**The Right Revd Michael Geoffrey Hare Duke** was born on 28th November 1925 in Calcutta. He was educated at Bradfield College and Trinity College, Oxford. He served as a sub-lieutenant in the RNVR from 1944 – 1946 and was ordained to the diaconate in 1952 after ordination training at Westcott House, Cambridge.

Michael Hare Duke served his title at St John’s Wood, London prior to being Vicar of St Mark’s Bury from 1956 to 1962. An abiding interest in human relationships saw him as Pastoral Director for the Clinical theology Association, Nottingham, from 1962 - 1964 after which he was vicar of St Paul’s, Daybrook up to 1969.

In retirement he was variously Chairman of the Scottish Association of Mental Health, Age Concern Scotland, and RSVP National Forum on Older Volunteering. Recognised as a writer, journalist and poet, throughout his ministry Michael was responsible for a number of well received articles and publications.

His marriage to Grace Lydia Frances Dodd (known affectionately to everyone as ‘Baa’) was long and enriching. Baa played a key role, enabling their home to be open house to all which served with flexible ease as Diocesan Office and caring family seat. Baa died in November 2012.

His election, in 1969, as Bishop of the United Diocese of St Andrews, Dunkeld and Dunblane came after the diocesan voters had been split irreconcilably between support for leading anglo-catholic Graham Leonard, Bishop of Willesden (later Bishop of London), and staunch episcopalian Thurstan Irvine, the Diocesan Dean. Michael Hare Duke was known at the time for having conducted a successful retreat in the diocese, and more widely for his promotion of Clinical Theology (the creation of Frank Lake, and widely taught in ministerial training courses at the time). Seen as a progressive priest, in terms of the split he ‘came through the middle’.

Many younger and less conservative clergy and laity took to him straight away, but gaining wide acceptance was a long process, with some never reconciled. His informal style and chirruppy upper-middle-class accent alongside decidedly radical views and frequent television appearances made him a well-known figure. In his leading role at Glenalmond College he was for some a breath of fresh air, but to others he was a more challenging element.

One aspect of his ministry as ‘modern’ was seen in his abiding interest in psychotherapy, including a long association with the Institute of Human Relations in Edinburgh. Counselling remained an active part of his ministry. Where the roles of the counsellor and that of the bishop came into conflict Michael Hare Duke’s tendency veered towards the former.

His support of the anti-nuclear movement, as well as peace issues more generally was unequivocal whether in the media or at public meetings or in his published output and was not always welcomed in a number of the military homes in his diocese. His friendship with Bishop Luis Prado of the Diocese of Pelotas in southern Brazil gave his episcopate a truly international aspect, one he shared generously with his Diocese. It was a successful twinning arrangement and gave many a valuable insight into the wider Anglican Communion.

More personally he sought to make connections across the more westerly countries of the Warsaw Pact; Poland especially. His stance was liberal left of centre, which might have been enhanced by a developed and counterbalancing critique of syncretising Christian-Marxist apologetics.

Michael Hare Duke played a leading part in the major shift in the structures of the Scottish Episcopal Church in the 1970s, along with bishops Alastair Haggart and Ted Luscombe, and against the resistance in varying degrees and intensity of the other bishops. This saw the introduction of non-stipendiary ministry, and replacement of the Representative Church Council and Provincial Synod with a slimmer and more effective General Synod.

Along with Gianfranco Tellini, Michael Hare Duke’s liturgical expertise came to the fore in shaping the *Experimental Liturgy 1977* for the Scottish Episcopal Church. The language of its successor, the 1982 Liturgy, carries his unmistakeable imprint in its language forms and thanksgiving emancipatory theology. Taken together and alongside the other liturgical revisions of that time, the Scottish Episcopal Church was transformed from a rather ‘stuck’, conservative, clergy-dominated institution into the lean more inclusive organism Michael Hare Duke believed it needed to be.

His frequent light-hearted manner found whimsical expression, to the annoyance of his detractors, in the then Scottish Episcopal Church (SEC) newspaper, SCAN, with its regular send-up of treasured aspects of SEC life (spoof announcements on, for example, the formation of a Pictish Church Society, and a series of cartoons).

Michael Hare Duke was ahead of his time within the Scottish Episcopal Church in the development of non-stipendiary ministry in his diocese. Year in, year out, fortnightly training sessions in his diocesan in-house training scheme ‘Training for Ministry’ saw many along the route to ordination and without whose ordained ministry the diocese would have been much the poorer. His commitment to this along with Diocesan Missioner, Celia Matthews, was remarkable and was one of many factors that led the University of St Andrews to award him an honorary Doctor of Divinity degree in 1994 as part of its 450th Anniversary celebrations of the founding of St Mary’s College.

European holidays were taken with Baa. It was a time for refreshment. She, with friends would paint, he would write, create verse, and compose hymns. His rendering of *Brightest and best are the sons of the morning* typifies his approach to language and to theology.

Michael Hare Duke was a radical thinker, looking for new solutions to old problems and willing to go outside the box. He remained Senior Bishop for most of his episcopate. It was a long, in fact at the time it was the longest, UK episcopate and was a distinguished one.

A former member of the diocese said of him, “He was always forward thinking and was at the forefront of bringing the diocese and the Scottish Episcopal Church into the modern age and equip it for the 21st Century.”

He died in Perth on 15 December 2014 and is survived by a son and three daughters.

The Rt Rev Dr Robert Gillies

Bishop of Aberdeen and Orkney