

## MARCH 2018 NEWS FROM SEI



**Students abroad** From the 19th-23rd March 2018, four SEI students joined fifteen candidates from the Church of Scotland for a study tour in Rome. They write: 'This trip leaves ecumenical, historical and spiritual resonance within us as we return to Scotland for our continuing formation. In addition to the deep ties of friendship formed with the CoS candidates, we had a wonderful evening of worship and socializing at the Scots' College (where the Scottish candidates in the Roman Catholic Church train) and a visit to the Waldensian College (the main Reformed Church in Italy). Historically, the overlapping of the centuries is captured in both the civic and ecclesial architecture of Rome and the stories of humanity are written on almost every wall of this "eternal city".'

*Jenny Holden, Joanna Leidenhag, Thomas Ware, Harriet Oxley*

The spiritual dimension of this trip was by far the most profound. In particular, visiting the burial sites of the earliest Christians and martyrs inspired such a sense of gratitude to God. We visited the Scavi excavations beneath St Peter's basilica where Peter is believed to be buried. Perhaps more amazing are the catacombs of St Priscilla, where 40,000 of the great cloud of witnesses who died in the first two centuries are buried; rich and poor, male and female, Jew and Gentile, are all together waiting for the return of our Lord. Additionally, there is a second century fresco of what appears to be a female priest (probably St Priscilla) presiding at the Eucharist!

Rome is truly a city of worship where the artistic gifts of humanity are on full display (we saw three paintings of Caravaggio, two Michelangelo sculptures, Bernini's "St Teresa in Ecstasy" and visited the Vatican Museum and Sistine Chapel). Although at times the over-glorification of the human institution may distort the Gospel, the enduring legacy of Peter and Paul and the earliest Christian communities are an eternal witness to the love of our God and the light of hope which every Christian carries within'.

**Meet the Ambassadors 4.** Mrs Nan Kennedy, the SEI Ambassador in the Diocese of St Andrews, Dunkeld and Dunblane, is a member of St. Paul's, Kinross, a congregation in which she has variously served as Vestry Secretary, Vestry Chair and Lay Representative. She introduces herself as follows: 'How did I end up here as an ambassador for SEI? A good question ... I am not a 'cradle' Episcopalian. Indeed my journey to the SEC was long and convoluted. I was born and brought up on the Isle of Lewis, a 'Wee Free' family. When I went to university I discovered the freedoms, especially for women, in other denominations and worshipped mainly at the University Chapel.



After graduation, off to London we went. The church across from our flat was a thriving Methodist church. That suited me just fine, and our older two children were baptised there. Next stop Bangkok; the only English-speaking church I could walk to was small, American and very exuberant. OK, so the clapping was a bit much but I had two small children and Sunday School was brilliant. Onwards to Bombay and the closest church was All Saints, Malabar Hill in the Church of North India. This was my first real experience of Episcopal worship and I fell in love, with the liturgy and the people. Next Brussels and imagine my delight; the nearest church was All Saints, Waterloo, an American Episcopal congregation where we worshipped for ten happy years. Our son was baptised there, our daughters confirmed. When it became time to leave, for the US and eventually back home, I decided that my days of peripatetic church hopping were over. I had found my forever church! The rest, as they say, is history and I hope I bring the best of all my experiences to the Institute.'

**Alastair Haggart Bursary Award 2018.** The winner of this year's Award, administered by a pendant committee of SEI, is Mrs Kate Sainsbury, Lay Reader in the Strathearn Group of Churches (Diocese of St Andrews, Dunkeld and Dunblane). Kate is shown here 'in work gear' alongside similarly clad friends at Southton Smallholding, The Bield Retreat Centre, Blackruthven, Perthshire.



The organic smallholding provides therapeutic work for adults with learning disabilities. Kate says 'Southton has been a model for Appletree Community', a residential community for people with complex and profound learning disabilities currently being developed by her in the Diocese of St Andrews, Dunkeld and Dunblane.

The Award will enable Kate to consider how a *fresh expression* of Church might be created through the nurturing of Appletree Community, and how Scottish and international L'Arche communities might inform this development. To assist her thinking she will visit Jean Vanier and the L'Arche community at Troisly, Northern France, Professor Jonas Ruskus and the Lithuanian L'Arche community, and Professor John Swinton and the new L'Arche-like community on the campus of Aberdeen University.

Bishop Mark said: 'I am delighted that Kate has received this Bursary. She has dedicated so much of her life and ministry to the inclusion of those with profound learning disabilities. When Kate shared her vision of Appletree Community, I was aware that I was glimpsing something very powerful and potentially life-changing for some of the most vulnerable in society'.

**Meet SEI's Committees** The activities of SEI are guided and monitored by two committees. This month we introduce the Management Committee, whose task is essentially that of an academic 'Board of Studies', monitoring the delivery, standard and direction of the curriculum taught and evaluating the students' experience. (The Institute Council, to be introduced in a future Newsletter, deals with overall strategy, finance and governance issues).

The Committee, chaired by the Principal, comprises two SEI Associate Tutors, Ms Elizabeth Corsar (New Testament) and Canon Ian Paton (Liturgy); the Internal Quality Nominee, Dr Eric Stoddart; the External Quality Advisor, Mr Martine Somerville; student representatives for IME 1-3 and IME 4-6, Mr Peter Woodfield and the Revd Nick Bowry; the Principal of SURCC, Revd Dr John McNeil Scott; the Durham University Liaison Officer, Dr Ashley Cocksworth or Dr Frances Clemson; the Director of Studies, Revd Dr Michael Hull, and the Director of Mixed Mode Studies, Revd Richard Tiplady.



Mike, Martine, Elizabeth, Eric and Ashley.

**SEI Training Fund.** Huge thanks to the Diocese of St Andrews, Dunkeld and Dunblane for making SEI one of the beneficiaries of the Diocesan Lent Appeal 2018, and to Inverness Cathedral for the magnificent cheque arising from the collection taken at the Installation of the Provost, the Very Revd Sarah Murray. Thanks also to Canon Robin Paisley for continuing to send deputising fees to the Fund.

If retired clergy or Lay Readers have any vestments or equipment – stoles or scarves, robes, Home Communion sets or the like – which they no longer require, please contact Mrs Denise Brunton, SEI's Administrator [deniseb@scotland.anglican.org](mailto:deniseb@scotland.anglican.org) These items would then be collected by, and offered to, current ordinands or Reader candidates at a SEI Residential Weekend, and the proceeds from their sale given to the Fund. In this vein, we are very grateful to Mrs Sue Duncan for her recent kind donation of vestments.

