



A Pastoral Address to the People of God of the Convocation of Episcopal Churches in Europe

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Bishop in charge and Suffragan to the Presiding Bishop

October 2, 2014

Dear People of God in the Convocation of Churches in Europe,

I am writing to you as we begin our annual Convention. It is an obligation, as the canon law of The Episcopal Church requires bishops to make an annual Address to their conventions and synods. But for six years now, since the Waterloo Convention in 2008, I have refrained from reading an address to the delegates, in favor of a Pastoral Letter to be distributed to all the members of the Episcopal Churches in Europe.

Your comments are very important to me. Please feel free to write me care of the Convocation, 23 avenue George V, 75008 Paris France, or else email at bishop@tec-europe.org.

The work of this Convention

First of all, our special guests at the Convention will be the new Bishop of the Igreja Lusitana Catolica, the Rt. Rev. Jorge (George) Pina Cabral, and his wife. The Presiding Bishop has licensed him to function as an assistant bishop in the Convocation, just as I was licensed in the Portuguese church at their synod on 2003. We will have a lot to learn from this new leader and his growing Church.

Our program: As you know, the Convocation has been working under a "Vision" passed by the Convocation in 2012. The first aspect of **Vision 2012** is a succinct statement by all our people together:

The Episcopal Church Europe is a welcoming community that knows God loves all people – no exceptions. We celebrate our diversity of languages, cultures and nations. We rejoice in reaching out to the world and becoming One in Christ.

The second is committing to deepening and broadening the natural cyclical movement of a Church, a diocese, a congregation, and individual Christians as we grow in faith: affirming identity in Christ, formation for deeper identity, living that identity in the world, and managing the whole enterprise. Your Council decided in February to focus this Convention, and the following three, on one of these points.

This year's work revolves around the first point, Identity. Here is the relevant text from the Vision 2012 statement:

I. COMMUNITY AND IDENTITY

Who I am / who we are: called to be transformed into the image of Jesus Christ.

Each of us has an ongoing and changing relationship with Jesus Christ, “by grace through faith,” unique for every person. At the same time, we share the one Faith and live that Faith in community. Individually we are a facet of the image of Christ, together we make up Christ’s image (Ephesians 2: 4-10, 19-22).

Three concrete visible signs of Who we are will be:

1. fostering greater awareness and understanding of the organic wholeness of the Convocation of Episcopal Churches in Europe as our congregations, individually and together, become One in Christ

2. increasing empowerment of the laity

3. planting new mission congregations based on a strategic plan and nurturing existing ones.

The Rev. Tom Brackett will lead us in reflections on our Identity as Christians. He is the Episcopal Church Officer for New Church Starts and Missional Initiatives, and a fine speaker. (Ask your delegates about their experience!)

Other matters before us

Of course, Convention is for Convocation business, though I would argue there is no business more important than our growth in Christ. We will have elections to a wide variety of offices:

The following positions are open for nominations for elections at the Annual Convention:

Council of Advice – elected to serve for two years

Two clergy (presbyters)

Two Lay:

Treasurer – elected for a three year term

Assistant Treasurer – elected for a three year term

The Ecclesiastical Disciplinary Board – elected for three years

Two lay: One seat open, & a second seat open to fill one remaining year in the term of a member retiring (early)

One clergy: One seat open.

There will be a **budget** to pass for 2014, and financial statements to review for 2012 and 2013. You may recall that we had difficulty with presenting the 2012 results at the last Convention — this one will make up for it.

Due to our auditors' insistence that old expenses need to be written down, we will have a difficult year in 2015 no matter what budgetary decisions we take. The Council's budget proposal includes a 1% increase in the assessment, bringing it to 9%. This is still low by our Church's standards, but there it is...A careful analysis of our income and expenditures was undertaken before deciding on the final figures for the budget. We will hear more about this when we meet in Frankfurt.

The bigger picture is the need to consider how to move toward **financial autonomy**. The General Convention presently pays the salary and benefits of the Bishop in charge. The issue of financial autonomy for the Convocation and other dependent jurisdictions of the Episcopal Church is certain to be raised at the 2015 General Convention. It is time for us to begin planning for this.

As a reminder, the office of Bishop in charge had been variously funded until Bishop Edmond Browning, the future Presiding Bishop, became Bishop in charge in 1971. He was the Convocation's first full-time Bishop in charge, and in order to fund him, he was named a Suffragan to the Presiding Bishop so that funding could be placed under the office of the Presiding Bishop, just as with the Bishop of the Armed Forces (now Federal Ministries) and the Bishop in charge of pastoral development.

I want you to know that I am confident that we can eventually reach autonomy. Financial autonomy, once achieved, will mean a change of status not just of the Bishop in charge but of the Convocation itself. We are now self-governing, like a diocese. As the years pass, and you continue to determine your own future under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the "good old days" of a loose group of churches dependent on others will become a thing of the past.

Website: The site continues to expand in usefulness to all of us, under Canon Jere Skipper's direction. If you haven't looked at www.tec-europe.org lately, please do so. Your congregation may be featured on the rotating images, and people can get directions to it from the map. Also, have you subscribed to [The Read Thread](http://paper.li/EpiscopalEurope/1363881221), a weekly news aggregator for the Convocation? (<http://paper.li/EpiscopalEurope/1363881221>)

Also, delegates have their own web page. Go to: <http://www.tec-europe.org/event/527835-2014-10-02-2014-convocation-convention-frankfurt/>

The next phase in the communications strategy is to build on the existing web presence to create a vibrant representation of the breadth of our ministry and mission in Europe. We will also further develop our web infrastructure to help connect people serving in like ministries – beginning first by networking those charged with communications work in their congregations. Finally, for 2015, we are planning to provide more opportunities for communications training for our congregations.

Disciplinary Board: We are working on appointing “Intake Officers” for the church in Europe. This is a canonical officer who takes in complaints about clergy, and investigates them to see whether they have any merit. Most dioceses have only one, the exception being Hawai’i. As it has five islands with five different cultures, that diocese elected to have five Intake Officers. We have decided to have three: France, Belgium, Switzerland; Italy; Germany, Austria, and one day perhaps, Poland.

Christopher Koch, Esq., of Geneva has agreed to serve as Church Attorney (essentially the prosecutor if a complaint reaches trial).

Audit: The Convocation’s books have been audited and we have received a “clean” letter from BDO, our French company. They are the fourth company auditing us, and the first to spend any time learning about us. Thanks to hard work by Sophie Plé, past treasurers, our present assistant Treasurer Denis Le Moullac, and Treasurer Mary Faigle, our books are truly professional, in other words, worthy of managing God’s fiscal assets.

All parishes which formerly had **outstanding bylaw issues** are now in compliance with Episcopal Church and Convocation constitutions and canons, as well as national laws. The exception is St. Augustine of Canterbury, Wiesbaden (see below).

The Canons Committee worked hard on this project, as well as the Council of Advice. The Canons Committee is currently composed of the Rev. Dr. Hanns Engelhardt, the Rev. Steve Smith, Christopher Koch, Esq., Maria Grazia Rizzo, Michèle Spike, Esq. (who also serves as my chancellor), and myself. I am the only non-lawyer on the committee.

The next project (for 2015) will be to revise the *statuts* or articles of the French 1901 association known as The Convocation of Episcopal Churches in Europe. When we first wrote these in 2003, we made the Bishop in charge the President of the association (corporation). This means that the Convocation of Churches in Europe cannot by law pay the Bishop, as officers of 1901 associations are forbidden to receive compensation, other than reimbursement of expenses. Since we are working toward financial autonomy, this provision should be changed. Finding the best way forward is the issue.

The other change is more technical. In 1907, a change was made to the French law known as the ‘1901 law’. This allowed Roman Catholic dioceses to be known as “diocesan associations.” (Due to that church’s resistance to its disestablishment, it did not avail itself of this provision until 1924, at the Pope’s insistence.) The main thrust of my ministry among you has been to develop our common life to function like an Episcopal diocese, even though we are not officially one. At heart this accomplishment is about self-government, instead of paternalistic oversight of outlying congregations. We have succeeded. Therefore I think for clarity’s sake in Europe, adding to the *statuts* that we are “*une association diocésaine*” would be helpful, and does not require the government’s approval. It is not obvious to Anglophones, but “convocation” in French translates to ‘a legal summons’, so anything to clarify our identity would be helpful. More on this to follow...

Episcopal Acts

Part of a bishop's annual report is to inform you of my “episcopal acts” — what I have been doing in my role as your Bishop — since our last convention. I made 26 visitations,

confirming and receiving 63, and presiding at 8 baptisms. I ordained the Rev. Christopher Easthill to the Sacred Order of the Priesthood at the Church of the Ascension, on November 17. He is now serving as Priest-in-charge of St. Augustine of Canterbury, Wiesbaden. I ordained the Rev. Fanny Belanger to the Sacred Order of the Priesthood on February 1 at the Virginia Seminary Chapel. She presently serves as assisting priest at Epiphany Church, Washington, DC. On May 29, I received the Rev. Francisco Alberca as a priest from the Roman Catholic Church. He is now Vicar of the Church of the Resurrection, Orvieto, working under the Rev. Austin Rios, and helping with the Latin American Community in Rome.

Christ-the-King Church, Frankfurt, called the Rev. John Perris, former Rector of St. James, Montclair, New Jersey, as their new Rector in June 2013. He and his wife Catherine finally began their ministry among us on February 1, 2014, and I instituted him as Rector on March 9. (The word “institute” refers to the Bishop delegating his or her authority over a congregation to a Priest.)

The Rev. Mercedes Tutasig awaits a visa before she leaves us for an extended internship in the Diocese of New York. Many thanks to Bishop Andy Dietsche and his staff, as well as support from the Presiding Bishop, my discretionary fund, and of course her parish, St. Paul's-Within-the-Walls, Rome. This will lead, we believe, to her ordination to the priesthood.

Parishes & Mission Congregations

Cathedral of the Holy Trinity:

Under the strong leadership of Dean Lucinda Laird, the Cathedral is moving forward on all fronts. The construction is finished now, and the new facilities are rapidly coming into use for a burgeoning congregation. The Friday homeless meal has resumed in a fine new kitchen, for instance. In May, one of the large rooms was named for former Dean Zachary Fleetwood.

Recent changes by the Socialist government to income tax have led several parishioners to elect to live in other countries, an unwelcome development which has had financial consequences for the Cathedral. These people are primarily Americans who have to pay both U.S. and French income taxes, since America remains for now the only nation that taxes its citizens wherever they are in the world.

The solution is to grow in numbers, of course, and I am confident that this shall happen. Early returns are encouraging!

Christ Church, Clermont-Ferrand:

The Michelin Corporation, which employs many members, has changed its compensation structure, essentially making its employees work under a Swiss contract. This means that contributions to the parish are no longer tax-deductible in France, yet another consequence of unfavorable government tax policy changes. The parish has worked hard to overcome the resulting deficit under Fr Rob Warren's leadership, helped by some strong lay leaders.

Caireen Stewart, Fr Rob's wife, has become a "pillar" of the Youth Commission. Christ Church hosted this year's Youth Across Europe event. Attendance was strong, and the program was noted to be 'remarkable.'

Emmanuel Church, Geneva:

The parish continues to flourish under our senior rector's, the Rev. John Beach's leadership.

I took part in a *Happening* event at year's end, and we decided to start developing our own European version of this spiritual renewal program for young people.

During my visitation on June 27, I preached, celebrated, and confirmed not only at the joint Emmanuel/Holy Trinity morning service, but also at nearby La Côte in the afternoon. For four years, the Convocation took care of that congregation. Also, I added the below:

In June, the vestry at Emmanuel and I had a very meaningful meeting; we discussed the work before them, and where they are headed.

All Saints, Waterloo:

All Saints' celebrated its 35th anniversary on September 27th, at a dinner for parishioners and friends of the congregation.

Now that the shocks of building ownership and change of rectors have subsided, the parish is gaining steam in attendance and program. I commend the Rev. Sunny Hallanan for her involvement in the community, as part of her committed and inspiring leadership.

The parish has made good use of the generous bequest from the Worth and Dorothy Campbell Estate. We still await the final installment, which should bring the total to \$1.1 million or so.

One development has been that the parish is starting to use *Transformed By Stories*, the narrative, formation method conceived by the Convocation's own European Institute of Christian Studies, and with broad participation over the years from the Convocation laity. We have dedicated much time, energy and resources to developing this framework for lay Christian formation, and I am pleased that *TBS* is now being adapted for congregational use.

St. Paul's, Rome: The extensive renovation and restoration is ongoing, under the Board of St. Paul's and their president, Marnie Dawson Carr. The building is even more beautiful than before. Having the use of the second floor in the rectory building — for the first time in decades — has been life-changing for the congregation, and will continue to allow the parish to grow.

The Joel Nafuma Refugee Center has a new Outreach Coordinator, Ms. Jill Rios. She brings extensive experience with refugees and managing programs for them to help the Center become much more publicly recognized, and funded eventually on a wider basis than at present.

I was a bit nervous when this parish went through the transition after an 18-year rectorate. However, Fr. Austin Rios has grasped the nettle and is leading St. Paul's into a new era of growth and depth.

Church of the Ascension, Munich:

Under the steady leadership of Fr. Steve Smith, the budget is in the black, and attendance is strong. Outreach includes work with a refugee transit home, the English-speaking prisoner support that I have commended in other years, and a soup kitchen.

The Rev. Dorothee Hahn is still working happily with the Romanian Orthodox Diocese of Husi as an official missionary of the Episcopal Church and the Convocation. This month, the Rev. Margaret Rose, chief ecumenical officer for the Episcopal Church, and Matt Davies of Episcopal News Service visited her and her Orthodox colleagues.

Christ-the-King, Frankfurt: Besides the good news concerning the call of the Rev. John Perris, the Rev. Ian Gallagher had done a great job as Interim Rector. He received a call to serve in Vicar of St James & St. Barnabas, Enfield Highway, in the north of London.

The Rev. Jennifer Adams-Maßmann is back from Cambridge, England, and continues to work on her doctorate. Her husband Alex has received a major grant that will allow him to continue research for the next two years.

And of course, the parish is hosting us for this year's Convention! **Grüne Soße!**

St James, Florence: The parish continues a weekly food bank, a thrift shop, and ministry with college students. Fr. Mark and Dottie Dunnham have worked hard to bring a spirit of calm optimism.

The Carriage House renovation is complete, and it opens new possibilities for program activities. Melinda and I had the privilege of being the first guests, and we highly recommend it!

Christ Church, Charleroi, Belgium: The Rev. Mark Barwick reports that the congregation continues to do well. The use of French is being explored to be more open to the community. It is wonderful to have their delegates at Convention. However, as a congregation that is over 90 years old, they do not consider themselves to be a "mission congregation."

St. Augustine's, Wiesbaden:

At the parish's annual meeting in February 2013, the Rector, the Rev. Tony Litwinski, asked the parish to make up its mind either to raise the large sums necessary to repair and maintain the building owned by the Bishop of London, or else move.

The Episcopal Church has maintained the building since 1957, and Episcopal military chaplains were instrumental in saving it from the serious damage done to it in 1944 by British bombers. Episcopal priests have served the parish since then as well. One of the essential issues is that the Church of England never officially gave up the parish. My predecessors and previous Bishops of Gibraltar signed various letters delegating authority to the Episcopal bishops over the parish. A bylaw written in 1992 stated that.

However, neither Bishop Rowell nor I signed a continuation of that delegation. I have never considered that the Diocese in Europe had any claim to the congregation. The building, yes,

of course. However, the parish hasn't any connection whatsoever with the Diocese in Europe: St. Augustine's rectors are called by the vestry with the approval of the Bishop in charge according to our canons and are "canonically resident" in the Convocation, not appointed or licensed by the Bishop of Gibraltar. It sends delegates to our synod (convention), not the synod of the Diocese. It pays an assessment to the Convocation. Over the years, the Convocation, not the Diocese in Europe or the Bishop of London, has loaned funds and given grants to the parish (there is still a loan outstanding). In another situation where a congregation wanted to be "bijurisdictional" Bishop Rowell and I agreed that since only one bishop working under one church's canon law could intervene in case of problems, it is impossible.

Soon after the 2013 meeting, there was a petition alleging misconduct that the vestry received in June, demanding a special meeting of the congregation in order to fire the rector. The document was not addressed to me, nor was I apprised of it until after it appeared. Following the canon law in such situations, which requires first an attempt at reconciliation, I appointed the Rev. Anthony Jewiss to assess the petition's validity. He reported to the parish and me that some of the alleged signatories claimed they had not signed the petition, and that the charges were baseless.

At a meeting of the Vestry in September, Fr. Litwinski became convinced that reconciliation was not possible, and he petitioned for a canonical "severing of the pastoral relation." This required further investigations by a committee I appointed, and in close consultation with the Presiding Bishop and her chancellor, David Booth Beers, Esq., I issued at length a Judgment in January 2014. It required that the parish pay the rector the equivalent of a year's salary, beginning from October 2013; this is the standard amount in settlements where no misconduct has occurred. The building is to be returned to the Bishop of London.

On February 8, I chaired the annual meeting of the parish. A new vestry was elected, and people some time to re-organize and figure out a budget. They also decided to study the real needs of the building, and the possibilities of renting another church in the city. Because of the volatility of the situation, the vestry asked and I agreed not to push a vote on the bylaw changes approved by the vestry in October 2013.

With the advice and consent of the Council of Advice, and the vestry, I appointed the Rev. Christopher Easthill to serve as Priest in charge. In light of the congregation's dire financial situation, the Convocation paid his first three months there for a total of €7500,00. Since then the parish has been able to have a pledge drive and create a budget.

Three members of the Vestry met with me in Baden-Baden on June 6. The study of their options had been carefully done. They secured an architect to study the building, and determined that €550.000 is needed for current repairs and renovations. They also found a church in Wiesbaden, the Bergskirche, which could offer them everything they need except an office. Of course, the Vestry asked unanimously to be able to stay where they are...

The second question is of course the building. In a letter to the Vestry, I said that their decision to stay was obviously emotional rather than rational, given that they had not been able to raise building capital in recent memory.

The Vestry has asked to have a contract for Fr Easthill, beginning on October 1. All things considered, I decided to agree. After some legal wrangling, the vestry finally agreed to pay the rector the sum required, and that will be finished by the end of September.

The continuing question is the building. I have always maintained that ownership is necessary to raise the kind of money needed to maintain the building (if it can be raised at all), and to date the Bishop of London continues to offer a lease. With the consent of the Presiding Bishop, I have suspended the execution of the Judgment for now to allow for some healing and serious reflection.

Specific reports on mission congregations:

Resurrection, Orvieto:

Church of the Resurrection reorganized, and has re-started services now that Fr. Francisco Alberca has been received into the church as a priest, and is able to conduct regular services in Orvieto. The congregation is a small group, with a few long-time members, and a handful of young, Italian families. It is my hope that this slow growth will continue, and that Fr. Francisco can eventually rebuild a congregation in Orvieto.

St. Columban's, Karlsruhe: Our oldest mission celebrates its twentieth year. The Council visited them for their September meeting, and were able to meet with members and their priest, the Rev. Dr. Hanns Engelhardt, now in his 80th year.

St. Boniface, Augsburg & St. James the Less, Nürnberg: The mission congregations have asked to have a third year with Fr. Dennis Krumlauf. I have seen significant growth in both congregations, and I am happy to report that Fr Dennis and Jane have decided to stay one more year. This news has been greeted with general rejoicing. Their financing needs to be continued, but on the basis of their growth, that the congregations are taking on more and more responsibilities. I predict that St. Boniface, in particular, will become our next parish.

St. Alban's, Ramstein, is facing changes, and the Rt. Rev. Jay Magness, Bishop of the Forces, is working with them to move off base and become much more involved in the Convocation. For information, all Episcopal military chaplains in Europe are automatically licensed in the Convocation.

Grace Anglican-Episcopal Church in the Hérault: Mary Faigle, Fr. Tony Jewiss, and the intrepid band continue to hold services at St Jean Bosco, an outstandingly hospitable Roman parish. I led Lessons & Carols there last December, with 176 in attendance and assisted by the Archdiocese's auxiliary bishop. I am scheduled to do so again. The Council met there in February as part of our plan to visit all congregations.

Milan Italian Missions: The Council and I have decided to proceed to ask Convention to incorporate the congregation, **Buon Pastore**, Milan, officially into the Convocation this year, as a "specialized mission congregation" under Canon 22.3 of our Constitution and Canons. We will vote on this at the beginning of Convention. (I received their priest, the Rev. Maria Vittoria Longhitano, into the Episcopal Church last year.)

If and until we seat Buon Pastore at this Convention, they are still Old Catholics, under my jurisdiction by license from Bishop Harald Rein of the *Christkatholische Kirche der Schweiz* (the Old Catholic Church of Switzerland), and using the Swiss rite in Italian. Our canons permit the use of other rites if needed for the incorporation of congregations. We will need to redo our Italian translation so they can make proper use of it (the present version makes Italians giggle a little).

Furthermore, I want to create a special structure directly under my authority that I call the “Archdeaconry for Italian-language ministry,” with Madre Vittoria as Archdeacon reporting directly to me. So in this Archdeaconry for Italian Ministry, there are communities of varying size and age in Bari, Livorno, Merano, Milan, Parma, Naples, and Randazzo, Sicily. The best-organized are Buon Pastore, Milan, and Resurrezione, Randazzo. The only one I have not visited is in Naples.

In preparation for this development, I decided to visit Buon Pastore, and accompany Madre Vittoria and Andrea her husband in their car after visiting the congregation. On August 7, I celebrated the Eucharist with members of Buon Pastore, and then went to Merano in the Italian Alps the next day. Here I found a community of 20 people under a former Roman priest and his wife. I had refused to celebrate the Eucharist, as I did not know these people, so we had Evening Prayer. The group was impressive, as the visit started with an official welcome from the town’s mayor, and flowers for Vittoria+ and me given by little children. We spent the night and I had a long discussion with the priest the next morning.

We then stopped in Livorno, where I celebrated the Eucharist and gave the Carmelite scapular to a woman, making her a Third Order (lay) Carmelite in the growing Old Order. After this, Andrea drove round the clock until we ended in Randazzo, Sicily, with the Chapel of the Resurrection, where the next day (11 August) I celebrated and preached, and took the vows of a second novice. I am working with their priest, Giovanni LaRosa, to receive him into the Episcopal Church.

I have been in regular contact with Madre Vittoria throughout, and I am convinced that this ministry she has is real and has significance for the Episcopal Church. There are several issues, of course:

- 1.) Organization. Milan has a local *associazione* which gives it a legal existence in Italy, though it has no tax advantages (see below report on English Associazione). The others have either a “daughter” relationship to Milan or are in the process. Several may disappear, and others may appear. The question of canonical status is important, but other than Buon Pastore, is premature in my estimation.
- 2.) Finances. Vittoria+ is convinced that all this effort should be self-financed. She and Andrea use their personal funds to support her work. She is reluctant even to have the small travel grant I have proposed (though her husband is not). There are no transfers of funds between the congregations, to my knowledge. When we visit, the local congregation is expected to pay the hotel and meals, nothing else.
- 3.) Inculturation. This word usually refers to the Gospel’s transformation of a national or regional culture. Here I mean it in the sense of these Italian communities learning how to become Episcopalians. While our manner of governance is attractive to them, they have no experience of living with it. We need to give them time to learn, and having learned, to accept it and adapt it to their situation.

- 4.) The religious order does not present issues *per se*. However, Carmelite spirituality has a millennial pedigree, with many different styles. Some Episcopalians would find it odd to worship in a service where St. Elijah and St Albert of Trapani are invoked. There is clear agreement among all these people that we Anglicans do not ask the saints to do anything for us other than pray. Old habits die hard, however, and sifting between local traditions (and here I am thinking especially Sicily) and adopting our method of being the Church will require patience and openness on all sides.

Parenthetically, the lay Order of the Daughters of the King continues to flourish in several of our churches. This provides a way for busy modern women (despite the Victorian title) to have a daily prayer life in the context of a community of women. I highly recommend it.

Polish Episcopal Network (Polska Wspólnota Episkopalna)

I had hoped that the convention could welcome the Network as an affiliated organization, “serving to introduce the Episcopal Church to interested Polish people,” or some such language.

The group has translated virtually the entire Book of Common Prayer. I am still in conversation with the Custodian of the Prayer Book about certification. At present prayer groups of various sizes have met in Warsaw, Krakow, Poznan, Lublin, Kotteniche, and Nowy Sącz.

The creation of an Association so the group could function under Polish law, however, gave rise some challenges in regards to leadership and expectations. In part, this is to be understood in the context of Polish culture and life, as well as law. Nevertheless, I have called for the group to observe a brief hiatus from further organizing. I will travel there again in the next few months to discern with them the future direction for the network and the congregations there.

I am sure there will be further developments...

European Institute of Christian Studies: Planning for next April’s Academy for Parish Leadership VI on communications is well underway, and I expect there will soon be new ordinands for EICS to work with. One important task is to update and harmonize documents in the Handbook that relate to the work of both COMB and EICS. A joint commission, under the leadership of the Rev. Tony Jewiss, is working on this project. The Convocation Handbook will be updated, as will the documents on the Handbook website. <http://www.tec-handbook.org>

Another important matter is the updating of Child Protection Guidelines and training, consistent with developments in the States. Who trains the trainers?

The *Transformed by Stories* formation framework is being used in Waterloo, as I noted before, and needs to be revived as a program to offer around Europe. We did too much work to let this effective tool go by the wayside.

The Rev. Liz Hendrick has asked to step down as co-chair (with Sonja March), and I have reluctantly accepted her resignation. She has brought her great powers of analysis and organization to complement a highly talented board.

COMB: “*The Commission on the Ministry of the Baptized serves to guide and empower all baptized people in discerning their ministries.*”

COMB is planning the next Vocational Discernment Conference in November in Paris. A good deal of work is going into developing guidelines for licensed Lay Ministries, and harmonizing documents with EICS for the website. There will be fresh new ordinands for COMB to work with in the months to come.

Lee Williams, the chair, may have to step down, for reasons related to his professional and work life.

Youth Commission: Youth Across Europe held three retreats in May and June, for ages 10-13, 13-19, and 20-30. The Youth Officer for the Episcopal Church, Bronwyn Clark Skov, attended two of the three, and gave a glowing report which she published here : <http://episcopoyouth.org/2014/06/16/discerning-christian-vocation-with-youth-across-europe/>

She also brought greetings from our youth to the Episcopal Youth Event, attended by several thousand young Episcopalians. We plan to send representatives to the next EYE in 2017.

Following a promise made at the December *Happening*, I paid to send three of our young people to a *Happening* training conference in Florida in September. They will enable us to begin to plan and hold our own *Happening* events without depending entirely on teams from the US.

Other: Since I have been Bishop in charge, I have wanted to have **official recognition** of our church in Italy. Several Italian lawyers informed me that this could not be done without the Diocese in Europe congregations in Italy. In discussions with Bishop Geoffrey Rowell in 2003, he told me that their lawyers had concluded the matter was too delicate and difficult in the Italian context, and they were not inclined to pursue it.

In December Madre Longhitano informed me that the Diocese in Europe was on the verge of being recognized in Italy. They would then be given the tax advantages for parishioners and congregations, as well as eventually being exempt from value-added tax.

As things unfolded, the Italian President signed the decree recognizing the *Associazione Chiesa d’Inghilterra*. I asked to meet with the Archdeacon for Italy, the Revd Jonathan Boardman of All Saints, Rome, Fr Austin Rios, and Madre Longhitano (Fr Mark Dunnam being unavailable), in Rome, which took place on August 2. Attending were the Revd William Lister, of Florence (and the Diocese in Europe), and Madre Teodora Tossati, the other former Old Catholic Italian female priest, now in the Diocese in Europe.

Fr Boardman insisted that our churches or even individuals can become members of this *associazione*, and run for office in it, except that the Diocese’s Archdeacon for Italy is always president.

As discussions went on, I was dismayed to learn that the Diocese began work on this project eight years ago. Suffragan Bishop David Hamid wrote about it in his blog here: <http://eurobishop.blogspot.fr/2014/07/the-church-of-england-in-italy-we-are.html>

The Presiding Bishop has said she will raise the matter with the Archbishop of Canterbury at their next meeting.

The Church Publishing Company has offered a **contract to reprint** under license our Spanish and French Bilingual Selections. Chancellor Michèle Spike reviewed it and made some adjustments. They are offering an 8% royalty. I have signed it with the advice and consent of the Council of Advice.

We will need to redo the Italian and German translations, now that they have had ten years of use. I do not anticipate, however, that we will have to start all over. Furthermore, I would like to see us offer the German and Italian Prayer Books as “e-books” that could be accessed on a Kindle reader or an iPad and other tablet computers.

I attended and participated in consecrating the **new Bishop of Gibraltar** in Europe, the Right Reverend Dr Robert Innes, until recently Dean of the Holy Trinity Pro-cathedral in Brussels. There were several firsts: he is an evangelical, a priest with experience in Europe and who will live in Brussels, and who was consecrated in Canterbury Cathedral. I have known Bishop Innes for years, and look forward to working with him.

The Diocese in Europe's appointment process is unusual. The Bishop of Gibraltar is appointed by a committee consisting of the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Bishop of London, and a bishop to be named by the Anglican Consultative Council. The latter body selected a Nigerian archbishop to serve on this committee. The Convocation's opinion was solicited as part of the process.

I usually meet twice a year with the **Board of Foreign Parishes**, of which I am a member. This Board, along with the Board of St. Paul's and the Board of St. James, assists the Convocation and the Church as a whole by holding certain properties and investments, such as the Nice Fund, as well as managing the Jeffrey & Anne Rowthorn Fund for us. All three were incorporated in the State of New York, beginning when Theodore Roosevelt was governor. The Boards' members tend to be former parishioners of one or more of our churches. In recent years the Board has begun discussions to determine how it might be of service to all our churches.

Most recently, the Board passed a resolution that I proposed at its May meeting to form a committee with the Presiding Bishop's office and our representatives to discuss the Convocation moving toward **financial autonomy**. Regardless of what happens in the future, these Boards will always accompany us, and so it is good to talk over possibilities with them now.

I have informed the Francophone Network of the Anglican Communion that I will **resign** as President at the next triennial meeting in January 2016. Meanwhile, I attended the triennial synod of the Anglican Church of Guinea and Guinea-Bissau in July, at the request of their new bishop, Jacques Boston. The small Church operates four dispensaries, fully furnished with doctors, nurses, and laboratories. It has become invaluable to the nation's Ebola efforts.

I also attended the **funeral** of Archbishop Tilewa Johnson in the Gambia in February, as the representative of the Presiding Bishop and the Episcopal Church. Only 16 months earlier, I had attended his very joyous enthronement as Archbishop of West Africa.

I returned on September 24 from the fall meeting of the House of Bishops in the Episcopal **Diocese of Taiwan**. For over two years, the bishops had been planning and saving for this trip. Ostensibly to celebrate the 60th anniversary of our Mandarin-speaking diocese, it was also an occasion to express the Church's support of this diocese, even smaller and more isolated than we are.

With 20 congregations, including two expatriate ones, the Diocese of Taiwan has an impressive ministry to its fellow Taiwanese, including magnificent kindergartens (I know: two of my parishes had parochial schools) and innovative ministries to solitary elders, including non-Christians. This is all in the context of a culture hostile to Christianity. Becoming a Christian often results in being shunned by one's family.

When Bishop David Lai welcomed us at the opening meeting, he said he was happy that all the bishops could experience what he has to put up with at our meetings: jet lag. I fist-pumped in approval, as I always have six to nine hours jet lag as well, but nowhere near as much as he does. (The other bishop to face this is the Bishop of Hawai'i.)

More importantly, I expected that the bishops would also experience what I have for thirteen years now: telling the Church back in the States wonderful stories of our churches overseas. I have made a point to do this regularly, in print as well, in order to give encouragement back home. You have wonderful ministries in difficult circumstances, and people who discover our way of being Christian want to become Episcopalians (see above).

There is a lot to tell about Taiwan. Our church there shares the same situation as all Taiwanese, living in the shadow of mainland China. The diocese cannot join other, closer provinces of the Anglican Communion because of disapproval of China. So they remain Episcopal. Their churches celebrate heartfelt liturgies in beautiful, immaculate buildings; the clergy are well-trained and multi-lingual. With great patience Taiwanese Episcopalians move forward slowly but steadily. They have much to teach us (see [here](#) for reactions).

The Archbishops of Japan, the Philippines, and Korea came and shared their difficult lives, also in hostile cultures. The repentance and reconciliation of the Church of Japan (the Nippon Sei Ko Kai, or Holy Catholic Church of Japan) with the Anglican Church of Korea was especially moving to hear.

The equivalent of our Presiding Bishop, The Most Revd Samuel Robert Azariah, spoke powerfully and movingly of life in that country, where Christians like Asia Bibi (still imprisoned) continually face attack under the dreadful blasphemy laws. They are permanent second-class citizens. Very poignantly, he addressed us on the first anniversary of the bombing of All Saints Church in Peshawar that killed 172 and wounded 170.

We also heard reports on progress toward re-imagining the structures of the Episcopal Church and the task force on marriage, as well as other topics. These two, along with the election of a new Presiding Bishop, will be prominent aspects of General Convention next June in Salt Lake City, Utah.

Finally, I heard the priest of one of the expatriate congregations speaking of their ministry to people who are passing through, what I have called "preaching to a parade." I got the idea to

have a consultation between Taiwan and Europe on this topic, to compare and contrast, and to learn from each other. I expect we could find a grant to fund it.

Personal:

Marie-Noëlle has been accepted for an apprenticeship and diploma in pastry and baking, and has been hard at work all summer. She is now a “senior member” of the Cathedral Altar Guild, and continues to cat-sit for Dean Laird, as well.

I have begun regular yoga to augment my weight-lifting, and it is paying off, as I have dropped 4 kilograms. More to go, of course!

Your Bishop and friend,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a small cross-like symbol followed by the name 'P. Mahan' in a cursive script.