

Bishop Ian relocating to Dubbo

□ Registry staff cuts as Diocese trims costs to meet available income

By Lewis Hitchick

Bishop Ian Palmer and his wife Liz will set out on a six-day pilgrimage from Bathurst to Dubbo on Sunday afternoon, February 1.

Covering a distance of over 200 kilometres, the walk will symbolise the Bishop's decision to move from Bishops court in Bathurst – the traditional home of the Bishop of Bathurst – to the rectory at Holy Trinity Church, Dubbo.

Bishop Ian made that decision, with the backing of the diocesan executive body Bishop in Council, last December when he also announced that he was taking on the role of Rector of the parish of Dubbo.

With the support of recently-ordained priest Darryl McCullough, Deacons Ray Tickle, Louis Stringer and Nick Hurford as well as the Reverend Gloria Shipp, Bishop Ian is planning to serve as part-time parish priest while continuing his current duties as the Bishop of Bathurst.

He said that the depletion of the Endowment of the See (the trust fund which was established to pay the stipend and costs associated with the office of Bishop of the Diocese) over the past decade has meant that there are no longer sufficient funds to pay the full-time stipend of a bishop. This has forced him, along with Bishop in Council, to consider ways of reducing the cost of his stipend.

The December meeting of Bishop-in-Council also took the radical step of terminating the employment of four employees in the Diocesan Registry Office, to bring the administrative costs of the diocese into line with income.

In September, the annual Synod of the diocese had decided not to pass a proposed budget which would have required parishes to double the contributions they currently pay towards the running costs of the diocese. Many parishes already struggle to meet these assessments, and Synod considered that passing the proposed budget would have been quite unrealistic.

Instead, Synod asked Bishop in Council to consider alternatives that would lower the costs.

"After weeks of thought, prayer and preparation the Bishop in Council in December agreed on a budget for 2015," Bishop Ian said. "Very simply, they passed a budget that has no increase in the parish assessments for 2015 and shows a small surplus."

Details are still being finalised, but tasks essential for the continuing operation of the diocese are being out-sourced to various providers. The Bishop's Registrar, Karen Trafford, will be the only diocesan employee continuing in the Registry Office beyond June, when General Manager Graham Higham completes his employment. All other staff will have left by early February.

"These are huge changes," said Bishop Ian, "but they are to ensure not only the survival of our Diocese, but to advance the worship, mission and ministry of the work of our Lord here. I ask for your goodwill, prayers and patience."

The Bishop said that while some might compare his pilgrimage to Dubbo to Bishop Leslie's walk in 1971, there were some significant differences.

"Bishop Leslie walked *to* Bathurst, as his focus was on the completion of All Saints' Cathedral; I will be walking *from* Bathurst, with a focus on taking the ministry of God's church out to the surrounding communities.



WALKING THE WALK: Bishop Ian and Liz Palmer have committed to walking more than 200 kilometres from Bathurst to Dubbo during the first week of February. (Photo: Chris Seabrook, Western Advocate.)

"I believe, and have said on several occasions, that unless our churches are serving their communities they are not fulfilling their calling."

He is also deliberately describing his trek as a 'pilgrimage' rather than a 'walk'.

"A walk is getting from one place to another. Making a pilgrimage is doing it in a purposeful and reflective way," Bishop Ian said. "For me, turning a walk into a pilgrimage means making it a time of reflection and purposeful prayer, and allowing yourself to be changed by it."

"We will be using this pilgrimage to reflect on what the new look for the diocese might be," he said.

"We are going through a period of big change and we need to be able to look at it in a different way."

He said it will also be a symbolic statement that he and Liz are prepared to walk the difficult road ahead with the people of the diocese.

See page 4 for Bishop's Pilgrimage Itinerary

Anglican education: Family, freedom and fulfilment

□ **Bishop Ian delivered the following address at the Staff Commencement Service at All Saints' College on Tuesday, January 27, based on the Gospel reading from Mark 3:31-35.**

Thank you for the privilege of allowing me to be here this morning.

I asked Dr Miller if there were times when I as Bishop and Chair of Council could meet with the staff. He suggested this occasion. Then, when I mentioned it to (School Chaplain) Fr Tony Card he asked me to give the homily!

The reading we have just heard is the Gospel reading set for this morning. When I checked it out after Tony sent it to me a month ago I wondered whether to ask for a different one, but then thought that we would probably end up with some motherhood statement rather than a part of the Gospel that speaks to our context quite challengingly.

The reading is about family. Or is it? The Jewish family in the 1st Century was a tightknit unit. Sometimes several generations would live under the same roof. Family and business would go together and the bonds of family loyalties were paramount.

So this story in the Gospel is disturbing. Earlier in Mark 3 we've read that Jesus' family thought he was mad, and now they have come to bring him back into the fold!

So when Jesus' mother and family are outside the house where he is teaching and ask for him to come to them Jesus replies, "Who are my mother and brothers?" Then he looks at those around him and says, "Here is my mother and here are my brothers! Anybody who does God's will is my brother! And my sister! And my mother!"

This reply from the lips of Jesus is scandalous. Jesus, who has already challenged Jewish identity with his different interpretation of Sabbath observance and food laws, now challenges that identity seen in the solidarity of the family.

Jesus has just chosen his disciples and is now saying that the closest human relationships are not defined on a horizontal level by one's family, but on the vertical plane by one's relationship with God and doing God's will.

If that is the context in which Jesus was speaking, what is the context in

which we are listening?

We listen to politicians who when they want to win votes praise family values! They want us to cheer, applaud and put a cross beside their name. But once in office they are often prepared to promote policies that can undermine these very same family values.

Coming so soon after the murder of eight children in Cairns, the choice of Rosie Batty as Australian of the Year reminds us that families can be frightening and violent, and yet their purpose is to be a place of safety where people can grow with respect and love for one another.

However, there is no doubt that when a person believes in God and faithfully adopts a certain religion, that shapes their moral code, life-style and relationships. I have spoken about the Jewish family and that is, of course, to speak of both an ethnic and a religious community.

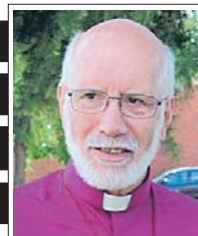
We speak about the Christian family and that is to draw upon teaching in the New Testament that explains the words of Jesus – that when we are baptised we become members of the Church, we know God as our loving heavenly Father and we are adopted as sisters and brothers of Jesus into God's family. People are persecuted in some parts of the world because faith in Jesus Christ means they must break from their human family.

This is one reason why mockery of a person's religion evokes such deep feelings in passionate believers and why the appalling things we have witnessed over this holiday period in Sydney, Canada, Paris, Peshawar, northern Nigeria and elsewhere are both shocking and a warning that religion cannot be ignored.

This is where an Anglican School needs to carefully and thoughtfully see how it can make a difference in its teaching and community.

In the early 1970s I taught religion, relationships, social and moral ways of living in a multi-ethnic and multi religious high school in North London. I taught it as an academic subject to "O" and "A" level grades as well as a general

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subject right across the school; pupils from 13 to 18 years old. In that secular comprehensive school I had to teach and practice religion in the context of respect and academic integrity.

Our secular society – politically correct and in its anti-religious fervour but worshipping at the sacred shrine of consumerism and economic growth just does not grasp what is happening across the world. The followers of ISIS, Boko Haram and other so-called radical groups are not deranged zealots, nor even primarily terrorists, they are passionate believers.

Professor Philip Jenkins, a world famous social historian, and thinker has been saying for over a decade that in the 21st Century religion will replace ideology as the main motivating force in world affairs.

The movement *Je suis Charlie* ('I am Charlie') in the past fortnight has quite rightly marched for free speech and as a warning against the evil of radical Islam.

However, the latest edition of Charlie Hebdo is not a testimony to free speech, it is again mocking the faith of passionate believers; people who count their relationship with God as more important than their family relationships. And Charlie Hebdo does not only mock the Prophet Mohammed, it also mocks the Christian faith and our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Rene Descartes, the 17th Century French philosopher is sometimes considered the father of modern secularism because he shifted philosophical discourse from the authority of the church to the primacy of human reason. Famously he describes going into a boiler room and there discovering that knowledge of my existence does not depend upon a statement from an outside authority but upon my awareness of conscious thought. He coined the phrase, *Cogito ergo sum* (I think therefore I am).

The trouble is that we have shifted from the perceptive insights of Cartesian philosophy through the rigours of English empiricism and the rightful scepticism of German and French existentialism to the just plain banal of modern political correctness that infects and

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Family, freedom and fulfilment

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perverts disciplined thinking and argument even in our school curricular.

In our MacDonalD's culture we have moved again from the political agenda of policy shaped by John Stuart Mills and Max Weber for the good and happiness of a wide society to my individual need for my own comfort no matter how much that might discomfort others. In a culture where consumerism and meeting my personal needs are paramount, *Cogito ergo sum* (I think therefore I am) has been demeaned to "I shop therefore I am" (or as someone quipped *Costco ergo sum*).

If what Philip Jenkins says is right, and he is strongly supported by many others, then we need to be aware that for many people *Cogito ergo sum* has become *Credo ergo sum* (I believe, therefore I am).

What we believe will then shape us in many ways. This will include how we spend our time – prayer, scripture, silence

and worship will be foundational. From this will flow how we act in terms of trust and self-discipline; what we say in terms of respect and also conviction; what we believe in terms of the essentials of faith; what we do and teach others to do in terms of social and personal morality, medical ethics, sexual ethics, political priorities, economic responsibility, work ethics and so on.

In this context an Anglican School has a vital part to play in the education of young people in our nation. It must do more than rehash the myths promoted by Western, left-of-centre ABC or Foxtell secularism. We cannot leave secularists to have their day without challenge from disciplined knowledge, wisdom and Christian faith.

If religion has the capacity to shape peoples' lives even more than family (and the effects of peer pressure in school are well known to us all) then we must educate young people in the fundamentals of belief, in deep respect for others

that enjoys freedom to disagree but never to mock or blaspheme another's faith. We must teach them that the journey inward to the core of our own being to deal with our own demons and grow our spirituality is more arduous and important than any journey they will make in their career or business.

Our Anglican tradition and All Saints' College has the capacity to do this. Let this tradition and these high ideals and this faith shape our College life in the coming years.

If what people believe will shape the destiny of people and nations this century then we have no need to apologise for the Anglican faith-commitment we make in our teaching and College, but we have every obligation to practice it well and with conviction, humility and respect.

+ Ian Bathurst .

... still on pilgrimage.

'Following God's call'

□ Genieve Blackwell appointed Assistant Bishop in Melbourne

Bishop Genieve Blackwell has told *Anglican News* that she is "excited" about the prospect of being appointed an Assistant Bishop in Melbourne, but admitted she will be "very sad" to be leaving Wagga.

"Wagga is the home town I grew up in, and there was a very good feeling about coming back home after 39 years," she said, "but I have a real feeling that the move to Melbourne is about following God's call."

Before moving to Canberra-Goulburn Diocese in 2005, Genieve had served as priest in the parishes of Grenfell and Gulgong. She was ordained priest in All Saints' Cathedral, bathurst, in 1998.

Her move to Melbourne was announced in mid-December, when Archbishop of Melbourne Philip Freier invited her to be an assistant bishop following the retirement of Bishop Barbara Darling. However, her role will be somewhat different to that of Bishop Darling.

"She was a Regional Bishop, responsible for Melbourne's Eastern Region," Bishop Genieve explained. "My role will not necessarily be regionally based. The details are still to be worked out, but it will be part of an evolving mission-shaped structure, consistent with what's being talked about in Melbourne."

Genieve Blackwell was consecrated Bishop in St Saviour's Cathedral almost three years ago, when Bishop Stuart Robinson appointed her Assistant Bishop with oversight of the Wagga Region – the first female bishop in NSW. This was a part-time role, in conjunction with her appointment as Rector of the parish of Turvey Park in Wagga.

She will conclude her duties in Canberra-Goulburn Diocese and



MISSIONAL: Bishop Genieve said her new appointment will be part of a 'mission-shaped structure' that is evolving in Melbourne Diocese.

Turvey Park parish after Easter, and will take some leave before commencing her new role in Melbourne on June 1. Details of her commissioning service are yet to be finalised.

Bishop's Pilgrimage: Itinerary

From Sunday February 1 to Saturday February 7, Bishop Ian and Liz Palmer will be making a Pilgrimage Walk from Bathurst to Dubbo.

Bishop Ian has said that the walk will serve several important purposes:

- It highlights the decision for the Bishop of Bathurst to move out of Bishops Court in Bathurst, and to take up residence in the Rectory at Holy Trinity Dubbo. Bishop Ian will also be commissioned as Rector of Dubbo on Saturday evening, February 7;
- It symbolises Bishop Ian's and Liz' commitment to walk with the people of the diocese on the difficult journey ahead;
- It provides an opportunity to walk and talk with people from the parishes along the way;
- It gives opportunity to reflect on the changing nature of ministry and mission in the Diocese of Bathurst.

While he is not expecting anyone else to walk the 200-plus kilometres, he will welcome anyone wanting to walk part of the pilgrimage with him.

"Whether it's just for a kilometre or so as we enter or leave a town, or perhaps for five or ten kilometres along a country road, we will be greatly encouraged to have people join us for part of the pilgrimage," Bishop Ian said.

"Of course, we'd love it if anyone would like to join us for a full day's walking - although they will have to bring a picnic lunch and make their own transport arrangements for the beginning or the end of the day."

The planned itinerary for the walk is as follows:

Sunday 1st February

- 4.30pm Healing Service All Saints Cathedral.
- Walk to Abercrombie House via the cycle track and the Macquarie River.
- 7.45pm Arrive Abercrombie House for overnight stay.

Monday 2nd February

- 7am Morning Prayer.
- 7.30am Leave Abercrombie House along Ophir Road.
- 12noon (approx.) Lunch on roadside.
- 4pm Afternoon tea and Evening Prayer with Ben and Kate Edwards and Cabonne Area team.
- 5.30pm Walk on to Emu Swamp - about a further 5ks.
- Arrive between 6 and 7pm. Overnight with friends.

Tuesday 3rd February

- 7.30am Morning Prayer
- 8am Leave to walk into Orange
- 10am Morning Tea and Prayers at St Barnabas East Orange
- 12noon Lunch Holy Trinity Orange for people from a number of Agencies engaged in ministry to those in need. Launch of *Share the Benefit*.
- 2pm Take Anson Street then Hill Street out of Orange - prayers at the site of Frank and Marilyn Hetherington's home then follow the Burrendong Way out to March.
- 3.30pm Evening Prayer at St Philip's Church in March.
- 4.30pm Walk on to Mullion Creek - arrive about 6.30pm. Overnight at Mullion Creek.

Wednesday 4th February

- 7.30am Morning Prayer.
- 8am Leave to walk to Stuart Town via Burrendong Way.
- 12noon (approx) Lunch at Euchareena.
- 5pm Arrive Stuart Town - Evening Prayer at church. Drive to Wellington for overnight stay.

Thursday 5th February

- 7.30am Morning Prayer.
- 8am Leave to walk from Stuart Town.
- 10am Morning Tea at Mumbil.
- 12noon (approx.) Lunch on roadside - Dripstone area.
- 6.30pm Evening Prayer and Parish Gathering in Wellington. Overnight at Wellington.

Friday 6th February

- 7am Morning Prayer.
- 8am Walk from Wellington via River Road to Geurie.
- 12noon Lunch on roadside - Ponto Falls area.
- 3pm Evening Prayer in Geurie.
- 3.30pm Walk from Geurie to Wongarbron.
- 5.30pm Arrive Wongarbron - drive back to Wellington for overnight stay.

Saturday 7th February

- 7am Morning Prayer.
- 8.30am Drive back to Wongarbron to resume walking into Dubbo.
- 12.30pm Arrive in Dubbo at Holy Trinity **Rest!!**
- 6pm Evening Eucharist and Commissioning.

Sunday 8th February

- 8am Services at Holy Trinity Dubbo.

MU's Wave of Prayer

By Lorraine Clarkson,
Diocesan President MU
Australia

Members of MU Australia in the Diocese of Bathurst celebrated the Wave of Prayer by praying for their new Link Dioceses.

Staff of The Mothers Union at Mary Sumner House in London have

reorganised the groupings, bringing new and established Dioceses together for a time of prayer and learning about each other for four days in the year.

From the 22nd to the 24th January, we endeavour, through our Link Secretary who, for our Diocese is Mrs Marie Seckold of West Wyalong, to make contact with MU members in the Dioceses of Egypt in Egypt, Otukpo and On the

Coast in Nigeria, Gasabo in Rwanda and Nasik in India and pray for each other.

We learn a little of the physical aspects of these Dioceses but more importantly learn about their outreach activities, their needs and hopes.

The Mothers Union Wave of Prayer is a very forceful reminder that there is a movement of prayer around the world for each members in each Diocese.

We in Bathurst were privileged to have Members of Mothers Union around the world pray for us in January.