

## **Archdeaconry Synod Report for 2016. St Laurence in Lanzarote**

The first quarter of 2016, which took us into our third year of interregnum, was filled with sad, and challenging, news for the Parish. In January, Ken Rees, our erstwhile Treasurer and Churchwarden and a pillar of the Parish for fifteen years, lost his battle with cancer. In February our Reader, David Dowdell, resigned, followed by the retirement of our Children's Group leader in Nazaret. In March, Tony Newman, one of our Churchwardens, became seriously ill and passed away in July. These events, coupled with the ongoing decline in our core membership as a result of recession, repatriation, ageing, and infirmity, left the Parish struggling. As a consequence, the energies of those remaining have been focussed on the provision of regular Sunday services in three locations on the island, albeit to the detriment of some former activities of the Parish, including bible study, some fund-raising events, the distribution in some areas of publicity materials to hotels, complexes and other outlets, the organisation of our visitors into a 'Friends of St Laurence', and meetings of our branch of the Mothers Union.

However, in our adversity, God has been good to us throughout the rest of the year. Thanks to the efforts of Linda, our Parish Secretary, we have benefitted from a seamless sequence of locums, many of whom are old friends having visited us in previous years, and we welcomed back Canon Medhat Sabry, our Area Dean, to chair our APCM in April. Attendances at our Sunday services have remained high, as tourism to the island has increased as a result of the instability and uncertainties in Turkey, Greece, Egypt and Tunis. Most hearteningly, our core membership has begun to grow with the advent of a small number of new helpers, some of whom are well below retirement age!

During the year, we conducted one baptism, 31 wedding blessings and 10 funerals.

Thanks to the initiative of Freida, one of our churchwardens, our monthly 'apostles' lunches have continued to be held in various parts of the island, bringing together church and non-church members in fellowship.



Joint services have been held with the Catholic, Norwegian and German Lutheran churches to celebrate the week of Christian Unity and the Passion on Good Friday.



Home Communion have been taken to the house-bound on a weekly basis, our monthly newsletter has been revived, and volunteers have begun to revive the children's group. In all of this we are managing to keep our heads above water financially.

Perhaps, most encouragingly for the immediate future of our Parish is the news that Rev Peter Ford has been appointed as our Priest-in-Charge with effect from 24<sup>th</sup> January.



With new energy, vision and leadership to add to the commitment and enthusiasm of our resurgent core members, there is every reason to believe that we shall be better equipped to undertake our Lord's will for this Parish in the future.

Linda Davis, Parish Secretary  
Michael Norsworthy, Lay vice President  
Archdeaconry Synod Representatives.