

## Letter from Archbishop Mouneer Anis

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[News & Views](#), [Articles](#), [++Mouneer](#)

July 2007

My dear brothers and sisters,

It has been a long time since I have written to you. There have been many things that have happened since I last wrote. We are very grateful for your prayer support. I am especially grateful for Mrs. Elspeth Mackinlay who has been a great help in circulating the news of the Diocese.

### • **Synod**

We had a very good and successful Synod. Our theme was "Run the race, keep the pace". It was a time to assess our journey and our mission. We were encouraged by all that has been happening in the different churches in the Diocese. We praise the Lord for the many open doors for ministry and we pray that the Lord will send laborers for the harvest. We rejoiced to have a representative from our Church in Asmara. In the previous Synods I have always been the only bishop, but this year we had four bishops, Bishop Ghaiz, Bishop Andrew Proud, and Bishop Derek Eaton; so we were able to meet as a house of Bishop while the other two houses (clergy and laity) were meeting. Our topic of discussion was the "enculturation of liturgy". The Synod decided to encourage the spirit of giving, that the churches contribute 10% of their clergy's stipend (to begin with).

### • **Goodbye**

In the past few months we have said goodbye to Ruth Sayers, my PA for more than 2 years. Ruth went back to the UK for a long home assignment. She may come back Egypt or be placed in a different area of this region. I am very grateful for her help and support to me during this time. We were also sorry to say goodbye to Christa and Peter Lund Herum. Christa was the Diocesan coordinator of the Center for Interfaith Dialogue and Islamic Studies. We are encouraged to know that Christa will continue to work for Danmission and will visit Egypt from time to time to supervise our new project "Planting a Tree of Hope" (Developing the culture of dialogue and acceptance of others among school children). Canon Godfrey and Daphne Taylor left us at the end of June after serving with us as acting dean for more than one year. During this time they worked very hard and developed many areas in the Cathedral. We are very grateful to Canon Godfrey as he beautifully organized two big events, the installation of Bishop Derek Eaton, and my investiture. We are also sad to say goodbye to Mary Abadeer and her family. Mary started the Menara school for children with special needs in Menouf. Under Mary's leadership the school has grown tremendously and has become one of the best institutions of the Diocese. Mary will join Dr. Hany (her husband) who works in a Christian hospital in Nakada, Luxor.

### • **Welcoming**

We welcomed Joanna Mikhail as my PA and we also welcomed Hany Salah as my PR (public relations coordinator). Gihan Zaki is temporarily working with Episcopocare. Mike and Anne Potter and their two little girls have also recently joined us from New Zealand. They are the guest house managers. Janet Riskallah was appointed as the principal of Menara school of Menouf.

### • **Alpha Courses**

We have been very encouraged by the several Alpha courses that have been going on in Alexandria, Old Cairo, Ein Shams, Madinet El Salam and Menouf. These courses are bringing many of the un-reached to the church. We are also hoping to appoint an Alpha course coordinator for Egypt in collaboration with Holy Trinity Church, Brompton. It is worth mentioning that 6 members of our Diocese attended the International Alpha course in HTB from 21st to the 26th of May.

### • **Thank you to Philip Southby**

Mr. Philip Southby, the chairman of the Egypt Diocesan Association (EDA), and the Diocesan business consultant, has decided, because of family demands, to step down from his position as Bishop's commissary and Diocesan business consultant. He will, however, continue to chair the EDA. I would like to take this opportunity to give special thanks to Mr. Philip for his great support and encouragement along the last 7 years. We are glad that he will continue to support the Diocese through the EDA.

### • **Children's Conference, El Abour City**

I was very encouraged to spend time with 230 children from the different churches in Egypt at the Children's Conference. The conference center couldn't accommodate any more children otherwise we would have had more children. Sunday school teachers divided the children into two age groups. I was very impressed by what the children learned and especially the friendships that developed among them, which is important for the unity of

the Body of Christ. I was encouraged to see the image of the future of the Church in the faces of these children. I am very grateful to Manal Yashoua and Michel George, the Diocesan Children's Ministry officers, for all the work they have been doing.

• **Clergy and Family's Conference, Ein Sochna**

We had a great time for the clergy and their families at the Red Sea. We were lifted up by the bible studies and discussion groups that centered on the book of Revelation. We all enjoyed and were very much encouraged by the bible studies led by the Rev. Dr. Grant LeMarquand of Trinity Episcopal School for Ministry, Ambridge, PA. During the conference we had a session where we assessed and criticized ourselves as a church. This was a very healthy thing to do and we came out determined to start prayer meetings and bible studies in our churches. It was great to have Bishop Andrew Proud and his wife Janice with us.

• **New Coordinator for Diocesan Training Taskforce**

Mr. Selim Fouad was commissioned to be the coordinator for the Diocesan training taskforce. This is a very important task and he will need your prayers.

• **Enculturation of Liturgy**

Rev. Yashoua Yakoub is chairing a committee that will work on the enculturation of liturgy. This committee has met twice and has come up with many good ideas. The challenge is how we can worship as Egyptians while keeping our Anglican identity.

• **Ordination of Deacons**

On the 17th of June I ordained Yousef Abu Galha from Sudan as Deacon in St. Micheal's Church, Heliopolis. It was great to have Bishop Ezekiel Kondo and Bishop Andudu from Sudan participating in the service. Deacon Yousef will be responsible for the Sudanese congregation in Heliopolis.

On the 20th of July we ordained Dr. Bahig Ramzy, the diocesan executive director of administration, and a student in the Alexandria School of Theology, as Deacon at All Saints Cathedral. The service was attended by many people and the Cathedral was packed. It was a very joyful service. Bishop Derek and myself participated in the ordination. Dr. Bahig is going to help in both the English and Arabic speaking congregations in the Cathedral. We hope to find a new diocesan executive director of administration before he starts his duties as a full time ordained minister.

• **New Arabic Congregation in St. Mark's, Alexandria.**

Rev. Emad Azmi, Principal of Alexandria School of Theology, and his wife Michelle, together with a group of students, staff and faculty from the Alexandria School of Theology have started a new Arabic congregation in St. Mark's, Alexandria. We praise the Lord for this.

• **Ras El Soda, Community Service Center**

We praised the Lord and rejoiced that the building of the Ras El Soda Center was rebuilt and restored. The spiritual meetings were resumed on the 1st of July. One hundred people attended. They also have a very large Sunday school. We still need to replace the damaged furniture and medical equipment on the first floor, but the good thing is that the Center is now recognized and registered with the government. During the Clergy and Family's conference we were able to collect among ourselves more than 4,000LE to buy 100 new chairs for the church hall. Rev. Emil and his wife Gigi were very encouraged and excited about this gift.

• **Confirmations**

It was very encouraging to visit and confirm new members in St. John the Baptist, Maadi, the Church of the Epiphany, Port Said, Jesus Light of the World, Old Cairo, and All Saints Cathedral, Cairo. And I look forward to the coming confirmation services in Menouf, Heliopolis and Alexandria this September.

• **Other activities**

I participated in the Committee of the 100 leaders (C-100) of the World Economic Forum in Amman, Jordan. Lord Carey, the former Archbishop of Canterbury, chaired this committee. The Grand Mufti of Egypt participated for the first time. It was an excellent interfaith event.

I also participated in the Global South Primate's Steering Committee Meeting from the 16th to the 18th of July in London, England. We produced a very important communiqué, that you can find it [here](#).

I also enjoyed participating in the Wycliffe Hall conference in Oxford that focused on the Covenant and the mission of the Anglican Communion. This was an eye-opening opportunity and it was very helpful.

• **Dinners with the Youth**

I very much enjoy having dinner every month with the youth from different churches. This last week we had snacks on a boat on the Nile. It was a wonderful time of interaction with the youth. I am very grateful to Adel Salah and Clare Tarron for their hard work in youth ministry.

• **Strategic Planning Committee**

We recently had a two day long and fruitful strategic planning committee chaired by Mr. Reda Hanna. The discussion and conclusions that came out of this committee meeting were very encouraging.

• **Prayer Requests**

Please pray for my upcoming visit to Iran to elect and install a new Bishop there.

Please pray for the Diocese of Cyprus as they are selecting their new Bishop.

Pray for Bishop Derek and Alice as they look after the Cathedral in Cairo. We especially pray that the LORD will call someone to assist him. Pray also for their upcoming visit to Tunis in October.

Pray for Bishop Andrew Proud and his wife Janice as they face the financial and organizational challenges of creating the new Episcopal area of the Horn of Africa.

Pray for Bishop Suheil Diwani, the new Bishop of Jerusalem, and all the challenges that he is facing in building up his Diocese.

Pray for me as I participate in the House of Bishop's meeting of the Episcopal Church in America on the 20th of September.

Pray for the upcoming annual Interfaith meeting at Lambeth Palace, between the Anglican Communion and Al Azhar from 1-3 September.

Please pray for the various conferences that are taking place this summer, including the Diocesan Women's Conference in August and the youth conferences of our different churches.

We need a great deal of prayer as September marks the opening of the first stage of the new project at Harpur Memorial Hospital.

Please pray the LORD will provide to complete the building for Harpur Community Health Center.

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