Dear Friends,

February has been a month in which we have worked together, prayed together and worshipped together as the Body of Christ.

We held a Women’s Workshop that focused on the role of women in the church. We were grateful to have time with the Archbishop of Canterbury as he finished his pilgrimage here in the Land of the Holy One. We celebrated our renewal of Baptismal vows in the Jordan. And as always our doors were open to the many visitors who come to worship at the Cathedral of St. George the Martyr, here in Jerusalem.

As we enter the Lenten Season, a time of reflection and contemplation, we take this time, to perhaps, give up or take on something that will remind us of our dependency on God. Lent is, in many ways, an iconic time, when all things point to God, when we live in the knowledge ‘that all things come from thee, O Lord; and of your own to do we give to thee’.

We live in the joy that we know the end of the story. We know that although this time leads us to the cross and Christ crucified, it also leads us to the empty tomb. Christ resurrected in Glory.

I pray that you will have a Lent that gives you rest, peace and hope.

Peace, Salaam

+ Suheil Dawani
Women’s Day in Ramallah

A Women’s Workshop was held in Ramallah on January 27. The aim of the workshop is to prepare women as leaders in the Episcopal parishes in the West Bank and Israel. The workshop was opened with a welcoming word from Rev. Hanna Daleh and The Women’s Activities Coordinator, Mrs. Shafeeqa Dawani. Bishop Suheil Dawani also gave a few words in support of the women’s workshops that are being held in the Diocese of Jerusalem. He spoke about how important these meetings are in enhancing communications, in preparing, training and qualifying cadres*.

Each parish sent 3-4 participants to receive the leadership training that was prepared by Rev. Ibrahim Nairouz. The main topics of the day included: Encouraging the women’s role in the Church through expanding their responsibilities under the leadership of the clergy and biblical training for leadership in women’s meetings.

The workshop concluded with the hope of having a similar workshop in Jordan. Future workshops will include the practice of the theories learned on this day.

*Cadre principally refers to committed people within an organization that form, or have the capacity to form, the backbone of that organization.
The Archbishop of Canterbury concludes his pilgrimage

The Archbishop of Canterbury and his pilgrims ended their time in the Land of the Holy One at St. George’s Anglican Cathedral with an Evensong service on Thursday February 2. The Archbishop met with the congregation and visitors at a reception held in the Guest House of St. George’s. After the reception Bishop Suheil hosted a private dinner at his residence, in honour of the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury Dr. Rowan Williams. Attending the dinner were Religious leaders, diplomats, Lambeth and Cathedral clergy. Discussion was held on the social and religious development in the region and especially the Christian presence in the Middle East and particularly in the Holy Lands. The Archbishop was pleased to see the ecumenical relationships among all those present.

His Beatitude Theophilos III, Patriarch, Greek Orthodox Church; His Beatitude Msgr. Fuad Twal, Patriarch, Latin Church; and Archbishop Aris Shirvanian, Armenian Orthodox Church, representing His Beatitude Archbishop Torkom II Manoogian, who is ill at this time. Also included were Sir Vincent Fean, British Consulate General; Mr. John Gatt-Rutter, EU Representative; The Reverend Canon Jonathan Goodall, Lambeth Palace; The Revd Toby Howarth, Lambeth Palace; The Very Reverend Dr. Graham Smith, Dean of St. George’s College, and The Reverend Canon Hosam Naoum, Canon of the Cathedral of St. George the Martyr. Regrets were given by Mr. Daniel Rubenstein, American Consulate General, who was unable to be there at that time.

A check up visit to the Evangelical Educational Institutions

On February 9th, Bishop Suheil Dawani visited the Episcopal Technological and Vocational Training Center in Ramallah, accompanied by Mr. Giovanni Anbar, the Center’s Manager. The Bishop checked on the renovated of the Kitchen and the Dining Room. He also met with the Center’s students, giving them encouragement and support. It is through their hard work that they will able to gain all the achievements required to graduate.
Bishop Suheil also went to visit the Arab Evangelical Episcopal School in Ramallah accompanied by Rev. Hanna Daleh, Rev. Hosam Naoum, and Mr. Haleem Bashlawi. He had a meeting with the school’s teachers, and listened to their needs. A word of appreciation and encouragement was given to the faculty of the school by Bishop Suheil and Mr. Iyad Rafidi, the school principal.

Baptism and Annual Pilgrimage to the Jordan River in Amman

On Friday 10th February, the Diocese of Jerusalem and the Middle East held the Annual Pilgrimage to the Jordan River, “Maghtas”. Traditionally this was the site where John the Baptist baptized his cousin, Jesus and is now a place where pilgrims can gather at the River Jordan. Coaches from all over Jordan brought parishioners to the site where they attended a service led by Bishop Suheil Dawani, Bishop in Jerusalem. He was accompanied by the local clergy representing the many congregations that make up the Anglican/Episcopal Church in Jordan. This year a choir from the Redeemer Church, Amman led the singing and they also sung whilst communion was being served.

Visitors to the Cathedral of St. George’s

It was a pleasure to welcome Bishop Barry Clarke, from the Diocese of Montreal, to the 9:30 am service on February 12th. Bishop Barry served at the altar with Bishop Suheil and the Revd Dominic Barrington, Parish Priest from St. Peter and St. Paul, Kettering, UK. They were part of a group of nearly 50 clergy and laity from Canada and the U.K. who were visiting the Holy Land. After coffee hour Jeff Halper of ICAHD gave a talk to the group in McInnis Hall. They then returned to St. George’s Guest House for a lovely lunch.

Also at the Arabic/English service was the Interfaith Group (Christ Church Greenwich and Temple Sholom), led by Fr. Jim Lemler. This was the second interfaith trip that Fr. Lemler has brought, from the U.K., to the Land of the Holy One.
On February 19, Richard Cheetham, the Bishop of Kingston, U.K. - attended Sunday services. He is here attending the course, ‘Pilgrimage and Spirituality, at St. George’s College. This course will be visiting various spiritual sites, taking time for meditation, and exploring the theology and practice of pilgrimage in the Holy Land.

For more information on any of the courses run through St. George’s College in Jerusalem, please go to their website – www.sgcjerusalem.org

Ash Wednesday

The celebration of Ash Wednesday and the beginning of Lent was held on February 22. The imposition of ashes and Holy Eucharist was given by Bishop Suheil to a large congregation on Wednesday evening. Serving with the Bishop at the Altar was The Revd Stephen Leader, from St. James Parish in Enfield, U.K. A Lenten supper of meatless ‘Upside Down’ was offered to all in the Guest House, after the service. This delicious traditional dish is made of rice, eggplant, tomatoes and cauliflower. It was a reflective evening as we gathered as the body of Christ in remembrance of Jesus’ time in the desert and His sacrifice for us.

Please mark your calendar for these future service dates at St. George’s Cathedral in Jerusalem:

April 1 - Palm Sunday –
- 8am Holy Eucharist
- 10:30am Arabic/English Holy Eucharist
- 2:30pm Join the Catholic Procession to Mount of Olives
- 6pm Solemn Evensong

Throughout Holy Week (Monday – Wednesday)
- 5pm Service of Readings, Prayers and Hymns
- 6pm Solemn Evensong

April 5 - Maundy Thursday –
- 7am Holy Eucharist
- 11am Renewal of Vows and Blessing of Oils
- 6pm Service of Footwashing
- 7:30pm Procession to Gethsemane

April 6 - Good Friday –
- 6am gather at the Cathedral to leave for the Via Dolorosa (or meet at 6:30am at the First station)
- 12noon Good Friday Worship Service with Lenten Lunch

April 7 - Holy Saturday –
- 9am Holy Eucharist
- 8 pm Easter Vigil

April 8 - Easter Sunday –
- 8am Holy Eucharist
- 10:30am Arabic/English Holy Eucharist
- 6pm Solemn Evensong
The Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem, a diocese of the worldwide Anglican Communion, extends over five countries, including Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Palestine and Israel, within the Province of Jerusalem and the Middle East. There are 27 parishes that minister to the needs of their communities, centered on the Cathedral Church of St. George the Martyr in Jerusalem. The church supports 33 institutions, which include hospitals, clinics, kindergartens and schools, vocational training programs, as well as institutions for the deaf, the disabled and the elderly, reaching out to interfaith neighbors in mutual respect and cooperation.