



The Episcopal Diocese of Egypt with North Africa and the Horn of Africa

ALEXANDRIA SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

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Historic visit to AST on February 1, 2009

On 1st February, The Most Rev. Dr. Rowan Williams, Archbishop of Canterbury, and most of the Primates of the Anglican Communion visited our Alexandria Campus. Our Principal, Rev. Emad A. Mikhail, gave a short presentation in St. Mark's Church, Alexandria about the founding of AST as well as its goals. Faculty, staff, students and other guests were present. Archbishop Rowan acknowledged the rich historical heritage in which we minister. He reminded us that we need to take our stand in the tradition of St. Mark who evangelised Egypt in the first century and was martyred in Alexandria. Following the visit, Archbishop Rowan participated in a service led by Presiding Bishop



Mouneer Anis dedicating St. Mark's as a Pro Cathedral. We are very grateful to the Trustees of the Anglican Communion Fund for their generous contribution towards the cost of remodelling the rooms at St. Mark's.

AST conference, January 28-31



Once again we sensed God's blessing during this intense time of study and fellowship. Overseas faculty members, Bishop Maurice Sinclair and Canon Andy Wheeler from England and Rev. Daniel Perrin from the USA, came and gave lectures on Philosophy and Ethics, Modern Church History and Jesus Christ as Teacher and Pastor respectively.

The fourth year students met with staff and faculty to consider how they would continue to meet, encourage and support one another after they graduate in June. They even discussed ways to help AST in the future and plans to set up an alumni Club.

The bond of friendship that exists in each year group and the students' loyalty towards AST is very strong

MA in Biblical Studies will commence late August

This will be offered at AST in conjunction with Moore Theological College of Sydney Australia. Moore faculty will come to Egypt two or three times a year to present courses in intensive modular form. For more information: www.ast-eg.org/news

Fourth year courses on Islamics & Philosophy and Ethics and Wisdom of God



This January we were very privileged to have Dr. Chris Taylor, an expert in Islamic Studies come and give a broad introduction to Islamic history and thought to our fourth year students. Chris is from Madison, New Jersey where he is professor and chair of the Department of Religious Studies at Drew University. He earned his MA and PhD in Near Eastern Studies from Princeton University. Chris has lived in Egypt numerous times since 1980, and his wife Magda is Egyptian. Chris' research and writing focuses on Islamic thought and history. Students considered the nature of God as described in the

Qur'an as compared and contrasted to the God of the Bible. They also surveyed the Qur'anic text to grasp the nature of the relationship between God and creation as described in Islam, with particular attention to the role of humanity. Throughout the course there were extended discussions of both similarities and contrasts between Islam and Christianity.

Bishop Maurice Sinclair together with Dr. Mary Massoud delivered a course that set out to trace the way human wisdom has evolved down the ages and in different regions of the world. The context of this developing and changing wisdom of man is God's wise plan in creation and redemption. Rather than teaching human philosophy and ethics separately from what is revealed in Scripture about the wisdom of God, our aim is to hold the two together in order to try to see how they relate to each other. As part of one assignment students gave a short presentation on some aspect of current thinking in the Arab World and suggest how Christians may engage more effectively at the grassroots and in intellectual debate. Topics chosen included the 'Influence of Pharaonic Egypt on present life', 'Optimism and Pessimism' – good and bad omens, 'Comparing the Islamic and Secular trends' and the 'Effect of globalisation on Egypt'. Dr. Mary is currently Professor of English & Irish Literature at Ain Shams University, Cairo and holds a PhD, D. Lit degree in English, and a double Masters: one in English & Comparative Literature from Columbia University, New York City, USA, and the other in Theology, with a focus on Religious Drama, from Union Theological Seminary, New York City. She is the author of several works in the field of literature, and also the book, *Translate to Communicate*. For AST, she has meticulously translated Bishop Maurice's lectures into Arabic for this course.



Praise & Prayer

Give thanks & pray for the continued growth & development of the AST family & its programmes, facilities & funding.

- Pray for the prospective MA in Theology students and the planning of this program starting 24th August.
- Give thanks for the new AST library in Alexandria. Pray for books to fill the rooms!
- Our students and staff have been involved in a series of traffic accidents in the last several weeks. Please pray for the safety of the AST family in Egypt's wild traffic