Celebrations as 20 new curates begin their ministry...

“Welcome to life in the borderlands between the church and the secular world” was the message to the 20 new deacons ordained at Bradford Cathedral on July 1.

The retired Bishop of Oxford, the Rt Revd John Pritchard, was the preacher at the two packed services held in the morning and afternoon. “Those borderlands are where Jesus spent much of his time and are where clergy can help to broker peace between families, communities and even countries,” he told the ordinands.

The twenty men and women being ordained included a retired GP, a former actor and puppeteer, a care home manager, and a waste management adviser with Calderdale Council. There was an international feel to the ordinations, with a German tutor and ordinands who began life in South Africa, New Zealand and Canada.

There was thunderous applause and cheers as Bishop Nick welcomed each group into their new, life-changing roles - ready to go out and serve across the Diocese. Speaking to them on the steps after the final service, he told them warmly: “It’s a serious business, but do have fun.”

...And 24 new priests ordained

On Saturday 24 June, 24 deacons were ordained as priests at services in each of the five Episcopal Areas. The priesting services were held at Ripon Cathedral, Leeds Minster, Bradford Cathedral, Dewsbury Minster and Wakefield Cathedral. Pictured (above) outside Leeds Minster with Bishop Paul Slater are new priests, from left, Sonia Kasibante, Hanna Lievesley, Jimmy Lawrence, Kathryn Elliot and Alison Battye.

Pictured holding ordination Bibles outside Dewsbury Minster with Bishop Jonathan Gibbs are, from left, Simon Scott, Cindy Sheard and Andrew Steer.
More than ‘bog standard’

LEEDS St John’s Farsley is officially the first Anglican church to open a 24/7 Changing Places toilet. The state-of-the-art accessible loo, with a hoist, adult size changing table and shower is especially designed for people with disabilities to use, and Rosie Tudge and her husband – incumbent, Canon Paul Tudge – are hoping their toilet will be the first of many.

In 2012 the Tudge family went with their two disabled boys to the Paralympics and were impressed by the facilities which enabled their trips to the toilet to be managed with ease and dignity. Now with their new 24/7 toilet, the church has put 40 signs in prominent locations around Farsley so that people become aware of the facility.

Toilet humour was the order of the day at Farsley’s Official Toilet Opening when architect Mike Overton ripped the toilet paper sash across the door; the impressive four toilet roll cake was cut and Rosie tweeted:
“This is not just your bog standard toilet!”

Holidays
Bishop Nick Baines

One of the best lyrics of the band The Beautiful South goes like this: “The world won’t end in darkness, it’ll end in family fun, with Coca Cola clouds behind a Big Mac sun.” It was written in 1996, but its haunting scepticism resonates even today.

The Cold War had ended five years before, the Berlin Wall had collapsed, the Soviet Union had ceased to exist, and many people thought the world was heading into an era of peace and liberal democracy. It didn’t quite work out like that, did it?

What the song’s author, Paul Heaton, was getting at was the sheer superficiality of a culture that anaesthetised itself against reality by consuming sugar and fleeing into a world of consumer fulfilment.

Fear of the nuclear conflagration had given way to something differently dangerous - the fantasy of escapism. But today, the complex threats to world order (and, indeed, to the planet itself) have come back with a vengeance. It was inconceivable just a year ago that we would be living in a Trumpian utopia in which “taking back control” meant anything other than taking back control.

But just as was the case 20 years ago, Christian hope means we don’t have to numb ourselves to reality. It’s a hope that is rooted not in a formula for self-preservation, but in the person of the God who creates, loves, redeems and raises us from all that threatens to destroy. It’s a hope that allows us to live in the tension of both engaging with this flawed world while looking forward to the renewed world it will become.

Holidays of course are a legitimate form of escape - the temporary relief from work and responsibilities renewing and re-energising us. But even on holiday, the perspective our faith brings will mean that we’re not running away from the uncomfortable parts of life and relationships, but rather continuing to engage with the world, spurred on by hope.

+Nick
Bishop of Leeds
Faith in food as community groups meet for a meal

HUDDERSFIELD Members of the local faith groups in Crosland Moor have joined together for a community lunch which they hope will be the first of many. Following some difficult months for the Crosland Moor community, including terror related raids last month, the first lunch on July 1 provided an opportunity for positive dialogue across the faith spectrum.

Representatives from St Barnabas church, the Masjid Bilal Mosque, and the Seventh Day Adventist Church enjoyed fellowship and conversation, as well as exploring areas where they have more in common.

Matthew Ambler, Deanery Lay Chair for Huddersfield commented, “It was a very enjoyable gathering, meeting people from other faiths and traditions over the common bonds of good food, social company and our shared belief in God.”

Rewriting the history books

RIPON A young man from the Harrogate area who has just 20 percent vision, has written a guide that opens up the history of Ripon Cathedral to a whole new audience. Tom Oates began volunteering as a guide at Ripon Cathedral last July but soon realised that something was missing for visitors like him.

Now, a year on, Tom has developed his own guide to Ripon Cathedral specifically for people with visual impairments. “I think people with visual impairments have been missing out,” said Tom. “We are including a sensory guide as well looking at the stonework and carvings.”

Tanzanian school links growing

WAKEFIELD School links with Tanzania could be encouraging churches here to grow, according to Tanzanian Link officer, Arthur Mauya (pictured).

Arthur has been in the Wakefield and Huddersfield areas with Melina Galibona, diocesan assistant links officer, to renew friendships and visit schools.

The school links with Tanzania started in 2014, and earlier this year a group of teachers from the Area visited Tanzania, returning with a wealth of education materials and resources.

Arthur, a lay canon at Wakefield Cathedral making his 15th visit to the diocese, said, “I can see the church growing because of the schools links. Children are leading the way in church growth. Pupils go home, tell their parents what they have learned in school, and the parents ask about the church.”

BRADFORD An international charity has launched a global campaign against food waste by holding a ‘Food Waste Feast’ at Bradford Cathedral. Tearfund Action is encouraging churches and individuals to be part of a new approach to the way food is consumed and thrown away. The food was provided by the Saltaire Canteen in Shipley which runs a ‘pay as you feel’ café using ‘intercepted’ food from supermarkets. On the menu was a three course meal - a starter of lettuce, pea & cucumber soup, a main course a chick pea & sweet potato curry and to follow a pudding of pear & ginger cake.
Thousands of people from all faiths and none took part in community events and shared meals, picnics and family events across the diocese last month for the Great Get Together weekend to celebrate murdered MP Jo Cox’s belief that we have more in common than that which divides us.

In her former constituency of Batley and Spen, Batley Parish church was open during the weekend for quiet reflection and to light candles. And more than 600 people gathered in the town’s Memorial Gardens for Batley’s ‘Big Iftar’.

A picnic in the park was organised by Cleckheaton Churches Together. Vicar, the Revd Brunel James, said: “Extremists are doing their best to tear our society apart - we need to do everything we can to hold the community together.”

In Hanging Heaton, the Bishop of Huddersfield, Jonathan Gibbs came down to share tea and cake at a family day with children’s activities and a treasure hunt. In Wakefield hundreds gathered to eat their picnics for a Great Get Together on Heath Common. In the evening, hundreds of

In Bradford, people of all creeds and colours flocked to ‘Iftar in the Park’. Based in the city centre, it was described as a “beautiful event of unity and togetherness”. In Leeds there were Great Get Togethers at All Hallows and Leeds Grand Mosque.

Speaking on Radio 4’s Today programme, Bishop Nick said, “When Jo Cox said in her maiden speech in the House of Commons that we have more in common than that which divides us, she was surely right. But, the genius of what her husband Brendan has done (in focusing on that commonality and compassion) lies in creating space for relationships to be made within which our differences can then be explored honestly.”

Revd Mark Umpleby, Kim Leadbeater & Jean Leadbeater, Jo’s sister and mother