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BRIGHSTONE:

Diocesan iconographer the Rev Derick Stevenson has completed a commission for an Anglican convent in Oxfordshire.

Derick, who is based in Brighstone, spent 12 months painting an icon of 'The Presentation of Christ in the Temple' for St Mary's Convent in Wantage. It was presented to the Reverend Mother Winsome at a special service in the convent chapel. In his sermon, Derick talked of how he came to paint it.

"Sister Pauline and I were at Turvey Abbey as fellow students on an icon course," he said. "In my private prayers, I sensed that God was saying that I must help her with her gilding practice and that I should offer to paint an icon for her convent.

"But by the time I got down to breakfast, I was feeling I had imagined the whole thing. But Sister Pauline said: 'In my morning prayers God seemed to say that I should ask you to help me with my gilding.' "Amazed and surprised, I said: 'I have to tell you that the second part of God's word is that I should offer to paint an icon for your convent.'

"We should never be surprised at God's word as he speaks to us in the present day."



The Rev Derick Stevenson and his wife Joan hand over the icon to Mother Winsome

news from the pews

CATHEDRAL: Our cathedral is holding a costume exhibition on April 14 – when you can see clothes from Victorian times right up to the 1970s.

It's being organised by Rosemary Fairfax, visits and education officer for the cathedral.

The exhibition opens at 11am. Entrance is free, but a donation to the cathedral appeal would be appreciated.

Owners of the treasured items on display have given permission for some of them to be worn for a costume parade at 2.30pm when models will show off some of the vintage clothes.

Tickets for the

parade, which cost £5 and include tea and waitress service, are on sale in the cathedral shop.

TOTLAND: A presentation was made to committed Fairtrade campaigners Chris and Eva Murphy at an ecumenical service in Totland Methodist Church.

The couple, from All Saints Church, Freshwater, had run a Traidcraft shop in School Green Road for 20 years before taking retirement. They were thanked for their service to the local community in that time.

The presentation was made at a united service organised by Churches

Together in West Wight. The Methodist minister, the Rev Glenn Ford, who also chairs Churches Together in West Wight, led the service, which included clergy and laity from 11 different churches.

The Rev Tim Eady, from St Mary's, Brighstone, was the guest preacher and worship was led by the Isle of Wight Gospel Choir.

CROOKHORN: Worshippers from Church of the Good Shepherd in Crookhorn helped to raise £5,000 for the Naomi House Children's Hospice – by throwing themselves out of a plane.

Sam Jackson and 13 of her friends did a sponsored parachute jump in memory of her three-year-old son Ethan. He had been cared for in Naomi House shortly before he died last summer.

"The parachute jump was great," she said. "I'd do it again tomorrow if I could!"

"There was just one moment that took my breath away – when I moved forward along the bottom of the plane, I realised that I was sitting with my legs outside the plane and was only hanging on by the harness.

"I had to look up, smile at the camera, and then jump!"

PORTSMOUTH/NEWPORT:

Ten teenagers from Poland visited St Luke's School in Portsmouth and Trinity Middle School in Newport as the latest part of an exchange programme.

The students and their two teachers from the Lutheran Secondary School in Cieszyn and the Mikolaj Rej School in Bielsko-Biala spent four days in the UK, visiting both schools as well as seeing some of Portsmouth's tourist attractions.

Teacher Jolanta Marcisz, from the latter school, said: "Four days was much too short for us to see such a variety

of activities and classes!

"We visited two very different schools, both of which are doing wonderful jobs.

"Both of our schools are independent schools which are fee-paying, so it was different for us to see state schools. The main difference is that our classes are less numerous – one of our schools has a maximum of 22 in one class, the other has 16 to 18 pupils. That makes learning and teaching

completely different.

"But the fact that they are church schools is quite similar. The idea is the same – to give children and students the possibility of having a more religious education than a non-church school can give.

"The service we visited at Trinity Middle School was something very educational for us, and a marvellous experience. We sing some of the same songs in Poland, but in a different

language!

"We also went to a marvellous church – St Hubert's in Idsworth – which was a place where we could have special feelings and special thoughts."

The group also visited the Spinnaker Tower, HMS Victory, the Royal Naval Museum and the Blue Reef Aquarium during their stay. They were hosted by worshippers from Blendworth, Chalton and Idsworth parish churches during their stay.

The visit was part of an exchange programme that started last year with visits by Polish teachers and a priest to our diocese.

the school report