

## **The Fellowship of St Thomas**

### **Report of 38<sup>th</sup> Annual Celebration held in Dunblane Cathedral**

**on Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> September 2011**

**The Celebration** began at 10.30 am in the upstairs room at Dunblane Cathedral halls. Margaret Nutter welcomed everyone and opened the meeting with prayer. It was a particular pleasure to have The Rt Revd Ashoke Biswas, Church of North India Bishop of Calcutta present. Margaret then introduced Linda Oxburgh of Release International and invited her to speak on the subject of 'The Persecuted Church'.

Linda explained that Release International serves persecuted Christians in 30 countries around the world: supporting pastors, Christian prisoners and their families. They also supply Bibles and Christian literature, and work for justice. Release was founded by Pastor Richard Wurmbbrand who was imprisoned and tortured by the Romanian secret police in the 1950s and 1960s because of his Christian faith. She then gave a very comprehensive talk the substance of which appears in the January 2012 edition of the FOST Newsletter and on the website. This was followed by a panel discussion composed of Margaret Nutter, Linda Oxburgh, Saboohi Gill, Jim Watson and John McArthur and questions and comments from the floor.

**Lunch** was served in the INDIA GATE restaurant. The buffet arrangement worked well and everyone was served in good time with an excellent meal.

**The Annual General Meeting** was held in the Leighton Room in the Cathedral upstairs halls.

**Worship** was held in the Cathedral. Rev Paul Watson celebrated Communion using the Eucharistic Liturgy from the Theological College of Lanka, Sri Lanka and the Church of Ceylon. Mr Nimal Vijaysinghe preached on the parables of those who declined to come to the banquet and of the foolish virgins. The offering amounted to £314.74 in support of the counselling course run in the city of Jaffna in the north by the ecumenical Theological College of Lanka. This is part of the rehabilitation process of helping the community there to move on by training counsellors to enable folk to process what they have been through during the war. The chalice gifted by Sr Joy Whitin was used by the Fellowship for the first time.

**Afternoon Tea** was served in the hall prior to departure.