

Diocese of Hereford  
Council for World Partnership and Development  
Holy Land Group

# Harvesting the Arab Spring

## Breaking the Template, A new 'Spring' in the Peace Process, Challenges to Christianity,

The day will be led by Gerald Butt, who writes on the Middle East for the Church Times, and for a time was the BBC correspondent for the area based in Beirut and later Jerusalem

**Saturday 19th May 2012**

**10.00 a.m. – 4.00 p.m. Ludlow Food Centre  
(Off the A49 at Bromfield, 3 miles north of Ludlow)  
Lunch and refreshments, including vegetarian options, and  
to suit all faiths will be available (£7)**

*Car parking available. Please note that a car service will be available from the station in Ludlow if booked in advance.*

### **Programme**

10.00 a.m.	Registration and tea/coffee
10.20 a.m.	Welcome
10.30 a.m.	The Challenge to Dictatorship. What will follow for Muslims ?
11.20. a.m.	Short break
11.30 a.m.	The Impact on Palestine and Israel. Whither the Peace Process ?
12.45 p.m.	Lunch
13.45 p.m.	The Future for the Christians of the area.
14.30 p.m.	Short break
14.45 p.m.	Plenary discussion.
15.45 p.m.	Silent meditation
16.00 p.m.	Close.

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## Registration Form

I will attend the Holy Land Day on 19th May 2012 (£7 inclusive price, payable in advance if possible). Early booking for this significant event is recommended as numbers are limited. (Please print clearly.)

Name: Address:

Telephone:

Email:

Please tick here if we may keep your details to let you know of future events....

Please note that there will be a choice of vegetarian and fish dishes at the buffet, and one non-halal meat dish. If you have any dietary needs not catered for in the buffet, please indicate below:

Please tick here if you require transport from Ludlow Station to the Ludlow Food Centre.....

[Please contact Revd Preb David Roberts to book a place:](#)

Post: 14 Beaconfield Park, The Sheet, Ludlow, SY8 4LY

Email: david.roberts03@tiscali.co.uk Telephone: 01584 878568

## **HARVESTING THE ARAB SPRING - *Flier from Gerald Butt***

For more than a year the Middle East has been in turmoil, with popular unrest shaking the foundations of the region. These seismic changes have brought down long-serving dictators and forced other leaders to push through political and economic reforms, in the hope of keeping the Arab Spring at bay.

So what are we to make of all these upheavals – where is the Arab world heading and what will the post-Arab Spring region look like? Will it bring Middle East peace closer? How will Israel and Iran respond if the movement continues to expand? And what will be the future for Christians in the Middle East as Islam becomes a stronger political and social force? Middle East analyst Gerald Butt, a former BBC Correspondent who covers the region for the *Church Times*, will help us address questions like these when he leads three discussion sessions:

### **1. Smashing the Template**

For the past half century the Arab World has been governed by rigid, brutal and corrupt dictatorships. It was all the more surprising, therefore, that popular movements could find the courage to challenge these uncompromising regimes. We examine how the protest movements grew, what motivated them and what their aims are. And we will go on to assess how much more energy might be left in the Arab Spring.

### **2. A New 'Spring' in the Peace Process?**

With the Middle East stage dominated by the events of the Arab Spring, the Arab-Israeli conflict has become a side-show. But no aspect of life in the region has been left unaffected by the fruits of the revolutions. We look at the impact of the momentous changes on the Palestinians and Israel and consider whether these are likely to help or hinder the search for peace. We also analyse what effect Iran's regional ambitions might have on the peace process.

### **3. Challenges to Christianity**

The success of Islamic groups in the first free elections that many Arabs have ever known reflects a desire by the majority to emphasise their Islamic roots. But where does this leave Arab Christians? Already thousands are leaving Egypt, Iraq, Lebanon, Syria and Palestine – fearful of what the future might hold for their children. We will examine what kind of assurances Christians would need to remain in the region and ask what role – if any – Western Christians should be playing in providing support to their co-religionists in the Middle East. We will suggest forming small groups to come up with ideas about what we might do to ease the plight of Arab Christians.

Gerald Butt was born and brought up in the Middle East. After studying Arabic at London University he began his career in journalism. As the BBC's Middle East Correspondent he was based in Beirut and later in Jerusalem. He has written and presented several BBC radio series on the region and is the author of six books – the latest is *History in the Arab Skies: Aviation's Impact on the Middle East*.