



## ANGLICAN CHAPLAINCY OF MARSEILLE, AIX-EN-PROVENCE AND THE LUBERON NEWSLETTER NOVEMBER 2019

### Advent

As the days shorten, our thoughts turn once more towards Advent and the approach of Christmas. Advent is a time of watching and waiting for the coming of Christ in the incarnation, culminating in the joy of Christmas. It also looks ahead to the final advent of Christ as judge at the end of time. Some churches emphasise Advent as a time of prayer and fasting, not unlike Lent. This can be part of a general interest in rediscovering the practices of the early church. Nowadays, though, a message of abstinence in Advent is apt to make even devout churchgoers feel uncomfortable. Should they not take part in their child's end of term Christmas celebrations on the ground that they are happening too early? Should they boycott their employer's pre-Christmas festivities because, if the early church didn't indulge in them, neither should they? Are they not to accept offers of mulled wine and mince pies before 25<sup>th</sup> December? Or do they do all of the above and just feel guilty? This sort of dual pressure – of the church on the one hand proclaiming a discipline that feels almost impossible to keep (unless one has no family, friends, gainful activity or time pressure!) and, on the other hand, the lived experience of twenty-first century Christians – can sometimes leave people with a feeling of failure as they approach Christmas.

The real emphasis of Advent is on expectation rather than penitence. Even so, before I was ordained, I often found myself struggling with the church's assumptions about the amount of time its members had available during this season. If you are juggling multiple responsibilities and pressures, one way to approach Advent from a spiritual point of view can be to focus on its central symbol: the conquering of darkness by light. Why not spend some time each week this December in front of a lighted candle, reflecting on the ways in which darkness in your life has been dispelled by light, of how you might do something to dispel the darkness for others, and of how the light of Christ's coming makes the difference? I offer it as a suggestion to those who feel they have no time to 'do Advent properly'. And if in the end all you can see are crowded streets, a city overrun with extra people for whom there doesn't seem to be any room, then pause for a moment and look for Christ there. For that is where incarnation begins.

Almighty God,  
give us grace to cast away the works of  
darkness and to put on the armour of light,  
now in the time of this mortal life,  
in which your Son Jesus Christ came to us in  
great humility;  
that on the last day, when he shall come again  
in his glorious majesty to judge the living and  
the dead, we may rise to the life immortal;  
through him who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.  
Amen.





## Chaplaincy news

On 3<sup>rd</sup> November All Saints celebrated its Patronal Festival at the 10.00 service of Holy Communion, followed by a bring and share lunch. On 10<sup>th</sup> November we marked Remembrance Sunday at All Saints and Oppède. This year the Act of Remembrance at the Commonwealth War Graves Cemetery in Mazargues is taking place later than usual, at **10.00 am on Thursday, 28<sup>th</sup> November**. If you are coming by car, parking is available behind the Cemetery in the rue Ernest Rouvier. Enter through the back gates and follow signs to the Commonwealth War Graves area. Or take Bus B1 to Obélisque followed by a short walk.

## Christmas Fair

Our Christmas Fair will be held at All Saints, 4 rue de Belloi on **Saturday, 30<sup>th</sup> November from 2.00 to 5.30 pm**. Please do come if you can and tell your friends. Huge thanks to Helen Brooking for organising the Fair and to all who have volunteered time and skills.

## Deanery Advent Carol Service – St Paul’s Monaco

Our Deanery Advent Carol Service is taking place this year on **Sunday, 1<sup>st</sup> December at 4.30 pm** in St Paul’s Monaco. If anyone wishes to attend, please let the Marseille chaplaincy know ([anglican.marseille@gmail.com](mailto:anglican.marseille@gmail.com); 07 66 01 71 50) so that we can pass on numbers for catering purposes.

## Carol Service

Our Chaplaincy Christmas Carol Service is being held on **Saturday, 14<sup>th</sup> December at 4.00 pm** at All Saints, 4 rue de Belloi. Please join us for this special celebration and bring your friends. The service sheet will be bilingual and there will be French readings and carols as well as traditional English ones. Mulled wine and mince pies will be served afterwards.

## Offering hope at Christmas

*Christine Portman writes:*

### Bibles, Birth Certificates and real Christmas presence

Finding the right Christmas presents for far-away family or friends sometimes leaves us scratching our heads for ideas. This year, however, three British charities are offering imaginative and practical gifts - presents that won't just bring a smile to those who receive them - but which will transform the lives of those they seek to help.

‘No room at the inn’ will be the reality for hundreds of thousands of our fellow humans this Christmas. Embrace the Middle East focuses its efforts on children trapped by poverty and war. From Syria in the north to Egypt in the south they work across the region. They offer to send in your name dozens of life-giving gifts, ranging from something as simple as a pair of shoes to malnutrition treatment for newborn babies. You can find them at [shop.embraceme.org](http://shop.embraceme.org) or ring them on 0044 1227 811646.

On the other side of the world, Toybox is working with street children - there are an estimated 670,000 children in El Salvador without birth certificates! The charity offers to help you register a child. These ‘Invisibles’ have no rights: schooling, medical care - everything we take for granted - are closed to them. But they are open to exploitation. Your gift could give them back their lives: [www.toybox.org.uk](http://www.toybox.org.uk) or phone 0044 1908 360080.



Here in Europe we are used to dwindling congregations - but as I've witnessed for myself, the Church in China is growing fast. A million people come to faith every year. Whilst on pilgrimage David Pickering visited the fabulous Bible press in Nanjing. The biggest Bible press in the world, it prints one copy per second, but they need to buy the paper first! A generous donor has promised to match all donations like for like, and a gift of £12 would fund 32 new Bibles. They can be found at [bible.society.org.uk](http://bible.society.org.uk) or you can call them on 0044 1793 418222.

This year there's no need to be stuck for ideas. Happy Christmas shopping!

### **Bishop's Advent Appeal 2019**

Bishop Robert's Advent Appeal this year is for the work of the Anglican Communion Fund in empowering women. The Bishop writes: 'We know that women often both bear the heaviest costs of poverty or conflict and are also those whose empowerment can do the most to bring development that reaches grass roots and bring hope for the future.' Please do support this appeal, the full text of which is available at the link below:

<https://europe.anglican.org/main/latest-news/post/1519-bishops-2019-advent-appeal-anglican-communion-fund-empowering-women>

### **Pastoral care**

Would you know who to call, either in an emergency or if you knew someone in need of pastoral care? We'd like to be able to respond quickly to anyone in need of help from the church. This might be in cases of accident, illness or bereavement, or simply loneliness or the need for a listening ear. Perhaps someone you know needs assistance in organising a happier event - a wedding blessing or a baptism?

Anyone in need of help is welcome to contact me as Chaplain in the first instance. Although I am based in Marseille, we are able to offer support in other areas too. Over the coming months we're hoping to expand the list of people offering to be a first port of call.

### **Clergy:**

Marseille      The Revd Jamie Johnston: 07 66 01 71 50; [anglican.marseille@gmail.com](mailto:anglican.marseille@gmail.com)

Pays d'Apt      The Revd Canon David Pickering: 06 35 96 16 16; [portpick@gmail.com](mailto:portpick@gmail.com)

Petit Luberon      The Revd John Smith: [john.smith@4u-team.org](mailto:john.smith@4u-team.org)

### **Readers:**

Pays d'Apt      Christine Portman: 06 35 96 16 16; [pickport@gmail.com](mailto:pickport@gmail.com)

Manosque      Jane Quarmby: 0044 7714 064141; [janequarmby0430@gmail.com](mailto:janequarmby0430@gmail.com)

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### **Dates for your Diary**

#### ***Sunday, 1<sup>st</sup> December – Advent Sunday***

10.00 am Holy Communion at All Saints Marseille led by The Revd Patrick Cassidy, with Reader Jane Quarmby preaching

11.00 am Holy Communion at the Oratoire, Aix-en-Provence led by The Revd Jamie Johnston

#### ***Sunday, 8<sup>th</sup> December – Second Sunday of Advent***

10.00 am Holy Communion at All Saints Marseille led by The Revd Jamie Johnston

10.30 am Holy Communion at the Eglise Sacré Coeur, Oppède led by The Revd John Smith

#### ***Saturday, 14<sup>th</sup> December***

4.00 pm Christmas Carol Service by candlelight at All Saints Marseille, followed by mulled wine and mince pies

#### ***Sunday, 15<sup>th</sup> December – Third Sunday of Advent***

10.00 am Holy Communion at All Saints Marseille led by The Revd Jamie Johnston

#### ***Saturday, 21<sup>st</sup> December***

3.30 pm Christmas Carol Service at the Eglise Saint-Sébastien, Goult, followed by reception

#### ***Sunday, 22<sup>nd</sup> December – Fourth Sunday of Advent***

10.00 am Holy Communion at All Saints Marseille led by The Revd Jamie Johnston

#### ***Wednesday, 25<sup>th</sup> December – Christmas Day***

10.00 am Holy Communion at All Saints Marseille led by The Revd Jamie Johnston

#### ***Sunday, 29<sup>th</sup> December – First Sunday of Christmas***

10.00 am Holy Communion at All Saints Marseille led by The Revd Jamie Johnston, with Reader Jane Quarmby preaching

We are also hoping to hold a service at the Oratoire, Aix-en-Provence in the days leading up to Christmas - more details to follow.

With every blessing,

The Revd Jamie Johnston, Chaplain