

Chaplaincy of All Saints' Marseille with Aix en Provence and the Luberon

Newsletter November 2020

As many of us have been experiencing the difficulties of a second lockdown, the Christmas message of our Bishop Robert is timely:

In one of our best-loved carols, Christina Rossetti situates the birth of Jesus 'in the bleak midwinter'. She paints a severe and freezing manger scene, with howling wind and deep snow. She represents the frosted earth and water with iron and stone.

From the biblical narrative, it seems unlikely that Jesus was born in the bleak mid-winter, as the shepherds would not be putting their sheep out to pasture in freezing conditions. But that does not stop us gladly enjoying Rossetti's romantic poetic licence and reminding ourselves that the conditions of the first Christmas were hard, extraordinarily hard by modern standards.

Mary was a young girl giving birth a long way from home. The town of Bethlehem was crowded with strangers registering with the tax authorities of the occupying powers. Mary laid her new-born baby in an animal's stone feeding trough. And the first visitors were not close family but rough men from the fields.

It is extremely difficult to recover this first Christmas. The festival has become overlaid with medieval nativity scenes and Romantic or Dickensian winter scenes. In the twentieth century, Christmas became the setting of the perfect family gathering. Most significantly, the run up to the commercial Christmas – the 'golden quarter' – is now a vital part of the retail industry's overall wellbeing so that vast sums are expended on advertising to persuade us to acquire more goods and more debt.

But not in 2020. This year it will be very different. Travel bans, lockdowns and quarantines mean it will be harder and perhaps impossible to get together with our loved ones. People are poorer. High streets, at least at the time of writing, are closed in many countries. And even when they re-open, shopping isn't quite the same when you have to physically distance and wear a mask.

Christmas will be simpler this year. And for many it will be sadder. As Covid-19 has progressed, more and more families have been affected by the virus and its frightening and sometimes long-term symptoms. Some of us have a relative who has been in intensive care, struggling to breathe. Many of us know someone who has very sadly lost their life, and some of us face the first Christmas without someone close to us. This year, perhaps we more intuitively sense the harshness of the manger scene, the cruelty of death, the pain of a bleak mid-winter.

Another well-known – and much older – carol speaks to us about 'tidings of comfort and joy'. In 2020 we need to hear these tidings. For Christmas is at heart the story of a God who draws near to us in Jesus, sharing the sorrows and joys of human experience. In the

mystery of the incarnation, the eternal God wonderfully condescends to be born as a human baby, in the roughest conditions. He is 'Immanuel' – the God who is with us.

Whatever conditions you face this Christmas, I hope you will be able to reach out and find the God who is with us. I hope you will take comfort from the presence of God with you, and perhaps also find opportunity to comfort others.

'God rest you merry' in modern English means 'may God grant you peace and happiness'. The unknown author continued:

'Let nothing you dismay

for Jesus Christ our Saviour was born on Christmas Day.

To save us all from Satan's power

when we had gone astray

Which brings tidings of comfort and joy.'

I wish each of you and your families comfort and joy as we approach this Christmas season.

+ Robert Gibraltar in Europe



+Robert Gibraltar in Europe

New Appointments

Curate for the Chaplaincy

We are delighted to welcome Roxana Teleman as our new curate. Many will know her from her long service on the Chaplaincy Council as secretary, and playing the piano for services at All Saints. She and her family live in Marseille. Roxana completed her theological studies in the UK along with other ordinands from the Diocese of Europe and was ordained Deacon in Brussels in

2019. After serving the first part of her curacy in Nice, we are very pleased that Roxana is being appointed to Marseille, Aix and the Luberon to continue her training.

She will be licensed as Curate on Saturday, 28th November and will join the Ministry Team on Advent Sunday, the beginning of the new liturgical year. Please would everyone keep Roxana in their prayers.

New Archdeacon of France

Bishop Robert has just announced the appointment of our new Archdeacon:

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

It gives me the greatest pleasure to announce that Canon Dr. Peter Hooper has been appointed to be the next Archdeacon of France.

Peter is currently priest-in-charge of seven rural churches near Melton Mowbray and Area Dean of the Framland Deanery in the Leicester Diocese. He is the Chair of the House of Clergy, is a member of Bishop's Council, sits on various other Diocesan Committees and also serves as the Rural Officer for Leicester Diocese. Much of his time in ministry has been directed to growing Christian communities and presence, both within established settings as well as in start-up situations and secular organisations. Children and young people have been a particular focus, and he has helped two communities register as Eco-Churches. He is interested in national initiatives on clergy flourishing and has co-ordinated a series of projects looking at reducing the administration burden for clergy. Peter has been Area Dean for two different deaneries, both of which have been re-organised under his leadership, and his ministry has emphasised the need to care for and encourage clergy and parishioners who find change difficult.

Prior to ordination Peter worked in agriculture, eventually becoming managing director of a large agricultural seeds subsidiary of DuPont, based in Toulouse, and represented the industry up to national level in France. As a business leader he nurtured discipleship through a 'faith in the workplace' course and continues to tutor on various Diocesan Discipleship programmes. A major part of Peter's ordination training took place at the *Institut Catholique de Toulouse*, though more as a result of geography than tradition, as Peter has a very broad churchmanship. Whilst living in Toulouse he served as Chaplaincy Warden in the Anglican Chaplaincy, so understands well the realities of chaplaincy life in the Archdeaconry from a lay officer perspective, particularly as related to financial issues.

Peter was widowed in 2019 and has two grown up children, William who is a Chartered Civil Engineer and Catherine, a Human Nutritionist, who works in the Food Industry. Whilst they will not be returning with him to live in France, they are excited about the opportunities to visit. Peter has lived and worked in France for over a decade and looks forward very much to returning to a country that he regards as his home.

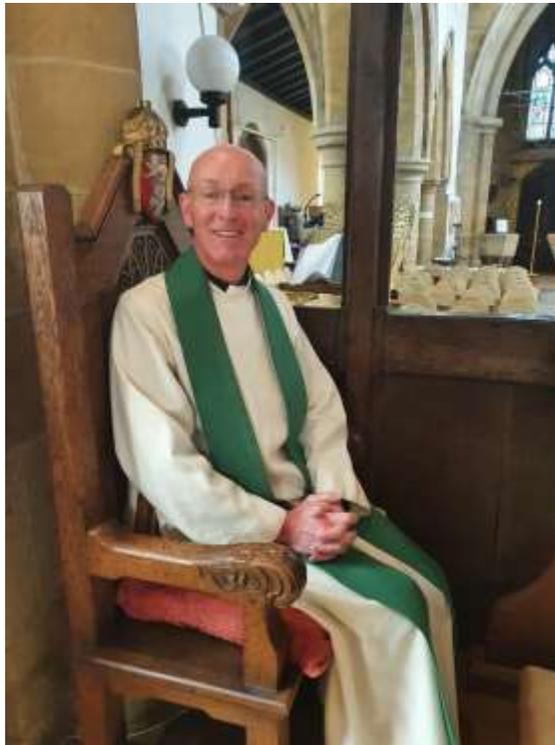
Peter will begin work with us on 15 February 2021. He will be licensed initially as Acting Archdeacon, continuing to live in Leicestershire. A move to France will be organised as quickly as possible in these difficult times, when Peter will be licensed as Archdeacon in full title.

Peter feels a strong sense of calling to this role. He comments: "It is often quoted that you should 'never go back'. However, when we truly open ourselves up to God's guidance, such dismissive

thought should not be part of our discipleship journey. We offer our lives to be shaped, formed and placed where God knows best and so it is with enormous pleasure and great excitement that I respond to his call to 'go back' to my ministerial roots in France".

I am thrilled that we are able to appoint a priest of such rich experience and skill to this key leadership role, with responsibilities for our chaplaincies across France and Monaco. Please pray for Peter as he begins a major period of transition. In due course I hope you will join with me in giving Peter a warm welcome into his new responsibilities and return to France.

+ Robert Gibraltar in Europe



New Chaplaincy Council

At the AGM on Saturday 21st November, some long serving members of the Chaplaincy Council stood down for a well-earned rest, and some new members have joined us. The Chaplaincy Council is now slightly smaller and comprises of:

Revd Jamie Johnston – Chair, Anne Roumieu, Gaston Roumieu, Dimby Razafintsambaina, Michael Annett, Muriel Teusink, Christopher Morgan, plus Christine Portman and Jane Quarmbly as Synod reps. Jane was also re-elected as Church Warden (we still have a vacancy for a second Warden if anyone is interested....)

The new Council looks forward to serving all of our congregations in Marseille, Aix and Oppède.

Fundraising in Advent

One of our zoom members in England is involved with a charity providing relief to those in need in a deprived area of West London not far from Grenfell Tower, the apartment block which suffered a devastating fire in 2017. This year the calls on the charity's food distribution centre have trebled due to the lockdowns. As a chaplaincy we are keen to help, and have a target of raising enough funds to buy 100 chickens so that clients of the food distribution centre can receive a Christmas lunch.

If you can find it in your heart to help towards this collection, please donate 15 pounds (or more if you can) to our account with the Diocese in the UK:

Either online at:

<https://www.justgiving.com/diocese-ineurope>

Click 'Donate', choose an amount, enter card details, then under 'Your donation summary' click 'Add a message of support' and write in 'For Marseille Chaplaincy Christmas Project'. (This will enable us to allocate your donation to the collection.)

Or by bank transfer to:

Sort code: 02-06-13

Account number: 40317039

Account name: Diocese in Europe Fund

Reference: 'Marseille Xmas'

For further details please contact the Chaplain on anglican.marseille@gmail.com or (+33) (0)7 66 01 71 50.

Brexit

The British Consul in Marseille, Michèle Solari, and her colleagues recently held an online workshop with chaplains in the Riviera Deanery to brief them on the process for applying for a post Brexit residency card in France, applications for which need to be made before 1st July 2021.

The team at the Consulate are very keen to ensure that any British citizens in the area who may be isolated or vulnerable receive all the help they need with the application process. If any of you know someone who may need assistance, particularly if they don't have access to computer facilities (since applications can only be made online), please let the Chaplain know on anglican.marseille@gmail.com or (+33) (0) 7 66 01 71 50 and one of us will be in touch with you.

If you haven't already signed up to the UK Government website 'Living in France', this is a helpful way of keeping up with changes in the rules. You can, in particular, opt to receive email alerts when new information about Brexit is published.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/living-in-france>

For those of us affected by Brexit, here's another link which you may find helpful (please note that this is from a commercial organisation, not a government body):

<https://www.spectrum-ifa.com/category/driving-licence-in-france/?fbclid=IwAR2jHvmXTRYttFhXmg1cbMRkROvtSfYI1KyqE-AZ19GMxZ5BhCg9dASfkBU>

Woolly hats

Calling all knitters! One of the practical ways in which our chaplaincy supports the Seamen's Mission is by the provision of handknitted woolly hats. Sadly the ladies who used to knit these are no longer with us so it's down to us. I have found a very easy pattern on the internet which you are welcome to use (I'm not the best knitter in the world and it works for me).

You need a pair of 5.5 mm knitting needles, some fairly thick wool like Arran, and a needle.

Cast on 74 stitches and work to a tension of 15 stitches to 4 inches.

Work in garter stitch (knit) for 10 inches. Bind off, leaving a long tail. Thread the tail through the last row and pull together, knot securely. Sew up the seam and weave in any loose ends.

Ta-ra! One hat. Pom poms optional.

Once done please send to Gaston Roumieu, who will make sure they get to the port.

Survey

We recently asked for views on our provision of worship across the chaplaincy especially in these difficult times of isolation and lockdowns caused by the Covid 19 pandemic. 35 people responded to our survey so a big thank-you to all of you who took the time to let us know your views.

Overall the feedback was very positive. Here's a precis:

Just over 82 %of respondents live in France and attend worship in one of our 3 locations. 14% live in the UK.

Before the crisis, 80% attended worship in our chaplaincy at least once a month, of which 26% attended weekly. After the lockdown, the numbers of attendees dropped to 52% overall and 18% weekly.

During the lockdown, 62% joined in the weekly zoom services of Holy Communion on a Sunday morning, and 48% the weekly zoom services of Compline on a Wednesday night. After lockdown 53% continued to attend the zoom services of Holy Communion on a Sunday and 35% the Compline services on a Wednesday.

100% join in with the responses in a zoom service, 92% out loud and 8% internally.

The social side of the services met with varying levels of interest – 79% liked some chat beforehand, but 21% not at all, 96% like to share the peace to some degree, and 97% like to say goodbye in some way at the end of the service of Holy Communion.

Online worship doesn't allow us to take the host and instead we have the prayer of spiritual communion. 76% of people found this prayer helpful but missed sharing the moment of communion physically with others. However 44% of people did not find it hard that they could not receive the sacraments physically, and only 21% had received home communion.

80% of people were largely happy with the music chosen, with a further 16% preferring it if the music was restricted to hymns so that they could sing along with the music.

Once the lockdown is over the majority of people (75%) think that they will go to church for worship whilst 15% felt the opposite.

Comments received in answer to being asked what have people appreciated the most, what were the downsides and what could we do differently were:

“Having the opportunity to take time out of a busy week, during difficult times to worship and focus on what is important”.

“I appreciate it all, and look forward to the services. There are no downsides, under the current circumstances.”

“Everything is perfect. Thank-you so much!” (We know that's not true, but we liked it anyway. Ed.)

History of the Chaplaincy

Part 6 - KEEPING ON KEEPING ON: Challenges past, present and future

In this, our final instalment of the history of our chaplaincy, we look at some of the challenges we have faced over the past 170 years and continue to face today. As well as facing down the plague and pestilence, war and scandals touched on in previous instalments of this series, the chaplaincy (unlike our richer neighbours on the French Riviera) has always been financially challenged. Originally established as a consular chaplaincy in 1850, the chaplaincy's role in supporting British residents and visitors to the port was recognised with some British government support, but we mainly relied on the collection plate and donations. As a seamen's mission, the chaplaincy also asked captains of English vessels to contribute five francs every time they came into the port, and this helped fund our work at the Seamen's Club.

By the early 1880s the national endowment of consular chaplaincies had been withdrawn, and the British Foreign Office was also making an annual Parliamentary grant of £100 towards the maintenance of the Marseille chaplaincy (similar grants were made to other ports such as Trieste and Smyrna); other than that the congregation were now left to provide for their religious wants from their own resources. Marseille, along with Malaga and Trieste, was “represented as having exceptional claims for help” being “much frequented by British sailors”, the Diocese's estimate being “tens of thousands of British seamen

entering Marseilles annually". Some church societies also gave assistance: for many years the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts gave a grant of £30 to Marseilles, and the MSS and St. Andrew's Waterside Church Mission were, as the Bishop's *Pastoral Letter* points out, also "very liberal in supplying books for the sailors".

All Saints has also benefitted from the generosity of private individuals, and it is only through occasional large gifts that All Saints' church was built and has been kept in good order. One important benefactor was **Charles Henry LOWE** of Rowde Hall, Wiltshire, who made his fortune in the shipping trade, and his generosity resulted not only in completion of the present-day church in rue de Belloi but also in the purchase of a parsonage, "a very suitable and pretty villa in the Boulevard Rivet No. 16," for successive chaplains.

1909 was a momentous year for All Saints, as with the death of the last consular chaplain in Marseille, we became an independent chaplaincy. Needless to say, the trustees and congregation were concerned about the loss of the British government grant, but the Consul felt that "the abolition of the Consular Chaplaincy would perhaps be beneficial" because we would be freed from the restrictions imposed centrally.



Hitherto, only British subjects had been eligible to subscribe to the church, and the Consul considered that this had kept "a certain number of active and well-to-do members of the congregation (as for instance, British subjects who have voluntarily become naturalized as French citizens for

commercial purposes), Americans, and Foreigners married to Englishwomen, from participating in the management of the temporal affairs of the church". It appears the Consul was right: the church survived and, over a century later, is still benefitting from the rich contribution made to parish life by its multinational congregations.

Nowadays our only income consists of pledges; donations via the collection plate; baptism and wedding fees, and a small (and diminishing) grant from the Mission to Seamen – we receive no funding from the Anglican Church, and indeed need to make a contribution to the Diocese in Europe every year. The roof has, like so many church roofs, been a leaky liability for over 100 years, and repairs (and repairing water-damaged paintwork) have been needed on average every 30 years. Over the years our community have, through necessity, responded by being eager fundraisers, with the Christmas Fair, concerts and sales of work being major events in the Marseille calendar.

EPILOGUE

But it is not all doom and gloom and fixing leaky buildings. Rich in vocations, the chaplaincy has sponsored two ordinands in recent years: our French former Licensed Lay Minister **Stéphane Javelle** was ordained priest in 2018 and is now curate in the Diocese of Salisbury, and our Romanian former secretary and music coordinator **Roxana Tenea Teleman** was ordained deacon in Brussels in 2019.

In 2019 we welcomed our 41st permanent chaplain in 170 years, the **Revd. Jamie Johnston**, and under his leadership we are now facing up to the challenges of an ongoing pandemic. Our online services are well attended, and now that our churches are able to open again we are



offering no fewer than 14 services a month, and are in the process of installing wifi and webcam in All Saints' Marseille with a view to streaming services and other events from there. Of course, especially in the current climate, challenges still remain –this year's Christmas Fair is having to be made a virtual event – but we have survived crises before, and with your help as parishioners we are looking forward with optimism to the continued work of the English Church in Marseille, Aix and the Luberon, as our Anglican community approaches its third century.

+++++

This series has been redacted and revised from our church history, "All Saints and Sailors," which is available in All Saints church in Marseille, or by email as a PDF file, for a modest price of 8 euro (or 10 euro on Amazon!). Every penny of the purchase price goes to chaplaincy funds and this little book (now in its fourth edition) has raised over 1000 euro to date. If you would like to read more about our fascinating history while contributing to our survival, please email Amanda Haste on amanda.haste@sfr.fr.

Dates for the Diary

These arrangements are all assuming the current relaxation of lockdown restrictions continues – as and when things change we will let you know.

Sunday 29th November Holy Communion at All Saints Marseille at 10.00 a.m.

Holy Communion via zoom at 11.30 a.m.

Wednesday 2nd December Compline at 10.00 p.m. via zoom

Saturday 5th December Chaplaincy Council Meeting at 2.30 p.m. via zoom

Sunday 6th December Holy Communion at All Saints Marseille at 10.00 a.m.

Holy Communion at 11.30 a.m. via zoom

Wednesday 9th December Compline at 10.00 p.m. via zoom

Sunday 13th December Holy Communion at All Saints Marseille at 10.00 a.m.

Holy Communion at Oppède at 10.30 a.m.

Holy Communion at 11.30 a.m. via zoom

Wednesday 16th December Compline at 10.00 p.m. via zoom

Sunday 20th December Holy Communion at All Saints Marseille at 10.00 a.m.

Holy Communion at 11.30 a.m. via zoom

Carol Service at 4.00 p.m. via zoom

Wednesday 23rd December Compline at 10.00 p.m. via zoom

Thursday 24th December Holy Communion at 11.30 p.m. via zoom

Friday 25th December **Holy Communion at All Saints Marseille at 10.00 a.m.**
Holy Communion at 11.30 a.m. via zoom

Sunday 27th December **Holy Communion at All Saints Marseille at 10.00 a.m.**
Holy Communion at 11.30 a.m. via zoom

Wednesday 30th December **Compline at 10.00 p.m. via zoom**

If anyone has any articles or news for this newsletter please send to anglican.marseille@gmail.com

Editor: Jane Quarmby, Chaplaincy Warden

All Saints' Marseille with Aix-en-Provence and the Luberon

4, rue de Belloi, 13006 Marseille

Tel: +33 (0)7 66 01 71 50

email : anglican.marseille@gmail.com