

Newsletter September 2020

**Reflection - A Jubilee for the Earth**

There is an old Hasidic story about a child who, every morning, during daily prayers, would go out into the woods. One day his father decided to follow him and watched as the child prayed, among animals and trees. "Why do you go outside to pray?" inquired the father. "I come here to be with the LORD" the child replied. "Don't you know that the LORD is the same everywhere?" the father asked. "I know," said the child, "but I am not."

Where do you experience the freedom to be your true selves?

On 18<sup>th</sup> September, some of us joined in the diocesan Creationtide service online, celebrating God's Creation and calling us to keep a Jubilee for the Earth, a time of restorative justice for our planet. If you wonder whether 'Creationtide' is an attempt to renew or reform the Church of England liturgical year, let not your heart be troubled.

It all started in 1989, when the Ecumenical Patriarch Demetrios established September 1<sup>st</sup>, the beginning of the liturgical year for Orthodox Churches, as a Day of Prayer for Creation. It would have, perhaps, remained a 'parochial' event if the Iron Curtain had not fallen a few months later. The following decades have seen an ever-increasing willingness of European churches not only to share their spiritual heritage, but also to contribute Christian voices and values to the building of a common Europe, broader and deeper than the EU. And so, in 2007, the Third European Ecumenical Assembly held in Romania, at Sibiu, made the proposal to celebrate a 'Time for Creation' during the five weeks between 1<sup>st</sup> September and 4<sup>th</sup> October. The following year, the World Council of Churches invited its members to observe these five weeks through prayers and action on ecological issues. Since then, many Christians have heard, and responded to, the call to acknowledge our contribution to the disfigurement of creation and to care for, rather than abuse, the natural world.

If humanity tries to find answers to the extraordinary environmental challenges we can no longer dismiss as not relevant, will technological, economic and political solutions suffice? Don't we need to undergo a conversion, a change of heart, that has spiritual roots?

On the last day of Creationtide, 4<sup>th</sup> October, some Western Churches, including the Church of England, commemorate Francis of Assisi, that compelling and inspiring figure, "a man of great fervour, feeling much sweetness and tenderness even toward lesser creatures, [...] simple by grace, not by nature" (*Thomas of Celano, The Life of St Francis*).

Francis was known to immerse himself in the beauty and peace of God's creation when he wanted to pray – as his true self. "This is indeed the reason why I account it a great treasure, because man has had no hand in it, but all has been given to us by divine Providence" (*Little Flowers of St Francis*). He had surely rediscovered that the divine and the human meet in the tiniest detail in the seamless garment of God's creation.

The harmony which Francis experienced with all creation led to a liberation from fear, greed and compulsion, and a desire to speak the language of fraternity and beauty with the world. He could hear the clamour of the earth and the clamour of the poor; he kissed the leper and crossed battle lines to enter into peaceful conversation with Muslims.

The Jubilee for the Earth could be for us a time to acknowledge that we should be indifferent to nothing in this world. A time to try to heal relationships with Creation that have become conflictual, and to move gradually away from what we want to what God's world needs. And a time to pray for the grace of confidently coming before God as our true selves, in the knowledge that He is, in the words of Francis, "all good, every good".

*The Revd Roxana Tenea Teleman*

### **Church services**

We are continuing to hold services every Sunday morning at 10.00 am at All Saints, Marseille, and every 2nd Sunday of the month at 10.30 am at the church in Oppède. Thanks to our strict protocols we are able to continue in both churches despite the recent restrictions imposed for Marseille. Thanks to the generous offer from Gabrielle and René to use their garden, we will also be holding our first service since the confinement in Aix on Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> October. We have not yet resumed services in the Oratoire as it is part of residential accommodation and used daily.

### **Reader licensing**

Our two Readers, Christine Portman and Jane Quarmbly, were re-licensed this Sunday, 27<sup>th</sup> September. Thanks to zoom we were able to share the service from Dauphin across the chaplaincy and beyond.



## **Covid-19**

The *département* of Bouches-du- Rhône, which covers both Marseille and Aix, is now designated a red area of ‘maximum alert’ under the Covid precautionary measures, as a result of which the government have increased restrictions on certain types of gathering. Bars and restaurants are now closed in Marseille and their opening hours have been shortened elsewhere. For the time being churches remain open for worship, provided health protocols are complied with. Our own protocols for personal attendance in church remain unchanged – wearing masks, using hand sanitizer, signing the register, cleaning your space after use etc. We are monitoring the position and will let you know if and when things change.

## **Chaplaincy AGM**

Due to the lockdown we were unable to hold our AGM in the spring and it was rescheduled to 4<sup>th</sup> October at 11.15 am at All Saints’ Marseille. However, this has now been postponed to 17<sup>th</sup> October as the restrictions on meetings in Marseille are changing rapidly and further information is awaited on whether it may be possible to hold such meetings via zoom. Please send any items for the agenda to Jane Quarmby, along any outstanding reports for inclusion in the annual report (as requested in April). It would be very helpful if you could send everything to Jane before 10<sup>th</sup> October. There are some documents which those standing for the Council need to supply to Christine and, as we haven’t had many responses yet, here are the requirements again – as below:

## **The AGM’s around the corner! Will you offer to stand for the next Chaplaincy Council?**

A healthy, functioning chaplaincy needs a lively council with members who represent all our congregations. True, church members need to be kept fully informed of what’s going on, but more than that, everyone needs to be able, through their representatives, to bring ideas or concerns to the council’s attention. If you feel able to offer yourself for this service, please don’t hesitate to contact either Jamie or Jane and let them know that you would like your name to go forward at the AGM.

As you know, safeguarding is at the heart of the Church’s commitment to provide a safe and caring environment for all its members. It reflects our faithful adherence to Christian values. All council members have a clearly spelled-out Duty of Care to their congregations\*, so the Church of England has asked all those who undertake specific roles within the Church to provide various pieces of information to ensure that, as far as possible, parishes and chaplaincies are following safe practice.

Many thanks to those of you who intend to stand for the council and have already sent in photocopies of the documents listed below. However, if you have not yet done so, please be sure during September to send to our Safeguarding Officer, Christine Portman, the documents that she needs to see:

- A photocopy of your ID (passport, carte d’identité etc.)
- A photocopy of your new casier judiciaire. This can be applied for online in English at: <https://casier-judiciaire.justice.gouv.fr/mai-web-b3-presentation/pages/accueil.xhtml?cid=1> or in French at: <https://casier-judiciaire.justice.gouv.fr/pages/accueil.xhtml>

The service is free of charge and the document will be sent to your home address within two weeks.

- A completed Confidential Declaration Form. This can be found on the diocesan website at: <https://europe.anglican.org/downloads/safeguarding/2019/confidential-declaration-form-cdf.pdf>

For those who have previously filled in the CDF, you'll be pleased to know that a shorter Confidential Renewal Form can now be found at:

<https://europe.anglican.org/downloads/safeguarding/2019/confidential-renewal-form-crf.pdf>

Christine can send you either of these as a mail attachment if you'd prefer.

- Finally, you'll need to send her a copy of the certificate you will receive when you complete the new, Church of England Basic Awareness CO Safeguarding training. The course gives an excellent overview of the essentials you'll need to know as a member of the Chaplaincy Council. It's free, takes around an hour to complete and can be found online at:

<https://europe.anglican.org/safeguarding/online-training>

Click on the red link under 'Basic Awareness, CO Online course. If you haven't done Safeguarding before and don't already have an account, enter your own name under "Username" when prompted. Then create a password for your personal account. Please make a note of this in case you need to access it in future. If prompted for the name of the Chaplaincy, enter marseille.

The course is easy to follow and functions more smoothly than the previous version. However, if you have any difficulties, please don't hesitate to get in touch with Christine at

[safeguarding.anglican.marseille@gmail.com](mailto:safeguarding.anglican.marseille@gmail.com)

This is the address to use when you send in the supporting documents.

We hope that you'll join us and so help to make our church even more responsive to our members' needs.

- \* Promoting a Safer Church – House of Bishops 2017

<https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2019-05/PromotingSaferChurchWeb.pdf>

Please be aware that these documents are mandatory now for all Council members so if you want to be on the Council and play a part in running our chaplaincy you need to get your skates on!

### **Help for refugees and asylum-seekers**

Following the recent devastating fire at the Moria refugee camp in Greece, our prayers continue for refugees and asylum-seekers in the Diocese. Christine Portman has details of a grassroots appeal being organised to raise money for humanitarian aid and support on the island of Lesbos, where the need is acute. If you would like more details, please contact Christine by email at [pickport@gmail.com](mailto:pickport@gmail.com).

## Our Chaplaincy's History

### Part 4 - WARTIME: "These anxious times"

At the outbreak of World War II most of the 'British Colony' fled Marseille, keen to escape the German occupation and rejoin their families. During what the *Diocesan Gazette* called "these anxious times" conditions became difficult for the British Colony. The chaplain, **Revd. Hubert COX**, was at least in Marseille at the outbreak of war – unlike other priests who were stranded far from their chaplaincies – and rose manfully to the challenge of supporting his flock. In October 1939 it was reported that "Mr Cox is tackling a very difficult job [...] At the beginning of the war he was busy helping people leaving France. The Church Council has adopted "Business as Usual" as its motto and the Annual Sale of work will be held. The ladies of the community are knitting for the French troops at the Front."

Revd. Cox was clearly a tower of strength, combining his sense of duty with an equally keen sense of humour. In February 1940 he wrote:

"I am not free, of course, to take up full-time Army chaplain work, as I have the Colony and the Sailors' Club to care for, but I am trying to act as far as I can in the capacity of chaplain to the troops [and] I have had special services in church and in billets. [On Christmas Day] the men assembled at table for a scrumptious meal due for 7.30. At 7.10 began the short service of reading, one and a half hymns, a carol, sermonette and prayers; it ended at 7.29¾. To my mingled surprise and joy, the men took part in the service with the same hearty good will with which they later attacked the meal".

The Seamen's Club was by now providing an even more crucial service than it did in peacetime, arranging football matches and excursions, and supplying books and papers to men in billets and hospital, loan of wireless sets, holding of services in billets, etc.

But the Seamen's Club was providing rather more of a service than the Germans realised. Early in 1940 Revd. Cox was appointed Chaplain to the Army Base in Marseille "until they have enough troops to justify a uniformed man", and was subsequently called up as an Army Chaplain working with the troops on the south coast of England. Due to tightened security around the port area, the usual functioning of the Seamen's Club at rue de Forbin was suspended . . . until a Church of Scotland minister in Paris, **Revd. Donald C. Caskie**, arrived on the scene in 1940. According to the *Diocesan Gazette*, after the Germans entered Paris the Revd. Caskie had left the city on foot, having surrendered his passage in favour of a stranded lady, and tried to escape through Spain.

"Thwarted in this he found his way to Marseille, where he was asked by the Consular authorities to take charge of a group of stranded British folk who had been housed in the Institute of the Mediterranean Mission to Seamen. Mr Caskie was instrumental in helping hundreds of British people who had escaped from the North and in sending messages of reassurance to their friends at home."

However, the work going on at the Seamen's Club went far further than 'sending messages of reassurance'. In 1940, Caskie had been joined by George Rodocanachi, a Greek Orthodox doctor working in Marseille, and together they were helping allied servicemen who had not made the evacuation at Dunkirk and were thus trapped in German-occupied France. Rodocanachi treated wounded men and even hid some of them in his own flat, and the Mission was thought to be the largest safe house in France at that time. They received anonymous funding, food parcels were left on the Mission's doorstep overnight, and phone calls were made to warn them when police would be checking the building. This shows that a

lot of locals knew what the Mission was doing and sympathized with those fleeing. The Mission would bring the men in and arrange false papers and identities for them. They would take their uniforms and tie them in sacks with rocks, then drop them in the harbour at night time. They would then attempt to move the men through the Pyrenees and down to Gibraltar. The Mission was very successful, but eventually it came under suspicion and was forced to close; the work, however, continued.

As for All Saints' Church itself, the Bishop of Gibraltar granted permission for a succession of US Army chaplains to become temporary wartime chaplains, and the church was later used by a French Protestant congregation.



**1944: The liberation of Marseille**

After France was liberated, the tattered remains of the Anglican congregation were delighted to find that, despite the bombing of the Vieux Port, the building had remained intact. A letter from the British Consul-General of Marseille to the Bishop reports that "The English Church is undamaged. An American Chaplain (Anglican) has been given the key to the Church and will shortly be leading services [. . .] The Parsonage at Boulevard Rivet has, I understand, not been damaged, but [much] of the furniture and belongings have been looted."

All Saints' Church was opened up (although it was to take many months of clean-up operations before the building was restored to its regular state), and on 5 April 1945 the churchwarden Mr Arkless wrote that "The Church is doing excellent work. It was full on Palm and Easter Sundays, with extra chairs. The services were very fine, and on Easter Sunday the three National Anthems were played" (presumably French, British and American).

On 13 May 1945 Victory in Europe (VE Day) was celebrated in All Saints' Church with a Solemn Service of Thanksgiving presided by **Revd. Paul S. OLVER**, a New York priest and US Army Chaplain, and the church was re-opened for public worship and Anglican use. However, even though the church was operational it was to be another three years before All Saints again had an Anglican priest as a regular chaplain.

*Our thanks to Amanda Haste for compiling this from her research into the history of the chaplaincy.*

## Residency

Just a reminder to those needing to apply for residency that the French government portal opens on-line in October 2020. It has just been announced that the date has been put back (again) from 1<sup>st</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> October. We will then have until July 2021 to get our applications in.

## Donations

Good news – we have received two very generous donations which have covered the initial costs of equipping the church at Marseille with wifi, camera and microphones. Our grateful thanks to our anonymous benefactors.

## Diary dates

Wednesday 30 <sup>th</sup> September	Compline via zoom at 22.00
Sunday 4 <sup>th</sup> October	Holy Communion at All Saints Marseille at 10.00 Holy Communion via zoom at 11.45. Holy Communion at Aix (Gabrielle and René's garden – details available from Jane) at 11.00
Wednesday 7 <sup>th</sup> October	Compline via zoom at 22.00
Sunday 11 <sup>th</sup> October	Holy Communion at All Saints Marseille at 10.00 Holy Communion at l'Eglise Sacre Coeur, Oppède at 10.30 Holy Communion via zoom at 11.45
Wednesday 14 <sup>th</sup> October	Compline via zoom at 22.00
Sunday 18 <sup>th</sup> October	Holy Communion at All Saints Marseille at 10.00 (A special service for St Luke's tide, with a focus on healing) Holy Communion via zoom at 11.45.
Wednesday 21 <sup>st</sup> October	Compline via zoom at 22.00
Sunday 25 <sup>th</sup> October	Holy Communion at All Saints Marseille at 10.00 Holy Communion via zoom at 11.45.
Wednesday 28 <sup>th</sup> October	Compline via zoom at 22.00

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