

STUDIES AT A RESIDENTIAL THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE

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By Stéphane Javelle, Reader of All Saints' Marseille and theology student

Fr David asked me to write a short article about my studies in Theology. I am a Reader at All Saints' Marseille and for the past ten years I have steadily participated in the leading of worship. A few years ago I asked for a meeting with the Diocesan Director of Ordinands to discuss a vocation towards ordained ministry in the Church of England. After several supportive meetings I was sent on a weekend vocations seminar and then for the Bishops' Advisory Panel in London. It took over a year for the discernment process to be followed. I had done some theology studies when I was younger and, during the process, I was granted a full year



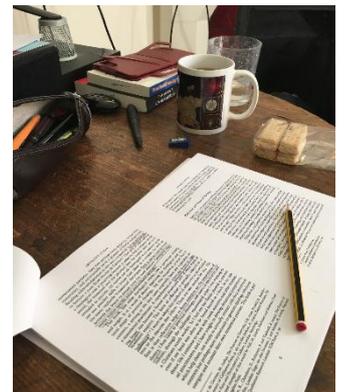
towards a three year program in theology. Last autumn I took a period of absence from my employer in Marseille and formally started a residential program of studies at Ripon College Cuddesdon near Oxford. From September 2015 to May 2017 I completed second year of studies. Last month I started my third and final year.

This term at Cuddesdon I am taking the following courses:

Reflective Practice in Context: This course is to make us able to think globally in our Theological Reflection practices. By global, I mean using different kind of resources for Theological Reflection: Bible references; Authors on theological reflection, spirituality, pastoral care; and Social and Ethical statistics & surveys. By practice, I mean reflecting and including all kinds of experiences when reflecting on my summer placement, my college, and in outside issues facing the community.

Masters Liturgy: This is a course on the study of the history, theology, and practice of liturgy (worship and devotions) in the Church of England. It includes the examination of the early Church, the Church of Rome before and after the 17th century and the Church of England's split from Rome, the volatile and creative time of the Continental and English Reformation; and contemporary worship of the 20th and 21st centuries..

Leadership & Theology for Ministry & Mission: This course is conducted as a panel of reflective and practical approaches of the various aspects of the ministry of Church leaders. I would say, it is a Christianised study of the best management practices.



Stéphane studying in his room.

Resources & Methods: This is a course that teaches how to be a theological academic once you have left the college. After graduation and ordination as a deacon or priest, the church expects that you will continue with a formal period of religious formation and spend the rest of your life undertaking continued education and constant clergy studies.

Church History in Focus: I am quite enjoying this study of the history of the Church of England during the last few centuries focusing around major topics such as the evangelical revival, the Oxford movement, and the development of church architecture.

Education & the Learning Church: A priest is involved with the sacraments and with applied pastoral care and with homiletics (preaching) but a priest is also expected to be a teacher. This course presents different approaches to pedagogy – adult education practices, youth and child education, how to transmit the teaching of the Church, our knowledge and the will to learn more in the pastoral context.

For most of these courses I have papers to research and write, for others I have to prepare and lead practical seminars. This is an exciting academic time. It is a time of preparation and a beginning of a life committed to lifelong learning.