



Saint Michael's Messenger, Newsletter, December 2015

The Eucharist is celebrated every Sunday at 10.00 am followed by refreshments

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY:

Sunday 6th December	Eucharist 10h00 Advent 2 (Mon 7th - Fri 11th Dec Fr Tony in UK)
Sunday 13th December	Eucharist 10h00 Advent 3
Sunday 20th December	Eucharist 10h00 Advent 4
Monday 21st December	Carol Service 18h30 Anglo-French Ecumenical Service
Thursday 24th December	Christmas Service 10h00 Danish Lutheran
	Eucharist 19h00 Christmas Eve
Friday 25th December	Eucharist 10h00 Christmas Day
Sunday 27th December	Eucharist 10h00 Holy Innocents

BISHOP ROBERT TALKS ON RADIO ABOUT THE PARIS ATTACKS

Following the atrocities in Paris from a series of terrorist attacks on Friday 13 November, churches in France and across the world have been holding vigils and times of prayer. Pictured is the exterior of St Michael's in memory of friends and family of those affected. Thanks to Barry, our Churchwarden, for this tribute in their memory. Bishop Robert Innes, our Bishop in Europe, has been giving a series of interviews on radio stations across Britain about the situation. You can hear him speaking on BBC Radio Guernsey to Elizabeth Mahy for a 3mn interview and find out more from the Diocese in Europe website www.europe.anglican.org.



FATHER'S NOTES...

The only thing Jesus asked his followers to do in his memory...



This month, appropriately for Advent, St Michael's will start to use new Orders of Service which will include special resources for the season and allow us to be more flexible in our choice of hymns. As I mentioned last month, some aspects of the service will remain familiar because they are essential to Christian worship. Since the very early days of the Church, Christians have gathered together for what was called in the Acts of the Apostles *the breaking of bread and the prayers (Acts 2:46)*. This was the origin of the Eucharist we celebrate today – *Eucharist* referring to the great thanksgiving prayer that accompanies the ritual of breaking and sharing bread in remembrance of Christ.

The Eucharist begins with a *Preface* which acknowledges the particular blessings God has bestowed upon his people throughout history. The Preface always concludes with the *Sanctus* or hymn of the angels which we all say together as a sign of our union with the angels and saints in praising the Almighty. Then come the key elements of the prayer – when the priest invokes the Holy Spirit over the bread and the wine, repeats the words of Jesus at the Last Supper, *This is my Body... this is my Blood...(Luke 22: 19,20)* and then remembers his

passion, death, resurrection and ascension to glory. Because the Eucharist is a sacrament, we are not simply recalling the past but are actively participating in those specific events that forgave our sins and made possible our entry to eternal life. It is, therefore, the highlight of our liturgy and why we may express this through chant, solemn gestures, genuflection, the ringing of bells and the use of incense; as with all good liturgy we worship the Lord with all our *heart, soul, mind and strength* (Deuteronomy 6: 4-9).

Receiving Holy Communion is the ultimate expression of Christian faith because we believe we receive the *presence* of Christ, his Body and Blood, in the physical forms of bread and wine. Many theologians still debate on how this can happen and how they should describe it, but suffice to say that it is a divine mystery that only Christ who instituted it could explain. Without this belief we would have to consider that if it isn't the Body and Blood of Christ then why did Jesus specifically say it was, and what would be the point of our receiving it?

The idea of worshipping *with all your strength* has led to a variety of postures during the liturgy with occasions to sit, stand and kneel depending on what is happening in the service. What should we be doing during the Eucharistic Prayer? Unfortunately, there is no universal answer and there are strong arguments either for standing or kneeling, and it is acceptable that if a person is unsteady or frail they may sit. At St Michael's, with its congregation coming from different nationalities and traditions, it would be most appropriate for us to stand since we would be reflecting the words used in the Eucharistic Prayers, *with all who stand before you in earth and heaven... and we thank you for counting us worthy to stand in your presence and serve you...* Standing conforms to the practice of major Christian traditions and is also consistent with the way in which we receive Holy Communion at St Michael's i.e. standing.

Each time we celebrate our Eucharist at St Michael's we should realise there can be nothing more important than to carry out the command of Jesus, *Do this in remembrance of me...* and for us to do so with reverence and humility in his presence.

I will be sending a Christmas message to everyone connected with St Michael's but until then, have a prayerful and peaceful Advent...

Fr Tony

'THE VIEW FROM THE PRESBYTERE...



Looking back over the last month, life in Beaulieu has been really busy with a multitude of different things going on. Naturally the Service of Remembrance was one of the most important events at St Michael's, as we gathered in the Church for a peacefully moving service. This thought was carried forward to Armistice Day, when the young and old of the town gathered at the Cenotaph: the Role of Honour was read out, candles lit, the silence observed, due respect given.

On that rather chilly morning none of us could have imagined that less than a week later we would again be gathered as a town, but it would be to pay our respects to those innocent people who lost their lives so brutally in Paris, and to remember the many victims and their families and friends whose lives have changed forever as a result of the cowardly acts of terror. So much has been said and written about the mindless criminals who thrive on our fear and the hatred they deliver, I would only add that we shouldn't let the terrorists harden our own hearts to those in need. We must continue to keep hope alive and never lose faith that a solution can be found and a new freedom descend...



And so here we are in December already. Tony and I have not had a Christmas with our family for many years (always working!) but this year we are very blessed to be having our granddaughter with us, and of course her Mummy and Daddy! And I guess that's a similar story for many around the globe – families and friends coming together to celebrate.

During Advent, as we prepare for one of the most important feasts in the Christian calendar, we look forward with anticipation and excitement. Let's leave a space in our prayers to remember all those around the world whose peace and joy has been cruelly snatched away in all sorts of different circumstances.

Whatever troubles or worries we have in our lives at this time, we are nevertheless truly blessed to have a faith; and so we have a duty to use that faith to inspire hope and love in others by our words and actions.

To all our parishioners far and wide I wish you a happy, holy and peaceful Christmas.' **Fiona**

CHURCH CLEANING PARTY



After the service on Sunday, Father Tony asked if anyone would be available to clean the church ready for Advent. A small but happy band of volunteers arrived at the church on the appointed day with mops, buckets, feather dusters, vacuum cleaners and all manner of cleaning products in hand. With rubber gloves at the ready, we set about

the task of cleaning every nook and cranny of the church, from top to bottom, inside and out. As is clear in the group photo taken by Andrew, what could have been an onerous and miserable task turned out to be a fun morning of hard work and great camaraderie! On behalf of everyone who will visit St Michael's over the Christmas season, a huge thank you!



Fiona

NICOLA'S NOTICES

Mince Pies: Is anyone travelling from UK before the carol service on 21st December? If yes, could you fit in some mince pies into your luggage? The mini ones are best. Or if you are already here let me know if you would like to make some small ones for the carol service.

Please contact Nicola Karlsen on ekarlsen@wanadoo.fr if you have a local item to share with members of the St Michael's congregation.

Life in France: Anyone thinking of setting up a self employed business in France might find it worthwhile taking a look at ***Freelance in France 2015*** written by the experienced and often frustrated Barth Hulley. He found French taxes and bureaucracy mind baffling for the self-employed so has written an informative guide to help you through. If you are contemplating realising a freelance dream on the Cote d'Azur, do give it a read. (Available from Amazon)

WISHING YOU A PEACEFUL, MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY, HEALTHY AND SAFE NEW YEAR

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