



Saint Michael's Messenger, Newsletter, February 2016

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

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY:

Sunday	7th February	10h00 Eucharist
Tuesday	9th February	18h30 Shrove Tuesday pancake supper
Wednesday	10th February	12h00 Ash Wednesday Eucharist and Ashes
Friday	12th February	12h00 Lenten Service
Sunday	14th February	10h00 Eucharist Lent 1
Friday	19th February	12h00 Lenten Service
Sunday	21st February	10h00 Eucharist Lent 2
Friday	26th February	12h00 Lenten Service
Sunday	28th February	10h00 Eucharist Lent 3
		11h45 Eucharist Danish Lutheran

FATHER'S NOTES...

This month's article is a well-deserved thank you to everyone who has had a part to play in supporting St Michael's over the past year. Although I have only been at St Michael's since June I felt it was only right to present some kind of report to the Council so that they had a feel for how, from my perspective, the year has progressed. Much more can be said and will be presented by members of the Council at the forthcoming AGM but these are just a few extracts which I hope will encourage the continued support of the church.



For the first part of the year the chaplaincy was still in vacancy and thanks must go to the locum priests and especially to Fr Philip who on so many occasions made sure the Eucharist was celebrated at St Michael's. For the year 1st January to 31st December 2015 there have been a total of 68 services at St Michael's... the total attendance at all services was 2453, which is a 30% increase on the previous year and the total number of communicants was 1593, which is an 11% increase on the previous year.

The number of services and attendance has actually been under-recorded and from 1st January 2016 it will be more accurate by including those attending the Danish Lutheran services which are also held at St Michael's; this is important because it will better reflect the use of the church for Christian worship.

Notable services were the funeral for Fr Geoffrey Grant, the Induction of the new chaplain, and the main festivals of Easter and Christmas which were all very well attended. We have also had a number of wedding blessings during the year which have brought people to St Michael's from China, America, Canada and Australia...

The church organ was recently serviced and the piano tuned. Although they continue to be played for special occasions the regular liturgy is accompanied by a music system. *Liturgical music is not just accompaniment to hymns and we are fortunate to have a system that provides a very wide range of quality music – organ, choral and orchestral for different occasions. The selection of music, hymns, preparation of play lists and rehearsal all takes time and we are fortunate that it is all done voluntarily and to high standards.*

We have had a very successful Ecumenical Advent Service with the Roman Catholic Church and there were several occasions when St Michael's was officially represented at civic events in Beaulieu, St Jean and Villefranche. The Mayor of Beaulieu and representatives of the Mairie have also attended St Michael's for special services. There are even more celebrations being planned for 2016 to include the Danish Lutherans and again the Roman Catholics.

A number of policy documents, consistent with the Gospel and mission of the Church, have now been produced... At the moment these cover the Community of St Michael's, the Roles and Responsibilities of office holders, Communications and Media, the Religious and Secular use of St Michael's, and Finance Management. Making use of the good practice in other churches and dioceses, a number of procedures and protocols were then developed for St Michael's to ensure credibility, consistency and continuity in our administration. Standard procedures for Communications and Media and Financial Management have now been produced and more will follow in the coming year. All policies and procedures will be published and made available to anyone who wishes to view them.

St Michael's and the chaplaincy continue their mission thanks to the different kinds of support and contributions received throughout the year. It is an almost daily task, certainly several days each week, to make sure the church is ready for use; repairs and maintenance, buying supplies, tidying and cleaning, providing flowers and decorations, setting up hospitality and refreshments, collecting, counting and banking money, keeping accounts and paying bills, overseeing improvement projects, replying to e-mails and requests, planning for and arranging services and events, preparing agendas, documents and minutes and attending meetings... all this has been done by a few local people who reliably dedicate their time, expertise and often their own material resources to St Michael's...

Another vital support without which St Michael's and its chaplaincy would never be able to function is of course financial. The generosity of the congregation on Sundays is magnificent, as too are the welcome donations from visitors and all the occasions when parishioners forego their own fees and expenses for the benefit of the church. There is also another kind of financial support we have received that has been considerable and greatly appreciated - it has been provided by the Friends of St Michael's. Historically, the Friends have undertaken to provide substantial funds for the running of the church and especially for renovation and improvement projects. And some have established a quite separate fund specifically to support religious, spiritual and pastoral ministry here...

This past year saw the upgraded version of St Michael's website launched and this will no doubt become a valuable tool in promoting the church and what we have to offer. It is already a massive improvement on the old site but will still develop over the coming year. St Michael's Messenger has also been at the forefront of our communications and feedback indicates it is very much appreciated.

My intention for the coming year is to develop the sense of belonging to and association with St Michael's especially for seasonal and occasional visitors to Beaulieu who come from all over the world. With the continued hard work of the Chaplaincy Council and the congregation, bolstered by the generosity of our benefactors, we can make sure those who come to St Michael's, either by design or chance, are spiritually nourished, inspired and encouraged...

Next month will see us into the season of Lent and I will be mentioning its origins and some interesting features that will be reflected in the services at St Michael's.

Fr Tony

'THE VIEW FROM THE PRESBYTERE...



A rather belated Happy New Year!

I hope you all had the best possible Christmas you could. St Michael's was busy with lots of visitors to the church as well as the regular and occasional congregation. Christmas Eve was a bit of a nail biter as only a tiny handful of us gathered for the Vigil Service, but then just as the service was about to start the church filled with strangers! It was really quite magical. Tony and I are well used to small numbers at one or other of the Christmas services, as in our army days the church would either be packed at the Vigil Service or on Christmas Morning – never both! So to see so many at each of the services was lovely. The church looked beautiful, and on Christmas Eve the focal point moved from the advent wreath to the crib, which sat humbly at the front of the altar. For me, the atmosphere in the church was so peaceful, so tranquil that I felt as though I was actually there in the stable on that holiest of nights. It was easy to be completely wrapped up in the prayers of joy, praise and thanksgiving, and of hope for the year to come.

After a very busy Advent, Christmas and early January, Tony and I took a few days off and returned to the UK to catch up with some family and friends. I must admit it was lovely to be back in the North, but good grief it was cold! I always think of February as being a rather optimistic month – longer days with spring knocking at the door, and I have to say Beaulieu has not disappointed; lots of blue skies and sunshine.

As Tony and I look forward to the coming year, we can't help but reflect on last year and how much our life has changed – for a start he didn't have three different bosses to brief about our recent trip back to the UK! There is indeed lots to look forward to in 2016, but inevitably we will all have some difficult days, because that's life. I know I will be able to look back at our first Christmas in St Michael's and revisit the tranquillity and peace of the Christmas services, and if I can harness that atmosphere I will be able to use it to put me in a much stronger position.

So as we move into February, my optimistic month, I have a real sense that actually, Christmas, and all it stands for, is where the optimism really started. Have a great – and optimistic - February!

Fiona

RUNA INGASON R.I.P.

We were very sad to learn of the death on 29th December of Sigrun, known to all as Runa, at age 84. She and Petur Ingason were married for 63 years and were inseparable. From their native Iceland they travelled the world together in pursuit of Petur's career in the aviation industry, eventually settling in the UK. They then embarked on a series of adventures on motor yachts and spent some years on the Riviera before buying their apartment in Beaulieu around 13 years ago. Their daughter Gudrun had a blessing ceremony for her marriage to Andy Palmer at St Michael's in 2006. Runa is survived by Gudrun, Petur and their son Sigg, all regular visitors to Beaulieu since the early 80's, plus their grandchildren and great grandchildren.



NICOLA'S NOTICES

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

SHROVE TUESDAY 9TH FEB 6.30 PM

Traditional pancake supper at St Michaels
15 euros per person including drinks, main dish and pancakes.
Open to all, bring a neighbour or a friend.
Let Nicola know numbers in advance by email



COLLECTION OF FOODSTUFFS FOR LOCAL RED CROSS (CROIX ROUGE)

Up until Shrove Tuesday there will be boxes at the back of the church for you to donate foodstuffs for the local Red Cross. This food is redistributed to persons in need.

Our congregation can either buy goods to donate or empty their cupboards before Lent; it might be a nice way to counterpoint the feast and fast and to start Lent with a gesture of giving. You can bring dried goods such as pasta or tinned and bottled goods within the sell by date. No fresh or frozen foods. When you are emptying your cupboard think also of food that does not need reheating, and food that may be a special treat for those receiving it.

In this way we can enjoy our pancakes but not forget those who are not so fortunate

LIFE IN FRANCE:

LE CHANDELEUR

You may have noticed in the supermarkets in France a proliferation of pancake making paraphernalia. You may have thought, 'Oh yes, it's nearly Pancake Tuesday.'

However that is not the connection. On 2nd February every year, France celebrates 'Le Chandeleur' with the making of pancakes. This was originally a pagan festival, derived from the torches used to burn off the old wheat and corn stalks before preparing for sowing the next year's seeds. At the same time the last year's harvest was used in making pancakes, thus hopefully assuring a good harvest for the coming year. In Christian times this festival was appropriated into the Catholic church calendar as the date of the Presentation of Christ in the Temple. It is always on the 2nd February. Whereas, of course, in Britain, pancakes are part of the Shrove Tuesday tradition.

Want to get in touch?

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