



Saint Michael's Messenger, Newsletter, February 2017

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

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY:

Sunday	5th February	10h00	Eucharist - Presentation in the Temple
Sunday	12th February	10h00	Eucharist - 3 before Lent
Sunday	19th February	10h00	Eucharist - 2 before Lent
		11h45	Danish Lutheran Service
Sunday	26th February	10h00	Eucharist - Sunday before Lent
			<i>Parish Lunch & Pancakes</i>
Wednesday	1st March	10h00	Ash Wednesday
Friday	3rd March	12h00	Lenten Service

FATHER'S NOTES...

This month Fr Tony shares his annual report for 2016:



CHAPLAIN'S ANNUAL REPORT 2016

During the past year St Michael's has provided regular worship and chaplaincy mission thanks to the magnificent support of its Council, volunteers, congregation and visitors.

Our main purpose was to provide religious services and during 2016 we conducted a total of 99 (compared with 71 for 2015 which is an increase of 39%). There were 68 celebrations of the Eucharist, 6 Baptisms, 8 wedding blessings or renewal of vows, 3 funeral or memorial services and 14 other services e.g. for Lenten Observance and for the victims of the Nice terror attack in July.

Services included those celebrated by the Danish Lutheran congregation which, along with the Anglo-French Advent Service with the Roman Catholics, and the Christian Unity service attended by representatives of St Michael's at the beginning of the year, also demonstrated our ecumenical commitment.

Although our resident congregation remained small it was boosted by our usual seasonal members and many first-time visitors. The total attendance for services was 3,110 (compared with 2,407 in 2015 which is an increase of 29%) and there were 1,721 communicants (compared with 1,587 in 2015, an increase of 8%). A great thank you to all those who have contributed to our liturgies by assisting in greeting and security, reading the Scriptures, preparing music, distributing Holy Communion, providing flowers and hospitality, and generally maintaining the church through repairs and cleaning. While some of our congregation can only be here for one or two Sundays a year, there are people working throughout every week to make sure St Michael's is able to function as well as it does.

We have been saddened during the year by the sudden deaths of three very well-known people who for many years were associated with St Michael's - Christina Gorna, Vance

Johnson and Ian Corrie. In each case members of the congregation and local people attended special memorial services at the church to pray for them and their families. In our prayers we have also included other members of the congregation who have lost loved ones or have themselves been affected by serious illness or tragedy.

We held three days of prayers for the victims of the terror attack in Nice and some of us attended the civic commemoration in Beaulieu. Fortunately, no-one from St Michael's had been directly involved but some had known others who had been killed or injured in the attack. The terrorist killing of a priest in a French church then prompted all churches in France to assess their security and, with advice from the local police and gendarmerie, we were able to make some discrete arrangements which improved the security for people attending services at St Michael's.

There were more improvements made to St Michael's during the past year. Thanks to a generous donation we received an additional ten matching chairs, bringing the 'comfy' seating to seventy and almost to capacity in the nave. The new lighting and electrical system that was installed is not only safety compliant but is energy efficient and allows us to illuminate the sanctuary, roof and aisles to much greater effect than before. The liturgy has also been enhanced through the donation of a rose chasuble for Gaudete and Laetare Sundays, a second gold chasuble for concelebrations on Solemnities, and also a white chalice veil and burse set to complete the liturgical colours.

We have made more use of the side altar by using it to exhibit seasonal and festive displays (icons, prayers and images) that are intended to be both educational and devotional. Last year we did this for Bible Sunday, St Michael, Harvest, Remembrance, Advent and Holy Innocents. More are being planned for the coming liturgical year.

During the year our Treasurer retired after many years of service which was acknowledged by the Council and the Bishop. Before a new Treasurer was appointed for the beginning of 2017, finances were managed by members of the Finance Sub-Committee who also implemented the recommendations made in the annual independent examination of the accounts; systems were introduced for each part of the financial management process, monthly bank account reconciliations were conducted and a database was designed to provide instant and automatic calculations of all our income and expenditure. I am pleased to report that St Michael's was able to meet all its financial commitments in 2016 within its basic income and also within budget. We also increased our support for local, national and international charities thus demonstrating our place in the wider Christian mission. I would, therefore, like to thank all who have contributed to this success through their generous offerings, donations or gifts to St Michael's.

Fundraising during the past year included the parish lunches, the Passover meal and the recent Christmas Sale. A great deal of time and resources were put into planning, preparing and then delivering these events and it was all very much appreciated by those who were able to take part.

St Michael's can be considered a 'hidden gem' of the Riviera and it has attracted considerable interest and visitors from around the world. We have had several guided tours of the church organised by the Tourist Office at Beaulieu and hotels and tourist offices in the neighbouring towns have been given our church leaflets to display. The popular Messenger, Web site and the St Michael's Facebook page, which was launched during the year, have not only kept our extended congregation in touch but have encouraged new people to come to the church. Again, many thanks to those who have put so much effort and technical skill into making our church known internationally.

A criticism of some churches in the Diocese in Europe has been that they had evolved into expat social clubs for privileged Brits abroad! I'm delighted that St Michael's is no such thing. We are a truly international church, which in itself is a sign of the universality of the one

Church, and we are only distinguishable by our liturgy in English. By virtue of our Church of England heritage we are part of the Anglican Communion and that is also significant because we can celebrate and share our communion with many other Christian denominations. As for being privileged, we are only privileged by being brothers and sisters in Christ and children of the one Father for whom we come together to worship at St Michael's.

Thank you once again to those who work for and worship at St Michael's all the year round, and to all those who are only able to join us for a few Sundays during the year and yet support the church from afar. I hope that in the coming year we will all continue to take to heart and put into action the words permanently displayed on St Michael's noticeboard - *'They devoted themselves to the Apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.'* (Acts 2:42) - then we will be strong in our communion with Christ and confident in the faith as we take St Michael's into a new year.

Priest in Charge, St Michael's, Beaulieu sur Mer
Fr Tony

'THE VIEW FROM THE PRESBYTERE...



Belated Happy New Year! When 2017 dawned, I'm sure I'm not the only person who was glad to see the back of 2016, as it was without a doubt a difficult year for so many. All around the globe there were natural disasters, wicked atrocities, illness and personal loss, and it touched every one of us in some way. I tend to be a glass half full sort of person, and on the whole believe it's in our own hands to decide how we deal with the trials and tribulations life throws at us - we can either learn and grow or become bitter and entrenched, but nevertheless I struggled at times to make sense of many of the simply awful things that blighted 2016. Despite the uncertainties that we as world face at the moment, as 2017 unfolds, I'm doing my best to harness a new optimism.

I'm writing this on Holocaust Memorial day, and I'm reflecting on the importance of human rights. I wrote some months ago about how we are lucky to have been born who and where we are. Today, as I do each year on this day, I count my blessings that I was born in Gosforth in the 1950s; you see, had I been born just ten years earlier in Germany, I would have been among those in grave danger. The horrors of the holocaust didn't happen overnight, rather, one by one basic human rights were taken away from the minorities, then eventually whole sections of society were dehumanised, persecuted and wiped out. With so much of the ugly rhetoric from last year still reverberating around the world, we can honour the millions who died in the holocaust by continuing to be vigilant in our defence of human rights. We need to be brave; we need to be ready to stand up for anyone who is being treated badly, to speak out when those in positions of power abuse that power, to be careful of how we conduct ourselves. After all, surely it's a Christian duty to do so? In actual fact, despite these uncertain times it really is very easy for us to set an example, it could be something as simple as a smile, a random act of kindness, a helping hand, charitable giving or total immersion in a cause for a better world.

I'm sure everyone would like to see a world where everyone is treated with equal respect, a world where we are quick to stand up against injustice. Change happens slowly, not overnight, and it starts with the individual. We really can make a positive difference...

Fiona

UPCOMING EVENTS:

PANCAKE LUNCH Sunday 26th February after Eucharist

A main dish with drinks, followed by pancakes. All are welcome. This is a sit-down event so it is helpful for us to know numbers. Please let Nicola know, ekarlsen@wanadoo.fr

There is no ticket price, but any contribution you wish to make would be welcome.

After the feast, the fast....



FOOD DONATIONS

During Lent we think of those who are much less fortunate and one of the ways we can be of practical help is to donate foodstuffs to the local **Red Cross**.

You can deliver goods to the church throughout Lent.

All items should be non-perishable items, within their sell by date, and unopened.



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



Want to get in touch?

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