



Saint Michael's Messenger, Newsletter, May 2019

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

Dates for Your Diary:

Sunday	5th May	10h00	Eucharist – Easter 2
Sunday	12th May	10h00	Eucharist – Easter 3
Sunday	19th May	10h00	Eucharist – Easter 4
Sunday	26th May	10h00	Eucharist – Easter 5
		11h45	Danish Lutheran Service
Friday	31st May		Wedding Blessing
Sunday	2 nd June	10h00	Eucharist - Ascension
Saturday	8 th June		Wedding Blessing
Sunday	9 th June	10h00	Eucharist – Pentecost
			Followed by Church Lunch
Sunday	16 th June	10h00	Eucharist – Trinity Sunday
Thursday	20 th June	10h00	Eucharist – Corpus Christi
Sunday	23 rd June	10h00	Eucharist – St John the Baptist
		11h45	Danish Lutheran Service
Thursday	27 th June		Wedding Blessing
Saturday	29 th June		Wedding Blessing
Sunday	30 th June	10h00	Eucharist – St Peter and St Paul

Also every Friday at 19h00 – Pentecostal Service (in French)

Father's Notes



Easter hope...

Over the past few months we have had news of horrific attacks on ordinary people around the world – against Christians during Holy Communion, Muslims at daily prayer and Jews attending their synagogues. Attacks have been made against people in schools, railway stations, hotels and in the street. There is truly a madness in the minds of the few people who perpetrate these cowardly crimes against humanity; they not only fail to see the evil of their actions but they perversely imagine that they are doing the right thing!

We heard of a similar madness when we recently commemorated Good Friday at St Michael's. In the various Gospel accounts of Jesus' trial, particularly before the Governor Pontius Pilate, it was clear that nothing Jesus had said or done deserved punishment and execution. He was innocent, yet those who called for his death believed that they were doing the right thing. We know Jesus was put to death on the cross and buried. That wasn't the end, though; three days later Jesus was seen alive again - his resurrection a confirmation that all he had taught and promised was true.

A record number of people attended St Michael's to celebrate the Resurrection on Easter Sunday; the church was full because we share a faith in the salvation Jesus gained for us on

the cross; we share his message of love and kindness and we share a hope that, following his teaching and example, we may also share his resurrection.

The Resurrection brought great joy to the Apostles and disciples in the early Church, but at the same time it brought the need for courage to endure the troubles they were still going to have to face: *Then they will hand you over to be persecuted and killed, and you will be hated by all nations on account of My name. At that time many will fall away and will betray and hate one another...* (Matthew 24: 9,10).

Only our prayer will bring healing, reconciliation and peace to those whose minds are filled with hatred and violence. With the faith we have in the sacrifice and resurrection of Christ we can persevere in prayer and we must persist in love and service to all people. Jesus knew what his followers, including ourselves, would have to face and said: *...because lawlessness will increase so much, the love of many will grow cold. But the person who endures to the end will be saved.* (Matthew 24: 12,13).

Fr Tony

Passover and Memorial of the Last Supper



With thanks to David and Barbara, Jeremy and Fiona for the photographs

Maundy Thursday saw our beautiful church packed! It was the evening we were celebrating the Passover and remembering Jesus' Last Supper. The first year we were here we were a very symbolic 13 at the Passover. This year, four years on, we were 48! Even the empty chair reserved for the prophet Elijah was eventually filled!

When Fr Tony rang the bell, the service started with the lighting of the menorah candles. This is traditionally done by the lady of the house and so I was incredibly humbled to be referred to as just that by Fr Tony. We then had prayers, the readings from Holy Scripture followed by the three questions; these are traditionally asked by the youngest person present, and this year it was 9 year old Linda who was the youngest; she asked them beautifully. We then all shared a middle eastern themed meal, with of course roast lamb for the main course. The wine flowed, the conversation was lively and everyone seemed to be thoroughly enjoying the fellowship.

As the evening went on, the bell rang out again and the atmosphere immediately calmed; silence fell on the room as the service of Holy Communion commenced. After the service the atmosphere picked up again and as I looked around I felt it incredibly moved that the meal, the laughter, the conversation, the warm fellowship had woven seamlessly through a very sincere and wholly respectful act of worship and remembrance.

Fr Tony and I have been celebrating the Passover for as many years as I can remember and, traditionally, we have provided the meal as our gift to our congregations. Over the past two years the numbers have grown, with more and more people expressing an interest in joining in, nobody being turned away, and that is truly wonderful. However, the cost of providing a meal has become too much for us so we were considering ways of changing it without losing the meaning. But, for the second year running someone contacted us to offer help with the cost. And so, thanks to a very generous gentleman stepping in to support the event, and the fact that everyone who came to the Passover contributed to the desserts or wine, we were again able to give every single cent that was donated - a staggering €1,350 - to the Little Sisters of the Poor in Nice, who do a most beautiful job in caring and providing for the elderly poor who turn to them for shelter, often when there is no one else.

I believe that the service of Passover and Memorial of the Last Supper perfectly demonstrated what lies at the heart of St Michael's; the service was beautiful, the fellowship was warm! Even members of our congregation who couldn't attend came in at the end of the night and took all the crockery away to wash! Thank you to all who helped on the night and the next morning. As a result, the church was in good order ready for our Good Friday devotions. We are a close and loving community, with the door open wide to give a warm welcome to everyone who sets foot in our church.

Well done and thank you to everyone who was part of such a very special evening!

Fiona

Chaplaincy Council

Following elections at our Church Annual Meeting on 14th April, here is the updated list of CCC members

Chairman: Fr Tony
Lay Vice Chair: Jeremy Nordberg
Churchwarden: David Knight
Churchwarden: Vacant
Treasurer: Graeme Batt
Safeguarding: Monica Cashman
Secretary: Fiona Ingham
Synod rep: Justin Hayward
Synod rep: Ian Noble
CCC member: Hugh Mellor
CCC member: David Hart
CCC member: Ian Lawrie

The View from the Presbytère ...



Those of you who are regularly at the Sunday Eucharist will know that I often volunteer to do the various tasks required for a smooth service, but one task I never put my name down for is to do a reading. However, a couple of times recently there have been gaps in the rota, so I've (reluctantly!) stepped in at the last minute. Please do look at the rota if you know you're going to be in church, and sign up for any of the duties you'd like to help with.

And so, last Sunday I reluctantly stepped in at the last minute to read, and as I approached the lectern totally unprepared and feeling a tad nervous, I scanned the reading to get a feel for it before beginning. My

heartbeat immediately slowed on seeing the words '...a stream in the desert'. I was transported back to a talk I gave a couple of years ago to a Women's Group, the title I was given was, 'Streams in the Desert'. I had a lot to say on the subject, so had prepared well, but was terribly nervous. Standing at the lectern in St Michael's was no match for the huge sea of faces I faced at that Women's World Day of Prayer gathering!

Thinking of Sunday's reading reminded me of a letter that Tony had written to me during one of the many times when he was away during our army days; this particular letter was written when he was deployed and living in the desert. Tony hated the heat, the dust and the flies and the fact everything was so dry. In the letter he told a story that I was sure was too farfetched, but nevertheless was absolutely true. He wrote, "Last night I saw a stream in the desert..." He told me that it came from nowhere in the middle of the night and closed in through the front of his tent, under and around his sleeping bag and out the flap at the other end. Apparently, during the night there had been a mighty storm and the whole area had been flooded. But, by morning the waters had completely disappeared and everything seemed pretty much as normal. There was no trace of the rain water, but it had certainly left its mark - the morning air was slightly cooler, slightly fresher, the dust was more settled and what vegetation there was looked more refreshed and revitalised. We could call this an ephemeral stream, where the stream can no longer be seen, but its effect can not only be seen, but also felt.

In a figurative sense, isn't this the same with the Holy Spirit? Like a desert stream is in contrast to its environment, changing that environment with its presence and action, so the Holy Spirit is in contrast to the material world, not visibly seen as such but leaving a sign of its presence in that it changes people and their lives. In praying to the Holy Spirit, we should certainly include a prayer for ourselves, that the Spirit's presence, like the ephemeral stream - hidden from sight - may yet transform us so that the Spirit can be detected in everything we say and in everything we do.

In terms of our daily prayer and Christian action, the stream in the desert must be kept flowing, even if at times the stream flows a little sluggishly it is still there, after all, the work of the Holy Spirit isn't always spiritual elation, more often than not it is discreet and gentle...

Fiona



Fellowship Lunch

You are warmly invited to join us in the church garden for a parish lunch on **Sunday, 9th June** immediately after the Eucharist. Suggested donation of €25 per person.

To help us cater, please add your name to the list at the back of church if you wish to attend, or you can email Fiona (fiona_ingham@hotmail.com)

Want to get in touch?

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