

St. John's Anglican Church, 31 Avenue Carnot, 06500 Menton, France

Website: <http://www.anglicanchurchmenton.com>

Sunday Service – Eucharist – 10.30

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The English Library, St. John's Church, Menton – Closed at present

Books available on loan in The Louvre on Saturday mornings from 9.30-11.30

Refreshments also available

The British Association, Menton Chair: Birgitt Nordbrink Tel. 04 93 28 10 02

A representative of the Association is present in the Louvre, Saturdays 9.30-11.30

The Anglican Community, Bordighera

The English Cemetery Chapel, Via del Campo, Bordighera, Italy

Eucharist Service: usually 2nd Wednesday of each month – 10.30

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Eucharist Service - Sundays 10.30

Holy Communion or Shared Prayers – Wednesdays 12.30

Website: www.anglicanchurchgenoa.org

THE CROSS BORDER

Newsletter
DECEMBER 2015

A D V E N T

ST. JOHN'S ANGLICAN CHURCH
31 Avenue Carnot, 06500 Menton, France

is closed at the moment

EUCCHARIST SERVICE EVERY SUNDAY - 10.30

in the Chapelle St. Roch, Place Saint Roch, Menton

ENGLISH CEMETERY CHAPEL, BORDIGHERA

EUCCHARIST

WEDNESDAY 16 DECEMBER 2015 10.30am

CHRISTMAS MESSAGE
from The Right Reverend Dr. Robert Innes

My eldest daughter, Ruth, used to work for a famous high street retailer. Sadly, the stress in and around Christmas was one of the reasons that she left them. The long hours in the run up to Christmas, the packed shops and stressed shoppers, and the night shifts just before Christmas Day itself when the shop had to be turned around rapidly into Boxing Day 'sales' mode, piled huge pressure on assistants and management alike. Yet everyone knew that Christmas was of vital commercial importance. And not just for this shop. The centre for retail research suggests that many Northern European retailers make more than half of their sales and profits in the three months around Christmas. [Http://www.retailresearch.org/shoppingforxmas](http://www.retailresearch.org/shoppingforxmas).

The main character in the commercial Christmas is of course Saint Nicholas, Father Christmas. But underlying Santa's prominence, is the original Christmas story. Indirectly, at least, the giving of gifts is rooted in the gift of the Christ-child and the costly gifts given by the magi. And so the Christmas story is used to help legitimate the retail sector and the consumption of goods at Christmastime. How ironic, that our own texts can be co-opted to trap us in the very patterns of modern behaviour that many of us would long to escape or at least to control!

In this light, it is important to read the biblical infancy narratives again with fresh eyes and to notice their hugely subversive, liberating and revolutionary intent. In Luke's gospel, when Gabriel announces to Mary that she will have a child, the angel tells her that her baby son will be great and that God will make him a king inheriting the throne of King David. Everyone was well aware that there was already a local king – Herod – and that behind him was the weight of Roman Imperial authority. Yet, after she is visited by Elizabeth, Mary responds with the words of the Magnificat, in which she glorifies the Lord who exalts the humble but brings rulers down from their thrones. When the child is eventually born, the first to see the new born Christ in Luke's gospel are the shepherds, who symbolize the lowest and poorest in society.

The opposition between the infant Jesus and the ruling powers is highlighted even more clearly in Matthew's gospel. Matthew's Jesus is presented from the outset as a king – descended from David, born in the city of Bethlehem, worshipped by Magi. He is immediately a threat to Herod and must be taken for his own safety out of Israel into Egypt. Biblical commentators have usually interpreted the flight into Egypt in theological terms, relating it in some way to Israel's journey into and subsequent exodus from Egypt. But, straightforwardly, it's clear that the infant Jesus is on the run. He is fleeing persecution. He is a refugee.

Thus both Matthew and Luke introduce Jesus as a king who threatens the 1.

An old year ending - A new year beginning !

It is time to take stock and give thanks:

First of all to God our heavenly Father for all the blessings we have received this past year; for his protection, comfort and guidance. We thank our council, wardens, David and the locums David Perks and Neville Griffiths, who faced each problem with courage and commitment. We thank the congregation who continued to support us.

A miracle occurred when Margaret Turner's funeral took place in St. John's church, as she had desired. It was the first service since the disaster five years ago. Other miracles followed when, for a few weeks in October/November, the Eucharist and a baptism were celebrated in the church. It was a shock to some to see the damage done to the annex, which was still awaiting restoration to begin, but admiration for those who had cleared and cleaned the church. Another set-back when the church was told that it had to have a document certifying the building was safe before further services could be held inside. Five years of bureaucratic obstacles! We thank God for giving perseverance to those facing these problems.

Of course, there was also the demise of the digital hymn player – no more accompaniment during services. However, a strong male voice from a visitor bore us all along for a few Sundays and gave us the courage to continue. We thank God and ask his blessing on our attempts when we sing new tunes.

So, we are back in St. Roch – rescued by the Roman Catholic church, who have shown their friendship again and generously allowed us to use their chapel. It has become a second home to us. We thank them.

We look forward to David's return. His mother died while he was with his family in South Africa and he thanks God that he was able to be there with her. Our thoughts and prayers are with him and his family.

The New Church Year - looking forward to the birth of Jesus – starts on Sunday 29 November. David will be there with us.

We pray in hope that it will be a year of more growth in our spiritual lives, of working together in fellowship to further our church on the Riviera and among the people who either live here or visit us.

Let us thank God for the opportunities he lays before us and ask Him that we may be filled with his love and strength, fortitude and cheerfulness, openness and wisdom in whatever we find in the year ahead.

A JOYFUL AND PEACEFUL CHRISTMAS!
and

A HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL OUR READERS!

READINGS IN DECEMBER - YEAR C

6 th	Second Sunday in Advent	First Reading Canticle Second Reading Gospel	Malachi 3. 1-4 Luke 1. 68-79 Philippians1. 3-11 Luke 3. 1-6
13 th	Third Sunday in Advent	First Reading Canticle Second Reading Gospel	Zephania 3. 14-20 Isaiah 12.2-6 Philippians 4. 4-7 Luke 3. 7-18
20 th	Fourth Sunday in Advent	First Reading Psalm Second Reading Gospel	Micah 5. 2-5a 80. 1-7 Hebrews 10. 5-10 Luke 1. 39-45, (46-55)
25 th	CHRISTMAS DAY	First Reading Psalm Second Reading Gospel	Isaiah 52. 7-10 98 Hebrews 1. 1-4, (5-12) John 1. 1-14
27 th	Christmas 1	First Reading Psalm Second Reading Gospel	1 Samuel 2. 18-20, 26 148 Colossians 3. 12-17 Luke 2. 41-52

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ADVENT – A Prayer to use from time to time during the Advent season

Our heavenly Father,
as once again we prepare for Christmas,
help us find time in our busy lives for quiet and thought and prayer,
that we may reflect upon the wonder of your love
and allow the story of the Saviour's birth to penetrate our hearts and minds.
So may our joy be deeper,
our worship more real,
and our lives worthier of all that you have done for us
through the coming of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen

6. oppressive powers governing first century Israel. Jesus is a 'prince of peace' whose kingdom is founded on very different principles from the military rule that underpinned the 'pax Romana'. His kingdom is one where the first will be last and the last first. Even in his birth and infancy he is identified with the poor, the persecuted and the refugee.

5. Europe faces an ongoing refugee crisis. Many towns and cities across the whole continent are receiving large numbers of migrants. Our own parishes and chaplaincies are doing what they can to bring aid and assistance. There is no easy solution to the crisis. The long term solutions involve peace building and the generation of economic prosperity in the Middle East and Africa. Medium term solutions might involve the creation of safe routes and the speedier processing of asylum applications. But in the short term, the particular calling of the church is to pray and to work for the welfare of those who have been forced to flee their homes and who face a European winter. The book of Deuteronomy 10:19 teaches: 'You are to love the stranger for you were strangers in the land of Egypt.' We remember that this was how Jesus began his infant life too.

I have heard some wonderful and deeply moving stories of how care for the stranger has brought unexpected grace. A teacher was telling me how pupils at her school found a new sense of meaning and purpose through ministering to the Syrians who had arrived in their town. Clergy have told me how their congregations have laid aside minor disagreements when faced with the urgency of a common mission and purpose.

This Christmas, we are summoned to see the world with divine perspective and compassion. For our own good and for the good of others, we are invited to reclaim the Christmas story! We are to preach, proclaim and live the amazing news that God enters his own creation to save, console and heal the poor and the lost. God comes amongst us as a vulnerable baby sharing our own human weaknesses and vulnerabilities. He becomes human so that we become divine (to quote Athanasius), but he also becomes human so that we can become more fully human ourselves. And in humanity to reach out beyond ourselves to others as he has reached out to us. That is the real gift.

Finally – aside from the commercial pressures – I am very aware that the Christmas season puts particular opportunities and pressures in the way of our chaplaincies. We are typically receiving lots of visitors who don't normally darken the doors of our churches. At the same time, many regular church members are away at Christmas itself, visiting family or friends. So those that remain have to work especially hard to keep everything running and to provide a cheerful welcome.

To all those who sustain and enable our worship over Christmas I give my warm and sincere thanks: to our clergy, lay readers and leaders, musicians, welcomers, wardens, caterers and cleaners.

And may God whose message of peace was sung by the angels to herald the birth of his Son, bring his peace to our hearts, our homes, our families and our world over this Christmas time.

+ **Robert Gibraltar in Europe**

Spelling Error /correction - apologies to SIAN Griffiths. In the two previous issues of the Cross Border my head told my hands what to write, but the hands did not obey, they wrote Sean instead of Sian. I am so sorry Sian. Editor

CHARLES DICKENS

Charles Dickens the author of the much loved seasonal book 'A Christmas Carol' lived in Genova between 1844-1845. Towards the end of his book Scrooge said to Bob Cratchit, *“A Merry Christmas, Bob! - a merrier Christmas Bob, my good fellow, than I have given you for many a year. I'll raise your salary, and endeavour to assist your struggling family, and we will discuss your affairs this very afternoon, over a Christmas bowl of smoking bishop.”* So, what is Smoking Bishop? .. read on

- Ingredients : 5 unpeeled sweet oranges
- 1 unpeeled grapefruit
- 36 cloves
- ¼ pound of sugar (125g.)
- 2 bottles of red wine (strong)
- 1 bottle of port

Wash the fruit and bake them in the oven until they are brownish. Turn once. Put them into a warmed earthenware bowl with six cloves pricked into each. Add the sugar and pour in the wine – not the port. Cover and leave in a warm place for a day. Squeeze the fruit into the wine and strain. Add the port and heat. DO NOT BOIL!

Serve smoking hot in small wine glasses. Serves 15 to 20 .

BELIEVE : When someone says it can't be done,
Remember the sun, moon and earth
and all her stars
were fashioned for you,
and are cheering for you.

CHOOSE : When someone says it can't be done,
Swim bravely through the river of words;
swim upstream,
breathe deeply
and open your eyes.

PRESS ON : When someone says it can't be done,
learn to hear your heart,
to use your wings,
to own your truth.
Press on, friend;
take Faith's warm hand in yours
and press on.

Rachel Wallace-Oberle.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year - in 21languages

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|---|--|
| Apache (Western) – Gozhqq Keshmish | Arabic – I'D Miilad Said ous Sana Saida |
| Croatian – Sretanb Bozic | Danish – Glaedelig Jul og godt nytar |
| Farsi – Sal-e no mubarak | French – Joyeux Noel et Bonne Année! |
| German – Frohliche Weihnachten und ein gluckliches Neues Jahr ! | Greek – Kala Christougenna
Ki'eftihismenos O Kenourios |
| Hebrew – Mo'adim Lesimkha. Shanah Tova | Italian – Buon Natale e Felice Anno Nuovo |
| Irish – Nollaig Shona Dhuit | Japanese – Shinnen omedeto.
Kurisumasu Omedeto |
| Korean – Sung Tan Chuk Ha | Nepali – Krist Yesu Ko Shuva Janma Utsav Ko Upalaxhma Hardik |
| Maori – Kiaorana e kia manuia rava i teia Kiritimeti e te Mataiti Ou | Samoan – la manuia le Kilisimasi ma le tausaga fou |
| Russian – Pozdrevlyayu s prazdnikom Rozhdestva i s Novim Godom | Swedish – God Jul och Gott Nytt Ar |
| Spanish – Feliz Natividad y Prospero Ano Nuevo | Ukrainian – Veseloho Vam Rizdva I Shchastlyvoho Novoho Roku ! |
| Hindi - Shubh Naya Baras | |

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