

Santa Margarita, Menorca - PCC Chair / Chaplain's Report - 2020-2021

The chaplain, as chair of the PCC, is expected to give a report on the work of the PCC during the past year. Well, in the 14 months since the last annual meeting, the PCC's work, like the rest of chaplaincy life, has been constrained by the COVID-19 pandemic and its repercussions. In common with the rest of the world, our PCC has had to find different ways of operating. As life in general has been largely restricted, so has the life of this chaplaincy. Our main preoccupation has been to ensure that proper measures are followed to protect the health and safety of those within our community, which includes physical and health precautions, but which also has to address the way in which we protect the emotional and spiritual life of our extended community of faith. The few PCC meetings that have taken place have been held partly in the church and partly via Zoom, or by use of e-mail where we needed to establish consensus, or have a recorded vote.



Presumably it is well known by now that the worship of our chaplaincy has continued through the internet. Recorded services have been offered every Sunday and Wednesday for 14 months. We were blessed to have been spared mandatory total closure of the church, which of course was not the case in Britain, and I am blessed with a supportive wife, so for several months Kate and I maintained the worship of the church while others joined us electronically. We were pioneering in hosting a 'virtual

visit' by our archdeacon, David Waller, in May 2020, during which he preached and met with the chaplaincy via Zoom after the morning service. The PCC concurred with reopening of Wednesday worship in August 2020, and although at this point we are officially closed for Sunday worship, a select group has been worshipping on Sundays to ensure that we are fully aware of the protocols to be followed. One of the first tasks of the new PCC will be to decide when to



reopen for Sunday worship officially, subject to the restrictions, requirements and recommendations of the Balearic government and the Diocese in Europe. Also, several people have suggested that they would like to see regular communal gatherings via Zoom (a sort of virtual coffee morning), which seems to be a good idea, although no one has yet stepped forward and offered to organise this.



At this point, I should also mention that after declining the invitation several times, I have agreed to accept the role of Area Dean for Northern Spain and the Balearics. The next year is going to be an interesting one in this regard, since three new chaplains will be taking up their positions in Palma and Puerto Pollença in Mallorca, and in Ibiza.

Maintaining our commitment to provide some sort of supportive ministry to those in need has not been easy, especially since we know that there has been a considerable increase in the number of families in need in Menorca. We have been able to contribute to the purchase of cleaning and sanitisation supplies for the Red Cross, to offer a large number of vouchers for prepared meals at Christmas, and latterly to contribute to the bulk purchase of food in conjunction with the Rotary Club of Menorca.



I wish to give five special sets of thanks. First, to Penny Hargrave, who stepped into the role of treasurer a couple of years ago, and who had to preside over rather difficult circumstances as the chaplaincy finances appeared to be precarious until the online

'Donate' button started to demonstrate how generous our supporters can be. Penny and Keith will be leaving Menorca later this year, and she has resigned as treasurer. We are very fortunate that Suzanne Hodges has stepped into that role, for which we should all be grateful. Meanwhile, Penny and Keith have been strong supporters of this chaplaincy, contributing to the social life of the church, raising funds and offering advice and feedback. They will be missed. Secondly, to Margaret Jones, who has had to do an awful lot of new things during the year, not least of which has been to become proficient in the use of Zoom, and who together with Trevor has kept in touch through e-mail and phone with a very wide swathe of regular and occasional members of the community of Santa Margarita; she also shared with me the constantly moving target of postponed wedding blessings. Thirdly, to the wardens, who have been a real source of support and encouragement, and who have patiently, often without real recognition, and certainly without fanfare, conducted the management of chaplaincy affairs in an unprecedented situation. Fourthly to Dianne Carter, who despite expressing her wish a year ago to step down from her responsibilities within the chaplaincy for family reasons, has continued to support the families who are connected to our chaplaincy through online offerings (see 'Weekly Bundles,' below). Finally, to Kate, who has had to endure hours of solitude while I sit in front of a computer, editing worship video, or staring at an empty screen hoping for inspiration!

Eventually, things will return to some sort of 'new normal' as vaccinations take effect and restrictions are reduced. No one can know when we will be able to worship without wearing masks, or sing in church, or consume wine with our communion bread. I have repeatedly quoted the Bishop of Leeds, Nick Baines, who suggested that we should be asking ourselves four questions as we move ahead. What have we lost that we wish to regain? What have we lost that needs to remain lost? What have we gained that we ought to retain? And what have we gained that we need to relinquish, because it has only temporary benefit? One example of something gained is online worship, that has allowed a worshipping community to be maintained for the past 14 months. Are we going to retain this indefinitely, or should we aim for a deadline when it will be withdrawn? This does not apply only to our own chaplaincy. Many of us have been able to take advantage of online worship on a diocesan-wide basis, which has given us an appreciation for the wider community within which we exist, and more regular access to our archdeacon and our two bishops. I suspect that this is one of those things gained that we will want to retain.

There is one other question that is going to require the attention of the new PCC. A 'For Sale' sign has appeared on the door that opens into the garden behind the chapel of Santa Margarita. The Roman Catholic diocese wishes to sell this plot of land, and while it is willing to entertain offers from the Anglican Church, it will not wait indefinitely for an offer. Should the chaplaincy begin to raise funds to purchase the property? Should we begin to formulate plans for use of the land? Should we simply step back and let the land be sold? If we do the latter, we will acquire new neighbours, who will almost certainly want to develop the plot. This is going to be a challenging question without any quick, easy answers, and the timing leaves much to be desired.



Finally, as Kate and I approach the completion of eight years at Santa Margarita, I wish to say (not for the first time) how grateful we both are for the spirit of care and nurture that we have experienced. I know that we are fortunate, since this is not the case in all chaplaincies within the Diocese in Europe. Thanks be to all who contribute to our well-being in many different ways. We are blessed to be here, and to be able to say with true appreciation every Sunday: the Lord is here; his Spirit is with us.

Young Families in Church - 2020

JaFfA (Jesus a Friend for All) CLUB

The final JaFfA was held in February 2020 - 'The Final Countdown' - just over seven years old, and 80 gatherings plus the final one.

A bitter sweet experience - looking back over the years with wonder - what a privilege to journey with these families over this time.

FOOTSTEPS

Footsteps was held on three occasions in 2020, during the 11:00am Eucharist. Due to the restrictions imposed by COVID-19, this ministry moved to on-line, and is covered in this report as WEEKLY BUNDLES (below).

SMALL SAINTS OF CIUTADELLA

Small Saints met as often as possible during 2020, on Saturday mornings - in the chapel of the Carmelitas or at the open air chapel at Cala'n Bosc. It was a blessing to share prayerfully with the Carmelite sisters during the year; and for the young families to meet in an open space during the summer months.



WEEKLY BUNDLES

It seemed important to offer support to all young families connected with the chaplaincy of S^a Margarita when the pandemic first 'hit' in 2020. So, from Mothering Sunday, weekly 'bundles' were sent out. They were initially mailed to our resident island families, then also to our 'swallow' families. Then, to any other families - associated via baptism or word of mouth - who wished to participate. What was a 'bundle'?

Based normally on the theme of the gospel for any particular Sunday (but not always), the bundle included, but not necessarily all of these resources on a weekly basis:

- a power point presentation of one of the lectionary readings for that Sunday;
- a web link to a presentation based on the Godly Play 'method';
- an age-appropriate reflection on that reading;
- an activity;
- a colouring page, or a word search, or a maze;
- a prayer and/or hymn/praise song;
- ... the list goes on ...