

# **The Church of the Holy Ghost**

**Genoa's English speaking church**



**June 2011**

# NEWS UPDATE

After two weeks in the wonderful company of Father Rajinder and Lorna who we thank greatly for their time and energy, we welcome back Father Crispin and then Father Michael and Daphne.

On 29<sup>th</sup> May a short council meeting was held: chaired first by Flora and then Father Rajinder. Reports were given by the three sub-committees:

- a) Neil, for the fabric and maintenance committee, told us that work on the windows behind the altar is taking longer to complete as there are no actual window frames. The extra expenditure to complete the work and costs has been approved by the council. The builder should return to repair the cross. The steeplejack has to come again.
- b) Ruth, for the social and fundraising committee, proposed the Saturday of the second week of July as an afternoon tea and book sale. Details will be given in due course.
- c) Vicky, for the worship and outreach committee, requested help with the magazine. No conclusion was reached on All Age Services and Bible study groups. Anyone interested in either of these areas should speak to Vicky.

The church is usually closed in the month of August to allow for cleaning and for the fact that there is no chaplain and very few people around. This year the decision to close has not been confirmed as there are people willing to organise and attend DIY services. Watch this space!

Meanwhile Luca is busy trying to organize all sorts of football things... watch this space too!!!

## Father Crispin Harris



***We welcome Father Crispin back to Genoa and hope he enjoys his time with us.***

***“I am looking forward to arriving in Genoa this coming Saturday and am staying with Michael and Daphne the day before, so this is a very hurried reply.***

***Michael and I were in the same class at school in 1948 so we go back a long way. We have always kept in touch, though after ordination he went to Trinidad and then back to England and I***

***after joining the Community of the Resurrection spent 21 years with CR in South Africa. I was elected its Superior 1997-2002 but now I live a quiet life at our monastery in Mirfield near Huddersfield, West Yorkshire. I have known Daphne from 1962 and was best man at their wedding. They have always been generous in inviting me to come on holiday with them, knowing that I am an impoverished monk!”***

*Crispin Harris*

## Easter in Ecuador

An article by our friend Helen Pugh

As many of you know, I have a 'slight' obsession with Ecuador, a small but very geographically and culturally diverse country bordered by Peru and Colombia. I spend a fair amount of time there, especially in the jungle town of Tena, but not usually at Easter so this year was different.

The first thing you notice about Ecuadorian Holy Week is the lack of chocolate egg adverts. Like Christmas, Easter in Ecuador has not lost its spirituality to consumerism. No one appropriates the festival for what it is not.

I'm Anglican by upbringing, possibly Methodist by leaning, but in Ecuador I go to Catholic Mass. I quite like absorbing different services as I feel that all Christian denominations have something different and worthwhile to offer. Besides, my boyfriend's family are Catholic as are about 99% of the country's 15 million inhabitants.

The new priest in Tena is quite innovative, imaginative and also a good speaker. He led services every day for Holy Week (sometimes more than one!) and I went to four in total. Accompanying me were hordes of my boyfriend's nieces and nephews (he has about 30 in total so not all of them!) and they get very excited by Church especially when they can help at the altar. Holy Week Festivities meant 20 or so children could help so excitement doubled! Allowing so many children was another reason why the church was so packed during the week.

On Palm Sunday, the plan was to process to the church following a man on a donkey, but the donkey had escaped so instead we attended the evening service where people brought rosemary branches and palm leaves to be blessed and placed in their homes.

On Maundy Thursday, the priest followed Jesus' example by washing the feet of twelve local boys and girls. This humble gesture really moved me. Ecuador is still plagued by rampant chauvinism and racism and here was a mixed-race (*mestizo*) grown man washing the feet of twelve mainly indigenous boys and girls.

On Good Friday, all of the eight television channels showed back-to-back films about Jesus' death so we were able to think about and contemplate this incredible story all day. Then we went to mass at 3pm. For the entire first hour of the service, three men were tied to crosses to represent Jesus and the two criminals, and they were surrounded by children in the role of mourners. In his sermon, the priest said something that made me stop and think. On the cross, one criminal asked Jesus, "Aren't you the Messiah? Save yourself and us!" The second instead said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom" (Luke 23). Often we say to God, "Save me from this," or "Get rid of this problem for me," whereas our response should be that of the second criminal. That's not to say that we shouldn't ask for help in times of trouble as many parts of the Bible show, but perhaps that we should remember too what Our Father in Heaven has planned for us.

On Saturday, people brought water and paintings to be blessed, but most spectacularly, eighty children and adults were baptised within an hour. That was definitely not something I'd seen before; I can't imagine what it must have been like to see thousands be baptised in one day, like in Peter's time!



I think we often go to 'developing' countries with the idea of 'improving' them, 'making a difference' and 'giving something back to the world', but I feel that it should be an interchange of ideas and beliefs. Definitely in terms of celebrating religious festivals for what they are, Ecuador could teach us a lot.

*Here is a photo of Helen and her godson, baptized in Ecuador in 2008*

# Diary Dates For June and July

## June

**Saturday 4<sup>th</sup>** Church Cleaning

**Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup>** visit from John Payne our Priest In Charge

## July

**Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup>** Church Cleaning

**Saturday 9<sup>th</sup>** Tea and Book sale

Details of all events will be given in church nearer the time.

### Refreshments for June

5<sup>th</sup> Liz  
12<sup>th</sup> Alexia  
19<sup>th</sup> Ann  
26<sup>th</sup> Kalina

Please remember to swap with someone else if you are unable to provide refreshments on the day which has been assigned to you.

## Gospel Readings for the months of June and July

### June

#### **5<sup>th</sup> June-**

Luke 24: 44- end

#### **Sunday after Ascension Day**

The Ascension

#### **12<sup>th</sup> June-**

John 20: 19-23

#### **Pentecost**

Jesus appears to His Disciples

#### **19<sup>th</sup> June-**

Matthew 28: 16-20

#### **Trinity Sunday**

Jesus appears to His Disciples

#### **26<sup>th</sup> June-**

John 6: 51-58

#### **1<sup>st</sup> after Trinity (Corpus Christi)**

The bread of life

### July

#### **3<sup>rd</sup> July-**

Matthew 11: 16-19, 25

#### **2<sup>nd</sup> after Trinity (St Thomas)**

Come to me and rest

#### **10<sup>th</sup> July-**

Matthew 13: 1-9, 18-23

#### **3<sup>rd</sup> after Trinity**

The parable of the sower

#### **17<sup>th</sup> July-**

Matthew 13: 24-30, 36-43

#### **4<sup>th</sup> after Trinity**

The parable of the weeds

#### **24<sup>th</sup> July-**

Matthew 13: 31-33, 44-52

#### **5<sup>th</sup> after Trinity**

Parables of the mustard seed and the pearl

#### **31<sup>st</sup> July-**

Matthew 14: 13-21

#### **6<sup>th</sup> after Trinity**

The feeding of the five thousand

## Pentecost

*Pentecost - Duccio di Buoninsegna (1308) Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena*

**The Church** celebrates Pentecost (so called because it is fifty days after Easter Day) as the day on which the Holy Spirit descended upon the apostles, gathered in an upper room with Mary, mother of Jesus, "as a mighty, rushing wind", fulfilling Jesus' promise when he "breathed on them", as recorded in John's Gospel (chapter 20).



This event, which marks the beginning of the Church, is recorded in the book of Acts of the Apostles, chapter 2. The 14th century Sienese painting by Duccio (above) illustrates the moment when the Bible says the Spirit descended upon the gathering of Christians in the form of tongues of fire. The Holy Spirit gave the apostles gifts of grace through which they would undertake the evangelical mission of the Church. On the day of Pentecost, the apostles were given the miraculous "gift of tongues" so that everyone from every country understood the Christians' inspired message of salvation as if they were hearing it in their own languages. Thousands were converted by the preaching of Peter and the other apostles.

The Solemnity of Pentecost ends the Easter season. After Pentecost, the Easter candle is kept in the baptistery or near the baptismal font, and is lighted only for a baptism. Three Solemnities are celebrated in the weeks immediately following Pentecost: Trinity Sunday, Corpus Christi (The Body and Blood of Christ) and the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

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## An Ecumenical Update

*from Giovanni Battista Forlino*

"In May 2011 the Anglican community of Genoa was able to take part in two important ecumenical, interreligious meetings: the first on 11th May at the Centro Banchi, with the local Catholic community and representatives of the Israelitic Community. Father Geoffrey Smith took part, accompanied by Alexia Piaggio and Giovanni who provided translation and support. Father Geoff proposed a reflection on the second and third letters of Saint John, highlighting, on one hand, the value of hospitality and, on the other, how to curb the desires of protagonism within the community and the need to exclude those who deny the humanity of Jesus (the Gnostics)

On 17th May, at the church of di San Marco al Molo (which is well worth a visit thanks to its historic, architectonic and artistic value, due especially to the black stone columns in the naves which date from the eleventh and twelfth centuries) an Ecumenical meeting of prayer for peace was held, with the participation of representatives of all the main Christian Communities present in Genoa. Giovanni, as Ecumenical representative was present for the Anglican community. During the meeting, the Ecumenical prayer for peace was read; a few copies of which are available in English at the back of the church. Monsignor Paletti (Vescovo Ausiliare per Genova) and Pastora Meinecke (Chiesa Evangelica Luterana) provided the reflections. Brief refreshments followed the meeting."

**Here is the intercession text for the Pentecost meeting.**

*We pray that peace and harmony will reign amongst all peoples of the earth, that wars may cease and hate and resentment stop. We pray for those in need and difficulty, that the Providence of God and the compassion of their fellow men sustain them.*

## **Social Ecumenism as Practiced in an Era of Climate Change.**

An article published in the summer edition of 'Green Christian'

*By Revd. Geoff Smith and Revd. John Smith*

By New Year's Day 2101 humanity will have survived the worst of global warming, higher temperatures and sea levels, intense droughts and storms and has somehow succeeded in stabilising the Earth's climate below a rise of 2<sup>0</sup>. Atmospheric gas concentrations have peaked between 450ppmv and are declining, global temperatures are returning to their pre-warming levels, the natural world is healing and the international social contract finally agreed in 2011 held. Humanity, though lower in numbers and living sustainably, is, as a whole, better fed, healthier and more prosperous. Human beings have managed to save a world threatened by a catastrophe of their own making. A more secure, stable world, growing strongly, with a safe natural environment and with less poverty. A world acting together. **Worldwatch Institute.State of the World, 2009.**

### **The Christian Basis**

Christ came to restore broken relationships. This divine response to the human condition opens up the possibility of our committing ourselves to living authentic lives in authentic communities.

Christ came to share, he left us with the simple instruction to break bread and spill wine 'in remembrance'. This spills powerfully over into a human ethic for shared living; for the disciples, the 'common purse, for Peter and Paul the claims of the Jerusalem Church on the wealth of the new churches in Asia Minor, the parables of the loaves and fishes and the Samaritan's 'neighbour'.

For men and women in Christian and human social communities, sharing means sustainability.

Yet everywhere the detritus of over consumption threatens to overwhelm our society and the planet, from the carbon dioxide of our energy wasting lifestyle to the plastic, packaging, flotsam and rubbish. It is no longer possible to sail the seas, walk the shoreline, a country lane or a footpath through fields without being confronted with the mounting rubbish that is accumulating with the attendant threat to wildlife. This sheer unsightliness is a constant reminder of the dis-respect that human beings show each other and the created order as litter is tossed from cars and thrown away without regard for the environment or the consequences.

Christ came in human form to live as a neighbour in community. He took part in local community life, attended weddings, enjoyed a drink (at least ensured that others did) visited his friends families, cared for those around him and with whom he made community. He scandalised leaders by hanging out with the wrong sort and his radical new message and shocking ways found favour with the poor, the slaves, the dispossessed and those who needed healing.

For Christians and for the church this may well mean re-acquiring the habits of traditional approaches to ministry i.e. visiting, trusting, being, hanging around, drinking in the local pub, meeting people where they are in context. In the countryside pastoral work is best done over gates, and in lambing sheds and milking parlours, whilst walking the dogs. This means working in community with organisations that are not church. Christians need to be inclusive not exclusive. There should be no false dichotomy between faith, life and work. Lives should not be compartmentalised. We are called to make community.

*This is only part of a long article which Father Geoff co-wrote. If you are interested in reading all of it please ask Vicky who will give you the full version.*

## Light One Candle

Is there any point in my struggling to live sustainably when so many - including emerging nations - are indifferent to the earth's worth and restraints? And the bulldozers continue to roar. I care, but what good does it do?

Are not my actions, like myself and my thoughts, dismissed like seeds in a gale? What good are my frail efforts at personal and community sustainability? Mother Teresa agreed that one's efforts were only a drop in the ocean, but added that the ocean would be smaller without that drop. The anthropologist Margaret Mead, when asked if the actions of a few committed persons could change the world replied, 'It's the only thing that ever has'. Robert F. Kennedy said that 'each of us can work to change a small portion of events, in the least of these actions will be written the history of this generation'. When we live sustainably locally, in community with others who share our ideals and efforts, we are part of a holistic countercultural movement offering hope and light.

When families who have lived on ancestral land for centuries leave their hereditary fields, as they do in parts of Africa , Asia , South America , and even in the west today, the world and its future grow darker. As Indian farm woman Chandramma said sadly, 'A farm without seeds is like a home without light'. But each of us can be a candle. And we all know the saying: 'It's better to light one candle than to curse the darkness'.

People of all religions, and of none, wonder if they make a difference. Do my little acts matter? The biblical scholar C.F.D Moule said he was asked this question more than any other. He replied, 'Nothing is wasted, all good acts contribute to the approaching kingdom'. In the words of the Colossians hymn so loved by the Jesuit paleontologist Teilhard de Chardin, 'In Him all things cohere' (Col. 1.17). Even in dark times all good actions, no matter how slight, burn brightly.

We may be a drop in the ocean, a candle lit in the dark, but, in Christ and together, we can win.

Edward Echlin

(Author of *Climate and Christ, A Prophetic Alternative* , Columba, 2010.)

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## Notices

**Thanks** Many thanks to Father Rajinder and Lorna for their brief but intense visit to Genoa. We very much look forward to seeing them back another time. This month we thank Father Crispin and Father Geoff for their contributions to the magazine. PLEASE contact Vicky or Wendy if you would like to make a contribution next month. (see next item) Thanks to the 3 sub-committees was offered during the council meeting of 29<sup>th</sup> May.

**Magazine** Help is needed in the production of the monthly magazine, which will otherwise become a monthly sheet of A4. People are needed to- prepare the Bible readings page, organize the Diary Dates page, write articles

**Church On line** Many thanks to Father Chris Pearson who has put the June edition of the magazine on line. Go to the church website to find the link. [www.anglicanchurchgenoa.org](http://www.anglicanchurchgenoa.org)

**English speaking babysitter wanted** We have received this request from a friend of Helen. If anyone can help please contact Vicky, Alexia or Wendy.

*'I would like to find an English speaking nanny for my 3 year old. As she's very young I thought that half a day a week would be enough, or collect her from nursery, bring her back home and stay with her for an hour a day. I wondered if you knew anyone or could suggest someone in Genoa who could help.'*

**Sponsorship** If you or anyone you know may be interested in placing a small advertisement in the magazine please contact the secretary on [secretary@anglicanchurchgenoa.org](mailto:secretary@anglicanchurchgenoa.org)