



Jubilate

**The Magazine of the Chaplaincy of Christ the Good Shepherd,
Poitou-Charentes**



Sunday 3rd January 2021

For all the possibilities ahead
in this New Year,
make us thankful, O Lord.

Give us wisdom, courage and
discernment
in the face of chaos, despair or fear.

Help us to see how,
in our circumstances,
we can contribute towards
peace, faith and love.

And give us the will
to translate our desires
into actions

The Second Sunday of Christmas

Collects

Almighty God,
in the birth of your Son
you have poured on us the new light of your incarnate Word,
and shown us the fullness of your love:
help us to walk in his light and dwell in his love
that we may know the fullness of his joy;

God our Father,
in love you sent your Son
that the world may have life:
lead us to seek him among the outcast
and to find him in those in need,

All praise to you,
almighty God and heavenly king,
who sent your Son into the world
to take our nature upon him
and to be born of a pure virgin:
grant that, as we are born again in him,
so he may continually dwell in us
and reign on earth as he reigns in heaven,
now and for ever.

Bible Readings

Jeremiah 31.7-14

Psalm 147.13-21

Ephesians 1.3-14

John 1.[1-9]10-18

Some words of encouragement for the New Year
(taken from 'Life with Him' by Jennifer Collins)

Today, Jesus says

To the lonely: I will come to be your companion,
for I know what it's like to be lonely

To the weak in spirit: I will come to be with you,
for I have faced temptations
and difficult decisions

To the unsure: I will come to lead you like a shepherd.
I understand
and have spent much time with my Father in prayer

To the addict: I will come to take away your cravings and dependency,
and give you my love in your heart

To the depressed: I will come to nourish your soul
and give you a purpose for living

To the sick: I will come to hold your hand,
for I know what it's like to suffer and experience pain

To those who weep: I will come to wipe away your tears,
for I know what it's like to cry

To the mourning: I will come to share your sorrow,
for I know what it's like to lose a loved one

To the dying: I will come to be your companion
as you journey towards the celestial city
which is your home

Prayer vigil

It has been our custom in the Chaplaincy to hold a prayer vigil in January during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, usually on the Monday to incorporate the monthly prayer meeting. At the moment church seems very strange, occurring mostly via Zoom or Facebook and with no Chaplain, but the current situation should not rule out holding our usual prayer vigil. Quite the opposite – prayer in these difficult times, seeking God’s will for us as a Chaplaincy, nationally, internationally and as individuals, is of the greatest importance. Therefore, I would like to encourage you to join in the vigil in 2021.

The aim is to cover the 24 hours from midnight of Sunday 17th January to midnight on Monday 18th January in continuous prayer.

Those taking part would each undertake to **pray for one hour** in their own home and as they feel led, for the church, the world and for individuals. In order that we can ensure that the whole 24 hours is covered could I ask you to email me at annwhite79120@gmail.com to let me know your chosen hour. It is planned to have at least 1 person praying each hour but of course if several people are praying at the same time, that is even better. I will collate all the slots. Please, when you reserve a slot would you include your email address so that I can remind you of your chosen slot and let you know who will be praying at the same time.

Thanking you in advance and looking forward to hearing from many of you;

Ann White

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“Together in Prayer” is now being published as a document separate from *Jubilate*.

This is to make it easier to print out and keep in your Bible, by your bedside or wherever you pray.

If you have not received your copy of “TIP”, please contact david.hawken@orange.fr

Don't forget to visit the Chaplaincy website:

www.church-in-france.com

A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAPLAINCY TREASURER

2020 has given us very few opportunities for congregational worship. Members who could attend were able to make their offertory. Some have sent cheques or made bank transfers, but others have been unable to do so.

NOW is a good time to make your financial contribution towards the work of the Chaplaincy.

- * You can join the Planned Giving Envelope Scheme (just ask!)
- * You can make out a cheque payable to ***The Chaplaincy of Poitou-Charentes*** and send it to me in the post (details at the end)
- * You can set up a ***virement*** direct from your Bank for a one-off payment or for regular (perhaps monthly) giving:

Raison Sociale:	The Chaplaincy of Poitou-Charentes
Banque:	BNP Paribas, Civray
RIB	30004 00359 00010005280 38
IBAN	FR76 3000 4003 5900 0100 0528 038
BIC	BNPAFRPPROC

The *virement* can also be linked to the ***Reçu Fiscal*** tax rebate scheme (just ask!)

Please give prayerful consideration to your giving for 2021.

If you would like further information, **just ask**. And please send your cheque to:

WILLIAM JONES

2 chemin du Breuil, 16720 Saint Même les Carrières

Tel : 05 45 82 12 93

EMAIL : williamjones@orange.fr

Thank you.

We must remember that Jesus is the same yesterday, today and for ever

New Year - A Time to Wait

Wait only upon God; my soul, be still,
And let thy God unfold His perfect will.
Thou fain wouldst follow Him throughout this year,
Thou fain with listening heart His voice wouldst hear,
Thou fain wouldst be a passive instrument
Possessed by God, and ever Spirit-sent upon His service sweet –
then be thou still,
For only thus can He in thee fulfil His heart's desire.
Oh, hinder not His hand,
From fashioning the vessel He hath planned.
Be silent unto God, and thou shall know
The quiet, holy calm He doth bestow
On those who wait on Him;
so shalt thou bear His presence, and His life and light
e'en where the night is darkest,
and thine earthly days shall show His love, and sound His glorious praise.
And He will work with hand unfettered, free,
His high and holy purposes through thee.
First on thee must that hand of power be turned,
Till in His love's strong fire thy dross is burned,
And thou come forth a vessel for thy Lord, So frail and empty.
Yet, since He hath poured into thine emptiness His life, His love,
Henceforth through thee the power of God shall move And He will work for thee.
Stand still and see the victories thy God will gain for thee;
So silent, yet so irresistible, Thy God shall do the thing impossible.
Oh, question not henceforth what thou canst do;
Thou canst do nought. But He will carry through the work where human energy had failed,
Where all thy best endeavours had availed thee nothing.
Then, my soul, wait and be still;
Thy God shall work for thee His perfect will.
If thou wilt take no less, His best shall be
Thy portion now and through eternity.

– Freda Hanbury (Poetry & Hymn Writer from Tunbridge Wells, Kent c;1900)

EPIPHANY - A WHIMSY



Hallo, reader! I'm a star. Not just a 'celebrity', a **STAR, A REAL STAR**. I expect you've seen me when you look up at the night sky, only I'm not as bright as I used to be. (You must know people like that!) Let me tell you my story:

It was around 12 BC (only, of course, we didn't know it was BC, because *He* hadn't yet arrived). I spotted Halley's Comet whizzing towards me. In those day comets worked for the Celestial Messaging Service, and Young Hal, as we called him, had a message for me. It was from the Archangels' Information Office: it even had the Alpha/Omega imprint on it. I think it was from Gabriel himself, although I could never actually find out. Anyway, this was going to be my big chance for "Star-dom". My orders were to go first to a place somewhere out East (The Official Secrets Act prevents me from saying exactly where, but Southend, it wasn't). It took me several years to get there: travel around the heavens is not that quick when you have zillions of kilometres to cover and you have to burst out of your usual orbit, but eventually I reached my initial destination. And who should be arriving at the same time – none other than three Magi. Now I don't believe in 'magic'; I think God orders things much better than that, but these Magi were also astrologers, and anyone who studies the movements of the stars (like me) gets my vote. Mind you, those people who call themselves astrologers, write in the newspapers, pretending to look into the future and advise you on your love life, need to be avoided – absolute bunkum! Now, where was I?

Oh, yes, the Magi – you probably know them as the Three Kings. They never actually told me their names or where they came from. Well, let's be honest, you don't expect a great deal of communication between people, however high exalted, and stars, even higher exalted. Later history has conjured up (whoops! Bad choice of words) some theories. Their names *might* have been Melchior, Balthazar and Gaspar (or was it Caspar, or Jaspar?) They *may* have come from Persia (or, as you modernists call it, Iran), India, Arabia, Babylon or even Africa. It's been suggested (I'm saying nothing) that they represented the three 'races' of mankind: Caucasian, Mongoloid and Negroid (that'll please the Equal Opportunities campaigners to some extent, I suppose), or that they were there on behalf of the three known (at the time) continents, Africa, Asia and Europe. I don't know, I didn't know then, and it's still not my job to speculate. Now was my time to shine like no other. It's what we stars do, you know. And my orders were to shine so brightly that these Magi, Kings or whatever you call them, would be Wise Men, and follow my lead.

So I led them, and they wisely followed.

What followed was a little unusual. When we got to Jerusalem, it was my day off. So the Magi went to pay their respects to the local king, Herod. "King" - Impostor, more like. So much under the thumb of Rome he could have played for Juventus. They told him about their quest for a *new* king and asked him which way to go. What a cheek. They only had to wait for me to come back on duty. Anyway, Herod, who, let's be honest didn't know much about anything, called together his own group of so-called wise men and astrologers (more of that lot!) and asked their opinion. Well, some of them must have read their scriptures because they came up with the information that Bethlehem was where a new king might be found. I could have told them that, but there we are. My Magi thanked Herod who asked to be informed if and when they found the new king, so that he could go and pay his respects (liar, liar, pants on fire).

Next day we left and, of course, I led the way. To Bethlehem. To a stable with a manger, with shepherds and angels doing '*son et lumière*' and all that ? Nope! That was all finished. Shame I missed it.

And now the Baby and his parents were safely ensconced inside the Inn. I couldn't go in – so warm and so bright as I am – but I was able to watch from above. The Magi, great men though they were, actually knelt down in front of the Baby and worshipped Him. Then they did the traditional thing and gave out presents: but no baby grows, nappies, musical dangles or cuddly toys. This Child was given Gold to represent the fact that He was a King – I imagine the parents thought “Good! That's his school fees taken care of.” Then there was Incense which was a symbol of worship. Anyone else watching might have thought that was a strange gift for a baby, but there was even weirder to come: Myrrh. That's a kind of spice used in burials – hardly suitable, you would think. But even the most unusual things can prove prophetic. Hmmm.

Having stayed the night in this Bethlehem Best Western (other hotel chains are available), the Magi had a discussion. They decided that it was not safe for the Child for them to go back to Jerusalem and tell Herod about Him. How right they were! Within weeksbut that's another story to which, mercifully, I was not a witness. This was the end of my special assignment. They went back to their own countries by different routes and I resumed my place back in the heavens.

Just before I go, I ought to tell you that the time the Magi visited the Child has since been given its own name: Epiphany. It means ‘sudden understanding’, ‘revealing’, ‘when the penny drops’, ‘a religious awakening’. The Magi weren't local, but I think they were there to show everybody else in the world, to throw light on how important **He** was, **and** **is**. When **He** grew up, He said “I am the Light of the world” and I can tell you that's absolutely right. But don't forget that *I* was the light who took the Magi there. We stars deserve a bit of credit!



How to eat an elephant

This was the title of one session in, believe it or not, a course preparing teenagers for Confirmation.

The suggested method was to **cut into it into small pieces, cook it slowly and chew it carefully.**

It was given to help the teens with reading the Bible. After all, the Bible is God's Word and therefore ought to be read. But it is very daunting for anyone of any age to try to read the whole of the Bible, and it is not recommended, except for the saintly few, to attempt it at one go.

Instead you can:

- * cut it into small pieces (verses, chapters, books)
- * cook it slowly and chew it carefully (as you read, think about what you're reading and how it might have an influence on your thoughts, beliefs and actions)

One suggested method that you might like to try is to

READ THE BIBLE IN CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER – following the timeline of when things were written and in connection with their historical events.

In the course of 2021, *Jubilate* will, each week, give you suggestions taken from the "One Year Chronological Bible" (publ. Tyndale Press (ISBN: 0-8423-5090-X).

It doesn't matter which version or language you use; Just start by asking God to speak to you through His written Word.

It will take self-discipline but the spiritual rewards could well be worth it.



SO LET'S GET STARTED

The suggestions (roughly three chapters per day) given for this week are

Jan 1st Genesis 1:1 - 3:24

Jan 2nd Genesis 4:1 - 5:32, I Chronicles 4: 1 - 4, Genesis 6:1 - 22

(Sorry. You'll just have to take time to catch up on two those days when you can!)

Jan 3rd Genesis 7:1 - 9:29

Jan 4th Genesis 10:1 - 5, I Chronicles 1:5 - 7, Genesis 10: 6 - 20
I Chronicles 1: 8 - 16, Genesis 10:21 - 11:26,
I Chronicles 1: 17-27

(The 'chronological' idea is kicking in already)

Jan 5th Job 1:1 - 3:26

Jan 6th Job 4:1 - 7:21

Jan 7th Job 8:1 - 10:22

Jan 8th Job 11:1 - 14:22

Jan 9th Job 15:1 - 18:21

Remember, this is NOT an endurance test; it's not a competition – there are no prizes and no punishments involved.

It is simply an opportunity to read the Bible, completely, but in a different way. You might choose to make notes or to formulate your own prayers based on your reading. **If you would like to share your discoveries with other *Jubilate* readers, please send them in.**

*Your word is a lamp for my feet,
a light on my path.*

(Psalm 119 v. 105)

Worship in the Chaplaincy

Through the miracle of the Internet, we can still worship “together”, though apart. This Sunday **3rd January**, Rev’d Steven Abram will be in the ‘Live Lounge’ at **10.30.am** to lead **Virtual Worship +**

This will include an “Agape”

Agape – is a Greek word for God’s unconditional love.

An Agape is a term used to describe the ‘love feasts’ of the early church where there was a breaking and sharing of bread and wine – meals were also a feature hence ‘feast’. See *1 Corinthians 11*. These occasions almost certainly will have arisen out of the Last Supper, which of course was based on Passover which was also a meal, and led to what we call Holy Communion.

Although the “Agape” is not a formal communion service, you are invited to have bread and wine (or your own preferred alternatives) to hand.

To join in at 10.30 on Sunday, go to:

<https://www.facebook.com/Virtual-Worship-Poitou-Charentes-104677654507124/>

A video of the service can be seen a little later, together with Bible Study resources by typing into your computer : www.abram.org.uk/vw



An interesting article about Agape can be found at the following internet link:
<https://www.ridley.cam.ac.uk/assets/documents/Holy-Communion-Closed-Churches-Social-Distancing.pdf>

Jubilate:

The editor wishes to thank those who have sent messages of appreciation and encouragement to him.

NOW is the right time of year to update mailing lists.

If you are happy to continue receiving *Jubilate* and *Together in Prayer*, you need to take no action.

If you prefer to “unsubscribe” from either, please send an email to:
david.hawken@orange.fr stating your wishes.

If, at any time, you change your email address, please inform me specifically of the new one. Don’t just trust that my computer will realise what’s happening.

If you know of anyone else who would like to receive *Jubilate* and/or *Together in Prayer*, please ask them to send me their requirements and email address.

Thank you

Lord of all hopefulness, Lord of all joy,
Whose trust, ever child-like, no cares could destroy,
Be there at our waking, and give us, we pray,
Your bliss in our hearts, Lord, at the break of the day.

Lord of all eagerness, Lord of all faith,
Whose strong hands were skilled at the plane and the lathe,
Be there at our labours and give us, we pray,
Your strength in our hearts, Lord, at the noon of the day.

Lord of all kindness, Lord of all grace,
Your hands swift to welcome, Your arms to embrace,
Be there at our homing and give us, we pray,
Your love in our hearts, Lord, at the eve of the day.

Lord of all gentleness, Lord of all calm,
Whose voice is contentment, Whose presence is balm,
Be there at our sleeping, and give us, we pray,
Your peace in our hearts, Lord, at the end of the day.

**Chaplaincy of Christ the Good Shepherd,
Poitou-Charentes**

Our AIM:

- To love the Lord our God with all our heart and soul and mind and strength.
- To love our neighbours as ourselves
- To go and make disciples

Email: office.goodshepherd@sfr.fr

Admin. Assistant: Valérie Pétry

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