

PALM SUNDAY (2)

Dear Friends,

It was a great privilege to walk with the Palm Sunday procession through Corfu Town yesterday and to represent us among the incredible train of people that slowly and carefully wended its way through the crowds lining the streets. It is a spectacular demonstration of collective faith - music colour, prayer - from the youngest to the oldest.

My place is to walk next to the Catholic Archbishop, Archbishop George who always welcomes me warmly. We walk together dressed in our cassocks behind the sea of impressively robed Orthodox clergy gathered around St Spyridon and behind us are the local government officials, the mayor and deputy mayors and executive officers. In front of the orthodox priests are hundreds and hundreds of musicians - each band wearing differently coloured uniforms and between them, the schools and local organisations all dressed in their own particular uniforms. All walk quietly and contentedly to the beat of the drums under the clear blue sky. It takes over half an hour for the full procession to pass a particular point.

As the assembly of clergy pass by, surrounding the island's saint, most in the crowd cross themselves. I wonder what they are thinking? Are they receiving the blessing being prayed as the procession moves through the people, affirming their own faith, offering their own prayers of thanks, expressing a moment of awe?

At intervals, groups of children come to lie in the middle of the road before the saint... so that as the carried remains move, his shadow will pass over them. There is a history of healing connected with moments like this.



At particular points, the procession stops and prayers and blessings are said for the town. We kneel on the tarmac road. Everyone listens before reforming and continuing. Eventually, the procession arrives outside the Palace of St Michael and St George. A sermon is preached and the final prayers said.

The procession then makes its way back along the Liston - it feels like this is just what that beautiful part of the town was created to host - and most of the procession departs leaving only a couple of hundred musicians and the robed priests left to receive St Spyridon back to his resting place in his church.



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Entering the church, finally enjoying the shade after hours of sunshine, there is a wall of sound. The church is packed with every inch of space used to let just one more person in. The air resounds with the sound of brass and woodwind and I follow Archbishop George to Bishop Nectarios who stands in the doorway to the iconoclast, saying a final few words while many attendants relieve him of layers of vestments. A large basket full of red roses is brought forward and those who walked behind the priests are offered one. It's a beautiful gesture. I am encouraged by Fr Thermastacles, who is the Vicar General on the island and an extremely accomplished man, to go forward after archbishop George and we squeeze our way through the throng, for our flower and smile of recognition.

We are then led through the twists and turns of the building and emerge back in the sunlight, somehow through one of the icon shops that surround the church.

It's taken hours to mark Palm Sunday this way (and to remember with thanks how St Spyridon had helped with a famine a few hundred years before). It has involved everyone. It's unavoidable.

Of course, it's very different to how we celebrated Palm Sunday. Our church family listened to the Passion narrative from Mark - beautifully arranged

and read - we worshipped the servant King and remember how He taught us through His Passion, the depth of love He has for each one of us. We broke bread and shared the cup in remembrance of all He has done for us. It was very special and personal.

And I am left feeling that we are blessed to have both these expressions of worship. We lose something (particularly in the secularising of the UK) when we don't stop what we usually do to remember together who we are corporately as a people - what has shaped us for good through the centuries. And, at the same time, we need to create the personal space to worship with our hearts and souls on fire with love for Jesus, our Saviour and Friend.

So maybe we are doubly blessed at HTC. Living in a country that has not forgotten how their faith has shaped their history and having a church family we can celebrate personally and more intimately with.

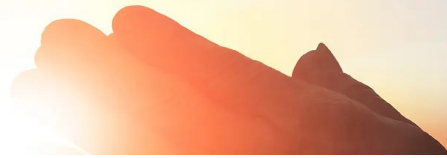
I can't help but be left feeling very thankful.

With every blessing,

Jules.



PULSE PRAYERS



We thank you for HTC and all the faithful and unseen servants forever active. For our worship team and jazz band, pastoral and social, for the encouragement and gifts of our visitors. May all who pass through be refreshed both spiritually and physically. Thank you for our international network of tech help and Pulse. Thank you for Jackie and her gatherings in Lefkada, bless her with all she needs as you see to completion the work you first began there.

We pray that you will bless Jules, our wardens and council with discernment through your Spirit of wisdom and revelation. Come Holy Spirit.

Bless the island with a safe and full season of tourism and make every provision for the islanders. Bless The Hellenic Red Cross with every provision they need for the poor families. Bless The Special Needs Vocational High school and Lykeio with the extra teachers and classrooms they need. Bless and protect Sabrina and team in Yemen and make every provision for their work providing food. Come Holy Spirit.

Lord, we see wars, conflict, violence and evil which breaks our hearts. We run out of words as we cry out for peace. Holy Spirit groan and intercede for us.

We pray for those who are sick in body, mind and spirit, those awaiting operations and those recovering from surgery. For the lonely and bereaved. Holy Spirit comforter and helper, come alongside them.

We pray for our families near and far, especially the young people. Please protect and give provision. Spirit of Truth and counsellor guide them in their daily lives and lead them into the truth of Jesus.

'The Spirit of The Lord is on me because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight to the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of The Lord's favour.' *Luke 4.18-19*

We look forward to Orthodox Easter Tide. Such a wonderful celebration. May the crowds experience the reality of Jesus. For the Albanian Fellowship outing, we pray this will be a time of refreshing and growing together in The Lord, for Maria and ourselves.

We pray that those preparing for baptism and confirmation will have a real sense of The Holy Spirit and grow in the love and joy of Jesus.

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PULSE PRAYERS



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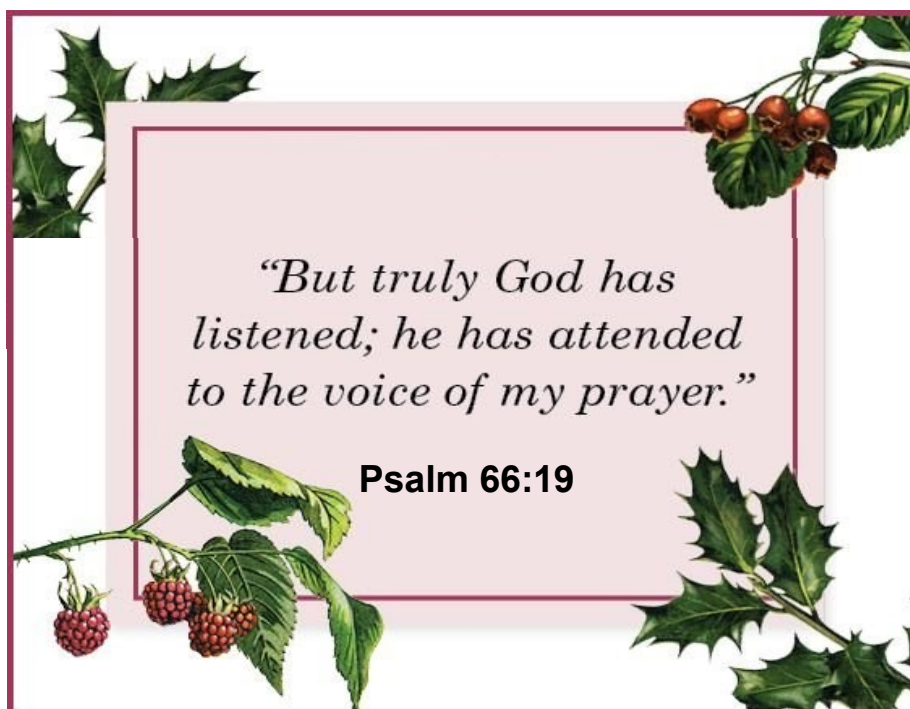
We look forward to The ICS Chaplains being with us. Adrian and Ruth Whitehall returning and Andrew and Chris Holmes this month. We pray for another fruitful time as they share their gifts.

For the several weddings in quick succession in Lefkada, Liapades and South of the island. We pray for blessings on these marriages, we pray too for anointing, strength and energy for Jules at this very busy time in the run up to the Bishop visiting us and the official opening of Café Logos on 1st June. For Violetta as she prepares a performance of spoken and choral poems for the occasion.

Thank you for the Café Logos vision becoming a reality, for those giving time and talents during the week. We pray for streams of living water to flow through there. Come Holy Spirit.

Heavenly Father, thank you that you are with us in our joys and holding our hands throughout our pains and struggles. In this broken and lost world empower us with your Spirit to share the Good News, be the hands and feet of Jesus, love with your compassion and mercy and keep your joy in our hearts.

Your Kingdom Come, Amen



HTC visit to the special needs vocational high school and Lykeio

On Friday April 19th, 2024, a group from HTC visited the special needs vocational high school in Kefalomandouko . To provide some background about the visit HTC have been visiting and supporting the school since 2011. This year Jules, Richard, Anne, Pauline, Lorraine, Ian and Jan attended to visit. On arrival we were welcomed into the headmistress's office and served refreshments.

(In September 2023, Mr Aimoirides the headmaster retired and the new Headmistress Ioanna Korellou was appointed)

Ioanna began our time together enquiring about each of us and how we have arrived in Corfu. As you can imagine there were some interesting things revealed in the group.

Ioanna shared some of the work of the school and enabled all of us to appreciate the issues and challenges they have on a daily basis. At present there are 64 students with class sizes being 11 students and one teacher. The number of students has increased since the last year. This can often present a challenge if staff are unwell as there needs to be adequate cover for students due to the different needs they have. The students have a range of different mental conditions that require special

input at school, an example given was students with Autism. There is another school for students who have a physical disability.

As a group we were able to offer suggestions for the future as to how HTC can support the school. Until now the support offered has been financial. Ioanna explained that our recent financial gift sponsored a school trip to Iannina on the mainland. This was received with enthusiasm by the students as some of them had never left Corfu. This was very encouraging to hear about.

For possible future support the following ideas were discussed. Setting up a music session, art workshop, having a talk about church. The art and music ideas were well received as at present there is no art or music teachers in the school. There was also a suggestion that we could host a session at Cafe Logos.

The contribution that HTC have made over the last few years has been greatly appreciated. Ioanna and her staff appreciate the support and interest we have in the school. During 2023 HTC raised €1,000 for the school.

Jan Billington -Phillips



Celebrating service in Lefkada



HTC recently had the opportunity to celebrate with Jackie Dallos, the work she has led in Lefkada. Here's her thoughts and memories (so far) from the time living and working there.

After living in Corfu for four years and being a member of HTC for a great part of that time, our family moved to Lefkada for my husband's work. I missed church terribly but kept links by writing and having my children supplement the cast of the annual Nativity play.

On one such visit we met Rev. Clifford Owen who had taken over from the former chaplain Stuart Broughton just after we left. He expressed an interest in coming to Lefkada to see if regular visits for worship might be fruitful. He had a vision of linking all the Ionian islands in such a way with HTC being the hub.



Jackie tells HTC about the work in Lefkada

Anyway, he came, and on the meet and greet met 12 people. We agreed it was a good idea to do bi-monthly visits at first which Clifford did, travelling with his wife Avis. Then HTC had the benefit of Bill and Phoebe's work as they came to live in Corfu and wanted to support Clifford. A Methodist minister Bill would alternate visits with Clifford giving a service of the Word.

We have gathered in a variety of places and had the company of some very encouraging and warm locums, as well as Rev. John Gulland and his wife Mary. Always supported and always trying to do our best to be a visible presence in the community sharing God's love and care.

We spent a year gathering and sending funds to Haiti after the massive quake there as we felt a one-off donation just wasn't enough in light of the devastation they had suffered. We also raised funds for the local centre for those with mental health challenges as the staff had been working without pay for several months when we became aware of them. We have supported those in the local community who have found themselves on hard times by raising funds for a local charity group that supports

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20 YEARS

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them as well as helping individuals along the way. Victims of circumstance who have lost their homes, work etc.

It doesn't seem possible that all this has been going on for 20 years! I pray that in the small things we have done God has seen that all we want to do is show His love and presence in the community through any ways in which we can engage that bring Him glory.

The celebratory weekend was a real joy and I am grateful for the love and support shown especially in the service where there was a laying on of hands for my continuing ministry. I pray that wherever God leads us we will always shine for Him and bring Him the glory He deserves.

It is humbling yet exciting, to love and serve our God. I hope to be able to do so for many more years yet, and by God's grace perhaps that vision for HTC, Lefkada, and the rest of the Ionian islands may be part of His bigger plan.

Jackie Dallos



Jackie was licensed as a Reader in July 2017



Jackie with Rev. Clifford Owen at her licensing service.



Jackie was joined by three other ladies from Lefkada for the celebrations

The Safe Space

Have you recently lost someone you love? Are you feeling isolated or anxious? Does the world seem overwhelming and scary since the pandemic? Is your mental well-being languishing or your self-esteem low? Then perhaps it would be beneficial to spend an hour in the "Safe Space".



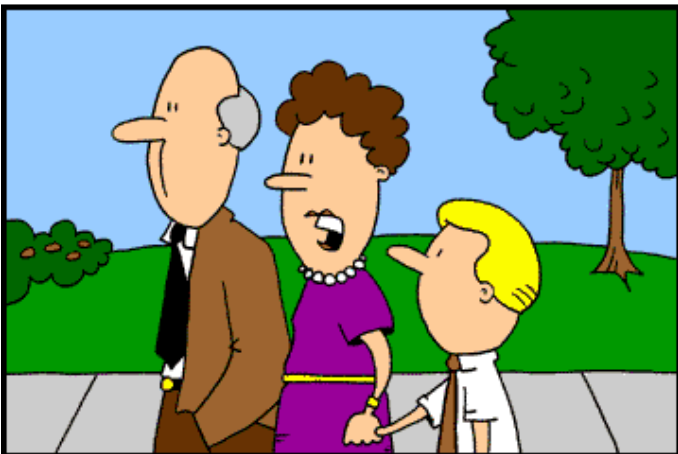
The Safe Space is an informal Christian counselling setting where you can receive one-to-one confidential on-line space to explore your feelings

To book an appointment:

email Trish: trishmariawilson@gmail.com or phone: 0030 6986644271

<https://sites.google.com/view/trish-wilson-christian-counsel/home>

Cartoons (with thanks to Reverendfun.com)



05-07-1999

YOUR FATHER HAS AGREED TO STAY AWAKE IN CHURCH TODAY SINCE IT IS MOTHER'S DAY ... IT WOULD BE NICE IF YOU WOULD DO THE OPPOSITE FOR ONCE



05-24-1999

I'VE BEEN DEBUGGING YOUR CREATION MODEL AND, NATURALLY, THERE WERE NO ERRORS ... WHEN I ADD THE SIN VARIABLE, HOWEVER, THINGS GET NASTY


 **Links** 


 <https://europe.anglican.org/prayer-diary/prayer-diary>

 <https://www.ics-uk.org/Pages/Category/prayer-diary>

 <http://www.theagiot.com/>

 <https://enimerosi.com/en>

 https://www.facebook.com/groups/CorfuForum/?ref=group_header




WHAT'S ON at HTC

Keep up to date with what's on at Holy Trinity Corfu by visiting our website calendar.

<http://holytrinitycorfu.bravesites.com/whats-on>

OR



We always welcome contributions to our publications; however, we will not publish any material which infringes copyright. When sending in items for inclusion please state your source and the name of the author.

We are happy to accept prayer requests for inclusion in Pulse or in the morning service. If you are requesting prayer for someone other than yourself please make sure you have their permission to be mentioned publicly.

*Please remember the submission **deadline for PULSE is 25th of each month**. Articles, news, information etc. received after this time may not be included and will be carried over to the next edition if appropriate. Thank you.*

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