



St Michael's Messenger

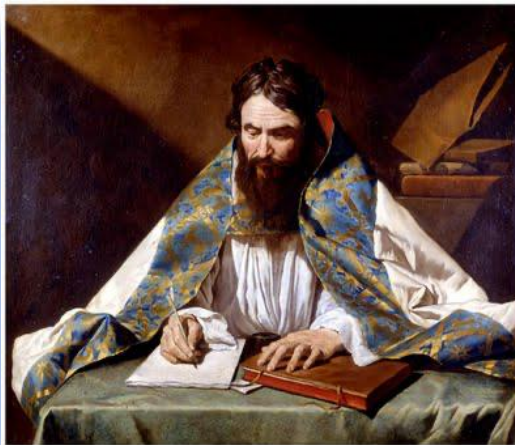
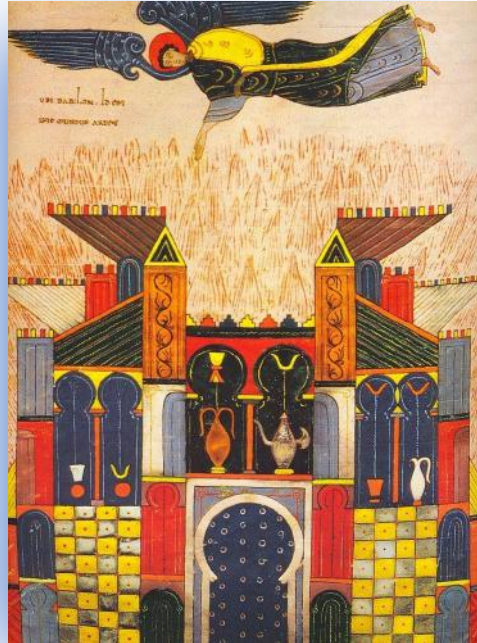
JANUARY 2026

Prayers for the month of January

Mozarabic Collect for New Year

O God,
your days are without beginning
and without end.
We dedicate this coming year to you.

Give us such prosperity as you know is
good for us,
and make us abound in doing whatever is
pleasing to you;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.



O Lord,
you have mercy on all.
Take away my sins,
and mercifully kindle in me
the fire of your Holy Spirit.

Take away my heart of stone
and give me a heart of flesh,
a heart to love and adore you,
a heart to delight in you,
to follow and to enjoy you, for Christ's sake.
Amen.

- Saint Ambrose, d. 397

Diary Dates January – February 2026

Sunday 4 January 10h00 – Eucharist – Epiphany

Readings: 1. Isaiah 60. 1-6 <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Isaiah%2060.%201-6%20&version=NRSVA>
2. Ephesians 3. 1-12 <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=%20Ephesians%203.%201-12%20%20&version=NRSVA>

Celebrant Priest: Fr David Houghton

Sunday 11 January 10h00 – Eucharist – Baptism of Christ

Readings: 1. Isaiah 42 1-9 <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Isaiah%2042%3A%201-9&version=NRSVA>
2. Acts 10 34-43 <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts%2010%3A%2034-43&version=NRSVA>

Celebrant Priest: Fr David Houghton

Sunday 18 January 10h00 – Eucharist – Epiphany 2

Readings: 1. Isaiah 49 1-7 <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Isaiah%2049%3A%201-7&version=NRSVA>
2. 1 Corinthians 1 1-9 <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%201%3A%201-9&version=NRSVA>

Celebrant Priest: Fr David Houghton

Sunday 25 January 10h00 – Eucharist – Epiphany 3

Readings: 1. Isaiah 9 1-4 <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Isaiah%209%3A%201-4&version=NRSVA>
2. 1 Corinthians 1 10-18 <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%201%3A%2010-18&version=NRSVA>

Celebrant Priest: Fr David Houghton

Sunday 1 February 10h00 – Eucharist – Presentation (Candlemas)

Readings: 1. Malachi 3. 1-5 <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Malachi%203%3A%201-5&version=NRSVA>
2. Hebrews 2. 14-end <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hebrews%202%3A%2014-18&version=NRSVA>

Celebrant Priest: Fr Brett Ward

Bien-Être Exercise and Relaxation: Thursdays 12h15pm

Pentecostal Service in French: Fridays at 19h00



Christmas season at St Michael's...

On Sunday 21 December, more than 120 people gathered in the church to attend the **family choral Concert** "Christmas in the Colours of Europe" - the event was organized and sponsored by the Mairie. Featured artists were the vocal ensemble "Musiques en Jeux" under the direction of Alain Joutard.



The following evening, 22 December, 50 members of the St Michael's, Roman Catholic and Danish Lutheran congregations braved rain and gale force winds to celebrate the annual **Ecumenical Advent Service** together.

The service was conducted by locum Fr David Houghton of St Michael's, Pastor Christian Madsen of The Danish Church de la Cote D'Azur and Cure P. Thierry Dasse and Diacre M. Philippe Courau of the Paroisse Notre-Dame de L'Espérance.

Festive refreshments including mulled wine and mince pies were served following the service - a joyful celebration of the season in the beautifully decorated church.



A Letter from Fiona

As a New Year starts, one can't help but look back on the old year. It's important, though, to find a balance between remembering the past and looking forward to the future. There are times in all our lives when the past was difficult, and this can cloud our vision of the future. So, living in the here and now, and making the best of the moment we're in, is so important. 2025 was not the best of years for me, but by no means was it the worst. And when I look at the state of the world – the wars, destruction and the human suffering this brings and the poverty, the loneliness, the illness, and all manner of hardship, I truly do count my blessings each and every day. So looking forward into 2026 I pray for a better world for everyone.

When I look at what the coming year looks like for me, already Beaulieu is featuring in my plans. Tony and I lived longer in Beaulieu than we'd lived anywhere in our married life, and so naturally St Michael's remains important to me, though from afar, most of the time. However, I've been very lucky to have had several visits to Beaulieu this last year, the most special one being the visit I made in late November. I had already brought a memorial stone down on a previous visit, which had been carefully placed in 'Tony's Garden' behind the church.



But on this last visit, Fr Hugh came over from Monaco to conduct a very intimate service, remembering Tony and dedicating the stone. It was a short service during which Fr Hugh read a section from the *Ordinal of Responsibilities of a Priest*, responsibilities which Tony fulfilled with absolute dedication and humility, and this, together with his words about Tony and what made him the man he was, Fr Hugh painted a vivid picture of him, and thus reminded us all of just what a truly special priest St Michael's had had in Tony.

The service was short, but hugely moving. I was incredibly touched that so many of St Michael's congregation came along to witness this final act. Tony is talked about with such affection, and that day was no different, which is so incredibly comforting.

My grief has become a constant companion, and the gap left by Tony will always be there, but I also recognise that you, the St Michael's congregation, are still grieving your loss, and this was very clear on that chilly Sunday afternoon as we all stood in the garden and remembered the humble servant that Tony was, both as a priest and as a man.

Our faith tells us that we will be reunited, and this is what helps me to put one foot in front of the other each day. So, as we go into the New Year, my prayer is that whilst putting that one foot in front of the other. I will dedicate each step to the memory of Tony by remaining humble, never looking for glory and always endeavouring to do my best to effect change, I'll try to do this by following Tony's example of always speaking up and walking with love.

And so, to my friends at St Michael's, wherever in the world you are, until we meet again, be that in Beaulieu, in Newcastle, somewhere else, or in spirit, I wish you all health, happiness, love and peace in 2026.

With my fondest love

- Fiona x



***Congratulations to Gary and Teresa, who welcomed Alessandro,
the newest member of the St Michael's congregation!***





On behalf of the St Michael's community, many thanks to members of the **Chaplaincy Church Council (CCC)** for your service in 2025. Pictured above are Council members John Briggs, Jacqueline Parhad, Graeme Batt, Justin Hayward, David Knight, Nicola Karlsen, Chris Sladden, Luisa Messina, Monica Cashman and Bob Henry. Egill Karlsen (inset) took the photo!



From the churchwardens

Concerning the new priest, there are still administrative matters to be concluded on the Diocese level. As soon as we have more details, we will share them.

30 people attended services at the church on Christmas Eve and 25 on Christmas Day. Thanks to everyone who celebrated Christmas at St Michael's in 2025. **Christmas decorations will come down on Monday, 5 January starting at 10am.** Please stop by to help if you can.

And a reminder to **please look at the sign-up sheets** at the back of the church to put your name down for readings and refreshments.

How is St Michael's doing at the start of 2026?

Spiritually, we are thriving.

We have a healthy congregation, with new people joining regularly. Worship is joyful and vibrant. Our church building is classed as a national *monument historique* and is in good condition, thanks to recent maintenance and upgrades.

What about finances?

This is where we face challenges.

For many years, we covered our running costs comfortably. Today, income only just meets expenses.

Why?

- Costs have risen: rent on the priest's accommodation (up 50% since 2010), health insurance coverage for the priest, car expenses and building maintenance.
- Regular giving has fallen: down about 30%. Despite a growing congregation (now over 200 people and 2,000 visits a year), fewer people give regularly. Sunday plate offerings have not kept pace with inflation and while very much needed, are not enough to offset operating costs.
- No recent large bequests: while we are grateful for generous one-off gifts, there have been no major legacy donations to the church in recent years.

What does this mean for the future?

If income and expenses continue on this path, we will have to use our emergency reserves to cover basic costs.

Common questions

Does the Church of England pay our priest?

No. We pay the priest's salary ourselves and also pay a fee to the Diocese. At present, we cannot afford a full-time priest.

Does the French state pay for the church or priest?

No. The commune has no responsibility for the building, gardens, or clergy salary. All costs are borne by us.

How do Nice and Monaco manage?

Both have received large bequests in the past and own property, including housing for clergy. This income allows them to employ staff. St Michael's relies entirely on volunteers and pays rent for clergy housing.

How can you help?

Regular giving (pledges)

- Helps secure the church's future.
- Can be very tax-efficient:
- French residents: up to 66% tax credit.
- UK residents: Gift Aid adds 20% to donations.

Leaving a bequest in your will

- A legacy gift, carefully invested, can support St Michael's for generations.
- Tax advantages depend on residency and assets:
- Gifts of French property to a charity can avoid up to 60% inheritance tax.
- Most cash bequests are tax-free.

Tax benefit seminars

- In 2026 we will offer seminars on the tax benefits of giving. More information to come.

Bank details for giving in Euros:

St. Michaels Church

LCL Bank

Account No: 03232 079010V

IBAN No: FR32 3000 2032 3200 0007 9010 V35

SWIFTBIC: CRLYFRPP

Bank details for sterling giving:

The Diocese in Europe Fund

(Specify: "St Michael's Beaulieu Sur Mer")

Barclays Bank

Account No: 40317039

Sort Code: 20-06-05

IBAN No: GB43 BARC200605 4031 7039

SWIFTBIC: BARCGB22

For questions or bequests in wills, please contact the Treasurer:

treasurer@stmichaelsbeaulieusurmer.org

St Michael's gratefully thanks all who have given their money, time, skills and labour to care for this beautiful place of worship, to the glory of God.

Together, let us ensure it continues for the next hundred years.



*To the entire St Michael's community,
Happy New Year from the Messenger!*

Want to get in touch?

Editor Eric: stmichaels-messenger@outlook.com

Our Website: www.stmichaelsbeaulieusurmer.org

Our YouTube Channel: <https://www.youtube.com/@StMichaelsChurch-Beaulieu>



Disclaimer: The editor and St Michael's Church do not accept responsibility for the consequences of any action taken upon the advice, advertisement or information contained in The Messenger.

Epiphany Season 2026