

**THE NEWSLETTER OF THE
ECUMENICAL CHURCH OF OCCITANIE**
www.ourchurch.fr

PRAYING AND WORKING FOR PEACE IN THE UKRAINE

As we witness the humanitarian catastrophe which is unfolding in the Ukraine, ECO are both praying for the restoration of peace and justice and also taking practical steps to help support the victims of this dreadful war.

All of our services now include prayers for the people of the Ukraine, and we urge you to also include them in your private prayers.

We have already circulated details of an Occitanie-based charity— the Alliance Occitanie Ukraine—which is collecting money to purchase medical supplies for a hospital train in Poland where war casualties are being treated.

Christian Aid, the UK Methodist Church, the Barnabas Fund and Samaritans Purse have also appealed for financial assistance to support their work in the Ukraine.

Church leaders across the World have joined together to condemn the Russian attack on the Ukraine. The Anglican Archbishops of Canterbury and York have described the attack as “a great evil”:

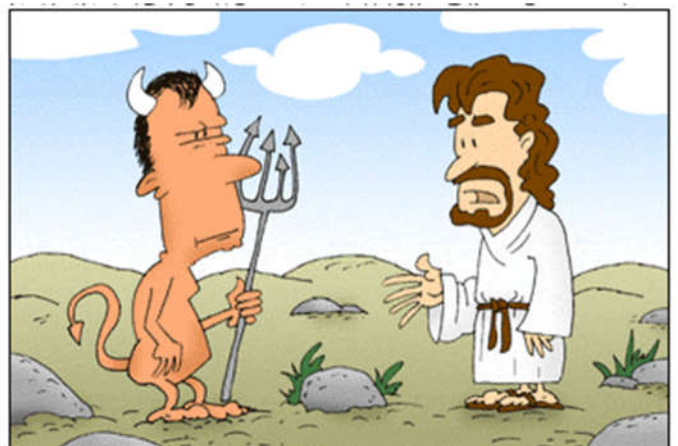
“The horrific and unprovoked attack on Ukraine is an act of great evil. Placing our trust in Jesus Christ, the author of peace, we pray for an urgent ceasefire and a withdrawal of Russian forces. We call for a public decision to choose the way of peace and an international conference to secure long term agreements for stability and lasting peace.”

Tension sometimes exists between the Russian Orthodox Church and the independent Ukrainian Orthodox Church. However, a week ago the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, the spiritual leader of 200 million Eastern Orthodox Christians telephoned Metropolitan Epiphanius, the primate of the Ukrainian Church and “expressed his deep sorrow at this blatant violation of any notion of international law and legality, as well as his support to the Ukrainian people struggling ‘for God and country’ and to the families of innocent victims.”

This will be particular blow to Vladimir Putin, who has long cultivated the approval of the Russian Orthodox Church. More than three-quarters of the Russian population describe themselves as members of the Russian Orthodox Church.

It remains to be seen how much influence the Russian Church may be able to exercise over President Putin in galvanising opposition amongst the Russian people to his attack on the Ukraine.

**THE DEVIL FOUND IT VERY HARD TO
TEMPT JESUS....**



**TURN THOSE STONES INTO BREAD ? THAT'S SO
OLD TESTAMENT ! WHAT ABOUT GLUTEN AND
LACTOSE INTOLERANCE...NOT TO MENTION THE
HIGH CARB CONTENT AND THE LOW GI VALUE.....**

LENT BEGINS AT ECO

Our worship events for Lent have begun in the Occitanie.

On Ash Wednesday, in the North of our region, a group met and in place of the imposition of ashes, followed the tradition of the Egyptian Coptic Christians, who tattoo a cross on their right wrist as a symbol of their faith, by marking their wrists with a black pen. The cross on the wrist is a sign of defiance against persecution, and originates from when Christian children used to be taken from their parents and converted to Islam. Parents therefore used to tattoo the cross on their children's wrists so they would never forget their origins.

The worship continued with a Ceilidh Communion in the Iona tradition and after a Lenten lunch, the gathering finished with a reading of T S Elliott's famous poem "Ash Wednesday".

The poem is too long to reproduce here, but you can read it online at

http://famouspoetsandpoems.com/poets/t_s_eliot/poems/15133

We also broadcast a special service for Ash Wednesday on our YouTube Channel which can be watched at any time on our website.

Next Wednesday (9th March) our first Lent Group meeting will be held on Zoom at 15:00. Each session will have an independent theme, so you are welcome to attend any of them individually.

Please watch out for details on our website shortly.



NEW WORSHIP LITURGIES FOR LENT

ECO's liturgies are based on the worship of the Iona Community, and during the past year we have used 4 different liturgies for: our Evening Prayer, Healing, Sunday Morning Prayer and Communion services.

Following our Worship Team Meeting, we have decided to introduce two additional Orders of Worship during Lent:

one for Sunday Morning Prayer and one for our services of Compline / Evening Prayer. These will be used alongside the existing liturgies to increase the variety of worship that we use. We will also be reviewing our Communion and Healing Services and will be introducing new versions of these services in due course.

We would welcome your comments once the new liturgies have been in use for a while as we will review them again after Easter.

Church Mice

Karl Zorowski

