

CMS Link Letter no. 2 October 2011

Crònica Catalana

Dear praying friends,

Hallelujah! A year from the original diagnosis and prognosis and I am still here, still working a few hours each day and very grateful to the Lord for all that He enables me to do, for the way the church has responded throughout this time, and for daily grace to meet every situation. However, the news from the oncologist this week was not good. The marker in the blood has increased quite a lot in the last three weeks, and since the current treatment is no longer working as well as hoped, and the side effects are accumulating, he is completely changing the treatment regime. I don't have all the details straight yet, but I think it will consist of an intravenous dose in the Day Hospital, followed by 48 hours intravenous through a portable pump at home. That will require the insertion of a permanent "via", but the plus side of that is that there will be no more trouble finding

All who attended the 2011 Synod - minus me!



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veins! I am disappointed at this development, but I am hanging on to the fact that the Lord hasn't changed and His grace will continue to be sufficient, come what may.

The new regime is due to start on 17 October, so meanwhile I have two extra chemo-free weeks which I hope to make the most of. Please continue to pray for healing and for the Lord to be glorified in all that may occur.

I was able to attend the Synod in Madrid in June and even to moderate some sessions. It was good to see the church in Reus formally recognised as a congregation and to meet representatives from new churches and mission points – all very encouraging. The photo left of all those who attended Synod was evidently taken when I had gone off for a rest, because I am not in it! At the end of the final session, I was quite bowled over when the Bishop presented me with the Diocesan cross for distinguished service – I don't feel I have done anything exceptional, and much that I have done should have been done better.

In September I was able to go to Valencia for the meeting of Pastors and Readers of the eastern archdeaconry, the consecration of the new

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church building and the induction of the new rector, an Australian mission partner.

Our second experience of a 24/7 prayer weekend in June was excellent. Two interns from St Aldate's Church in Oxford came to help our young adults set it up, and also gave them ideas for the future. Based round the Beatitudes, all those who came – both from our own and other churches – found it a moving and powerful experience. The weekly prayer meeting has now been reorganised and from this month there will be two meetings, one daytime and one evening, but both fortnightly alternating with the Growth Groups. Please pray for more people to participate in both the prayer meetings and the Growth Groups. Two of the Growth Groups will be using the SEAN course on Matthew's Gospel, one group having already completed the first two books of the series. The other two groups will use a more traditional Bible Study format.

We had an excellent "Back to Church Sunday" on 25 September. Having sent invitations to nearly 40 couples or families who at some stage have had links with the church, we were joined by 13 visitors for the occasion, some of whom had never to my knowledge been in a service with us. I was very encouraged by the positive response, but have to say that more than half the visitors were linked with one church family. The invitation also included the church's anniversary service and lunch on 12 October (108 years), and will be extended again for the Carol Service on 18 December that will close the "My Hope" outreach due to run from 15-17 of December. Only three church members have so far offered their homes for "My Hope", which means that most still have not caught the vision for sharing their faith or the courage to step out in faith and just do it. Please make this a matter of prayer.

I have mentioned in previous *Crònicas* the new law for Places of Worship that came into force about 18 months ago. Since then there has been a change in the Catalan government, and they are now making changes to the law



One of the 24/7 prayer stations

– changes that will leave evangelical churches with less protection than we had before the current law. The Catalan Evangelical Council, which actively backed the original law, perceives this as a very real threat to our constitutional right to freedom of worship and has issued an urgent call to unity and prayer. Please join us in this.

I have never had so many visitors as during this last year, and really appreciate the renewed contact with people that ill-health has brought. All your letters, emails and phone calls are a great source of support and encouragement, and your prayers more valuable than words can say. I still believe in a God who answers prayer, even if He doesn't do exactly what I think He ought to! Despite this week's disappointment, I am basically content for Him to do things His way. Please pray on!

With love in the Lord Jesus

Sue

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