

Holy Trinity Church, Nice

Fr. Peter Sherred

Holy Trinity Church in Nice is described as an ornate Anglican church and is found near the sea front of this Riviera city in the rue de la Buffa. During the week Mass is said daily, at varying times, with Sunday Mass at 11am.

The area bishop of Nice is the well respected bishop in Europe, **Geoffrey Rowell** of Gibraltar. Bishop Geoffrey was one time Warden of **Keble College** the patron of Charlton Church in St Alphege Road and in such capacity was present in Dover at the induction service of Charlton's last freehold stipendiary appointment when Fr. Nick De Keyser took up his appointment as Rector of that parish. It's a small world!

Among the graves in the adjoining cemetery is one of **Henry Francis Lyte** (1793-1847) who was a British vicar from Devon. He is perhaps principally remembered for writing the song sung at every FA Cup Final, and recognised by many churchgoers, **Abide with me** which he finished just three weeks before dying from tuberculosis in Nice.

The present clergy ministry, for Holy Trinity and a daughter church (St Hugh's at nearby Vence), is provided by an engaging priest, originating from Melbourne in Australia, Fr. Ken Letts supported by his charming wife Isabel. A canon of Gibraltar Cathedral and Acting Archdeacon of France he is spiritually gifted with clear pastoral ability and a good preaching style.

Queen Victoria on her first visit to Nice, whilst on holiday, attended Holy Trinity and when the Excelsior Hotel Regina closed in 1937 the royal coat of arms which had hung above the door of

the hotel chapel (the Queen preferred her clergy or bishop to come to the hotel chapel to conduct a service! No doubt a perk when one is head of the Church!) was moved to hang above the inside door of Holy Trinity. On her last visit to Nice the Queen donated £20 (£1090 at today's prices) for the endowment fund of the church and the incumbent of the time was given a handsome travelling clock.

15th August in France is a holiday and a feast day when the **Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary** is remembered. I was invited to participate in the Holy Trinity service on Sunday 20th August 2007 and concelebrate the Mass with Fr Ken as I had in 2005. With my wife Mary and our four children we have attended this beautiful church for a number of



Canon Ken Letts and Fr Peter Sherred



Pulpit, Holy Trinity Church



Banner of Saint Paul



View to main altar

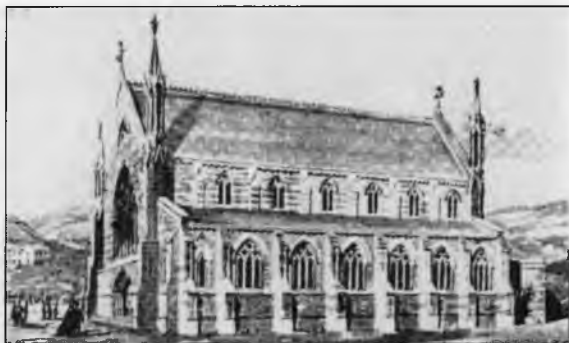
years when on holiday on the Cote d'Azur and it was a privilege to participate in such an important service in a full church with so gifted a priest as Fr Ken. Some readings were in French (the gospel, however, was read in English by me!) and the responses to the intercessions, the Lord's Prayer (*Prière du Seigneur*) and the blessing were all said in French. It was, in all senses, an impressive and uplifting event and in the context of the most recent document issued by the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission, (ARCIC), appropriate for such an Anglican church based on the continent of Europe. **Mary: Hope & Grace in Christ** affirmed that *Anglicans and Roman Catholics agree in recognising that Christian understanding of Mary is inseparably linked with the doctrines of Christ and the Church. We agree in recognizing the grace and unique vocation of Mary, Mother of God Incarnate (Theotokos), in observing her festivals, and in according her honour in the Communion of Saints. We agree that she was prepared by divine grace to be the Mother of the Redeemer, by whom she herself was*

redeemed and received into glory. We further agree in recognising in Mary a model of holiness, obedience and faith for all Christians. We accept that it is possible to regard her as a prophetic figure of the Church of God before as well as after the Incarnation.

After the service the congregation adjourned to the garden cemetery for wine or coffee as they do each week. Not only does the church act as a worship centre for ex pats and local people but it is rightly described as an Anglophone cultural centre. One of its most remarkable features is that the church doors remain open all day, without supervision, to enable people to find a church that is welcoming and available for ex tempore worship and prayer. This was a condition of Fr. Ken, fully recognising the attendant risks that may be involved, on his appointment and is in marked contrast to so many churches in England which remain firmly shut and locked for much of the week. Beautiful CD music of various religious styles can be appreciated when sitting in the calm of the church in the daytime. Earlier this

year I had the privilege of being asked by Fr. Ken to cover the parish for two weeks in February while he undertook ministry duties elsewhere, in France and Andorra. I was warmly welcomed by the community and stayed in the adjoining presbytery, dating from 1894, the architect for which was one A Messiah! This visit coincided with the annual Nice carnival seemingly tolerated by local residents but for visitors a must.

Holy Trinity is a must to visit if one is in the area. Be assured of a warm welcome by Fr. Ken and Isabel throughout the year and a very warm welcome from the weather in high summer when fans are a prominent feature inside the church although they do little to remove the heat from celebrants in copes and/or chasubles!



Holy Trinity Anglican Church, Nice 1860-62



Holy Trinity Church, north exterior



Wine and Wisdom 2007??

Report from Alan Lee

The Dover Society's annual Wine and Wisdom evening held on Monday, 19th February was once again a resounding success. We must congratulate Clive Taylor and his team Jill and Andrew for ensuring that all ran smoothly. The contest took the form of nine rounds of ten questions with double points for the round when a joker was played, meaning there were 100 possible points available. The fifth round, a selection of Dingbats, were wrestled over by the teams while they enjoyed their refreshments, this year the difficulty of each Dingbat seemed to be set just about right.

Smiths Crisps with a magnificent score of 90 were the winners of the engraved tumblers. Bakers Dozen finished second on 88 with Enigma in third place on 87 points. It was such a close contest that any one of six teams could have won this year.

Better, even than last year, the attendance of sixteen teams of six almost filled St. Mary's Parish Centre. Many thanks must also go to our new social secretary Pat Hooper, her first event, and all her helpers for arranging a most enjoyable evening.