

Dear friends,

I (Chris) began to write this letter as Hilde was in Manchester on the last day of her post-abortion counselling course, *'The Journey'*. The year has been full of trips to Manchester, firstly for the introductory course on pro-Life counselling ministry and now this second level course. It has been a good preparation for the future and even this year she has come in touch with a lady who suffered a miscarriage in difficult circumstances. We have now done a number of presentations of the possibilities and are in touch with some ladies who are interested in helping, or at least learning more. The last presentation was to the Balearic pastors' fellowship on their annual day retreat. A pile of books on the topic donated by OM Special Projects arrived just the day before, for which many thanks! The last year for which we have full statistics was 2008, when 3,387 women in the Balearic islands chose 'voluntary interruption' of their pregnancy. Most chose to do so for 'maternal health'. Sadly, the issue of maternal health will dog these women for the rest of their life, unless they can come to full peace with God. The total for Spain was 115,812.



Courtesy of the Evangelical Alliance

The precise way forward for this ministry is unclear. We feel Hilde should start with a group of people to pray, translate the training course into Spanish and run it next year, so that the group could begin offering -advertising- counselling in about a year's time, while taking the opportunities which arise meanwhile. Actually, we believe there are probably enough women in the churches already who would need to go through *The Journey*, particularly coming from lands where morals have long been more 'relaxed' as in Latin America, or where abortion was previously the sole method of contraception, as in former iron curtain lands.

In addition, after becoming aware that more could be done to gain access to evangelical patients, I have recently been encouraging church leaders to look into improving relationships with the management at the new university hospital, which opens in less than a month. So, after some cajoling, I went along there with two pastors to meet the director. Interestingly, it appears they have been waiting for us to turn up for five years or so, ever since the architects drew up plans for two chapels. The director envisions us sharing a 'Christian' chapel with the Catholics. The alternative is a 'Multi-confessional' room, slightly smaller. Both also have a small office - or sacristy, depending on who uses the room for what. The Churches' Council will now have to negotiate a chapel free of objectionable 'images'!

Web matters

Meanwhile, life has not been inactive for me, with the renewal of the OACI email system and the Spanish Evangelists' Conference web site. Partly due to spam, the last international meeting (2008) agreed to outsource the email to a professional service. After a couple of test drives we have found a firm which has proven very effective. I prepared the accounts for the new service and on Reformation Sunday the old system was switched off. Thanks to Steve Poulard for all his work over the past 15 or more years - I can't remember how long ago it started. We continue to benefit from his provision of web hosting for the OACI web site. At the same time, the Spanish Evangelists' Conference ([Confevan](#)) website has been completely changed. Originally on the Howe-Poulard *Carrelet* Content Management System, it is now moving onto a new server and (for me) CMS, *Wordpress*, this time provided by a member of one of the churches in Palma. I have been busy chasing up members of the Confevan board for new content. I was in Madrid for the bi-annual board meeting on 19th November to present the new web and having been approved, it should be live before you get this letter.

Perhaps it is just as well with all the other things that have happened this year that the graphic designer responsible for a new look to [PrayforSpain](#) had personal problems and was not able to work on it. This has given Mark plenty of time to fine tune the *XCathedra* CMS which will make it all work. There are already several social networks using *XCathedra*, including [St. Pixels](#) and the [Churches' Media Net](#), both of which I am occasionally a visitor. I also took the invitation of the OAC president as a final prompt to sign up with Facebook, but have not done much and I am certainly not inviting everyone on my email directory to be a 'friend'! But if you would like to see the clean 'Wall' (unlike my real office), by all means ask. Anyway, not much time for twiddling the thumbs while we wait for the new Pray4Spain. Indeed, it might be noticed by fervent visitors to the current site that there is not even enough time to keep most pages up to date.



With members of the English speaking home group (and one other) at the mother church

Local church ministry continues to be a significant part of our life, of course. One week we attend the (Spanish-speaking) local home group in the South-east of the island, leading it when our pastor can't get there. Two regular members are Spaniards, the rest of us foreigners, some from Europe, others from Latin America. We are currently looking into key Reformation doctrines, such as Grace and the Sovereignty of God. The following week (usually - sometimes they have been the same week) we lead the English speaking home group in Palma, co-led by Ken and Rosie Prudhoe. There are days when we are all actually English bar Hilde, but on other occasions, particularly now that the tourist season is over, we also have an Indian, a Hungarian, a Bulgarian family, a Romanian... not to mention an Irish woman and now a Scot and a Philippino! Our last African

member got married in the summer to a Dutch girl -in Ghana- and we occasionally have Latin visitors. It is sometimes difficult to keep tabs on everyone and for them to keep up with our Bible study series, which generally use Scripture Union notes. At present we are studying prayer. In addition, we are never lacking for need of time and resources to help others with issues facing their lives.

Once a month we are also helping out at the new church-plant in Arenal, Mallorca's most famous resort. Meetings started in a home two years ago, but they have only had the meeting room since January and it was officially inaugurated in September - not quite such a multi-media affair as the Pope's [inauguration](#) of the Sagrada Familia church in Barcelona! Interestingly, a large proportion of the membership of this branch of the church are immigrant workers, rather than ex-pats. I suppose only Hilde and I really fit into the latter category in some way - a French lady also attended the inauguration. Some 30 meet every Sunday morning and every other Tuesday evening. Every month I either preach or lead a service. I have been preaching recently from the early chapters of Acts. Other preachers have been teaching on the essence of local church and similar topics.



A full meeting hall at Arenal

All the while, health issues have slowed our pace. Thanks to all who have prayed for us in the various phases of this over the past months. Hilde has had trouble with her neck, causing on-going dizziness trouble. I have been struck by over-used shoulders, now much better, but not quite perfect, 'atypical facial pain', which is a sort of migraine which causes toothache, now under treatment and gradually decreasing in frequency and intensity, plus a few other lesser and nevertheless bothering conditions. Finance has at least prevented us from doing much itinerant ministry, so we were able to



Somewhere up there!



View from 'up there' (Switzerland)!

stay at home during the past months, bar the occasional meeting or our holiday, which this year included Switzerland (my brother's new chalet flat in the Valais) and the Costa Brava (our flat). It doesn't look as if we will be able to sell the flat and/ or shop in Palamos any time soon, but since the *Alturas* ministry gave up the shop in the summer we are delighted that this autumn we were able to re-let it to a business, thus relieving the financial pressure.

Many thanks again to all who have been supporting us through the past year. We appreciate and needed it!

May the Lord bless you this Christmas and into 2011.

Much love from us both,

Chris & Hilde

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