



*Nelly Vos, serving the Church in France*

Shalom! May the Lord bless you and keep you!

As May is the due date of a newsletter, I found myself with an urgency to share about how I survive and live happily during the lock down. In Marseille, we should have more flexibility tomorrow, May 11.

I am so thankful that I had no serious health issues the past months. I have a beautiful home, facing the ocean; it is quiet, peaceful, the traffic of boats and airplanes slowed down considerably, I even saw dolphins a couple weeks ago. My garden has been a field of poppies - my favorites flowers - for a month now. I did not even plant anything! The weather has been very pleasant; I can sit on my porch, work and hear my neighbors' two little boys playing every day. It has been a tremendous blessing.

Confinement is not much different from my life before : I do not have a close co-worker or a team, I live by myself, and continue to communicate with the girls and family as they are all on the other side of the ocean, on a regular basis.

Confinement is like an extended déjà-vu. If you remember, in July 2018 I broke my ankle and due to complications, I was not able to leave my house for more than six months, I was then deprived of some fellowship, and my work had slowed down as I could not visit churches and artists.

Since mid-March, some churches in our denomination, including the one I attend in Aix-en-Provence, use technology to connect. I realized pretty quickly that this form of « doing » church was not my preferred way to experience fellowship! I have a hard time to feel that I belong to the church through a screen and very limited communication during the week.

As I meditated on the few verses of Jesus' visit to Martha's house, I was challenged by the Lord again to not be consumed with the business I am fond of, rather than the serenity I should taste and savor. I also saw the Church as being like Martha, keeping busy with doing what she was supposed to do, in the appearance mode (*paraître*, in French) out of duty and Mary, as what the Church's

orientation should be, understanding that what matters most was being, (*être*, in French) being still, resting in Jesus.

I am also challenged by the way we live our faith in some French churches, in one word: isolation. We live for ourselves, not really interested in our fellow neighbors, the Samaritans. When we open our churches, we are expecting people to walk in, but usually they don't. If they do, we greet them « *bonjour* » and that's it ! Shouldn't the church be in the streets rather than within our walls? This might be the missionary in me speaking. I must admit that sometimes I don't reach out to people.

Speaking of the ministry, let me say that God has given me a renewed vision for the way I lead the work. I am being a little more aggressive to motivate and mobilize pastors, leaders and artists to collaborate in different instances.

As you have certainly observed creativity is on the rise during this time of being in lock down. My main prayer is that the boost won't deflate as fast as it rose.

Let me just name a few people who are good support to me. *Murielle*, a seminary student and *Daniel*, a seminary teacher, have accepted to participate actively on the book on the Lord's supper. We are aiming to complete the book no later than a year.

*Joël*, a youth pastor and *Geneviève*, an artist, are serving on the committee for the book on #water. Pray that 5 or 6 participants will actually send us the meditation they agreed to write, so we can start to put the book together.

I thank the Lord for these people.

The collaboration with *Camille* has been interrupted, due to family difficulties, so the team work is reduced to working with *Isabelle* on the 2021 calendar. The weekly planner is going well. The goal is to have these two products ready by early September.

Pray for *Nicolas*, 27, a new convert, whose voice teacher is challenging him to compose and suggested to do it on Jesus! As far as Nicolas knows his teacher is not a believer ... The first stage is writing music and words. Pray for him to be inspired and not become discouraged, by the magnitude of the project.

Pray that we won't have to postpone the Art exhibit with Jip Wjingaarden (July 18 - August 9). Meetings are coming up soon to decide the course of action.

Thanks again and again for standing with me in the Lord's field for many years. I appreciate your prayers and thank the Lord for each one of you.

Blessings to all !

*Nelly*