



PERSPECTIVES

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Church planting in the Paris area

Growing churches in Lorraine and Brittany • Interaction camps

Paul's page: 144 + 1 (and counting!)

Reflections by Paul Cooke, France Mission's Director



Welcome to our new-look magazine! I do hope you like it. The new title – *France Mission Perspectives* – brings together

our own name as an organisation with that of our principal partner in France: the evangelical churchplanting union known as Perspectives. Every issue will feature reports on a diverse range of people and projects connected with Perspectives, helping you pray for the Lord's work in France.



As I came to prepare this first issue of FM Perspectives, I noticed there had been 144 editions of its predecessor (*Action Missionnaire*), representing **well over 40 years' worth of prayer news!** 144 is a symbolically important number in Scripture... The 144,000 sealed in Revelation 7 form part of a great vision emphasizing the sheer diversity of God's people – a reminder that our ministry is just part of the worldwide Great Commission. In Revelation 14:4, the 144,000 are also described as *"firstfruits to God and the Lamb"*, an image that reminds us that the Lord's work is ongoing – **firstfruits** being followed by the rest of the harvest.

What Jesus said about harvests in Matthew 9:37 remains very true for France: *"The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few."* A significant number of French evangelical pastors are currently around retirement age but the growth of church-planting is inevitably **increasing demand**. Unfortunately, there aren't currently enough students in ministry training to satisfy this demand. Daniel Liechti, part of Perspectives' national leadership, estimates that France needs an **additional 45 full-time pastoral workers every year** for supply to meet demand.



Daniel Liechti,
Perspectives'
Director of
Development

Jesus tells us: *"Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field"* (Matthew 9:38). That is, indeed, our prayer in France Mission – and **your partnership is vital** in helping us support existing and future work. So, whether you've been with us more than 40 years or fewer than 40 days, **please pray** that the Lord will continue to bless France Mission's ministry as we enter this new season.

Every blessing

Paul

Front page photo: Gospel choir outreach in Villers-lès-Nancy (as part of *Bouge ta Ville*)



Planting a church in Cormeilles

Intern Frederic Cryan reflects on the first half of his year



While finishing university, I felt called to go to France to serve the church but felt **rather reluctant to go** at first. After

being put in contact with the pastor here in Cormeilles-en-Parisis, Damien Wary, I would take a month to reply to his emails while he would respond to mine within a day!

I arrived in France in September 2018 and *Eglise Harmonie* (the name of the church plant in Cormeilles) hosted its first service on 7th October. The challenge for the first few months, apart from getting up to scratch with the work that had to be done,



Damien, Bekah, & Frederic: pastor and interns in Cormeilles

was trusting God and seeking Him even when not much was going on in terms of church life. From September, I took charge of organising children's activities and church publicity. Services are currently held on the first Sunday of each month.

Over the last two months, **people have suddenly become very inquisitive**. We started our homegroups for non-Christians this February. This currently includes three groups. I am heading up a men's group undertaking a kind of variant to the Alpha Course which goes in search of life's meaning, through Jesus, while exploring existential questions. We also have a group of Catholic-background retirees exploring the Gospel of Mark and a young adults group coming along to film nights.

"Over the last two months, people have suddenly become very inquisitive."

After Easter, I hope to **start a youth group** with the help of my fellow intern, Bekah Watkiss, as there is an obvious need for an environment where local youth can feel loved and learn about God.

Through the time spent with fellow Christians serving *Eglise Harmonie* I've been **amazed by the testimonies** that different people share as well as by the church presence in France that is much stronger than I thought based on my previous experiences.

I'm now seriously considering serving the church in France for the next few years.

You can contact Frederic at fredericcryan@me.com

Approaching the finishing post

Missionaries Paul & Marjorie Dowling ask you to pray for replacements



It seems incredible that we can now talk about our **retirement next year!** Paul will be 65 in May 2020 and we plan to take our

retirement more or less at that time. We've never made any secret about this and have talked regularly about it at church. Notwithstanding, Paul talked to one of our less regular members a few weeks ago and it came as a shock to her. Inevitably periods of transition like this, with a change of pastor in view, are unsettling for a church, especially when we don't know whether there will be anyone to replace us and, if so, who it will be. We've been very encouraged by our new **regional director, Patrice Niveaux**, who's clearly taken our cause to heart and has promised to do all he can to find someone for us. **Please pray** that the right person hears the Lord's call to come



Perspectives' Regional Director, Patrice Niveaux

here. We're doing all we can to prepare the church for this change and are on the lookout constantly for people with the capacity to take on more responsibility in the church, but there are few people with both the gifts and the availability.

In other respects, things go well in the church. Our **Christmas service** was a very happy occasion, with several visitors present, all of whom seemed to appreciate it. Our little group doing the **Alpha Course** is very



Church outing

encouraging. One of our members, who is a health professional, is also leading an **anger management course** and we've been amazed by the number of people who've signed up for it and are finding it helpful.

"Please pray that the right person hears the Lord's call to come here."

On 23rd March we're going to screen the film *The Case for Christ* (*Jésus, l'enquête* in French), an excellent opportunity for church members to invite their friends. **Please pray** that they will rise to the challenge. And please pray for us that we will keep our eyes fixed on Jesus and run the race right to the end with Him.

You can contact the Dowlings at paul.dowling@sfr.fr

Contemplative evenings in Le Pré Saint Gervais

Missionaries Jonathan & Rachel Vaughan explain this new seeker-friendly activity



We were encouraged that four people asked to become church members at our AGM in February. One of the main

subjects for discussion at that meeting was our **small groups**, which we want to be a way for people to care for and encourage one another. The groups have not been working so well recently, and during Lent we're trying different styles and times of day, to encourage people to try attending a group, or to attend more regularly. **Our prayer** is that this would motivate people to commit to a group beyond Lent.

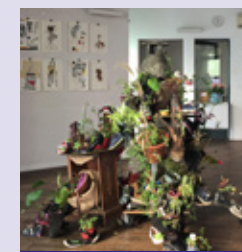
One new venture this term has been developing Christian meditation as a seeker-friendly activity. During the art exhibition, we held a contemplative evening, offering a time of quiet to reflect on Bible verses on the theme of the invisible, with visual input from the artwork. We plan to hold these **contem-**



Church away-day in the woods

"We were encouraged that four people asked to become church members at our AGM in February."

plative evenings once a month, as an alternative to café church. The aim is to provide people with an opportunity to slow down and think deeply, ask themselves questions of meaning and purpose, with Bible verses



Art Exhibition - "Invisible"

as food for thought, so that God's Word might speak into their lives. For Christians, these evenings provide a wonderful opportunity to really listen to the Word and to pray carefully about what it says to us.

We met with the new mayor in January and we were able to mention that we're looking for a **larger building**. He said that the council would be happy to assist us if necessary, so we're grateful for this positive outcome. However, having talked with local estate agents, it appears that buying bigger premises may be **quite a challenge** (in terms of cost and availability). Do please **continue to pray** for wisdom and guidance.

You can contact the Vaughans at jony.vaughan@gmail.com

Paris-Cardinet: church as laboratory

Missionary Dave Brown explains more



A neighbouring pastor once called our Paris-Cardinet church a “laboratory”. I was very struck by that word, but as

I thought about it, I realized why. It’s the place we can try out ideas coming from two different sources, two different ministries I am involved in.



Firstly, **church revitalisation**. Ever since coming to Paris-Cardinet I knew that we had to work on “replanting” the church but the word revitalisation, and the thinking about it, was practically unknown back then. I’ve worked a lot on seeing the implications of our postmodern world. I now lead the **Church Revitalisation Network** of the European Leadership Forum (take a look at our bi-lingual website on the topic: revitalisation.fr). I’ve been accompanying pastors involved in this right across Europe (and have made three visits to Lithuania to mentor leaders from a local denomination). I recently taught revitalisation at the Geneva Bible Institute and have been able to advise some churches in French-speaking Europe.

Secondly, **evangelism**. I’ve just agreed to continue chairing the Evangelism Commission of the CNEF (National Council of

French Evangelicals). This will be for a third (and last!) three-year mandate. Much

has been achieved, mainly through surveys among pastors and non-Christians, through an **apologetics website** (apologetix.fr), and through the film called *Envoyé-s* (= “Sent”) which was released last year. But we need to continue our work in helping churches to get to grips with bringing the



gospel to a generation who are ignorant but who didn’t personally reject the gospel – their parents or grand-parents did that! How can we help to make the gospel plausible today? Watch this space...

“How can we help to make the gospel plausible today? Watch this space...”

So Paris-Cardinet is a laboratory but, being situated in the centre of a huge city with a high turnover of members, we know that all our experiments will not be immediately applicable elsewhere.

You can contact Dave at david.brown.paris@gmail.com



New Team Members in Blois



Missionaries Peter & Rachel Calvert welcome some new faces to their team



Churchplanting is a team enterprise! Last time, we introduced you to Megan, John and Fiona. Here are some requests for our other team members here in Blois.

Marcio (who is Brazilian) would ideally like to get a visa which would allow him to combine ministry commitments with paid work in a café or as a sports coach (at present his visa only allows him to work as a pastor... which isn’t always the best way to get alongside the locals!). **Please pray** in particular for his friendships and witness in the football club he plays for... maybe God will call some of his team to follow Jesus too? **Please pray** for spiritual break-throughs this year. Marcio is also currently involved in training a puppy who is destined to become an assistance dog. **Pray also** for the people he meets through this!

Anneclia works as a nurse. **Please pray** for her friendships and witness at work and in the dance class she is part of. It’s not always easy to balance a demanding job with the



The Blois team: Marcio, Fiona, John, Peter, Rachel, Anneclia, Megan, Anne-Line (L to R)

commitments of being part of a fledgling church plant (scouts, looking after the accounts, leading worship, small group...); **please pray** for wise choices, good times of rest, encouragement and renewed energy.



Anneclia is planning to apply to **All Nations Christian College** for the autumn, in order

to use her nursing qualification to serve in a cross-cultural context. We’re very excited about this... although of course, she will be much missed in Blois.

Anne-Line teaches art and design at a local secondary school. She is very much still part of the church plant but is facing some health issues and is taking a sabbatical from team commitments at present. **Please pray** for her, for improved health, growth in Jesus and a good balance of work and rest.



All Nations College, Hertfordshire

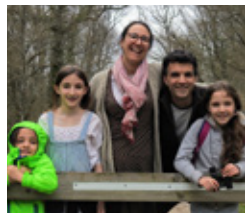
You can contact the Calverts at pierrezrachel.calvert@gmail.com; they will be happy to pass on messages to other team members



Guess the Bible story...

Bilingual gospel fun!

Perspectives missionary Peter Calvert, from Blois, tells us about the summer camps he will help lead this summer



Dressing up as a caveman. Smashing a jug to illustrate the fall of man. Organising a wide game by moonlight. Giving

testimonies around a campfire. Making spaghetti bolognese for 100. Translating dorm-inspection reports, NASA-style. Comparing God's creation to making a pizza without any ingredients. Transforming a high-school dining room into a space centre. Giving thanks for our meals in bilingual song. Making a musical video-clip about loo-cleaning to the tune of "My Favourite Things".

This is a list of various things that our team members at **Interaction summer camps** have found themselves doing in recent years. It might seem trivial, a far cry from serious preaching and discipling. But, in actual fact, many of us who are involved throughout the year in church-based ministry find that some of our best **gospel**



Ready for action

opportunities arise during these weeks of hot, frenetic summer fun. Interaction is a gospel-centred camp, with two short Bible talks and an interactive Bible study every day. Far from being a distraction from church ministry, camp feeds into it, providing a great spiritual boost for our believing young people and a perfect opportunity to tell the gospel to those who haven't yet grasped it, whether from church or unchurched families.

"Far from being a distraction from church ministry, camp feeds into it."

What sets Interaction apart from other gospel camps is its **bilingualism**. We have French-speaking campers and English-speaking campers (mostly from the UK). So, in order not to lose anyone, everything we say in public is said both in French and in English: game rules, prayers, safety instructions, Bible talks, worship songs. If that sounds wearisome to you, think again! In fact, it adds to the fun. For campers and leaders alike, it's a great intercultural experience as we live, eat and play together.

Know anyone who'd like to come? Tell them to take a look at www.interactioncamps.org. We're looking for campers (10s-18s), practical helpers (18-23), leaders (21+), and cooks (18+).

Interaction France 1 (10s-14s) Friday 26th July to Saturday 3rd August £265 (£310 with transport from London)

Interaction France 2 (14s-18s) - Sunday 4th to Monday 12th August £295 (£340 with transport from London)

You can contact Peter at pierrezrachel.calvert@gmail.com



Jump! Saute!



Swinging through the trees

Part of the *Bouge ta Ville* outreach event

Accommodating growth in Villers-lès-Nancy

Pastor François Longeron provides an update on the fellowship he leads



The Perspectives church in Villers, originally planted from the neighbouring town of Vandœuvre when Dave Brown was

pastor there, is happily **intergenerational and intercultural** – a patchwork of members with different backgrounds and mother tongues who are a pleasure to work alongside, even if, as in most churches in the suburbs of large cities (Nancy in our case – with a population of 435,000 in the city and its environs), “turnover” is high as people move for work and study.

In the second half of 2018, 11 people moved away for work reasons while 26 new folk

arrived! This can prove quite challenging in terms of planning and organisation, but we thank the Lord that the church continues to grow. Due to the limitations of our building, we’ve held **two Sunday morning services** for several years now and have a group of Chinese-speaking believers who meet in our building on Sunday afternoons.

Even though our website needs updating, quite a few new people come to us via this “shop window”. Take **Aurélien**, for example... He was a black-clad Goth who liked collecting old books and had an interest in spiritual things. Among his purchases one day, he discovered a beautifully bound New Testament. He started reading it, became intrigued, and then looked for a church leader to answer his questions. He came to me via the internet and ended up getting

baptised and marrying a sister who was already a member of our church.

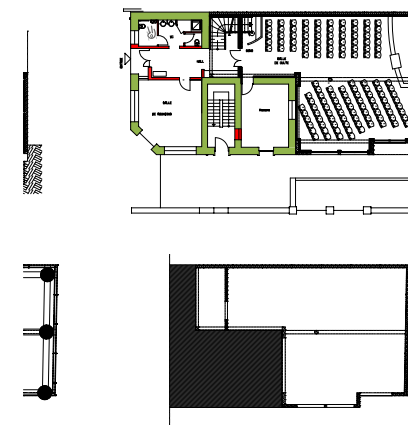
Another example would be **H...** who came from Asia to study at the university in Nancy. Via a friend we have in common, I was able to talk with him about faith and salvation in Christ. H... gave his life to the Lord and was making great progress when the time came for him to return home. Even though he got a job with a “Christian” employer, he contacted me a few weeks ago to say that he’d discovered something new: “as a result of a really bad experience, I’ve come to understand that there are true Christians and those who are Christians in name only. **Please pray** for me and my future!”

When you read this report, our AGM will just have taken place and we will have:

- Given thanks for two new members of the Leadership Team and announced the retirement of another brother from this group after 30 years’ service
- Presented a project to double the size of our worship space and add three rooms for youth & children’s work
- Announced the start of a youth Bible study group for 15-20 year olds which will connect with similar groups in other local churches



Shared meal at church



Architect’s plan

- Encouraged the fellowship as they see that some of those who’ve been converted at the church are now taking up leadership roles (e.g. Michel, the current president of our church council)
- Shared news of outreach plans, including a big children’s event on 22nd June and a conference around the theme of peace to mark the 30th anniversary of our twinning with a town in Germany (which will include the visit of an evangelical pastor from that town)

Preaching the gospel, training young Christians to take on responsibilities within the church, and integrating into the general life of our town are the means by which God’s grace will enable us to share the Good News of Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord to *les Villarois* (our fellow citizens in Villers). May He be glorified through our work and witness here!

You can contact François at longeronfr@gmail.com



The Saint-Brieuc church family

A growing church in Brittany



Paul Cooke reports on the Perspectives church in Saint-Brieuc



From the Perspectives church in Villers (in Lorraine), we move 720km due west to the Perspectives church in Saint-Brieuc on the northern coast

of Brittany. Not all Perspectives churches are currently blessed with growth, but these two are – and I hope you'll be encouraged by the story that's been shared with me by Michaël Piette, the pastor in Saint-Brieuc.

A bit of history:

The Perspectives church in Saint-Brieuc was originally set up by a group of about 20 believers in 1956. They met in the same

location for 54 years but finally moved into larger, better equipped premises in 2013. That same year, Michaël Piette was appointed pastor both of the church in Saint-Brieuc and of its satellite congregation in nearby Lamballe (about 20km to the east). Over the last few years, the adult membership at Saint-Brieuc has nearly **doubled** to 64, while the number of children and young people has **tripled**.

Teaching:

The church's teaching programme is designed to fit with the school year, focusing on **five biblical values** every year. This year, those values are: wisdom, hope, trust, forgiveness, and friendship. Each value is introduced at a Sunday-afternoon gathering

and is then followed up by two months of teaching in Sunday services, Home Groups, and children's work. There's even an artistically gifted group who provide appropriate decoration and visuals to complement the theme.

Family outreach:

Last year, the church set up a group called *Les familles z'à cœur* (which roughly translates as "A heart for families") as part of the AFP (Association Familiale Protestante – see afp-federation.org). This allows the church to organise family-friendly events, especially Saturday-afternoon activities for 6-12 year olds. The group will soon be relaunching the church's library and will also be arranging for **The Mark Drama** (*Marc l'expérience* in French) to take place in the Côtes-d'Armor department of Brittany.



Church weekend away

Challenges of growth:

As the church grows, so do the needs. Youth group leaders in Saint-Brieuc sometimes need to go out into the car park to have enough space for their sessions. The church has a shed at the end of a small piece of land, but work will be necessary to make the whole area functional and pleasant. Renovation wouldn't be practical, so the plan is to demolish the shed and replace it with a **summer house** and turn the piece of land into a **pleasant garden** covering 80m². Finding the finance for the work (estimated



The Piette family

at 6,000 euros) is a challenge, as the church is still repaying its mortgage and is not yet able to cover the salary of a full-time pastor.

"If you'd like to help, pastor Michaël would love to hear from you!"

How can you help?

Most of the practical work is scheduled for the week of **8th-14th July 2019**. The work will involve demolishing the shed, building the summer house, and creating the garden area. If you'd like to help, pastor Michaël would love to hear from you! The church will be able to provide volunteers with board and lodging. And the Brittany beaches aren't far away if you need to relax after a week's labour! Alternatively, if you'd like to make a contribution to the costs, you can do so via the FM website: francemission.org. Pastor Michaël says a big **thank you for your prayers** for the churches in Saint-Brieuc and Lamballe. May the Lord continue to bless their work and witness for Him!

You can contact Michaël at michael.piette@eglises-perspectives.org

2018 financial review

UK Director Paul Cooke provides an overview of how supporters' generous donations were used last year

Compared to the previous year, 2018 saw a small increase in total income and a small decrease in total expenditure for France Mission. Income rose from £388k to £394k, while expenditure dipped from £406k to £402k (see the pie charts for more detail).

Thanks to your generosity, we were delighted to be able to send **£343k to support missionaries and gospel projects** in the French-speaking world. This figure would have been higher had we not decided to delay a non-urgent grant (with the beneficiary's full agreement) in the hope that the pound-euro exchange rate might improve from a low point at the end of last year.

Given that **legacy revenue** was significantly down last year (from £53k in 2017 to £17k in 2018), overall income held up very well. Legacies are unpredictable, so we never include them in our plans, but whenever they arrive they can make a **huge difference** – a legacy really is the ultimate gift. Thank you so much to those of you who have already made provision to remember France Mission in your will.

Now that we have our new website etc., we want to invest more in **advertising and exhibiting** this year in order to attract new supporters. We're also currently considering ways in which we can best use **social media** to share about

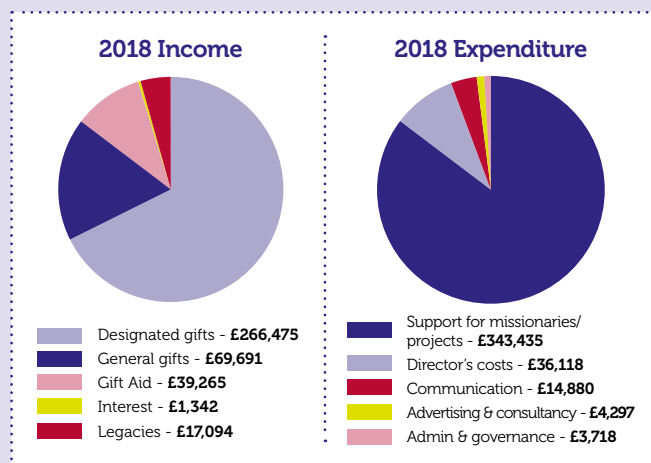
the highlights and the challenges of the Lord's work in France.

A huge thank you to all supporters, old and new, whose prayerful generosity is helping God's kingdom to grow in France. May He continue to enable and prosper the work through the gifts and prayers of His people!

Once they've been formally approved at the Trustees meeting at the end of March, a formal set of **accounts for 2018** will be posted on the FM website (francemission.org/who-we-are#accounts). If you'd like any more information, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Thank you once again for your amazing support!

If you'd like a statement of personal gifts for the tax year 2018-2019, please just ask and I'll gladly supply you with one (paulcooke@francemission.org).



Other news from Paul Cooke



Next France Day (13th April 2019)

We're nearly there now! This will take place, God willing, on **Saturday 13th April 2019 (10.30am to 4.30pm)** at

Brook Lane Community Church, 27-29 Brook Lane, Bromley BR1 4PX. In addition to myself, our speakers for the day will be Paul & Marjorie Dowling (from the Perspectives church in Châteauroux) and Chris & Joanna

Frizelle who have gone out from Bromley to help with a church plant in Clermont-de-l'Oise (northern France). It promises to be a great day and it would be wonderful to see you there. For catering purposes, it would be helpful if you could

please let me know if you're hoping to come (paulcooke@francemission.org). Full details can be found on our website (<https://goo.gl/r8aZ9U>).

New DVD

As mentioned on page 6, Dave Brown and a team from the CNEF (National Council of French Evangelicals) have put together an excellent DVD called *Envoyé-s*. The title means "Sent" and is based on Jesus' words in John 20:21: "As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." The DVD comprises two 25-minute films providing a powerful reminder of the biblical basis for mission and a fascinating overview of the history of Christian mission, with a particular focus on French contributions. It also presents a

couple of engaging contemporary scenarios designed to help all of us think about how we can be "missionaries" in our everyday lives. Thanks to the subtitles, the DVD is entirely accessible to English-speaking viewers. You might like to offer it to your church's mission group or consider it as a resource for Home Groups. We've spent about £10 per DVD getting them made but, if you'd like one, we're offering it to supporters completely free of charge. To order a copy, please use the response form that came with the magazine or email me at paulcooke@francemission.org.



Helping in France

In addition to the possibility of joining a **work team in Saint-Brieuc** (see article on pages 12-13), the Perspectives church in **Avalon (Burgundy)** would also be interested in a few extra team members for evangelistic outreach from **8th-14th July 2019**. They'd be particularly interested to hear from anyone who could "faire de l'animation de rue (sketch, chant avec guitare ou autre animation, etc)". For more details, please contact Henri Klopfenstein (klopfenstein.henri@gmail.com).



France Mission: Love France – Love Mission – Love Church

France Mission's vision is to see increasing numbers of people in France encountering God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – through the work and witness of local evangelical churches. As a support organisation, we provide targeted, strategic support to help the French evangelical church move closer to achieving its own goals. To find out more, please visit francemission.org.

If your church or small group would like to hear more about the Lord's work in France, please contact Paul Cooke to book a speaker:

- Email: paulcooke@francemission.org
- Phone: (+44) 07980 450462 or (+44) 01392 213275
- Post: PO Box 743, Exeter EX1 9RN, UK

Support France Mission when you shop online

We've registered with two websites – **easyfundraising** and **TheGivingMachine** – that enable you to raise funds for France Mission whenever you shop online. Both sites provide access to a wide variety of popular retailers, are easy to use, and don't cost you (or us) a penny!



So, if you shop online, please do consider signing up either at easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/francemission or at thegivingmachine.co.uk/causes/france-mission and help us raise more funds to support the Lord's work in France.



We're also registered with **Amazon Smile**. So, if you shop with Amazon, just visit smile.amazon.co.uk to get started:

- Log in to your Amazon account and search France Mission in the "pick your own charity" search bar
- Select France Mission
- Amazon will send you a confirmation email
- Any purchases you make will generate a donation for France Mission (at no extra cost to you!)

Thank you!



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