

newdirections

December 2012

£2.50

serving Catholics and Evangelicals seeking to renew the Church in the historic faith

A better way forward

The future after the vote

Also in this issue:

- Books of the year
- Robert Beaken on the Nikaeen Club
- Paul Cartwright considers Remembrance

parish directory

BARRY St Mary's, Holton Road, near rail, bus and town centre *Credo Gynru (Fif Wales)* Sunday: Solemn Mass 8am and 11am, Sunday Club 11am; **St Cadoc's, Coldbrook Road** Sunday: Solemn Mass 9.30am, Vespers 6pm Saturday Benediction 1st Saturday of the month. Parish Priest: Fr Ben Andrews ssc 01446 406690

BEXHILL on SEA St Augustine's, Cooden Drive, TN39 3AZ Sunday: Mass at 8am, Parish Mass with Junior Church at 10am. Further details: Father Robert Coates ssc 01424 210 785

BIRMINGHAM St Agatha, Stratford Road, Sparkbrook (B11 1QT) 'Any similarity between the Church of England and St Agatha's is purely coincidental!' (A Diocesan Official - 2001) Sunday Mass 11am. Secure Parking. Canon John Herve ssc - 0121 449 2790

BISHOP AUCKLAND St Helen Auckland, Manor Road, West Auckland Medieval church, *Forward in Faith, ABC*. Sunday: Sung Mass 10am, Evensong and Benediction 6pm. Weekday Mass: Mon 7pm, Tues, Thur, Fri, Sat 9.30am, Wed 10am, Rosary Mon 6.30pm. Parish Priest: Canon Robert McTeer ssc 01388 604152 www.sthelenschurch.co.uk

BLACKPOOL St Stephen on the Cliffs, Holmfild Road, North Shore ABC, *Forward in Faith, SSWSH Parish*. Vicar: Canon Andrew Sage ssc. Sundays: Said Mass 9am, Solemn Mass (Traditional Language) 10.30am, Evening Service 6pm; easy access and loop. Tel: 01253 351484 www.ststephenblackpool.co.uk

BOSTON LINCOLNSHIRE St Nicholas, Skirbeck Boston's oldest Parish Church. *Forward in Faith Parish* under the Episcopal care of the Bishop of Richborough. Sunday: Low Mass 8am (1st and 3rd), Sung Mass 9.30am. Daily Mass, offices, benediction and confessions as displayed on notice boards. Rector: Fr Paul Noble ssc 01205 362734 www.forwardinfaithlincs.org.uk/stnicholasboston.html

BOURNEMOUTH St Ambrose, West Cliff Road, BH4 8BE. A *Forward in Faith Parish with Resolutions ABC in place*. Sunday: 8am Low Mass BCP, 10am Sung Mass Traditional Ceremonial, modern Rite, 6pm Evensong. Parish office 01202 766772

BOURNEMOUTH St Francis of Assisi, Charminster Road (corner of East Way) *A Forward in Faith Parish* under the care of the Bishop of Richborough. *Resolutions ABC*. Sunday: 8am Low Mass, Parish Mass 10am, Evening Prayer and Benediction 6.30pm - first Sunday of each month and major festivals. For information about all services during the Interregnum contact Barbara Geatrell 01425 470370 or Dean Quinton 01425 672601 Churchwardens www.stfrancis-bournemouth.org.uk

BRADFORD St Chad, Toller Lane (B6144, 1 mile from city centre). Sunday services: Low Mass 8.30am, Solemn Mass 10.45am, Evensong and Benediction 6.30pm. Weekday Masses 8am (except Wednesday 7.30pm and Thursday 9.15am). Parish Priest: Canon Ralph Crowe ssc 01274 543957. *Resolutions ABC*. English Missal/BCP www.stchads.dial.pipex.com

BRIDPORT St Swithun *Resolutions ABC*. Sunday: Low Mass 8am; Sung Mass 9.30am, Evening Prayer and Benediction second Sunday 6pm. Weekday Masses: Tues 12 noon, Wed 9am, Thur 10am. Parish Priest: Fr Peter Edwards 01308 456588

BRIGHTON WAGNER GROUP The Annunciation (11am) Fr Michael Wells 01273 681431. **St Bartholomew's** (11am) Fr. David Clues 01273 620491. **St Martin's** (10am) Fr Trevor Buxton 01273 604687. **St Michael's** (10.30am) Fr Robert Fayers 01273 727362. **St Patrick's** (10.30am) Fr Steven Underdown 01273 747889. **St Paul's** (11am) Fr Robert Fayers 01273 727362. (Sunday Principal Mass times in brackets.)

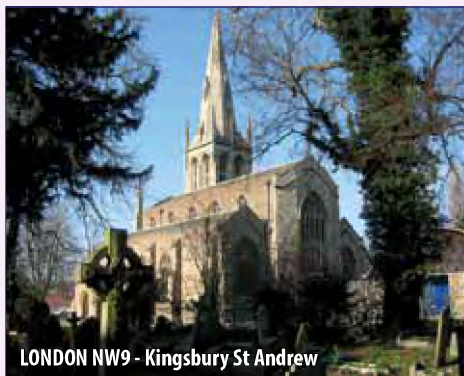
BRISTOL All Saints, Pembroke Road, Clifton (near zoo and suspension bridge) Sunday: 8am Mass, 9.30am Family service (Mass 2nd and 4th Sunday), 11am Solemn Mass (children's group), 6pm Evening Service with Benediction. Feast days: 7.30pm Solemn Mass. Daily Mass. Confessions: Saturday 11.30am, 5.30pm or by

arrangement. *Resolutions ABC (Ebbsfleet)*. Information, appointments: Fr Richard Hoyal 0117 970 6776

BRISTOL Christ Church, Broad Street, Old City Centre BS1 2EJ *Resolutions ABC*. Sunday 11am Choral Eucharist, 6.30pm Choral Evensong with Anthem and Sermon. Georgian gem, Prayer Book services, robed men and boys' choir, Renatus Harris organ. Tues, Thurs and major holy days: 1.05pm Eucharist. Regular recitals and concerts (see website). Parish Priest: Fr Richard Hoyal 0117 9706776 www.christchurchcitybristol.org

BRISTOL Holy Nativity, Wells Road (A37), half a mile from Temple Meads Station *A Forward in Faith Parish, Resolutions ABC*. Sunday: Solemn Mass and Junior Church 10am, Friday Mass 10.15am. Priest in Charge Fr Christopher Kinch 01179 712 496

BROMLEY St George, Bickley Sunday: Low Mass 8am, Sung Mass 10.30am. Daily Masses: Mon 7.30am, Tues 9.30am and 7.30pm, Weds 10am, Thurs 9.30am, Fri 9.30am and 6.30pm, Sat 9.30am. Times of Confession and other information from Fr Owen Higgs on 020 8467 3809



LONDON NW9 - Kingsbury St Andrew

CARDIFF near rail, bus, Millennium Stadium, city centre and Bay Daily Mass; *Credo Gynru*. **St Mary, Bute Street** Sunday: Solemn Mass 11am; **St Dyfrig and St Samson, Pentre Gardens** Sunday: Solemn Mass 9.30am; **St Paul, Paget Street, Grange Town** Family Eucharist 10am. Parish Priest: Fr Graham Francis 02920 487777. Associate Priest: Fr David Morris 0292 22 2177

CHARD The Good Shepherd, Fumham. *Resolutions ABC*. Sunday: Sung Mass 9.45am, Solemn Evensong and Benediction (3rd Sunday only) 6pm. Weekday Masses: Tues 10am. Contact: Heather McCann on 01460 64531

CHESTERFIELD St Paul, Hasland, Derbyshire Sunday: Sung Mass 9.45am (Family Mass 1st Sunday), Evening Prayer 3.30pm. Masses: Tues 7.15pm (Benediction last Tues of month), Frid 12 noon, Sat 8.30am. **St James, Temple Normanton, Chesterfield, Derbyshire** Sunday: Parish Mass 11.30am, Thur: Mass 7.15pm. Fr Malcolm Ainscough ssc 01246 232486

COLCHESTER St Barnabas Church, Abbott's Road, Old Heath, Colchester *A Forward in Faith Parish. Resolutions ABC*. Sunday: Said Mass 8am, Sung Mass 10am. Weekday Masses: Mon 6pm, Tues 10am, Thur 7pm, Holy Days 7.30pm. Check website for other daily services www.oldheath.org.uk Vicar: Fr Richard Tillbrook ssc 01206 797481 fathercarp@hotmail.com

DEVIZES St Peter's, Bath Road, Devizes, Wiltshire *A Forward in Faith Parish under the episcopal care of the Bishop of Ebbsfleet. Resolutions ABC*. Sunday: Low Mass (BCP/EM) 8am, Sung Mass 10am, Exposition, Devotions and Benediction (First Sundays) 5pm. Thurs Low Mass 7pm. Mass on major Saints Days and other Festivals (times vary. Fr Peter Moss ssc 01380 724785

EASTBOURNE St Saviour's *A Forward in Faith Parish with Resolution ABC*. Sunday: Low Mass 8am, Solemn Mass 10.30am. Daily Mass and Office. Details and information from Fr Jeffery Gunn 01323 722317 www.stsaviourseastbourne.org.uk

FOLKESTONE Kent, St Peter on the East Cliff *A Forward in Faith Parish under the episcopal care of the Bishop of Richborough*. Sunday: 8am Low Mass, 10.30am Solemn Mass, 6pm Evening Prayer. Weekdays - Low Mass: Tues 7pm, Thur 12 noon. During Interregnum - tel: 01303 254472 www.stpeterschurchfolkestone.org.uk - stpetersfolk@yahoo.co.uk

GRIMSBY St Augustine, Legsby Avenue Lovely Grade II Church by Sir Charles Nicholson. *A Forward in Faith Parish under Bishop of Richborough*. Sunday: Mass 9am, Parish Mass 10.30am, Solemn Evensong and Benediction 6pm. Weekday Mass: Wed 9.30am. Contact Mr T Jones 01472 871673

HARTLEPOOL St Oswald's, Brougham Terrace. *A Forward in Faith Parish under the episcopal care of the Bishop of Beverley*. Sunday: Sung Mass 9.30am, Benediction 6pm. Daily Mass, Offices and Confessions as displayed. Parish Priest: Fr Graeme Buttery ssc 01429 273201

HEMPTON Holy Trinity (near Fakenham, Norfolk). *ABC, FIF*. The Church on the Green. Visit us on the way to Walsingham. Mass on Sundays and Wednesdays at 9.30am. Linked to the Shrine of OLW. Parish Priest: Fr Lockett ssc 01328 820030

KINGSTON-upon-THAMES St Luke, Gibbon Road (short walk from Kingston railway station) Sunday: Low Mass (English Missal) 8am, Sung Mass (Western Rite) 10.30am, Evensong and Benediction 5pm. 3rd Sunday each month: Teddy Bears Service for pre-schoolers 9.30am. For further information phone Fr Martin Hislop: Parish Office 020 8549 4551 www.stlukeskingston.co.uk

LEAMINGTON SPA St John the Baptist *Parish under the Episcopal care of the Bishop of Ebbsfleet - all resolutions passed*. Daily Mass. Sunday: Low Mass 8am, Parish Mass 9.30am, Solemn Evensong and Benediction (1st Sunday only) 3.30pm. Traditional Catholic Worship in a friendly atmosphere. Parish Priest: Fr David Lawson ssc 01926 422208 www.fifparish.com/stjohnleamington

LIVERPOOL St Agnes and St Pancras, Toxteth Park (FIF & ABC) Sunday: Parish Mass 10am; Solemn Evensong and Benediction 6.30pm. Daily Mass. Sunday School. Glorious J.L. Pearson Church, with modern catholic worship, good music and friendly atmosphere. Parish Priest: Canon Christopher Cook ssc 0151 733 1742 www.stagnes.org.uk

LONDON EC3 St Magnus the Martyr, Lower Thames Street (nearest Tube: Monument or Bank) *Resolutions ABC*. Mass: Sunday 11am, refreshments following. Tues, Thur and Fri 12.30. Visitors very welcome. www.stmagnusmartyr.org.uk Fr Philip Warner saintmagnus@bulldoghome.com

LONDON N1 Holy Trinity, Hoxton Sunday: 10am Solemn Mass and Sunday School. Midweek Services: contact Fr Andrew Newcombe 020 7253 4796

LONDON N21 Holy Trinity, Winchmore Hill. *A Forward in Faith, Resolution A, B & C, modern catholic parish*. Sunday: Every Sunday: Said Mass 9.00am and Sung Mass 10.30am with Junior Church. Weekdays: Tues to Fri 12 noon Angelus and Mass. Saturday Mass 10am. For the Sacrament of Reconciliation and other enquires contact Fr Richard Bolton at rdeb2010@btinternet.com or phone 0208 364 1583

London NW9 Kingsbury St Andrew *A Fif Parish under the Episcopal care of the Bishop of Fulham* Sunday: Mass at 10am. **Tube to Wembley Park then 83 Bus to Church Lane** Parish Priest: Fr John T Smith ssc 020 8205 7447

LONDON SE13 St Stephen, Lewisham (opposite Lewisham Station) *A Forward in Faith Parish under the episcopal care of the Bishop of Fulham*. Sunday: Mass 8am, Parish Mass 10am. Weekdays: Mon 10am, Tues 6.30pm, Wed 12.15pm, Fri 6.30pm, Sat 10am Parish Priest: Fr Peter Hudson 07908 640369

LONDON SE16 St Mary Rotherhithe, St Marychurch Street SE16 4JE *A Fulham Parish*. Sunday: Solemn Mass 10am, Evening Prayer 6pm, Benediction monthly. Mass times: Tues 12 noon; Wed 10am School Mass; Thur 6pm; Fri 9.30am; Sat 9.30am. Tube: Jubilee Line Bermondsey/Canada Water/Rotherhithe Overground. Visitors most welcome. Fr Mark Nicholls ssc 0207 394 3394

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'Back to the drawing board!'



LEAD STORY

A way forward?

Peter Westfield on the outrage that greeted the decision reached by the House of Laity

Perhaps I was naïve. I knew that there would be a backlash against a ‘no’ vote in General Synod, but I had not anticipated the scale and the hysteria with which the backlash would be employed. Bishop after bishop has lined up to impress the media with his [sic] outrage at the temerity of the House of Laity in coming to a mind of its own.

Calls for reform

My personal favourites are those who call for reform of the way Synod members are elected, since they are so obviously undemocratic and out of touch with modern society. Never mind the fact that the rules of this synodical process were clear from the outset (as they were in 1992, when the legislation allowing the ordination of women to the presbyterate was passed by an even smaller margin than this result); never mind the fact that the legislation and its forbears failed consistently to achieve the two-thirds majority in each house which was necessary at the final stage as it made its process through the legislative system; never mind the fact that Synod prayed in silence that God’s will be done before the final vote was taken: the final result was clearly wrong, and so something must be done!

The obsession with the cultural norms of the society in which we live is a curious one, too: I write this on the day when the Gospel reading at Mass was Luke’s account of the cleansing of the Temple. Jesus was not too obviously concerned with the cultural norms of his society on that particular occasion. When even as profound a theologian as Rowan Williams implies that our main focus should be conforming to the ‘trends and priorities of...wider society’, then we know that we are indeed in the grip of collective hysteria.

Legitimate and fair

What this saga has also demonstrated is that not only are the hard-line proponents of women’s ordination completely scornful of the ecclesiology and governance of the Church Universal – we have known that for a long time – they are also utterly scornful of the structures of government of the very Church to which they belong, and in which some of them aspire to be bishops. How else can the utter outrage at the decision reached – legally, legitimately, and fairly – by the House of Laity be explained?

It seems that synodical governance is fine, until the synod in question reaches the wrong decision! Then the wisdom and leadership of the bishops is called upon. And yet it was precisely this leadership that was ignored and rejected when the Archbishops’ amendment was rejected – by a small majority – in the House of Clergy. Perhaps episcopal leadership, along with synodical governance, is a pick-and-choose affair?

Whatever the strange consequences of Synod’s vote – and they are worthy of serious analysis at some time in the future, even if only by historians – they must not stop us from looking to the future, with faith and with hope. Catholics and Evangelicals together must adopt a constructive and united approach to ensure that this scenario is not repeated. Perhaps a way forward might be something similar to that adopted by the Church in Wales: two pieces of legislation, separate but inextricably linked, one which creates women bishops and another which gives provision for those who are opposed. If such an approach were to be adopted here, the future might indeed be brighter than the recent past, and we could move Forward in Faith together.



Confirmations and Baptisms at All Saints Small Heath



they
are
utterly
scornful
of the
structures
of
government
of the
Church
to which
they
belong

Order! Order!

Brian Regan writes to the Second Church Estates Commissioner, Sir Tony Baldry MP

I have read your article in the news and in Parliament relating to the vote on Tuesday. I would like to respectfully correct some misinformation about the traditionalist Anglicans and explain why Christians from the other side are equally passionate about their point of view.

Equal but different

As a barrister, and a learned parliamentarian I am sure that you must agree that the measure that was being proposed on Tuesday was poorly written and did not give fair and legal provision for faithful Anglicans who in all conscience cannot recognise female Episcopal orders. While the measure was acceptable for Liberal Anglicans, over a quarter of synod members said it was not acceptable for Traditionalists. I ask you to remember that this integrity was held by the vast majority only a few decades ago. Those of this 'original integrity' including Anglo-Catholics and Conservative Evangelicals, have painstakingly read Holy Scripture and come to a convincing conclusion that a bishop must be and can only be a man. Traditionalists are not being sexist. They acknowledge that men and women are equal and 'one in Christ' but because God made us different and with different functions, this equality does not mean we are the same. We see male and female equal but different. Traditional Anglicans have made their decision based on several facts; one is that Jesus chose only *men* as his 12 'Apostles' [the Apostles being the forerunners of the Bishops]. As he was both a radical Rabbi and God incarnate if he had wanted, he could have easily chosen women as Apostles. He clearly did not! If God makes a decision about a primary issue such as the structures of Christian ministry, then who are we to challenge him or worse, change it. Secondly, St Paul says in the first letter to Timothy chapter 3, and in his letter to Titus, that 'a bishop must be a man' (KJV). This maybe is an area where we differ from the Liberal wing of the Church.

Guardians of the faith

The media wrongly think that Bishops are 'managers or CEOs' of the *Church UK Inc.* They are plainly not. They are, of course 'the servant of the servants of God' and the spiritual descendants of the Apostles of Jesus Christ. They are not to lord it over us but to be our shepherds, our guides and 'guardians of the Faith'. Please note 'Guardians of the faith' and *not* innovators of a new one. Becoming a bishop is not about power but service.

Another important fact that we should remember is that the Church of England is less than 1% of the world's Christians and yet we act as

surely the Church is not here to reflect society – but the other way round

though we are a majority. Even if we count all Anglicans worldwide we are still only 4% while the vast majority of all the other Christians (at least 80%) do not ordain women on these very same grounds.

Apostolic succession

Every Sunday both you and I say 'We believe in one, Holy, catholic and Apostolic Church'. That means that we proclaim that we are a truly catholic and Apostolic. For Anglo-Catholics *apostolic succession* is of prime importance as it is the guarantee of our sacramental certainty. Our Holy Communion is a sacred essential part of God's grace within us. In order to give us *truly* the body and blood of Christ we need to receive that Holy Communion from a priest who is without question apostolically ordained by an apostolically consecrated Bishop. Now if we in all conscience cannot accept a female bishop as a spiritual descendant of the Apostles, then any priest ordained by a female bishop is not apostolically ordained and consequently the Holy Communion, over which they preside, is at the very least, questionable. That is so very

different to today for at the moment we can live together in relative harmony and I can choose whether I receive my Communion in a church presided over by a woman minister. After women are consecrated as bishops I will not be able to know and will be forced out of the communion. Without proper provision this vote will disfranchise me and all those holding this integrity. That proposed piece of legislation was about to give us a permanent sacramental problem and *by law* make us second class Anglicans. You see, after women are consecrated, I will never be able to know if the male priest at the altar is apostolically ordained or not.

Secular trends

Another aspect is quite important. Through this proposed divisive legislation, we were being encouraged to follow secular trends. Again, St Paul in his several letters unmistakably warns us not to follow secular worldly trends. He preaches against false teachers of the faith who follow such ways. This very week I heard a Church of England bishop say that the Church should reflect the nation's modern ideas. *This is so wrong.* That is precisely why we are in the moral mess we are in today. Surely the Church is not here to reflect society – but the other way round – surely society should be encouraged to reflect the teachings of Christ. That is our primary mission as Christians. If Jesus had reflected the society of his day, we would be living in a fascist world with a state dictating what we can believe. No, Jesus was outspoken, teaching against distorted secular or religious ideas. Surely we cannot set ourselves to know more than Christ and his Apostles. I hope that this has been helpful and shows our passionate position. I ask you to give some time and thought to us, your brothers and sisters in Christ, equally pained but faithful Anglicans of the Original apostolic integrity?

Yours faithfully,

Brian Regan ssc 

Singing (and dancing) in the rain

Trevor Jones on remaining Anglican in a changed landscape

*'Life is not about surviving the storm; it's about how you dance in the rain' (Taylor Swift).**

Do not suppose that Miss Swift has many followers among NEW DIRECTIONS readers, but perhaps one or two of you could sing along to the lyrics of 'Fifteen' or '22' to enumerate a number of her numbers. She has however, albeit inadvertently, offered a peerless description of the Anglo-Catholic adventure. We have never had a best day. We are however really really good at singing and dancing in the rain.

Better than revenge

There has been an Anglo-Catholic habit of being angry with the rest of the Church of England; it is not a helpful perspective. We owe it to the Church of England to be here, they need us. Without the classic/traditional Catholic perspective there will be an ecological imbalance in the Church, the microsystem will be damaged, perhaps beyond repair.

The position we represent is an essential of Anglican identity, thus we must continue our presence, our work and our care for the Church of England. Our mission is as clear as it has always been; to bring full Catholic faith, morals and practice to the Church of England. This will require patience, love and graced determination. If it just got a lot harder, bring it on!

Enchantment

The postmodern world, indeed the post-Sixties world, has been a time of disconnection and loss. Our own history has become less real and less alive for all of us. Anglo-Catholicism has lost George Herbert and John Keble, Charles Lowder and George Rundle Prynne; there is a real need in a new paradigm to re-negotiate our sense of self-identity. We are the children of an enchanted realm, of a story of service and sacrifice, of whole lives offered and the creation of responsive ministry in difficult situations. We need to learn again the skills of our story and discern

the radical and unexpected answers to serving the inner city and estate parishes that are still the bread and butter of our movement. Nothing will ever be the same again, well, thank God for that.

Tied together with a smile

The secret of the message and mission of St Thérèse of Lisieux is her smile. Hers is a spirituality of friendship and generosity, of simplicity and openness. This little way exemplifies service and relationship. The rule of the Priests Society of the Holy Cross

we represent the essential DNA of Anglicanism, we *are* the Anglican mainstream

(SSC) requires that its members show nothing less than the highest standards of good manners and kindness to those with whom they disagree. All who identify with our movement should be known in the Deanery and Diocese as being exemplars of charity, patience, kindness and prayer; it's all in the smile. St Francis de Sales taught that you trap far more flies with a jar of honey than with a barrel of vinegar. You win more souls that way as well. Ours is the smile that could save Anglicanism.

Everything has changed

The landscape of our life has changed; the decision to remain Anglicans in difficult times may require other changes. Anglo-Catholics have always been mission minded. The liturgical answers of the ARCIC centred environment of the Seventies are at least up for debate. Are the Breviary and the Missal the best tools for Anglo-Catholic evangelization in a changed world?

They may be loved, they may constitute a brazen war cry and statement, but they need a lot of explanation to Charlotte and Brand

as they start coming to St Anselm's. This could be the moment to engage with the liturgical element of our heritage and demonstrate the full and orthodox riches of the Common Worship and Office. This would invoke the Anglo-Catholic genius for transforming things, an experiment in 'found' art as we *teased* the pattern into shape, that would end all the accusations of illegality. The making of a new English Missal (in Word format that could be passed around by email for local printing and binding) would be a positive contribution to the Anglican story.

Fearless

There is an 'assertive' self presentation that can be most unattractive; it is popular with those who are most unsure of their position. Once you start shouting you have lost control of the conversation. Anglo-Catholics have no need of such shallow presentations. We represent the essential DNA of Anglicanism, we *are* the Anglican mainstream. We need to be fearless in the presentation of our case, we are not a sideshow, we are not peripheral, we are not guests in the Church of England, it is our home, we grew up here and are not about to be shuffled out of the back door.

Where space is not made we must make the space, fearlessly and with impeccable manners. The next twenty years will be demanding, we must both adventure in evangelization and persistently demonstrate how urgently the Church of England needs our gifts and skills.

Holy Ground

The great Anglo-Catholic skill has always been that of transforming lives and creating in the locale and the neighbourhood lives of authentic holiness. This happens because our parishes are places where Christ is the King. In our parishes the objectivity of our worship involves everyone, the pastoral goodness of our priests

and their lives of sacrificial service is a constant availability and the simple and social all provide room, holy ground, sacred space for an integrated and holistic humanity. We don't do issues as much as Incarnation. This is our great gift to English Christianity and we must renew and nourish it, for with this tool we can re-educate the Church of England back into her real role. Even when it feels cold and wet our parishes sing through the rain; love and humour authentically inform and form us. Our small patches of Holy Ground are lights in the darkness of an increasingly grey and secularized nation; we needs must make the lights burn bright.

Stay, stay, stay

There is a sort of odd English temperament that enjoys there being no alternative and simply having to get on with the task at hand with whatever tools are available, however inadequate. Given any choice, ours is not the position we would have selected as a basis for the renewal of the Church of England. Well, guess what? Ours is a great and holy mission; most of us can only hope to see small transformations, the Church happens in centuries.

The task looks impossible, and indeed unless we stay and stick to it, it will be impossible. At every period of Anglican history people, clergy and lay, have felt the call of Jesus to guide his Church in this land to its full vocation. This call to holiness and Catholicity is persistent and recurring, and it comes again for our generation. Despair will not help, nor will anger. The Gospel is optimistic. However broken it is, the English Church remains capable of renewal and even in an age of no faith it is still the best voice with which to speak to the people of this land.

Begin again

Anglo-Catholics have in all honesty (and only honesty will do) lost immense amounts of ground in the last decades. We are not a power in the land. That may be a good thing. Power is dangerous and when we had it we did not always use it well. Beginning again can only be good for us. We must think of new ways of attracting young people, in our inner city parishes, in the universities; we need to encourage

and build the Christian family and traditional concepts of marriage; we need to renew our worship in many directions and modes. We need to use the gifts of the communal and individual. Most urgently we need to believe that all this is worth doing because without us the Church of England will fail. Over the decades and centuries we are her only hope.

Back to December

Today is the day we begin, whatever the General Synod decides (I am writing in the first week of November). There is no room for tragic self-regard or triumph; both would be shallow responses. What matters is not short-term ecclesiastical politics but the Gospel and God's people. The Anglo-Catholic vision has always been about dancing in the rain, doing something really wonderful under difficult

we must organize events that people other than our own will want to be part of

circumstances. Our response needs to be pragmatic, we have a job to do, and no one ever said it would be easy. When your closest friends make silly and tragic choices then you get closer and help more. Wherever we are in December the answer will still be deeper prayer, harder work and Christ-created joy.

Anglo-Catholics have in the last twenty years moved from being central to church decision making,

and sometimes this has been because we have de-coupled ourselves from the process. Our General Synod reps have worked hard, but we are unrepresented on committees and in leadership in Diocese and Deanery. We must re-engage at Deanery and Diocesan level, we must offer to serve, seek election and organize events that people other than our own will want to be part of (Walsingham is leading the way here).

An enthusiastic young priest said to me recently 'I want Anglo-Catholics to take over Soul Survivor'; well, perhaps not this week! We are essential to the real authentic Anglican model, we must take up our share in making the future; time to breath in and step (back) though the door.

I'm only me when I'm with you

A priest of wit and insight commented in a pub after this year's national assembly that Anglo-Catholics have been 'bemoaning the decline since 1833.' Well enough, if things have gone wrong, and they have, it happened on our watch, we are responsible, so no bitterness; we are Catholic Anglicans; our living out of the faith belongs in the Anglican context.

We belong here and from here we start the work again in charity and hope. This time let us do the job of bringing the Church of England to full Catholic faith and order properly. **ND**

** Those who wish to further explore the oeuvre of Miss Swift are directed to iTunes or YouTube rather than e.g. the library of Pusey House*



Anglican Patrimony

Christopher Trundle on the distinctly Catholic and liturgical content of *The English Hymnal*

‘Where there is congregational singing it is important that familiar melodies should be employed, or at least those which have stood the test of time: therefore the ‘specially composed tune’ – that bane of many a hymnal – has been avoided as far as possible’ (Ralph Vaughan Williams, the Musical Preface to *The English Hymnal*).

It is almost hard to believe that these words were written as long ago as 1906 to accompany the first edition of *The English Hymnal*, of which Vaughan Williams was the musical editor. In darker moments I am tempted to think that little has changed since then, but we must remind ourselves that the influence of this hymnal (and, to a lesser extent, that of its successor) has transformed the musical experience of Christians around the world.

Influential and controversial

When *The English Hymnal* was published most Anglicans – or at least those of the broadly ‘high Church’ persuasion – used *Hymns Ancient and Modern*, published in 1861. This, it was felt by many, particularly by Anglo-Catholics, did not go far enough in facilitating Catholic musical worship in accordance with the Anglican liturgical tradition, and included rather too much ‘sentimental’ Evangelical music. The general preface to *The English Hymnal*, however, claimed that it was ‘not a party-book, expressing this or that phase of negation or excess, but an attempt to combine in one volume the worthiest expressions of all that lies within the Christian Creed, from those ‘ancient Fathers’ who were the earliest hymn writers down to contemporary exponents’.

This statement, while not untrue, conveniently masks the distinctly Catholic and liturgical nature of the hymnal’s content. Its publication caused significant controversy, with the Archbishop of Canterbury and many other bishops calling for its suppression and making complaint

in the press – I say again, little has changed. Their concern was with the emphasis on the intercession of the Saints and certain other liturgical additions which were not quite ‘strictly Prayer Book’.

And they were not wrong, for there are indeed translations of ancient Office Hymns for all seasons of the year and for all classes of saints, and liturgical material including plainsong sequences, processional hymns, stations, introits, antiphons and litanies (including a Litany of the Blessed Sacrament) features prominently.

King of Glory, hear our voices,
Grant thy faithful rest, we pray;
We have sinned, and may not bide it,
If thou mark our steps astray,
Yet we plead that saving Victim,
Which for them we bring to-day.

*(this verse directed to be sung
‘at Holy Communion only’)*

A moral issue

Despite the distinctly Catholic theological tone, there is, however, much which comes from other traditions but which is entirely consonant with the Christian Creed, as the editors rightly stated in their preface. It is important to note the inclusion of hymns written by an American Quaker, Wesley, Milton and material from Orthodox sources.

Vaughan Williams states in his musical preface that the choice of hymnody (and tunes in particular) is ‘indeed a moral rather than a musical issue.’ The opportunity hymn singing offers to Christians for both communal and personal devotional response and for teaching of the faith must not be underestimated, for singing is a spiritual and holy activity, much-loved by Anglicans; it follows, therefore, that the selection of music and words is a weighty and serious matter. The Anglican hymn tradition, so clearly demonstrated in *The English Hymnal*, is without doubt one of the finest treasures of our tradition and we must be careful not to lose it. **ND**

In vino (et cervisia) veritas

‘Gaudete,’ cried ‘old Huw’, a retired Latin master and regular customer for books, when I chanced upon him in Whitstable’s Wetherspoons. ‘Yes Huw, Swansea City’s doing well this season.’

‘That too, but mostly the fact that the Pope’s set up a Pontifical Academy encouraging greater use of Latin.’

‘Why are you so excited, Huw? You’re a good lapsed Baptist.’ He replied, ‘Indeed, Alan, but I’m as keen on the promotion of Latin as real ale – and, by the way, my cup is no longer overflowing.’ I bought him another pint. He continued. ‘Had a problem with the driving licence people – they’re at Swansea too, you know, and...’ I interrupted before he sidetracked to lengthy memories of his home town and how he used to out-drink Dylan Thomas, another ‘Swansea Jack’.

‘Wrote to the vehicle people, in Welsh as well as English, of course. No joy. Just threats to take me to court.’ I was puzzled. ‘Huw, what’s this to do with Latin?’

‘Coming to that. Then wrote to them in Latin telling them they’d made a mistake, and also saying that, if they took me to court, I’d conduct my own case, also in Latin. Result? Immediate reply, full of apologies, saying I’d been right all along. That shows how useful Latin can be. So, God bless our Pope.’

It then dawned upon me that Huw had provided the reason why Forward in Faith, Reform and other orthodox groups are not able to win arguments in Synod. They don’t present their case in Latin. The sorry consequence of the removal in the Sixties of the requirement that ordinands be found ‘learned in the Latin tongue’.

Readers, forget pullovers and necklaces in your Christmas present wish-list. See if your local adult education centre offers ‘Brush up your Latin’, and ask Aunt Flo for the cash for the course fee instead.

Meanwhile – Sit iucundus tibi dies.

The established order

An ordinand on the reactions of British media and politicians to the failure of the women bishops legislation

The furore over the failure of the draft measure to secure the two-thirds majority it needed in the House of Laity has revealed a visceral hatred and intolerance within the ranks of liberal Anglicanism. Words of reassurance and calls for trust have been replaced with threats, insults and in some quarters a determination to drive through even more uncompromising legislation. In short, what has been shown in the past days is a clear desire for those parts of the Church of England which, as a matter of conscience, keep hold to the precedent and teaching of two millennia, be extirpated from the national church.

Hijacked

One has to wonder what sort of church we find ourselves in when matters of theology are then hijacked, somehow legitimately, by the media and parliament. It took a matter of hours for David Cameron's liberal conscience to weigh in with his take on the matter. A man who by his own admission 'is not faith-driven' believes the Church must simply 'get with the programme'.

He presumes to think women bishops were 'right a long time ago'. What right does he have to say this? On what basis are his comments founded? Alas, they are the words of someone who believes the 'job' of a bishop is no different from that of a doctor, lawyer or head of a FTSE 100 corporation. Among all the carping of the liberal media and our politicians, never is God, the Bible or the clear precedent of our fathers in faith worthy of a mention.

Threat of disestablishment

According to them, we are the 'established church', and therefore it is our duty to 'reflect' the society we 'represent'. It is an assumption that Catholics and Evangelicals baulk at. We are not here to reflect society or share its opinions – we are members of the body of Christ. We are here

to proclaim his saving grace and transform society into one that reflects his purposes.

The Church represents no one but Christ, and to think otherwise is a dangerous distortion of the truth. There is an assumption that the 'established' position of the Church of England and its 26 bishops in the House of Lords is somehow the ultimate goal that all else must be sacrificed to protect.

The threat of disestablishment is made as if it were too hideous to even contemplate. Our detractors fail to appreciate that for the past

since 1992 our stake in the established church has been eroded to almost nothing

twenty years Anglo-Catholics and Evangelicals have in many ways already been disestablished. Just two of 44 diocesan bishops are Catholics, and there exists not a single Evangelical bishop in the entire church. Our views are marginalized in the press, and never is an orthodox cleric invited to share his views on the BBC. Since 1992 our stake in the established church has been eroded to almost nothing. To threaten us with it now is both ignorant of recent history and our commitment to the faith.

A warning

What was once a genuine discussion about how women might be brought into the episcopate without unchurching those opposed has become a fight for what sort of church we are to be in the future. Resting on this legislation is not just the future integrity of the ordained ministry, but the sacrament of marriage, the traditional family, and the sanctity of life. The Episcopal Church has abandoned any adherence to orthodox Christianity and the results have been devastating. Between 2000 and 2010 its congregations have

shrunk by 23 per cent. In that time the Episcopal Church has sought to reflect secular society at every turn: championing abortion, blessing gay marriages, repudiating the virgin birth and the resurrection, not to mention the deliberate appointment of the most objectionable of bishops. The example of the Episcopalians should serve as a warning: there is no future in abandoning the church's mission in order to reflect society. In doing so the church simply makes itself an irrelevance, because it offers nothing that society does not already have.

Keeping credibility

If this is to be the price of our established position, then it is a position we must renounce. Catholics cannot be held to ransom over this issue. Our conscience is clear. What was asked for was provision to enable us to remain in the Church of England with integrity, and to have confidence that our position was secure in perpetuity. It was the failure to provide that security which caused the vote to fail. Hopefully next time this can be provided, so that we might all move on together.

But to use 'establishment' as a stick to beat us with will not work. Establishment is at best a questionable benefit – and this week that was demonstrated by parliament presenting itself almost as God himself. If we cannot answer to God alone there is something seriously wrong. The Church of England does not gain or lose its credibility based on what society thinks of it; its credibility is won and lost by its faithfulness to God and the Gospel. Traditional Catholics and Evangelicals believe passionately that we cannot be faithful to God if we assent to something such as this that so fundamentally changes the priesthood and compromises the teaching of Scripture. If we must relinquish our status as the established church in order to be faithful to what we believe, then so be it. **ND**

faith of our fathers

Arthur Middleton on translating the Bible

In the Prayer Book on the Second Sunday in Advent the Collect acknowledges that the Holy Scriptures were given for our learning and prays that we may hear them, read, mark, learn and inwardly digest them. When that Collect was first composed it was a time when possession of an English translation of the Bible could result in being burned at the stake on the charge of heresy.

The Church feared that uncontrolled reading of the Bible by people lacking the essential qualifications to understand what was being read might undermine the authority and stability of the Church. The Church's official biblical text was the fourth-century Latin Vulgate text and, though an increasing number could read Latin, the risk of being led into error was great. It was the Church's responsibility to communicate the right interpretation of the Scriptures; otherwise unorthodox interpretations would emerge, producing heresy that would corrupt other people and rob them of salvation. It was this increasing danger of heresy that provoked stricter rules about translations of the Bible into the vernacular.

Wycliffe had produced English translations of the Bible in the

fourteenth century that led to stricter laws. When it comes to translating the words of Scripture the danger is even greater, as the translator can so easily introduce his own ideas.

Bible translation today has its problems. In 2003 Pope John Paul II condemned *The New Revised Standard Version* as an incorrect translation. The translators came to the translation with certain *a priori* political and sociological assumptions from late twentieth-century western secular culture, central to which was political correctness. So all language about God, humankind and society was rewritten within the cultural limitations of how the sexes are being engineered to relate to one another in modern secular society.

These assumptions emerge from the modern discussion as *a priori* guides, telling the translators beforehand what to see and how to translate the text. Feminists approach the interpretation of the Bible with their *a priori* assumptions about the place of women in modern society that tells them beforehand what to see. The proper approach to the text will let the questions emerge from the data observed even though these are ancient texts and the emergent

questions may be irrelevant. Their irrelevance will mean they are independent of the modern discussion and can cross-examine and critique the presuppositions of our modern concerns. The translator's task is to establish a strong, independent voice, and as far as possible keep these biblical writers true to themselves.

Another reason for resisting vernacular translations was the Church's belief that alongside the written Bible she possessed certain unwritten traditions that were received directly by the Apostles and had the same authority as Scripture. Recently Margaret Barker (*The Great High Priest*, 2003) has written that there was far more to the teaching of Jesus than is recorded in the canonical Gospels. For several centuries a belief persisted among Christian writers that there had been a secret tradition entrusted to only a few of his followers. Eusebius (*History* 2.1) quotes from a now lost work of Clement of Alexandria, *Hypotyposes*: 'James the Righteous, John and Peter were entrusted by the Lord after his resurrection with the higher knowledge. They imparted it to the other apostles, and the other apostles to the seventy, one of whom was Barnabas'; the tradition was given to an inner circle of disciples after the resurrection; and the tradition was a form of higher knowledge, i.e. gnosis. If the secret tradition did concern the practice and meaning of the sacraments, and was rooted in the symbolism of the temple and the teachings of the ancient priesthood, its recovery is of more than simply academic interest. It has been all too easy for *sola scriptura* scholars to dismiss such a claim, and then find themselves constructing theological positions which are not even biblical, because they have ignored the envolving traditions which could have illuminated the meaning of the biblical texts (Barker, p. 11).

The Church of England stressed the traditional coinherence of Scripture and the Church. The interpretation of the Bible in the Church was necessary if the Bible was to mean anything, for the Church expressed the life which the Bible indicated. It follows that the meaning of the sacraments and everything in the organic life of the Church are a fulfilment of that life which is proclaimed in the Bible. **ND**



'Who will rid me of this troublesome Church?'

So it is Justin Welby!

George Austin on the announcement
of the new Archbishop of Canterbury

When I wrote about the background to the speculation about Justin Welby's likelihood of becoming Archbishop of Canterbury (NEW DIRECTIONS October 2012), I pondered the lack of confidentiality in the leaks.

It was not clear from press reports if this was on the part of members of the Crown Nominations Commission – which would have been unthinkable in the early Nineties when I was one of its members – or from elsewhere. Now it appears much more likely that this came from what have been described as 'political' sources.

Indeed could it be that Rowan Williams informed those sources that he would be announcing his resignation well before the end of 2011? Giving time for Welby to be put into the see of Durham by November that year? We shall never know for sure, but one hopes that politicians remember that the Magna Carta declared that the Church should be free of state interference – especially in the elections of its bishops. Not that this has ever been followed.

The greater good

However, I concluded the article by pointing out that in the end the Holy Spirit did have his place in the process and it is clear that, whatever political machinations there may have been, this appointment is for the greater good of the Church of God.

Welby is clearly a man who is pleasantly deprecating, describing himself as 'the thickest bishop' in the Church, yet one with considerable gifts and a fascinating history. At York, there is John Sentamu who in earlier days in Uganda, as an advocate in the Supreme Court, spoke against Idi

**he wants the Church of England
to be 'a place
where we can disagree in love'**

Amin and was briefly imprisoned before fleeing to England.

Welby too has been in danger of death, having been captured by rebels in Nigeria when working on conflict resolution. He might have been from a cloistered Old Etonian background but has seen more of that dark side of life than most other bishops.

A safe pair of hands

With an evangelical background, developed at Holy Trinity, Brompton, we can be sure that when he recites the Creed, he does not have his fingers crossed behind his back or his tongue in his cheek. With parts of the Anglican Church becoming deeply infected by the secular pressures all around us, he will be a safe pair of hands – as is Sentamu at York.

He is in favour of women bishops – and even a total traditionalist like me recognizes that if the Church has women priests, it must also have women bishops. Of those like me who nevertheless cannot in conscience agree with this change, Welby has said that he values us and wants to learn from us. He wants the Church of England to be 'a place where we can disagree in love, respecting each other deeply as those who belong to Christ.' That sounds like the Church of England I had known and loved for so many years but which is now limp and damaged.

The question for the General Synod will be whether or not liberal fundamentalists will be able to take this on board.

But there is always hope and the power of God. **ND**



devotional

Light and Gifts

Arthur Middleton

Some years ago, in the Mendip caves, all the lights went out and left us in total darkness. Nobody could pick up any light within that darkness. So it was also an experience of blindness, for darkness and blindness become one and the same experience when there is no light. The fear and horror of everyone's life is that they might be plunged into darkness and blindness, physical, mental or spiritual. For deep within every human soul is a yearning for light.

Two ways

In that cave there were two ways in which I could allow light to guide me through the darkness. First, by providing my own light with a torch. This light would have been in my control and therefore limited by my own inadequate knowledge of the caves and darkness. Furthermore, I would have pointed it only into the places where I wanted it to shine and followed it only into the places where I wanted it to go. A second way was to have my path lit up by a light that was provided and beyond my control. Such light would lead me by lighting up for me that total darkness, but it would also

give me total vision. This light would invite my submission and total response. Unconditional response to this light was the secret, the key to finding my way through the darkness.

Epiphany light

Epiphany is about light. The Magi followed the star and submitted themselves to the guidance of light, and what they found was a king in the form of a child, a king not of man's making but of God's making. The secret of his kingship was in his obedience, not to his own will, but to the will of him who sent him. His commands are the eternal laws of humanity to which he submitted. This is the 'light of men.' Only by obedience to these laws can we find fulfilling life, that for which God made us.

Follow that light that is beyond your own control and you will never walk in darkness or blindness. We have all known Christian people in our parish communities who have always followed that light. Such people have embraced 'the light which is the life of men'; it became their guiding star and it never let them down because they never deserted him. His Church was their life for which they sacrificed themselves in unstinting service and absolute loyalty.

Like the three kings they brought their gifts and made them available to the King of Kings. Sometimes their gifts were unusual like the little old lady who spent many hours making and selling toffee cakes and raised £1000 for church funds or the lady who presented Christ with £500 raised from making marmalade. This was the gold, frankincense and myrrh of their lives. **ND**

Every sense is brought into play at Christmas, as indeed is every emotion. It is a time of profound spiritual richness. It is also a very busy time for nearly all of us and a time of disruption to our usual pattern of life. The possibility of enjoying and relishing the spiritual feast is often overshadowed by the work in the preparation for the family and community feast.

This, I know, can lead to great frustration and resentment to some in our church communities. It is tragic that the individuals who would most appreciate the prayer and worship of the festival are the ones who bear the brunt of the preparations and all the anxiety that can accompany it. I have seen mothers in tears at Christmas because they were prevented from attending worship by the demands of their family.

There has to be something profoundly wrong about this. It may be that this family dilemma does not affect you, but it will be a real issue for many readers. The question is often put: 'How do we keep Christ at the centre of Christmas?' The first necessity is to recognize the problem. Many

Ghostly Counsel

The Family at Christmas

Andy Hawes is Warden of Edenhall Regional Retreat House

people would be mortified to know the spiritual cost of 'making Christmas for the family or for guests' to those who find themselves responsible for 'making it happen'. Having recognized the problem, its solution is found in planning ahead. Does the Christmas household know when services are taking place? It is useless to find out on 23 December when the Christmas services are timed. There should be an earnest conversation about attending church, as there is about who wants what for Christmas.

The preparation for Christmas might also include some thought about

bringing prayer and worship into the home and family at Christmas. These prayers might include special prayers of thanksgiving for bringing us together and intercession for those unable to be present. Simple prayers from the heart around the dining table are powerful. There is also the gift of Christmas Carols, most of which can be sung without any accompaniment and many by people of all ages. It is perhaps the last Christian festival which provides a language for prayer and worship in which most people are fluent – put it to use.

There is also the Christian iconography of the Crib and the Candle, both of which should find a central place in the family at Christmas. Why not make a point of placing the Christ Child in the crib on Christmas Day with everyone present and welcome the Lord with a Carol? Likewise displaying the best Christmas cards, that is to say those that celebrate Christ, can create something akin to a prayer corner in the living room. But the key thing is to think about all this now, for as certain as Christmas Day is on 25 December it will come out of the blue like an express train!

Remembrance

Paul Cartwright travelled to Belgium with the West Yorkshire Police Band to participate in the Act of Remembrance at the Menim Gate in Ypres

**They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old:
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning,
We will remember them.**

Autumnal mornings can be so crisp, misty and cold, especially when you are in the middle of an unsheltered muddy field in the middle of nowhere. This is exactly where I found myself on a recent trip to Ypres in Belgium when once again my brass playing had led me to be involved in something which as a musician you could only dream about; I had been afforded the privilege to be part of the 11 November weekend of Remembrance at the Menim Gate; the place of remembrance for those who were killed in the First World War and whose bodies were never recovered.

I was there as part of the West Yorkshire Police Band that had travelled at its own expense to remember those who had given their lives for what they believed in; those who had fought for our historical security which we enjoy today.

Trench warfare

The town of Ypres and its surrounding area played an important part in the First World War due to the trench warfare that took place in the predominantly flat land. It was almost impossible for those fighting in the area to advance towards the enemy and even the early tanks sunk on occasions.

Any war is horrible, but we know that conditions in the Great War were particularly bad. New weapons were in the process of being tested, and our travels took us to areas where the first use of poisonous gas had taken place. Even now, munitions are found on a daily basis and the police station at Ypres receives 25 unexploded bomb calls every day. Often the farmers who are ploughing the fields come into contact with these devices, and in most cases they just move them to the side of the road so that they are ready to be collected by the Army bomb disposal unit, but on occasions even ploughing the fields can be dangerous.

Making a sacrifice

If you have never visited the area I would urge you to make a trip; and certainly while we were there we met people from all over the world. Some had never been to Ypres before, and others had decided to make an annual pilgrimage of remembrance. The corporate action of many thousands of people from different backgrounds and different age groups as they join together in concert in an act of remembrance can be seen as almost a direct parallel with what we are all

**the soldiers may have died on
the battlefield, but through the
Cross they would live forever**



called to do during the Celebration of the Mass. In our daily worship we hear the words 'Do this in memory of me' and we are called to stop, pray and reflect upon the sacrifice which Jesus made for us, a sacrifice which was made so that evil would be overcome.

'Known only to God'

In the First World War we also saw many people from different backgrounds and countries uniting to fight against that which was thought to be evil and destructive, and as I pondered this while I was standing in the many different war cemeteries surrounded by muddy farm fields I began to think about the countless soldiers who were still buried unknown in the earth.

We read in Luke 22.42 how Jesus prayed to his Father in the Garden of Gethsemane: 'if you are willing, take this cup away from me. Nevertheless, let your will be done, not mine.' I wondered if maybe similar thoughts had been experienced by those who found themselves fighting in the trenches.

Jesus fulfilled his preordained duty by going to his death on the Cross, and through this we are given new life. As you look around the beautifully tended graveyards, this new life is reinforced with inscriptions such as 'Known only to God,' and for Christian soldiers the sign of the Cross is emblazoned on each gravestone. For the soldiers on the battlefields, they too fulfilled their duty, far too often by going to their own death, but of course this is where the parallel to Christ ends as the Peace the Jesus offers us is everlasting peace, whereas



the Peace obtained by war is short-lived. The soldiers may have died on the battlefield, but through the Cross they would live forever.

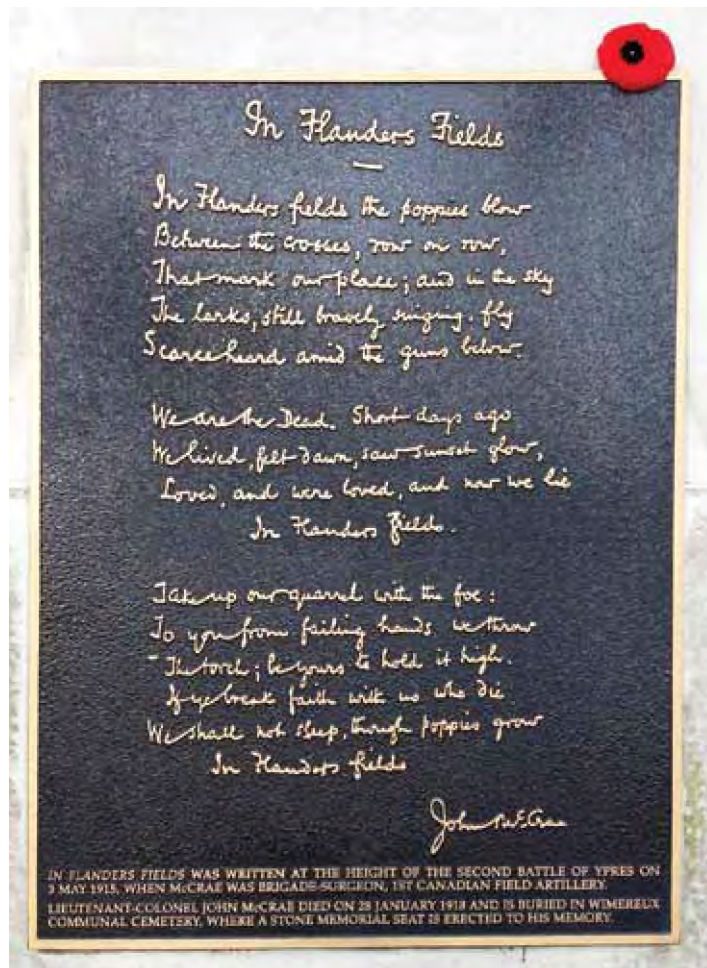
Essex Farm Cemetery

In the small amount of time that I had to explore the area I went with a group to visit the Essex Farm Cemetery, which was where the British Army set up an Advanced Dressing Station. It is also believed that in May 1915 the Canadian Army Doctor and artillery brigade commander Major John McCrae wrote his famous poem 'In Flanders Fields' while he was stationed there, but it was not this which attracted my attention; it was one particular gravestone. Buried in the Essex Farm Cemetery are the remains of 5750 Rifleman Valentine Joe Strudwick who served with the 8th Battalion The Rifle Brigade and was killed on the 14 January 1916 at the tender age of 15, one of the youngest British casualties of the battlefield.

Historic occasion

Being present on any battlefield brings with it a number of casualties, when opposing sides seek to gain ground and destroy the opposition; this was true in the First World War and it is true today. Still now, our chaplains in the Armed Forces are called to care for those on the front line and to repatriate those who are injured and killed in the many conflicts around the world. Wherever fights take place people are injured, and they must be cared for and never forgotten. We as Christians are called to forgive those who cause us similar injury, be it physical or mental, and we can learn a lot from the Act of Remembrance

**it was possible for those who had
battled against one another in
the past, to stand side by side**



which took place at the Menin Gate in Ypres at 8pm on Sunday 11 November 2012, for it was at this Remembrance Service where history was truly made.

As part of this service people are allowed to place poppy wreaths of remembrance, and it was on this day, while I was present, that for the first time in history members of the German Armed Forces paid their respects for the Allied Forces who had died in the Great War by placing a wreath alongside all the others who had come to pay their respects at the Menin Gate. Historically it would have been unheard of that such a thing would take place, but this year it was possible for those who had battled against one another in the past, to stand side by side, paying their respects, remembering the casualties along the way, and hoping that the same would never happen again.

An end to conflict

The German soldiers who were the obvious minority were accepted for who they were and what they represented, and for all those people who looked on, some with tears in their eyes, it provided hope for the future. Maybe we too can share the same hope that there will be an end to conflict on all battlefields, where a future will exist where minorities are welcome. If it can happen to those who experienced great loss through the outpouring of charity, then surely we too should have that same hope for whichever battle we may have personally experienced?

**When you go home tell them of us and say,
for your tomorrow we gave our today.**



Quelle surprise

John Herve re-assesses Descartes

Most of us are aware of the 'milestones' which form our Western world-view. One of these is the works of Rene Descartes (1596–1650). We can probably quote one of his central tenets – 'I think, therefore I am'. It has 'centre-stage' in his philosophy and was the catalyst for the rationalist school of thought; one of the abiding traditions of Western thought. But 'lurking in the wings' is a further, often forgotten tenet.

When attention is drawn to *this* it often produces nothing short of astonishment in theists and non-theists alike. More, the intellectual journey through which his ideas developed was remarkable.

Beginnings

For his starting point was mathematics. He invented a new way of applying algebra to geometry; he also created the graph (indeed, the two main axes are entitled 'The Cartesian Co-ordinates'). He was enthralled by the totally reliable certitude of the discipline. But, significantly, it led him to ponder upon whether the certitude of mathematical methodology could be applied to *other* areas of knowledge, to see if there is anything outside mathematics whose truth it is impossible to refute.

He concluded that certainty *in* mathematics is reached by logical progression; this begins with premises which are utterly simple and obvious and cannot be refuted (e.g. a straight line is the shortest route between two points). But it then moves on, again by simple and obvious steps, to reach conclusions which are not at all simple or obvious! These are all reliably true, and open up a world of great practical usefulness. Now, he asked, can there be any premises *outside* mathematics from which we can move on to knowledge which is totally certain, reliable and true?

Staged progress

This set him off on three separate but contiguous stages. First he considered human experience – can I trust what I experience as having any reliable form?

Sadly – no! For my senses frequently deceive me. A building appears as a different colour at dawn, in sunlight, at dusk. A branch 'bends' in the water. So things are rarely in reality what they appear to me to be.

This led him on, secondly, to pursue the quality and nature of this distorted human experience. Sometimes he experienced doing something in reality which was not real at all. He was in fact dreaming. Yet a dream has all the hallmarks of reality (indeed, in dreams one rarely does un-real things). And how can one be sure one is not dreaming reality at any given moment? From this he moved on to a *third* stage, asking:

God must in certitude exist for he has created an awareness of himself within me

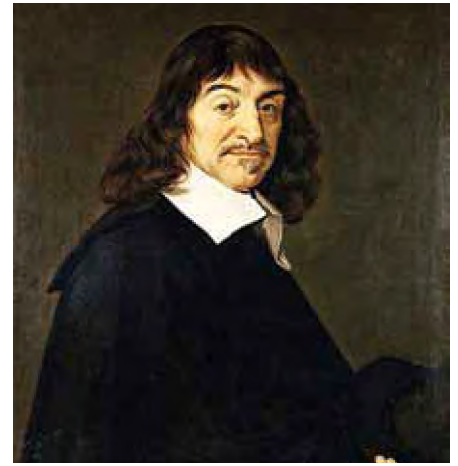
what is the origin of this situation?

He concluded that his despair that nothing is reliable and truthful could even result from a malign 'spirit' or force (he was a man of his time) whose sole purpose is to deceive and de-stabilize reality. So there can be *anything* I experience that I can rely on, that I cannot be deceived about?

The 'penny drops'

After this third stage, he realized he was 'missing a trick': that however distorted the reality of the experience, however false the inferences, *it is I who have the experience and I who make the inferences*. However distorted the reality is, I can be absolutely sure I am experiencing it. Thus there is certainty. I know I am an existing, experiencing being. That is unquestionable. Further, I am conscious (i.e. aware) that I am experiencing whatever it may be. In other words, 'Cogito ergo sum; I think therefore I am'.

Most people leave it at that. But there is a surprising twist, for Descartes does not leave it there. We have indeed reached the central platform of his



ideas, but there is something else.

Having established that there are things I can know for certain outside mathematics (i.e. my own consciousness), he asked, 'is there anything else I can know for certain?' His answer is arresting. 'Yes' he says – the existence of God! How is that? Well, Descartes has concluded he is a conscious being. That conscious awareness tells me I am imperfect, my inferences of reality are fragile, I am perishable, finite and transitory. Yet part of my consciousness is also the concept of a perfect being, eternal, infinite and imperishable.

God must in certitude exist for he has created an awareness of himself within me. I know he exists, is perfect and therefore cannot deceive me about reality. My mind may deceive me but that part of me that apprehends God cannot.

The total picture

My conscious awareness of God and his nature means I can utterly rely on him. God does not deceive. My senses deceive. But that part of me which I irreducibly am, that comprehends God, does not. So the centre-stage 'Cogito ergo sum' cannot stand alone; what *must* follow is 'Sum Deus est' (I am, God is). To regard Descartes as acknowledging one without the other is to pervert his entire framework.

Descartes still stands among the giants of philosophy, not only because of his novel approach to the nature of knowledge and the re-working of the ontological argument for God's existence. For his style is unsurpassed, and his work is written with clarity and 'jargon-free'. For a rewarding and stimulating introduction to philosophy, try reading his *Discourse on Method* followed by *Meditations*. **ND**