

newdirections



June 2013
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serving Catholics and Evangelicals seeking to renew the Church in the historic faith

Looking to the future

The commissioning of Dr Colin Podmore
as Director of Forward in Faith

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- Our Lady of Willesden
- Whit Walks
- New biographies of Pope Francis and C S Lewis

parish directory

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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. 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. Wed, 7pm Exposition, 8pm Mass. First Sat of the month, 11.15am Mass of Our Lady of Walsingham. For further information phone Fr Martin Hislop: Parish Office 020 8974 8079 www.stlukeskingston.co.uk

LEAMINGTON SPA *St John the Baptist* Parish under the Episcopal care of the Bishop of Ebbw Vale - 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 rector@stmagnusmartyr.org.uk

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, Windmore 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 rdh2010@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:

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BARRY *St Mary's, Holton Road, near rail, bus and town centre* Credo Gyrnu (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 210785

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, Holmfield 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, last week of the month: Choral Evensong. Parish office 01202 766772. Email: stambrosechurch@btinternet.com

BOURNEMOUTH *St Francis of Assisi, Chaminster 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 Service 6.30pm - first Sunday of each month. Parish Priest: Fr David Wastie 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 (Ebbw Vale). 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). During Interregnum contact Roger Metcalfe, Churchwarden on 01275 332851 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



CARDIFF *St Mary, Bute Street - near rail, bus, Millennium Stadium, city centre and Bay* Daily Mass; Credo Gyrnu. 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: Fr Jeff Williams 01460 419527 www.churchofthegoodshepherd-chard.weebly.com

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 fathercap@hotmail.com

DEVIZES *St Peter's, Bath Road, Devizes, Wiltshire* A Forward in Faith Parish under the episcopal care of the Bishop of Ebbw Vale. 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

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Where did they all come from?



LEAD STORY

Looking to the future

The Sermon preached by the **Bishop of Fulham** for the Commissioning of Dr Colin Podmore as Director of Forward in Faith

amidst
the
many
languages,
cultures,
and
nations
of the
world,
there is
but one
faith,
received
from
the
one Lord

The content of the Tradition is one and the same,' wrote St Irenaeus, Bishop of Lyon, at the turn of the third century, 'for the churches which have been planted in Germany do not believe or hand down anything different, nor do those of the Iberians, nor those of the Celts, nor those in the East or Libya or Egypt, nor those established at the centre of the world.' Perhaps a German-speaking Cornishman might especially appreciate this vision of the universality and catholicity of the Church, of the many languages and peoples of the earth united in the common truth revealed to us by Jesus Christ. And now our friend Colin Podmore comes to Gordon Square – surely established very near the centre of the world – to direct the work of Forward in Faith, and to further its vision, our vision, for unity and truth. Colin, we pray for you in this new work, and we anticipate with relish and with joy the good fruit which your appointment will bear, not just for Forward in Faith but for the whole of the Church of England and indeed the Church Catholic of which she is a part.

Theological richness

It should not surprise us that Colin has selected texts for this Mass – from the Common Worship 'Ministry' readings – of such theological richness and subtlety, which illuminate deeply the mystery of the Church. The Apostle, writing to the faithful in Ephesus (city of magicians) weaves together three great themes: the unity of the one Church in the one Spirit; the identity of the One who now sits in the heavenly places, filling all things with himself, with the Christ who came down to earth; and the intimate connection between this same Christ, descended and ascended again, with the Church which is his Body.

That part of Ephesians 4 read for the Epistle this evening opens with that Irenaean note: amidst the many languages, cultures, and nations of the world, there is but one faith, received from the one Lord, transmitted by one baptism, all people having one God and Father. And Christ, *Christ that Morning Star who came back from the dead*, as we sing at the Great Vigil of the Passover of the Lord, has ascended in his humanity to the heavenly places that he might distribute gifts: gifts for the strengthening of the

Body of which he is Head. The gifts are many and diverse, but they are given for the sake of unity, they are given that the Church might indeed be a people brought into unity: one Body, one Spirit, one God and Father of all.

The virtue of charity

Paramount among the gifts given to the Body is that of the means whereby the Lord's own teaching may be continued and handed on: the apostolic ministry, the first named in the great symphony of Ephesians 4. The apostolic teaching and the apostolic ministry are alike pastoral in intent: they are given to guard Christ's faithful from every breeze of teaching and the craftiness of men. But still more importantly, they are given that the Body may display all the more abundantly the highest gift of all, the gift of charity. They are given for the increase and abounding of Love.

In tonight's reading from the Gospel of St John, the evangelist draws us more deeply still into the relationship between Christ, the Church and the gift and virtue of charity. Jesus speaks of the intimate union between him and those who would follow him. *'Abide in me and I in you...I am the vine, you are the branches.'* There exists a mysterious and real communion between the vine which is the Lord and the branches which are the disciples, the branches which we are: and that unity, that communion, is Love: the love which unites Father and Son in the interior life of the Godhead. And for St John as for St Paul, these intimate relationships of communion in love, Father with Son and Son with disciples, do not produce a closed system, a steady state, but rather serve to enable the outpouring of grace and love over all creation: *go and bear fruit, fruit that will last.*

Sent to bear fruit

So as we step back and survey the heights of the mystical ecclesiology of the apostle and the evangelist, without becoming too dizzy and losing our heads, we find a receiving – the receiving of gifts; an entrusting – with teaching and ministry; and a sending out, to bear fruit in love. All of this knits together very well (to borrow the Pauline metaphor) at this Mass when we celebrate a *commissioning*: a word which has roots in the Latin *committere*, to

entrust – we are trusting our new Director with a gift to be received and a work to be done – but which itself relates of course to the verb *mittere*, to send, from which we get our word ‘mission.’ Entrusted with gifts, we are sent to bear fruit: that is the basic pattern of Christian service: and it applies as well to a new Director as to any other ministry among the baptized.

So – and he’s coming to it at last, you might be thinking – what is the gift with which our new Director is to be entrusted, and what is the work he is to be sent to do? How will we know whether it has borne fruit? What might the fruit taste like? Forward in Faith, which I have described before as the Marmite among ecclesiastical organizations, loved and loathed in equal measure, is still a fledgling society, barely twenty years old, and yet which has achieved so much in a short time (and here again we must acknowledge the immense contribution of Colin’s predecessor Stephen Parkinson). It necessarily inhabits a space which is paradoxical, even contradictory; the paradox is not hard to spot. The officers of Forward in Faith, the Council, clerical and lay, and, I trust, every single member share the vision – dare I say it – which we have found in Epistle and Gospel tonight: the unity of the Church, the transmission of the Lord’s own teaching by means of the apostolic ministry, the absolute inescapability of the importance of communion, with the Lord and with one another, in the Christian life.

Faithful Anglicans

So why Marmite, rather than apple pie? Who could disagree with any of this? Well, of course, because alongside these spiritual and ecclesiological ambitions, Forward in Faith is perceived to be a pressure group, and, in the eyes of many, a pressure group with a negative and backward-looking agenda. It is a tragedy, and an astonishing one at that, given a moment’s thought, that we – and here I mean all of us in the Church of England – should have come to this: that faithful Anglicans who are inspired by convictions which the whole of our Church still affirms in her title deeds and carries in her DNA should be perceived by some as disloyal, a fifth column perhaps. No doubt blame – like gifts – can be distributed across the whole Body.

Forward in Faith will continue to speak the truth in love about those issues which exercise us, because of their impact, as we see it, on the unity and apostolicity of the Church: we ask to be heard with an equal love; we further ask that, difficult as our message is for some – including some whose presence we are so delighted by here this evening – we are judged by the best motives and intentions which can be construed from our understanding of the common faith which unites us all in Christ and which we are

all called together to proclaim. If that is by way of appeal to brothers and sisters in Christ who will not agree with us about everything, then let me conclude with another to officers and members of Forward in Faith which now begins a new phase in its young life. Let us never give anyone the excuse to suggest that we are simply another churchy pressure group. If that is how we present ourselves, then the world will take no notice of us and our brothers and sisters in Christ will not listen. At every turn, we must abide in love. ‘You did not choose me, but I chose you.’ The Lord of the Church speaks these words to every disciple, not just those with whom we happen to agree. Can we live by that, as we seek, guided by our new Director, to prosper the work of Forward in Faith for a new generation?

Joyful assembly

This packed church – and how grateful we are to Fr Smith for his hospitality – reveals this evening an awesome spectacle: the People of God of every age, women and men, priests and people, led in worship by the Bishops of our even newer Society, with which Forward in Faith has already pledged itself to work very closely. It does not feel, if I may be so bold, like the meeting of a pressure group, but rather the joyful – and remember St John’s promise of joy given in tonight’s Gospel – assembly of the saints of God; or those on their way to be saints. (Some have further to travel than others.) The questions which I, the Vice-Chairman, the other Fr Smith, and brother bishops, will put to Colin in a few moments point to the most positive programme for our life together. I will not rehearse them now, but listen carefully when the time comes, and take to heart all that is spoken.

I spoke a moment ago of the paradox of where Forward in Faith sits in the life of the Church: deeply committed to the widest, most inclusive vision of unity and catholicity, that the world may believe and all come to Christ; yet having to defend what is – on ‘home territory’ at least – a minority position and even perceived as sectarian. It is then a huge challenge to Colin and to all of us to keep going, to keep going joyfully, and to keep on in love. The path is rocky, the stones are sharp. Toes are stubbed and feet bleed. Yet in the Scriptures we have heard tonight, there is the promise that all for which we long, hope and pray, has already come to pass: there *is* one body, one Spirit, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all. The apostle does not use the conditional but the indicative. God grant each one of us, and the whole Church, grace to work to uncover and reveal, and never to distort and obscure, that which God himself has given. **ND**

*Church of St Alban the Martyr,
Holborn 15 April 2013*

Forward
in Faith
will
continue
to speak
the truth
in love
about
those
issues
which
exercise
us

Recognition of Orders – some issues

Thomas Seville CR clarifies the circumstances in which someone ordained in another episcopal church can minister in the CofE

The announcement that the Church of England, under the Overseas and Other Clergy (Ministry and Ordination) Measure 1967, recognizes the orders of the Free Church of England is welcome news. Bishop John Fenwick of the FCE has also hailed it in these pages (ND, April 2013). It may be of interest to note what a decision under this measure does and does not import.

Clearly, if you belong to a church that is not in communion with the Church of England it is necessary to be received into the Church of England before the question of ministering can arise. It is also important to note that it does not amount to saying that the ministries of the Church of England and another church are simply interchangeable. If after due process someone ordained in another episcopal church who has been received into the Church of England is allowed to minister in the Church of England, this does not mean to say that all such ministers are in effect allowed to minister without further ado.

Treated with respect

It does create however a climate in which such requests to minister would be treated with proper respect, in addition to that recognition of what they have received from God in the church where they were ordained. Moreover, the measure requires that a body in which episcopal orders have been given has what it takes to be seen as a church; its faith and sacraments have to be those which are those of mainstream Christianity and it has to show evidence of perseverance and stability in that faith.

One is not treating here – and certainly not in the case of the Free Church of England – of a group which has altered the creeds to suit a passing fancy. Nor indeed are we talking of what used to be termed *episcopi vagantes*; the famous account in A.N. Wilson's novel *Unguarded Hours* notwithstanding, the Church of England does not recognize the orders of such clerics.

Three things have to be satisfied if the orders of an individual coming from another episcopal church seeking to minister in the Church of England are to be recognized. They are suitability, training and recognition.

The first issue (and it is emphatically the first) is that of suitability. Is the person a fit person for ordained ministry in the church? Suitability touches areas which are treated of in the selection process of ordinands in the Church of England, but more important in this case would be whether there are any issues of a disciplinary or

what is being done is to ensure that the gift of Catholic ministry is given its due respect

moral nature which need addressing. Competent authorities in the church which such a person has left are to be consulted. There might, for example, be a case when someone had been under discipline and was trying to avoid the need for coming to terms with it and, in the end, they were seeking a less testing berth.

Second is the issue of training. Because the approach taken to the shape of ministry in the various episcopal churches differs, the question arises of what further study or practical experience may be needed. This may mean something formal such as courses or something less structured, like experience of a Church of England environment, or both.

Case-by-case approach

Third (and only then) the question arises of orders strictly speaking, whether the existing ordination of the person concerned can be accepted as meeting the requirements for episcopal ordination; if not, he or she will need to be ordained, absolutely or conditionally.

In the case of the Free Church of England, the ordinal and the church's teaching on ministry – an area where there used to be divergence – have been seen as consonant with that of the Church of England. Yet the assessment of ordination requires that a case by case approach is taken and so the 'who' and 'how' of an ordination would need to be looked at.

All of this can look a little grudging. Yet what is being done is to ensure that the gift of Catholic ministry is given its due respect: to repeat ordination has always been regarded as a grave sin, indeed as sacrilegious. Moreover, it is but a part, a significant part, of the reconciliation of churches. Some years ago, there were conversations between the Free Church of England and the Church of England which failed quite late in the game. Perhaps these might be taken up again and, God willing, brought to a happier issue; then some of the possibilities which Bishop John Fenwick looks for might become a reality.

Fr Thomas is a member of the Faith and Order Commission **ND**



Play on...

Peter Mullen explains why we should never underestimate the importance of music in church

When I was first ordained, I served a curacy in a half-smart suburb of Leeds. My boss the vicar, Howard Garside, was a devout, kindly, blunt Yorkshireman. He used to blow out the everlasting sanctuary light every evening to save a penny on candles. Anyhow, one Friday evening we had enjoyed a performance in church of the Fauré *Requiem*. Next morning the senior curate and I were in the Lady Chapel, having just said Morning Prayer, and we were playing a tape-recording of the lovely solo *Pie Jesu*. In barged Fr Garside, scowled and shouted at us, 'What's this – a blinking concert?'

Different attitudes

This says a lot about attitudes towards music in church. There is an almost caricature opposition between the parson who tolerates church music because it puts a few more bums on seats and the organist and choir who only come so they can chirrup to their egos' content.

They are the artists, after all, and they know of course that the words of the hymns, the Creed, the Gloria, etc. are a load of baloney and part of what Philip Larkin called 'that vast, moth-eaten, musical brocade, created to pretend we never die.'

I have always loved music in church. It was the music of the Schultze organ in St Bartholomew's, Armley which first attracted me to church – that and the first Anglican hymn I ever heard – *Blessed City, Heavenly Salem* by the miraculous tune of *Westminster* by Henry Purcell.

How mysterious that I should once have found myself at St Michael's where Purcell was first to play the organ. I cannot imagine life – let alone religion – without music. I would go so far as to agree with Nietzsche who said, 'Without music, life would be a mistake.'

Soul of the liturgy

Music is no mere accompaniment to religion. It is not an ornament. Music is the direct presentation of

what worship is. This is because it is the representation in sound of the lineaments of the universe which God created.

When I hear harmony, I am sensing through the ear those relations of number and proportion that resound throughout all time and space. Artur Schopenhauer put this better than anybody when he wrote,

'Music is the soul of the drama or liturgy. It expresses the true nature of the actions and words and makes us immediately acquainted with the innermost soul of the events... Music does not express this or that particular

**it is the representation
in sound of the lineaments
of the universe which
God created**

affliction, pain, sorrow, horror, gaiety, merriment or peace of mind; but affliction, pain, sorrow, horror, gaiety, merriment and peace of mind as they are in themselves.'

Mysterious

The substance of music, like the substance of the world itself, is mysterious. When we listen to a melody, what we hear is movement; but really nothing moves. When we say that a melody moves from, say, C to G, there is no movement, only sequence. We recognize the same melody when it is played in a different key, when it is played more quickly, more slowly.

The melody has its own character and we get to know it. Each melody has a personality all its own. An allegro in a minor key has been compared to someone dancing while his shoes pinch him. And the key of C-sharp like an unprotected woman finding herself at Shepherd's Bush on the Central line and wondering how she's going to make it back to Clapham Common.

Of course music requires clock time in order for us to hear it, but it seems to exist in ideal time, or out of time altogether – simply *there*. This is a mirror image of the soul. Our bodies, our appearance, our senses are here in clock time and we need clock time in order to express ourselves. But the self or soul that we express has another sort of existence which is in what our religion calls *eternity*. So music is a way of understanding our deepest selves and how we are related to God. *We are the music while the music lasts*. And the music is eternal. We know that, say, Mozart's *Clarinet Concerto* would exist even if no one ever played it again.

Sacred music

I must say it again: music is no mere accompaniment to faith; it is the direct presentation of the faith. When we hear the *St Matthew Passion* this is Good Friday. Listen, if you dare, to the last chorus. This is Our Lord being taken down from the Cross and laid in the tomb in the rock. When you hear the *Christmas Oratorio* you are there at the nativity of Christ – and the fact that, in the Bach, the shepherds are indubitably German shepherds from Leipzig with snow on their boots does not in the least misrepresent the Incarnation: rather it confirms it. This is what is meant by the expression *sacred music*.

Because church music is part of religious truth, you cannot have the music by itself without a corruption of the music. In other words, if you separate the music from its purpose, you deny the character, personality and meaning of the music itself. The greatest musician of all time, Johann Sebastian Bach, knew this; and that is why his statement that he composed all his works 'to the glory of God' was not a delicate pietism, but the literal truth.

Taking it seriously

Church music does not have any reference except the setting of the religious truths of the oratorio, the anthem or the Mass. If the music is

under-rehearsed or badly performed, it diminishes the act of worship. Musicians must take choir practice seriously. Of course, the corollary of this is that the words and ritual movements which go with the music have to be performed with the same care and reverence that the choir has for the notes. If you smirk and snigger your way through the Prayer of Humble Access, it is as big a desecration of the sacred ritual as if you sang B-flat where you should be singing B-natural. The priest and the lesson reader have a responsibility to speak the words properly, with attention to both meaning and rhythm.

Because we are physical presences

living in a material world, we are obliged to use *things* in order to enact *truths*. Like music itself, we have to use time to express eternity. This is just another way of saying that everything we do is sacramental:

You are the music while the music lasts.

These are only hints and guesses; and the rest

Is prayer, observance, discipline, thought and action.

The hint half-guessed, the gift half-understood is Incarnation. ND

This Homily was first preached at St George's Headstone on the Fourth Sunday after Easter

À la carte in the Cart?

That this realm has had one Queen for 60 years is a matter for celebration this month. However, during her reign, the desire that the realm 'shall have but one use' became a vanished aspiration.

From the informal services of HTB, via revamps of the Roman Rite, to parochial permutations of *Common Worship*, the menu of Anglican service choices is as comprehensive as that at your local Chinese take-away.

Yes, 'variety is the spice of life', but overspiced diets lead to digestive problems. Can too much liturgical variety have caused the belly-aching over falling attendance? Henry Ford's menu may have been too prescriptive – 'any colour as long as it's black' – but he pulled in the crowds. Are Anglicanism's would-be and current customers discouraged from attending by too much choice?

Another contemporary Anglican concern is protecting the environment. Yet how many forests have fallen producing the paper to chronicle the liturgical menu changes from ASB onwards?

Not just menu changes but also in the way in which they are compiled. For example, the spread of foot washing from gourmet A.C. establishments to most parishes gives three different flavours to the Maundy Thursday menu. Which is key flavour? Christ's humility, the gift of Holy Communion or stripping the altars? Interesting that Pope Francis is urging shorter and more simplified service structures.

If ever there was a day to fast, even from receiving Communion, it is Good Friday, and this was enshrined in the older Anglican tradition of Litany and Ante Communion. Now the Good Friday Liturgy has become a common menu feature, destroying the contrast between the fasting solemnity of Good Friday and the joyous feasting of the First Mass of Easter. Dessert course before the main dish?

Alan Edwards

FORWARD IN FAITH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY 2013



The Council of Forward in Faith has decided that the National Assembly should be a more focused occasion, held on a single day at a single venue

The 2013 National Assembly will be held at St Alban's, Holborn, on Saturday 19 October

The day will begin with Mass and end with Benediction

Further details and timings will be announced in due course

Catholic League Centenary 2013

Tuesday, July 2nd 2013 – Foundation Day

Church of the Assumption, 12 Warwick Street, London W1B 5NB

5pm Afternoon Tea & Reception

6pm: First Centenary Festival Lecture:

Gregory Dix and the Necessity of the Papacy

The Revd John Hunwicke, Personal Ordinariate of Our Lady of Walsingham

7pm: Solemn Sung Mass (Roman Catholic)

The Rt Revd Keith Newton, Celebrant

(Ordinary of the Personal Ordinariate of Our Lady of Walsingham)

Preacher: The Revd Michael Rear, President of the Catholic League, Preacher

Saturday, July 6th 2013 – Inauguration Day

Church of St Magnus the Martyr, London Bridge, EC3R 6DN

12 noon: Solemn Sung Mass (Anglican)

The Revd Philip Warner, Celebrant

(Rector, in succession to the Founder, the Revd Henry Fynes Clinton)

Preacher: The Revd Canon Dr Robin Ward, Principal of St Stephen's House, Oxford

1.15pm: Lunch Reception

2.30pm: Second Centenary Festival Lecture:

The Quest for Unity – 100 Years of the Catholic League

Dr Michael Yelton QC, President of the Anglo-Catholic History Society

RSVP to centenary@unitas.org.uk

www.unitas.org.uk

Simple faith

Digby Anderson argues that simplicity is a dangerous idea in matters of religion

A 'simple' faith. That is what the Pope is said to favour. A simple faith suitable for poor people. His Holiness is very keen on the poor. A 'bias' to the poor is a term back in use. 'Plain' is another word said to be favoured, as in a 'plain liturgy'. I carefully labour 'is said' because these are words the media translate into English and the media may be as incompetent at translation as they are at theology. So it is too early and would be unfair to criticize His Holiness for these words – yet.

Track record

However, if he is appealing for simplicity, he is not the first to do so. The word has a track record, even form. So too does the idea that the faith should be simplified to make it suitable for the poor whether in the south or in Europe.

The most obvious hackle it raises is that it might imply that the lower orders are too stupid or lazy to take proper full-blooded Christianity. An even more immediate concern is that dictionaries do not represent 'simplicity' as being unequivocally a good thing.

True, it can be contrasted favourably with unnecessary elaboration, fussiness. But simple can also be mere simplicity, weakness in intellect, even silliness; thus the patronization of the lower orders; an intellectually weak faith for intellectually weak people. Most usefully the dictionaries explain that simplicity means coming of one element. Simplifying the faith might mean focusing on one idea to the exclusion of others. The early Fathers thought this more or less a definition of heresy.

Simplicity has form in that it was one alleged justification for the heresy of the Reformation; getting rid of all those church-induced complications. More recently it was one justification for the Cromwellian barbarism that followed, whether causally or not, Vatican II.

Simplicity justified the dynamiting

of high altars, the hiding of the Blessed Sacrament away from the principal place, the removal of statues, the cult of ugliness in vessels and vestments, the expression of the liturgy in the language of the gutter – or the office, the building of basilicas to resemble underground car parks or, worse, health clinics, the degradation of theological ideas into slogans and the trivialization and sentimentalization of church music. Pope Benedict talked of the need to re-sacralize the mass, following these depredations. That means he thought it had been desacralized.

simplicity has form in that it was one alleged justification for the heresy of the Reformation

Anglo-Catholics have been treated to a special use of simplicity. Our church is accused of being preoccupied with abstruse matters such as the ordination of women or the acceptability of homosexuality.

Words and meanings

If the church is to reconnect with the majority of ordinary people, it has to forget all this and come back to the simple faith, the simple faith taught by Jesus. The critics have a curious view of him as concerned largely with fairness and being kind to children. They have not heard of the Lord who promised judgement and hellfire. They have no time for the Lord who, on the night of his betrayal, at his Last Supper and in his high priestly prayer instituted the sacraments and order of his Church. You might just be able to portray one of the Beatitudes as being simple, as having one 'element', but not the Johannine Jesus, not the Incarnation let alone the Apocalypse.

Not all the advocates of simplicity want to plunder and distort Christianity to make it fit one



element. Some of the Simpletons insist that the faith is to remain unchanged but presented differently. Simplicity is a matter of style. But it is highly questionable whether you can separate what is said from how it is said. Usually when you change the words you end up changing that which they convey. For instance, most natural language (that is, not closed languages such as mathematics) have layers of associations and images. Change the word and you lose old and introduce new associations. Why was the battle over the new English translation of the mass so bitterly fought? Because both sides were battling not for words but for different theologies.

The whole truth

These problems reach their height in the mass. There is the odd Gospel story which might appear simple, though the preachers of two millennia can find rich messages even in them. But there is no possibility of making the canon of the mass a simple matter. What happens at the altar to the elements, what the priest, the *alter Christus* is, what happened at Calvary and the Last Supper, what happened on the first Sunday, at all masses and at the Ascension are not 'of one element'. The sacrifice of the Epistle to the Hebrews is not simple. The faith acknowledged in the three creeds especially the matters associated with the Trinity and the Incarnation is not simple.

Simplicity is a dangerous idea. It is especially so when invoked in matters of religion, metaphysics and ethics where the whole truth counts. As Wilde reminds us, the truth is rarely pure and never simple. Forget the seductive contrast of simple with fussy. The crucial contrast is between simple and profound. **ND**

faith of our fathers

Arthur Middleton on true devotion and a good life

Hele's *Select Offices of Private Devotion* was published in 1717. It is available in digitized form at Amazon and other sites. My 1840 edition was given to Susanna Frere by her godmother, Jane B. Frere, on 20 March 1866. I am assuming that this is the family of Fr Walter Frere CR, a former Superior of the Community of the Resurrection and a former Bishop of Truro.

Fundamental doctrines

It contains large collections out of the Holy Scriptures. 'In these are comprised all the fundamental doctrines and the most important duties of the Christian Religion – the doctrines we are most concerned to understand and believe, and the duties we are most indispensably obliged to observe and practise, in order to our eternal happiness.'

Hele's wife's grandfather, with his wife and eleven children, was ejected by Cromwell from his parsonage house and forced to stand in the snow for some time before anyone dared admit them into their houses. His ejection lasted fifteen years. These people suffered during the Puritan ascendancy.

In the present climate 'spirituality' has become a commodity to be

acquired and with overtones of 'New Age' influences it can often be reduced to a self-regarding, feel-good factor experience, an exercise in self-realization where the living of the 'good life' can be forgotten. Hele reminds us that 'Be we ever so frequent and punctual in our prayers, if they do not influence our lives, they are but vain repetitions at the best. An unholy life is a plain demonstration that our prayers are not holy. These cannot be pure, as long as that is defiled. It is morally impossible he should worship God aright, who does not conscientiously endeavour to obey Him too.'

Frail creatures

We are, in the biblical understanding of human nature, and in Hele's words, 'frail, impotent, helpless, sinful creatures; labouring under manifold wants and infirmities; encompassed with innumerable dangers' and in the Prayer Book collect 'utterly unable of ourselves to do anything for ourselves.' As Hele stresses, 'our only hope is in God's mercy through Christ; His promises are our only comfort and security; these we must implore by incessant and earnest prayer; but as these are all of them conditional, it is certain that the success of our

prayers will depend upon our faithful endeavours to perform the conditions on which God has promised the things we pray for. Though we ask ever so fervently, ever so importunately, ever so devoutly, if we do not ask according to the terms of the Gospel, the Gospel gives us no encouragement to believe that we shall receive what we ask.'

'This is a truth,' says Hele, that well deserves our most serious consideration, 'because a mistake in this point must needs be of very dangerous and fatal consequence.' Citing St Paul, on godliness in general, prayer, if rightly performed, 'is profitable unto all things, having the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come' (1Tim. 4.8). There is not any one thing necessary either to our temporal or eternal happiness, but that the pious Christian may procure to himself by diligent faithful prayer to God for it.

Trust and confidence

Hele is aware of other requirements necessary to rendering our prayers successful; to be frequent in prayer, a conscientious temper and endeavour to serve God in purity of heart, and uprightness of life, a calm and peaceable, charitable and beneficent temper, reverence for the majesty of God and a sense of our own unworthiness, and finally, a holy trust and confidence in the power, wisdom and goodness of God.

God of His infinite goodness give us all grace so to pray, so to live, that our prayers may derive a happy influence upon our lives; and our lives give a power and efficacy to our prayers; and both jointly contribute to our daily increase in whose Divine graces and virtues, which will, through His mercy in Christ Jesus, entitle us to God's peculiar favour and blessing in this world: and to that far more exceeding and weight of glory, which is reserved in Heaven for all who at the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ, shall be found meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light. Amen.



Are you still here?

ND



dismissed by the *Church Times* with uncharacteristic asperity.

Let me say straightaway: on a simple initial reading, it is entirely orthodox and thoroughly Christian; so why the worry? 'It sets out,' as the Archbishops explain in their foreword, 'to explain the continued importance of and rationale for the doctrine of the Church of England on marriage as set out in *The Book of Common Prayer*,' – excellent! 'Canon B30,' – excellent! 'the *Common Worship Marriage Service*,' – fair enough! 'and the teaching document issued by the House in September 1999,' – oh dear! If this booklet was designed to mirror that dreadful exercise in smoke and mirrors (and this is precisely what the typesetting and layout is meant to suggest) then it is a dangerous Trojan Horse. Beware bishops bearing gifts.

Fair and intelligible

The text is brief, and nearly every single statement needs further elaboration and explanation if one is to appreciate the depth of what is being said; but one could say that of any summary. What it says it says truly. The style is mellifluous, even at times a little florid in its earnest desire not to appear too earnest. Church people would prefer something a little more crisp and precise.

There are plenty of statements I *could* pick apart, but none that I found heterodox or unacceptable in themselves. Which is why it has been so easy for the liberals to rubbish it: viewed through the infallible lens of 'the hermeneutic of suspicion,' it is of course highly suspicious. The fact remains that it presents a fair and intelligible description of marriage, at a time (to use its own words) 'when marriage is spoken of unclearly or

Lack of self-awareness

The then archbishops introduced the 1999 booklet with the statement 'The House of Bishops considers it timely on the eve of the new millennium to reaffirm the Church of England's teaching on marriage.' Nonsense! That embarrassingly slight booklet was no

**if they really think it is
a study document, they
are either stupid or being
culpably disingenuous**

more than a softening-up exercise for the bishops' (ultimately successful) move to persuade General Synod to permit the remarriage in church of divorcees.

If this was not the original intention, then why on earth did they publish it? And why issue a booklet now in exactly the same format if it is to serve some purpose other than softening us up for some compromise over same-sex church weddings?

When attacked by the Press for their latest document, the response was that it is merely 'commended for study.' Do they ever listen to themselves! It is a summary of the Church's teaching on marriage, not a teaching document: it is far too short, far too succinct to be any use for 'study.' If they could only commend it for what it is, we might just believe them.

If they really think it is a study document, they are either stupid or being culpably disingenuous. I don't know which is worse. Like the Archbishops' Amendment, this is a good text, defeated by its own confused presentation.

A slippery slope:

Am I being too hard? Make your own mind up. They (commendably) leave the question of same-sex unions to the end. The final paragraph reads thus,

50. It has seemed to some that the disagreement over same-sex marriage is a disagreement over mere names. But names govern how we think, and how we think governs what we learn to appreciate. When marriage is spoken of unclearly or misleadingly, it distorts the way couples try to conduct their relationship and makes for frustration and disappointment. The reality of marriage between one man and one woman will not disappear as the result of any legislative change, for God has given this gift, and it will remain part of our created human endowment. But the disciplines of living in it may become more difficult to acquire, and the path to fulfilment, in marriage and in other relationships, more difficult to find.

I would like to think that this is a straightforward justification of why the Church of England wishes to keep faith with its traditional doctrine. But the dear old House of Bishops speaks with so uncertain a voice, I quite see why others view it as a slippery slope towards what it had earlier commended as 'well-designed accommodations.' **ND**

The document can be read at
www.churchofengland.org/media/1715479/marriagetextbrochureprint.pdf
 marriage (1999) can be found at
www.churchofengland.org/media/45645/marriage.pdf

devotional

The moral struggle

Bishop Donald Parsons

When temptation does arrive, however, what shall be done? Swiftiness and vigour in acting can hardly be overstressed. To allow the tempting thought to remain in our minds is to invite defeat. Delay gives the temptation more time to exert its power and also gives us more opportunity to accumulate reasons for yielding. A seedling is uprooted more easily than a sapling.

The hour of trial

The kind of action we take depends upon the kind of temptation we face. There is value in distinguishing between those of aversion and those of allurements. Those of aversion are temptations to avoid things which are unpleasant or demanding. Procrastination, sloth and indifference are examples of such temptations of aversion. Direct attack is called for here, a spurring of the will to get it done.

A different procedure is demanded, however, for dealing with alluring temptations, those which are attractive and inviting. In this category are lust, gluttony, revenge and similar things. Because of the nature of the temptation,

the helpful action is a deliberate distracting of the will.

Perhaps the clearest example is a temptation to some sexual sin. We find little profit in repeating 'I will not think of doing this, I will not think of doing this.' All the time we are so insisting, the image is present to our minds and imaginations. We are still thinking of the evil act, concentrating on it, and allowing opportunity for the alluring nature of the temptation to be felt. We should turn the mind to something else, to some attractive thought which is good or at least harmless.

Perseverance

The attractiveness of the sin must be offset by direct attention to something else which is also appealing. The common dictum is, 'Think of the Cross.' For many this may not work. Hence, think of baseball, or football, your work, or anything else which is interesting and not sinful. The fundamental thing is that the attention must be directed elsewhere, as promptly and firmly as possible. We cope with temptations as their nature demands.

Further, the need for perseverance must be stressed. One of the most potent aids to sin is the feeling that we cannot succeed. If we believe we will ultimately fail, we will conclude that we might as well give in now. Yet experience proves clearly that temptation does not go on forever. The tragedy is that we often surrender just a bit too soon. Just a little more persistence, and the trial will pass. **ND**

From A Lifetime Road to God

*by Bishop Donald Parsons, Vith Bishop of Quincy,
edited by Arthur Middleton*

The Orthodox theologian Alexander Schmemmann begins his book on the Sacraments by saying 'man is born hungry, eating is communion with God.' This observation has thrown new light on my own prayer journey through Easter because it struck me how often sharing food is crucial in the resurrection appearances of Jesus.

'Have you anything to eat?' he asks the awe-struck disciples in the locked room. St Luke tells us that the disciples on the road to Emmaus 'recognized him at the breaking of the bread' and Jesus prepares a breakfast of barbecued fish on the beach in John 21. The Lord transposes his table fellowship with his friends into a partaking in the glory of the resurrection. In the story of the breakfast on the beach it is not until 'they had finished eating' that Jesus begins his questioning of Peter.

Commentators over the centuries have pointed to the 'Eucharistic interpretation' of these resurrection meals and that is, of course, absolutely true. But there is something more in this which escapes piety and liturgy. You have to eat to live. The way we eat

Ghostly Counsel

Eating to live

Andy Hawes is Warden of Edenham Regional Retreat House

and our attitude to the food we prepare speaks volumes about the way we live, our attitude to creation, to ourselves and to others.

Consider that television programme *Come Dine with Me*. It appears to me like a parable of contemporary society. People thrown together to eat food they don't like, with people they don't care about, and then given every encouragement to be negative about both. Then there is the 'fast food' phenomenon – which is a mechanism for refuelling and a cause of huge amounts of waste and litter: the exact opposite of careful stewardship.

If eating is 'communion with God' then the preparation of the food we eat, how we eat it and what we do when

we are eating it are all areas for serious reflection because they are spiritual issues. The ethics of food production and all the attendant questions about rearing of animals and the raising of crops are spiritual issues that address our communion with God. Schmemmann points out that the fall happens when man eats the food 'that is not given'; as soon as humanity sees food as something of itself and not as the gracious provision of God, the vicious cycle of self-destruction and the breakdown of relationships begin.

This makes the praying of grace before meals an imperative in the Christian life. It also means that being careful about what we buy and the way we prepare and cook our food is itself a prayer – a means of communion with our Heavenly Father. The 'resurrection meals' remind us too that Jesus is the unseen guest at all our tables.

St Ignatius of Loyola in his 'rules for eating' commends us to always imagine that Christ shares our food. Reverence and love for him should not only be reserved for the Holy Table; it should be seen in making all our tables holy.

Looking Forward!

The commissioning of **Dr Colin Podmore**
as Director of Forward in Faith

Thank you for being the occasion of so much
encouragement last evening.

Concelebrating bishop

The whole thing was wonderful!

FiF priest in the congregation

What a magnificent occasion at St Alban's. Our
little group came away feeling uplifted and greatly
encouraged.

FiF layman from the south coast

It was a great pleasure and privilege to be at your
inspiring and uplifting commissioning service
yesterday.

Female ordinand

How uplifting and rich the liturgy was on Monday
evening.

Liberal catholic priest

I found it uplifting (if a touch on the long side!) and
the atmosphere was tremendous. Thank you for using
a form of service and language
that I'm familiar with. There was
a great cross-section of people
there, the music was good, and the
Bishop of Fulham preached well.

Retired liberal catholic layman

An excellent event: everything
well judged, and a very good
advertisement for the cause.

FiF layman

It was an occasion of
extraordinary quality and
prayerfulness. And I was much
moved by the generosity and
dignity of the spoken words. The
music too, was well chosen.

Traditional catholic lay woman

That was a wonderful mass
for your commissioning, great
reverence a beauty & a coup for
bringing so many from various
strands of thought together (not



to forget the coup of an Eastward
facing mass with concelebration
which gave everyone a sense of how
inclusive Godward can be). The
combination of Bishop Jonathan's
sermon, your commissioning
promises all set in the context of
being 'pro-communion' really feels
like a new chapter has begun. Laus
Deo & thank you.

FiF priest in the congregation

I've never been present at the
celebration of the Eucharist with
brothers and sisters from right
across the ecclesiological spectrum.
I think your gift and your charism
with Forward in Faith will be to
build bridges and familial bonds of
love which in their turn will provide
the right forum and environment for
honest engagement with the issues
which presently divide us. Thank


you for taking on such a role, and especially for your
commitment to the younger catholic clergy.

Younger concelebrating priest

It was the most glorious service I have been at for
years. It flowed faultlessly and with pace. Trad.
language and glorious music. So many high points,
not least the rousing participation. It really was 'One
Voice'.

Retired liberal catholic priest

The service was memorable.

Senior Synod member 



Anglican Catholic Future?

Colin Podmore reflects on the questions raised by the recent launch of the Anglican Catholic Future network

The third week of April was quite a week. On Monday the Bishop of Fulham presided and preached at my Commissioning. On Tuesday he did the same at the Patronal Festival of St Magnus the Martyr. On Wednesday morning I spotted him on television, entering St Paul's in rochet and black chimere for Lady Thatcher's funeral. That evening the Bishop of London licensed him as Guild Vicar of St Dunstan in the West during Solemn Evensong. (When will I again hear two sermons from Bishop Richard in one day?)

And on Thursday evening the Bishop of Ely presided at the launch of 'Anglican Catholic Future' at the Annunciation, Marble Arch.

These five services had several things in common. They all featured at least one very tall bishop, if not two. None of them could have happened as they did in any church other than the Church of England. And they each reflected, albeit in different ways, the fundamentally Catholic identity of our Church.

An Anglican service

Anglican Catholic Future was much more low-key than our Monday mass. The smaller church was nicely full. The Bishop of Ely presided with a woman priest acting as deacon and a male subdeacon. Two bishops and two male priests were robed in rochet/surplice and stole.

A curious form of the *Vidi Aquam* replaced the prayers of penitence. It concluded with the Bishop praying that we might bless God, while making the sign of the cross over the people. Unlike the *Common Worship* form (and in true 'Affirming' style), it was not penitential in character. The versicles and responses before the final blessing were in the Roman, not the Anglican order. And the rite concluded with the Regina Caeli.

But otherwise, all the liturgical texts were from *Common Worship* mainstream. The mass was said, but with Kyrie, Gloria, Sanctus, Benedictus, Agnus Dei and hymns sung by the congregation. The service could have happened in any Anglican parish to which an earlier 'high' tradition had bequeathed a thurible and a red high mass set. It pointed to the Catholicity of both the Church of England's inheritance and its current liturgical provision.

Catholic identity?

After the service and a glass of wine the Rector of Berkhamsted and Bishop Conway gave brief introductions to Anglican Catholic Future – a 'network', not a membership organization, currently focused on London but hoping to develop contacts elsewhere. Its stated primary purposes, 'to inspire and equip clergy and laity for the work of Christian mission and ministry rooted in Catholic practice, piety and

theology' and to make more explicit 'the implicit Catholic identity of our church', we can wholeheartedly endorse. 'Reasserting', as the Bishop put it, 'the historic Anglo-Catholic claim that the whole of the Church of England is Catholic' is just what we all need to do.

In his sermon the Revd Dr Peter Groves (Vicar of St Mary Magdalen, Oxford) affirmed that 'Anglo-Catholicism is thoroughly Anglican'. A question that the Catholic Movement must answer is indeed that of how Anglican we are: do our life, actions and words justify our claim that we are 'loyal Anglicans' for whom provision must be made that enables us to remain such with integrity? The question for 'Anglican Catholic Future', by contrast, is that of how Catholic it is.

For Dr Groves, Catholic identity involved understanding

Christianity as 'the religion of the incarnation': 'God meets us where we are, and calls us to his service.' But it also required a recognition that 'we individually don't have all the answers...because we are part of something far bigger

than ourselves', leading to 'a humility about ourselves' – 'a realization that...there have been quite a few Christians before us...who, if we only pay attention, might have just something to teach us' and that we should 'stop talking loudly about our own new ideas...and learn from the universality, the catholicity of the Christian faith'.

So far, so good, but Dr Groves left me wanting more. Surely our Catholic identity involves not just Anglicans individually learning from the Tradition and the wider Church, but also the Church of England as a whole being faithful to that Tradition and deferring to the wider Church on questions affecting the whole that do not admit of local resolution? In short, Catholic identity must involve a developed understanding of the meaning and impact of the Church of England's claim to be but 'part of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church'.

Party rivalries?

The network's statement says, 'Following the imperatives that guided our Catholic forebears in the Church of England we will focus on theology, spirituality and the life of prayer, liturgy and worship, vocation and priesthood, ecumenism and social justice.' All of these the Oxford Movement did indeed promote, but none was the imperative that inspired it. At root it was about how the Church of England is to be understood. Resisting state reform of the Church, Keble and Newman highlighted the Church's independent basis – its 'apostolical descent'.

Everything mentioned in this statement was a fruit of the Oxford Movement, but the Movement's root was Catholic ecclesiology. If one enjoys the fruits of a tree but fails to tend

it is a 'network' currently focused on London but hoping to develop contacts elsewhere

its roots, it will eventually wither and die.

The statement also bewails the fragmentation of the Catholic tradition in Anglicanism and 'pre-occupation with divisive issues,' promising that Anglican Catholic Future will not have 'recourse to political agendas and party rivalries.' This was certainly true of the service, which avoided reference to divisive issues and in which no women were robed as priests.

After the service, Bishop Stephen emphasized that Anglican Catholic Future's aim was 'not to set ourselves over against others' and spoke of our 'shared purpose.' Having seen me in the congregation, he congratulated me on my appointment as Director of Forward in Faith, prompting a round of applause. Welcoming other members of Forward in Faith and the SSC, he acknowledged our 'serious differences' but asked that we should not 'lose sight of what we shared.' This irenic approach deserves a sincere welcome.

Not represented?

But if Anglican Catholic Future is free from party rivalries and concerned to steer clear of divisive issues, it seems sad that no representative of our Catholic Movement has been included among its leadership. Did they decline invitations, or were they not invited? Fr Bowie said that the network's leadership were 'keeping in touch with other Catholic groups of various shades of opinion.'

I am not aware of contact with Forward in Faith and would be interested to hear which of the Catholic Societies has been approached. Welcoming the congregation, the Bishop of Ely said, 'We are here to get beyond our divisions,' but I spotted only two or three SSC priests and no lay Forward in Faith members. I went in response to an advertisement. If a truly inclusive initiative was intended, could some effort not have been made to invite people from the Catholic Movement to attend?

With the service booklet came a letter signed by 13 diocesan and 6 suffragan bishops. Curiously, for an episcopal greeting to a network pledged to eschew 'party rivalries,' none of our Catholic bishops had signed it. Did they decline, I wondered, or were they not invited? The only programmatic statement in the six-sentence letter suggested the answer: 'Within the ministry of the whole people of God we believe that a catholic future for the church will be one that rejoices in the ministry of women and men as bishops, priests and deacons.' Had the bishops misunderstood the purpose of Anglican Catholic Future, or had they understood it too well and let the cat out of the bag? Either way, that sentence was singled out for inclusion in the press release published after the service.

There is nothing wrong with groups who share a common viewpoint on contentious issues working together – or adopting a 'partisan' stance, if it they do so in a Christian and irenic spirit. This is, after all, precisely what Forward in Faith seeks to do. But to claim to avoid 'recourse to political agendas' and criticize 'preoccupation with divisive issues' while promoting one view of the ordination of women to the priesthood and episcopate is problematic. Furthermore, if there is an unwillingness to make the sacrifices and

the statement also bewails the fragmentation of the Catholic tradition in Anglicanism



compromises that would be required in order to involve those whose views are different in a non-political initiative, wouldn't it be better to be honest about that, rather than pretending to an inclusion that is lacking?

Living priesthood?

The first event in Anglican Catholic Future's 2013 Programme, on the Saturday after the launch, was a 'Vocations Day – Living the Priesthood,' with the Revd Lucy Winkett of St James, Piccadilly, and the Revd Bernard Silverman (Chief Scientific Adviser to the Home Office). Both are excellent people with whom I have appreciated

working in the past, but I had not previously thought of them as Anglo-Catholics – or of St James, Piccadilly, as an Anglo-Catholic church. That they should be chosen to expound the Catholic understanding of vocation and priesthood at the network's first event therefore came as a surprise.

Affirming Catholicism?

The final puzzle of the evening concerned the relationship between Anglican Catholic Future and *Affirming Catholicism*, of which the Bishop of Ely is a Vice-President and with which many of the network's leaders have previously been associated. The themes contained in the statement of *Affirming Catholicism*'s aims on its website are remarkably similar to those of Anglican Catholic Future and Dr Groves' sermon.

So what has happened? Do the new network's founders share the concern of many that *Affirming Catholicism* fails to affirm Catholicism? Or do they consider its alliance with Inclusive Church problematic? If so, will they seek to be more Catholic and less political than *Affirming Catholicism*? And will they succeed?

A pleasant evening

The launch of Anglican Catholic Future brought a week of heady liturgies to a pleasant end. I received a warm welcome, shared in the worship of God, enjoyed meeting again some old friends and acquaintances, and had some useful conversations. Nothing was said or done to which I could take exception. But I did not leave with a clear or recognizable vision of an Anglican Catholic future. If anything, I left more puzzled than I had come. **ND**