

newdirections

A man in clerical attire, wearing a black cassock and a pink sash, is leaning over a desk to assist a young girl with her schoolwork. The girl is wearing a school uniform and glasses, and is looking at a laptop. The man is pointing at a piece of paper on the desk. In the background, there are educational posters on the wall, including one with the words 'their they're our' and another with a map. The scene is set in a classroom or study area.

May 2014
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Final Approval?

David Banting and Oliver Coss
speak at Diocesan Synods

Also in this issue:

- J Alan Smith considers breaking the Union
- Nicolas Spicer reflects on Mary and ecumenism
- Stephen Keeble on Same Sex Marriage

parish directory

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

BIRMINGHAM St Agatha, Stratford Road, Sparkbrook (B11 1QT) "Fit is worth believing in, it is worth travelling for" 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 Mcleer 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 Richmond. 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, Resolutions ABC in place.* Sunday: 8am Low Mass BCP, 10am Sung Mass Traditional Ceremonial, 6pm Evensong. 2nd Sunday of the month Choral Evensong with Benediction. Parish Priest: Fr Adrian Pearce SSC 01202 911569; Parish office: 01202 766772. Email: afpear2@gmail.com

BOURNEMOUTH St Francis of Assisi, Charnister Road (corner of East Way) A Forward in Faith Parish under the care of the Bishop of Richmond. *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

BOVEY TRACEY St John the Evangelist ABC, Forward in Faith, Under the Episcopal Care of the Bishop of Exeter. Sunday: 10am High Mass. Low Mass 10am Tues and Thurs. Parish Priest: Fr Greg Stanton SSC 01925 051905

BOWBURN, Durham Christ the King, Forward in Faith, ABC. Sunday: 11am Sung Mass and Sunday School; Weekday Mass: Wed 9.30am, Fri 6.30pm; Evening Prayer and Benediction 5.30pm last Saturday of month; Parish Priest: Fr John Livesley SSC 01388 814817

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: Thur 10am. During interregnum please contact the Revd Duncan Wilson on 01308 420651

BRIGHTON WAGNER GROUP The Annunciation (11am) Fr Michael Wells 01273 681431. St Bartholomew's (11am) Fr David Cues 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 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

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

CARDIFF near rail, bus, Millennium Stadium, city centre and Bay Daily Mass **St Mary, Bute Street** Sunday: Solemn Mass 11am; **St Dyfrig and St Samson, Pentre Gardens** Sunday: Solemn Mass 9.30am. Parish Priest: Fr Graham Francis 02920 487777. Associate Priest: Fr David Morris 029 2221 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, Wed 6.30pm (with Healing and Reconciliation on the 4th Wed of the month). Contact: Fr Jeff Williams 01460 419527 www.churchofthegoodshepherd-chard.weebly.com



CHARD - The Good Shepherd, Fumham

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

CHOPWELL Saint John the Evangelist NE17 7AN Forward in Faith Parish ABC. Sunday - Sung Mass 10am. Daily Office & Mass as displayed. Parish Priest: Fr Paul R Murray SSC 01207 561248 p.r.murray@durham.anglican.org

COLCHESTER St Barnabas Church, Abbott's Road, Old Heath, Colchester A Forward in Faith Parish. Resolutions ABC. Sunday: Mass 8am (Said) and 10am (Sung). Weekday Masses: Mon 6pm, Tues 10am, Thur 7pm, Holy Days 7.30pm. Check website for other daily services www.stbarnabasoldheath.wordpress.com 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 Exeter. All resolutions passed. Sunday: 8am Low Mass (BCP), Fourth Sunday only: 10am Sung Mass, Thurs: 7pm Low Mass. Mass on major festivals and Saints Days - times vary. Contact during interregnum: Mrs J Hosie, Churchwarden 01380 813500

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 Richmond. 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 Richmond.* Sunday: Parish Mass 9.45am, Solemn Evensong and Benediction 6pm (First Sunday). Weekday Mass: Wed 9.30am. Parish Priest: Fr Martin 07736 711360

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, FF. The Church on the Green. Visit us on the way to Walsingham. Mass on Sundays and Wednesdays at 10am. 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 Exeter - 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-HEATHROW-HANWORTH TW13 St George, Hanworth Park, Feltham, TW13 7QF Beautiful and historic Church. Traditional worship. Vibrant parish social life - ABC Fulham Jurisdiction. Sunday: 8am Low Mass (English Missal), 10am High Mass (Traditional), 6pm Evensong and Latin Benediction (first Sunday of the Month). Low Mass 10am Tues and Thurs. Fr Paul Williamson: 0208 844 0475. Email: 1stewart1@live.co.uk

LONDON EC3 St Magnus the Martyr, Lower Thames Street (nearest Tube: Monument or Bank) Resolutions ABC. Mass: Sunday 11am, refreshments following. Tues, Wed, 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 Parish 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 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: Sung Mass 10am; Thursday Said Mass 10am. Tube to Wembley Park then 83 Bus to Church Lane. Churchwarden: 020 8205 7447

London SE11 4BB St Agnes Kennington Park, St Agnes Place - 8 minutes walk from both Kennington and the Oval tube stations (Northern line) ABC/FIF. Sunday: 10am Solemn Mass. Daily Mass: Mon 10am; Tues 5.30pm; Wed 10am; Thu 5.30pm; Fri 10am - Bible Study after Mass on Wed. saintagneskenningtonpark.co.uk 020 7820 8050 fipaulesor@btconnect.com

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LEAD STORY

Towards Final Approval?

David Banting offers a realistic assessment of the new legislation to the Chelmsford Diocesan Synod

I speak
for those
who
even
at this
stage
must
carefully
reiterate
their
conscientious
dissent

I dreamed a dream, a dream of a new kind of bishop and a new way of 'bishops', but it has died the death of a thousand Synodical debates. We are still trying to square the circle of what we have come to call two integrities in a jurisdictional and legislative way. General Synod has now manoeuvred itself for 'Final Approval' on women bishops in July, but for this Diocesan Synod today is in effect our 'Final Approval' debate. I will speak to encourage all conservatives and traditionalists, Evangelical or Catholic, in our conscientious opposition to this development.

Theologically unsound

We believe it to be inappropriate as being biblically inconsistent and theologically unsound, a case where (in the words of Articles XXI and XX of the 39 Articles) 'Councils may err, forasmuch as they be assemblies of men, whereof not all be governed by the Spirit and Word of God' and 'the Church having authority in controversies of faith, yet it being not lawful for the Church to ordain anything that is contrary to God's Word written, neither to expound one place of Scripture that it be repugnant to another.' It will confuse the roles and vocation of man and woman in marriage, it will compromise the doctrines of the Trinity and Christology, it will complicate mission, and corrupt the integrity of the way we handle the Bible.

The way that Galatians 3.28 has been used as 'a knock-down argument' is a good example. It is a glorious text about the equality of women and men in the grace and salvation of God, but says nothing specifically about their roles or vocations in marriage or ministry or oversight, which Scriptures elsewhere do indicate to be a wonderful complementarity rather than a worldly interchangeability.

New goodwill

We have final legislative arrangements before us and they will no doubt be put through. But there never has been a significant debate on the foundational theology that the original Rochester Report set before the Church. So I speak for those who, though a minority, even at this stage must carefully reiterate their conscientious dissent. It will be a vote against

the principle of the development, however much we will endeavour to make any special arrangements work in the future.

In voting against, I am content in myself and plan to be confident of the new atmosphere in General Synod. The House of Bishops Declaration tells me I have a secure place within the Church of England and Anglican Communion and that our integrity can have every hope of continuance, flourishing and succession.

Thank you for that new goodwill. That we are here at all is extraordinary – the fruit of a patient and painstaking 15 months of General Synod clawing its way to a new approach and attitude. We began to learn to listen and to trust.

Sympathy and trust

It took General Synod some time to come to terms with the painful experience that we had not got it right last time in 2012. I wonder whether the dioceses have ever acknowledged that many are simply feeling tired, frustrated or bored. The point is that this settlement has emphatically not come to us before. It is not only a new package, it represents a new attitude and mood.

So, I can speak honestly, even bluntly. Today is not really about this motion. It is about understanding and embracing the new mood. It is about sympathy and trust. It is about the future and how we will live with this and work it out in the ground.

The conservative/traditionalist position has been treated by many as unintelligible and backward-looking, out of date and out of step. At worst, we are still thought of as misogynist and on a par with slavery and apartheid. At best, we are opponents of the majority in the Church and in our culture. But this package calls us to 'good disagreement', to understand, support and work with each other. It will no longer do to call us or think us prejudiced or unappointable; we are to be considered equal, but different. Bishops and Archdeacons have agreed no more to say that a Conservative Evangelical is 'not right for this parish' because of their integrity, or that a Conservative Evangelical cannot be considered as a Suffragan Bishop because too many would 'feel unaffirmed'. The House of



Bishops Declaration has made considerable promises of this new climate and of their own intentions.

Challenges for all

The Five Principles will stretch us all somewhere. I cannot easily accept them all, but I can if others put equal energy into accepting and delivering those they struggle with. I have gone out of my way to remain involved in the patronage processes that have considered and appointed women and incumbents and to attend their institutions where I have known and worked with them. I still look for that to be reciprocated.

I spoke at General Synod against the unprecedented suspension of the Standing Orders to allow only three months for the legislation to go to the Dioceses. At this very

last stage I counselled against a sudden 'hell-for-leather gallop for the last fence'. That seemed suddenly to abandon the patient but remarkable progress that General Synod was making towards final approval in November.

It is hard to think at a full gallop. We need cool heads and warm hearts and a long sustained commitment and patience to trust and collaborate in the future. That is what the debate is about. I will urge a no vote from all conservatives. I will ask proponents to consider an abstention unless you are quite clear that from now on you will consistently oppose any new discrimination against conservatives, insist on their flourishing under these arrangements, as promised, and ensure that they are considered at every level on all-round merit, rather than tolerated or humoured, forever constrained by their integrity. **ND**

Hope for the future

Oliver Coss sets out the way ahead to the Birmingham Diocesan Synod

I have a non-churchgoing friend who has often said that the best word to describe the Church of England is, in a certain homage to Douglas Adams, 'harmless'. Through much of the last fifteen years we have painstakingly argued, in public as in private, over women, over sex and sexuality, and on the purpose of the church in the twenty-first century; and after the catastrophic events surrounding the General Synod meeting in November 2012, he told me that he was minded to amend his description to 'mostly harmless'. I wish he could be here now.

I wish he could have seen how our friends in General Synod have laboured together through the storms so recently quelled, and the measure, tone and respect with which it enthusiastically passed the legislation that now stands before us. I don't want my contribution to this debate, or my reflections on the package of measures before us, to be dominated today by minutiae, or by fine detail. We are not here to debate the details of the bishops declaration, nor will this measure stand or fall in this Synod on the basis of the provision given, or not given, to those who are not the object of this legislation. No.

Commonalities

This is a debate in the simplest terms: whether we now agree to enact the principle of admitting women to

the episcopate

That being the case, and this being a conscience issue, I hope no one here would expect me to vote any other way but against. But, if you will permit me, I shall not do so resentfully, or in any vain hope that I will get my own way. I hope, for the sake of my dear brothers and sisters in Christ who yearn to see the episcopate opened to women, that we will proceed quickly in resolving this question once and for all.

Unity cannot happen on my terms, or on anyone else's. It must, fundamentally, be grounded in what we believe the Spirit is saying to the church. In that search and effort, we uncover commonalities that reinforce our common life in Christ: some of those are geographical, some commonalities emerge where each of us face similar issues, and sometimes they emerge in sharing deeply held theological viewpoints, that define our understanding of Christ's body the church. Anglo-Catholics have often been suspected of living a ghettoized lifestyle, but realistically it is rather that our commonalities are more broadly spread, and it is our intention to we must work twice as hard to nurture all of them. The curate's egg may be good in parts, but it is the totality of it, not its constitutive elements, that best describe it as an egg.

I am not going to give you any romantic platitudes, and say I am deeply in love with the Church of

England, and could not bear to see it change; but I am going to say that I, and others like me, find in this way forward a sufficiency that allows us to say that we are committed to the mission of the Church of England.

Recognized and respected

I endorse the five principles contained in the Draft Declaration, the commitment to continuing pastoral, episcopal provision. I find there a great deal of hope that the integrity of each of us is recognized and respected, and that each integrity has an essential value to Anglican missionary endeavour. That mission means opening the episcopate to women, while welcoming a diversity of faith and practice; and that mission means difficult internal conversations in other directions, and I hardly need to say that the tone with which we treat each other in one context, may be the tone that endures as we unpick other divisive issues.

But above all that, and the patent need to re-establish unity in the bond of peace, the mission of the Church of England means the grafting and rooting of men and women throughout our land, so that they may know the new life of Jesus Christ. I warmly commend this pathway to you, and in respect of where your conscience lies, invite you to vote accordingly, and not at this stage to be encumbered by any other consideration. **ND**





Breaking the Union?

J. Alan Smith discusses the forthcoming referendum on independence for Scotland

In the Fifties and Sixties, a major principle of progressive thought on foreign policy was 'the right of self-determination.' I started having doubts after the chaos that followed the independence of the former Belgian Congo and the breakup of the Central African Federation. Apparently, it was all right for Northern Rhodesia (Zambia) and Nyasaland (Malawi) to leave the latter but not for Katanga to leave the former; this was a distinction too subtle for me to grasp.

A general principle?

Now the people of Scotland alone will decide whether Scotland will leave the UK, without reference to the other parts of the country. This is quite different from the process by which the southern 26 counties of Ireland left the UK nearly 100 years ago; this required an Act of Parliament passed by representatives of all parts of the UK. The major party in the Coalition is officially known as the 'Conservative and Unionist Party'; should the Scottish people choose to leave the Union, future historians may well judge harshly a Unionist Party that made it so easy for them. If the right of Scotland to decide alone whether to leave represents a general principle then, presumably, in the 1860s the States of the Confederacy had the right to leave the USA.

Both worse off

A rational discussion on the proposal for Scottish independence would examine whether Scotland and the other nations in the UK benefit from Scotland's presence in the Union. It is my opinion, based on a reading of our island's history, that they do. Of course, if Scotland were to leave, then both parts would probably survive but, equally probably, both parts would be worse off.

An aspect barely mentioned is the future of Northern Ireland. Historically, the seventeenth-century Ulster plantation was settled from Scotland and, geographically, Northern Ireland's surface link to the UK is the Stranraer-Larne ferry. Logically, Northern Ireland *could* remain in the UK following the departure of Scotland but, in practice, that departure would be a threat to a still-fragile constitutional settlement.

Details unclear

A worrying aspect of the process is the way that a major decision for Scotland to leave could be made without significant details having been settled. An alternative approach would have been to have a first referendum to determine, in principle, whether Scotland should leave and then, if the decision were 'Yes', to produce a detailed proposal to put to a second referendum.

The major areas affected by Scottish independence would be the legal system, the armed forces, and the currency. Scotland already has a distinct legal system and its future would depend on whether an independent Scotland were part of the European Union. Would an independent Scotland

be able to maintain all the existing Scottish regiments as well as the specialized corps required by an army and elements of a navy and air force? Certainly the remaining parts of the UK would need to spend more on defence to maintain the UK's obligations.

The currency to be used by an independent Scotland has been widely discussed: a new Scottish currency; the euro; or sterling. A newly independent country of the size of Scotland would find a new currency a risky venture. An independent Scotland choosing to go from sterling to the euro would be well advised to read the fable of King Log and King Stork. The continued use of sterling has some attractions but hidden difficulties. The problem is not the use by Scottish people of UK notes and coins but the creation of sterling amounts by Scottish banks. Who would control the Scottish banks and who would act as their lender of last resort?

Other areas affected are the public and private corporations located in Scotland because Scotland is part of the UK. For example, would National Savings & Investments remain in Glasgow? A major problem for the UK, if Scotland were to leave, would be the relocation of UK defence establishments from Scotland. Paradoxically, policies to benefit Scotland as part of the UK could lead to significant expenditure for the UK in the event of an independent Scotland.

Devolution of powers

There are hints that, if Scotland were to reject the call for independence, then wider powers would be devolved to the Scottish government. I think it would be better for the UK government to consider the devolution of powers throughout all the UK and not just Scotland. At present, we have different systems of devolution in Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland while the majority of the population, the people of England, have no devolved powers at all, apart from those devolved to local government.

On the other hand, if Scotland were to choose independence, then the UK should seek to ease their path. Between the decision to leave and their actual departure, the UK should negotiate with organizations such as the EU, the NATO and the UN to ensure that Scotland can join those it wishes to join before it loses its membership of them that it enjoys as part of the UK. It would be in the interests of the UK to remain on good terms with an independent Scotland without sacrificing its own legitimate interests. **ND**

Safe Harbour

Over the black dock a blood moon
And an old rook before the white sail
Of a ruined galleon
Other ships sunk in history
And gulls haphazard like a flight of ideas.

Peter Mullen





Women Bishops: Frequently Asked Questions

In this new series, Colin Podmore explains the women bishops legislation and the new provisions for those who cannot receive their ministry.

What are the parts of the 'package'?

They are:

- a House of Bishops' Declaration (which the House will make in May 2014)
- a Measure (a law which, if approved by the General Synod in July, will be presented for parliamentary approval and royal assent in autumn 2014)
- an Amending Canon (which, if approved by the General Synod in July, will be promulgated in the General Synod once the Measure has royal assent – probably in November 2014)
- an Act of Synod to rescind the 1993 Act of Synod (which will come into force when the Amending Canon is promulgated)
- Regulations concerning a Resolution of Disputes Procedure (which the House of Bishops will make under the new Canon C 29).

What will the Measure do?

The Measure will

- permit the General Synod to promulge a Canon allowing women to be ordained bishop
- keep in force permission for a Canon allowing women to be ordained priest
- repeal the Priests (Ordination of Women) Measure 1993 and related provisions in other Measures
- ensure that the provisions for those unable to receive the ministry of women as bishops cannot be challenged under the Equalities Act 2010.

Members of Forward in Faith are voting against the Measure because its main purpose is to permit the ordination of women as bishops –

which, for reasons of theological conviction, we cannot endorse.

What will the Canon do?

The Canon will

- amend Canon C 2 to enable a woman to be ordained bishop
- re-order existing provisions about deaconesses, women deacons and women priests
- add a new Canon C 29 requiring the House of Bishops to make Regulations with a procedure for resolving disputes about arrangements under the Declaration (any amendment of the Regulations will require two-thirds majorities in each House of the General Synod).

Members of Forward in Faith are voting against the Canon because its main purpose is to permit the ordination of women as bishops – which, for reasons of theological conviction, we cannot endorse.

Which is better: an Act of Synod or a House of Bishops' Declaration?

An Act of Synod is a non-legislative instrument or resolution of the General Synod which is formally published as 'the embodiment of the will or opinion of the Church of England as expressed by the whole body of the Synod.'

Though it is morally binding, it is not legally enforceable. It contains no mechanism for resolving disputes or addressing grievances. By contrast, the House of Bishops' Declaration on the Ministry of Bishops and Priests has associated with it a Resolution of Disputes Procedure established by Regulations under a Canon, under which grievances can be brought.

Rescinding an Act of Synod only requires simple majorities in the General Synod, whereas the House of Bishops will only be able to amend or revoke the Declaration if the amendment or revocation is supported by two-thirds majorities in

each House of the General Synod.

What will happen to the Provincial Episcopal Visitors when the Act of Synod is rescinded?

Nothing. The Sees of Beverley, Ebbsfleet and Richborough are not mentioned by name in the Act of Synod, but they are named in the Declaration, which notes that they remain in existence. Though the role of Provincial Episcopal Visitor is not mentioned in the Declaration, the House of Bishops has stated:

'The title and role of the "provincial episcopal visitor" are currently set out in the 1993 Act of Synod. There is no reason why these – or the financial arrangements for the three sees – should change when the 1993 Act of Synod is rescinded, given the House's wish for there to be continuity. As noted in paragraph 30 of the Declaration, the three sees and their occupants remain an integral part of the new dispensation.'

(GS 1932, para. 23)

The Bishops of Beverley, Ebbsfleet and Richborough will carry on with their existing roles and ministries.

What will we need to do this summer, after the legislation receives Final Approval?

Nothing. It will be summer, so take a holiday – you deserve it! Nothing will change until the Canon is promulgated, which cannot take place until November 2014 at the earliest. There will then be a two-year transitional period during which the existing resolutions will be treated as remaining in force. Forward in Faith will issue guidance to parishes later this year. **ND**

Future Frequently Asked Questions will look at the House of Bishops' Declaration and the Resolution of Disputes Procedure





The removal of blindness

Aidan Mayoss **CR** reflects on the purpose of Jesus' healing miracles

Have you ever thought, or tried to imagine, what it must be like to be born blind? We can't. We can fear the loss of our sight, especially as we get older, but that is very different from never seeing at all, as far as we know, with no experience of light. Yet such people have been capable of much; blind organists, for instance, and the painstaking learning of new music line by line from Braille; tuning pianos; bringing up sighted children; all in what we think of as 'the dark'.

Such is the man in today's Gospel. I think of him as a 'bloke', possibly even a Yorkshireman in his besting of the Pharisees later on the account. Here, unlike Zacchaeus, there is no request 'That I might receive my sight'; a bird for such a man is something soft and feathered and capable of a wide variety of song but he does not know what it looks like.

Jesus comes up to him, touches his eyes with some salve and tells him to go and wash in the nearby Pool of Siloam and lo, he can see. Now there is a question raised, both in the minds of the disciples and the Pharisees, for sickness and pain are popularly thought of as punishment for sin.

When I was a curate there was indeed a clergyman of the established church who enquired of seriously ill patients what sin they had committed to be so smitten. To make things worse he did not believe in confession and to make things better Matron just banned him from the hospital, but the myth is still around.

When we ourselves are smitten, we

ask 'What the hell have I done to get this?' but that is a rhetorical question; whatever punishments we receive in this life we have deserved and worse, but they are never caused by God.

So this is rather an odd sort of healing miracle, it had not even been asked for; I very much doubt if the blind man thought anybody could cure him. A difficulty that has always to be faced with the healings of Jesus is that of their purpose. There must be a purpose beyond the mere restoration of sight or whatever, otherwise Jesus is just revealed as capricious. What do we say to all the many others born blind within five miles of the Pool of Siloam? Why him and not me?

Of course, if we think that this life is all that there is and death really is the end, then the healings of Jesus do not stand up to any sort of argument, they really are capricious, but if the New Testament is understood '*sub specie aeternitatis*' with death being 'but the gate of life immortal' then the term used by St John, a sign, makes a lot of sense; indeed it is the only way of making sense of much of the New Testament. So the removal of blindness, the restoration of children presumed dead to their parents, all are but satellites to the Resurrection. So as in Lent we prepare for Easter, let us also prepare mentally by pondering on the multitude of signs given to us in the Scriptures and in our own experience, so we shall be altogether better in our celebration by marvelling at the continued presence of the risen Lord in us and around us. **ND**

**The Executive Committee of Forward in Faith
seeks to appoint a new**

EDITOR OF NEW DIRECTIONS

in succession to Fr Philip Corbett,
who will be stepping down in September 2014

Expressions of interest in this unpaid role
and suggestions of possible candidates are invited

*Please email the Director: colin.podmore@forwardinfaith.com
by 31 May 2014*

'We'll support you evermore?'

May have mentioned it before, but I've been a Wimbledon FC fan for many years. [You have – I've had to press 'Delete' many times. Ed.]

However, have I a Plough Lane experience to come? Like St Paul (admittedly a different road), will I realize I've been supporting the wrong team? Should I still be celebrating the fact that Wimbledon was reborn again 12 years ago this month when we fans refused to follow the owners' decision to move the team to Milton Keynes? Also that, despite having to begin again in football's basement, the Dons have got back into the Football League?

Wimbledon fans – romantic but wrong-headed? Are they clinging to the past like many traditionally minded ecclesiastical counterparts? As Archbishop Justin has reminded us, the Church, like all institutions, must adapt to changes in society. No good, he argues, continuing to oppose the gay marriage law. If he's right, no good Wimbledon fans resisting change. The modern way is to move with the times and switch stadia. After all, the Church switches doctrines as readily as liturgies.

So I've seen the light and am thinking of becoming an Arsenal fan. Their new home, the Emirates Stadium; old-fashioned Highbury abandoned. As the Church's 'liberals' remind us, 'new truths for a new age.'

Come on, FiF. See the light like me. Get modern. You made a start by backing Pilling, but supporting Gay Rights is already dated. More encouragingly, you and The Society accepted a code of practice. That's more like it. Disregarding the lessons of history is really twenty-first century. Look at the Environment Agency's success last winter in abandoning old-fashioned dredging and ditching.

Alan Edwards



Armageddon

Digby Anderson asks why the current generation of young people expect to be better off than their parents

Those intent on creating a sense of moral outrage have a new mantra. They announce, horror of horrors, that for the first time the current generation is worse off than the previous generation. The mantra varies as to whether this dreadful state has befallen us for the first time ever or just for the last half century or so. A political variant has younger people today worse off than those under the previous Socialist government. What is clearer is that this decline is modest, a few per cent of disposable income. The outrage is not about the amount. It is that any new generation should have less than their parents. Nor is this very slightly impoverished generation only among the poor or the lower orders. It is not a re-issue of the old Marxist nonsense about increasing immiseration of the proletariat under capitalism. The new unfortunate generation comes from all middle England.

Whig idea

Why then the outrage? If the decline is not discriminatory in terms of class and very modest, and happening perhaps only once – ‘for the first time,’ why the outrage? Because such an allegedly unprecedented event flouts what progressive persons regard as a law. The law is a child of the Whig idea of history; things get better. History starts in war, poverty and chaos and gets better especially after the Enlightenment. Unilinear progress is the rule of social and economic order. Laws and rules quickly become, for enlightened progressives, rights. It is the right of each new generation to be better off than its parents. Rights are being denied. Fie!

Remorseless progress is only one theory of history. Once, admittedly a long time before the Enlightenment, in the Middle Ages, chaps thought the world was getting worse and likely to get even worse before its end. Others held that fortune was like a wheel. One moment we are up in the clouds, the next in the manure, and then up again, round and round. Since then, really anarchic persons have dared suggest there is no law and that prediction is impossible. It is not clear where Our Holy Mother Church stands. Early teaching accepted the possibility of miserable chaos in the future. It also looked back to golden ages, notably Eden, but also during Roman times after Constantine. I cannot find anything in traditional teaching that upholds one generation's right to be better off than its parents.

Secular progressivism

But the modern church is almost totally infected by secular progressivism and Vatican II's understanding of the ‘modern world’ is rotten with it so modern clergymen are bound to defend our poorer, if only 5% poorer, young people. They are suckers for any supposed needs of youth



anyway, their obsession with it yet another symptom of their secular infection. However, for the few who hold on to the older ideas there is nothing shocking about young persons' trivial immiseration.

Why the outrage? Suppose, young people have to restrict themselves to only six pizzas a week, wait another three months to save for their house

deposits, scale down the diameter of their tattoos, delay the purchase of a new pad or app, watch one fewer episode of pornography on a TV screen two inches narrower than their friends', reduce the length of a holiday, guzzle marginally fewer pink drinks, miss a visit to the hairdresser's or put up with exhaust pipes emitting 5% fewer decibels than they would wish to inflict on the world, who cares?

Getting even worse?

There is, however, one point of interest, the prospect that this totally outrageous reversal of fortune is not just ‘for the first time,’ but that things are set to get even worse. This might also go for matters non-economic and affect persons other than the young. An instance: the church has been told congregations have declined by 50% over a half century. It wonders what it can do to increase numbers. But why expect numbers to stay constant or increase? What if the next 50 years sees a greater decline? What would that do to jobs of bishops, the balances of budgets or the status of positions women clergy have struggled so hard to obtain? It is surely time the church, politicians and even young people opened their minds to the possibility of doom ahead. They must start thinking more negatively. **ND**

faith of our fathers

Arthur Middleton on Neville Figgis and the spirit of Antichrist

For Neville Figgis, of the Community of the Resurrection and an Honorary Fellow of St Catherine's College Cambridge, was a prominent preacher in Edwardian England. His sermon *Antichrist* is prophetic for today's Western culture. His starting point is Rev. 12.7: 'There was war in Heaven. Michael and his Angels fought against the Dragon, and the Dragon fought and his Angels, and prevailed not.' War, he claims, is the enduring condition of the militant Church on this earth. It implies an enemy, two mutually opposing spirits.

Irreconcilable

'The thought which flames through the Book of the Revelation is that of a great warfare – a warfare between two kingdoms: that is, two organised bodies of spiritual being, the Kingdom of Jerusalem, the Heavenly City, the Bride of the Lamb which is from above, the Mother of us all, the Kingdom of Christ, and the Kingdom which is spiritually called Egypt or Sodom, the Kingdom of darkness or Antichrist, the home of all the spirits that hate His Name. In brief, Christ and all that He includes are encompassed by real foes.

This theme is to be found all through the New Testament. In Romans 1, St Paul draws a lurid picture of where

the spirit of this world ends, and yet more boldly, he describes in Galatians the issues of these two irreconcilable oppugnant spirits in terms of the works of flesh and the fruits of the Spirit.

The fight is not over. 'We are witnessing and feeling an assault made before our eyes upon every single ideal of thought and feeling and action which we can call specifically Christian; that that assault is being directed by men of known power; that in many ways it has with it the current of feeling and the people's applause. I mean that all the things which the spirit of Christ bids us do or avoid doing are being openly reversed.

Marriage

Marriage treats human life as something holy because it is sacramental. No part of Christian living could seem more vital than that which treats human life as something holy, which regards marriage as sacred because it is sacramental. In Figgis's day it began to be undermined with pleas to make divorce as easy and as secretive as possible and the flouting of any view of the union but that which is purely physiological. Today we have same-sex unions misnamed as gay marriage and it will not stop there.

'Now this is the direct contrary of our Christian notion, which is that the inner meaning of marriage is sacramental, and that therefore the outward part needs guarding; ... Such a view could only come naturally to an age which had passed from a denial of the whole sacramental principle to a questioning of the Incarnation and then to repudiate the spiritual meaning of physical facts. For if matter be something non-spiritual, and outside God's Kingdom, then the marriage-bond may very easily be treated like a contract, made or broken at will. If it has no meaning beyond certain outward acts, then of course the moral or spiritual law has nothing to do with it.'

Derisive denial

'Along with the love of God,' he writes, 'there is slowly but surely being undermined all real sense of the love of man. Thus it is true to say that in all directions the ideals of life that we call Christian are being met with derisive denial; that this denial does not stop at details, but goes right down to the principles of the whole life. This denial has its roots in a spirit yet more antagonistic to Christian living, for it rests upon a disbelief in the reality, first, of sin, and, secondly, of the other world.'

Figgis goes on to say that there is a spirit abroad which is actively and consciously opposed to that of Christ: 'Its meaning and its essence are anti-Christian. And it is in a world such as this that the Church has to fight for her distinct existence ... our first and clearest duty is to preserve the distinctness which makes Christianity what it is and not something else, and also to beware of supposing that a few concessions here and there will really conciliate our foes; for these foes are bent upon our annihilation and will be satisfied with nothing less. Like Chamberlain before Hitler appeasement is no solution. The world at large does not love Christ and it is at last able to say so.' **ND**



The Bishop and his people

Richard Norman reports on Bishop Jonathan Baker's episcopal visitation to St Mary's, Rotherhithe

It was a great privilege for us to be the second of Bishop Jonathan Baker's 62 parishes to receive an episcopal visitation, in March – and a wonderful opportunity to showcase some of the important work with

ecumenical neighbours (and the Deanery Lay Chair) at the Finnish and Norwegian churches in Rotherhithe. Bishop Jonathan was also able to meet staff at a local charity shop supported by four churches in the area, including



which as a church we are involved.

Visiting schools

The Bishop arrived early, for Morning Prayer, before heading to our parish primary school to celebrate Mass. The Eucharist is offered weekly in school, with pupils acting as servers, readers and intercessors. They have learned a simple plainsong melody for the Ordinary of the Mass, and had also rehearsed excerpts from Elgar's setting of the Introit *Ecce Sacerdos Magnus* for Bishop Jonathan's arrival. The Bishop answered the children's questions about his ministry, and afterwards met staff and toured the school. He then visited the nursery next door, where a strong Christian ethos is again encouraged.

A final educational stop was at Bacon's College, a Church of England-sponsored Academy in Rotherhithe, where (over an excellent lunch) he met the Principal and senior leadership team, and other staff involved in the school's pastoral and spiritual provision. Two Sixth Form students took Bishop Jonathan around the school, giving him the chance to take part in a GCSE Religious Studies class.

Churches and charities

The afternoon began with two home visits, before calling in on our

it was a very positive thing to share with our bishop something of our daily life



St Mary's. A short car journey later he was introduced to the work of Bede House, a local charity which works variously with young people, victims of domestic violence and hate crime, people with learning disabilities, and on community engagement projects.

A final item in his schedule of visits was tea with the local funeral director and the vicar of the neighbouring parish. Evening Prayer followed, and then time with one of our Scout Groups. In the evening, Bishop Jonathan met



members of the PCC and with them enjoyed a splendid dinner.

Vibrant places

It was a very positive thing to share with our bishop something of our daily life, and to celebrate the strong relationships we have with others in the local area working to witness to the transforming love of Jesus Christ, whether in the fields of education, church unity or community service. Writing about Bishop Jonathan's visitation in these pages will hopefully

remind others in the Church of what we all know to be true – that our parishes are vibrant and interesting places, in which the Gospel is being faithfully ministered in attractive and effective ways.

The day reinforced our sense of loyalty and affection for our bishop, and our awareness of his prayerful concern for us. Do encourage your own bishops to visit your parishes: and do celebrate the work being done in them under God! **ND**

devotional

Turned to gold Arthur Middleton

The hymns of George Herbert are familiar to you. In one of his hymns, *Teach me my God and King*, he sees avarice succinctly expressing the paradox of money. Money becomes the drudge which we elevate into sovereignty, stamp our image on it and worship it. The result is inevitable; such people fall into the ditch. This falling into the ditch is the folly of the blind people who will not look upon the real world of God, but persist in following their own corrup

Sovereign remedy

But there is a remedy. This hymn is called the *elixir*. For that is what the word 'elixir' means, a remedy. It is a word used in the ancient science of alchemy (that preceded chemistry). It is a kind of preparation that can change metals into gold. Or it is a preparation that is able to prolong life indefinitely, a supposed remedy for all ills.

And what is this elixir, that sovereign remedy that will make all the difference to the life of the Christian? It is being able to recognize that all things in the daily routine of life

may indeed turn to gold and change their meaning if they are directed to God in willed intention. The whole of life can be lifted out of the psychological into the spiritual sphere. So our prayer is: *'Teach me, my God and King, / In all things thee to see, / And what I do in any thing, / To do it as for thee.'*

Statement of love

The Elixir is a simple statement of love to the Person of God, and the consequence of the love. There is no reward for conscientious piety divorced from love. That is a dead pietism. It is the love which is the active agent in the elixir. He then breaks into another allusion when he describes this love: *'This is the famous stone / That turneth all to gold: / For that which God doth touch and own / Cannot for lesse be told.'*

This is an allusion to the philosopher's stone, an imaginary stone, substance, or chemical preparation believed by alchemists to have the power of changing base metals into gold. But Herbert's stone is no imaginary stone. It is the touch of God's love that turns all into gold. Everything he touches must be given a value that is equivalent to turning everything to gold.

Face to face with the Person of God, Herbert sees his work in the world as the unceasing labour of praise. Praise of God is a challenge to society and a reiteration that the life not turned to God is no life, and that words not addressed to God are vain. The work of praise is a duty, but a duty of love not fear, which is not only unavoidable but in which there can be no wish of avoiding. God is a loved Person, not an idea, and to praise his goodness is a work of gladness. **ND**

Jesus gave them this command: 'Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised.' To wait is the Lord's command to the disciples at the time of his Ascension. This time of waiting Acts 1:14 tells us was a time spent together – the disciples, with Mary mother of Jesus, the other women, and his brothers joined together in constant prayer. This waiting time was not a time of a passive absence of activity; it was one of deepening fellowship and utter dependence on God. This is what waiting must be for the Christian.

A great amount of life is spent in waiting – of being in between. It is a consequence of the nature of being human that so much is beyond our control; creation is so ordered as to make us dependent on other people and the unfolding of circumstances and consequences. The natural reaction is to fuss and fret and try to take back control of the situation. It is seldom possible to reclaim the timing of the events and processes to which we are subject.

Learning how to wait helps us to learn how to pray. The disciples, Our Lady and their companions were in

Ghostly Counsel

Waiting on God

Andy Hawes is Warden of Edenham Regional Retreat House

'constant prayer' during this profound Novena (nine days) between Ascension and Pentecost. It was a time (we can speculate) both of deepening awareness of what had happened over the past forty days, and preparation through penitence and praise to receive the Holy Spirit. It was a time of absolute openness and complete dependence on the Holy Spirit.

There is a 'waiting upon God' that is an attitude of patiently seeking the way forward or listening attentively to his call to follow. If you are in this predicament then consider the example of the 'first Novena'. From it we can learn the following: this time of waiting is part of God's purpose and activity; it is

not an abandonment of us. It is a time that should not be a solitary one; it is very important to seek friendship and fellowship in the waiting. In the same way one might ask a friend to accompany one to wait for a hospital appointment, it is important to have someone to share this waiting on God which has nothing like an appointment time attached to it.

It is also important to keep working away at the task in hand. There is always something which can be done with and for God in the present situation. There is always unfinished business to attend to. To wait does not mean to stop. Waiting can provide an opportunity for restoration and preparation. It is during the Novena that Peter calls the community together to tell them 'it is necessary to choose one of the men' to replace Judas. In this way the apostolic number was restored and the community of faith was prepared for the outcome of waiting.

Waiting is a testing of trust, but in the testing is an invitation to deeper fellowship and faith and it draws one nearer to God whose patience is neverending.



La Serenissima

Howard Levett on how ecumenism is alive and well and living in Venice

Not so strange a claim, since from the time of this city's foundation (some claim as far back as the fifth century AD, and built in the middle of the sea), a certain independence from the dominant political and religious hierarchical cultures surrounding Venice has been one of its most attractive features, alongside the heritage of the artistic, architectural and musical features with which the city has been blessed.

The Anglican chaplaincy in Venice from whence this piece is penned was founded as long ago as 1605 when the diplomatic representative of James I of England (and VI of Scotland), Sir Henry Wotton, negotiated with La Serenissima's authorities to be allowed to bring with him his own (CofE) chaplain who would be permitted to conduct services which all Venetians who so wished could attend. Thus in the fraughtest of times, when the Christians of Europe of both Catholic and Protestant stripes were literally at one another's throats, this remarkable arrangement was possible in Venice.

History of tolerance

There is no denying that Wotton had a 'subtext' or hidden agenda behind his request – he genuinely believed that Venice was ripe for 'conversion' from its Roman Catholic heritage to joining up with one of the 'Protestant' denominations that were being established in most of northern Europe and in very particular joining up with the Church of England, toward which end he arranged for the BCP to be translated in to Italian! Suffice to say that despite a succession of chaplains throughout the centuries since, Sir Henry's goal was never achieved.

There is no record of any ill feeling towards the presence of an Anglican chaplaincy in Venice by Venetians nor by their religious and political authorities. Quite the reverse appears to be true, but then Venice also tolerated the presence of Lutherans and other Protestants and most famously of course, the presence of both Turks and Jews.

Ecumenical Council

The advent of the ecumenical movement from the early twentieth century onwards was welcomed in this city of ancient toleration and following Vatican II a huge flowering of that movement grew from soil already well prepared for it.

For decades there has been a monthly meeting of the Venice Ecumenical Council of churches, the major player in it being the Patriarchate of Venice. Catholic, Orthodox ('Eastern' and 'Oriental'), Anglican, Lutheran, Waldensian-Methodist, Adventist churches are all represented on this council and events of real significance are celebrated throughout the year from a complete ten days' worth of services held every day around and in Christian Unity week in January to non-stop ecumenical Bible reading held in one church or another during April.

During 2013, when the fiftieth anniversary of Vatican II was celebrated, each of the non-Roman Catholic churches was invited to produce a paper on their particular denomination's views and reactions to the documents produced by the Council 50 years on, at a whole-day conference held in the Patriarchal seminary next to the magnificent Salute church. The day began with prayers involving all the participants in St George's Anglican Church nearby. The papers produced have since been published in an attractive booklet at the expense of the Patriarchate.

The day itself ended with a beautifully devised liturgy in which the clergy of all the participating denominations anointed each other, along with the lay members of their various flocks who were also present, with oils that had been specially consecrated for the occasion in the Seminary's newly restored chapel.

**a huge flowering of
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Close relationship

Of fundamental importance for true ecumenical flourishing on an ongoing basis is the close relationship built over many years and with the close involvement of successive chaplains at St George's and successive parish priests of the two local parishes of Santa Maria

del Rosario (the 'Gesuati') and of San Trovaso. The closeness grows deeper as we do more and more in common, including, if not quite yet full 'concelebrations' of the Eucharist, a sharing that is all but.

On Palm Sunday this year a joint blessing of Palms is planned in the Campo outside St George's Church before each congregation then proceeds into its own churches for the Mass, a stage surely on the journey towards that full communion Our Lord desires so much. Worth mentioning too is that a Philippino congregation uses St George's on a weekly basis and at Christ Church Trieste, a linked chaplaincy, a large Romanian Orthodox Congregation uses the building on a weekly basis.

It would be a wrong and imbalanced to conclude without reference to other remarkable features of the ecumenical scene in Venice. Last year saw the celebration by the Lutheran Church in Venice of its own 200-year-old presence in the city. In fact the ceiling of the Lutheran church caved in not long before the celebrations of the anniversary were to take place – to the rescue came the Catholic Church of the Apostles opposite the Lutheran building – and the major services were held there instead. The Catholic church has also provided accommodation for the Lutheran Pastor in Venice.

Thus we have come a long way from days when Christians were at one another's throats. Now it seems, at least in this great city, with its already long-standing noble history of tolerant embrace, they are already well on the way to turning to live in each other's hearts! Laus Deo. **ND**





'Lead Kindly Light'

Mark McIntyre on the lessons learned by Newman during a trip to Italy

In the winter of 1832–3, Hurrell Froude, a close friend of John Henry Newman was suffering from tuberculosis. Froude's father was anxious to take his son to warmer climates to see if it would help with the infection. The Froudes asked Newman if he would accompany them on an extended holiday around the Mediterranean. Newman was much in need of a break, having just completed a major scholarly work on the Arian heresy and had been relieved of many of his tutorial students.

The party set off from Falmouth and made their way to Corfu, Malta, Palermo, Naples and Rome. Interestingly, what Newman saw in Rome did not impress him on this first visit. Perhaps this shows us something of his later more moderate catholic sympathies, rather than some of the more elaborate continental customs and practices.

Work to do

In Rome he heard the news that the British Government were about to abolish some Irish Bishopsrics. This angered both Newman and Froude and they became determined to act in protest of the state interference in the life of the Church. Before leaving Rome, the party made contact with Nicholas Wiseman, later Archbishop of Westminster.

As they parted, Wiseman expressed the hope that they would meet again sometime in Rome. Newman replied, 'We have a work to do in England.' It was at this point that Newman left the Froudes, who began their return journey back to England. Newman, on the other hand, went to Sicily, fascinated by its beauty.

Not abandoned

While in Sicily, John Henry Newman was taken seriously ill and came very close to death. Everything became

dark for him and he found himself in a state of despair and personal upheaval. He felt that by leaving his travelling companions he had been particularly wilful, seeking his own way. He also knew, however, that God had not abandoned him. He kept saying when the fever was at its worst, 'I have not sinned against the light.'

When he began to recover, Newman caught a ship to Palermo but was unable to depart from here for a number of weeks due to his recurring

clearly we see
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truly a journey of discovery

illness. Finally he left Palermo, but the ship he was on was becalmed between Corsica and Sardinia. Famously, it was at this point, in his physical and spiritual journey, that Newman wrote the now famous poem, 'The Pillar of the Cloud,' or as it is better known, 'Lead Kindly Light':

Lead, kindly Light, amid th'encircling gloom, lead Thou me on!
The night is dark, and I am far from home; lead Thou me on!
Keep Thou my feet; I do not ask to see
The distant scene; one step enough for me.

I was not ever thus, nor prayed that Thou shouldst lead me on;
I loved to choose and see my path; but now lead Thou me on!
I loved the garish day, and, spite of fears,
Pride ruled my will. Remember not past years!

So long Thy power hath blest me, sure it still will lead me on.
O'er moor and fen, o'er crag and torrent, till the night is gone,
And with the morn those angel faces smile, which I
Have loved long since, and lost awhile!

Two certainties

When Newman finally reached home, on 9 July 1833, he was refreshed and revitalized. On 14 July 1833, his friend and colleague John Keble preached the now famous Assize Sermon, challenging the role of the state in the life of the Church. This sermon was described by Newman as indicating the beginning of the



Oxford Movement.

From this brief description of a journey made by Blessed John Henry Newman we see the working through of vocation which originated in his conversion experience of 1816 when he was fifteen years old. At this time, Newman had the sense of two absolute certainties: knowledge of God as creator and the knowledge of self. These made Newman deeply aware of God's desire for him to serve him and do him a 'definite service'. Clearly we see that the Christian life is not a static one; it is truly a journey

of discovery. One of the saddest things to see in the life of a Christian is when their faith journey has become static and as stagnant as a trapped pool of water.

Newman himself said that in order to grow we need to change, and so to grow towards perfection is to have changed often. He went on to say that this change is necessary in order to remain the

same – not flitting from one opinion to another but to see a clear line of development and growth, from 'shadows and images into the truth'

Vocation

Newman's words to Dr Wiseman are worth taking notice of when reflecting on the Christian vocation, 'I have a work to do in England.' There



is, first of all, a certainty about the sense of calling, even though Newman was not exactly certain about what that work would look like and how it would develop. He was not saying 'I must found the Oxford Movement...' No, he knew God was calling him, but what he was being called to be and to do would become clearer later and would of course also change and develop. But at the time of his meeting with Wiseman, Newman knew he needed to return to England and trust that God would show him the work, the 'definite purpose,' that was to be his vocation. Here we learn from Blessed John Henry Newman that we need to trust God and his call even when the direction and picture is not one hundred per cent clear.

Wilfulness

Newman recognized what he calls the 'sin of wilfulness' when he was determined to follow his own mind to Sicily instead of making the journey home with the Froudes. On one level this is a very minor incident, but it became for Newman a lesson that he had to learn before he could answer God's call. He recognized that this 'wilfulness' was a symptom of his state of mind and soul. He saw in himself a little too much 'I want...' Yet even such self-centredness God can use to show us the error of our ways, of our own wilfulness. This does not mean God abandons us to our folly, but rather even mistakes can be used as a blessing and opportunity to give glory to God. They can even be a chance to show God's mercy and love to others. In short, God's mercy is not dependent upon us getting it right all the time, and for this we should be ever thankful. Newman realizes that God is always able to call him back to his first love and that first deep realization of certainty, 'myself and my creator.'

Dependence on God

Another characteristic of John Henry Newman's journey back to Oxford in 1833 was his illness and finally the becalming of the ship on the final leg of his journey. In sickness Newman was called to stop and rest awhile. Again something for us to learn is that God's work is not totally dependent on us. God called Newman to realize that his dependence was to

be on God. If he was to move forward in answering this call, Newman needed to know his dependence.

This makes sense of the poem we know as 'Lead Kindly Light' The darkness of wilfulness and wanting to plan his own way and have it all mapped out, Newman rejects for a path that will be step by step and guided by God. He realizes that he will not always see what may be around the corner, but he will trust, 'one step enough for me.' In verse two,

**we need to trust God
and his call even when
the direction is not one
hundred per cent clear**

Newman acknowledges the novelty of this newly discovered way of being a disciple. Perhaps it is the garish day, with its attractions and fears, that sounds so contemporary with modern living. Even the pride that rules our will has resonances in modern society and individual lives. Newman speaks to our contemporary lives when he recognizes that he remains on the journey towards perfect submission to God's will for him. It may still just elude him because he says, 'Which I have loved long since, and lost awhile.'

A love song

'Lead Kindly Light' touches
the very depths of the Christian

heart. It speaks of a deep desire to respond to God's call and yet is starkly realistic about how the human heart struggles in that response. It is also a love song, because in our struggle there is never a point in which God's love for each human being ever wavers.

There is never a time when God does not 'Lead thou me on.'

'God has created me to do
Him some definite service. He
has committed some work to me
which He has not committed
to another. I have my mission.
I may never know it in this life,
but I shall be told it in the next.
I am a link in a chain, a bond of
connection between persons.
'He has not created me for naught.
I shall do good; I shall do His
work.

'I shall be an angel of peace, a
preacher of truth in my own place,
while not intending it if I do but
keep His commandments.

'Therefore, I will trust Him,
whatever I am, I can never be
thrown away. If I am in sickness,
my sickness may serve Him, in
perplexity, my perplexity may
serve Him. If I am in sorrow, my
sorrow may serve Him. He does
nothing in vain. He knows what
He is about. He may take away my
friends. He may throw me among
strangers. He may make me feel
desolate, make my spirits sink,
hide my future from me. Still, He
knows what He is about.' **ND**



FORWARD IN FAITH Diocese of Norwich

Annual General Meeting

Saturday, 24 May 2014

Mass at 12.00 noon in

S.Mary and All Saints Church, Walsingham

followed by Lunch & Meeting in the Parish Hall

(Please bring packed lunch - tea/coffee provided)

Keynote Speaker : Dr Colin Podmore

Director - Forward in Faith

ALL WELCOME

