

newdirections

May 2012
£2.50

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

Conservative Evangelicals – standing up and being counted

Andrew Presland presents the calls for
adequate provision from Evangelicals

Also in this issue:

- The Cowley Road Passion Play
- Robin Ward on Richard Hooker
- Newman the Poet

parish directory

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. Weekdays: Mon, Wed and Sat 9.30am, Tues and Fri 7.30am, Thur 7.30pm. Vicar: Fr Stephen Jones 01472 877109

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 Allan Buik ssc 01328 820030

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

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

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

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

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

LONDON N21 Holy Trinity, Winchmore Hill. *A Forward in Faith modern catholic Parish. Resolutions ABC.* Sunday: Mass 9am and 10.30am. Weekdays: Tues to Fri 12 noon Angelus and Mass. Saturday: Rosary 9.30am, Mass 10am, Reconciliation 11am. Confessions Saturday at 11am or by appointment. Contact: Stephen Whittam on 0208 886 5217

London NW9 Kingsbury St Andrew *A FIF Parish under the Episcopal care of the Bishop of Fulham* Sunday: Mass at 8am and 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 7am, Tues 7.30pm, Wed 12.15pm, Thur 8am, Fri 6.30pm, Sat 8am. Parish Priest: Fr Geoffrey Kirk 020 8318 1295

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

LONDON SE18 St Nicholas - the Ancient Parish Church - St Nicholas Road, Plumstead. *A Forward in Faith Parish under the episcopal care of the Bishop of Fulham.* Masses: Sunday

BARRY near rail, bus and town centre *Gredo Gymru (FIF Wales)* **St Mary's, Holton Road** Sunday: Solemn Mass 8am and 11am, Sunday Club 11am, daily Mass, except Friday; **St Cadoc's, Coldbrook Road** Sunday: Solemn Mass 9.30am, Vespers 6pm Saturday with Benediction 1st Saturdays. Daily Mass in Parish except Friday. Priest to be appointed - 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 on 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 - 2007)* 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, Resolutions 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.sthelenchurch.co.uk

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

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

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

BOURNEMOUTH St Francis of Assisi, 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 Prayer and Benediction 6.30pm - first Sunday of each month and major festivals. For information about all services during the Interregnum contact Barbara Geatrell 01425 470370 or Hubert Allen 01202 529336 (Parish Office) Churchwardens www.stfrancis-bournemouth.org.uk

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

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

BRISTOL All Saints, Pembroke Road, Clifton (near zoo and suspension bridge) Sunday: Mass 8am, Family service 9.30am (Mass 2nd and 4th Sunday), Solemn Mass 11am (children's group), Evening Service with Benediction 6pm. Feast days: 7.30pm Solemn Mass. Daily Mass. Confessions: Saturday 11.30am, 5.30pm or by arrangement. *Resolutions ABC (Ebbsfleet).* Information, appointments: Fr Richard Hoyal 0117 970 6776

BRISTOL Christ Church, Broad Street, Old City Centre BS1 2EJ *Resolutions ABC.* Sunday 11am Choral Eucharist, 6.30pm Choral Evensong with Anthem and Sermon. Georgian gem, Prayer Book services, robed men and boys' choir, Renatus Harris organ. Tues, Thurs

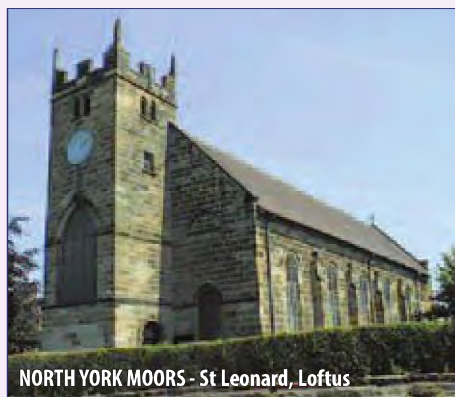
and major holy days: 1.05pm Eucharist. Regular recitals and concerts (see website). Parish Priest: Fr Richard Hoyal 0117 9706776 www.christchurchcitybristol.org

BRISTOL Holy Nativity, Wells Road (A37), half a mile from Temple Meads Station *A Forward in Faith Parish, Resolutions ABC.* Sunday: Solemn Mass and Junior Church 10am, Friday Mass 10.15am. The parish is in interregnum. Contact: Philip Goodfellow, Churchwarden 07733 111 800 phil@goodfellow.org.uk

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 near rail, bus, Millennium Stadium, city centre and Bay Daily Mass; *Gredo Gymru.* **Bute Street St Mary:** Sunday: Solemn Mass 11am; **Pentre Gardens St Dyfrig and St Samson:** Sunday: Solemn Mass 9.30am; **Paget Street, Grange town St Paul:** Family Eucharist 10am. Parish Priest: Fr Graham Francis 02920 487777. Associate Priest: Fr Ben Andrews 029 20 228707

CHARD The Good Shepherd, Furnham. *Resolutions ABC* Sunday: Sung Mass 9.45am, Solemn Evensong and Benediction (3rd Sunday only) 6pm. Weekday Masses: Tues 10am. Contact: Heather McCann on 01 460 64531



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

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

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

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

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

Continued on page 37

content

Vol 15 No 204

May 2012

regulars

4 LEAD STORY

Conservative Evangelicals - Standing up and being counted

ANDREW PRESLAND

reports on call for adequate
provision from Conservative
Evangelicals

6 Getting to know Jesus

NICOLAS STEBBING CR

On the importance
of making a retreat

7 The Marriage Debate

RICHARD NORMAN

on the arguments
against same-sex marriage

8 Anglican Patrimony

CHRISTOPHER TRUNDLE

on the recitation of the Psalms

8 Now there's a funny thing

ALAN EDWARDS

Considers the need for humour

11 Novena 2012 – Ascension to Pentecost

A guide to prayer when the
House of Bishops meet this month

13 A fair consultation?

NICHOLAS TURNER

considers the governments
consultation on same-sex marriage

15 Newman as Poet

DENIS DESERT

considers the continuing power
of Newman's poetry

17 The College of Readers

BARRY BARNES

explains the importance
of Reader Ministry

18 Vierge Noires 3

Images of Our Lady for May

21 Against Lucretius

A poem by Peter Mullen

22 Views, reviews & previews

ART: Owen Higgs

on *Johann Zoffany RA*

MUSIC: Christian Stobbs

on the music of Francis Pott

BOOKS: Janet Backman

on *Habits of Change*

John Twisleton

on *Less is More*

Conrad O'Riley

on *Making the Most
of the Lectionary*

Dewi Hopkins

on *Dom Augustine Baker*

Andrea Little

on *Eucharistic Ministers*

Alexander Robertson

on *Theological Ethics*

Richard Norman on

Covenant and communion

29 Why bishops should support business

JULIAN MANN

considers business and the Church

30 All 4 Jesus

CHRIS VERITY

concludes his history of
the Glastonbury pilgrimage
and looks to its future

32 The Cowley Road passion Play

DAMIAN FEENEY

reports on this important
act of witness in Oxford

10 FAITH OF OUR FATHERS

ARTHUR MIDDLETON on

Montanist and feminists

12 DEVOTIONAL

JOHN KEBLE

on Practical religion

12 GHOSTLY COUNSEL

ANDY HAWES

on prayer and fasting

19 THE WAY WE LIVE NOW

CHRISTOPHER SMITH

ponders self-indulgent
theologies of the Resurrection

DIRECTORY	2, 37, 38
30 DAYS	16
EDITORIAL	20
LETTERS	21
FOOTNOTES	35
FIF UPDATE	36
FR IVAN WRITES	39
PEVS' DIARIES	39

28 BOOK OF THE MONTH

ROBIN WARD

reviews an important new
book on Richard Hooker

34 SECULAR LITURGIES

TOM SUTCLIFFE

on what is coming
to the stage this season

35 TOUCHING PLACE

SIMON COTTON on

Evercreech St Peter, Somerset

An initiative supported by Forward in Faith, ACS, CBS
and other Catholic Societies

A weekend conference for men
thinking about or training for
the sacred priesthood

**Friday 31st August to
Sunday 2nd September**

**God
Calling?**

**CALLED TO BE
A PRIEST?**

St Stephen's House, Oxford

ARE YOU INTERESTED!!

If so please complete the form overleaf and return to:
Mrs Ann Babington, Additional Curates Society
Gordon Browning House, 8 Spitfire Road, Birmingham B24 9PB
or book online:

www.additionalcurates.co.uk



LEAD STORY

Conservative evangelicals – *standing up ... and being counted*

Andrew Presland offers relections from Evangelicals in the Church of England

All our
ordinands
are
concerned
about the
lack of
provision
and a
number
have not
been sure
about the
Church of
England and
whether
they can
proceed
with
ordination
into it with
a clear
conscience

NEW DIRECTIONS' front cover strapline reminds us that it is 'serving Catholics and Evangelicals seeking to renew the church in the historic faith'. While much attention is focused on views of traditional Catholics with regard to the likely impact of the current draft legislation on the Church of England, less prominence is given to conservative evangelical concerns. Many conservative evangelicals believe that having women in positions of authority in the Church is contrary to the Bible's teaching on headship, so what practical concerns does this lead to? This article provides a chance to hear from some such conservative evangelicals.

No definitive statistics exist on conservative evangelicals' strength within the Church of England, because official church forms do not ask about such things. Church statistician Peter Brierley comes as close as anyone, in projecting figures from three English Churches Censuses to estimate that 40% of Church of England attenders currently go to *evangelical* churches – up from 26% in 1989. He also says that 83% of the estimated 175 churches with a Sunday attendance of over 350 are evangelical, although these figures overshoot what we are looking for, in that they include *all* types of evangelical.

Looking elsewhere to paint a pen picture of conservative evangelicalism reveals that:

Particularly in the Southern Province of the Church of England, there are probably more conservative evangelicals in pews than traditional Catholics. Conservative evangelical churches have a high proportion of the very large churches and often impressive numbers of committed Christian teenagers, students and young adults. Their churches also typically attract an unusually high proportion of men. (Ven Norman Russell, Archdeacon of Berkshire)

Of the hundreds of conservative evangelical churches in the Church of England, about 300 were recently contacted by researchers. Of the 142 that have so far provided information, 38% of congregations are aged under 30; over 425 women are considered to be part of the staff team or are working for para-church organizations and attending the church; just over 345 ordinands have been sponsored in last 10 years (an average of

three per church); and most churches have reported significant growth in the last 10 years, with at least 55 plants or grafts mentioned and similar numbers of new congregations within the original church structure. The average weekly attendance reported is 209 (compared with a national average of 53) and there is an average of 200 electoral roll members (compared with a national average of 75). (Susie Leafe, General Synod)

Conservative evangelicals are also active in some other aspects of church life which Archbishop Rowan has recently identified as being particularly positive: Anglican involvement in relief and development and the Anglican Communion. For example, at the time of writing, Anglican International Development and St Helen's Bishopsgate were holding a week of Bible teaching for 50 pastors in Juba Cathedral in South Sudan.

Conservative evangelical churches also lead the way in providing young ordinands, another of the Archbishop's priorities. Reform has calculated that some 70% of all male ordinands aged under 30 come from conservative evangelical churches.

Bringing the wrong type of diversity to the Church of England?

Many conservative evangelicals have less than positive views of the Church of England's ordination selection process. They have, for example, noted the unevenness of the playing field whereby conservative evangelicals are deemed to require 'broadening out' (e.g. by being expected to complete a placement at a church of another tradition), with no similar requirement appearing to apply to liberal Catholic candidates. The following observation is fairly typical:

'I trained for ministry at Oak Hill. My DDO said that the bishop did not like Oak Hill because 'it did not serve the whole church,' which is an allegation that could be pretty much made against any theological college – they all have their constituency.' (Revd Jim Charles, Vicar, St Peter's, Bexleyheath)

While such barriers have not deterred large numbers of conservative evangelicals from being ordained in recent years, the current flow

of ordinands might turn to a trickle if the women bishops legislation goes through unamended, given that potential ordinands may think (at least) twice before deciding that God has a future for them within the ordained ministry of the Church of England. There is, in fact, some evidence that the ecclesiastical equivalent of 'planning blight' already exists:

'The proposed move to elevate women to the episcopate and the lack of thorough provision associated with this alarms me greatly, as well as many of my contemporaries. As a young man who is currently embarking upon the selection process to be ordained in the Church of England, I am left feeling rather distressed and torn. Seeing as I would consider myself to be thoroughly Anglican and thoroughly evangelical, I am caught in a difficult position as I think about pursuing ordination. I love the Anglican Church, the historic formularies of the Articles and the Creeds, and there is no place that I would rather be. I love the Scriptures and seek to obey them in all matters of life and conduct. I cannot, in conscience, see this motion carried through without proper provision provided. What then am I to do?' (Andrew Smith, Cornhill Training Course and Church of England Youth Council)

'Our female youth worker/Cornhill student was and is very able, but understood that she would not get into the CofE as a deacon because she would be unwilling to be ordained priest. We had no funds to employ her at the time so she took a job in Manchester as a youth worker and eventually had to earn some real money, so returned to nursing. She is still actively involved but lost to paid ministry.' (Revd Russell Moul, St Paul's, Harold Hill, Essex)

While this does not point to an immediate exodus from the Church of England if the unamended draft measure receives the necessary support from General Synod, a couple of prominent conservative evangelical clergy have come up with the following prognoses:

'Unless the proposed legislation is changed, it is likely to mean the gradual removal of conservative evangelical witness through the Church of England over a generation.' (Revd Vaughan Roberts, Rector of St Ebbe's, Oxford)

'The way this legislation is framed is going to make a huge difference to our ability to promote the gospel through the Church of England: changes are vital.' (Preb Rod Thomas, Chairman of Reform; Vicar of Elburton, Plymouth; General Synod)

Similar views are held by a range of other conservative evangelicals, including women:

'I was ordained deacon in 1994 and have remained part of the distinctive diaconate since then, being persuaded theologically that it is not appropriate for women to lead churches. If the provision for those who in all conscience cannot accept women bishops does not protect them adequately then they will have no alternative but to seek alternative episcopal oversight from elsewhere in the Anglican Communion.' (Revd Carrie Sandom, Associate Minister for Women and Pastoral Ministry, St John's, Tunbridge Wells)

'There is a range of women's ministry carried out in conservative evangelical churches in the Church of England and one of my concerns is that if those churches are not supported by women bishops, neither will that range of women's ministry. Since 1992, formally recognised women's ministry within the Church of England has been focused on being ordained presbyter/priest, with the result that there is little opportunity for those seeking to fulfil other ministry roles to do so with

encouragement and training from the Church of England.' (Annabel Heywood, staff of St Ebbe's, Oxford)

'Having been on General Synod for over 16 years I am dismayed by the lack of proper provision for those, including evangelical women Readers like me, who do not agree with women bishops. I am also concerned that those who do want the change have not listened carefully to their brothers and sisters in Christ whose needs will not be met by the presently proposed Measure. If legal provision was necessary, and generally worked well, from 1992, then it is certainly needed now. I would urge the Archbishop of Canterbury to take a lead and bring forward amended proposals for us to vote on in July.' (Ruth Whitworth, General Synod – Ripon Diocese until 2010; now of Chelmsford Diocese)


Other conservative evangelicals have particular practical concerns that do not appear to be widely recognized:

'The issue of conservative evangelical churches is the issue of the succession of ministers trained for them. We will not leave; we will find alternative ways of staying Anglican. Can the CofE afford to lose us? Even many of the 'liberal' leadership are people converted through evangelical Anglican ministry.' (Revd Canon Dr Chris Sugden; Oxford Centre for Mission Studies; Anglican Mainstream; General Synod)

'The Bishop of Lewes retires in August and at the moment this means there will be no serving bishops in the Church of England who are evangelical and who do not ordain women. The House of Bishops seeks to reassure us – in the preface to the illustrative Code – that they will seek to maintain a supply of bishops to minister among parishes of our integrity – but given that there will shortly be none currently in post, it's difficult to feel any great sense of confidence about this.' (Preb Rod Thomas, Chairman of Reform; Vicar of Elburton, Plymouth; General Synod)

To conclude, the view expressed below is by no means a lone voice among those evangelicals who personally support the consecration of women as bishops:

'Unlike many readers of NEW DIRECTIONS, I believe that the time has come for the Church of England to be prepared to consecrate women as bishops. However, I do continue to have a number of concerns. First, I am uneasy about the way I have heard some argue for the consecration of women in terms which are much too close to the proliferation of secular 'rights' agendas. Following that, I am concerned that some women clergy I have heard speak seem to have little understanding of, or frankly even generosity of spirit towards, brothers and sisters in Christ who take a traditional view. This is obviously not true of all, but it is quite widespread. The Church has acknowledged that the Measure will change aspects of the doctrine of the Church of England and surely it cannot be right for an inclusive church to exclude faithful members for continuing to believe what the Church has historically believed.'

'For these reasons, if I were still on General Synod, I could not vote for the consecration of women on the basis of the Draft Measure due to come to York, unless amendments are made by the House of Bishops sufficient to enable traditional Catholics and conservative evangelical Anglicans to remain in the Church of England with a good conscience. Where there's a will there's a way. I hope and pray that it will be found.' (The Ven Norman Russell, Archdeacon of Berkshire and former Prolocutor of the Lower House of the Convocation of Canterbury) 

Getting to know Jesus

Nicolas Stebbing CR on how Ignatian spirituality can help us to find God in our daily lives

Jesus is at the heart of our Christian life. That is obvious. Yet it is surprisingly difficult to keep him there. We are so easily distracted. There is so much noise, so much to do, so many things happening that he easily gets crowded out. That is natural. Human beings cannot think of more than a few things at once and we must not feel too guilty about not remembering Jesus every moment of the day. He remembers us and that is what really matters. What is more serious is that we live in a world where the values are very different from the ones Jesus wants us to keep. The messages we get from newspapers, television, internet, friends, colleagues on all sorts of issues like truth, money, sex and ambition are often very different from the Christian values we learn from the Gospel. Letting these get eroded can have catastrophic consequences in our lives.

Returning the love

What is true of Jesus is equally true of God. We know God loves us. We know we ought to love him. But much of the time he seems so far away; his love at most is like a vague cloud of benevolence. More often he just seems uninterested in us. Or he speaks only to tell us to do something, or tell us not to do something. He can still seem a very Victorian sort of Father – caring for us maybe but happy to send us off to boarding school for most of the year.

And yet God does love us, and so does Jesus. What does this mean? Well, when I love someone I think of him or her all the time. I imagine what she is doing. I remember what he last said to me. I look at photographs; I long for the next time we meet. That must be what Jesus and God feel about us (in their much bigger and infinite way!). The fact they know and love everyone does not mean they cannot know each one of us individually and passionately. That is the advantage of being infinite. How can we return that love? How we can love Jesus in something like the way we love people here on earth?

Sacraments and devotions

Catholics have dealt with this in the past in a number of different ways – frequent use of the sacraments is one: going to mass during the week, not just on Sundays can have a big effect in making God more present to us during the week. Going to confession generally clears away a lot of the muck that was obscuring our view of God, and starts us off again in a good place. Other devotions such as prayer, meditation and Scripture reading are essential too, but can be difficult to keep fresh, and can themselves become a burden if we don't take care.

One way to prevent that happening is to see the devotion within a particular framework, a certain spirituality which helps to make a large sense of it. Some people find Franciscan or Benedictine spirituality helps a great deal to 'join up' the

devotional parts into a coherent way of serving and loving Jesus. Others find Ignatius of Loyola does this well for a modern world. How does this happen?

Teaching

Ignatius teaches us to 'find God in daily life.' But to find him in daily life we need to find him in the Scriptures where he makes himself known. We also find him in our own histories and in Christian people we have known. Ignatius shows us we do not need to spend a lot of time in prayer each day; what matters is that we have a kind of quality time with God which centres us on him, reminds us how important he is to our life, and then lets us get on with life. This is of course easier said than done. Learning how it is done often requires a teacher.

In recent years the Jesuits have been very generous in sharing Ignatian spirituality with other Christians.

**what matters is that we have a
kind of quality time with God
which centres us on him**

It has become a major factor in today's ecumenical world. Ignatian spirituality is simply a way of following Jesus, of looking for him in the Gospel and of finding him in our daily lives. It is particularly good for people who live very busy lives.

In that way it is a spirituality of the market place. We know Jesus spent much time in the midst of crowds of people; we can expect to find him in the midst of crowds of people today.

Forthcoming opportunities

How can you 'get into' Ignatian spirituality? Many places offer talks or weekends on this and that can be a good way to start. A longer and greater commitment would be an Individually Guided Retreat over six to eight days. Having done that one may then elect to do the full Exercises of St Ignatius. At Mirfield this year we are offering a weekend on Ignatian spirituality from 26 to 28 October, and Individually Guided Retreats from 29 July to 4 August and 7–13 October. Contact the Guest brother (guests@mirfield.org.uk) if you would like to know more.

There are lots of other places which offer this approach to following Jesus. The Jesuit retreat houses – St Beuno's, Loyola Hall, for instance – are excellent places to go. But for each of us the essential question must be 'How can I deepen my love for God?', 'How can I become more aware of God's love for me?', 'How can I find Jesus in my daily life?' If I can find good answers to those questions my Christian life will be rich and enjoyable and I shan't mind the occasional hardship it brings.

If I do not answer those questions there is a real danger that my life will cease to be centred on Christ and will be centred on me and my enjoyment of the mere externals of religion. It will be shallow and meaningless and will not stand up to the demands of daily life. That often happens and it is death. **ND**

The marriage debate

The call for same-sex marriage ignores the procreative dimension that has always been part of the traditional Catholic understanding of marriage, writes **Richard Norman**

Writing to Catholics in England and Wales, the Archbishops of Westminster and Southwark argue that '[the] roots of the institution of marriage lie in our nature. Male and female we have been created, and written into our nature is this pattern of complementarity and fertility.'

In Catholic thought there are two dimensions to the marriage relationship, the *unitive* and the *procreative*: marriage both makes for the 'mutual society, help, and comfort' of the spouses, but also provides the appropriate social context for the birth and nurture of children. It is clear from recent Government Equalities Office statements that only the unitive significance of marriage is considered relevant to contemporary secular discussion.

Theology of the body

Why ought the procreative dimension also be thought important – indeed necessary – to the proper understanding of marriage? The answer is all to do with a theology of the human body which teaches that the body is first of all *created*: 'God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.' Human bodies are created possessing sexual identity: Pope John Paul II wrote of 'the Creator's decision that the human being should always and only exist as a man or a woman.'

Traditional natural theology articulates why this should be. It speaks of a *nuptial* understanding of the body, which premises the phenomenon of gender upon humanity's creation in the image of the Triune God. Again, John Paul II explained that humanity in the image and likeness of God strives towards the unity enjoyed by the Trinity, which is nevertheless achievable only whilst retaining the distinctiveness of the individual persons. The human body "speaks" theologically, and there

is '[a] word that is inscribed in it, that speaks its meaning and its destiny'; to quote Carlo Maria Cardinal Martini. Human culture, whether secular or religious, cannot help but interpret the body in terms of some metaphysical "mythology".

In relationship to each other

Marriage is a sacrament precisely because the spouses draw one another beyond themselves into newness of life. Whereas *any* physical and social union may go some important way towards modelling this, yet only marriage – where unitive and procreative dimensions are seamlessly interwoven – models this completely, with the procreative aspect of the relationship clearly significant of the human destiny to new life. The Trinitarian character of marriage (its unitive dimension) must always be paired with its (procreative) Resurrection character. Fertility, as the archbishops recognise, moves complementarity beyond domestic self-sufficiency.

Grace builds on nature

(Alongside chaste singleness,) the marriage relationship is the sacramental means by which voice is given to the body.

Marriage "orders around" the physical union between a man and a woman. In turn, human bodily reproductive capacity points towards this physical union. Grace builds upon nature, and the sacrament of marriage supervenes upon the natural fact of reproductive pairing: '...sown a physical body, it is raised a spiritual body.'

Same-sex physical union does not in turn relate to human reproductive capacity. Consequently, it is not a union which fully reveals human identity as *created*.

A shared bodily nature

This is because human bodily nature is shared across the variety of sexual identities: the body of someone who identifies as homosexual

nevertheless still possesses the same reproductive capacity (both in terms of the mechanisms of *inclination or desire*, and those of *physical union*) as a heterosexual person. The homosexual *body* is similarly oriented towards procreation, even if homosexual personal experience is not. A homosexual identity cannot be read out of the body in the way that marriage "reads" the body. Indeed, only marriage or chaste singleness can read the created original history of a human body (and its divinely willed destiny).

The ecology of man

Speaking to the German Parliament in September last year, Pope Benedict talked of the importance of ecology, advising that '[we] must listen to the language of nature and we must answer accordingly.' He went on, *there is also an ecology of man. Man too has a nature that he must respect and that he cannot manipulate at will. Man is not merely self-creating freedom. Man does not create himself. He is intellect and will, but he is also nature, and his will is rightly ordered if he listens to his nature, respects it and accepts himself for who he is, as one who did not create himself.*

Revealing the truth

Marriage is a means by which the original and ultimate truth about humanity is revealed. The marriage of homosexual persons threatens to falsify that vision, because it does not treat the human person as a *unity* of body and soul. The call for same-sex marriage unacceptably 'spiritualizes' human relationships, because it cannot properly integrate the body into an understanding of the fundamental meaning of those relationships. In contrast, Martini points out that, '[a]ccording to Sacred Scripture, the human being is a whole and the human body is at once part of earth and of heaven.' So too, marriage is at the same time both a natural coupling and a supernatural vocation towards life-giving communion. **ND**

Anglican Patrimony

Christopher Trundle on the daily recitation of the Psalms in the Church of England

‘**T**he Psalter shall be read through once every Month, as it is there appointed, both for Morning and Evening Prayer’ (from ‘The Order How the Psalter is Appointed to be Read’ in the *Book of Common Prayer*).

The daily recitation of the psalms has been central to the worship and prayer of Christians and Jews from ancient times, and comes to us from the worship of the Temple at Jerusalem. Indeed, rubrics in ancient texts and in the Septuagint indicate that the psalter is a specifically liturgical book. Throughout the centuries, men and women have found that the psalms resonate strongly with their hopes, fears, joys and tribulations; they are supremely human texts.

Core of the Daily Office

The specifically disciplined and ordered recitation of the psalms, however, forms the core of the Daily Office, and countless different rules and structures have existed in both East and West to ensure that the whole psalter could be read in different timescales, most often once per week. At the Reformation the Church of England greatly simplified the ordering of their recitation for ease of use, dividing the psalms into groups for the morning and evening of each day of the month (the words, ‘15th Evening’ strike fear into the heart of many a chorister!).

The Reformers’ zeal for ensuring that Scripture was as easily accessible as possible was the prime motivation (‘to turn the Book only was so hard and intricate a matter, that many times there was more business to find out what should be read, than to read it when it was found out’; ‘Concerning the Service of the Church’ in the *Book of Common Prayer*); but there went with this a clear understanding that structured and ordered liturgy was central to the life of the Church.

The English translation of the psalms we find in the Prayer Book today is based on Miles Coverdale’s version,


and is largely identical to that of the Great Bible of 1539. This translation has become much loved and has left an indelible mark on Anglicans for generations. Our maintaining of the ancient tradition of reciting the psalms (albeit in the vernacular) is not the only part of our psalmic Patrimony, however, for their chanting has also become part and parcel of Anglican worship throughout the world.

Chanting and plainsong

Anglican chant is, of course, one of those things which people either love or hate. It is, nonetheless, one of the most readily identifiable parts of the Anglican Offices of Mattins and Evensong. Anglican chant had become a staple of English worship by the late seventeenth century, but it bears rather more resemblance to ancient forms of chanting than one might expect, and certainly echoes the fauxbourdon style frequently found in renaissance music.

We should not forget, however, that the singing of psalms to plainsong in the vernacular is also solidly Anglican. *The Psalter Noted*, published in 1849, and the later *Manual of Plainsong* compiled by Briggs and Frere under the general editorship of Stainer are two important examples of the Tractarian desire to restore ancient liturgical norms to Anglican liturgy.

The metrical psalm is also a part of our tradition, many being favourites in the *New English Hymnal* to this day. The Anglican choral tradition is, of course, one of our treasured possessions, not least because its very purpose is the service of the liturgy. The widespread singing of psalms, which the Church of England has maintained in a distinctive way, is an important witness to our ancient heritage and worship – and long may it continue.

‘My song shall be alway of the loving-kindness of the Lord: with my mouth will I ever be shewing thy truth from one generation to another’ (Psalm 89). 

Now there’s a funny thing

It was a cold, wet afternoon when I saw Ordinariate member Hubert selling the *Big Issue* on the High Street.

As he said, learning Romanian no problem now that you didn’t have to brush up your O-level Latin to join Rome. Credit to him, a self-help Ordinariate fund-raising initiative, and not depending on the CBS ‘bung’ coming in, or hoping that his bet on the people’s polymath, Stephen Fry, becoming the new Archbishop of Canterbury, would pay out. However, he looked so chilled that I invited him to join me for a pint in Wetherspoons. A good example of Anglican *via media*. On the one hand it was practical charity commanded in I Cor. 13. On the other, I’ve got shares in ‘Spoons’.

Once Hubert had thawed out, and we’d exchanged the usual Ordinariate v FiF banter (‘Going Over’ versus ‘Going Under’), we reached total agreement in settling for another pint. We also agreed in bewailing the fact that whether across the Tiber, or beside the Thames, there’s little humour in the modern church, despite the follies common to both communions.

‘However, Hubert,’ I ventured, ‘the Ordinariate’s got one laugh over us, because Julian Fellowes has come to one of your events. Most folk reckon that *Downton Abbey*’s the funniest sitcom since *Steptoe*.’ ‘Yes’, he admitted, ‘but one Fellowes doesn’t make...’ ‘Lord Fellowes,’ I interrupted. ‘Don’t forget Julian’s got a peerage, though perhaps that’s a bigger joke than *Downton*.’

We then wondered where are the Chestertons, Frs Forrests and Mascalls today? Is it impossible to parody the parody that the modern church has become? When, we mused, did a broadside from *Watch* ever contain a joke? Prove us wrong ladies. Pepper your next polemic with ‘funnies.’ We’ll check the laughter-rate on our MaxMiller-meter.

Fair play, the FiF National Assembly is hardly Palace of Varieties. MaxMiller-meter needed here as well?

Alan Edwards

faith of our fathers

Arthur Middleton on Montanist and feminist innovations

The *Apostolic Tradition* of St Hippolytus of Rome (c.215) expounds his opposition to current official innovations in discipline and practice, so he wrote a pamphlet to correct this by a public appeal to older custom. This work greatly influenced the East, in Syria and Egypt, and was known as *The Egyptian Church Order*. Its inclusion in this 'Church Order' literature saved it from extinction and the invaluable information it contains. This work, Fr Frere points out in *The Early History of the Church and Ministry*, contains two closely connected works, *Concerning Ordinations*, and *On Charismata*. In the latter, Hippolytus does not depreciate those with special spiritual gifts. He cautions them against boasting superiority over those who have the ordinary spiritual gifts of the Christian and those who have the special gifts of the ministry. His context is the Church's struggle with Montanism.

Claiming biblical support

Montanism gave to the prophet the power to absolve and allowed women to celebrate the Eucharist. Not until Epiphanius (fourth century) were there reports of female clergy in an offshoot of the sect. Today's movement for female bishops and priests reads like an action replay. These women were active as presbyters, and their ordination was justified by Galatians 3.28. The difference between the sexes was held to play no role, for in Christ Jesus, there is neither male nor female. This same argument is a password in feminist writings about the ordination of women.

Epiphanius and Firmilian describe a milieu that has its roots in Phrygian Montanism and Epiphanius elaborates the sources. He counters their Pauline justification with relevant statements by the Apostle combining 1 Corinthians 14.34 with 1 Timothy 2.12 and makes reference to the Pauline statements on the order of creation in 1 Corinthians 11.8. The

Montanists 'ignore the word of the apostle':

Since the Montanists claimed support – in addition to citing the example of Old and New Testament prophetesses – from Eve, who had eaten from the tree of knowledge, Epiphanius, using Paul, counters with: 'Adam was not deceived, but first Eve was deceived and became a transgressor.' Like other early Church authors, Epiphanius also cites the Yahwist's account of the Fall, 'Your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you.' Thus, the deciding argument for the refusal of female priesthood is the appeal to Pauline directives, supplemented with an important consideration, that if women were to have priesthood conferred on them then why not Mary, who would have been more eminently suited than any woman? Furthermore it was John, not Mary, who baptized Jesus.

An androgynous Christ

The female priesthood of the 'Quintillians' is connected with a theology that – perhaps linked in turn to Galatians 3.28 – regards Christ as androgynous. Epiphanius records the following vision Priscilla the prophetess had at the time of the founding of Montanism: 'In the form of a woman – so she said – Christ came to me in radiant garb, inspired me with wisdom and pronounced this place [the Phrygian village Pepuza] holy; it was there that the Heavenly Jerusalem would descend.'

The socio-cultural context of Montanism was an influential factor in this movement. Phrygia, is in Asia Minor, where participation by women in public activities was well developed. In Phrygian paganism, the god-mother Cybele was central to its worship, which may have had a subconscious effect on Priscilla's vision. If Jerome is right, Montanus – the founder of the sect – had earlier been a priest of Cybele.

This created a new hierarchy with new claims, a prophetic succession over against the Episcopal succession, and derived from what was seen as a new revelation to bring new gifts lacking in the Church's ministry that depreciated the apostolic hierarchy and its apostolic tradition. Are there parallels here to the present day?

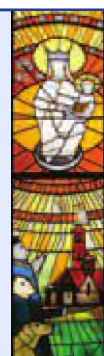
A new hierarchy

Today's new revelation emanating from the sociological, political and psychological gnosis of the present wants to re-evaluate that same apostolic tradition with 'gifts' that only gender can provide. Feminism will make good the deficiency of gifts it sees necessary to the fullness of apostolic order, creating as it has in Anglicanism a new revelation, a new hierarchy, a new succession derived from the new revelation and rejecting the catholic hierarchy and its apostolic tradition.

In principle this was the problem dealt with in *Concerning Spiritual Gifts*. The claim to a new revelation and more specifically to a superior kind of ministry emanating from prophets and wonder-workers is treated as novelty by this catholic author and apologist for apostolic order. He argues that the whole apostolic tradition negates such novel claims. Those who have the right belief will also, by the grace of the Holy Spirit, have the right tradition, and will know how it is to be carried on by the rulers of the Church. Thus the doctrine of the ministry is an ordinance, which is handed on as well as a ministry of divine grace. **ND**

National Pilgrimage

Don't forget the
**National Pilgrimage
to Walsingham**
takes place this year
on Monday 4th June



NOVENA 2012

PRAY WITH THE APOSTLES

ascension day → pentecost

In Acts 1:13–14 we are told that the Apostles with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus devoted themselves to **prayer with one accord**. They had just witnessed Jesus' Ascension and were waiting for the Holy Spirit.

Urgent Prayer for a pivotal time in the life of The Church of England

Between Ascension and Pentecost this year, the House of Bishops meet together. During this time they will decide what amendments to make to the draft legislation to enable women to be ordained as bishops in the Church of England in the hope of enabling the highest possible degree of unity for all in the Church of England, and for all to be able to thrive equally.

As the bishops approach this important meeting, and members of the General Synod prepare for the July Synod where this will be debated, perhaps for the final time, parishes and individuals are invited to dedicate time to prayer during the period between Ascension and Pentecost for the House of Bishops and for a positive outcome for all at the July Synod.

17→27 May

NOVENA 2012 gives suggestions for prayer, but each person or group can choose how to do this. We believe that it is important to try to build graciousness, sensitivity, and generosity, leading to the highest degree of unity possible and praying that, in the midst of differing views, we might desire one another's flourishing in the Church of England.



www.novena2012.org #novena2012



NOVENA 2012

PRAY WITH THE APOSTLES

ascension day → pentecost

*Acts 1:13–14 tells us that the Apostles, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, devoted themselves to **prayer with one accord**. They had just witnessed Jesus' Ascension and were waiting for the Holy Spirit.*

focusing our prayers:

(ASCENSION DAY) THURSDAY MAY 17

For the unity of the whole Church:

That they may be one, even as we are one. John 17:22

FRIDAY MAY 18TH

For the spirit of generosity:

Give and it will be given to you. Luke 6:38

SATURDAY MAY 19TH

That the Church of England may continue to reflect the diversity of the Body of Christ:

Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it. 1 Corinthians 12:27

SUNDAY MAY 20TH

That our Church may be truly inclusive:

We are all one in Christ Jesus; we belong to him through faith, heirs of the promise of the Spirit of peace. Common worship

MONDAY MAY 21ST

For the gift of patient love:

God is love and those who live in love live in God and God lives in them. 1 John 4:16

TUESDAY MAY 22ND

For the House of Bishops meeting today:

He breaks down the walls that divide us: praise Christ who is our peace! Common worship

WEDNESDAY MAY 23RD

For the decisions to be made at this time:

Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. 2 Corinthians 3:17

THURSDAY MAY 24TH

For faithful leadership of the Church:

As I have loved you, so you are to love one another. John 13:34

FRIDAY MAY 25TH

For the evangelisation of our nation:

I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Acts 2:17

SATURDAY MAY 26TH

For the healing of divisions in the Church:

Be devoted to one another in love. Honour one another above yourselves. Romans 12:10

(DAY OF PENTECOST) SUNDAY MAY 27TH

For the gifts of the Holy Spirit to be shown among us:

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. Romans 15:13

and praying each day:

In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

**Come Holy Ghost, our souls inspire,
And lighten with celestial fire;
Thou the anointing Spirit art,
Who dost thy sevenfold gifts impart.**

**Thy blessed unction form above
Is comfort, life, and fire of love;
Enable with perpetual light
The dullness of our blinded sight:**

**Anoint and cheer our soiled face
With the abundance of thy grace:
Keep far our foes, give peace at home;
Where thou art guide no ill can come.**

**Teach us to know the Father, Son,
And thee, of Both, to be but One;
That through the ages all along
This may be our endless song,**

**Praise to thy eternal merit,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
Amen.**

Take a moment to pray either silently or aloud, alone or with others. Make use of the Scripture suggestions for the day if you find these helpful. Then, when you are ready, pray as Jesus taught us:

Our Father...

Lord Jesus Christ, who said to your Apostles:
Peace I leave you, my peace I give you;
Look not on our sins,
But the faith of your Church,
And graciously grant her peace and unity
In accordance with your will.
Amen.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ
and the love of God
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,
be with us all.
Amen.

devotional

Practical religion

John Keble

Keble urges someone with a melancholic self-obsession 'to go out and do something kind to somebody or other.' 'Objects either rich or poor will generally present themselves in the hour of need to those who look for them in earnest.' 'Do not indulge in remorse as a matter of feeling or fancy. There is none of us but has reason enough to make himself miserable in that way, if it were at all allowable to do so.' A correspondent is concerned about the strictness of Christ's teaching.

Keble replies, the misgivings are 'perfectly right and reasonable – and the more you allow them, in a quiet way, to influence you in practice, the happier and wiser you will be.' The strict sayings of Jesus should be viewed not as tasks, or conditions for entering heaven, but as 'friendly advice... practices and tempers of mind, naturally and reasonably flowing from what we know to be the truth of our condition, and of God's dealings with us.'

Keble is for a wise and tolerant moderation. His curate goes on to tell us that Keble, though strong for discipline, is always concerned for a true joy and cheerfulness in religion. 'He, who takes the injunction 'do all to the glory of God,'

in the most literal sense, appears to me to come nearest to the true sense of it. But...I do not think the glory of God best promoted by a rigid abstinence from amusements, except they be either sinful in themselves, or carried to excess, or in some other way ministering occasion to sin.'

To a correspondent, a priest, Keble wrote, 'all my life long, I have been used to take what many would call the *laxer* view of common recreations and the ordinary pleasures of life. The Bible itself, besides being the Word of God, gives many 'secondary satisfactions' – poetry, language and history, ... its blessings on conjugal love, family delights, the ways of little children, the beauties and mysteries of art and nature. It seems to say, 'Take all these and make much of them, for God's glory.'

Such a course, he suggests, is recommended by the greatest Anglican writers, such as Hooker, Jeremy Taylor, George Herbert and Izaak Walton. To a bereaved father he writes of the comfort to be gained from the ancient church of the knowledge that 'we may innocently and piously pray for our departed, and that they no doubt remember and pray for us,' and he commends Lancelot Andrewes' commemoration of the departed in his *Preces Privatae*.

Conduct is not to be measured by feeling – 'This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments.' 'Our conduct He leaves to ourselves, but our feelings He keeps, in great measure, in His own Hands.' To make sensible comfort and assurance 'a sure or necessary sign of God's favour, *must* be a mistake, if it were only that it contradicts the Lord's agony and the feeling that he had on the Cross.'

Edited by Arthur Middleton 

Jesus taught that some of the enemies of our wholeness and happiness cannot be overcome without prayer and fasting. By this he meant that unless we offer ourselves and souls and bodies as a living sacrifice, coming to him in poverty and with every sinew of our being bent to do his will there is always room for the forces that diminish the work of his grace to interfere and inhibit healing. The New Testament is punctuated with accounts of fasting and prayer – not least Jesus' own wilderness journey of forty days and nights. In the Christian life the calendar of year and week is given extra emphasis and urgency by fasting.

It is a discipline and means of grace which is sadly underused and I have been reminded of this most powerfully over the past month. The experience is one involving my own family and close friends. At the end of March my daughter-in-law had unplanned emergency surgery on her spine. For a short time she was completely without sensation below her waist and now after five weeks has only recovered thirty per cent of the feeling in her legs.

Although at home, she is entirely

Ghostly Counsel

Prayer & Fasting

Andy Hawes is Warden of Edenham Regional Retreat House

dependent on others – not least her husband, who is unable to be at home during the day and is at work. They have three small children including a baby of nine months. One can imagine the complicated implications for everyone involved and the potentially devastating effect on the emotional and spiritual well-being of a young family.

Much prayer and healing ministry has been poured into this situation. The Lord called one friend to set up a prayer chain with a difference. Nearly thirty people have been involved in a continuous offering of prayer with fasting. These have included people of many Christian traditions and in some cases none. In the case of those ambivalent about

prayer they have volunteered to fast in partnership with a friend who will pray as they fast (fasting being defined as going without a daytime meal). It has been a very moving, indeed converting experience, to be part of this offering of love and pity.

As is the case in all the work of the Holy Spirit a community has been created. It has renewed and deepened friendships and also invited participants to reflect on their own response to the call of Christ. Many things have been healed and hope has been renewed for many. Prayer of any kind will always draw us nearer to God's heart and to one another.

As with all intercessory prayer we cannot know its effect because we don't know what would have happened if we hadn't prayed! Nevertheless, we can see all the gifts of the Holy Spirit at work in the young family; not least faith, hope and love. There are signs of healing and closed doors have opened offering new ways forward. As our friend wrote about the prayer chain, 'It will make us conscious of our utter dependence on God and make us thankful and open to his will', and so it did. Amen

A fair consultation?

The government has opened a consultation until mid-June on equal-marriage

Nicholas Turner argues that the proposals are ill conceived and will do real harm in the long term

One of the best illustrations of the current debate on changing the law on civil marriage was given in a recent television discussion on taxation. ‘Today, every government,’ the commentator insisted, ‘is economically right wing. Just as every government is culturally left wing.’ ‘Can you give an example?’ asked the host. ‘Well, there’s equal rights for homosexuals... And, er, gay marriage... And, er, so on.’

An ethical *a priori*?

Gay marriage is totemic. It is not a symptom of cultural liberalism; it is cultural liberalism. It is *the* campaigning issue *par excellence*; even free speech, a long-time staple, cannot match it as a crusading cause. We must recognize this. For it explains why the government’s consultation is not about *whether* but *how* ‘the ban can be lifted on same-sex couples having a marriage through a civil ceremony’ – note the loaded use of the word ‘ban’.

The principle has already been accepted, even though it played no part in any party’s manifesto. Peter Thatchell of *Stonewall* goes still further, ‘I am not convinced that there needs to be any consultation at all.’ True, he is not the most irenic of men, but such an authoritarian absolutism is characteristic of this issue. It is for many people an ethical *a priori*. It is simply true. It is a given. It therefore requires no argument, which is why there is no ‘need’ for consultation.

Equality

What is the problem, and why is the word ‘marriage’ so important? Equality. The feeling among the LGBT community (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender) that a civil partnership is not as good as marriage, and that the differentiation between the two is the basis for discrimination and homophobia. There is no arguing against the feelings of a minority which feels itself to be victimized. The majority simply have to take their word for it.

The most common metaphor is that of ‘apartheid’ and the most common analogy that of the ‘civil rights struggle’. The most widespread justification is that it has happened elsewhere; and indeed it has: equal-marriage has been introduced in Belgium, Canada, Iceland, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, and parts of Argentina, Mexico and some states in the US. So why not here?

Ignoring the consequences

What is wrong with the government’s proposals? This is best summed up in the Ministerial Foreword to the *Consultation Document* (CD), by Teresa May (Conservative) and Lynne Featherstone (Liberal Democrat),

‘Quite simply, if commitment and marriage is a good thing we should not restrict civil marriage only to opposite-sex couples.’

‘Quite simply.’ The case being put forward is a classic of Pollyanna politics. It completely – and deliberately – ignores the consequences of so far-reaching a change. Whatever you may believe about inter-Coalition bickering and bartering, there should be no denying the good intentions of the proposals. What is at issue, however, is the long-term effect on the institution of marriage.

Marriage is not ‘quite simple’. A key point for the CD is that

‘there is no legal definition of religious and civil marriage’

for if there is no legal definition, it implies, then there is nothing to stop the government modifying existing laws as it sees fit. In one sense, there clearly isn’t. On the other hand, the reason marriage has no ‘legal definition’ is that it is a traditional institution that has developed over the centuries, with

roots and forms older than parliamentary government itself. There are deep social and moral reasons why it happens to have no ‘legal definition’.

The most obvious change, though difficult to express in clear and simple terms for this very reason, is the unexpressed removal of children from the core of marriage, to be substituted by the (rather modern) notion of ‘commitment’. This complete lack of reference to children as a fundamental part of the institution (if not of every instance) of marriage suggests that either they have failed to consider the issues involved fully enough, or that they are deliberately simplifying a complex institution in order to push through a specific agenda. I suspect the former, but either option is worrying.

An underhand change

Another serious, and frankly underhand, change is nowhere mentioned in the CD, but can be found only in the much more technical *Impact Assessment*. A core part of the government propaganda is that these proposals will have no effect upon religious marriages, and yet it is stated in this second document quite clearly,

‘The changes proposed would therefore only apply to civil marriages, and not to ‘religious marriages’ conducted in places of worship, and would create a legal distinction between the two.’

The impetus behind these proposals is that

‘many people are unhappy with the existence of separate legal provisions and do not consider them to be equal’

hence the title ‘Equal Civil Marriage’. It does this by creating

a completely new legislative foundation sets a compromising and equivocal precedent

instead a clear separation and legal distinction between civil marriage and 'religious marriage' (note the provocative use of quotation marks for the latter, inferior category). Believers may be able to accept this: we know what we believe and to hell with the state. Ordinary non-church-going young couples who want a church wedding are going to have what they often call 'the real thing' taken from them.

Who will lose most?

One of the subtleties of the Solemnization of Holy Matrimony in one of our parish churches, for a couple who may be wonderfully vague and confused about their faith and beliefs, is that it is both the same and better than the secular, hotel version.

The couple know this, even if they cannot fully express it, and over the months of preparation, one can share the excitement of this great mystery, this gift of God in creation.

I know many colleagues do not like doing weddings, and would be happy to see this division established as soon as possible; but I remain convinced that it is these couples, who aspire to something more, who will lose most by what is being proposed.

Given that, as a matter of history and culture, it has been Christian marriage that has created, formed and nurtured civil marriage in this country, this deliberate separation will have untold consequences. It is one thing to seek to include same-sex couples within the orbit of the ancient tradition of marriage (which may be an admirable aim), and quite another to destroy the ancient tradition in order to create a new institution of equal-marriage, for both opposite-sex and same-sex couples.

Equality must not be ignored. But after a decade of legislation that culminated in the *Equality Act 2010*, which aims to place *all* issues of equality under one comprehensive

legislative umbrella, we do have to ask how this entirely different approach can be justified.

Serious social engineering

If it is an equality issue, it should be resolved by the equality legislation. A completely new legislative foundation sets a compromising and equivocal precedent. Especially so when it never featured in either Coalition party's election manifesto.

This does not mean that it is wrong, only that it has an unpleasantly anti-democratic smell to it. The altering of an ancient institution, involving the changing of thousands of pieces of legislation – this is not nothing: this is serious social engineering. The consultation is about

'how we can
remove the ban
on same-sex
couples having a
civil marriage in
a way that works
for everyone.'

They are asking the impossible. There is not a 'ban on same-sex couples'; there is an ancient institution, of crucial importance for the care of children and the creation of society, that cannot both be fundamentally altered and kept the same.

At a time when marriage is already under attack, by government legislation (as it happens), this is not the time to dismantle it entirely, for the idealistic but ill-thought-out alternative of equal-marriage.

'Quite simply' the two ministers say. I would submit that it is not 'quite simple.' It is immensely complex; the ramifications are far-reaching; the changes

devastating.

It should have been done with greater concern for the democratic norms and expectations of our ancient parliamentary constitution, and for those who deserve the protection of the state of which they are members. **ND**

What you need to do

First, sign the online petition by the end of May. You may well feel that online petitions are a wretched travesty of democratic government, but since this issue never featured in the General Election, and since the government has deliberately rejected any consultation about whether changing the character of civil marriage is a good idea, this has become a virtual substitute referendum.

When one says 'the petition', this means the one organized by the Coalition for Marriage, stating simply,

'I support the legal definition of marriage which is the voluntary union for life of one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others. I oppose any attempt to redefine it.'

It is not the most sophisticated way of expressing an opinion, but this is the twenty-first century, and democracy has become in part an exercise of on-line counting. Go to c4m.org.uk – the instructions are simple.

Second, if you think there are those in your congregation or community without access to the internet, you can download a paper form, and return that when signed, so that those names and addresses can be added to the list.

Third, send a response to the government consultation. You will need to download the consultation document at www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/about-us/consultations/equal-civil-marriage, and then download the response form from the same page. There are sixteen questions, six apply specifically to LGBT respondents, six can be given simple answers by anyone, and four require some kind of comment (limited to about 200 words). The response form has been badly designed and may well not be downloadable on your computer, in which case, copy the questions and send your response by email – we have been assured this is acceptable.

PARANOIA TITBIT

Three times in the *Impact Assessment*, and elsewhere in its publicity, the government cites a survey in Scotland that found 'only 6% of LGB respondents were satisfied with the current system.' Powerful evidence, surely!

It was carried out by Equality Network, which is a registered charity, funded by the Scottish Government Equality Unit, so perhaps not entirely impartial. I went to their website, to find a total of 204 relevant surveys listed. They have either removed the information, or their site is broken, but no information on this particular survey can be found, especially the key matter of whether the sample was self-selected.

Is it true or was it invented?

Newman the poet

Denis Desert on Newman's ability to use poetry to convey spiritual understanding

Matthew Arnold, the literary critic, in spite of not sharing John Henry Newman's theological perspective, held him in considerable regard. While Arnold admired Newman from an early stage it was not until May 1880 that he had the opportunity of meeting the older man who had recently become a Cardinal. Arnold records, 'Newman took my hand in both of his and was charming'. A further meeting took place between the two men in 1882 in the home of Chief Justice Coleridge. Coleridge's son records, 'they talked together as a pair of ripe scholars... Matthew Arnold never for a moment departed from the sort of attitude of a favourite pupil discoursing with an honoured master.'

Civilizing effect of culture

I would suggest that, in spite of not sharing a common theological understanding, their main point of agreement may have been Newman's ability to use poetry in order to convey spiritual understanding. An American academic underlines this point: 'Newman sees poetry as providing something for mankind which even the harsher aspects of society cannot destroy.'

Arnold strongly emphasized that society needed the civilizing effect of culture, of which poetry is an important part, if it is not to descend into anarchy. Arnold expressed his appreciation of Newman in a letter to the Cardinal, 'There are four people... from whom I am conscious of having learnt... Goethe, Wordsworth, Sainte-Beuve, and yourself.'

Lead Kindly Light

Newman's poetic output was considerable. One of his first poems is expressed in the hymn *Lead Kindly Light*. In 1832, with his friend Richard Hurrell Froude, he went on a European tour. In Sicily he was taken seriously ill and, during convalescence, found considerable solace in the church buildings. His experience was expressed in a poem reflecting both

appreciation of church interiors and his distrust of the Roman Church. He wrote,
'Oh that thy creed were sound!
For thou dost soothe the heart, thou
Church of Rome,
By thy unwearied watch and varied
round
O service, in thy Saviour's holy home.'

On the way back to England the vessel became becalmed for a week in the Straits of Bonifacio. In his own words he records, 'it was there that I wrote the lines, *Lead Kindly Light*, which have become so well known.' The poem was set to music to be sung as a hymn in 1865.

it tells of the dying of an old man, possibly a monk, assisted by his guardian angel

The Dream of Gerontius

It was in 1865 that, at the age of sixty-four, Newman began to turn his mind toward death: he was to live for another twenty-five years. He began to write down thoughts and poetic lines on many scraps of paper, possibly with no clear pattern in mind. It is noted that the author felt so dissatisfied with the work that he threw it into the waste paper basket where a friend retrieved it. Gradually this material began to take shape in the form of an epic poem *The Dream of Gerontius*. It tells of the dying of an old man, possibly a monk, assisted by his guardian angel, passing into the afterlife. The work, first published in the Catholic magazine *The Month*, became a success. The poem contained two sections eventually to become popular hymns, *Firmly I Believe* and *Praise to the Holiest*.

This narrative poem is a perfect example of Newman's ability with words and the power of the poetic form to convey spiritual truths. In part two *Gerontius* expresses the experience of 'passing over' in these

moving words,
*'I went to sleep; and now I am refreshed.
A strange refreshment: for I feel in me
An inexpressive lightness, and a sense
Of freedom, as I were at length myself,
And ne'er had been before.'*

Profession of faith

Possibly the poet identifies himself with Gerontius who, when surrounded by the priest and assistants, he makes the profession of faith in the words 'Firmly I believe and truly'. Newman in his early day as an Oxford academic and the leading light of the Oxford Movement struggled to arrive at a clear definition of faith. He became editor of *Tracts for the Times* but became disillusioned at the reaction to Tract 90 in which he attempted to reconcile the Articles of Religion with the ancient faith of the Church. The five verses from this part of the work were included in the *English Hymnal* in 1906.

At the end of the work the soul passes into purgatory with the words,
*'Take me away, and in the lowest deep
There let me be, ...
There will I sing my absent Lord and Love:
Take me away,
That sooner I may rise, and go above,
And see Him in the truth of everlasting
day.'*

Finally the Angel assures the soul,
*'Softly and gently, dearly ransomed soul,
In my most loving arms I now enfold thee,
And o'er the penal waters, as they roll,
I poise thee, and lower thee, and hold thee.'*

The piece ends with the choir of Angelicals singing, 'Praise to the holiest in the height.' These verses were put to music to be sung as a hymn by J.B. Dykes, precentor of Durham Cathedral, in 1868 and included in *Hymns Ancient and Modern*.

Newman's poetic style, expressed in both the written and spoken word, impressed Matthew Arnold and others over the years. I would suggest that the Cardinal's works are well worth the study for those of us who are called upon to proclaim the Faith today in an age in which language has become impoverished and prosaic. **ND**