

newdirections

September 2018
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supporting The Society under the patronage of St Wilfrid and St Hilda
and seeking to renew the Church in the historic faith



A congregation behind bars

Sarah Gillard-Faulkner on the importance of prison ministry

Also in this issue:

- #KeepTheSeal
- Nigel Palmer on Fr Wagner
- Sister Mary Michael CHC remembered

parish directory

BATH Bathwick Parishes, St.Mary's (bottom of Bathwick Hill), **St.John's** (opposite the fire station) Sunday - 9.00am Sung Mass at St.John's, 10.30am at St.Mary's 6.00pm Evening Service - 1st, 3rd & 5th Sunday at St.Mary's and 2nd & 4th at St.John's. Contact Fr.Peter Edwards 01225 460052 or www.bathwick-parishes.org.uk

BEXHILL on SEA St Augustine's, Cooden Drive, TN39 3AZ Saturday: Mass at 6pm (first Mass of Sunday) 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) "If it is worth believing in, it is worth travelling for" Sunday Mass 11am. Contact Fr.John Luff 0121 449 2790 www.saintagathas.org.uk

BISHOP AUCKLAND St Helen Auckland, Manor Road, West Auckland Medieval church. A Parish of the Society of S. Wilfrid and S.Hilda. Sunday: Sung Mass 10am, Evensong and Benediction 6pm. Weekday Mass: Mon 7pm, Tues, Thur, Fri, Sat 9.30am, Wed 10am, Rosary Mon 6.30pm. Parish Priest: Canon Robert McTeer ssc 01388 604152 www.sthelenschurch.co.uk

BLACKPOOL St Stephen on the Cliffs, Holmfield Road, North Shore A SWSH Registered 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. A Society and 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 Parish under the patronage of Ss. Wilfrid & Hilda. Sunday: 8am Low Mass BCP, 10am Sung Mass Traditional Ceremonial (CW), 4pm Choral 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 Katharine, Church Road, Southbourne, BH6 4AS. Resolutions passed under the House of Bishops Declaration.. Sung Mass at 1030am on Sunday. Said Mass every Wednesday at 10am. Parish Priest: Fr Kevin Cable Obl.OSB, (FIF/Society Priest). fr.kevin@bopenworld.com or Tel: 01202 460005

BOWBURN, Durham Christ the King, DH6 5DS; A parish of the Society, under the care of the Bishop of Beverley. Durham City's 'Forward in Faith' parish. 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). Society Parish. Sunday services: Solemn Mass 10.45am, Evensong 6.30pm. Weekday Mass Wednesday 7.30pm. English Missal/BCP. For all other services and information during the Interregnum please see our website www.saintchadtollerlane.org.uk

BRIGHTON WAGNER GROUP The Annunciation (11am) Parish Office 01273 681341. **St Bartholomew's** (11am) Parish Office 01273 620491. **St Martin's** (10am) Fr Trevor Buxton 01273 604687. **St Michael's** (10.30am) Fr Robert Norbury 01 273 727362. **St Paul's** (11am) Fr Robert Norbury 01 273 727362. (Sunday Principal Mass times in brackets.)

BRISTOL Ebbsfleet parishes All Hallows, Easton BSS OHH. Holy Nativity, Knowle BS4 2AG. Sunday Mass 10:00 a.m. (both Churches), Evensong 1st Sunday of month 6 o'clock (All Hallows), Weekday masses: Tuesday 7:15 p.m & Wednesday 10:30 a.m. (All Hallows), Friday 10:30 a.m. (Holy Nativity). Contacts: Fr Jones Mutemwakwenda 01179551804, www.allhallows-easton.org Father Steven Hawkins SSC. 07834 462 054 fr.stevenhawkins@googlemail.com www.holynativity.org.uk

BROMLEY St George's Church, Bickley Sunday - 8.00am Low Mass, 10.30am Sung Mass. Daily Mass - Tuesday 9.30am, Wednesday and Friday 9.30am, Saturday 9.30am Mass & Rosary. Fr.Richard Norman 0208 295 6411. Parish website: www.stgeorgebickley.co.uk

BURGH-LE-MARSH Ss Peter & Paul, (near Skegness) PE24 5DY A resolution parish in the care of the Bishop of Richmond. Sunday Services: 9.30am Sung Mass (& Junior Church in term time) On 5th Sunday a Group Mass takes place in one of the 6 churches in the Benefice. 6.00pm Sung Evensong (BCP) Weekday Mass Thursdays 9am. Other services as announced. All visitors very welcome. Rector: Canon Terry Steele, The Rectory, Glebe Rise, Burgh-le-Marsh. PE24 5BL Tel 01754 810216 or 07981878648 email: father.terry@btclack.com

CARDIFF near rail, bus, Millennium Stadium, city centre and Bay Daily Mass **St Mary**, Bute Street Sunday: Solemn Mass 11am; Parish Priest Fr.Dean Atkins SSC 029 2048 7777 www.stmaryscf10.co.uk

CHARD The Good Shepherd, Furnham. Under the Episcopal care of the Bishop of Ebbsfleet. 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

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), Sat 8.30am. **St James**, Temple Normanton, Chesterfield, Derbyshire Sunday: Parish Mass 11.30am, Thur: Mass 7.15pm. Churchwardens 01246 855245. 01246 85552

CHOPWELL Saint John the Evangelist NE17 7AN A Society 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

CROYDON S Michael & All Angels, Poplar Walk. Affiliated with SWSH. Sunday: Low Mass 8.00am, Family Mass 9.30am, Solemn Mass 11.00am, Evensong & Benediction 3.30pm (1st & 3rd Sunday). Daily Mass Mon - Fri 12.30pm, also Wed 7.30am. Sat 11.00am. Vicar Fr Tim Pike CMP 0208 6869343, Curate Fr Philip Kennedy 02036094184. Website, with full details: stmichaelscroydton.com

DEVIZES St Peter's, Bath Road, Devizes, Wiltshire Society of St. Wilfrid and St. Hilda parish under the episcopal care of the Bishop of Ebbsfleet. Sunday: 8am BCP Low Mass; 10am Sung Mass. Wednesdays - 7pm Low Mass. On major festivals & Saints' Days - times vary. Contact Fr. Vincent Perricone 01380 501481

DONCASTER St Wilfrid's, Cantley DN4 6QR A beautiful and historically significant church with much Comper restoration. A Society Parish under the Episcopal care of the Bishop of Beverley. Modern catholic worship with a friendly atmosphere. Sunday: 8am Mass and 10am Parish Mass. Wednesday: 9.30am Mass (followed by coffee morning). Friday: 8pm Mass. Saturday 9.30am Mass. Visitors very welcome. Contact: Fr. Andrew Howard ssc. (01302) 285316, mob. 0774 0932758 fatherahoward@gmail.com

DONCASTER Benefice of Edlington S John the Baptist with Hexthorpe S Jude, Sung Mass Sundays 9.00am Edlington and 11.00am Hexthorpe, 7pm on Weekday Solemnities, Confessions Edlington 6.45pm Wed and Hexthorpe 7.30pm Fri or by appointment. Normal Weekday Masses: Tues Edlington 9.30am, Wed Hexthorpe 9.30am, Thurs Edlington 7pm, Fri Hexthorpe 7pm. Divine Office recited each day (7.30am and 6.30pm Edlington) (8am and 5pm Hexthorpe). Other occasions see noticeboards. Contact: Fr Stephen Edmonds ssc - 01709858358 fr.s-edmonds@gmail.com

EASTBOURNE St Saviour's A Society Parish. Sunday: Low Mass 8am, Solemn Mass 10.30am. Daily Mass and Office. Details and information during Interregnum contact John Vernon, Churchwarden. www.stsaviours-eastbourne.org.uk

ELLAND All Saints, Charles Street, HX5 0LA A Parish of the Society under the care of the Bishop of Wakefield. Serving Tradition-

alists in Calderdale. Sunday Mass 9.30am, Rosary/Benediction usually last Sunday, 5pm. Mass Tuesday, Friday & Saturday, 9.30am. Canon David Burrows ssc, 01422 373184, rectorofelland@btinternet.com www.ellandoccasional.blogspot.co.uk

FOLKESTONE Kent, St Peter on the East Cliff A Society Parish under the episcopal care of the Bishop of Richborough. Sunday: 8am Low Mass, 10.30am Solemn Mass. Evensong 6pm. Weekdays - Low Mass: Tues 7pm, Thur 12 noon. <http://stpetersfolk.church> e-mail: 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 9.30am, Solemn Evensong and Benediction 6pm (First Sunday). Weekday Mass: Mon 7.00pm, Wed 9.30am, Sat 9.30am. Parish Priest: Fr.Martin 07736 711360

HALIFAX St Paul, King Cross: Queens Road, HX1 3NU. An inclusive resolution parish receiving sacramental provision from the Bishop of Wakefield. Sunday: 10.30 Solemn Mass; 16.30 (Winter)/18.30 (BST) Evening Prayer Last Sunday: 18.30 Evensong with Benediction (Occasionally Choral) Monday: 12.00 Mass Friday: 10.30 Mass Parish Priest: Fr Kevin Barnard 01422 360740 www.stpaulskingcross.co.uk

HARTLEPOOL St Oswald's, Brougham Terrace. A Society Parish under the episcopal care of the Bishop of Beverly. Sunday: Sung Mass 9.30am. Daily Mass, Offices and Confessions as displayed. Parish Priest: Fr Graeme Buttery ssc 01429 273201

HEMEL HEMPSTEAD St Francis of Assisi, Hammerfield, Glenview Road, HP1 1TD. Under the episcopal care of the Bishop of Richmond. Sunday Sung Mass at 10am. Solemn Evensong and Benediction at 6.30pm (4th Sunday). Traditional rite and ceremonial sung to Merbecke. Contact Fr Benjamin Weitzmann 01442 247503.

HEMPTON Holy Trinity (near Fakenham, Norfolk). A Society Parish. 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. Contact Fr.John Burgess on 01 328 863410

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

LIVERPOOL St Agnes and St Pancras, Toxteth Park (A Society Parish under the Episcopal care of the Bishop of Beverley) Sunday: Parish Mass 10am; Daily Mass. Sunday School. Glorious J L Pearson Church, with modern catholic worship, good music and friendly atmosphere. Contact: Fr.Derek Lloyd CMP. 0151 733 1742 www.stagnes.org.uk

LONDON E1W St Peter's, London Docks A registered parish of the Society of S. Wilfrid & S. Hilda. Nearest station is Wapping (Overground). Buses: D3 or 100. Sunday 8am Mass. 10am Solemn Mass Daily Mass and Offices. Contact: Fr Jonathan Beswick SSC 0207 481 2985, Fr Robert Ladds SSC 0207 488 3864 www.stpeterslondon docks.org.uk

LONDON EC3 St Magnus the Martyr, Lower Thames Street (nearest Tube: Monument or Bank) A Society Parish Under the Episcopal Care of the Bishop of Fulham. 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 HA1 St George, Headstone, Harrow HA1 4RJ A Forward in Faith parish in the episcopal care of Bishop Robert Ladds. Prayer Book Catholic, professional/scholarship choir, historic organ, furnishings by Martin Travers and Faith Craft. Mass (1549): Sunday 11am; Wednesday 9.30am. Fr. Stephen Keeble 020 8427 1253. www.stgeorgeheadstone.org.uk

LONDON N21 Holy Trinity, Winchmore Hill. A modern catholic parish under the Bishop of Fulham. 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

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Priests of the Society of the Holy Cross (SSC) and their pilgrims at the Walsingham Youth Pilgrimage
(Photo: Graham Howard)

Articles are published in *New Directions* because they are thought likely to be of interest to readers. They do not necessarily reflect the views of the Editor or those of *Forward in Faith*.

A Congregation Behind Bars

Sarah Gillard-Faulkner explains the importance of prison chaplaincy

The community where I minister is really quite self-contained. It has residents, a health centre, a café, a gym, a mechanical garage, classrooms, a hairdresser, several residential spaces with many offices, a mosque, a gurdwara, a meditation centre, and a church. And it is all contained behind a 20-foot fence with barbed wire along its top. Day to day I see out my ministry in one of the country's hidden places, for I work in one of England and Wales's 121 prisons.

The Prison Act of 1952 states: 'Every prison shall have a governor, a chaplain and prison officers, a medical officer and any other such officers as be necessary.' Mine is a role enshrined in the law of the land and, frankly, a great privilege to undertake in a very hidden part of our society. Prisons draw their operating principles from a quasi-military font and particularly the naval tradition, so it's hardly surprising that key personnel have clear resonances with the officer cadre of a ship's company.

A prison is a 'total institution,' a concept similar to the notion of self-sufficiency needed on board a ship at sea. Total institutions are typified by isolation from the outside world, internal discipline systems, and ability to deliver all core services needed to operate and survive. We can see the immediate parallels to the world behind the walls. So, what role does the modern day chaplain play within the twenty-first century prison?

As a role written into the law of the land, there goes with it certain duties undertaken in that role. Those of us called to the ministry 'behind the wall' are charged to fulfil the requirements of the enclosed community on two levels: first of faith-specific need and secondly of pastoral care. Within that there are certain statutory duties that a chaplain has to complete by law every day. Those duties include seeing all those who are segregated from the main population and seeing each prisoner within 24 hours of their arrival in a new prison.

It is right and decent that, even though a person may be placed in a custodial setting, they are treated with human decency and respect. It is with this in mind that provision is made for any individual within that environment to practise their own faith in an appropriate way. Any prison chaplain in that regard makes possible the facility of faith-specific provision. There is the opportunity for corporate worship each week. Sunday mornings in my establishment focus around the provision of Christian worship of many traditions. In my own setting, this is shared on alternate weeks with my Free Church colleague. Our men are given a variety of different styles of worship to experience and can access the styles suitable for their own growth and nurture. During the week there are pro-



visions made for other faith groups. This goes alongside providing as much access as we can for their spiritual growth in study and their individual spiritual need through access to Bible study, the praying of the rosary, and Alpha courses on a regular basis. Further, such disciplines as the sacrament of confession are provided, as and when it is requested, and insofar as the regime of the establishment is able to support it. Like in any parish setting, we also are on hand to provide the community with the rites of the church at the time of death.

As an Anglo-Catholic (sadly an all too rare breed in prison service chaplaincy these days) I believe I offer a spir-

ituality which is much needed by the prisoners. Not just the ability to teach prisoners how to actually use the rosaries they all love to wear, but an insight into a spirituality of real depth. This isn't just for the happy emotionally charged moments, but for the darkness and solitude too. Contemplative prayer and the use of icons are useful in a place where so many have poor literacy, and in an environment in which so many suffer broken family relationships, it can be powerful to enlighten them to devotion for Our Lady, in whom can be found the love of a mother.

It is right and decent that, even though a person may be placed in a custodial setting, they are treated with human decency and respect.

It may not surprise you, however, that in reality this is the smaller part of the role in which, as a prison chaplain, I spend my time. For just like any incumbent of a parish, each Church of England chaplain is charged by their bishop to take on the cure of souls for that community. And so, as a pastoral carer in this setting, our calling is not just to those of our own tradition or faith group but to the whole community.

Now within that framework a whole manner of other things get thrown into the mix in terms of the needs of prisoners for pastoral care, such as the need to contact home and the goings-on of family life that continues while a prisoner is inside. It is so often chaplaincy staff who inform prisoners of the hatches and despatches of a family. I think it would be fair to say that I inform prisoners on average once a week that a loved one in their family unit has died. Occasionally, I bridge the gap between home and prison when a family member is seriously ill and petition the senior management of the establishment

to ensure that the prisoner has the opportunity to visit and see their loved one before their death. My experience has suggested that uniformed staff and operational managers can struggle to find perspective between the prisoner and the person who is also a family member with a gravely ill relative. Chaplains therefore routinely navigate a path between prison, hospital, family and prisoner, a hugely complicated task that most prison managers would baulk at, yet invariably families are united with their loved one at their time of need, final farewells are facilitated, space for grief and reflection is provided.

As an Anglo-Catholic (sadly an all too rare breed in prison service chaplaincy these days) I believe I offer a spirituality which is much needed by the prisoners.

In reality that visit, that funeral attendance, cannot always be facilitated due to the pressures that are placed upon the custodial setting. It is at those key moments in life that chaplains in the prison are called to provide alternative provision which those in the wider society setting may take for granted. For example, attendance at the funerals of grandparents is rarely granted. In these situations, chaplains of the appropriate faith tradition are called upon to make some marking of the occasion within the custodial setting. Often the lighting of a candle in the chapel with simple accompanying prayers are exercised, and more often than not hugely appreciated by those to whom we minister.

However, not only does it work that way, it also works the other. In the last year I've become involved with three families following the death of their loved one whilst in custody. The latest has proved a challenging experience. When such an incident occurs, key members of the establishment visit the family of the deceased and such was my privilege on all those occasions. This experience is one that would be unlikely to be experienced from a parish perspective. However, the safety and care of prisoners is paramount to the governor of any establishment, and so when these happenings take place the governor, with a family liaison worker and a chaplain, often attend. And here comes the nub of why the alongsiding work of a chaplain is so important, not only for families but for staff too. The governor with whom I have attended such visits in the past reflected thus:

'Chaplains are also a massive resource to Governors in the event of certain operational events that affect prisons. While it's somewhat cliché to turn to death and end of life, my own experience is that my Chaplaincy Colleagues have an approach, attitude and experience that us operational folk simply cannot hope to match. The way in which we inform, support and care for those affected by death or illness in the custodial setting is a bellwether for the prison. I know that I have achieved better outcomes for families and men in custody because of the skills that my chaplains possess.'

In recent days I have accompanied a family member to view the body of their son in a mortuary, an experience that is harrowing and disturbing in many ways. His mother has, in recent years, had very little contact with her son, a man who has been in the prison system for 17 years. She never expected the next time she saw him would be in such a setting. In this particular incident, like others I have been involved with in the past, I will have the immense privilege of conducting his funeral and memorial service in my community. This for me reveals an immense opportunity for ensuring that the family, and the community in which he lived, receives the best pastoral care I can offer.

I'm a carer, a teacher, preacher, advisor, leader, advocate and intercessor not only for those who reside within the walls, but for those for whom it is their place of work.

All this goes alongside the day-to-day running of any prison establishment. Chaplains play a pivotal role within the prison, fulfilling a range of roles and functions, acting as counter-point and counsel in equal measure. I'm a carer, a teacher, preacher, adviser, leader, advocate and intercessor not only for those who reside within the walls, but for those for whom it is their place of work. Just in the last few days I was privileged to lead our staffing community in a memorial for those who have lost their lives whilst in service, and to dedicate a new plaque in memory of one who died nearly a year ago. Prisons are no different in their highs and lows from any other community and we keep the memories and anniversaries of our story too.

I do this as a permanent deacon in the Church of England within a rich catholic tradition. It is an ordained ministry that so often gets dismissed as being that thing that happens before priesting, but the ministry I seek to exercise constantly is about bridge building: the inside with the outside; the church with the unchurched; the sacred with the secular. That is what the diaconate has from its biblical foundations set out to do: to serve those who most need serving. St Stephen may have been called to serve widows at table, and in our modern day context I am called to serve those who—through choices they have made, rationally or not—find themselves in a custodial setting. It is a ministry hidden out of view and underestimated in its impact. **ND**



Rev'd Sarah Gillard-Faulkner is a deacon and the chaplain at HMP Onley

Explaining the Seal

Thomas Seville CR summarizes the practical and theological arguments for the seal of the confessional



#KeepTheSeal

The issue of the abuse of children and the vulnerable is perhaps the issue of our times. In the past twenty years it has become apparent that the maltreatment of many young and vulnerable people has been not an exception and not rare, but something which has occurred in all parts of society. What has shaken society all the harder is that it has been those in positions of authority and who enjoy great respect who have been among those who have committed grave offences. The results of abuse for many have been lasting; lives have been blighted, and lost through suicide. These offences have also been committed by those particularly associated with the mission of Christ and his church, by bishops, priests and religious. The church has certainly made efforts to make amends and to work towards a safeguarding culture, so that these things are not repeated; no one would say that all has been done that needs to be done.

Furthermore, the reaction to it is made stronger by the shock at its extent and a sense of incomprehension as to how such things happen or indeed what leads some rather than others to abuse. We share deep shame at the inadequate regard shown by the church to those who are victims of abuse, and the protection given to perpetrators. Although some things have been done, many feel the need to do something which really shows that the church means business in this area. One example of this is pressure for the repeal of the law on the complete confidentiality of what is said to the priest in the confessional, inviolable to all intents and purposes, commonly called the 'seal'.

It is important to stress that the practice of absolute confidentiality accorded to the penitent in confession has a theological rationale. The seal arises out of the church's ministry of reconciliation.

I want to begin this treatment of the seal with a bit of history. Despite the difference from early modern Europe, some points remain the same. I will then go on—at greater length—to show why keeping the seal is not only right, but necessary.

I refer to the good old days of King James VI and I. The previous century had seen major changes in the practice of making confessions to a minister. One of the few things not to be altered was the obligation of the minister to keep quiet about anything heard in the context of the confession. There would have been contexts in which a penitent confessed sins with others around, such as in the context of a sick- or death-bed confession. There the confidence which would fall on the priest would fall on those who heard such matters, but this would be a moral matter and was left untouched.

This was confirmed in the canons of 1603, with the qualification that exempted the minister from such confidentiality if, by keeping it, he committed a crime which carried the death penalty. In particular, this meant the crime of misprision of treason. This quaintly entitled crime denotes the case of someone who, knowing of an act of treason or a plan to commit one, fails to report it to competent authority. It used to be a capital crime but has not been so for two centuries. It would have applied to a priest who heard the confession of someone who had planned to kill the sovereign; if it was discovered that the priest had done this and kept his counsel, then he would have committed a capital crime. Apart from this it is worth noting that the absolute confidentiality of this ministry has been the law of this land for more than 800 years and remains so.

The practice of making a confession of sins to a priest in private is one of the ways the ministry of binding and loosing has been received from Jesus Christ.

The qualification was not an idle piece of lawyerly fun; attempts on the lives of rulers at this time were many, e.g. there were twenty-five on Henri of Navarre alone, the last being successful. Such a fear was indubitably unreasonable, paranoiac indeed, but it formed the background both in France and in England for the state to seek to make information received under the seal information which a suspect needed to make known to competent authority. If you heard about treason you were obliged to tell, unless you wanted to meet your death and moreover by an execution of remarkable brutality. For rulers, this was a time when it was not surprising if you thought you were in danger of your life and you had little idea of where exactly the gun or the poignard was coming from. Or, indeed, gunpowder. It was not surprising that the seal came in for stick. Does this remind you of something?

King James VI and I was, in addition to being an able politician, also possessed of a theological mind and, no stranger to being conjured against, sent an attack on the seal unqualified to the sovereigns of Europe. It formed a subsidiary part of his defense of the oath of allegiance being required of all his subjects. Bellarmine and Coeffeteau replied and du Perron drafted a response. The last named, brought up Protestant, argued that the seal served not only the good of the church but also that of the state, as well as that of the penitent. Without the seal, no one would confess an intention to assassinate and that therefore an opportunity would be lost of preventing such a crime, by reminding the penitent of the wrath which would

fall on him if he proceeded and of moving him to repentance. Du Perron also argued that the confessor should seek to warn the king without doing anything that would lead to the identification of the penitent.

This remains a good reminder that when faced with the revelation in the confessional of a sin that is also a serious crime something is being told to you because it cannot go further and may well not have been made known otherwise, and that someone's salvation is at stake. Furthermore, preventing a crime makes for the good of society, and there is the opportunity of assisting a criminal to make themselves known to the authorities.

When I make confession to another Christian, according to the advice given by the Letter of James (5.16), I am trusting that person and God in that person. According to the seriousness of the communication, I expect the communication to be respected. One of the means of respecting it is the practice of discretion and, more fully, confidentiality.

Confidentiality between persons remains a valued practice. It protects the persons of those who have good reason to communicate personal data to another for their good or for the law or medicine, allowing two or more persons to proceed without incurring the obligation to report further. It is commonly regarded as a good in society that confidentiality in certain cases must be kept for its good or the good of persons in that society; it can build, repair and deepen relationships. It can thus promote society's good. It can secure the wellbeing and the good of another person, irrespective of who they are or what they have done.

Confidentiality, however, is clearly patent of abuse. Confidentiality agreements can be and have been used to conceal wrongdoing and to intimidate those who may have good reason to go public: one sees that in the harm incurred by employees who make public certain harmful or criminal behaviour at their place of work. In the public sphere the publicity given to the abuse of confidentiality has given rise to an atmosphere of suspicion towards those who are in positions of power keeping stuff confidential. The converse—keeping matters confidential for the sake of an individual's good or protection—enjoys protection in law in some areas of life and is worthy of praise when someone suffers harm rather than break a trust. Exceptions can be made and professions have guidelines in order to protect both the giver and receiver of care or advice. In matters regarding abuse, in most cases there is an obligation on the professional to make the matter known to a competent authority.

There is, however, the protection claimed for the priest who hears a confession and when a penitent comes to make their confession with a view to absolution. In general, a high standard of confidentiality is something which a parishioner has a right to expect from a priest. However, that confidentiality which falls to the priest in the context of this ministry is of a different kind: this confidentiality is usually proportionate to the serious of its object and nature.

This is so in the case of confession. In a confession what is communicated is communicated to God with a view to receiving the assurance of God's mercy. Because a confession is something made directly to God, in the presence of a minister of

God, it is as serious as it gets. It is a 'sacramental ministry,' a sacrament, something which is a gift to the church by Christ even though at Pentecost she was not handed a nice 'Rites of Penance.' The present form has changed much since early times.

It is important to stress that the practice of absolute confidentiality accorded to the penitent in confession has a theological rationale. The seal is something which arises out of the church's ministry of reconciliation. It is one part of a larger whole, the church's witness to Christ and her obedience to him. One cannot separate the issue of the seal from central matters of the faith: reconciliation, Christ and the church. This is why it does in fact touch the faith.

The reconciliation of sinners is foundational to the church's purpose and life; she would look rather silly without it! She receives as part of this the ministry of reconciling sinners after baptism with God, with the church and with each other. It belongs to the good news of Jesus Christ, who died for our sins. By his incarnation, cross and resurrection God has put away the power of sin to separate humanity from himself and from each other: Jesus Christ has united what is alien from God, making one what was divided (Col. 1.15–17). His death and resurrection, by which he saved sinners, is the supremely free gift of God which is the gospel.

Little or no evidence has been discovered that the seal has been the reason or occasion of the abuse of children or the vulnerable.

As a communion of believers with God and each other, the church owes her life and existence to this work of God. The church is the calling and creation of God, by his word and spirit, to communicate this work. She manifests and expresses the 'mystery of Christ' (Eph. 3.4, Col. 2.2 *et al.*) By baptism people become members of the body, and by sharing in the eucharist they share in the body: 1 Cor. 10.16–17; 11.23–29. The Holy Spirit makes the work of reconciliation effective in her members. This may be through preaching and the sacraments, the prayers of the church and the witness of her members, but can also be through the acts of conversion, repentance and reconciliation offered by Christ through the church (Matt. 18.15–20; 1 John 1.5–10). For the ordained ministry, the work of reconciliation is at the heart of their vocation; it is an extension of the mission of Christ to reconcile. Indeed the whole matter of the seal can be led back to this reality: that God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself (2 Cor. 5.21).

Among the gifts received by the church from Christ for his mission there is the power of binding and loosing, sometimes referred to as the 'office of the keys.' Originally referring to what was permitted or forbidden by the law and so an exercise of judging (as in the Council of Jerusalem in Acts 15), it has in the context of texts such as Matt. 16.19, 18.18, and also John 20.23, given rise to a practice of admitting to or excluding from the church. The office of the keys is part of the ministry of the church, exercised primarily through those ordained to

the ministry of bishop and priest.

Originally exercised in a public form, the practice of making a confession of sins to a priest in private is one of the ways the ministry of binding and loosing has been received from Jesus Christ. The forgiveness and mercy which are proper to God is communicated through penitent and confessor. Although it became a party issue in the nineteenth century, it is worth repeating that it was not only Laudians or Anglo-Catholics who thought the practice should be more widely used. It is not the only way in which this takes place, and certainly not the most important one, but it is one of them. The seal is what enables it to happen securely.

When someone comes to confess their sins to a priest they are coming both to Christ and to his church, to a 'place' where in one sense they already are. For that to take place, the sinner needs to come with unqualified trust, or at least a trust which can become so. Otherwise, the freedom and honesty of the confession will be at risk and the priest's response will be disabled.

This argument for the seal—namely that without it the sinner may feel inhibited from a true confession—is the argument made most commonly: nothing may get in the way of access to the ministry of reconciliation. This is all the more the case if you hold that this ministry is sacramental or, indeed, a sacrament. Many other arguments for the seal relate to this; I will briefly list them. Most are simply those which arise if the ministry is to be executed well. There are others which are theological, and I list these separately.

- 1) It is the common practice of other churches which retain the ministry of private confession to an ordained minister to afford an almost absolute measure of confidentiality to the penitent—Roman Catholic, Orthodox, Oriental and Lutheran among others. It is not a peculiarity of the Church of England, but expresses the wisdom of the Christian centuries, which it would be foolish to ignore. It has been found by experience that for it to bear fruit, such confidentiality is needed.
- 2) The seal belongs to received teaching, as expressed by an Act of Convocation in the Convocation of York in 1959. Bishop Gerard Ellison, then Bishop of Chester, said that it is 'an essential principle of Church doctrine that if any person confess his secret and hidden [sins] to a priest for the unburdening of his conscience and to receive spiritual consolation and absolution from him, such priest is strictly charged that he do not at any time reveal or make known to any person whatsoever any sin so committed to his trust and secrecy.'
- 3) Ordinary human intercourse suggests that we need to be able to trust each other with confidences. If someone trusts a priest to keep confidence, then that trust is impaired if that priest fails to do so. That person will be harmed and what is owed to them as person is not given.
- 4) Such a measure of confidentiality and the accompanying ability to disclose anything is something which arises out of the ministry of making a confession made in the hope of receiving the assurance of forgiveness.
- 5) It offers a place of complete security, and this allows complete disclosure. If such confidentiality is in question

then so is this security. The penitent is less likely to be able to share without reserve the most painful wounds and the greatest pains. This goes for those who have done something criminally, for those traumatized by wrongdoing or those who have witnessed it to make the first steps towards disclosure.

- 6) It could be tempting to a penitent to withhold some of their sins if they could not trust the confidentiality of the confessor. This would reduce the usefulness of the practice significantly.
- 7) When one truly penitent comes to repent of all their sins, all sins are taken away. It is directly analogous to baptism. For this to be possible, nothing should be held back.

The 'seal' may be held to be measured by the mercy of God. This is ultimately a matter of corresponding to the being of the church as the means of the mercy of Christ.

- 8) The ministry is administered in the interests of the penitent. This means that in terms of the ministry the integrity of the penitent as a person comes first. To break confidentiality after having pledged it impairs such integrity. It does not respect them as a person and respect is due whatever sins one has committed or incurred.
- 9) Observance of utter confidentiality has to be universal: if one priest reveals a secret, then the ministry in general will be made less trustworthy. The seal offers a trustworthy ministry, open to all comers, because it gives shape to the church's mission to offer the forgiveness and mercy of God to sinners.
- 10) The seal enables the church to demonstrate the seriousness of sin: sinners must come under judgement in order to receive mercy, and the seal enables the confessor to hold a penitent accountable before God.
- 11) The seal allows the possibility of someone making a crucial step towards a fuller contrition. A comparison might be made using the metaphor of medicine, the sinful state of the penitent to a sick patient. In order to become hale again, a patient may have to face a number of treatments and it may be a painful incision which begins the healing.
- 12) In the Church of England, someone who has committed a grave sin which is also a serious crime and who comes to confession will, because it is not the 'natural thing to do', be taking a major step. To begin such a journey to conversion from sin to Christ and his church is enabled by the seal. Confidentiality in the form of the 'seal' can play a vital role in the salvation of such a penitent. A similarly major step would be enabled by the seal for someone making known a serious crime.
- 13) The confidentiality of the seal is unusual by contemporary standards and is positive witness. It is a testimony to the difference of God's mercy from the ways and morals of the society in which we live.

14) As far as the Church of England is concerned, little or no evidence has been discovered—much searching, many enquiries notwithstanding—that the seal has been the reason or occasion of the abuse of children or the vulnerable. Power has been abused in relation to the confession, but not the seal properly understood.

There are six more theological reasons which may be adduced in support of the measure of confidentiality which applies to the ministry of confession.

15) The basis for what is commonly called the 'seal' rests in the extraordinary mercy of God: 'The vast allowances of God's mercy', as Jeremy Taylor puts it. It is a mercy which is deeper than can be imagined, *quo nihil maius cogitari potest*, that which nothing greater can be thought. The church must never preach a mercy less than this. In maintaining the obligation to silence on the part of the priest, the church is seeking to ensure that the penitent has access to the same 'vast allowances of mercy'. This is one way, a small one, in which the mercy of God is made known and real, which, in some cases certainly, it might not have occurred.

The sinner needs to come with unqualified trust, or at least a trust which can become so. Otherwise, the freedom and honesty of the confession will be at risk and the priest's response will be disabled.

16) The seal belongs to the call of the church to reveal God's mercy to the world. This mercy comes from reconciliation with God. The church is called to protect those who seek this mercy. To be sure, this is available to those are content to seek this directly, but the ministry is open to members of the church both for forgiveness of sins and for the assurance that they have been forgiven.

17) The matter of this ministry ultimately belongs neither to the priest nor the penitent but to God: the penitent brings to God their lack of a sense of the mercy along with their sins, looking to draw closer to God by the ministry of the church. Unlike confidentiality between persons in secular life, in the law or medicine say, the confidentiality of confession is not a contract between the priest and the penitent. The person who comes to this ministry has a just claim to confidentiality. It secures this, but it also secures the ability of the church to maintain the freedom of anyone, under any circumstances, to seek God's mercy without fear. If the confidentiality of the confessional is qualified, for any reason, then something is put in the way of someone wanting to bare their soul.

18) This is one of those areas in which God is clearly working, doing what is proper to him: to forgive and to reconcile. It is where a member of the church confesses to another, but the confession is made to God. The minister acts in the name of God and the church. It is a commonplace which goes back to early Christian reflection

that sins confessed to a minister be spoken of as being confessed to God alone, and that therefore the minister knows the sins 'as God knows them.' Both St Thomas Aquinas and Dr Luther teach this. As T.T. Carter puts it: 'What he thus hears he knows only sacramentally, as within the veil of another world... the Priest knows them only in confession.'

19) The Church exists only because of the judgement and mercy of God, not because of any human institution; if she allows herself to be ruled by anything other than the reconciling work of God in Christ, then she ceases to be the Church. There is a question to be asked as to whether, in moderating the obligation to confidentiality, she is allowing herself to be ruled by something other than the work of Christ.

The 'seal' may be held to be measured by the mercy of God. It is one of the reason why priests have preferred death rather than betray a penitent. This is ultimately a matter of corresponding to the being of the church as the means of the mercy of Christ. Once the church breaks that correspondence—once she says to a penitent, however inadequate the penitence, that she cannot respect his attempts at contrition—the minister is doing something other than be a witness to the depth of the divine mercy.

In sum, the seal is a sign of the depths of the divine mercy, and is a small, if vital, sign of how deep those depths go. Is this something by which the church should stand? Yes! **ND**

Thomas Seville is a member of the Community of the Resurrection. He represents the Religious Communities on the General Synod.

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A Safe Space

A survivor of abuse writes to the Archbishop of York

Your Grace,

I write as an adult survivor of what my former counsellor calls chronic childhood trauma, some of which included sexual, physical and emotional abuse over a prolonged period of time.

I understand that you are in favour of altering the nature of the seal of confession in order to safeguard the abused. I write concerning that proposal.

I have known God's hand supporting me from an early age, but no more so than when he, I believe, literally saved me from committing suicide at around the age of 14. As I was about to take that step I felt a clear strength come from outside of me to give me an inner strength and peace. I found myself walking away from the water's edge to go back to the house, passing my mother taking yet another beating from my stepfather. From that time onwards I found myself making the three mile round journey to my village church every Sunday. I cannot begin to tell you the pain of all this and how it has affected and damaged me, as abuse does to anyone. With respect, unless you have survived abuse you cannot begin to grasp the pain, the isolation, shame and effect upon the whole of life.

I was fortunate enough to escape the farm at 17, when I joined the Merchant Navy. The farm was an isolated existence, living in the Peak District half a mile from the nearest neighbour. That isolation enabled my stepfather's abuse to go unnoticed and to isolate my family further. I was fortunate enough at 21 to have sufficient money to help my mum buy a house and so escape to a new life. I have never seen anyone look as terrified as my mother on that day. I could go on to explain my circumstances, but I want to get to my point.

I cannot emphasize enough that the only place I felt secure to open was in confession; even my mother did not know of my sexual abuse at that point.

The shame that I felt from years of abuse is beyond words, a shame that has shaped the whole of my life, a shame that belonged to the abuser but which the abused assimilates. The only place I felt able to speak of the abuse was to a priest in confession. I remember it clearly from all those years ago. I had hidden it for many years. The shame prevented me from speaking of it. I cannot emphasize enough that the only place I felt secure to open up was in confession; even my mother did not know of my sexual abuse at that point. When eventually she did learn of it she screamed. I ask you to pray for my mother that she may forgive my deceased stepfather.

Being able to make my confession in the knowledge that its confidentiality was absolute gave me the courage to speak of the abuse. It began a road to recovery, a road I am still tread-



#KeepTheSeal

ing. I am fortunate that God has given me the grace to forgive. I felt forgiveness from my heart as a gift during my first Holy Week at theological college. Forgiveness does not make the past go away, but it helps not to be destroyed by it.

Being able to make my confession in the knowledge that its confidentiality was absolute gave me the courage to speak of the abuse.

Please do not remove the time-honoured absolute nature of the seal; without it folk like me may not feel able to speak of their abuse. The church speaks of creating 'safe spaces' for the marginalized and needy; please do not remove this safe space from the victims of abuse. Please do not victimize the abused further by isolating us even more! Confession is a life line. The seal gives the victims of abuse the space and confidence to speak out, perhaps for the very first time, and so begin a journey of redemption. **ND**

The author of this letter wishes to remain anonymous.

Rector of St Paul's Church, Hasland and Vicar of St James' Church, Temple Normanton

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Totus Christus: Knowing and Loving the Son of Man

Guy Willis on an important conference at Pusey House

It seems that the 'death of God' is truly dead. The 2018 Pusey House Theological Conference, *Totus Christus: Knowing and Loving the Son of Man*, which ran from 9 July to the 11 of July this year, confirmed this. Those writers of the last century who tried to go beyond what they saw as the strictures of orthodoxy about the person and work of Jesus Christ have rightly become something of an irrelevance. What this conference showed is that, united by a shared belief in the incarnate Word, theologians from a variety of confessional backgrounds and disciplines can fruitfully engage upon this central tenet of the faith without diluting it.

The variety of speakers was paralleled by the wide range of participants, who came from all kinds of places and professions. Parish clergy from around the world (I think the furthest travelled was from Texas) mixed with theological students of all levels, together with professional academics, Religious and lay faithful. All were brought together in a conference the purpose of which was to 'examine some of the many registers of the mystery of Christ, both historically and thematically.'

In pursuit of this goal, a stimulating set of papers were delivered, with lively discussion and questions. They will be available in due course on the Pusey House website and, as with the first of these conferences, the proceedings will be published as a book which we will review in this magazine. A

guiding principle of the event is that, as the final speaker Bishop Rowan Williams reminded us, complex theological concepts like the person of Jesus Christ are not best understood when they are 'de-mythologized.' In fact, they are most deeply apprehended when they are encountered in liturgical and scriptural context, and the celebration of the daily offices and mass gave us the opportunity to put this into practice.

Father George Westhaver, the Principal of Pusey House, is to be congratulated on bringing this sold-out event to fruition. Thanks go too to the Greater Chapter, the team of stewards and the staff of St Cross College for what was a very well organised and smoothly run conference. All this meant that we had only to drink in the learning that was shared and ponder the truth of the Incarnation (there was fellowship to be had, too, over tea and coffee and at the two dinners). It was most appropriate that this should all take place in an institution whose founder, in the words of the Collect prayed there each day in his memory, 'did ... contend by his life and learning earnestly for the truth of the Incarnation of thy Son.'



The 2020 Pusey House Theological Conference on the Holy Spirit is planned for July that year, running from Monday 6 to Wednesday 8.

There are some well-tried spiritual exercises that enable an examination of conscience. There are passages from the Bible that can be used as a template for prayer and reflection: The Beatitudes, the Ten Commandments, 1 Corinthians 13 for example. There also 'lists' that can set an agenda for prayer particularly the seven 'deadly sins'. It struck me powerfully recently none of these exercises asks the question 'do you live in the truth?' They will help a penitent come to terms with the truth about themselves: to see themselves in the light of God's purposes and live, but they do not specifically ask the penitent 'is your life coloured by untruth?'

Jesus, John's Gospel tells us, was 'full of grace and truth'. He is the 'way, the truth and the life,' the truth he predicts 'will set you free'. The Holy Spirit Jesus teaches is 'the spirit of truth.' Truth Jesus teaches is the means to 'sanctification.' Jesus tells Pilate 'Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice.'

It is the hardest challenge in life to live 'truthfully.' To live in the truth is to live with vulnerability and humility. It demands courage to be a 'truth-speaker'. It

Ghostly Counsel

Living Truthfully

Andy Hawes is Warden of Edenham Regional Retreat House

is easier to trim the truth; to be economical with it. Today it is 'politically incorrect' to be truthful. Truth is the only criteria for true justice. Without truth we can never be fully in Christ. Where we avoid the truth about ourselves and our situation we live in an imagined reality and authentic relationships are not possible. There is always a victim somewhere of a lie be it white or grey.

Jesus is quite clear that the Devil is the 'father of lies.'

If we return to the classical texts cited above we see that Truth is the constant theme binding them together. Take the Ten Commandments. They command to live in the truth of the one God, not to set up 'false Gods' – to live in an alternative

truth. There should be no 'vain' use of God's name: we should not twist God to suit our own imagination and purposes. To keep the Sabbath is to live trusting in the providence of God: to rest in His truth. We cannot deny the 'truth' of our paternity and maternity – where we come from, to whom we belong. Living in the truth means not denying our past. Murder, Adultery, Theft and False Witness are the extreme examples of ordering the world around our self and our own passions hates and fantasies. To covet means that we are turning away from the reality of who and where we are to seek 'the imaginations of our hearts.'

To live truthfully is a huge challenge and it is so demanding that we live in a society and culture that long ago abandoned living in the truth and nothing but the truth. Where do we find truth in today's world of spin-doctors and twitter feeds? False news is now a recognised and effective political tool. One way we witness to Christ is to live in the Truth. Ask yourself the question every day – where have I failed to live truthfully today? It will lead to prayer that is deeply engaging with Christ who is both Grace and Truth.

A Good and Holy Thing

Robin Ward reminds us of the historical, theological and practical importance of the seal of the confession



#KeepTheSeal

The Church of England has always made provision for her members to confess their sins to a priest and receive absolution. At the Reformation the obligation to do this once a year at Easter was removed, but in the Book of Common Prayer, the Ordinal, and the Canons of the Church of England it is made clear that the practice is not abolished but retained and encouraged. In particular, those who are sick and those who are troubled in conscience are encouraged to open their grief and receive the benefit of absolution: the declaration by the priest in the name of Christ that the sins confessed are truly forgiven.

Priests hearing confessions in the Diocese of Canterbury are now required to make a statement before administering the rite. This is no sort of seal at all.

At the time of the Oxford Movement in the nineteenth century and subsequently, the practice of going to confession regularly became part of the rule of life for many Christians intending to live a catholic spiritual life in the Church of England, and this remains so. Even before then, confession and absolution, particularly in the case of serious illness, was understood to be a normal part of Christian practice; the novelist Henry Fielding has one of the characters in his novel *Tom Jones* say: 'Who but an atheist could think of leaving this world without having first made up his account? Without confessing his sins, and receiving that absolution which he knew he had one in the house duly authorized to give him?' Not only did the Church of England preserve and encourage the practice of going to confession, the law of the church also preserved the fundamental obligation of secrecy imposed on the priest who heard the confession, not to disclose or act on anything learned from a penitent. This law was expressed in the so-called proviso to Canon 113 of the Canons of 1603, which remains in force to this day. This canon obliged parish clergy and their churchwardens to present notorious public sinners for discipline in the church courts, but the proviso makes clear that if a person makes a confession of 'secret and hidden sins' the priest may never reveal or make known these sins under 'pain of irregularity', a penalty depriving the priest of any capacity to undertake the work of his office.

English law is complicated, and it is not entirely clear how this canonical obligation would protect a priest asked to give evidence in a court of law: as the House of Bishops puts it in its advice to clergy: 'Canon Law constrains a priest from disclosing details of any crime or offence which is revealed in the course of formal confession; however, there is some doubt as to whether this absolute privilege is consistent with the civil law.' But the principle on which the canon law rests is not sim-

ply a legal one, in the sense that it is a church rule that can be changed according to circumstances; it has its foundation in what is called the natural law, the way in which human beings learn and understand how to act morally from the evidence of God's purpose in creation.

What exactly is absolution? Jesus commissions the apostles immediately after his resurrection with these words: 'Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven. If you retain the sins of any, they are retained.' (John 20.22–3). These are the words that the Ordinal of the Church of England includes in the form for ordaining priests. Confession and absolution is, then, an act of judging established by Our Lord himself in the Church, and exercised by those who are ordained to succeed the apostles in the priesthood. A sacrament is 'an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace' and in the sacrament of confession, the outward and visible sign is reconciliation with the Church, which is what absolution means. The penitent is received back into the fellowship of the Church by the declaration of forgiveness, and according to Christ's own institution that reconciliation is a sure sign that grace is given and sin forgiven. As the great bishop Cosin of Durham wrote: 'The truth is, that in the Priest's Absolution there is the true power and virtue of forgiveness, which will most certainly take effect... as in Baptism.' Of course penitents must be sorry for their sins, and resolve not to sin again: confession and absolution are not an empty form or a magical excuse. But if they are sorry, the absolution given for sins is as effective as a new baptism.

It may be that in the Diocese of Canterbury sacramental confession is seen simply as part of the lumber room of outdated churchy practices.

Why then should there be any secrecy about this? In the early church we know that penance was sometimes public: the church in the person of the bishop exercised discipline over the congregation by excluding some sinners from communion, and those who had committed grave sins performed penance before the congregation and were readmitted. But it soon became apparent that this discipline would not enable all penitent sinners to return to communion with the Church. St Basil the Great noted the predicament of women who had been guilty of adultery: this was a capital offence in the Roman Empire, and so he allowed those who had been guilty of this very serious sin to confess and be reconciled with the Church in secrecy. We see here a development, rather like the sort of development that led to the baptism of infants becoming the norm: public penance, because of the difficulties and risks of administering it, gives way to private penance in which the

priest reconciling the penitent is strictly enjoined to maintain an absolute secrecy about what has been confessed.

St Thomas Aquinas spends some time considering why this secrecy, the seal of the confessional, is so important. He considers first, as most important, what many people feel to be the strongest argument against the seal: why should the priest keep what is known from a confession secret, if revealing it would do good to those who are harmed by the sin? Thomas uses the example of a person who confesses he is a heretic; we would be more likely to use the example of someone involved in the abuse of the innocent. The fundamental point that Thomas makes is that the priest hears the confession as God's minister, and that because the sacrament is instituted by God as a remedy and taking away of sin, it is a violation of the very nature of the sacrament to reveal what has been confessed. As he puts it: 'Charity does not require a man to find a remedy for a sin which he knows not; and that which is known in confession, is, as it were, unknown, since a man knows it, not as man, but as God knows it.'

Catholics in the Church of England will need to be emphatic in the resistance they offer to any change in the law of the seal of confession.

The seal then rests on an obligation that has three sources. The first is the one founded on natural law: the penitent comes to confess on the clear understanding that his or her confession is to remain secret, and a breach of this is a breach of that obligation of truthfulness between persons that nature proposes as fundamental to human relations. The second is the institution of the sacrament itself, in which Christ orders the forgiveness of sin through this sacrament as an act of judgement, which would not be possible without the seal. The third is the consistent witness of the canons of the church to the inviolability of the seal, not only in the Church of England (which in this respect continues and reasserts the teaching of the Fourth Lateran Council) but also the witness of the Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox churches, who administer this sacrament with a similar secrecy.

It is good that the Church of England preserved this discipline about the seal in its latest statement on this issue contained in the Guidelines for the Professional Conduct of the Clergy published in 2015, a document which has the force of an Act of Synod. In section 3.5 the Guidelines state: 'If a penitent makes a confession with the intention of receiving absolution the priest is forbidden (by the unrepealed proviso to Canon 113 of the Code of 1603) to reveal or make known to any person what has been confessed. This requirement of absolute confidentiality applies even after the death of the penitent.' However, this discipline is now under review in the light of the egregious failures of safeguarding that have taken place in the Church of England. This has happened most notoriously in the diocese of Canterbury itself, which has issued instructions to the clergy

on hearing confessions there that palpably and unashamedly break the current law.

Priests hearing confessions in the diocese are now required to make the following statement before administering the rite: 'If you touch on any matter in your confession that raises a concern about the wellbeing or safeguarding of another person or yourself, I am duty bound to pass that information on to the relevant agencies, which means that I am unable to keep such information confidential.' This is no sort of seal at all. We all know that horrible crimes have been committed by people who have abused the spiritual trust placed in them by others, but there is scant evidence that the seal of confession has contributed to this, and much evidence to suggest that if the clergy had in the past reported penitents to the authorities after hearing their confessions—homosexuals or women who have had abortions at a time when the criminal law punished such acts—the scandal would be all the greater now.

It may be that in the Diocese of Canterbury sacramental confession is seen simply as part of the lumber room of outdated churchy practices that don't have a role to play in modern mission. Certainly the length of time that the few remaining parishes of a definite catholic tradition there are kept vacant would suggest there is not much sympathy from the diocesan hierarchy. But anyone who experienced the recent Walsingham Youth Pilgrimage, at which five hundred young people were invited to come to a personal faith in Jesus Christ, and many of whom did so by making a confession of their past lives and receiving absolution, will know that this ministry is a living fountain of grace in the heart of the church. It is not hard to imagine what the effect on these young people would have been had the priests at Walsingham been compelled to read the 'Wilmott waiver' to them before beginning. It is scandalous for both priests and penitents that such a contradictory and, frankly, immoral situation should obtain with regard to confession and absolution. Catholics in the Church of England will need to be emphatic in the resistance they offer to any change in the law of the seal of confession, particularly as the review of the current discipline undertaken by the House of Bishops comes to its conclusion later this year. **ND**

Father Robin Ward is the Principal of St Stephen's House, Oxford.



Dr Margaret Barker giving the Assumption Lecture in Walsingham Parish Church

(Photo: Graham Howard)

Ordinations



Top row I-r: The Ordination of Fr Philip Kennedy at St Michael's Croydon; The First Mass of Fr Adam Edwards at Holy Trinity Ettingshall; The Ordination of Fr Aidan Edwards at St Anne's Lytham. **2nd row I-r:** The Ordination of Fr Matthew Topham and Fr Nigel Palmer at St Mary's Tottenham; The Ordination of Fr Joshua Bell at Norwich Cathedral; The Ordination of Fr Nicholas Johnson at Manchester Cathedral. **3rd row I-r:** The Ordination of Fr Richard Hume at St Mary and St Chad Longton; The Ordination of Fr Mark Mawhinney at St John's Seaham Harbour; The Ordination of Fr Aidan Bartlett and Fr James White at Holy Redeemer Clerkenwell. **Bottom row I-r:** The Ordination of Fr Edward Backhouse in the Trent and Derwent group of parishes; The Ordination of Fr Blair Radford at Ripon Cathedral; The First Mass of Fr Matthew Topham at St Mary's Tottenham

Gaudete Et Exsultate: On the Call to Holiness in Today's World

Julian Browning reads the latest Apostolic Exhortation by Pope Francis

I took Pope Francis's third *Apostolic Exhortation* on the parish pilgrimage I was leading at Walsingham this summer. This proved to be a good choice. Here is a tract for our time, a new guide to holiness. Francis tells us that 'growth in holiness is a journey in community, side by side with others' and that this is no holy huddle and is certainly not the passage to individual sanctification. As so often in current papal exhortations, we go back to basics. We study basic definitions of holiness with a view to practical results in our lives, not to understand a theological treatise. Those of us who are still getting to grips with Tractarian ideals and the hopes of the Oxford Movement might instinctively flinch at the phrase 'in today's world' and sigh deeply at the very thought of 'community', but the truth is that the only time we can be holy is today. 'Holiness is a gift that is offered to everyone, no one is excluded; it constitutes the distinctive character of every Christian.'

Anglican readers of the exhortation have an advantage: we do not have to take sides in the perennial arguments along the Benedict/Francis axis. Shed of that prejudice, we can take Francis's words at face value. He has the great gift of direct speech, as if addressing every individual believer. He goes to the heart of the matter. His first biblical quotation and the title of this exhortation is 'Rejoice and be glad' (Matt. 5.12). Jesus offers us true life, the happiness for which we were created. Holiness is the way we live this God-given life. The Pope is clear that one size does not fit all. Wonderful as the saints were and are, we cannot copy them. 'The important thing is that each believer discern his or her own path, that they bring out the very best of themselves, the most personal gifts that God has placed in their hearts [cf. 1 Cor. 12.7], rather than hopelessly trying to imitate something not meant for them.' Our entire life is to be a path of holiness, wherever it leads. Pope Francis is at his best as an author when up close, local and per-

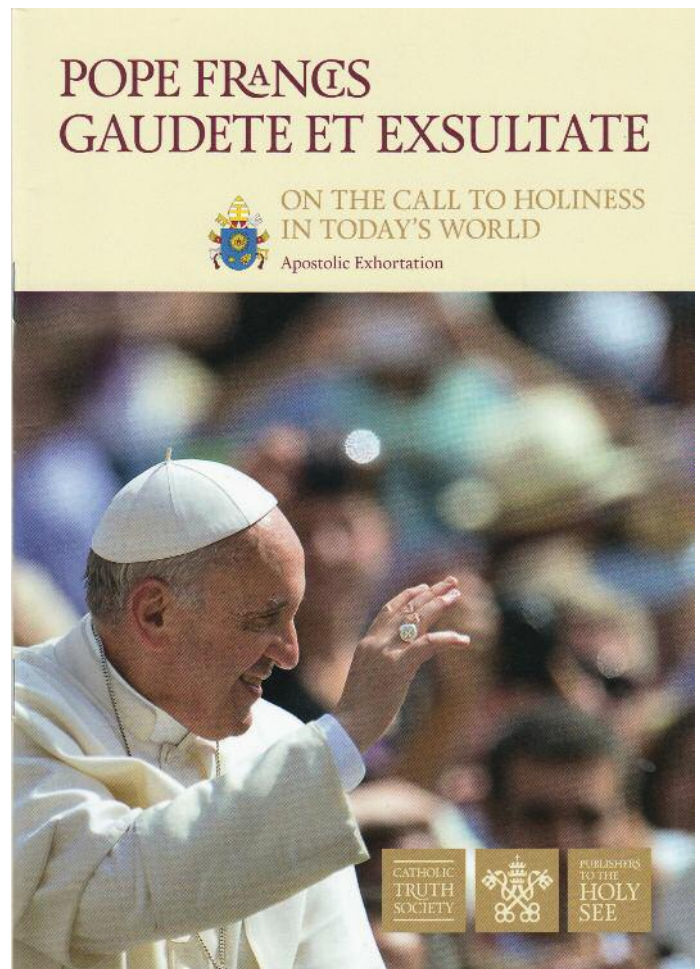
**Our entire life is to be a path of holiness,
wherever it leads. Pope Francis is at his
best as an author when up close, local
and personal.**

sonal. He gives a number of examples of how holiness is inseparable from the ordinary words and deeds of daily life: an ordinary life fired by an extraordinary love. 'Seeing and acting with mercy: that is holiness.' However, should any of us think that being nice to people and smiling in shops can constitute a holy day, the Pope soon disillusions us. He stresses the urgency and seriousness of every Christian vocation. 'The path of holiness is a source of peace and joy, given to us by the Spirit. At the same time, it demands that we keep our lamps lit [Luke 12.35] and be attentive.' Jesus's words 'clearly run counter to the way things are usually done in this world. Even if we find

Jesus's message attractive, the world pushes us towards another way of living.' There follows an account of the Beatitudes so succinct and challenging that any clerical reader short of a homily on the Beatitudes should order this booklet immediately.

**Be prepared to be challenged. Beyond the
papal charm, there is anger, the attractive
righteous anger of the prophet.**

Be prepared to be challenged. Beyond the papal charm, there is anger, the attractive righteous anger of the prophet. Jesus 'wants us to be saints and not to settle for a bland and mediocre existence.' Francis devotes many pages to timely warnings about false holiness and about the current threats to a holy life: 'Consumerism only bloats the heart.' We shall feel a sharp papal elbow digging into our ribs when we participate shamelessly in that 'individualistic and consumerist culture' which we affect to deplore. More seriously for the church, in his second chapter entitled 'Two Subtle Enemies of Holiness' Francis names two early heresies, Gnosticism and Pelagianism, and explains how they still plague us today. Quoting an earlier exhortation (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 2013), Francis asserts that



these two forms of doctrinal or disciplinary security give rise 'to a narcissistic and authoritarian elitism, whereby instead of evangelizing, one analyses and classifies others, and instead of opening the door to grace, one exhausts his or her energies in inspecting and verifying. In neither case is one really concerned about Jesus Christ or others.' Francis repeats Church teaching that we are justified not by our own works or efforts, but by the grace of the Lord, who always takes the initiative. So we do not become holy through moral perfection; nor does approbation by others matter in the slightest. Francis lays into

We stay on the path, individuals but together and mindful of each other, giving ourselves to the one journey, unashamedly counter-cultural or 'against the flow' as Francis puts it.

the 'New Pelagians,' those who see themselves justified by their own efforts and abilities. 'The result is a self-centred and elitist complacency, bereft of true love. This finds expression in a variety of apparently unconnected ways of thinking and acting: an obsession with the law, an absorption with social and political advantages, a punctilious concern with the Church's liturgy, doctrine and prestige, a vanity about the ability to manage practical matters, and an excessive concern with programmes of self-help and personal fulfilment.'



The Ordination of Fr Michael Vyse at Worksop Priory

The challenge goes deeper; this, after all, is a Jesuit Pope. Neutrality is not acceptable. 'Those who choose to remain neutral, who are satisfied with little, who renounce the ideal of giving themselves generously to the Lord, will never hold out.' That can be a hard teaching for Anglicans who have been taught to welcome compromise, even in matters of faith, order and morals. But for Francis, in his final chapter, 'Spiritual Combat, Vigilance and Discernment,' the battle with the prince of evil is real, 'more than a myth' as he says. The weapons we use for this combat are real too. 'Reality is greater than ideas' (*Evangelii Gaudium*). Maybe for us the metaphor of the pilgrimage or journey is more useful than that of battle. We can lose the path of holiness. We find ourselves alone in a dark wood, unsure how we got there, like Dante in *The Inferno* just before the sun rises on Good Friday. Francis says the Lord has given us the means to get back on the path: the cultivation of all that is good, daily prayer, meditation on the Word of God, the Mass, works of charity, and much else, including that divine gift encouraged by the Jesuits, discernment, to decide whether something new to our lives is 'new wine brought by God or an illusion created by the spirit of this world or the spirit of the devil.'

The weekend pilgrimage at Walsingham includes an evening procession of Our Lady by candlelight and Benediction: a living metaphor, so I thought the evening we joined it, of the call to holiness in today's world. We stay on the path, individuals but together and mindful of each other, giving ourselves to the one journey, unashamedly counter-cultural or 'against the flow' as Francis puts it, our lamps lit in the gathering darkness, moving forward joyfully and, as Pope Francis heads his chapter on the Beatitudes, 'In The Light of The Master.' **ND**

Apostolic Exhortation *Gaudete Et Exsultate* Of The Holy Father Francis on the Call to Holiness in Today's World. 66 pp. Catholic Truth Society, 2018. £4.95

Fr Julian Browning is an Honorary Assistant Priest at All Saints' Margaret Street.



The Society of Mary pilgrimage to Lourdes

Bede: An English Saint

John Gayford considers the life and legacy of the Venerable Bede

Bede was a modest but very intelligent Anglo-Saxon monk from Northumbria who lived from about 671 to 735, entering the monastic life as a child oblate at the age of seven. He has a humble shrine in Durham Cathedral and a plain railway station named after him on the Tyne and Wear Metro. Fortunately, he lived at the peak of Anglo-Saxon monastic life, before the Vikings sacked his and other monasteries at the end of the eighth century. In about 680, Abbot John the arch-cantor from Rome visited Bede's monastery and stayed for over a year teaching liturgy and chant, having a strong influence on the young Bede—remember there was no written music at that time and all chant had to be committed to memory. Due to an epidemic of plague while Bede was only a boy, the majority of the choir monks became unavailable, either because of death or illness. Bede and the abbot were left as the sole monks capable of singing the monastic offices, a remarkable accomplishment for such a young boy. Monastic health and numbers must have increased rapidly as there are later reports of 300 monks in each of the joint monasteries of Wearmouth and Jarrow. The communities could then produce three copies of the *Codex Amiatinus* which was a massive vellum version of the full Bible, our oldest extant copy of Jerome's complete Vulgate Bible, using Jerome's third revision of the Psalms, this time from the Hebrew. This was a colossal undertaking in which Bede was one of the scribes and also adviser, and which required a herd of nearly 2000 cattle to produce the vellum. One copy of the *Codex* was intended for each of the monasteries, and the third has survived the Viking ravages by being intended for the Pope, taken by Abbot Ceolfrith travelling through France where it became lost until relatively recently, the abbot dying on the journey. Unlike his two abbots (Benedict Biscop and Ceolfrith) Bede was not a traveller and rarely left the monastery, but spent his time writing, teaching

and were thus well received in the Carolingian Empire. This is fortunate for us as they could be re-imported back into England when Viking destruction had come to an end and monastic life was becoming re-established in the tenth century. It has to be remembered that Bede was writing principally for other monks and clergy, but this did not stop him writing on a wide range of topics. Works like his *Reckoning of Time* may have little relevance for us now, but are a useful source of study of medieval times. Most of his works were Biblical exegesis of selected passages from the Old Testament and more extensive coverage of the New Testament.

Bede was not an original or creative writer, but his judgements are scholarly and this prevented him from becoming controversial.

While most of his New Testament works relied on the principle of literal interpretation, others like *On the Tabernacle* and *On the Temple and the Song of Songs* used allegorical description which he preferred to call spiritual or mystical interpretation. Thus it is not surprising these works have always been popular in contemplative monastic meditation. Egbert was the first Archbishop of York and a pupil of Bede who received advice from his former master on corruptions that needed to be eradicated from the church in his diocese. Bede wrote many letters which are lost, as are other things he wrote in 'English' (this would be in Old English, which is probably more difficult to translate than his Latin!)

All the extensive works Bede wrote that have survived were written in a Latin which was (and still is) considered elegant and readable.

and singing the liturgy of the church. Bede became a deacon at the age of 19 when the usual age was 25, and he was ordained priest at the age of 30. He never became abbot or prior, but had all the qualities that made him a cantor and novice master. The Psalms were on Bede's lips from the time he entered the monastery. For any potential choir monk the learning of the Psalms by heart was an essential first task. To make matters more difficult Bede knew three versions of the Psalms and he added to this by composing an abbreviated version of the Psalter choosing specific verses which could be used in prayer.

All the extensive works Bede wrote that have survived were written in a Latin which was (and still is) considered el-



Bede was not an original or creative writer, but his judgements are scholarly and this prevented him from becoming controversial. He founded his opinions on tested and approved patristic thought. We do not know if his many homilies were ever preached, but they certainly proved useful for meditation. Bede wrote the majority of his homilies in the later part of his life, and less than 100 years after his death many were being included in the night office.

While there has through the centuries been a respect for the writings of Bede this was limited to those who could study the Latin text. In the last few decades there has been renewed interest in Bede and his works, with translation of his Latin texts into English. Added to this, Anglo-Saxon studies have become popular. Bede stands at the apex of this with an extensive bibliography. His *Ecclesiastical History of the English People* has been translated a number of times and has earned Bede the title 'Father of English History'. Most of what we know about Bede himself comes from passages included in this work.

Study of Bede takes us into a fascinating Anglo-Saxon world where kings and queens might become monks and nuns, and where monastic life is flowering before Viking invasions.

Almost in his own day Bede was known as 'The Venerable Bede' meaning that he was a person who was given great respect because of his wisdom and experience. Bede was never canonized in a formal sense, but at councils called by Emperor Louis the Pious at Aachen in 816 and 836 Bede was proclaimed as *doctor admirabilis* and admired for his teaching. It was not until 1899 that Pope Leo XIII proclaimed him as a Doctor of the Church. Although his saint's day varied in history it has now settled on 25 May.

Since the twelfth century we know that Bede has been depicted in art by imaginative artists who usually paint him as a monk sitting in his cell writing, sometimes surrounded by books. Dante included Bede as the only Englishman in his *Paradiso* and places him along with St Thomas Aquinas and St Bonaventure. There are nineteenth or twentieth century stained glass windows depicting Bede. Churches and educational institutes now bear his name and have commissioned statues and mosaics.

Study of Bede takes us into a fascinating Anglo-Saxon world where kings and queens might become monks and nuns, and where monastic life is flowering before Viking invasions. We can see the roots of our English history in church and state, and the wide knowledge, faith and wisdom of a humble monk in Northumbria—in Bede's time the edge of civilization. Bede has been called the Thomas Aquinas of the English even though he lived some 500 years earlier. He is worthy of much further study. **ND**

Revd Dr John Gayford is Honorary Assistant Priest at St Mary the Virgin, East Grinstead

Suggested further reading:

- Peter Hunter Blair, *The World of Bede* (Cambridge University Press, 1990).
- Scott DeGregorio, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Bede* (Cambridge University Press, 2010)
- Judith McClure and Roger Collins (editors with introductory notes), *Bede: The Ecclesiastical History of the English People* (Oxford University Press, 2008).
- Benedicta Ward, *The Venerable Bede* (Geoffrey Chapman, London, 1998).
- Benedicta Ward, *Bede and the Psalter* (SLG Press, Oxford, 2002).

Letter to the Editor

Lift high the Cross

From Fr Richard Norman

Sir

People and parishes across our constituency look forward each year to the celebration of patronal festivals; many of the Catholic societies of the constituency do likewise. The priest-brothers of the Society of the Holy Cross (SSC), the post-Reformation Church of England's oldest clerical fraternity, founded in 1855, celebrate both their anniversary of foundation (in February), and Holy Cross Day, the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, on 14 September each year.

This feast day commemorates three important events: the discovery of the True Cross by St Helena, mother of the Emperor Constantine; the dedication of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in 335, and the return of the True Cross to Jerusalem in the seventh-century, following its rescue from the Persian ruler Chosroës. Pious legend suggests that the Emperor Heraclius, returning to Jerusalem with the relic of the Cross, was unable to pass into the Church of the Holy Sepulchre until he had divested himself of his imperial attire, for the Cross of Christ reveals to us *our innate poverty*, and the *riches of God's grace*.

The brethren of the SSC pray daily that we 'should glory in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, for he is our salvation, our life and our resurrection: through him we are saved and made free.' Many Chapters of the Society will be planning suitable festivities for 14 September this year; but *next year* in 2019, the Chapter of St Justus & John Fisher in the Diocese of Rochester has arranged the use of the diocesan cathedral for a special celebration of our patronal festival, with Bishop Norman of Richborough. We hope that priests and people from nearby dioceses will also be able to join us, and/or that similar events might be organised elsewhere. Please put the date in your diaries now!

The Cross of Christ manifests the depth of God's love for us, and in it we find inspiration and example for our own pattern of Christian living. Please pray for the priests of the Society of the Holy Cross, for aspirants to the Society and members of the Pusey Guild, and for an increase in priestly vocations. And please join us this year and next in celebrating this special festival, during which we 'lift high the Cross, the love of Christ proclaim, 'til all the world adore His Sacred Name.'

*Father Richard Norman SSC
The Vicar, St George's Bickley*

SACRISTIES

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If you've visited Walsingham, there's a good chance that you know South Creak church (ND Aug 2012). Its large mediaeval sacristy (1) on the N side of the chancel was built c.1410 by an architect of S Nicholas' Kings Lynn.

Most sacristies are single-storey; just a few have more, with the upper floor providing living accommodation, like Warmington (Warks, ND Dec. 2014) and Church Hanborough (2: Oxon), both on the north side of the chancel. Those at the Norwich churches of S Peter Mancroft (3: Norfolk) and S Peter Parmentergate are at the E end, below the E windows of their churches.

At St Mary's, Warwick (4), the lay sacristan was required to spend each night in the first floor sacristy to watch over the treasures. He was also required to be sober in his habits, avoiding taverns, dice-playing and hunting and fishing nor 'ony other vnthrift [unthrifty] or riotous rule; nor having bolsters in his clothing, pikes on his shoes or long dagger at his side. Does this resemble any sacristan whom you know?

Further reading: James Willoughby, 'Inhabited Sacristies in Mediaeval England: The case of St Mary's, Warwick', *The Antiquaries Journal*, 2012, 92, pp 331–345 [ND](#)

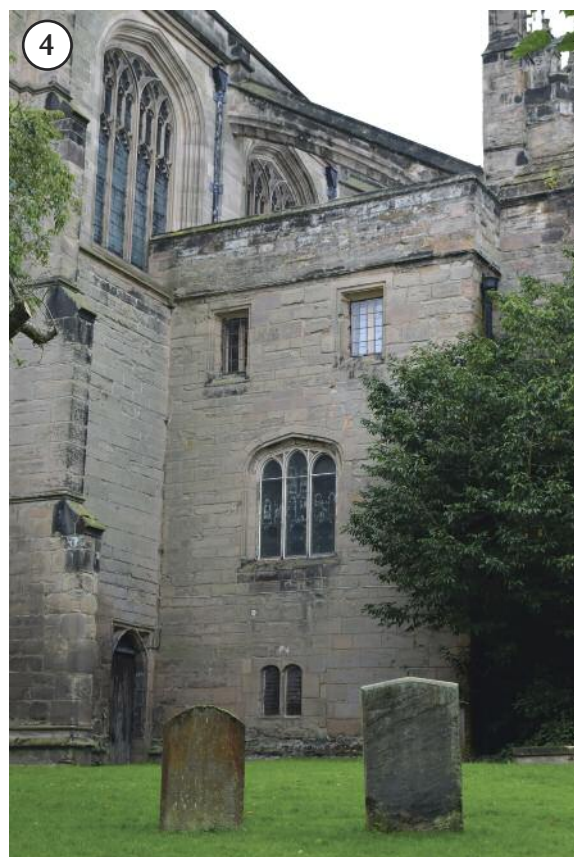
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is published on 5 October

Editorial



#KeepTheSeal

Throughout New Directions this month you will see a new logo: **#KeepTheSeal**. This is part of a campaign launched by Forward in Faith to ensure that the Seal of the Confessional is kept by the Church of England; that is to say, everything said to a priest in the confessional is totally confidential, and the priest cannot repeat what is said under any circumstances. The bishops of the Church of England are meeting later this year to discuss the Seal of the Confessional. We hope in their deliberations they will take into account the important contributions to the debate featured in this month's New Directions.

As well as these, and other articles in the months to come, we hope readers of New Directions who use the Sacrament of Reconciliation and make their Confession might write to their Diocesan Bishop to tell them of their experience of the sacrament. In particular the bishops will want to hear how important the strict confidentiality of the Seal is to the person making their confession and how removing the Seal would affect the way in which someone makes a confession, and indeed if it would prevent or put someone off from doing so. This is an important campaign that requires us all to work together: a change in the nature of the Seal of the Confessional would be a change to the very nature of the sacrament in which God offers through the Church His mercy and reconciling love.

It is often said of Confession: 'all may, none must, some should'. On the recent Society of Mary pilgrimage to Lourdes the youth group had their own reconciliation service on one of the evenings. This offered an opportunity for Bishop Philip North to do some serious teaching about the gifts God offers us through the Church. The most beautiful, he reminded them, is the ability to come to the priest and make a confession to God; and then to hear that you are forgiven, that you are loved by God, and reconciled to him. He emphasised that what was said in confession could never be repeated and that priests were willing, in the most extreme cases, to go to prison, rather than divulge something that was said in such a sacred context. If the Seal is held as sacred and important by clergy and laity alike, this has a profound effect on how we view and how

much we value this gift from God.

As part of thinking about the need to **#KeepTheSeal** we would also encourage priests and people to do some teaching in their parishes about the importance of the sacrament. Perhaps a time of teaching and readings, followed by a service of reconciliation, with priests available to hear confessions and to guide those coming to the sacrament for the first time through what can be a daunting prospect. We need to find new ways of teaching about the sacrament and explaining it to people; it is not just for the 'very religious' but for everyone, and as we showed in last month's edition it is fully part of our Anglican identity.

We also need to be sure that our priests are trained in how to hear confessions and to give counsel and advice. There should be courses for Ordinands and for those in their curacies; these should be organised by experienced priests and spiritual directors who are able to discuss openly and frankly what is required. It is in this way that the safeguarding concerns raised by many who want the Seal removed can be worked through. An open and honest conversation is required about this sacrament, and we hope that those who value it and seek to maintain it, whatever their views on other theological issues, will join with Forward in Faith in this campaign. We need to stand together in defence of the Catholic faith in the Church of England, and in particular this gift of mercy and reconciliation. Do not, however, simply think that someone else will take up the fight to preserve the seal: speak to your priest about having a service of reconciliation, having a teaching day on the sacrament, and making available literature in church. Think about how you can promote this spiritual exercise and how much you value it. And please do write to your diocesan bishop and let them know that this is a matter of importance to the whole church, and the very nature of the Church of England. The Body of Christ hung on the Cross bloodied and bruised by man's sins in order that we might be forgiven and reconciled with God. He has given the Church the means of that reconciliation, we should not turn away from it, or abandon it now when it is most needed to heal the Body of Christ on earth, bloodied and bruised as it is by man's sins. **ND**

the way we live now

Christopher Smith reflects on the importance of body and soul in created humanity

One of the reasons for the descent into bonkers-ness of the modern western world is, I suspect, to do with the difficulty that people have nowadays in believing that the human race has any particular, and indeed special, place in the universe: a place assigned by our creator that is different from that of any other part of creation (on this planet at least) because it is rational. Brought up to believe that the prophets and evangelists have been superseded by Charles Darwin, it becomes difficult for many of our contemporaries to see mankind as anything other than one step up from the great apes, and another step away from evolving into the next species on the evolutionary ladder.

But we have something else to say about the importance of being human, because we believe in the Incarnation. And the Incarnation has, as it were, validated our understanding of humanity at the centre of God's creation, even though human reason is weakened by sin. We have a rational soul which sets us apart from the rest of earth's created order, but we also have a body, and both body and soul were taken by the second person of the Trinity in the Incarnation, and he did not discard them on Ascension Day. Therefore, our body is neither that of a superior kind of ape, nor is it a temporary shelter for a spirit—a shelter which might be a nuisance or a plaything. No: the human body is part of the human being.

If being human is important, moral development consists in becoming more human, more authentically human. Although we are individuals, we exist within a society which is a kind of 'whole of wholes,' in which moral development is a continual process of trying to overcome the selfish part of our nature which is the consequence of the Fall, and trying to promote the truly human, grace-receiving self-giving part. The godless moderns may believe themselves to be liberated, but they actually live more limited lives, for it is the grace of

God which intensifies human freedom and fruitfulness.

In fact, part of being human, and therefore rational, is our ability to understand that we are created—that there is a God upon whose creative activity we are perpetually dependent. We should and, as Christians, we do, come before God with an attitude that combines gratitude and contentment with expectancy and wonder. Exhilarating, isn't it? So why are so many of our fellow human beings so miserable? Why are so

The godless moderns may believe themselves to be liberated, but they actually live more limited lives, for it is the grace of God which intensifies human freedom and fruitfulness.

many of them just sitting around, waiting to be offended about something? This year's silly season has been sillier than most, and if your attention wasn't wholly diverted by 'letterboxgate,' I wonder whether you noticed the belated reinstatement of a nurse called Sarah Kuteh.

Sister Kuteh once worked at Darent Valley Hospital in Dartford where, by all accounts, she was a good nurse. Being a Christian, it did not seem to her at all odd that there should be a question on the pre-operative assessment questionnaire about 'faith.' The modern NHS does at least pay lip service to the fact that, in seeking healing, we might have spiritual needs as well as purely physical ones.

There is, it seems, a fine line between seeking to address someone's spiritual needs when they are in hospital, and having any kind of meaningful conversation with them about God. It is, as most patients will know, hard enough to make someone in hospital hear what you are saying about your physical symptoms, let alone have any conversation about something whose impact is far longer-term than your illness. But Sister Kuteh, when working through the 'faith'

question in the paperwork, sometimes crossed that fine (and invisible) line, and caused 'offence.' Sometimes she offered to pray with patients. As she put it herself, 'I would... reassure them, based on the joy and peace that I really have found in the Lord.' And in 2016, in what must have seemed to her an act of simple human kindness, she gave a patient her own bible. Somehow, if she'd trotted down to the chaplaincy and obtained a bible from one of the 'spiritual care team,' that would have been ok. But you can

guess what happened next: she was marched off the premises without even being given the chance to say goodbye to her colleagues and dismissed after a disciplinary hearing a couple of months later, which at the very least seems to be taking a sledgehammer to crack a nut, and could have resulted in her being struck off.

Once upon a time, of course, it would have been seen as a good thing that Sister Kuteh's nursing career had been inspired by her Christian faith. Even so, the doughty sister took the case to an employment tribunal, where the judge opined that 'people should not express anything about their own beliefs without it first being raised as a question by anyone else,' although he did concede that he didn't know very much about religion. She didn't get her old job back but, last month, the Nursing and Midwifery Council lifted restrictions on her permission to practise. Of course, they made her beg, but in the end they felt able to say that she had 'set out the steps you have taken to address the deficiencies highlighted in your practice. You have addressed how you would act differently in the future.' Chilling, isn't it?

Sister Kuteh could see (and said as much) that there is a problem if we are only considering a person's physical needs. She knows that the body is not the whole person. Sadly, though, as Jacques Maritain put it, 'Man has achieved a fictitious emancipation.' **ND**

views, reviews and previews

art



AFTERMATH

Art in the wake of World War One

Tate Britain

until 24 September 2018

This show aims to explore the impact of the First World War on art in Britain, France and Germany in the period 1916-32. Some of the art is war art which reflects on the battlefields of France (there is no reflection on the war at sea or the conflicts which made this a world war). Other works depict the aftermath of fighting as shown in the war memorials and the wider society of the three countries after hostilities finished. The topic is huge and the treatment is inevitably bitty.

The war was the most destructive in Europe to date. The American Civil War had already shown how industrialised warfare could kill huge numbers of people and devastate tracts of town and country. The advances in technology and communications infrastructure between the ending of that war and

1914 made World War One a new kind of war. Because of mass mobilisation, sea blockades and aerial bombing more people than ever before in an international conflict were killed or wounded. The power of artillery and the machine gun meant that for much of the war small numbers of defenders could hold off much larger attacking forces. Contrary to what the planners had expected there was relatively little direct, hand-to-hand contact with the enemy - as many soldiers died in day-to-day maintenance of the trenches or casual shell fire as in going over the top. The cramped conditions, high incidence of illness and the continual but random threat of death created unheard of levels of stress amongst soldiers. Their suffering was one reason for atrocities against civilians - the Germans, in particular, pushed beyond the boundaries of acceptable behaviour to try to force a quick and overwhelming victory.

How did art cope with a war which was so impersonally destructive and vicious, all-embracing and psychologically damaging? During the fighting artists were prohibited from showing the horrors of death. Even after the war what death looked like was usually, as it were, painted from behind or conveyed in a highly stylised way. That was inevitable. Perhaps a third of those killed on the battlefield were so blown apart or cut up as to be unrecognisable. The destructive force of modern weapons created the Unknown Soldier, not so much the hero but the soldier whose body was too shattered to be identified. The bleakness of the Cenotaph - as opposed to the Germanic (!) romanticism of its French counterpart - is at least a thoughtful take on industrial, modernised warfare.

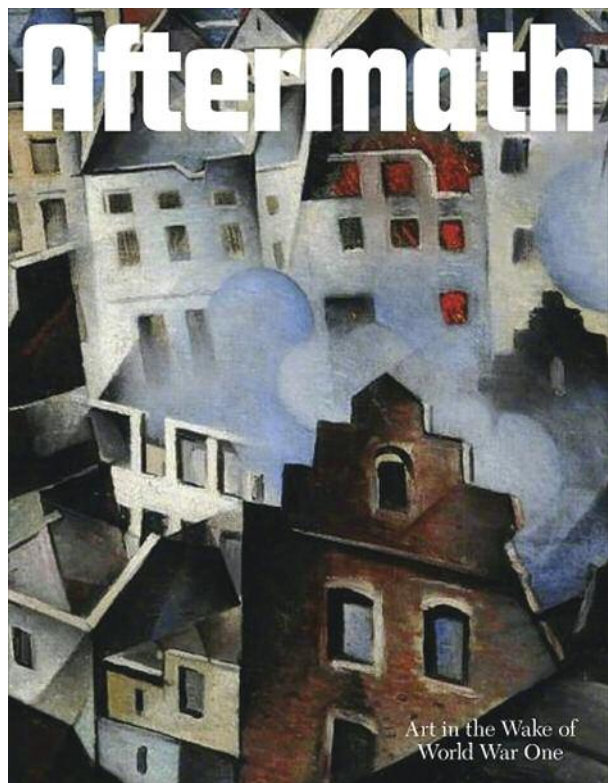
Most artists didn't or couldn't get to grips with this and nor does this

exhibition. However, the show does have two compensating strengths. The first is the turn against the pre-war celebration of modern, industrial life. Industry was to return as a leitmotif through the (modified) hope inspired by the USA in the works of Léger, Citroën and Lissitzky but in the immediate aftermath of war the English neo-pastoral, the classicism of Picasso, the celebration of the Jazz Age all suggest societies which had to look away from the present reality.

Those works are not particularly interesting. The main strength of the exhibition and the art which grabs the attention is very different. The emotional heart of this show lies in Germany, above all in the printmaking of Otto Dix, Max Beckmann and Käthe Kollwitz (rather less that of the French Georges Roualt). Dix's rage and anger at the German Establishment - politicians, industrialists, the military, journalists - who had led Germany to war expresses itself in ferocious caricature. There is nothing at Tate Britain which could match his great 'War' triptych in Dresden, the twentieth century's response to Grünewald's Crucifixion, but his prints have a nightmare quality which more than other artists does work with the human face (or skull). Beckman likewise responds to the post-1918 situation with a febrile anger which expresses the war's impact on the mind. His work with its disabled soldiers and ugly prostitutes is even more cartoonish than Dix's. However, the strongest and most artistically effective of the printmakers is Kollwitz. Her main works in this show are a series about the suffering of women, above all mothers. The very black - literally - prints have the greater force because they are simple and concentrated. They are an artistic achievement which for once is able to do justice to the theme.

To get the measure of the best of the artists at Tate Britain it helps to have some knowledge of the uniqueness of the First World War. Their work is not often great but it is not sanitised. It is a genuine howl of pain and anger.

Owen Higgs





ECCLESIASTICAL LAW

Fourth Edition

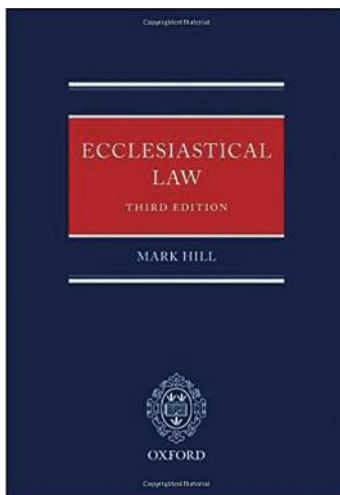
Mark Hill

OUP 2018

It has been more than a decade since the publication of the previous edition of Mark Hill's volume on Ecclesiastical Law, which takes its place in the OUP series of big black books for legal practitioners. I seem to remember nagging him at something a while ago to produce a fourth edition, and I can't have been the only person to do so, since I find it invaluable, and it needed an update. I may be a qualified barrister, but I like this book not because I have ever practised as a lawyer, but because I do practise as a parish priest.

It surprises me rather how little ecclesiastical law most of my colleagues know, and I can't say it featured highly in my training. Yet this is the body of law under which we work, not just the Canons themselves, but Measures, Acts of Synod, Acts of Parliament, rubrics, and the rest; the complex set of relationships between different aspects of ecclesiastical law reflects the complicated authority structure of the Church of England itself, which has evolved by retaining many parts of its ancient structure, and developing in various new ways. It is a subject worthy of study by ordinands and clergy in its own right, but it also governs the way we go about much of our day-to-day activity.

Hill writes a state-of-the-nation address by way of a preface, and he notes how busy a decade it has been in terms of 'the prodigious output of General Synod' and 'the business of the courts and tribunals of the Church of England,' and how much more quasi-legislation there is now, for instance in sets of guidelines and Codes of Practice attached to the 'black letter' legislation. When I wrote a chapter on the Clergy Discipline Measure 2003 for a textbook some years ago, I noted that the Measure itself was supplemented by two Statutory Instruments, the Clergy Discipline Rules 2005 (elucidated by an Explanatory Memorandum) and the Clergy Discipline Ap-



peal Rules 2005, and by a Code of Practice, published in 2006, plus Guidance on Penalties and a series of Practice Directions. For many New Directions readers, the legal mechanism which allows the admission of women to the bench of bishops has been highly significant, but the Measure contains only one clause: the document we all need to know is the House of Bishops' *Declaration on the Ministry of Bishops and Priests*.

There is much to be said, then, for a single-volume work which draws together and analyses the most significant parts of this body of law, and which begins with a helpful section on the history of the corpus and its sources. The format, reasonably enough, remains the same as the third edition, which itself had added a detailed section on the Clergy Discipline Measure. Colleagues need to know about that legislation, and they need to know the Guidelines for the Professional Conduct of the Clergy.

What else will the parish priest find useful in this volume, which, it must be said, represents a significant financial outlay? Well, we all need to remind ourselves of the rules for the conduct of Parochial and PCC meetings; indeed, the chairman needs to know rules better than his most punctilious PCC member, and I never begin the APCM without Mark Hill's book on the table in front of me. Then there are faculties – not only the how but also the why (in legal terms) – and the useful section of particular cases has been lightly updated. And are we secure in our knowledge of the law relating to marriage, particularly in the light of recent changes, and given that many clergy do no more than one wedding a year nowadays? What of other liturgical matters including the seal of

the confessional? And what happens when you don't appoint two church wardens, or you are wondering about the legal status of the demand for higher Quota? And what if you find yourself wanting to fight a proposal for a pastoral scheme or Bishop's Mission Order?

I am inclined to think it a pity that the 'Materials' section has taken another heavy pruning, this time saving the publisher over 150 pages; I take the point that the Church Representation Rules are currently undergoing a significant re-drafting in General Synod, and that materials are easily obtained from the Internet (if one knows where to look!), but there was some benefit in having as much stuff as possible in one place. There are the inevitable minor errors – the sub-editor might want to apologise to the Bishop of Stepney for getting his Christian name wrong – but it would be a rare volume of this kind that escaped without any mistakes. This is undoubtedly a helpful revision of an important book, which is worth the investment.

Christopher Smith

HOLY LIVING

The Christian Tradition for Today

Rowan Williams

Bloomsbury Continuum 2017,
240pp, £12.99, ISBN 9781472946089

On a visit to the local monastery for spiritual direction I was struck by the number of monks reading this book and raised humorously the question 'how are you getting on with Holy Living?' My own reading had preceded theirs and this review provides my answer! That so many involved in religious life and spiritual direction look to Rowan Williams as an authority is a tribute to the breadth and depth of his engagement with the Christian tradition, even if the density of his thought can be overpowering.

He is challenging, full of spiritual wisdom and can make one sentence summaries of immense realms. I liked these sentences on church controversy, globalisation, Sunday trading and sex: 'We have little incentive to be open with each other if we live in an ecclesial environment where political conflict and various kinds of grievance are the dominant currency... Structures and landscapes that proclaim the powerlessness

ROWAN WILLIAMS



The Christian
tradition for today

BLOOMSBURY

of individuals and of small-scale societies to exercise any creative role in moulding the environment not mapped or shaped with human beings in mind... The weekend may be a lost cause in many communities, thanks to that triumph of functional and acquisitive philosophy that was the legitimising of Sunday trading... Sex is not everything, and there are imperatives more urgent where the Kingdom of God is concerned; but sex is capable of revealing God in the deliberate weakness of a love that entrusts itself to another with no pre-negotiated limits of time and availability. That, says Scripture, is what sexual intimacy can be for humans. As so often with the New Testament, the question is thrown back to us: now what are you going to do about making such a possibility real?

Williams' capacity to open up a subject for his reader and then throw out the challenge to make what's possible real is evident to those who stick with him as an exponent of Christian spirituality. This book selects his thinking on the Rule of St Benedict, the Bible, Icons, contemplation, St Teresa of Avila and self-knowledge placing them incongruously side by side with no linkage save they're all in Christian tradition. If you're unfamiliar with any of these this book will remedy your ignorance and give more than a taster of their spiritual meaning and power. I was particularly impressed by what was shared about self-knowledge, Teresa and the Eucharist and how contemplation makes the Church more fully the Church.

The author is a follower of Thomas Merton's spiritual ecumenism that sees the Christian discipline of contemplation as linked to awakening humanity and bringing it into its right mind. Being faithful especially in 'our contemplative appropriation of the gift received in the Eucharist, which is the realization in us of the active relation between Father and Son in the Trinity, ...(we) become more transparent to the divine act of saving self-emptying, for the sake of the world.' Reflecting his own use of icons in prayer Bishop Rowan writes similarly: 'the person who stands in front of the icon is not the only one doing the looking. Such a person is being seen, being acted upon, in this framework. The icon, therefore, is not a passive bit of decoration but an active presence. And the liturgical use and presence of icons is part of an entire understanding of the life of prayer, the baptized life, as being brought into a presence so as oneself to become a kind of presence.'

'Holy Living' is implicitly critical of quick-fix when it comes to gaining holiness, speaking of 'a journey that entails an 'excavation' of the passions and a disciplining of them... nothing to do with some sort of exclusion or denial of the emotions, but about the rational inhabiting and understanding of the instinctual life in such a way that it doesn't take over and dictate your relations with God or with one another. The holy person is the one 'free from passion' because he or she is the person free from having their relations totally dictated by instinct, self-defence - reactivity, as we might say these days.' Such a paragraph might take a life-time to implement!

It is impressive how this book lacks 'agenda.' Though Rowan Williams is perceived as victim and counter to narrow streams of Anglicanism the most he says critical of such thinking is on the use of the Bible: 'To claim that we receive revelation is not... to assert that we are in possession of answers not provided to others, but to say that we have been impelled by the act of God into (an) unfolding process of reflection and growth.' What he hands on from Teresa of Avila about right sharing of the Eucharist similarly implies ongoing readiness to empty yourself as Christ does into bread and wine as counter to 'high church superfi-

ciality.'

'Holy Living' is a challenging read in its language and uneven structure but all the more for those who press on with it and into it as a resource for gaining 'the holiness without which no one will see the Lord' (Hebrews 12:14b). I end with a quotation to that end which is a suitable last word on an intriguing and challenging book. 'All contemplating of God presupposes God's own absorbed and joyful knowing of himself and gazing upon himself in the trinitarian life.'

John Twisleton

THE IMPERIAL TEA PARTY: FAMILY, POLITICS AND BETRAYAL

The Ill-Fated British and Russian Royal Alliance

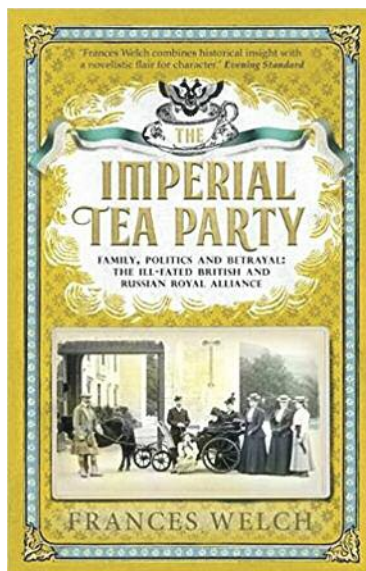
Frances Welch

Short Books 2018 288pp, £12.99

ISBN 178072305-6

The centenary of the Bolshevik coup d'état was overshadowed by the continued fascination with the tragic fate of the Romanovs. Frances Welch, who has a good track record writing about the fall of the dynasty, here looks at three occasions when the British and Russian Royal Families met. That gross, greedy, guzzling, geriatric gorgon Queen Victoria, the central figure of the extensive cousinage (a mixture of dynastic politics and a marriage bureau), presided at Balmoral. Her much more genial and politically adept successor, Edward VII, met Tsar Nicholas and his family at sea, once off Reval (now Tallinn), the other off the Isle of Wight. Lurking in the background is the uninvited Kaiser Wilhelm II.

A rich vein of sources has been mined, much from the Royal Archives. The regal diaries, especially by the Tsar, are generally bland, uninformative and insipid - but they provide amusing counterpoint to the details of the encounters. Occasionally too much is read into them. There is little point in looking for significance or emotional depth. The Tsar was dim and the Tsarina neurotic. Courtiers offer more detail and sharply etched remarks and pointed comments. It is interesting to see different perspectives on characters and incidents. The most rounded character (in several senses) is King Edward who emerged from a rack-



ety and scandal-strewn youth to a maturity that mixed bonhomie with political and diplomatic acumen. It might be regretted that he did not ascend the throne sooner.

There is much about court etiquette, uniforms, titles, precedence and a few too many detailed menus: among the ten tempting culinary offerings on the Royal Yacht HMS Victoria and Albert anchored outside Reval were Filets de Soles à la Joinville, Cailles froides à la Russe, Jambon au Champagne, Pains d'Ananas à la Créole, and Glace aux Pêches.

Politics, diplomatic exchanges, and treaty discussions, were conducted between the Sovereigns and their government representatives. Those between the Tsar and Lord Salisbury at Balmoral are well recorded. At Reval and the Isle of Wight the King and those present of his ministers (among them Sir Edward Grey) and Court (Sir Frederick Ponsonby) were impressed with the Russian Prime Minister, Pytor Stolypin. His assassination in 1911 was a disaster for the dynasty.

The uncanny resemblance between the Tsar and his cousin George (variously in these encounters Duke of York, then Prince of Wales) and their affectionate regard one for another makes the dénouement of their relationship all the more poignant. After his deposition from the throne, there were plans to rescue him by the Royal Navy with the support of the Lloyd George and the government and with the acquiescence of the Provisional Government in Russia and, crucially, with the firm agreement of King George V. The fall of the Provisional Government and the eventual seizure of power by the

Bolsheviks and their decision to imprison and kill the Royal family made such a rescue much more problematic but not impossible. However, King George had a change of heart.

He was undoubtedly influenced by the advice of his Private Secretary Lord Stamfordham who was anxious that sheltering an autocrat would be resented by public opinion and affect the popularity of the monarchy. However, he could have declined Stamfordham's advice as later he did when advised not to attend an Orthodox Liturgy for the Tsar after the assassination. Frances Welch dispassionately sets out the sequence of the change of heart, but it cannot excuse the moral failure.

This is a charming study, intimate but alive to the wider context and, inevitably, overshadowed with the cruel hand of fate that struck in a cellar at Ekaterinberg.

William Davage

PHOEBE - A STORY

Paula Gooder

Hodder & Stoughton 2018, £8.99, 320pp
ISBN 9781473669727

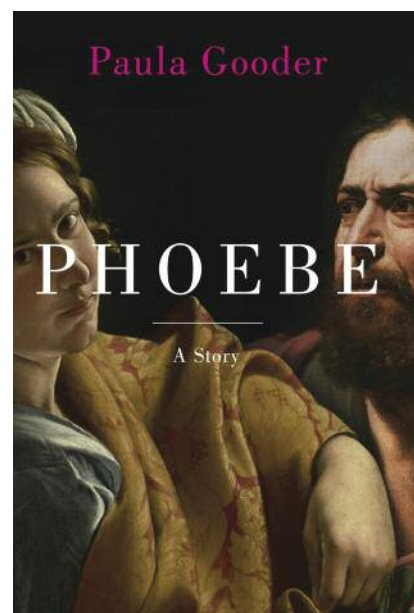
I remember how 101 Best Bible Stories first got me reading Scripture. When someone honours the biblical accounts by rewriting them imaginatively yet faithfully, they engage a wider readership. In *Phoebe*, Paula Gooder uses her New Testament scholarship to open up the world of the first Christians, bringing scripture alive through writing a life of Paul's co-worker Phoebe.

You can engage with the book in two ways. Two thirds of it is a well written 32 Chapter story centred on Phoebe. The last third reflects back on the story providing notes on the chapters. Besides explaining or justifying the plot, the notes further open up the world of the first century and the emergence of Christianity within it. Rome, Corinth and Jerusalem are principal places of interest. Gooder builds from the verses that mention Phoebe in Romans Chapter 16: 'I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a deacon of the church at Cenchreae, so that you may welcome her in the Lord as is fitting for the saints, and help her in whatever she may require from you, for she has been a benefactor of many and of myself as well.'

It's a story always on the move linked to the last movement of Paul from Jerusalem to Rome and Phoebe's presumed carriage of his letter to the Romans from Corinth to the Christian community in Rome. The journeys, including Paul's plan to take the Good News to Western Europe, are solidly grounded in scripture. What is particularly powerful is that alongside these core elements of the narrative, Paula Gooder imagines and presents Phoebe's faith journey. This faith is nurtured by new Christian companions she finds in Rome who help encourage and organise her ongoing mission. The author presents a balanced critique of Paul through the way his letter is imagined to have been received by different parties in Rome.

When we read the epistles unlike the Gospels they can come at us cold because we lack an understanding of the context. Through Phoebe Paula Gooder provides an imaginative context for Paul's letters using her knowledge of him and her own capacity to think herself into how the people Paul wrote to might have responded to the arrival his letters. His letter to the Romans that is being considered, so full of the doctrinal working out of the death-defying love of God shown to us in Jesus Christ, makes a good talking point throughout Phoebe's story. Many of the conversations are about the practical significance of the Good News of Jesus for folk with the openness to face up to their need of grace.

Since the book aims to inform as much as to entertain the author disclaims it as a novel, apologising for the copious



commentary towards the end that would not suit as footnotes to the text proper. Paula Gooder half apologises for challenging the tradition of the Church in reserving holy orders to men, showing determination to set right what she sees as a misinterpretation of Paul: 'I have lost count of the times I have been told that Paul is 'bad for women', or something similar. You will gather, as you read, that I do not agree.'

As Rowan Williams writes in his commendation: 'Very few people are as expert as Paula Gooder in communicating biblical scholarship clearly and creatively, and this first venture into historical story-telling will bring the biblical text freshly alive for a wide and enthusiastic readership.'

John Twisleton

THE POLITICAL SAMARITAN: HOW POWER HIJACKED A PARABLE

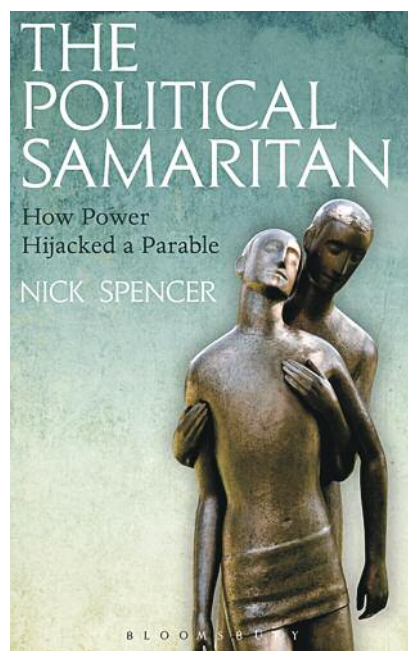
Nick Spencer

Bloomsbury 2017

In the corner of a community centre in one of my parishes is a miners' banner showing the Good Samaritan lifting the injured man onto his donkey, and Jesus' words: 'Go and do thou likewise.' Although it is paraded once a year at the Durham Miners' Gala, I had naively assumed it was a relic of a bygone age when politicians (in this case trade-unionists) 'did God.' Nick Spencer's book suggests forcibly that I am wrong: 'God talk' is alive and well in contemporary politics, and not just in the USA. Although Spencer contends, like many others, that public discourse is in crisis- 'the nadir of post-truth politics', characterised by the mistrust of anyone who exercises power and crippling short attention spans, he also argues that political discourse still needs a 'divine register' to give it a 'horizon-expanding impact', this being provided by reference to authoritative texts, normally, though not exclusively, the Bible.

The heart of the book is its second chapter, in which Spencer charts the rise of what he calls 'the political Samaritan': references made to the parable of the Good Samaritan beginning with British abolitionists at the end of the eighteenth century, through key figures such as Martin Luther King, to the present day. His key interest is in British parliamentarians,

especially Prime Ministers and party leaders, from Thatcher onwards, noting differences between left and right. For Thatcher, who perhaps made the most extended political use of the Samaritan in modern times, the parable was about the exercise of personal virtue and (bizarrely) the need for individuals to have personal wealth in order to offer charity; for the often-forgotten John Smith, the story was about the essentially relational nature of human beings, a theme taken up by Tony Blair in a rare allusion to scripture in his 1995 party conference speech: 'I am my brother's keeper; I will not walk by on the other side.' Not 'walking by on the other side' is the phrase most often quoted in parliamentary debate right up to the present, used to justify intervention in situations as diverse as the 2008 credit crunch (Gordon Brown), the war in Syria



(Hilary Benn) and, perhaps understandably, the refugee crisis (Nicola Sturgeon and many others).

Nonetheless, to me, this phrase poses a question about Spencer's argument: can the repeated use of one Biblical phrase really be considered as demonstrating a reverence for scripture and Christian values in contemporary debate? After all, Spencer himself concedes that the Good Samaritan is something of an exception in our national consciousness: with which other of Jesus' parables would 70% of British adults today claim to be familiar? He also questions in his last chapter as to whether the Good Samaritan might be classified in George Orwell's linguistic cat-

egory of the 'dying metaphor,' although Spencer happily concludes not: 'for those politicians who dare to cross the road and pick it up, the parable shows surprising signs of life, more spirited, edgier and sharper than we might have expected.' And, ultimately my question appears not to matter: the very fact that such phrases and allusions are used, consciously or unconsciously, is enough for Spencer. Echoing Rowan Williams' assessment that our society remains 'haunted by Christianity', Spencer argues in his last chapter that Christianity has shaped our culture, values and language 'in much the same way that our landscape has been shaped by the Ice-Age. The majority of the ice has now gone, 'but we are the way we are because of its long, formative presence.' Commentators such as the atheist Matthew Parris have (grudgingly) accepted that this landscape will not change; and Spencer proposes this fact as challenge to those 'liberal' political philosophers and commentators who argue that political language must be 'neutral' to 'comprehensive doctrines' such as religion.

This is a hugely enjoyable book, and for its 166 widely typed pages, impressively wide-ranging: elsewhere we are offered a lively commentary on the text of the parable in Luke 10 and the exegetical issues surrounding its interpretation; we also gain a useful overview of the ways in which the parable has been interpreted in the church, particularly of allegorical readings from Irenaeus onwards. (Incidentally, footnotes rather than endnotes would be especially helpful in these sections). From all this, Spencer wisely concludes that no one reading of the parable will suffice although he does offer a tentative hierarchy of the contemporary political interpretations. He stresses the parable's role in shifting the idea of 'neighbour' from something or someone I define to someone I am, and its powerful call to exclude no one from neighbourliness or even person-hood.

Overall, the book certainly confirms The Economist's assessment of Spencer as 'like a prophet crying in the post-modern wilderness.' Its arguments should form part of the armoury of those who argue and campaign for the ongoing and rightful place of Christian 'neighbourliness' and compassion in British politics today.

John Livesley

September Diary

Thurifer shares some thoughts

Thomas Trotter has been the Birmingham City Organist since 1983, succeeding the legendary George Thalben-Ball. He gives lunchtime recitals in the Town Hall or Symphony Hall once a fortnight from October to July. The admission fee is modest, the repertoire is extensive, and performance is never less than excellent. It is a rare survivor of a civic commitment to the arts in general and music in particular. These positions remain a feature in some cities, particularly in the North. There is an extensive programme of organ recitals throughout the country, in cathedrals, colleges, galleries and concert halls, and those who subscribe to Steve Smith's weekly Recital Diary can obtain details. It is an excellent and comprehensive service. See recitaldiary@cdmnet.org for further details.

*

Sir Thomas Beecham once commented that the British public knew nothing about music but liked the sound it made. I am among that multitude. I may not know much about music but I know what I like and don't like. I have an aversion to certain musical instruments: the flute (unhappy liturgical experiences at my theological college), accordion, and guitar, both acoustic and electric. Aware of that prejudice, I recently attended a series of lectures on the history of the guitar by Professor Christopher Page. 'The Guitar in England from Henry VIII to Samuel Pepys' was, to this prejudiced neophyte, both absorbing and revelatory. They may not have overcome my animus against the instrument, but it is better informed. The lectures were given under the auspices of Gresham College, an entirely beneficent organization and the result of disinterested philanthropy by merchant and financier Sir Thomas Gresham (c.1519–1579). The lectures on a variety of subjects—religion, science, technology, the arts, literature, politics—are one of the advantages of living in London, but all can have access as they can be found on the web, sometimes by live streaming. Highly recommended: www.gresham.ac.uk

*

Clerical vesture in films, on television and on stage is often a source of irritation. I spotted a particularly egregious one while sampling ITV Encore's *Maigret* (1992/3), starring Michael Gambon. Maigret attended the 'First Mass of All Souls' (after which he found a dead body in a pew) at which the 'celebrant' wore a green dalmatic. Whoever was responsible (costumers? production staff?) simply had not tried. Most commonly it is a biretta worn the wrong way around. A recent example is in the otherwise laudable film *The Happy Prince*. A priest acquaintance once advised a company making a murder mystery partly set in an Anglican theological college. He gave what help he could, answered questions he was asked. A few weeks later he had a telephone call from the production de-

signer, and was told that a life-size statue of the Sacred Heart had turned up and asked whether or not it would be appropriate in an Anglican seminary. 'Only in an ordinand's room, and only in one seminary' was my friend's answer. No prizes for guessing which college.

*

In the same college a seminarian, now a distinguished academic, author and theologian, was disturbed in his revision for Finals by one of his fellows noisily searching for a library book. In the midst of a sustained, wittily scathing tirade he told the hapless offender: 'Don't stand there simpering like some middle-distance Comper cherub.'

*

Political junkies struggling on a Church of England pension, and those who enjoyed his previous book on the Referendum in 2016, will be grateful that Tim Shipman's book on the 2017 General Election is now available in paperback (*Fall*

Out: A Year of Political Mayhem, Collins, £9.99). If, as the commonplace has it, journalism is the first draft of history, this book bears it out. Bolstered by a range of sources it is not without human sympathy for the motley crew it anatomizes. Anyone with a couple of brain cells to rub together knows the background, the twists and turns, the catastrophic mistakes, the misplaced confidences, the betrayals, lies, melt-downs, the bathos and the pathos, but there is still excitement to be had and surprises to enjoy in the book. Human failings and frailties abound in this sorry tale that lacks heroes but has many villains. This is not a tale nor a

tragedy of Shakespearean proportions—it is at best tragical-comical—but it revives that once estimable theatrical genre the 'Whitehall farce.'

*

People-watching can be an occupational hazard. Occasionally, amidst the dreary sartorial dross gold can be found. He was middle-aged, wearing an impeccably cut three-piece suit, a silver chain and fob to his pocket watch, a Tattersall shirt with Guards' tie. His were trendier than traditional brogues. He sported a moustache, twirled at the ends, probably not waxed. My initial instinct was 'an officer and gentlemen, perfectly kitted out' (apart from the shoes). This was immediately followed by 'officer or mountebank?' Perhaps he was on his way to inveigle himself into the affections and fleece some elderly lavender-scented spinster or bachelor eking out a lonely existence in some elegant, fading Georgian terrace in the People's Republic of Islington (props Mr Corbyn and Lady Nugee), on a modest income from some long-established but now declining family trust. A cad and a bounder, or worse, from the pages of some Thirties or post-War crime fiction. Less a gentleman than a cliché. **ND**

Thurifer

I first saw Alan Bennett in late 1960 when he was teaching history at Magdalen in a modest way, having got his Oxford First in that subject. He was pointed out to me as he processed with other dons to the high table for a 'formal hall' dinner. Dudley Moore, another of the *Beyond The Fringe* fab four, had been Magdalen organ scholar until 1959, and his built-up shoe for pedal work remained in Dr Bernard Rose's organ loft as a memento. *Beyond the Fringe* spawned the age of satire and the BBC's *That Was The Week That Was* with David Frost, as well as the magazine *Private Eye*, and eventually *Monty Python*, *Dud & Pete* and much, much more. Those times were before 'stand-up comedy' and the memory of the Suez fiasco being recent enough for Brits to accept unrestrained self-criticism ladled out with comic flair as nothing less than we deserved (I'd argue Brexit only became conceivable as our return to economic success—thanks to EU membership—restored traditional British ideas above our station.) Bennett's flair for gentle satire as a diarist and playwright made him into that rare thing, a 'national treasure.' By contrast, Jonathan Miller's theatre and opera career and his polymath brilliance ruled him out of that category. Cleverness has always been suspect in the UK. Today Bennett is sole survivor of all that affectionate cynicism.

In 1968, Bennett's bitingly hilarious *Forty Years On* opened at the Apollo Theatre with John Gielgud as headmaster. It was an irresistible send-up of Britain's imperial past and belief in our national virtue. Bennett's revue in many ways anticipated Lindsay Anderson's sexier, more serious (and Brechtian) film *if...* out the same year and winner at the Cannes Film Festival. I rustled up a large group of flatmates and friends to join me at the Apollo for a second visit. The jokes were based on history of which many of us were somewhat ignorant, but their delivery was irresistible.

People go to almost all Bennett's plays poised to laugh. He has a quirky way of looking at how things are which people

of a certain age (mine and older) seem to find accurate enough to be entertaining. But just as I found David Hare's *Racing Demon* no laughing matter because its view of the CofE was so superficial, so Alan Bennett's secure confidence about British follies six years ago in *People* (his play about the National Trust), and now again in *Allelujah!* (about euthanasia, Alzheimer's and the NHS) seems to me

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actually quite grimly and unpleasantly truthless. In fact Bennett in his dotage has become conventional and unperceptive in so much of what he is saying. He was always content to exploit clichés—which have their comic angle—but the way he assembles his vehicles is now lazy and unrevealing. Retired National Theatre director Nicholas Hytner, on whom



Bennett relies to straighten out muddles and stand up floundering complexities, does not endow the acting with too much reality. The new Bridge Theatre is not a lovely building: overly large and the wrong shape, and with many seats uncomfortably positioned, but with a tally of spectators that guarantees profits for popularity, which is the principle Hytner adopted at the National (though a subsidized national institution should have other crucial concerns).

If there is anything much to be said seriously or entertainingly about the fact

that we age—some of us lose our marbles, and we all die, often getting ill on the way—this is not it. *Allelujah!* shows a certain stiff-upper-lipness about the fundamentals, but very little appropriate feeling for what it may be like to care for those passing through the process (which Bennett himself, healthy and happy at 84, is not yet requiring). My big sister Jane is now 81 and has

Alzheimer's, and has depended for nearly a decade on two wonderfully different and affectionate carers. One is English, the other Polish, both are Roman Catholic but who have not engaged in giving her a helping hand towards the next world as Bennett's Sister Gilchrist does with a succession of

suitable candidates and no concern. But Jane in a 'care home' (which tends to mean 'don't-care-home') would almost certainly have lost what makes her loss of communication and self-help tolerable—classical music on the radio and consistent kindness and concern.

The audience when I went along on a £35 ticket for a terrible seat seemed full of people who might well have been in the play. The activities in which the Beth's geriatric ward seemed to engage to keep clients cheerful would not be seen or heard in most NHS hospitals doing a good job, but care homes go in for this sort of stuff. *Allelujah!* is a musical as well as a play, and sometimes the music is an occasion for dancing, all of which helps audiences have a mindlessly good time while not digging deeply into various topics lightly touched on. None of the characters really gets enough space or time to come alive and make a case, though Samuel Barnett as one patient's slightly alienated gay son (a rich management consultant) did what he could. Jeff Rawle as his dad—doomed to Sister Gilchrist's death-by-injection when work experience Andy (David Moorst) pours his urine all over his clothes—was equally lively. But mostly Bennett's thoughts about local small hospitals were nonsense. The NHS has better new ideas for GPs, though Bennett and Hytner know what can make audiences giggle and enjoy! **ND**

A Courtyard in Jerusalem

Ann George takes a friend on a particularly memorable Old City walk

On the wall above my head as I write this article is hung a framed A4 card, signed by Archbishop Jäffo of the Syrian Orthodox Church, and displaying the Lord's Prayer, but written in a language I cannot read. I obtained this treasure on my first pilgrimage to Jerusalem, which was led by an elderly priest who knew the archbishop quite well. We were given a guided tour of St Mark's monastery church by one of the resident Syrian Orthodox priests and then the group had an audience with the archbishop in his imposing palace audience chamber. In the church the priest had spoken the Lord's Prayer for us: a great event for me, as, for the first time in my life, I heard the language that is now the closest equivalent to the language that Jesus had spoken every day during his ministry: Aramaic. Old Syriac or Western Aramaic is the language still used in the Syrian Orthodox Rite.

When I came to live and work in Jerusalem I retained a fondness for this church, which is a little jewel tucked away inside the Armenian Quarter, hard to find and easily missed, so when a friend from England came to stay with me in September it was on my list of places that I wanted to show her. Julie slept on the sofa in my little white-painted, stone-walled room, which resembled, I always felt, a hobbit-hole, with its curved stone ceiling and its rounded arches on the door and window embrasures. I was working most days, but, because of the Jewish High Holidays, I had pockets of time free; we planned to hire a car to go up the Jordan valley and stay for 4 nights, doing the tour around the Sea of Galilee at our leisure. At other times, Julie had to manage for herself, so on the first day of her visit I took her on an orientating tour: the Church of the Resurrection first, very early in the morning, then the Via Dolorosa and the Mount of Olives, climbing up as far as the church of Dominus Flevit. On the way back, cutting through the Old City at a slight angle, ready for a sit-down, a drink and some lunch (September is still very hot in Jerusalem), we found ourselves in Ararat Street, and I remembered St Mark's church.

The door was open, but, in contrast to my previous visits, the church was very full of people. Instead of the empty space in front of the Bima (scripture-reading dais) 2 benches had been brought in. Although partially hidden by the milling crowd, we could see, seated on one bench, a motherly lady carefully laying out a full set of baby-boy's clothes, all white, and on the other, a young woman busily removing all the clothes of a tiny baby while he yelled lustily, thrusting his arms and legs in all directions.

A fully-robed priest looked on benignly, and, when all



seemed ready, he roared out a sentence, which was immediately answered by the crowd, who instantly turned into a congregation: the baptism had started!

Well, we thought it had, but we found out afterwards that we had completely missed part 1, where the priest repeatedly prays and anoints the child with holy oils in order to ensure he is totally free of any wicked influences and is well protected before the baptism. Now the naked baby was placed into the priest's arms by the godfather, and Julie and I watched, with fascination not unmixed with a certain alarm, as, again with much oil, anointing and prayers, the priest twice poured water he had scooped from a small font onto the boy's head, and then, with a smile and a glance at his congregation, popped the child into the font and gently pushed him down until the water flowed over his face. Everyone laughed and clapped and the little boy came out red-faced and very cross.

As the child, wrapped in a large white towel, was carried over to the older woman, the congregation dissolved again into a crowd, and we could just see, as people moved around us, that she was dressing him tenderly in the little white garments. The priest had disappeared, but the peremptory striking of a bell called the scene to order again, the congregation turned to face the iconostasis and the baby, now fully dressed in dazzling white, and wearing a crown slightly askew on his tiny head, was carried to meet the priest, who had appeared from the sanctuary with a chalice and a long-handled spoon. In a flash, the spoon was in the baby's mouth and he had made his first communion: Part 3!

Julie and I felt we had eavesdropped enough at this point, so we sidled out. We had been noticed, and someone had kindly tried to give us some idea of what was happening, but I am sure we missed lots of significant things. It was Julie's first real contact with any orthodox liturgy, and certainly I had never been to an orthodox baptism before. We were fascinated by the blend of homeliness and high ritual we had experienced, and humbled to know that we had been involved, if only in a very minor way, with a community that could trace its lineage back to the church of Antioch, already known to St Luke in Acts, and the place where, for the first time, the disciples of Jesus, Jews and Gentiles alike, were called Christians. We made our way back to the courtyard a good 2 hours later than I had planned upon, and collapsed gently into the white plastic chairs and stared at each other.

'Well,' I said, 'time for a late lunch, but I think a drink is in order: cold water first, but after that, red or white? After his eventful day we need to raise our glasses in a toast to the baby.'

ND

8 September is the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin, but to many Anglicans the rich vein of thought and devotion about Mary's place in the history of Anglican devotion is unknown. Anglican writers set her in the wider Christian scheme of redemption as the daughter of Abraham who stands in solidarity with the whole people of God through two thousand years of Christian history. Her place is in the centre of Christianity, not on the edge, because of her role in the mystery of the incarnation. Her personal response was vital if God was to enter physically into human life and demonstrate the God-bearing capacity of the whole of creation. While the nature of the Christian gospel is full of mystery it has a particularity that is concerned with space and time, heaven in the ordinary and in the meeting of heaven and earth. Mary, a person blessed among women, has an important part to play in this.

If, as Christian faith has always affirmed, it is in the man Jesus of Nazareth

that we find the supreme disclosure, assertion, stepping forward of him who alone sustains our life, our thought, our love, then the person of the woman who was his mother—and out of whom, bodily, he came—cannot but be a central theme of Christian reflection.

Her place is in the centre of Christianity, not on the edge, because of her role in the mystery of the incarnation.

Mark Frank, the seventeenth century Anglican preacher, speaks of the Annunciation: 'So the Incarnation of Christ, and the Annunciation of the blessed Virgin, his being incarnate of her, and her blessedness by him, and all our blessednesses in him with her, make it as well our Lord's as our Lady's day. More his, because his being Lord made her a Lady, else a poor carpenter's wife. God knows all her worthiness and honour, as all ours is from him; and we to take heed today, or any day, of parting them; or so remembering her, as to forget him, or so blessing her, as to take away any of our blessing him, any of worship to give to her.'

Now note here his balanced theology of not giving to Our Lady more than is her due: 'Let her blessedness, the respect we give her, be *inter mulieres*, "among women" still; such as is fit and proportionate to weak creatures, not due and proper to the Creator, that *Dominus tecum*, Christ in her be the business; we take pattern by the angel, to give her no more than is her due, yet to be sure to give her that though, and that particularly on the day.'

He was conscious of medieval extravagances in devotion to our Lady by emphasizing, as recent Marian corrections have done, that all Mary's glory comes from the Lord whom she needs as much as a saviour as we do. He continues to stress that she has a Lord as we, and her honour is 'among women,' among creatures. She is no goddess, nor partner with the Godhead either in title or in worship. Only in this way will we vindicate the blessed Virgin's honour, at the same time save ourselves from neglecting her and from giving her no more than either the Lord or angels gave her. So he admits that the Venerable Bede's title for her, the 'star of the sea,' is a fit name for the bright morning star that rises out of God's infinite and endless love. Maria the Syriac interprets *domina* as 'lady,' a name retained and given to her by all Christians. **ND**

FORTIETH ORDINATION ANNIVERSARY

On Michaelmas Day, 29th September 2018, Fr. David Houlding will celebrate his 40th Anniversary of Ordination to the Priesthood with a Mass of Thanksgiving at All Hallows Church, Gospel Oak, at 3pm.

A Parish reception will follow.

All will be most welcome, contact: fr.davidhoulding@gmail.com

Forward in Faith - Birmingham Branch

The Society Re-Launch

Tuesday 9th October 7.00 pm at
St Agatha's Sparkbrook B11 1QT.

Principal celebrant:

The Bishop of Ebbsfleet

Guest speaker: Dr Colin Podmore.

All are welcome.



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Statements by the Council of Bishops, our newspaper *Together* and the Society 'brand pack' are available on the Resources pages.

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Sr Mary Michael CHC

Peter CSWG remembers the life of a remarkable woman

Sr Mary Michael CHC died in hospital in Nottingham during the early hours of the morning of the Feast of St Thomas, following four years of managing the side effects of recurring cancer, for which she had first received treatment in 2005. She was 81 years old.

Sister had grown up in Liverpool during the Blitz years and was raised as a Christian within the Evangelical tradition. She first encountered the influence of Anglo-Catholic tradition through the parish of St Stephen's, Grove Street, in relation to her exploring a call to the religious life, which led to her joining the Community of the Holy Cross at Haywards Heath in Sussex in 1961.

In 1979, the Community moved from Sussex to what was to be a temporary home at Rempstone Hall in Leicestershire, and in 2011 to their present new convent at Costock some two miles away. During the years at Rempstone, Sister became a gifted and prolific writer, sponsoring a series of pamphlets entitled *That They May Be One* that included biographies of many popular and some lesser-known saints, and also touched on various ecumenical themes. The French ecumenist Abbé Paul Couturier, who had done so much to further unity in the early part of the twentieth century, became a significant and influential figure in her own ecumenical thinking. She also penned two further series called *Loneliness to Solitude* and *Faith on Earth*.

It was the momentous events of 1992 in the Church of England that became the impetus for a number of religious to come together in 1995, later to take the name of RooT ('Religious of orthodox Tradition'). It was in this group that Sr Mary Michael played such a significant part during the following years. RooT sought to give support and encouragement particularly to isolated religious, usually sisters, who found themselves misunderstood within their communities and rather isolated by the new changes. Its purpose remained always an eirenic and pastoral one, rather than one motivated by political aims. It was prompted primarily by a concern for the unity of the Church, a concern which, as we have seen, had been with Sister throughout her life, and lay at the heart of her faith and conviction.

Sister attended the RooT annual conferences organized by Mother Mary Teresa SSM and Fr Gregory CSWG in the mid and late nineties at St Stephen's House and Mirfield, which were oriented towards supporting a traditional understanding and practice of religious life and the vows. This eventually led to her representing RooT on the Forward in Faith Council for a period of several years. She kept the council well informed about the position of religious, and on matters of vital concern for religious life and communities, both in this country and abroad.

Within her own community, Sister had been appointed novice mistress in 1972, which meant relating to and instructing new enquirers and seekers, a task to which she brought her considerable experience and wealth of insight. Yet she re-

mained always very open to those from a younger generation who might be seeking to acclimatize to the well-established customs and traditions of religious life. She kept herself detached in such matters through a lively but wry sense of humour, occasionally referring to herself self-effacingly as an 'old timer'.

Caring for novices also brought with it a concern for religious vocations generally within the Church of England, and there seems little doubt that it was an impromptu speech Sister made at the Forward in Faith Assembly in 2013 that became a turning point for RooT, as it was for the traditionalist Catholic movement as a whole. Its immediate impact was to generate the first of the Vocation Taster Days, which took place at Wellingborough in 2014, for encouraging enquirers to think seriously about a possible vocation to this life.

Unhappily, it was at that point that Sister became unwell and unable to attend the Wellingborough Day, or indeed any of the later taster days at York and Kennington. This illness was later shown to be the re-emergence of cancer for which she had been first treated in 2005. During these final four years, Sister was not able to travel or attend meetings but lived the rhythm of a more solitary life of prayer at Costock. Nevertheless, she continued to take an active interest in RooT affairs, attending committee meetings right up to her last few weeks, including our preparations for our next (the fourth) taster day in October. Ironically, this event will take place within Sister's home city and diocese of Liverpool (at St Columba's, Anfield).

In 2014 in the new chapel at Costock, Sister passed a significant milestone in her own life, when with great joy and surrounded by a host of friends she celebrated the Golden Jubilee of her Profession.

Others will speak of Sister's particular gifts, but my own experience was always one of warm and encouraging friendship, and an unwavering concern, not just for the survival, but for the *flourishing* of monastic and religious life. She was a lively and regular correspondent which she shared her thoughts and deliberations on a variety of matters with ordered precision.

Fr Richard Meux Benson SSJE remained always for Sister a profound influence for her thinking, particularly about religious formation and vocation. Almost invariably, she would quote passages from him in articles on or about religious life, finding inspiration there for her own thinking and approach to living its Benedictine form. Indeed in a final 'postscript' on religious life, written only two weeks before she died, Sister comments that 'any genuine invitation from God' means that we must 'give all to him, cost what it may, and for life,' words that reflect something of the character of her own disposition.

ND

Fr Peter CSWG is a member of
a community of monks living in Crawley.

The Murderess and the Vicar—a Victorian Tale



#KeepTheSeal

Nigel Palmer relates a case in which the seal of the confessional came in for questioning

On Tuesday 25 April 1865, just before four o'clock in the afternoon, a hansom cab drew up outside the Bow Street magistrates' court in Covent Garden. From it stepped three figures: two ladies, and one gentleman. The gentleman wore clerical dress, the older woman something like it. The other younger woman was quietly but becomingly dressed, as befitted her station in life as the daughter of a successful and respectable government inspector, Samuel Kent, whose diligence and aptitude had secured for him a large house and grounds in Wiltshire. The party had set out that morning from Brighton, where the three of them, in their various avocations, had lived for a number of years. But their quiet and virtuous lives in Sussex were to be changed forever by what was to follow in the dingy atmosphere of the magistrates' court.

Not that some of the party were actually unknown on the national stage. The Revd Arthur Douglas Wagner was a considerable figure in Brighton, as his clerical father had been before him. Arthur Wagner had been sent to Eton and Trinity College, Cambridge, and his father, eager to keep his son by his side, had built a church for him in Brighton, and appointed him to the living where young Arthur remained vicar for the rest of his long life. He inherited his father's passion for building churches in Brighton and added four more to the family collection, two of which had been built at the time of his visit to Bow Street. All the 'Wagner churches' were adorned with the finest materials and ornaments that a committed Tractarian could lavish upon them, and some of them remain intact to testify to this day of the devotion of Arthur Wagner. He was no mere aesthete, however; at the time of his death, he was rumoured to have spent some £70,000 of his own money in financing the building not just of churches but schools, and dwellings for the poor of his parishes. He had also, in the manner of one of his Tractarian heroes, Dr Pusey, established a sisterhood of nuns next to his church, the Community of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The elder of the two ladies in Bow Street, the Lady Superior of the Community, Katherine Gream, accompanied Wagner dressed in her nun's garb and wearing a black cloak, trimmed with white.

It was the younger lady, however—Constance Emily Kent—who had already attracted much more lurid attention in the national press some five years earlier, in connection with the cruel death of her half-brother Saville. Not four years old, he had been taken from his room in the early hours of the morning, and found hours later, after a frantic search, dead, nearly decapitated, bearing other knife wounds, and showing

signs of suffocation. To add to the horror of his death, his body had been messily concealed in a dilapidated privy in the grounds of the Kent family mansion. Suspicion had immediately fallen on one of the household as the murderer, and much had come out as to the dysfunctional life of the Kent family during the murder's investigation. The first Mrs Kent had died young, and the second Mrs Kent had preferred and promoted the interests of her own children over those of her predecessor. It seems that she was fiercely resented by her stepchildren. There was even the suggestion that the roving eye of Samuel Kent had led to a scene of adulterous congress with the nursemaid, which had been witnessed by the young Saville, who was silenced to prevent him disclosing what he had seen.

Despite the best efforts of the first real 'detective' in the Metropolitan Police, Detective Inspector Jonathan Whicher (the model for Dickens' Mr Bucket in *Bleak House*), which had resulted in the arrest of Constance and, after Constance's re-

lease, the nursemaid, the case had never been brought to trial and determined. Constance, finding it now difficult to continue life with her father and stepmother, had attached herself to the Community of the Blessed Virgin Mary, where

she worked as a lay person for the reform and settlement of prostitutes. Mr Whicher, although still convinced of Constance's guilt, had been forced to retire in ignominy and ill health.

His belief was, however, about to receive spectacular validation. It seems from a brief diary entry by one of Gladstone's daughters that Arthur Wagner had sought Gladstone's advice as to what to do. The Bow Street magistrates were told that Constance Kent wished to confess to the murder of her half-brother; she submitted a written statement to that effect. The subsequent exchanges between her and Sir Thomas Henry, the presiding magistrate, and him and Wagner, make it clear, at that point, that the principal concern of the judicial authority was that Constance Kent had taken the step of confessing to the murder 'without' as Henry put it, 'any inducement from any quarter whatever to give [herself] up.' 'Do you say you did not persuade her?' Wagner was asked. 'I do say so' was the reply. Henry even asked Wagner if he knew Miss Kent's handwriting, which sounds like a trick question, to establish any part he may have played in composing her written statement. Wagner was too far wily for that, and said he did not know her handwriting, having never seen her write.

There is more than a whisper here of the old Protestant concern of the undue influence of 'Romish' clergy over their penitents, and especially over vulnerable and young women,

Wagner chose his own appearance in the box to put all his cards unmistakably on the table: "My duty to God forbids me to divulge received anything in confession."

which subverted the proper influence which father or husband (or both) should have over them. These were reflected in the excitement caused by John Chambers' manual for confession, *The Priest in Absolution*, twenty years later when the then Lord Redesdale made public objection, in the House of Lords no less, to the advice given as to probing methods to bring penitents to a good confession. It was even suggested by some that Wagner was using the case of Constance Kent to advertize the virtues of confession as a regular devotional practice within the Church of England. And the seal of the confessional was also specifically raised by Wagner with the magistrate, making it clear that he referred in court to her public statement, not to anything she had said in private to him.

Henry remitted the preliminary hearing to the magistrates in Wiltshire, where the crime had taken place, and the sad party that had arrived that afternoon in Bow Street journeyed on to Wiltshire. Kent was confined to Devizes prison, but appeared before the presiding magistrate at Trowbridge police court, Henry Ludlow, a week later. He was the same magistrate that had presided over an unsuccessful attempt to assemble sufficient evidence to send her to trial some five years earlier. Many of the witnesses were also the same, but significantly Katherine Gream, the Superior of the Community of the Blessed Virgin Mary, was subjected to the same stern enquiry as to whether or not she had exerted any pressure on Kent to give herself up. 'Never, never,' she replied. But Wagner chose his own appearance in the box to put all his cards unmistakably on the table. 'All the communication I have had with Miss Constance Kent was made to me under the seal of confession, and therefore I must decline to answer any question that would involve a breach of that secrecy... My duty to God forbids me to divulge received anything in confession.'

The magistrate did not pursue the point (despite rather feebly reminding Wagner that he had sworn to tell the whole truth) before remitting Kent to trial, but the public did. Wagner's statements in Trowbridge, confronting the public and the press with a High vision of the sacrament of confession, a far cry from the gentle rubrics of the visitation of the sick, were greeted with hissing from the public galleries. The national press and the members of both Houses of Parliament criticized him as the self-appointed guardian of Kent's conscience. He suffered assaults in the streets of Brighton, and notices advertising confession outside his churches were torn down.

In the event, Kent's repeated plea of guilty at her trial in Salisbury three months later meant that Wagner's stirring dec-

larations were never quite put to the test. Given that plea, the judge, Sir James Willes, was forced to pronounce the death penalty, his eyes brimming with tears as he did so. He later told Kent's defence counsel (John Duke Coleridge, a future Lord Chief Justice and memorialist of John Keble) that he would have ruled in favour of the legal privilege of a priest to withhold disclosure of anything said in confession. It may be that Wagner's establishment, Gladstonian connections, money and position protected him here to some extent, where later less fortunate men were attacked more directly for their determination. But Willes' opinion must also have been based on the proviso to Canon 113 of 1603, valid then, as now: 'Provided always that if any man confess his secret and hidden sins to the minister, for the unburdening of his conscience, and to receive spiritual consolation and ease of mind from him: we do

not in any way bind the said minister by this our Constitution, but do straitly charge and admonish him, that he do not at any time reveal and make known to any person whatsoever any crime or offence so committed to his trust and secrecy...' Being lawyers, both Willes and Coleridge would also have understood the principles which had established client

confidentiality, not only in the legal system, but also as they were to evolve in both banking and medical practices, and their importance in the polity of church and state.

Kent's death sentence was eventually commuted to imprisonment, where Wagner and Gream visited her; as part of her work in prison, she worked on mosaics which ultimately adorned the floor of the crypt of St Paul's. She was released in 1885. Full of years, and refusing to resign his living with superb Etonian assurance, despite ill health and some mental confusion, Wagner died in 1904. He left part of his remaining fortune to maintain the magnificent churches he had built. Kent has been identified as the Emilie Kaye who ultimately ran a nurses' home north of Sydney, Australia until her retirement, and who died in 1944, aged over 100. It has been argued, too,

that she confessed to the murder of Saville Kent in order to protect the true murderer, William Kent, her beloved brother, whom she seems to have joined in Australia after her release from prison. Perhaps it is not inappropriate to speculate that this, the wish to protect her

brother, by confessing to a murder she did not commit, is the real secret of the confession she made to Wagner in 1865. If it was, it may be thought that that was her secret alone, and it was not for her priest to betray it. **ND**

Fr Nigel Palmer is the Assistant Curate of St Benet, Kentish Town



Wagner suffered assaults in the streets of Brighton, and notices advertising confession outside his churches were torn down.

Theology and Disenchantment (Part Two): Varieties of ‘Accommodation’

Stephen Wilson continues his essay on post-Enlightenment trends in biblical criticism

Biblical criticism has ceased to be the threat to ‘settled faith’ it once may have been. It reached one climacteric in the quiet desperation of Albert Schweitzer’s *The Quest of the Historical Jesus* (*Geschichte der Leben-Jesu-Forschung*) of 1913 and rumbled on through varieties of Form and Redaction Criticism, as scholars recovered a measure of confidence that, yes, through the prisms of oral and then written traditions, the sayings and deeds of a historical Jesus were after all accessible to a degree.

Part One of this essay was therefore more concerned with the post-Enlightenment disillusion with the Church’s ‘historic formularies,’ applying Max Weber’s notion of *Entzauberung* (‘disenchantment’ or ‘desacralization’ of the universe) to the patristic and medieval *Weltanschauung* (‘world-view’) as liberal protestant theology conceived it.

The formularies of the early Councils had their origins in efforts to refine theological language in ways that would be faithful to the revelation of God in Christ, expressed what we now call ‘doctrine’ in a normative and schematic way, and in particular the (unavoidable) resort to the vocabulary of Being: the ‘ontology’ lying beneath the language of ‘God in Christ.’ I looked back to the 1977 publication of *The Myth of God Incarnate* as an instance of a failure of nerve, a loss of confidence in the formularies of Nicene and Chalcedonian orthodoxy, born of a (by then already dated) deference of theology to the ‘secular given.’

Such misgivings have lingered on into the twenty-first century. Graham Richards, in *Creationism: Design Errors and Cross-Purposes* (Lindsey Press, 2014) writes: ‘I believe that reversion to ancestral religious creeds, rooted in cultural contexts profoundly different in character from any in which people now live, is mistaken. If the needs commonly called “spiritual” are to find any satisfaction, we must move forwards not backwards, jettisoning vast swathes of traditional religious doctrine, not least the claims to exclusive possession of the truth as made by Christianity and Islam.’ In fairness to Richards, *Creationism* is a well-argued rebuttal of both creationism and intelligent design doctrine, and his comment is arguably incidental to his main argument.

I mentioned the challenge issued by Professor Donald Mackinnon around the time of *The Myth* that we grasp formal doctrine’s ontological nettle, and in particular the *homoousion* inserted into the Nicene Creed by the (otherwise intensely conservative) Council Fathers. The fact that they accepted this unbiblical neologism is significant. With its Johannine resonances the *homoousion* clause sits side by side with narrative elements (‘was born, crucified, rose, ascended’), eschatology (second Advent, resurrection of the dead and ‘the life of the

world to come’), pneumatology (the being and work of the Holy Spirit) and ecclesiology (Church and baptism). The formularies answered to the demands of communicating the deposit of faith and the countervailing pressures of heresy, when one strand of the tradition becomes a controlling narrative at the expense of all the others.

The late-modern reaction against the patristic project stemmed particularly from attempts by nineteenth century liberal Protestant theologians to surpass and re-define ‘classical’ ancient Christologies from the vantage point (as they thought) of a modern and post-Enlightenment narrative. This is (in part) the legacy of the kind of liberal Protestant repudiation of ‘Christian Hellenism’ we find in the writings of F.C. Baur (died 1860) and the ‘Tübingen School,’ the work of Adolf von Harnack (died 1930), and the later New Testament criticism of Rudolph Bultmann (died 1976).

Harnack’s *What is Christianity? Lectures Delivered in the University of Berlin During the Winter Term 1899–1900* targeted the patristic appropriation of ‘Hellenistic’ philosophical concepts

This Anglican, liberal protestant courtesy towards the demands of modernity was already looking dated by the mid-twentieth century.

and categories in interpreting the New Testament witness. Indeed, he held the New Testament itself to be a distortion of the original, initially oral Gospel tradition which had (he thought) already suffered embellishment at the hands of New Testament authors, including the Gospel writers themselves, and especially the author(s) of the fourth Gospel. Roman Catholics were shielded from all this, at least for a while, by the late nineteenth and early twentieth century papal edicts against modernism. Meanwhile, as we have seen, reaction against the patristic project still lingers, sometimes almost unconsciously, in the liberal mindset: we are entirely children of our time, as the Fathers and their pioneering experiments were of theirs—in thrall to an opaque ontology inaccessible to us now. The narrative of disenchantment seems so compelling, indeed overwhelming and irreversible, that there seems nothing for it but to ‘remake’ doctrine.

I treated *The Myth of God Incarnate* of 1977 as emblematic of this disenchantment. In his contribution to it, New Testament scholar Leslie Houlden opines (in the essay ‘The Creed of Experience’) that ‘we must accept our lot, bequeathed to us by the Enlightenment, and make the most of it.’ And the book’s preface quotes with apparent approval T. S. Eliot’s view that ‘Christianity is always adapting itself into something which can be believed,’ a mantra already quoted in Dennis Nineham’s *The Use and Abuse of the Bible, A study of the Bible in an age of rapid cultural change*. (Macmillan, 1976)

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And there’s the rub. Perhaps unsurprisingly, Nineham’s quotation is noted by David Tracey’s preface to his 2005 translation of a classic of nineteenth-century disenchantment,

Franz Overbeck's *How Christian is our Present-Day Theology?* (1873). For Tracy, Overbeck's thought 'emerges from, indeed is an expression of, the conflict between Christian and [modern] culture... Overbeck reacted particularly sensitively to any attempt at what he termed 'accommodating' Christianity to new conditions...' Overbeck himself relates how after his move from Jena to Basel he experienced, as an avowed 'Tübinger', 'something akin to shipwreck' and writes of his growing friendship with Friedrich Nietzsche—itself surely a clue to his developing animus against 'accommodation.' Overbeck, then, would have no truck with Eliot's *dictum*, nor with any other protagonists of 'accommodation.' And the irony of Houlden's remark about 'making the most of it' is that this (somehow distinctively) Anglican, liberal protestant courtesy towards the demands of modernity was already looking dated by the mid-twentieth century, and terminally so by the 1970s. It is the remark of a Biblical scholar seemingly blithely unaware of the roar of the receding tide of post-Enlightenment modernity (*pace* Matthew Arnold) and in the face of a postmodern negation, a Nietzschean 'anti-theology' where lie some of the real pressures on theology today. Houlden's remark was by no means an isolated example of this characteristic trope of deference; the contributors to *The Myth*, notably Maurice Wiles, Dennis Nineham, Don Cupitt and (maybe less explicitly) John Hick, were among the more prominent exponents of a deferential apologetic-by-accommodation. The two other contributors, Frances Young and Michael Goulder, were perhaps less obvious examples of this deference, yet the rhetorical undertow can still be felt of that 'philosophical idealism' against which Donald Mackinnon consistently (and rightly) fulminated. In point of fact, the mindset which saturates *The Myth* is nowhere more evident than in the opening sentences of Frances Young's essay, 'A Cloud of Witnesses': "In Jesus Christ I perceive something of God": a confession of that kind lies at the heart of Christian belief; it sums up the common mind of the faithful. Yet, as a matter of fact, Christian believers have experienced and understood this confession in more than one way. Since Jesus is confessed and has been confessed in many different cultural environments by many different types of people with many different hopes and expectations, there must be potentially a multiplicity of christological affirmations analogous to and parasitic upon the multifarious ways in which atonement and salvation have been experienced and expressed... christological statements should be regarded as belonging not to the language of philosophy, science or dogmatics, but rather to the language of confession and testimony.'

This is a threefold proposition that 'at the 'heart of Christian belief' is something 'perceived,' that its confession is 'expressed' in a multiplicity of ways, and that Christology belongs to 'the language of confession and testimony' rather than that of 'philosophy, science or dogmatics.' Might this not smack of the philosophical idealism of which Donald Mackinnon was so critical? Perhaps.

At the time of publication of *The Myth* a new phase of accommodation to the *Zeitgeist* was under way. There were already some postmodern stirrings in Anglican and liberal protestant circles: *Myth* contributor Don Cupitt (then Dean

of Emmanuel College, Cambridge) was moving towards a programme of post-critical theology in the sunlit uplands of post-modern semiology. *The Long Legged Fly* (SCM Press, 1987) would be a triumphant announcement that philosophy has finally broken free of an absolutizing 'metaphysics of presence.' But Cupitt simply replaces that with another absolutism, 'linguistic idealism,' in which language—'sign and communication'—is 'the true universal stuff, in which and of which everything else is constructed.' 'The surface play of phenomena—words, signs, meanings, appearances—is reality.' Language, indeed, is all there is: 'You are always already shut up within it, and must explain it from within... (it is) the true universal stuff, in which and of which everything else is constructed.' We can never get beyond language to compare it with reality. 'Objectivity is given in and with language; it is not, as realists suppose, something external to language around which language wraps itself.' This is heady stuff, as postmodernism in its solipsistic, deconstructive moods as can be. The Sea of Faith Network (as it came to style itself) would adopt Cupitt's radical deconstruction of transcendence. Religious symbols are artefacts, guides to action, not pointers to transcendent truth. There is no transcendent truth, except the truth of self-transcendence—though in fact there is no 'true' self, only an endless becoming. And 'God' is a focus of value, in me, in language.

We may question whether a humanly constructed God, wholly trapped within experience, could find any place within any genuine faith tradition, or could be squared in any way with its core beliefs. Such a 'God' cannot be a creator, cannot redeem us. Cupitt (and the Sea of Faith Network) have translations to hand for these terms. Preaching to 'settled faith'—as clerics of that persuasion must sometimes find themselves having to—presumably involves cloaking everything in the language of traditional orthodoxy. But all the meanings will have changed, in a radically idealist direction.

The pressures within and upon Christian theology since the Enlightenment may seem in every way so different from the patristic controversies as to defy any useful analogy with them. This may seem especially so if we regard early heresies as typically 'endogenous' to emerging Christian tradition, whereas the post-Enlightenment era's persistent and pervasive patterns of negation are in every way more opposed to Christian narrative than at home with it. In fact the contrast is less than total: Early Christian heresy was partly 'home-grown' and thus all the more readily anathematized as the enemy within; Cupitt's later writings are more an 'anti-theology,' yet they shadow Christian narrative and are parasitic upon it.

I have concentrated here on *The Myth* to the exclusion of much else (including its sequel, *Incarnation and Myth: The Debate Continued*, ed. Michael Goulder, SCM Press, 1979) so as to focus on just the one example of late-twentieth century theological *anomie*. The third and final part of this essay looks at *The Myth's* metaphysical undertow, speculates on that undertow's more distant pre-Enlightenment origins, and attempts a constructively (radical?) orthodox response to it. **ND**

Father Stephen Wilson is an assistant priest
at St Stephen's Lewisham.

touching place

HOLY CROSS, ILAM, STAFFS



You really should come into Ilam from the south-west, down the hill from Blore. As you cross the bridge, the village opens out in front of you, and right in front is what looks like an Eleanor Cross (1). The church is tucked away beside the large park. It's when you stand back from the west end to admire the saddleback tower that you appreciate it looks as wide as it is long (2). The S chapel was rebuilt c. 1618 and contains remains of the shrine (3) of local saint Bertelin (Bertram), but most of the visual effect is due to the rich Jesse Watts Russell, who married Mary,

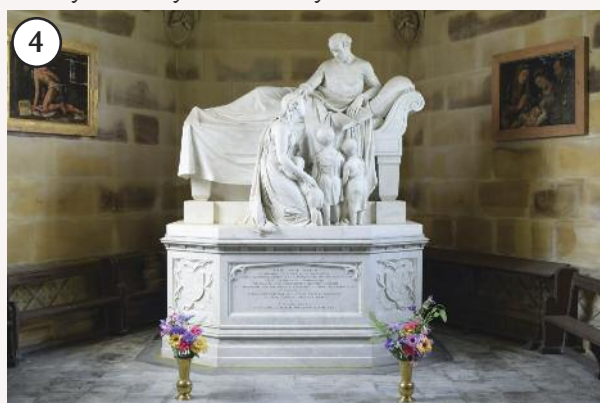


daughter and heiress of David Pike Watts, another rich man. In 1831, Jesse built the spacious mausoleum on the N side to contain an imposing monument, by Sir Francis

Chantrey, showing David Pike Watts blessing his daughter Mary and three children (4). When Mary died in 1840 (after bearing 8 children), the grieving Jesse commissioned J. M. Derick (best known as the architect of Pusey's Saviour's Leeds) to produce Ilam Cross as her memorial, sculpted by Richard Westmacott.

Sir George Gilbert Scott restored Ilam church in 1855 and did not stint on the craftsmen. The E window has glass of the Crucifixion by Clayton, who also did the Adoration of Shepherds and Wise Men in the nave. Skidmore of Coventry made the iron chancel screen, whilst the chancel itself has Minton tiles. Tear your eyes away from this collection of work by Victorian virtuosos to admire the Romanesque tub font of c. 1120.

By the early 19th century, the British had achieved much and become self-



confident. The British Empire had spread all over the world and they had pioneered the Industrial Revolution. There was one thing that they knew that they had not mastered, and that was Death, which is why their monuments can have an overwhelming splendour.

Map reference: SK 133507
Simon Cotton



Forms of words for making a bequest to FiF in your Will

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or I GIVE the residue of my estate to FORWARD IN FAITH of 2A The Cloisters, Gordon Square, London WC1H 0AG and I DIRECT that the receipt of the Treasurer or other proper officer of Forward in Faith shall be good and sufficient discharge to my Executor.

parish directory

continued

LONDON NW3 All Hallows Gospel Oak, Hampstead, NW3 2LD A Society Parish under the Bishop of Fulham. Sunday Mass each Sunday at 10am. For further details: Prebendary David Houlding SSC

LONDON NW9 Kingsbury St Andrew A Society Parish under the Episcopal care of the Bishop of Fulham. Sunday: Sung Mass 10.30am, Thursday Mass 10am – both followed by refreshments. Tube to Wembley Park then 83 Bus (direction Golders Green) to Tudor Gardens. Contact: Fr. Jason Rendell on 020 8205 7447 or stan-drews.kingsbury@london.anglican.org - www.standrewskingsbury.org.uk

LONDON SE11 4BB St Agnes Kennington Park, St Agnes Place. Under the Episcopal care of the Bishop of Fulham. 8 minutes walk from both Kennington and the Oval tube stations (Northern line). Sunday: 10am Solemn Mass. Daily Mass: Mon to Fri 10am – Bible Study after Mass on Wed. stagneskenningtonpark.co.uk 020 7820 8050 frpaulensor@btconnect.com

LONDON SE13 St Stephen, Lewisham (opposite Lewisham Station) A Forward in Faith Parish under the episcopal care of the Bishop of Fulham. Sunday: Mass 8am, Parish Mass 10am. Weekdays: Mon 10am, Tues 9am, Wed 12.15pm, Thurs 10.15am, Fri 12.15pm, Sat 10am Parish Priest: Fr Philip Corbett - 07929 750054

LONDON SE18 St Nicholas - the Ancient Parish Church - St Nicholas Road, Plumstead. A Society Parish under the episcopal care of the Bishop of Fulham. Masses: Solemn Sung 11am; Mon 12 noon; Tues 12 noon; Wed 9.30am; Fri 12 noon; Sat 10am. Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament half an hour before every Mass apart from Sunday. Modern rite, traditional ceremonial. Parish Priest: Fr Andrew Stevens 020 8854 0461

LONDON SE 26 All Saints, Sydenham A Society Parish under the care of the Bishop of Fulham. Grade II listed Church with stunning Fellowes-Pryne interior. Sunday - 10.30am Solemn Mass with Sunday School. Weekday Services as advertised. Parish Priest Fr. Philip Smith 0208 7783065.

LONDON SW1 St Gabriel, Pimlico Sunday: Mass 8am; Sung Parish Mass 10.30am. 6pm (& 5pm Wed) Choral Evensong (termtime). 7.30pm Mass. Midweek Mass: Tues 9.30am, Wed 7pm, Thurs 7.30am, Fri 10am, Sat 9.30am. www.st-gabriels.com

LONDON SW7 St Stephen, Gloucester Road (entrance in Southwell Gardens) A Fulham Jurisdiction Parish. Modern rite, traditional ceremonial, gospel preaching and good music. Sunday: Masses 9am and 11am (Solemn). Daily Mass: Tues 11am, Wed 7pm, Thurs 10am, Fri 1.15pm, Sat 10am. Rosary - 2nd and 4th Saturday at 10.30am. Fr. Philip Barnes SSC Contact: 020 7370 3418 www.saint-stephen.org.uk

LONDON SW11 The Ascension, Lavender Hill. Famous and flourishing ABC Parish, in the Fulham Jurisdiction. Inspiring liturgy with modern rites, traditional ceremonial, fervent preaching and good music. Sunday: High Mass 11am. Weekday Mass: Wednesday 7.30pm. Rosary: Saturday 11.30am. SOLW Cell organises pilgrimage, social and fundraising activities. Parish Priest: Fr Iain Young 020 7228 5340

LONDON SW19 All Saints, South Wimbledon. Society Parish Under the Episcopal Care of the Bishop of Fulham. Sunday Solemn Mass 11am. For other masses and services contact Fr Christopher Noke 020 8948 7986, the church office 020 8542 5514 or see www.allsaintswimbledon.org.uk/

LONDON WC1 Christ the King, Gordon Square The Forward in Faith Church. Mon to Fri: Mass at 12.30pm, plus: Thur at 12 noon: Angelus followed by Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament until 12.25pm. Other services: as announced. Contact the FIF Office on 020 7388 3588 or email: chaplain@forwardinfaith.com

MANCHESTER Fallowfield The Church of the Holy Family. A Society Parish. Sunday Mass: 9.15am. For other Sunday and Weekday Services or further information please contact Fr. Paul Hutchins on 0161 681 3644

MANCHESTER The Parish of Swinton and Pendlebury: All Saints, Wardley; **Saint Augustine**, Pendlebury; **Saint Peter**, Swinton. A Society Parish. Sunday Masses: 8am and 5.30pm (SP), Sung at 9.30am (AS), 10.30am (SP) and 11am (SA). Daily Mass in Parish. Clergy Fr. Jeremy Sheehy 0161 794 1578 and Fr. Michael Fish 0161 794 4298., Parish Office: 0161 727 8175 email: paroffsandp@btconnect.com

MIDDLESBROUGH The Church of St Columba Sunday: Mass 9.30am. Daily Mass. **St John the Evangelist** Sunday Mass 11am. For further information contact Fr Stephen Cooper 01642 824779

NORTH YORK MOORS S. Leonard, Loftus and **S. Helen**, Carlin How. Situated on the Cleveland Coast. Sunday - Mass at Carlin How 9am and at Loftus 10.30am. Further details on our website www.loftusparish.co.uk Parish Priest Fr. Adam Gaunt 01287 644047

OXFORD St John the Evangelist, New Hinksey (1 mile from the city centre; Vicarage Road, OX1 4RE) A Society Parish under the care of the Bishop of Ebbsfleet. Sunday: Parish Mass 10.30am. Contact - 01865 245879 or www.acny.org.uk/467 Come and discover Oxford's hidden Comper Church!

OXFORD St. Barnabas and St Thomas. Services: Saturdays 5.30pm Vigil Mass (St. Thomas). Sundays 8.00am Low Mass, (St. Barnabas), 9.15am Matins (St. Thomas), 10.30am Parish Mass (St. Barnabas), 6.30pm Evening Prayer (St. Barnabas). For Daily Mass see website: www.sbarnabas.org.uk. Parish priest: Fr Jonathan Beswick 01865 557530

PLYMOUTH SACRED HEART, ST JOHN THE EVANGELIST, WITH ST SIMON, AND ST MARY THE VIRGIN. A Society Parish under the Episcopal Care of the Bishop of Ebbsfleet. **St John**, Sunday 11am (sung), Thursday 10am (said); **St Mary**, Sunday 9.30am (said), Wednesday 11am (said); **St Simon**, Tuesday 10am (said). Feast days as appropriate. Pastoral care - Fr. S. Philpott. email: frphilpott@gmail.com email: churchofstjohn1@btconnect.com www.sacredheartplymouth.co.uk

READING St Giles-in-Reading, Southampton Street (next to the Orade). Medieval church. Forward in Faith, affiliated with The Society. Sunday: Mattins - 10am; Parish Mass with Sunday School - 10.30am; Evensong - 5.30pm; Low Mass 6pm. Daily Offices and Daily Mass. Friday Bible Study at 11.30am. Regular study groups, see our website. Parish Priest: Fr David Harris 0118 957 2831 www.sgilesreading.org.uk

ST. LEONARD'S-on-SEA Christ Church with St Mary Magdalen and St. Peter and St. Paul. Daily Mass 10.30am and 6pm. Sunday Mass 8am Parish Mass 10.15am. Solemnities Solemn Mass 7pm. Fr Luke Irvine-Capel SSC. Rector and Parish Priest www.christchurchstleonards.co.uk

SALISBURY St Martin - the oldest Church in Salisbury. We can be found in St. Martin's Church Street just over the inner city ring road. Walk up St. Ann Street from the Close and through the tunnel. A Society Parish under the episcopal care of the Bishop of Ebbsfleet. Sunday: Mass at 8:00am, Parish Mass at 11:00am. For further information about the Daily Office, weekday mass and confession see www.sarumstmartin.org.uk or call 01722503123. Parish Priest: Fr. David Fisher. 01722 500896

SCARBOROUGH St Saviour with All Saints, Parish affiliated to the Society of St Wilfrid and Hilda and under the Episcopal care of the Bishop of Beverley. Sunday Mass 9.15am with refreshments to follow. Evening Prayer 4.30pm. Evening Prayer and Benediction on the last Sunday of the month. Weekday masses: Monday 2pm Thursday 10.15am. Major Festivals times vary. Fr David Dixon 01723 363828 frdavidstmart@gmail.com stsaviour-scarborough.org.uk

SEAHAM: COUNTY DURHAM S John, Seaham Harbour SR7 7SA (with All Saints Deneside & S Mary's Seaham) Sunday 11.00am Solemn Mass & Sunday School (9.30am Solemn Mass All Saints & 1st Sun 11.00am Sung Mass S Mary's) 5.00pm Solemn Evensong & Benediction (2nd Sun). Mass Mon, Wed, Fri, Sat, 9.30am & Tues 6.00pm S Johns Thurs, 9.30am All Saints, Sat 10.30am S Mary's. Exposition of Blessed Sacrament Wed 8.45am - 9.15am S John's. Confessions by arrangements with Priests. *Parish of The Society in the Episcopal Care of the Bishop of Beverley*. Clergy: Fr Paul Kennedy SSC 0191 3665496 Fr Mark Mawhinney 0191 5816774 Fr Chris Collins 0191 5817186. www.stjohns-seaham.org.uk

SHREWSBURY All Saints with St Michael, North Street (near Shrewsbury railway station). A Society Parish under the episcopal care of the Bishop of Ebbsfleet. Resolutions ABC. Sunday: Mass 10.30am. For daily Mass times or further information, contact Fr. Paul Lockett SSC 01 743 357862

SPENNYMOOR, CO. DURHAM St Andrew, Tudhoe Grange, DL16 6NE A parish of the Society, under the care of the

Bishop of Beverley; Sundays: 9am Sung Mass, 2pm-4pm 'Sunday Club' for children ages 4-12, 6pm Evensong (with Benediction on 1st Sunday of month); Weekday Masses: Tues 7pm, Thurs 9.30am. Parish Priest: Fr John Livesley SSC - 01388 814817

STOKE-ON-TRENT, LONGTON SS Mary and Chad. A Society Parish. Sunday: Parish Mass 10am. Weekdays: Mon 10am, Tues 6.30pm, Wed 10am, Thurs 11.30am, Fri 6.30pm. Confessions after any Mass or by appointment. Fr Kevin Palmer - Parish Office - 01782 313142 - www.ssmaryandchad.com

STOKE-ON-TRENT, SMALLTHORNE St Saviour. Society. Convenient for Alton Towers & the Potteries. Parish Mass Sunday 11.00am. For details of Children's Church see website. Weekdays: Tuesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday 09.30, Wednesday noon. Contact Fr. Andrew Swift 01 782 827889 - frandrew@smallthorne.org www.smallthorne.org [twitter@SSaviours](https://twitter.com/SSaviours)

SUNDERLAND St Mary Magdalene, Wilson Street, Millfield. A Society Parish under the episcopal care of the Bishop of Beverley. Sunday: Parish Mass 10.30am, Benediction 6.30pm, Mass 7pm. Weekdays Mass: Mon and Wed 10.30am, Tues and Thurs 7.30pm, Fri 7.30am, Sat 10am. Rosary Thurs 7.15pm, Sat 6.15pm. Confessions: Sat 6.30pm or by appointment. Parish Priest: Fr Beresford Skelton 0191 565 6318 www.st-marymagdalene.co.uk Visit our Facebook page

SUNDERLAND St. Aidan, Sunderland, SR2 9RS. A parish of the Society under the episcopal care of the Bishop of Beverley. Sunday: Parish Mass 10.00 am, Evensong 6.00 pm. (Benediction last Sunday of the month 6.00 pm). Weekday Masses: Mon, Wed, Sat 9.30am, Tues 1.00pm, Thurs 7.30, Fri 8.00am. Rosary Mon 5.30 pm. Confessions Sat 6.15 pm. Contact: Fr David Raine SSC: 0191 5143485, farvad@sky.com

SUTTON All Saints, Benhlilton A Parish of the Society in the care of the Bishop of Fulham. Sunday: Low Mass 8am, Solemn Mass 9.30am. Weekdays Low Mass: Monday and Tues 7.30am, Wed 7.30pm, Thurs 10am, Fri 7.30am, Sat 10am. For further information please contact Fr David Chislett SSC: 07860 636 270. Churchwardens: Linda Roots 020 8644 7271, Carolyn Melius 020 8642 4276

SWINDON Parish of Swindon New Town A Society Parish under the episcopal care of the Bishop of Ebbsfleet. Sunday masses: 9.00am S. Saviour's; 10.30am S. Mark's; 10.30am S. Luke's. Weekday masses as advertised. Contact 01793 538220 swindonnewtown@btinternet.com

TAUNTON Holy Trinity, Trinity St, Taunton, TA1 3JG. Society Parish. Modern Catholic liturgy. Musical tradition. Sunday Services 8.10 & 6.30. Daily Mass. Fr Julian Laurence SSC, Vicar, Fr Adam Burnham SSC, Curate. See website for full details of services and events holyltrinitytaunton.org

TIPTON, West Midlands St John the Evangelist, Upper Church Lane, DY4 9ND. A Society Parish under the episcopal care of the Bishop of Ebbsfleet. Sunday 9.30am Parish Mass; 11.00am Mass with Sunshine Club for children; 4pm Evening Prayer. Daily Mass: Monday & Thursday 7.30pm; Wednesday 9.30am; Friday 6pm; Saturday 10am & Confessions at 10.30am. www.fifparish.org/stjohnthipton Parish Priest: Fr Simon Sayer CMP 0121 679 7510

TIVIDALE, Oldbury, West Midlands St. Michael the Archangel, Tividale Road and **Holy Cross**, Ashleigh Road. Society Parish. Sunday Worship: Parish Mass 11am (St. Michael's), Evening Mass 6pm (Holy Cross). Contact Fr. Martin Ennis 01384 257888 frmennis@gmail.com, www.vicaroftividale.co.uk

WALSALL St Gabriel's, Fullbrook, Walstead Road, Walsall, off Junc 7 or 9 of M6. Resolutions ABC. Sunday: 8am Mass, 10am Parish Mass, 4pm Evening Prayer, 5pm Evening Mass. Daily Mass. Parish Priest: Fr Mark McIntyre 01922 622583

WALSINGHAM St Mary & All Saints, Church Street. A Society and Forward in Faith Parish under the Episcopal care of the Bishop of Richborough. Sunday: Solemn Mass, 11.00 am Weekdays: please see www.walsinghamparishes.org.uk

WEDNESBURY, West Bromwich St Francis of Assisi, Friar Park WS10 0HJ (5 minutes from Junc 9 of M6) Sunday: Mass 9.45am. Weekday Mass: Tues and Thurs 9.30am, Wed and Fri 7.30pm, Sat 10am. Lively worship in the Modern Catholic Tradition, with accessible preaching, and a stunning gem of a church beautifully restored. Parish Clergy: Fr Ron Farrell: 0121 556 5823 or Fr Gary Hartill 0121 505 3954- Visit us at www.saintfrancisfriarpark.com

Continued on next page

WELLINGBOROUGH St Mary the Virgin, Knox Road (near BR station) *A Society Parish under the episcopal care of the Bishop of Richborough.* Sunday: Mass 10.30am. Daily Mass and Office. For further information see our Website: www.stmary-wellingborough.org.uk

WEST KIRBY S. Andrew, Meols Drive, Wirral, CH48 5DQ. Sunday 8:00 am Low Mass; 10:30 am Sung Mass; Evensong 6:00 pm Third Sunday. Daily Mass. Traditional ceremonial with a warm welcome. Safe harbour in Wirral and Cheshire West, visitors welcome. Parish of The Society under the Pastoral Care of The Bishop of Beverley Parish Priest Fr. Walsh. 0151 632 4728, www.standrewswestkirby.co.uk e-mail: office@holyltrinity-winchester.co.uk

WESTON super MARE All Saints with St Saviour, All Saints Road, BS23 2NL. *A Member of the Society under the episcopal care of the Bishop of Exeter.* All are welcome. Sundays: 9am Mass, 10.30am Parish Mass. Weekdays: 10am Mass (Wed, Thur and Sat). Priest-in-Charge: Fr Andrew Hughes SSC 01934 204217 fatherandrew@sky.com - Parish Office 01934 415379 allsaintsandstaviour@btconnect.com Visit our website www.all-saintswsm.org

WEYMOUTH St Paul, Abbotsbury Road DT4 0BJ *Under the episcopal care of the Bishop of Exeter.* Sundays (usually): Parish Mass 9.30am (creche and Sunday school); Informal Eucharist 11.15am; EP & Benediction 5pm (1st Sunday). For times of daily and Holyday masses see www.stpaulsweymouth.org or ring parish priest: Fr Richard Harper SSC 01305 778821.

WINCHESTER Holy Trinity. *A Society Church under the Episcopal care of the Bishop of Exeter.* Sunday: Sung Mass 10.30am. Weekday Masses: Thur 12 noon. Contact: Churchwardens: Barbara Smith 01264 720887 or John Purver 01 962 732351 - email: office@holyltrinitywinches-ter.co.uk - website: www.holytrinitywinchester.co.uk

WOLVERHAPTON St Paul's, Church Lane, Coven WV9 5DE. *A Society Parish under the episcopal care of the Bishop of Exeter.* Sunday Parish Mass 9.15am, Wed Low Mass 10.30am. Other services as announced on the Website. Further details and information during Vacancy contact Karen Jones, Churchwarden stpaulscovenparishoffice@gmail.com

YORK All Saints, North Street (near Park Inn Hotel) *A Society Parish.* Sunday: Low Mass 10.30 am, Sung or High Mass 5.30pm, Thursday Low Mass 12.45 pm. Visitors to this beautiful medieval church are always welcome; the church is normally open during daylight hours. - website: www.allsaints-northstreet.org.uk

YORKSHIRE near Skipton. *Three rural churches which make up The Society parish of the Yorkshire Dales.* Sundays: **THORNTON St Mary** Sung Mass, modern rite 9.15am. **MARTON St Peter** Prayer Book Holy Communion 10.45am. **BROUGHTON All Saints** Evensong 7pm. **HOLY WELL** Saturdays at Noon, summer. Canon Nicholas Turner SSC 01282 842332 bmtparish.co.uk

Diocesan Directory

FIF, DIOCESE OF BIRMINGHAM *Society Parishes* King-standing St Luke 0121 354 3281, Kingstanding St Mark 0121 360 7288, Small Heath All Saints 0121 772 0621, Sparkbrook St Agatha 0121 449 2790, Washwood Heath St Mark & Saltley St Saviour* 0121 328 9855

FIF, DIOCESE OF CANTERBURY *Society parishes* Deal St Andrew 01 304 381131, Eastchurch All Saints 07702 199844, Folkestone St Peter 01303 254472, Harbledown St Michael 01227 479377, Lydden St Mary 01304 208727, Maidstone St Michael 01622 721123, Ramsgate Holy Trinity 01843 863425, Rough Com-mon St Gabriel 01227 479377, Temple Ewell SS Peter and Paul 01304 208727

FIF, DIOCESE OF CHESTER Chester St Oswald and St Thomas of Canterbury, Fr Stephen Sheridan 01 244 399990; Congleton St James the Great, Society, Fr Colin Sanderson 01260 408203; Crewe St Barnabas, Society, Fr Ralph Powell 01270 212418; Crewe St Michael, *Coppenhall*, Society, Fr Charles Razzall 01270 215151; Knutsford St John the Baptist, Society, Rev Nigel Atkinson 01565 632834/755160; Liscard St Thomas the Apostle, Society, Fr Robert Nelson 0151 630 2830, Stockport St Peter, Society, Fr Kenneth Kenrick 0161 483 2483; West Kirby St Andrew, Society, Fr Peter Walsh 0151 632 4728

FIF, DIOCESE OF COVENTRY Coventry Centre: St John the Baptist (Fr Dexter Bracey 024 7671 1687); Holbrooks: St Luke (Fr Simon Oakes 024 7668 8604); Radford: St Nicholas (024 7633 7343); Tile Hill: St Oswald (Interregnum 07512 924401); Ansty: St James & Shilton: St Andrew (Fr Andrew Coleman 024 7636 6635); Nuneaton: St Mary the Virgin (Interregnum 024 7632 9863); St Mary & St John Camp Hill: (Fr Tom Wintle (024 7639 9472).

FIF, DIOCESE OF DERBY Calow: St Peter, Fr Kevin Ball, 01 246 462192; Derby: St Anne, Churchwarden Alison Haslam 01 332 362392; St Luke, Fr Leonard Young 01 332 342806; St Bartholomew, Fr Leonard Young 01 332 342806; Hasland St Paul and Temple Normanton St James vacant 01246 232486; Ilkeston Holy Trinity, Bp Roger Jupp 0115 973 5168; Long Eaton St Laurence, Bp Roger Jupp 0115 973 5168; Staveley St John Baptist with Inkersall St Columba and Barrow Hill St Andrew: Fr Stephen Jones, 01 246 498603

DIOCESE OF EXETER *FIF Recommended Parishes:* Abbot-sham St Helen, Churchwarden 01 237 420338; Babbacombe All Saints, Fr P Jones 01803 323002; Barnstaple St Peter, Fr D Fletcher 01271 373837; Bovey Tracey St John, Churchwarden 01 626 821956; Exeter St Michael & All Angels, *Heavitree*; St Lawrence, *Lower Hill Barton Rd*; St Paul, *Bumthorse Lane*; St Mary Steps, *West Street*, Fr R Eastoe 01392 677150; Great Tor-ington St Michael, Taddipott St Mary Magdalene, Fr P Bevan - 01805 622166; Lewtrenchard St Peter, vacancy 01566 784008; Newton Abbot St Luke, *Milber*, Fr N Debnay 01 626 681259; Paignton St John the Baptist with St Andrew & St Boniface Fr R Carlton 01803 351866; Plymouth St Peter and the Holy Apostles Fr D Way - 01 752 222007; Plymouth Mission Community of Our Lady of Glastonbury St Francis, *Honicknowle*, St Chad, *Whitleigh*, St Aidan, *Emesettle*, Fr D Bailey 01752 773874; Ply-mouth Sacred Heart Mission Community Parishes St John the Evangelist; *Sutton-on-Plym*; St Mary the Virgin, *Laira*; St Simon, *Mount Gould*, Fr Philpott, e-mail frphilpott@gmail.com; Ply-mouth Discovery Mission Community, St Bartholomew, *Devon-port*, St Mark, *Ford* & St Gabriel, *Pevelevell Park* Fr R Silk - 01752 562623; Torquay St Marychurch Fr R Ward 01803 269258; Torquay St Martin, Fr G Chapman 01803 327223; Torre All Saints, Fr P March 01 803 312754

DIOCESE OF GUILDFORD, *Society Parishes* Aldershot St Augustine, Fr Keith Hodges 01252 320840, Hawley Holy Trinity and All Saints, vacant contact the Churchwardens via the parish website. - For further details of all activities, events etc visit forwardinfaith.wixsite.com/fifguildford

FIF, DIOCESE OF LEICESTER Blackfordby and Woodville vac-ant, contact Miss Blossom Thompson 07813 214462; Leicester St Aidan, *New Parks*, Fr S Lumbly 0116 287 2342; St Mary de Castro, Fr D Maudlin 01572 820181; St Chad, Fr M Court 0116 241 3205; St Hugh, Eyres Monsell, vacant, interim Priest in Charge, Fr Simon Matthews 07763 974419; Narborough Fr A Hawker 0116 275 1470; Scraptoft Fr M Court 0116 241 3205; Wistow Benefice Fr P O'Reilly 0116 240 2215

FIF, DIOCESE OF LINCOLN *Resolution Parishes:* Binbrook (Louth) Vacant- Contact Fr Martin 07736711360; Eden-ham (Bourne) Fr Hawes 01778 591358; Grimsby St Augustine Fr Martin 07736 711360; Skirbeck St Nicholas (*Boston*) Fr Noble 01205 362734; Wainfleet Group (Skegness) Fr Morgan 01 754 880029; Burgh-le- Marsh (Skegness) Fr Steele 01754 810216; Fosdyke All Saints (Kilton) Fr Blanch 01205 624128. *Non-peti-tioning parishes information:* North Lincolnshire - Fr Martin 07736 711360; South Lincolnshire - Fr Noble 01205 362734

LEEDS FIF, WITHIN THE DIOCESE OF WEST YORKSHIRE and the DALES Belle Isle St John and St Barnabas, Priest in Charge, Fr Chris Buckley CMP 01132 717821, also priest with pastoral responsibility for the Parish of Hunslet St Mary. Cross Green St Hilda and Richmond Hill St Saviour, Fr Darren Percival SSC 07960 555609. Harehills St Wilfrid, Fr Terry Buckingham SSC: 01943 876066, Sunday Mass 10am

FIF, DIOCESE OF MANCHESTER Blackley Holy Trinity, Soci-ety, Fr Philip Stamp 0161 205 2879; Lower Broughton The As-cension, Society, Canon David Wyatt 0161 736 8868; Chadderton St Mark, Resolution Fr Steven Smith - 0161 624 2005; Failsworth Holy Family, Society, Jacqui Weir, Churchwarden - 07974 340682; Glodwick St Mark, Society, Fr Graham Hollowood 0161 624 4964; Hollinwood St Margaret, Society, Fr David Hawthorn 0161 682 5106; Leigh St Thomas & All Saints, Resolution, Fr Robert Dixon 01942 673519; Lightbowne St Luke, Society, Fr Philip Stamp - 0161 205 2879; Little Lever St Matthew, Resolution, Fr John Wiseman, 01 204 700396; Middleton Junction St Gabriel, Resolution Fr Steven Smith - 0161 624 2005; Moss Side Christ

Church, Society, Canon Simon Killwick 0161 226 2476; Oldham St James with St Ambrose, Society, Fr Graham Hollowood - 0161 624 4964; Peel Green St Michael, Society, Fr Ian Hall - 0161 788 8991; Prestwich St Hilda, Society, Fr Ronald Croft 0161 773 1642; Royton St Paul, Society, Vacant contact Tony Hawkins 07792 601295; Salford St Paul, Society, Canon David Wyatt 0161 736 8868; Swinton and Pendlebury Society, Fr Jeremy Sheehy 0161 727 8175; Tonge Moor, Bolton St Augustine, Society, Fr Tony Davies 01204 523899; Winton St Mary Magdalene, Society, Fr Ian Hall 0161 788 8991; Withington St Crispin, Society, Fr Patrick Davies 0161 224 3452

FIF, DIOCESE OF PORTSMOUTH Fareham SS Peter and Paul, *Fareham* Fr Roger Jackson 01 329 281521; IOW: All Saints, *Godshill*, and St Alban, *Ventnor* Fr John Ryder 01983 840895; Good Shepherd, *Lake*, and St Saviour on the Cliff, *Shanklin*, Fr David Lawrence-March 01 983 407928; Portsmouth: St Michael, *Paulsgrove*, Fr Ian Newton 02392 378194; The Ascension, *North End*, Vacant (Churchwarden 02392 660123); Southsea Holy Spirit, Fr Philip Amey 023 9311 7159; Stamshaw St Saviour, vacant Churchwarden 023 92643857

FIF, DIOCESE OF ROCHESTER Beckenham St Michael, 11am Sung Mass; Belvedere St Augustine, 10am Sung Mass; Swanley St Mary, 10am Sung Mass; Bickley St George, 8am Low Mass, 10.30am Sung Mass; Chislehurst The Annunciation, 8am Low Mass, 10am Sung Mass; Elmers End St James, 9.15am Sung Mass, 10am Sung Mass; Gillingham St Luke, Parish Mass 10.30am; Higham St John, 9.30am Sung Mass; Sevenoaks St John, 8am Low Mass, 10am Sung Mass; Tunbridge Wells St Barnabas, 10am Sung Mass; all contact details from Fr Clive Jones 020 8311 6307

FIF, DIOCESE OF ST ALBANS *FIF Recommended Churches* Bedford St Martin, Fr Pimenta 01234 357862; Bushey Heath St Peter, Fr Burton 020 8950 1424; Hemel Hempstead St Francis, *Hammerfield*, Fr Weitzmann 01442 247503; Letchworth St Michael & St Mary, Fr Bennett 01462 684822; Luton: Holy Cross, *Marsh Farm*, vacant; Holy Trinity, *Biscot*, Fr Singh 01582 579410; St Mary, Sundon & St Saviour, Fr Smejkal 01582 583076. (Please con-tact clergy for details of services)

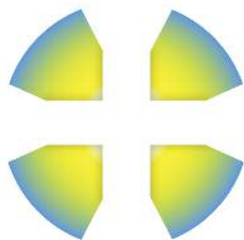
FIF, DIOCESE OF ST EDMUNDSBURY and IPSWICH Cookley St Michael and All Angels, Fr Jonathan Olanczuk, 01 502 470079, 9.30am Mass (3rd Sunday in Month) ; Ipswich St Mary at the Elms, Fr John Thackray 07780 613754. Sunday Mass 10.45am- Mendlesham St Mary, Fr Philip Gray 01449 766359; Eye SS Peter and Paul - The Rev. Dr. Guy Sumpter 01 379 871986.

FIF, DIOCESE OF SHEFFIELD Bolton-on-Deame St Andrew, Fr Schaefer 01 709 898426; Cantley St Wilfrid, Fr Andrew Howard 01302 285 316; Doncaster Holy Trinity, Fr Stokoe 01302 371256; Edlington St John the Baptist, Fr Edmonds 01709 858358; Goldthorpe SS John and Mary Magdalene, Fr Schaefer 01709 898426; Hexthorpe St Jude, Fr Edmonds 01709 858358; Hickleton St Wilfrid, Fr Schaefer 01709 898426; Hoyland St Peter, Fr Parker 01226 749231; Thurnscoe St Hilda, vacant; Mexborough St John the Baptist, vacant; Moorends St Wilfrith, Fr Pay 07530921952; New Bentley Ss Philip and James, Fr Dickinson 01302 875266; New Cantley St Hugh, Fr Stokoe 01302 371256; New Rossington St Luke, Fr Leal 01 302 864304; Ryecroft: St Nicholas, Fr Andrew Lee 01 709 921257; Dalton: Holy Trinity, Fr Andrew Lee 01 709 921257; Doncaster Ss Leonard & Jude (with St Luke) Vacant; Sheffield: St Bernard, *Southey Green* and St Cecilia, *Parson Cross*, Fr Ryder-West 0114 2493916; St Catherine, *Richmond Road*, Fr Knowles 0114 2399598; St Matthew, *Carver Street*, Fr Grant Naylor 01 142 665681; St Mary, *Handsworth*, Fr Johnson 01142 692403 (contact clergy for Mass times, etc)

FIF SOUTHAMPTON *Society parishes (under the episco-pal care of the Bishop of Richborough) welcome you:* St Barnabas, Lodge Road (off Inner Avenue A33 London Road) Sun-day: Solemn Mass 10am, Daily Mass and other service details from Fr Barry Fry SSC 02380 223107; Holy Trinity, Millbrook (Off A33 city centre road from M271) Sunday: Solemn Mass 10am, Mid-week Mass and other service details from Churchwarden 077090 22080

DIOCESE of TRURO - FIF Recommended Parishes FAL-MOUTH: St. Michael & All Angels, Penweris, vacant, contact Miss B.A.Meade, 01 326 212865; PENRYN: St. Gluvius, Fr S.Wales - 01326 378638; TRURO: St. George, Fr C. Epps - 01872 272630

News from Forward in Faith



FORWARDINFAITH

Data Protection

Over the summer shredding has been getting underway in earnest in the Forward in Faith office. The new General Data Protection Regulation prompted us to sort through our databases and all the paper files that contain personal data and remove those records that we no longer have any justification for keeping. That exercise is now complete, and shredding of three very large cardboard boxes full of paper is well underway.

The GDPR permits us to retain and process personal data where this is

- necessary in order to fulfil a contract
- necessary in order to comply with legal and regulatory requirements
- in pursuance of a 'legitimate interest', or
- consented to by those concerned.

The vast majority of the personal data now held by Forward in Faith is covered by 'contract' (e.g. paying members and subscribers), legal and regulatory requirements (e.g. gift aid forms) and 'legitimate interest' (e.g. sending *New Directions* to those members of the General Synod Houses of Clergy and Laity who have made their addresses available to receive communications from third parties). Where none of these justifications applies, the consent of those concerned has been obtained or the records concerned have been deleted.

We have published Privacy Notices on the Forward in Faith website, explaining the basis on which we hold personal data, and what we do (and do not do) with such data. See www.forwardinfaith.com/privacy.php

National Assembly

This year's National Assembly will be held at the Church of St Alban the Martyr, Holborn, on Saturday 17 November, beginning with Mass at 10.30 am and concluding with Benediction at 4.30 pm. The keynote speaker will be the Secretary General of the General Synod and the Archbishops' Council, Mr William Nye. The Council will finalize the agenda at its meeting on 20 September.

As usual, information and registration forms will be sent to registered parishes, branches and bishops' representatives during September.

Only members of the Assembly are entitled to speak and vote in the Assembly, but anyone is welcome to attend as an observer. Those who register as observers and pay the £15 registration fee will receive the papers and a ticket for the packed lunch. (Please contact Alison Shaw at the Forward in Faith office: admin.assistant@forwardinfaith.com). **ND**

Bishops of the Society



The Bishop of Beverley

PROVINCE OF YORK (EXCEPT BLACKBURN AND LEEDS)

The Right Revd Glyn Webster

Holy Trinity Rectory, Micklegate, York YO1 6LE

01904 628155 office@seeofbeverley.org.uk

www.seeofbeverley.org.uk

The Bishop of Burnley
BLACKBURN

The Right Revd Philip North CMP

Dean House, 449 Padiham Road, Burnley BB12 6TE

01282 479300 bishop.burnley@blackburn.anglican.org



The Bishop of Chichester
CHICHESTER

The Right Revd Dr Martin Warner SSC

The Palace, Chichester PO19 1PY 01243 782161

bishop.chichester@chichester.anglican.org



The Bishop of Ebbsfleet
PROVINCE OF CANTERBURY (WEST)

The Right Revd Jonathan Goodall SSC

Hill House, The Mount, Caversham,

Reading RG4 7RE 0118 948 1038

bishop@ebbsfleet.org.uk www.ebbsfleet.org.uk



The Bishop of Fulham
LONDON & SOUTHWARK

The Right Revd Jonathan Baker

The Vicarage, 5 St Andrew St, London EC4A 3AF

020 7932 1130 bishop.fulham@london.anglican.org

www.bishopoffulham.org.uk



The Bishop of Richborough
PROVINCE OF CANTERBURY: EAST (EXCEPT CHICHESTER,
LONDON & SOUTHWARK); EUROPE

The Right Revd Norman Banks SSC

Parkside House, Abbey Mill Lane, St Albans AL3 4HE

01727 836358 bishop@richborough.org.uk www.richborough.org.uk



The Bishop of Wakefield
LEEDS

The Right Revd Tony Robinson SSC

Pontefract Ho, 181A Manygates Lane, Wakefield WF2 7DR

01924 250781 bishop.tony@westyorkshiredales.anglican.org



The Right Revd Roger Jupp SSC
(SUPERIOR-GENERAL, CONFRATERNITY OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT)

St Laurence's Vicarage, Regent Street, Long Eaton,
Nottingham NG10 1JX

0115 973 5168 rajupp1@hotmail.com



The Right Revd John Gaisford SSC
(formerly Bishop of Beverley)

The Right Revd John Goddard SSC
(formerly Bishop of Burnley)

The Right Revd Dr John Hind
(formerly Bishop of Chichester)

The Right Revd Martyn Jarrett SSC
(formerly Bishop of Beverley)

The Right Revd Robert Ladds SSC
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The Resources pages include

- material about women bishops and women priests
- information about the House of Bishops' Declaration
- articles, addresses and statements
- the Forward in Faith 'brand pack'

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For informal discussion,

please contact:

The Rt Revd Jonathan Goodall

Bishop of Ebbsfleet

0118 948 1038

office@ebbsfleet.org.uk

Enquiries & application form from

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