

newdirections



November 2011
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serving Catholics and Evangelicals seeking to renew the Church in the historic faith

The Priest as Evangelist

Damian Feeney reflects
on the gift of evangelism

Also in this issue:

- Reports from the National Assembly
- George Nairn-Briggs on Walter Frere
- Neal Wood considers Downton Abbey

parish directory

BARRY near rail, bus and town centre *Gredo Gyrnu (Fif Wales)*
St Mary's, Holton Road Sunday: Solemn Mass 8am and 11am, Sunday Club 11am, daily Mass, except Friday; **St Cadoc's, Coldbrook Road** Sunday: Solemn Mass 9.30am, Vespers 6pm Saturday with Benediction 1st Saturdays. Daily Mass in Parish except Friday. Priest to be appointed - 01446 406690

BEXHILL on SEA **St Augustine's, Cooden Drive, TN39 3AZ**
 Sunday: Mass at 8am, Parish Mass with Junior Church at 10am. Further details: Father Robert Coates ssc on 01424 210785

BIRMINGHAM **St Agatha, Stratford Road, Sparkbrook (B11 1QT)** "Any similarity between the Church of England and St Agatha's is purely coincidental!" (A Diocesan Official - 2007) Sunday Mass 11am. Secure Parking. Canon John Herve ssc - 0121 449 2790

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

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

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

BOURNEMOUTH **St Ambrose, West Cliff Road, BH4 8BE**. *A Forward in Faith Parish with Resolutions ABC in place*. Sunday: 8am Low Mass BCP, 10am Sung Mass Traditional Ceremonial, modern Rite, 6pm 1st, Songs of Praise; Evensong 2nd and 3rd, Choral 4th or 5th. Weekdays Low Mass: 8am Tuesday and Friday modern Rite. Parish office 01202 766772

BOURNEMOUTH **St Francis of Assisi, Chaminster Road (corner of East Way)** *A Forward in Faith Parish* under the care of the Bishop of Richborough. *Resolutions ABC*. Sunday: 8am Low Mass, Parish Mass 10am, Evening Prayer and Benediction 6.30pm - first Sunday of each month and major festivals. For information about all services during the Interregnum contact Barbara Geatrell 01425 470370 or Hubert Allen 01202 511845 (Parish Office) Churchwardens www.stfrancis-bournemouth.org.uk

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

BRIDPORT **St Swithun** *Resolutions ABC*. Sunday: Low Mass 8am; Solemn Mass 9.30am, Evening Prayer and Benediction second Sunday 6pm. Weekday Masses: Tues 7pm, Wed 9am, Thur 10am. Parish Priest: Fr Peter Edwards 01308 456588

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

BRISTOL **Christ Church, Broad Street, Old City Centre BS1 2EJ** *Resolutions ABC*. Sunday 11am Choral Eucharist, 6.30pm Choral

Evensong with Anthem and Sermon. Georgian gem, Prayer Book services, robed men and boys' choir, Renatus Harris organ. Tues, Thurs and major holy days: 1.05pm Eucharist. Regular recitals and concerts (see website). Parish Priest: Fr Richard Hoyal 0117 9706776 www.christchurchcitybristol.org

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

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

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

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

CHELMSFORD **The Ascension, Maltese Road (10 minutes walk from the station)** *A Forward in Faith Parish under the Bishop of Richborough*. Sunday: Mass 8am; Parish Mass 9am followed by Parish Breakfast. Weekdays: Tues 7pm, Wed 9.30am, Fri 8am, Sat 10am. Modern rite, Traditional ceremonial. Parish Priest: Fr Ivor Morris 01245 353914 www.ascensionchelmsford.org

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

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

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

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

FOLKESTONE **Kent, St Peter on the East Cliff** *A Forward in Faith Parish under the episcopal care of the Bishop of Richborough. Resolutions ABC*. Sunday: 8am Low Mass, 10.30am Solemn Mass, 6pm Evensong. Weekday Masses: Mon 10.30am, Tues 7pm, Thur 12 noon, Sat 8am. Daily Offices. During Interregnum: 01303 254472 www.stpetersfolkestone.org.uk

GRIMSBY **St Augustine, Legsby Avenue** Lovely Grade II Church by Sir Charles Nicholson. *A Forward in Faith Parish under Bishop of Richborough*. Sunday: Mass 9am, Parish Mass 10.30am, Solemn Evensong and Benediction 6pm. Weekdays: Mon, Wed and Sat

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

HARLOW **St Mary Magdalene Harlow Common (southern side of Harlow, Chelmsford diocese)** *Resolutions ABC*. Sunday: Low Mass 8am, Parish Mass 10.30am, Evening Service and Benediction 6.30pm. Weekday Masses: Tues 7.30pm (preceded by Exposition at 7pm); Wed 9.30am; Thurs 10am; Sat 9.30am. Vicar: Fr John Corby ssc 01279 453848

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

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

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

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

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

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

LONDON N1 **Holy Trinity, Hoxton** Sunday: 10am Solemn Mass and Sunday School. Midweek Services: contact David Fordham 07885 064161

LONDON N17 **St Benet Fink, Walpole Road, Tottenham A** *Forward in Faith Parish under the care of the Bishop of Fulham*. Sunday: Sung Mass 10am. Friday: Low Mass 9.30am. Contact Fr James Hill - 0208 888 4541

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

London NW9 **Kingsbury St Andrew** *A FIF Parish under the Episcopal care of the Bishop of Fulham* Sunday: Mass at 8am and 10am. Tube to Wembley Park then 83 Bus to Church Lane. Parish Priest: Fr John T Smith ssc 020 8205 7447

LONDON SE13 **St Stephen, Lewisham (opposite Lewisham Station)** *A Forward in Faith Parish under the episcopal care of the Bishop of Fulham*. Sunday: Mass 8am, Parish Mass 10am. Weekdays: Mon 7am, Tues 7.30pm, Wed 12.15pm, Thur 8am, Fri 6.30pm, Sat 8am. Parish Priest: Fr Geoffrey Kirk 020 8318 1295

LONDON SE16 **St Mary Rotherhithe, St Marychurch Street SE16 4JE** *A Fulham Parish*. Sunday: Solemn Mass 9.30am, Evening Prayer 6pm, Benediction monthly. Mass times: Tues 12 noon; Wed 9.15am School Mass; Thur 6pm; Fri 9.30am; Sat 9.30am. Tube: Jubilee Line Bermondsey/Canada Water. Historic Mayflower Church. Visitors most welcome. Fr Mark Nicholls ssc 0207 394 3394

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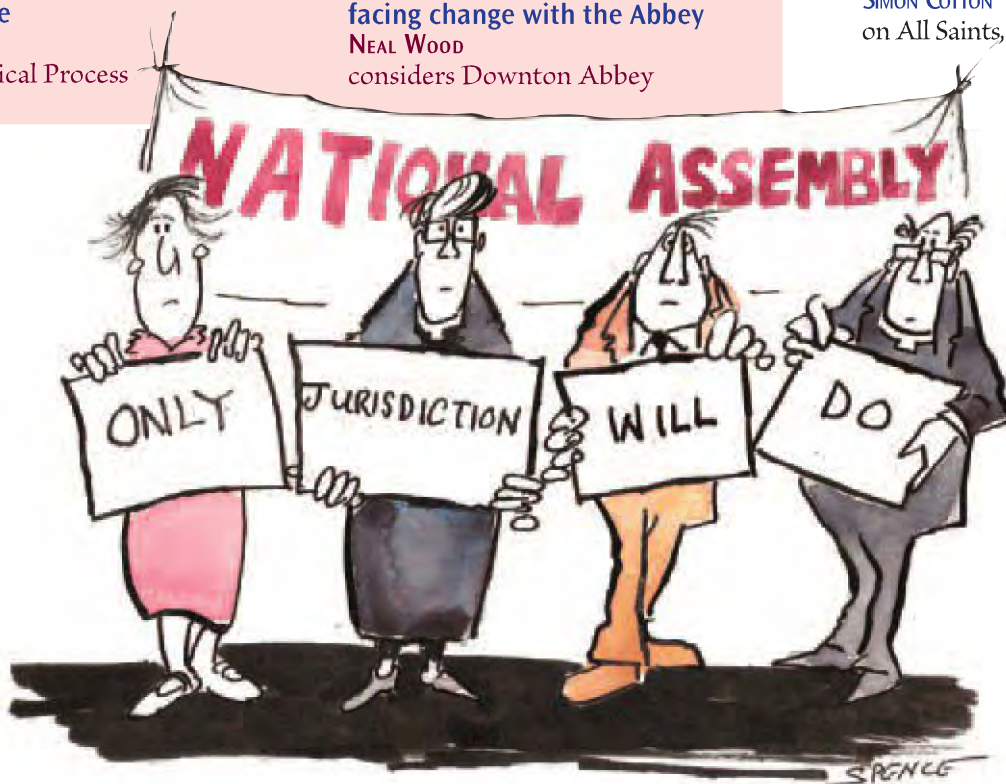
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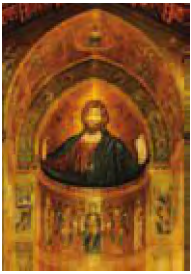
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LEAD STORY

The priest as evangelist

Damian Feeney on the gift of evangelism and the importance of identifying and encouraging it in others

our
current
difficulties
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concerned
for
evangelism,
not
less

Mention the word ‘evangelist’ and it is a loaded word. Images of larger-than-life charlatans, or slogan-bound figures in public places shouting at no one in particular still tend to impose themselves in our minds whenever the ‘e-word’ is mentioned. It is ironic when you consider that an evangelist is meant to be a ‘teller of good news.’ When I look back on my youth, I recall with joy the ministry of the priest that was instrumental both in proclaiming the faith to me and offering a remarkable role model for priesthood.

His qualities? He was a quiet, gentle soul – fervent in prayer, disciplined in his rule of life, firm and honest in preaching the Gospel, wise in counsel, diligent in pastoral care. Above all, he lived the Catholic Christian life in an attractive way, a way which showed love for his congregation whilst constantly challenging us with the standards of ceaseless love encompassed in the life, death and resurrection of Christ. He was a true evangelist, and many were blessed with the gift of faith through him. He was a world away from those caricatures.

Holiness of life

Priests have a crucial role in modelling the faith. Conversations at the recent ACS Vocations Conference at St Stephen’s House granted me the privilege of hearing the stories of others, discerning the will of God in their own lives, with similar examples to mine. Holiness of life is infectious, and attractive, and it persuades others of the value and importance of lives spent in the costly service of the Gospel.

The gift of evangelism to the Church is a specific one. Sometimes priests fall shy of the *doing* of evangelism – the story telling, the making connections between the life of people around us and the life of faith in Christ found in the church. Recall the words of Ephesians 4: ‘And to some, his gift was that they should be apostles; to some, prophets; to some, evangelists, to some, pastors and teachers, to knit God’s holy people together for the work of service to build up the body of Christ, until we all reach unity in faith and knowledge of the son of God’ (Ephesians 4.11–13a, NRSV).

Issuing invitations

So – the gift is found within the Body, if not

specifically held by all. It’s a vital gift, focusing as it does on the business of *seeking out* those who are searching for truth, *sharing the story* of the good news of faith, leading those who once were far away from God into a renewed and close relationship with him.

As a friend of mine once memorably put it, ‘An evangelist’s task is to issue the invitations to the Heavenly Banquet’ – a splendid, rich and altogether enticing image. It is important that we recognize that such invitations are invitations into God’s kingdom rather than simply church membership – but in places where this gift is alive and used in the right way, there is little doubt that people respond with curiosity and a desire to explore the faith. Such parishes and churches inevitably grow.

Prayerful discernment

Because of the nature of apostolic ministry, it is inevitable that bishops, priests and deacons carry a proportion of the responsibility for this task. Even if clergy do not have the specific gift, we are still needed to act as a focus for it within the local church. This can mean finding those who show signs of such activity in our congregations, spending time with them, and encouraging their ministry. My last parish was blessed with a person who possessed such a gift – the gift of personal invitation (in such a way that people couldn’t refuse!) alongside the ability to tell the story of her faith in a compelling and attractive way (and at the right time!).

Such people need nurturing, encouraging, and (sometimes) protecting, so that the Kingdom can reap the rewards. In a parish part of the responsibility of clergy is the task of prayerful discernment, perhaps within personal intercessory prayer and colloquy. Who are the evangelists, the storytellers, those whose lives attract and challenge? These are people whose energy can be focused in a vital and transforming way.

We only become aware of a gift by being placed in situations by God where that gift must be exercised. It is not necessarily about feeling good, or comfortable, but rather about trying, and seeing what the results might be. And the more we try, the better we become. And when we fall short, we are reminded of two important truths – that the work of evangelism is ultimately

God's responsibility, and that it is his grace, not our gift, which converts. Recall the words of the mighty St Jean Vianney, in which this is clearly understood: '[Lord,] grant me the conversion of my parish; I am willing to suffer whatever you wish, for my entire life!'

Proclaiming the faith

All of this has added importance when we contemplate all that lies before us. Our current difficulties should make us *more* concerned for evangelism, not *less*. Behind the complexities and discouragements of the debate over women bishops and an increasingly liberal theological agenda, there is still the imperative of the Gospel faithfully proclaimed and the importance of that Gospel in a society where people are now actively encouraged to distrust the whole business of faithful and faith-based living.

A believed faith is a proclaimed faith, a lived faith. Wherever we are led to witness (and in whatever context), the need for people with a lively, confessed faith is as vital to God's purposes as ever.

There are three specific issues which seem to colour the world of faithful living. The first is the number of people we meet who are happy without faith. The second is the issue of the credibility of the Church. The third is the (often valid) accusation of hypocrisy which is so often raised by those hearing the claims of Christ – that we do not live as our Master lives. The importance of honesty in these types of encounters cannot be over-estimated. The questions people raise as criticisms are so often opportunities for fruitful conversation.

Parish ministry offers the privilege of sharing that which is most precious to us. The daily round of prayer and sacrament, the privilege of preaching and teaching, the life of pastoral care and spiritual accompaniment, the building up of groups of people committed to excellence in ministry – all of these tasks offer the means by which the faith is modelled and taught. Here a gauntlet can be thrown down to the wider community, challenging self-centred, loveless and unjust ways of living.

Pastoral understanding

All too often it's easy to fall into the trap of thinking that the task of evangelism 'just isn't me'. We are tempted to contrast evangelism with pastoral care; 'Oh, I'm a pastor, not an evangelist'. Of course the best pastoral care is profoundly evangelistic, because it models the life of Christ, just as the best evangelism begins with a deep pastoral understanding and knowledge of the people with whom we engage. The most important examples of this are often to be found in our experiences of the occasional offices, but in truth can occur anywhere.

As ever, we take Jesus as our model of evangelism. He teaches large crowds, but then focuses on individuals – think of Zaccheus, or Bartimeus, or the woman who sought his healing by touching the hem of his garment. All of these were people in crowds, to whom Jesus devoted his attention, love and grace. Effective evangelism so often begins with the genuine befriending of individuals who in turn find in that friendship a host of questions which their normal frames of reference cannot answer – and so they are forced to face the dimensions of the spiritual and the faith-based which may have received scant attention in their lives thus far.

Recovering our confidence

What does this mean for the day-to-day ministry of the priest? Of course, some time is necessary – time to ponder who the people are in our communities who are not content with glib half-truths about life, but who long for something more; these are the seekers after truth and we should spend time looking for them, befriending them, eating and sharing with them. So much of our time is spent with individuals. How do we use that time? Do we speak of the things of God, or of the weather? Do we issue the invitations personally, so that people realize that they are being invited to a place where they will be loved, valued and cherished, and that we genuinely mind whether they are included or not?

For some time now we have pondered the question of the recovery of our confidence. Perhaps some of that recovery might come with a re-emphasizing of the evangelistic role of priesthood, as a focus and sign of the vocation of the whole Church to be a people of the New Evangelization, a people who are focused on being and telling Good News, a people who offer the hope of Christ's Risen Life. **ND**

*This paper was originally given
at the Catholic Societies
Vocations Conference
at St Stephen's House*

the
questions
people
raise
as
criticisms
are so
often
opportunities
for
fruitful
conversation

**VOCATIONS DAY**
For men considering ordination
SATURDAY 3rd DECEMBER
10.30am – 4.00pm
CHRIST THE KING
Gordon Square, London WC1H 0AG
Speaker: Bishop Martin Warner
Wives also welcome • For more information contact:
www.additionalcurates.co.uk • Tel: 0121 382 5533

Forward in Faith National Assembly Mass 2011

Bishop Martyn Jarrett preaches on the Feast of the Translation of the image of Our Lady of Walsingham

‘But how can this come about since I am a virgin?’ (Luke 1.34)

This very day, exactly eighty years ago, a great procession of some three thousand people wound its way from the parish church at Walsingham, along the High Street, to the newly erected Holy House. It is recorded that Bishop O’Rorke wore his tallest mitre, larger, some even say, than those now worn by Bishop Robert Ladds!

The image of Our Lady of Walsingham was being translated from the home she had enjoyed against a pillar in the Lady Chapel of the parish church to her new abode, the Holy House that so many of us know and love today.

Even for Fr Hope Patten such a major step forward might not have been anticipated when first he came to Walsingham, convinced, as he was, that God was calling him to restore Our Lady’s shrine. But, for the then Bishop of Norwich, Bishop Pollock, the event was not only a surprise; it was an unwelcome one. Bishop Pollock had told Fr Hope Patten that the shrine must be removed from the parish church and was delighted when Fr Hope Patten had agreed.

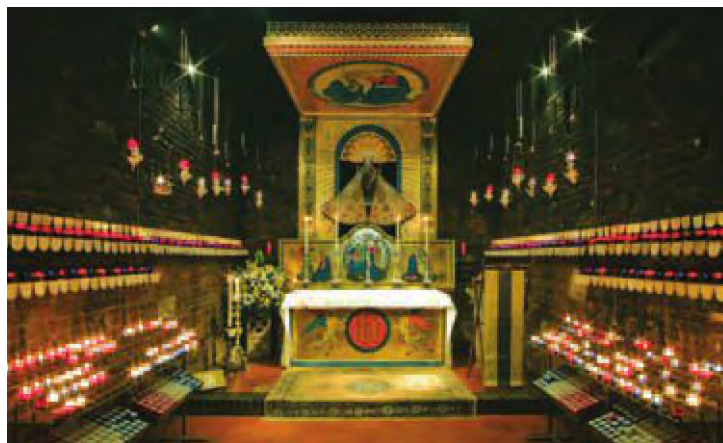
Cooperation with grace

It was only later that the bishop could catch on as to what was really happening. It is reported that on one occasion Bishop Pollock visited the Abbey House and, having, from its windows, focused binoculars on the building gradually being erected at the foot of Knight Street, walked away muttering ‘deplorable, deplorable’. It seems that, sometimes, God does a new thing in this world, delightfully surprising some while others are unsure, to say the least, and can only

run for cover.

That surprise and puzzlement of God doing a new thing in this world was even more strongly felt in the original Holy House, Our Lady’s home at Nazareth. Gabriel speaks his word and we are told that Our Lady’s immediate response is not one of assent but of puzzlement: ‘But how can this come about since I am a virgin?’

**God has called us to this
time just as he called
Blessed Mary to her role
in the Incarnation**



Our Lady had free will. Just like anyone else, Blessed Mary had to make choices. Her complete cooperation with God’s grace throughout the whole of her life ensured that she always retained the perfect innocence of her Immaculate Conception. But, we need to remember, even complete cooperation with God’s grace does not mean immediate arrival at a full understanding of what it is that God is about or of what he specifically demands of us at any one time. That great saint, St Teresa of the Child Jesus, who was to die at a woefully young age and in great pain from a

terrible cancer, tells how found great encouragement from Blessed Mary’s occasional questioning and lack of understanding.

St Teresa knew that Our Lady had experienced nights of faith, times when it was not clear where everything was leading and yet still she was open to perfect cooperation with God’s grace. St Teresa tells us that Our Lady’s trust, even when she did not understand, brought considerable consolation to her, in those regular periods of desolation that she, St Teresa, endured throughout her final illness.

Open to God’s will

It seems that Our Blessed Lady moves, to coin a phrase, ‘forward in faith’. Our Lady might misunderstand. She might wonder how something is possible. She might worry as she loses her young lad during the family pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Our Lady might even think, as the Gospels more than hint, that Jesus has perhaps become somewhat deranged during his early ministry and so want to take him home to her care. Yet still Blessed

Mary is open to God’s will. Blessed Mary is open to God’s will even when it means standing at the foot of the cross in the horror of Good Friday. The fruit of that faithfulness, of course, was to be Our Lady’s experience of her Son’s resurrection. Those disciples of Jesus who did not share Blessed Mary’s total faithfulness must have been even more bemused than was Bishop Pollock when he saw the working out of Fr Hope Patten’s steadfast belief that he was the one called by God to restore the Holy House to Walsingham.

Today, you and I sit in a puzzling and even seemingly dark place within

our Christian discipleship. As the decisive vote on admitting women to the episcopate comes nearer and nearer it seems as if nothing is going to give. So much of the evidence points to our fellow members of the Church of England being all too eager to rat on promises previously made to us rather than give us what they and we truly know to be essential for our authentic practice of the Faith as we have received it, practise it and want to share it with others.

A puzzling place

We are all too like that character in *The Royle Family*, a vegetarian, who, on finding herself a guest at a meal where meat is being served, is then treated as an invalid. It is eventually suggested that perhaps the meat could be fed to her in small pieces!

Brothers and sisters, I doubt that most of you share my particular dietary preferences. We do all know, though, the necessity of an authentic Catholic diet and we are all but despairing as the rest of the Church seems to think that if only they can feed us their watered down substitute we will soon learn to enjoy it. They just do not seem to understand. It is not that we do not want to be faithful servants of God. It is rather that, like Our Blessed Lady, we just cannot see how such a thing can come about.

The Holy Spirit

The answer for Blessed Mary comes, of course, with the great promise of the angel: 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you and the power of the Most High will cover you.' The great Cardinal Suenens wrote of Our Lady as being the recipient of the charismatic experience *par excellence*.

It is God who is working out his vocation for us and who is constantly giving us his life-giving Spirit so that you and I can both bring forth his new life and also discern the signs of its presence. There is little evidence that that was an easy vocation for Our Lady, sinless as she was. We hardly need reminding that it is not an easy vocation for us who are her children. You and I feel called by God, even now, to recall our Church to its Catholic heritage. And, let it be said, there are many among our Roman Catholic friends who realize the value of that

task if ever the ecumenical movement is to be about reconciling churches and not just about individual conversions. We do not know where that journey is going to take us.

We can be reasonably certain that, as for Our Blessed Lady, it will one day bring us to the foot of the cross. It might be, indeed, that some among us feel somewhere near that place at this very moment. The cross, though, is the very place of the Lord's victory. There is resurrection.

**you and I
feel called by God,
even now,
to recall our Church
to its Catholic heritage**

Only God knows

Perhaps our church will come to its senses and make proper provision for us even at this late stage. Perhaps The Society will be recognized as the gateway to such provision. Perhaps, who knows, some significant concession will be made that enables many to feel they can stay and continue that call to the Church of England to live an authentic catholic life. Perhaps, even, and dare we think it, the outcome will be the one that many of us dread most of all; that no more can be done in conscience within

the Church of England, as some of our number have already decided. Literally and profoundly, only God knows. He has called us to this time just as he called Blessed Mary to her role in the Incarnation, just as he called Fr Hope Patten, the fruits of whose vision we celebrate today. God has called us to this day. Some may taunt us for still seeking to hold our ground.

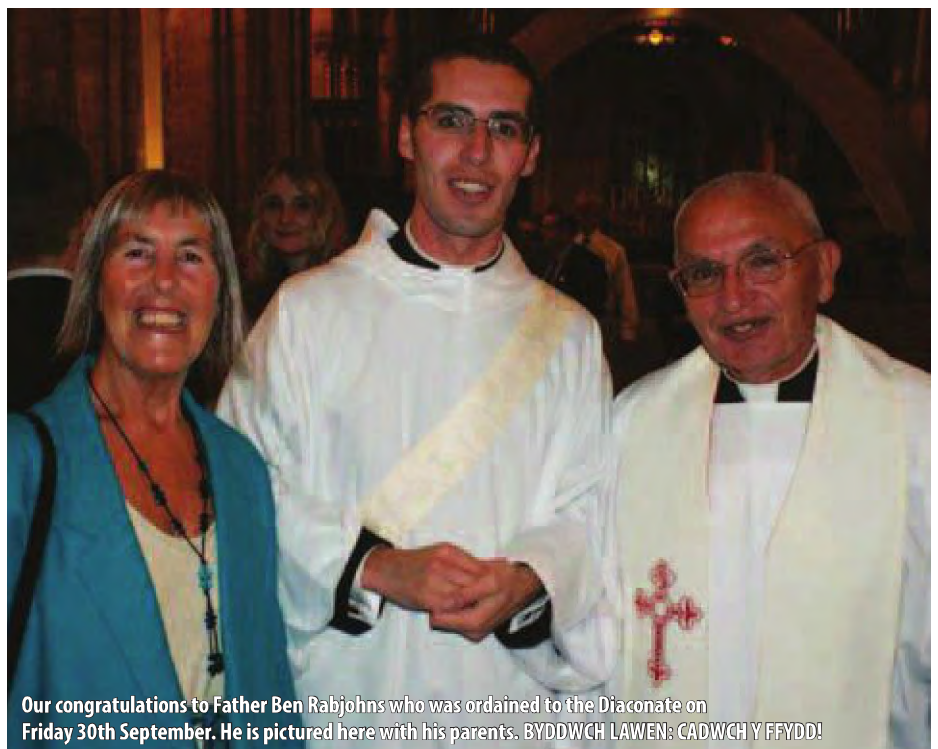
You and I know, though, that God is faithful. He will lead us into his future, proving again and again that he is, in those great words of Gerald Hughes, *The God of Surprises*.

Words of confidence

Today, of course, is not only the Translation of Our Lady of Walsingham. It is also the memorial of that other St Teresa, St Teresa of Avila, another great saint for whom, in terms of this world, the future could sometimes look very uncertain. Her words of confidence in God, even in uncertain times, have rightly become well known to many of us.

**Let nothing disturb you.
Let nothing frighten you.
All things pass away;
God never changes.
Patience obtains all things.
He who has God
Finds he lacks nothing;
God alone suffices.**

Let St Teresa, then, have the last word.



Our congratulations to Father Ben Rabjohns who was ordained to the Diaconate on Friday 30th September. He is pictured here with his parents. BYDDWCH LAWEN: CADWCH Y FFYDD!

Anglican Patrimony

Christopher Trundle on the writings of Jeremy Taylor
and his admirable confidence in the Anglican tradition

‘Suppose every day to be a day of business; for your whole life is a race and a battle, a merchandize, and a journey; every day propound to yourself a rosary, or a chaplet of good works, to present to God at night... Receive the blessed sacrament as often as you can: endeavour to have it once a month, besides the solemn and great festivals of the year.

‘Confess your sins often, hear the word of God, make religion the business of your life, your study and chiefest care; and be sure that in all things a spiritual guide take you by the hand.’

These words of Jeremy Taylor (1613–67) from his *Great Exemplar* are as relevant today as they were when he wrote them in 1649. Private prayer, good works, frequent communion and confession of sins form the backbone of the Catholic life, and it is a great encouragement to us that this devotional practice has continued in our Church of England long since.

Taylor is known, among other things, for his devotional books designed to give advice and guidance on the spiritual life. This work, and those which followed in successive years, *The Rule and Exercises of Holy Living* and *The Rule and Exercises of Holy Dying*, have retained a great degree of popularity. Taylor was a man of immense learning, which not only made him a gifted preacher, but also enabled him to write on theology and ethics. Indeed, his *Discourse of the Liberty of Prophesying* propounded an argument for toleration well before John Locke. But whatever we read, we encounter a mastery of prose and imagery which makes his work particularly vivid and effective even now.

Taylor lived through the turbulent period of the English Civil War and its aftermath. He had been a favourite of Archbishop Laud, and became a chaplain to King Charles I and his army, for which he was imprisoned several times during Cromwell’s rule. Throughout his early life he was suspected by many to have a secret

leaning to Roman Catholicism, possibly because of his friendship with Laud and with a Franciscan chaplain to Queen Henrietta.

After imprisonment, Taylor lived quietly in Wales as a private chaplain for some years before resuming an earlier academic career and moving to become a lecturer in Ireland. Not long after the Restoration he was appointed to the bishoprics of Down and Connor, and Dromore, where he faced intense disputes with both Presbyterians and Roman Catholics. To the Presbyterian ministers he offered either submission to episcopal ordination or deprivation, and consequently after his first visitation declared a great number of churches to be vacant. As for the Roman Catholics who did not understand English and were wholly attached to their traditional worship, they were made to attend Anglican services which they resented and did not understand. Bishop Heber, the editor of Taylor’s complete works, suggested that he might have enjoyed better results (not to mention an easier ministry) by encouraging his clergy to learn the Irish language.

Taylor, though, espoused an admirable courage and confidence in the Anglican tradition (if, perhaps, to the detriment of some of his people), and the emphasis he clearly placed on Holy Orders, the Apostolic Succession, and on the sacrament is as important now as it was then.

‘For as God descended and came into the tabernacle invested with a cloud, so Christ comes to meet us clothed with a mystery. He hath a house below as well as above; here is his dwelling and here are his provisions; here is his fire and here is his meat; hither God sends his Son, and here his Son manifests himself... He hath told us where he would be, behind what pillar, and under what cloud, and covered with what veil, and conveyed by what ministry, and present in what sacrament.’ **ND**

Jeremy Taylor, The Worthy Communicant, 1660

The Animals Went In (And On)

Old Noah set an interesting precedent
By the animals he called
to the Ark.

But ne’er has his example gained
such assent
As was given by our man at St
Mark’s.

‘Harvest Festivals are all very well,’
he averred,
But they only have marrows
and corn.
We need to give thanks
for the animal world,
For every piglet and puppy
that’s born.’

At St Francistide this friend
to beasts all,
Bade animals to his church
two by two;
So many replied to his
welcoming call
That the nave soon resembled a zoo.

The M.C. marched ahead
of the flocks,
Censing every inch of the way
A needful task to prevent any shocks
If the foxes all started to spray.

They baa-ed, they barked
and hopped all about;
All making such a terrible din
That the Vicar’s sermon turned
into a shout
And the cacophony fair
drowned the hymn.

A cockerel trying his harem to seek
With doodle-does that reached
to the spire.

‘Better than the hymns what
we sing every week’
Grunted the verger who hated
the choir.

All went with a swing till the
very last round
When a great beast leapt up
from his mat.
Squire Robinson’s pedigree
hunting hound
Had swallowed poor Father’s pet cat.

Alan Edwards

The New Oxford Movement

Clare Rabjohns on a new group of young Anglo-Catholics within the Church of England and what they hope to achieve

'For I will take you out of the nations; I will gather you from all the countries and bring you back into your own land. I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your impurities and from all your idols. I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws. Then you will live in the land I gave your ancestors; you will be my people, and I will be your God.'

Call to truth

These words are from the book of Ezekiel, chapter 36, the voice of a prophet, a voice crying in the wilderness, calling people back to God and back to the truth. We have found these words of Scripture helpful in the formulation and founding of our principles.

We hope to be a group that speaks in a clear, powerful and positive way from within the catholic wing of the Church of England. We are firmly committed to living sacramental lives, as a group and as individuals. We recognize that all our efforts are worth nothing if they are not done in Jesus' name, for the glory of God and the bringing about of his kingdom.

We strive to work for mission, evangelism and a renewal of the diaconate, the priesthood, the religious life, the episcopate and the ministry of all Christ's people. We believe that these truths are at the heart of the catholic faith, and are

things which we put our trust in and devote our lives to.

United in belief

The New Oxford Movement as it currently stands is a group of young Anglo-Catholics who unite under these common beliefs. So far, we have met several times for discussion, academic study, fellowship, worship, prayer and Bible study, and to offer mutual support in faith.

The group is made up of men and women, lay people and ordinands, deacons and priests. It is hoped that

we are determined to use the strength that we find together to forge futures for ourselves and others



by the grace of God, the group will continue to grow and develop and establish its identity. At this point we would like to stress that we are a very new group, much in need of prayer and support and very much in the early stages of development. Even the title the 'New Oxford Movement' is under discussion. We do however have a clear vision for the future of the movement. We propose that the group will exist as an umbrella society, containing within itself several strands to fit different purposes.

Three strands

The first of these will be simply a shared ethos under which to unite.

This, we hope, would initiate groups which could meet as we have done across the country for prayer and worship with people of a common mind.

The second would be a group specifically for young Anglo-Catholics to join together, for spiritual, academic and social reasons. This would then provide opportunities for discussion about the future, a chance to share ideas and experience and a group which can pray and worship together.

It is hoped that the existence of this group would enable them to have a strong, united voice and also participate in pioneering work in the life of the Church.

The third strand would involve the utilization of that group of young Anglo-Catholics for teaching and preaching, for mission and evangelism, for sharing stories, experiences and ideas, for leading children and young people, for the enabling of growth, for the building up of the body of Christ within parishes, schools, youth groups and many other situations across deaneries in England and Wales.

Determined

I think I can speak for all of us when I say that we are here, we are passionate about what we believe in, we are strong in faith and have a love for God which we want to share with others. We believe in the Church in which we work, worship and find ourselves.

We are determined to use the strength that we find together to forge futures for ourselves and others. And finally, we ask to be involved in decisions and planning as we move forward in the Church of England and the Church in Wales.

We are here, we are ready and we are working to be a part of the reawakening of the catholic and apostolic nature of the Church, in the spirit of the Oxford Movement. We are trusting in the faithfulness of a God with whom there is no shadow of a change. **ND**

faith of our fathers

Arthur Middleton on the life and writings of Richard Hooker and his wide vision of the continuity and wholeness of the Church's Tradition

Richard Hooker was born in Exeter, educated at the Grammar School and sponsored by Bishop Jewel of Salisbury as a student at Christ Church Oxford. He was diligent in learning and piety from 1567 to 1584 as student and tutor. On marriage he left the tranquillity of the scholar's life to be a country parish priest in Buckinghamshire before a spell as Master of the Temple (1585-91). In London he was faced with the busy life and ecclesiastical controversies of the Puritans. He worked alongside Travers, a Calvinist who opposed his theology because Hooker would not condemn Roman Catholics. Weary of the aggravation, Hooker moved to a quiet living where he could devote himself to replying to the Puritans and justifying the Church's system.

After eighteen months at Boscombe near Salisbury the first four books of his only work, *The Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*, had been written and published in 1594. In 1595 he moved to Bishopsbourne near Canterbury. Here in 1597 the fifth book was published but the last three were left in manuscript and not published until after his death three years later.

His response to Puritan narrowness which saw the Bible as a handbook of regulations for everything in life and religion was to elucidate a much wider and realistic understanding of divine law. God was Creator as well as Redeemer. The harmony and purpose in the natural order are expressions of the divine Reason which lies behind Scripture and the decrees of Church Councils, emanating from God himself and found in the lives of all his creatures. God's revelation comes to us in various ways and our reason and conscience arrives at knowledge of God's will by 'a number of concurrent means and faculties'.

To say that the Church has autonomy in many things is not to undermine the supremacy of Scripture, because it is reasonable to expect that the Church will have an authority over its own life enabling it to decree rites and ceremonies. He asserts the continuity of the Church of England as part of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church and therefore certain customs, orders, rites, and ecclesiastical government will continue, admitting that as in nature some laws are immutable so

too are some positive laws.

Hooker is less universally acceptable to some Anglicans, where he denies the necessity of episcopal ordination in cases of 'inevitable necessity'. In this he tends to reflect the generally inadequate conceptions of his age. A later generation of theologians and patristic scholars had to stress that in the three-fold ministry we have an historic guaranteed transmission of ministerial authority and sacramental grace that it is of the *esse* of the Church.

In Book V, the Church is not primarily a 'visible society of men', nor is the notion of a mystical body something apprehensible in 'our minds by intellectual conceit'; here the Church and Sacrament become really and truly one.

Hooker understood and expounded the sacraments as major instruments through which we are incorporated into the mystical body of Christ: 'Through them 'the medicine that doth cure the world' – God in Christ – was distributed to members of Christ's body.' Through Christ's presence in the sacrament, God's causative presence in the world was transformed into his saving presence in the Church. So for Hooker, the grace of the sacraments is the last link in a series whose terminus is the participation of the saints in the life of God.

Hooker's firm grasp of Catholic doctrine, his wholehearted adherence to its principles and his lucid exposition of the same undoubtedly preserved the Church of England from embracing a merely negative and destructive Protestantism and paved the way for that church revival on sound traditional lines. Throughout Hooker there is that wide vision of the continuity and wholeness of the Church's Tradition, for the transmission of certain living qualities of faith and order which link the present Church with the Primitive Church, being at once the assurance and norm of catholicity. **ND**



"being late is not an option."

Moving Forward in Faith

Daniel Howard reports on the 19th Forward in Faith National Assembly

This year's National Assembly of Forward in Faith was the first I have attended. I certainly hope it will not be my last. Every year I listen to the speakers as they inform our constituency about the latest developments, struggles and hopes for the immediate future. National Assemblies of years gone by had been about our struggle. This year was different.

At the heart of the assembly was a strong element of positivity, without succumbing to naivety. Throughout the course of the weekend constant updates were flowing from both Twitter and Facebook keeping the assembly up to the minute regarding developments from our friends who could sadly not be with us. The buzz word was, and continues to be over the course of these coming weeks and months: '#followingmotion.' (Twitter users will get this point!)

Good news

It was energizing to hear that our friends were, as the Bishop of Beverley constantly reminds us, "of good courage" being a truly Incarnational presence within their local Diocese' embodying our cause with, as Thomas à Kempis' *Imitation of Christ* so aptly describes, 'great grace and charity'.

This approach clearly paid off and the assembly rejoiced with applause as news of results from Blackburn, Wakefield and Winchester were duly announced from the stage. Following motions had been passed, some by a considerable margin.

Uncertain times

This, however, is only part of the story. The main focus of our assembly was to come together and be blessed by one another as we continue in the service of the Gospel in the light of uncertain times. Those in attendance were reminded of the plight of many of the Fathers of the Oxford Movement who had suffered as a result of calling the Church of England back to its Catholic roots and heritage. In my eyes, the highlight of the agenda was to

hear my friends talk passionately about the creation of a new movement in the spirit of our forebears. A thoroughly welcome call came from Clare Rabjohns as she challenged Forward in Faith as a whole to reconsider and have discussion surrounding the ministry of women within the Church – a powerful statement that was long overdue.

**our hopes and fears for
the future were gathered
at the altar in the packed
Church of Christ the King**



Unique ministry

In his first address as Chairman, Bishop Jonathan Baker outlined our history once more, recognizing the failures of times gone by and presenting a strong case for our future life together.

The Bishop recalled that this life is borne out in the unique ministry of traditional Catholics stating that the proposed legislation lacked the traditional inclusiveness of Anglican ecclesiology. Furthermore, our new Chairman noted that such a ministry is deeply valued by those who are in disagreement with us. It was particularly powerful to hear that area Bishops recognize that Churches under extended episcopal care are often the best at embodying the traditional values of Anglican parish ministry.

Bishop Jonathan's passionate speech provoked due applause from those gathered and touched heavily upon the devotional address of the Bishop of Plymouth. At the heart of Bishop John's address was the notion of 'abiding'. As Catholic Anglicans it goes without saying that we find our fullest expression within the mystery of the celebration of the Eucharist. Indeed, our hopes and fears for the future were gathered at the altar in the packed Church of Christ the King, Gordon Square. Here the Mass was celebrated within the earthly Jerusalem, our visible and united Church, gathered around a united Episcopate.

Within our celebration we partook and were joined together with the invisible Church, as we celebrated our truly unique patrimony by raising the roof to 'Joy to Thee, Queen! Within Thine Ancient Dowry'. This is our abiding: abiding and being transformed by the love of God in the Eucharist, abiding with the people of God by ministering in today's world, and abiding with the whole Church to build up the Kingdom.

Re-energizing

As a young Anglo-Catholic exploring a call to priesthood one is acutely aware of the issues the Church is facing. One is often aware of the desperation of the situation and ponders how this in turn relates to a possible priestly vocation within the Church of England; but, gathering together for worship, listening to one another, spending time with like-minded people and old friends, and perhaps more than anything, discussing a possibly tenable future was a joyous relief. And thus this assembly left me re-energized, passionately Anglican but unapologetically Catholic – 'a certain call in uncertain times'. Let us pray that our Dioceses, General Synod and the House of Bishops will be gracious to us, enabling us to 'get off the battlefield and into the mission field'. It is in this light that the assembly was charged to move 'Forward in Faith'.



devotional

An address to Christians

William Law

The *Treatise on Perfection* is a sort of rehearsal for the *Serious Call*, and it is addressed to the so-called Christian. Law does not speak to the notorious evil liver. His concern is with the people whom the world holds to be respectable and good.

He aims at such people as Crito who: *'buys Manuals of Devotion ... yet is not able to keep pace with them; with Publius, who goes to Church sometimes and reads the Scriptures, but knows not what he reads or prays, his head is so full of politics; as Matrona who has been fifty years eating and drinking, dressing and undressing, paying and receiving visits, she has no profaneness, and if she has no piety it is owing to this, that she never had a spare half hour in her life to think about it.'*

You will have gathered from this quotation that Law has hit upon the great device which he developed further in the *Serious Call*, of creating imaginary characters, or perhaps recording observed ones, to point his meaning. He is rather like Charles Dickens who spent many hours in that London pub by the Thames watching London's life and characters. These he used as the materials for his novels. It was a literary device used by other writers. To the characters Law

observed, who professed to be Christians, he is saying that they mistake the nature of their Christian profession, that:

'Devotion is founded in great Humility and a full sense of the Vanity and Littleness of everything but God. Christianity is not a school for the teaching of Moral Virtue, the polishing of Manners, or forming us to live a life of this world with Decency and Gentility. It is deeper and more divine in its designs and has much nobler ends than these; it implies an entire change of life, a dedication of ourselves, our souls and bodies unto God, in the strictest and highest sense of the words.'

True Christianity

And so Law makes a frontal attack on the world as he conceives it; the hundred things that distract men and women from God: society, with its endless visits, and its concern with possessions. Scholarship in the narrow sense of the collector's pride, and the quibbler's concern with texts; even public affairs if they absorb the whole man and infect him with place hunting; even religious observance that dulls the spirit into a false security. For 'it is not any number of moral virtues, no partial obedience, no modes of worship, no extreme acts of adoration, no Articles of Faith, but a new Principle of Life, an entire change of temper that makes us true Christians.'

'How unlike are Christians to Christianity!' says Law. This treatise is his careful and uncompromising study of the actual words and teaching of Christ; it is the book of simple obedience to Jesus. **ND**

Edited by Arthur Middleton

Psalm 132 begins 'remember David and all his trouble' – the plea for the Lord to remember is one that echoes throughout Scripture and is taken up by Christ in the institution of the Eucharist in his command to do this 'in remembrance of me.' Because of this it is in the Eucharist, through the classical Eucharistic Prayers of both East and West, that we place all our memorials – our prayers of remembering – in the one great remembering of the death and resurrection of Jesus 'who ever lives to make intercession for us.'

Most readers will have their own 'litany of remembrance' – significant anniversaries of birth and death, of the dates that mark moments of change and transformation in our personal and family lives. The same is true for communities and this month our nation has its services and festivals of remembrance. In the same way the liturgical year is made up of memorials. To remember is the first cause of most of our individual prayer and corporate worship. With all this in mind it is worthwhile to review our own discipline of remembrance. Many people say 'I will remember you in my prayers' –

Ghostly Counsel

Remembrance

Andy Hawes is Warden of Edenham Regional Retreat House

but how do they go about honouring the promise?

Although we may not have the either the inclination or administrative skills to create some kind of 'personal ordo', at the very least we should make sure that significant anniversaries do not pass without a prayer of intercession said or a thanksgiving made. To 'remember', in its literal sense, means to 'reconnect things'. For the Christian remembrance is a cause to reconnect our own faith journey with that of others both living and departed.

This 'discipline of remembrance' is not an end in itself. It is an opening up, through the door of our memory, of the mystery of time and eternity, and

a means of recalling us to one of the central realities of the spiritual life that we can only live in the present and in eternity. Remembrance 'transposed' into the register of intercession and thanksgiving is a means of letting go of the past and the future and drawing closer to Christ who is Lord of 'all times and all ages.'

The vocation to remember is planted deep within us by the work of the Holy Spirit who calls us to look for and work for the reconciliation of all things which is both the end and meaning of our Christian life. We believe that God will judge us all in a loving and true remembering of all we are and have been. We also believe as the prophet Isaiah taught that although a mother may forget her child yet the Lord 'will always remember thee.' Made in his image and likeness we are made to remember and in Christ we are called to be faithful, to pray without ceasing, always remembering both the good and the bad, the small and the great moments of our life, and in our remembering place them in the eternal purpose of the love of God.

The Society

The Bishop of Beverley speaks about the Society to the members of Forward in Faith

Perhaps understandably, I have lost count of the number of times I have either written about The Society or have spoken of it. During a recent conversation it was suggested that I should find a more headline-grabbing name. You can tell that the conversation took place in the North when I tell you that the first suggestion was that we rename it 'The Co-op'!

The subsequent proposal was that we name The Society 'The Mafia'! That would certainly have produced more interest but there was always the fear that such a title might just be a little too near the truth.

The Ordinariate

But let me start in what to some might seem an unlikely place. I want to begin by paying genuine tribute to those who have felt led by God to join the Ordinariate. Some of my oldest friends are among their number. On a personal note, over the past months what Newman famously called 'the parting of friends' has literally at times brought me to the point of tears.

I begin here because, right from the first suggestion of forming The Society, some immediately responded by saying it was a swift proposal to try and produce an alternative to the Ordinariate. Nothing was further from the founders' minds. What we recognized was that just as some were driven by conscience to join the Ordinariate so many others were equally driven by conscience, at least for the time being, to remain within the Church of England.

Such people surely had the right to explore how best to organize for the future and especially to identify what might be the most likely ecclesial provision that might be not only acceptable to them but also to the Church of England.

Our friends who have in conscience joined the Ordinariate must surely now give us space to try and bring this about. Perhaps I should just say at this point just how much I have appreciated the understanding and encouragement for working towards

a successful establishment of The Society that I and others have received from some of our Roman Catholic colleagues.

Christian unity

Indeed, I am sure some of you will have heard Bishop Geoffrey Rowell speak of his recent visit to Rome and of his audience with Pope Benedict. Bishop Geoffrey came away confident that Pope Benedict understood why some of us sought to stay within the Church of England to work for the establishment of The Society. The important thing was that we should remain close to

**coping with
bearable anomaly is
an essential ingredient
of being an Anglican
in a divided church**

each other in our journey towards Christian unity.

The key question in seeking to establish The Society is how we can produce something which still enshrines a basic understanding of what it means to be a church of priests, deacons and people gathered around its bishops, given that the Church of England, were it to admit women to the episcopate, has steadfastly set itself against permitting separate dioceses for those of us who could not assent to such an act.

I doubt I need to set the problem out in full. Most of us here have lived with the dilemma for many years. We want bishops who are truly our fathers in God, who are the font of our sacramental life, and so also have the care of us that flows from such a position.

We want priests who are clearly the priests of such a bishop, alternates with him and with one another as, by their ministries, they bind us more and more into the authentic life of the catholic church. We want to be

empowered in mission to make that church flourish as many more are brought into a living relationship with Jesus Christ.

Bishops

We are far from convinced of a view of the episcopate which sees bishops as some kind of quasi-magical characters. The idea that we can answer to any bishop regardless of gender or orthodoxy and then be grateful for someone whom we regard as being genuinely a bishop being parachuted in for us to undertake certain sacramental actions falls far short of a truly catholic understanding of the episcopate.

I might add, in passing, that the present legislation does not even propose that measure of sacramental and pastoral care for us. It is doubtful that any code of practice would make such provision either.

So it is that in this near last ditch situation some of us are trying to persuade the Church of England to let us live within a Society model. What does this mean? It means that the Church of England entrusts the care of traditionalists to that of traditionalist bishops.

They might be orthodox diocesans or suffragans. It is hard to see how any meaningful provision could be made without also having at least three provincial bishops based on the present sees of Beverley, Ebbsfleet and Richborough for those dioceses and regions that do not make more local provision. Such bishops would necessarily need to be given such jurisdiction (to use the technical term) that enabled them to be the fount of sacrament and pastoral life for their clergy and people.

Work for the future

It might just be that this could be brought about even at a late stage by the re-introduction into the General Synod of something like the archbishops' ill-fated amendment. Such an amendment would be far from perfect but would probably

enable much of what we seek to come about.

There would still be, of course, some anomaly in all of this as we try to work out the basis on which priests of The Society are then, with their Society bishops' permission, licensed and employed in the various dioceses of the Church of England.

Perhaps we might be thinking of something rather like, in the Roman Catholic Church, where the monks of Ampleforth, for example, are firstly monks of that community and then parish priests active within a local diocese; or when, for example, an Ordinariate priest is released for work in a local diocese while, of course, remaining a member of the Ordinariate and answerable to his Ordinary.

Clearly, the parallels are not exact. I admit I am doing some kite flying in an area where much more detail would need to be worked out in the future. Who knows? Addressing such practical implications could even make the code of practice relevant and useful to us.

Is this tidy? No. Is this perfectly reflecting of Catholic order as we have known it? Probably not. But is it a bearable anomaly such as Catholic Anglicans have had to live with since the Reformation and, more precisely, that we have had to live with since the first women bishops appeared within the Anglican Communion, or the first women priests were created within the Church of England?

Coping with bearable anomaly is an essential ingredient of being an

Anglican in a divided church. If we cannot accept the truth of that then I guess we would not wish to remain members of the Church of England whatever the outcome of our current dilemmas.

The bottom line

What we can do now is to formalize the life we have in fact already been living for the past seventeen years or so into a proper ecclesial body. The Society can, here and now, be our way of living out what it means to be the Church. And up and down

**we want bishops who are
truly our fathers in God,
who are the font of our
sacramental life**

the country, in places as diverse as Chichester or Blackburn, Wakefield or the West Country, this is beginning to happen.

We have our constitution in place and Catholic bishops are overseeing our journey forwards. We have thousands of people signed up to the idea and need thousands more as we send out a signal to the Church of England that this is not only what we want. It is, rather, the very basic bottom line of what we need if we are to be enabled in good conscience both to stay and to flourish within the Church of England.

Be sure there will still be a need for Forward in Faith. The Society is not

a rival society. It is our way of being the Church. We can be sure that, at some time, we will still need a strong and uncompromising campaigning body to help maintain ground won and to help achieving with more in the future.

And finally, a note of caution. We have to be realistic. The evidence so far is that every olive branch we have held out has been refused. Every time we have explained what are the bare essentials for us to stay within the Church of England we have been told instead that we do not understand our own position and that others know what is better for us.

Realistic and determined

I do not know what odds I might put on succeeding in our endeavour. I suspect they would be disappointingly low. The history of the past few years gives little ground for hope. I do know that God has put me and, I trust, you here at this time to persevere in the attempt and to do our best to make it succeed. If there be only a thirty percent chance or even only a ten percent chance of bringing The Society permanently into being, and I would put the odds a little higher than that, we have no choice but to go for it, being equally realistic and determined.

So, please, support, join, encourage The Society and let us see where God takes us with it.

*You can find out more
about The Society at
www.sswsh.com *

Where we are

Simon Killwick reports on the Synodical Process

Each session of General Synod begins with a report on the progress of legislation; it is usually like watching paint dry! It seems ironic to be beginning the Forward in Faith Assembly in this way. We have always known that women bishops would come; Forward in Faith has never existed to stop women bishops (contrary to popular opinion), but always to secure a proper place for us within the CofE.

Forward in Faith and the Catholic Group in General Synod have worked closely together to prepare our members and supporters for these debates. Fr Tony Delves has been

employed part-time by the Catholic Group and deserves our grateful thanks for this work, with funds provided by Forward in Faith, to be our national co-ordinator. He has worked closely with Mr Stephen Parkinson, Fr (now Bishop) Jonathan Baker, Frs Paul Benfield, David Houlding and myself.

Notable successes

Votes in Deanery Synods are consultative; they are reported to the Diocesan Synod, but are not binding on the Diocesan Synod. We have had some notable successes;

generally, where our people were present, and made out a good case for our position, we did well; where our people were not present, we did less well. Votes in Diocesan Synods are also consultative; they are reported to General Synod, but not binding.

However, the legislation must be approved by a majority of Dioceses if it is to come back to General Synod – there is no doubt that will happen, and the legislation will come to General Synod for Final Approval. To gain Final Approval, the legislation will need a two-thirds majority in each of the three Houses of General Synod; all the indications so far are that it will fail to achieve a two-thirds majority in the House of Laity – unless it is amended to make better provision for us.

Many members of General Synod are uneasy about the legislation as it stands; they recognize that if it is not amended, there will be a train crash whichever way the vote goes at Final Approval: if it passes, we and others will be marginalized and excluded; if it fails, there will be huge disappointment and anger on the part of those who want women bishops. Without amendment, it is a lose-lose situation for General Synod.

Following Motions

The problem is that we are not allowed to propose amendments in deanery or Diocesan Synod debates. The only way of expressing the need for proper provision is to propose what are called Following Motions.

Not even the General Synod can amend the legislation at this stage in the process; the House of Bishops is the only body that can do that. So the Catholic Group Executive and Forward in Faith National Council agreed last December to support a Following Motion which came from the Church of England Evangelical Council calling on the House of Bishops to amend the legislation to provide bishops for us with oversight in their own right. This has been passed in two dioceses so far; it may be passed in two more. Sadly, this will not be enough to encourage the House of Bishops to do the decent thing.

Difficulties

One problem that we have faced is that in many dioceses, we have few parishes, and therefore few if any members of Diocesan Synod to put our case. Too often debates have ended up being on the principle of women bishops, rather than the detail of the legislation; there has been little real debate about the issue of provision.

The voting in many Diocesan Synods therefore reflects a general desire for women bishops, rather than the legislation itself. In a number of Dioceses, where we have been better represented, our case has been made, and we have done better; we may not have carried the day, but we have gathered significant support – which refutes the claim that the draft legislation has received overwhelming or unanimous support. Where our case has been made, and there has been real debate on the legislation itself, there has been less than overwhelming support.

Over the summer, I became aware of another Following Motion, calling on the General Synod effectively to reconsider the Archbishops' amendment. It could not be worded quite like that, because of course the General Synod cannot amend the legislation, only the House of Bishops can do that – so it was worded in a roundabout way instead, that General Synod calls on the House of Bishops to amend in the manner proposed by the Archbishops.

Request for amendment

This Following Motion has already been passed by three Diocesan Synods; it is likely to be passed by two or three more. The beauty of it is that we are already virtually guaranteed a debate on this new Following Motion in the General Synod in February next year. If majority of General Synod pass it, it will hugely encourage the House of Bishops to do the decent thing, the Anglican thing, and amend the legislation. In the meantime, if anyone comes up with a better way of amending the legislation, that can be proposed as an amendment to the Following Motion in the February General Synod.


Complementary bishops

The Archbishops' amendment deserves consideration. The amendment would mean that every diocese would have to have a diocesan scheme under which parishes could request the oversight of a complementary bishop. This complementary bishop would have oversight in his own right, not delegated from the

diocesan bishop. The complementary bishop would have to act in close partnership with the diocesan bishop. Both the diocesan bishop and the complementary bishop would share oversight between them, in accordance with a Code of Practice approved by the General Synod. This is subtly and significantly different from the draft Measure which provides that complementary bishops only have delegated oversight.

The Archbishops' amendment is, of course, a compromise, but it stands in the best tradition of Anglican compromises, a tradition which has held the majority of Christians of varying beliefs together in one Church of England for over 500 years.

The amendment could be a lifeline – a lifeline to us, because it could enable us to remain within the CofE with integrity – a lifeline to the CofE, because it could enable the Church to move forward with women bishops and keep most of her loyal members on board by making proper provision for those who hold to the faith and order of the undivided Church.

Thanks to this new Following Motion, our situation looks a lot more hopeful than it did a year ago; the situation for the CofE looks a lot more hopeful. We pray for a positive debate in General Synod in February, and for wise counsel in the House of Bishops. Everyone is predicting the CofE to fracture over women bishops; we can now see how a win-win position could be achieved, and the CofE could yet astonish the world by moving forward together! 

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