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Editorial

We are pleased to offer once again what we hope is an interesting mix of contributions of an academic, as well as of a more pastoral nature. The present issue focuses particularly on three anniversaries, beginning with that of Dom Bede Winslow, father of this journal. Of the same generation is Bishop George Bell. St Anselm goes back somewhat further: and we are very pleased to include two pieces on him by his present successor at Canterbury. The extraordinary gift of friendship which the three anniversary subjects each enjoyed epitomises Anselm's advice: *omnis utilis scientia pendet ex caritate...*¹ 'All useful knowledge depends on love.'

It is also a particular joy to offer contributions by members of two ecumenical communities, Bose and Chemin Neuf, convincing witnesses to the work of the Spirit today. The International Catholic/Pentecostal Dialogue Report embodies various experiences of the same Spirit: and different again, yet at least as exuberant, is the flood of images surrounding the Figure of Mary in Orthodoxy, channelling the spiritual riches of Israel.

¹ Letter 433.

DOM BEDE WINSLOW OSB 1888-1959

Sr Benedict Gaughan OSB

This memoir by Sr Benedict of Minster Abbey, Ramsgate marks the fiftieth anniversary of the death of a pre-Vatican Council ecumenical forerunner, characterised by the Tablet of 14 August 1959 as 'a man of wide learning, great humility and universal kindness.' Dom Bede inspired the family of publications of which this journal is privileged to be a member.

Keith F. G. Winslow was born in Putney on 27 May 1888. His family was Anglican and he was one of three brothers. His father refused to allow his sons to be taught Latin, a language which, even as a monk, Bede never really mastered, and it was said that his French was even more notable by its absence.

After his father's death his mother moved the family to the Isle of Wight which Fr Bede always considered his country. He loved the place and had a special feeling for the great curves and openness of the landscape. It was while living on the island that he and his brother Cuthbert decided to become Roman Catholics, but they chose to be instructed by a priest of the London Oratory. This took place in 1910. Before becoming a Catholic Bede took a serious look at the Orthodox Church. Three years later he entered St Augustine's Abbey, Ramsgate and was professed on 1 April 1915. In a letter to Fr Aelred Carlyle (former Anglican who founded Prinknash Abbey) dated March 1914, Bede says: 'I am so thankful and happy that God has at last let me be numbered among the sons of our Holy Father [St Benedict]. Please pray that I may correspond to the graces God has [given] and will give me.'

Unlike most of his contemporaries, he was not sent to Rome for his studies owing to his lack of languages. (It is interesting to note here that he later had contacts with many people of various nationalities, and a close associate of Bede's once said that a sort of reverse gift of tongues would take place: people who thought they could not speak English began to speak his tongue.) Fr Bede studied at home and was ordained on 24 August 1922.

It seems that right from the beginning he felt a vocation to pray for

unity, primarily by his monastic life. As a young priest he considered doing this by becoming a Carthusian monk as perhaps the best way to pray and offer himself for the cause. He received permission to try his vocation. There he loved the solitude and private prayer, but came to the conclusion, after several months, as did his superiors, that this severe and solitary life was not, for him, the way to serve God best.

Back at Ramsgate he became guestmaster in the monastery and also a highly successful and much loved RAF chaplain at Manston, cycling to and fro. He also taught for a time in the prep school and did parish and chaplaincy work in local convents and schools.

He was in charge of the little parish in St Mildred's, Minster for three years in the early 1930s, before the return of the Benedictine nuns. He was responsible for the revival of the devotion to St Mildred whom he called 'the wonderworker' and for the annual pilgrimage to Minster in her honour. This still continues in a form Bede would surely be proud of: Mass in the Anglican church of St Mary the Virgin. He also negotiated the return of some of her relics from Holland. He had a deep and personal devotion to St Mildred and relied on her intercession.

More significantly, in terms of the history of Minster Abbey, he made the link that brought the Community to its present home in 1937 from St Walburga's Abbey, Eichstatt in Bavaria.

Dom Bede died suddenly during the night of 30 October 1959 while staying at St Joseph's College, Beulah Hill, London, where he was acting as a temporary chaplain. The late Fr Brochard Sewell writing in *The Tablet* described him as 'a very holy monk, of quite exceptional personal character... who did good by wearing his habit always and everywhere.'

A former Abbot of Ramsgate, Adrian Taylor, discerned that the secret of Bede's success lay in his humility and in his quiet tenacity. Dom Cuthbert Smith OSB, one of his contemporaries, wrote of him: 'One of Fr Bede's most notable characteristics was his imperturbability. Nothing ever ruffled him. He was at all times and in all circumstances perfectly calm and tranquil.' He goes on: 'He was extremely undemonstrative, but his friends were very numerous and it is safe to say he never had an enemy... it was impossible to quarrel with him.' Fr Cuthbert continues: 'Fr Bede's untimely and unexpected death is indeed a grave loss to his own brethren as well as to a very wide circle of friends, and the removal from his Community of such a

striking and lovable character will leave a gap which will be, not only difficult, but impossible to fill.'

Fr Bede received at least 170 people into the Church. Recently a lady who knew him when she was a young girl told me how he would come to their home and give instruction to her mother whom he later received into the Church. She well remembers Fr Bede who would come and talk at length about the love of God, Our Lady and St Mildred. Over forty years later this 'young girl' can speak of the utter humility, gentleness and holiness of this monk who helped her mother. 'I will never forget Dom Bede, in all these years I feel he has been with me.' Her mother took the name Mildred at baptism.

Dom Bede the Ecumenist: a Summary of his Achievements

He was a holy monk, a kind, humble and lovable person who never made an enemy, easy with young people, families and people with learning disabilities. He was, it seems, a great listener. And yet it was with surprise that his Abbot and Community learned of his desire to devote his life to the work of unity. He was not particularly gifted intellectually, and he had no language other than his own. Just before he died he wrote an 'Historical Statement' on the *Eastern Churches Quarterly*—all of two sides of an A4 sheet in his own scrawled handwriting, reflecting the humility of the man.

It appears that it all began in 1924 when he visited Rome for the first time making contact ('contacts' was one of his favourite words) with 'things' and people oriental. Although he had a great sympathy for Anglicanism and Methodism, he had what has been described as a 'love affair' with Eastern Christianity. Everything to do with the East, the prayer, the liturgy, the monastic life and the theology fascinated him, yet it has been pointed out that he remained faithful and true to his own Latin Church, and was a very conservative Catholic thinker.

A fine account of his achievements is to be found in vol. 1 no. 1 of the *Eastern Churches Journal*, the present journal of the St John Chrysostom Society. I would like to take the liberty of drawing from this.

The first issue of the *Quarterly* appeared in the Prinknash *Pax* (1931-1935). It was born as a separate journal in 1936, a legacy from his mother making this financially viable; later the Society of St John Chrysostom gave it financial support. He continued to edit it throughout the war years, and it became the best known and

respected journal in the English language on the Eastern Churches. He co-operated with the Fellowship of St Alban and St Sergius and the Anglican Eastern Churches Association. Articles were published by Anglican and Orthodox writers, and it was read beyond the Roman Catholic Community.

In 1938 Dom Bede and Barbara Fry organised an *ECQ* study group which survived Dom Bede. When Bede died in 1959, the rights of the journal were left to the Benedictines of Cockfosters, London who continued the work for a time, and in 1964 *One in Christ* was born. It continues to attribute its origins to the *ECQ* and to Dom Bede.

From December 1944 to September 1948 Dom Bede organised conferences at Blackfriars, Oxford under the auspices of the *Eastern Churches Quarterly*. Papers from the first conference included: 'The Liturgy and Christian Unity' (Revd D.J. Crichton); 'The Study of Church History and Christian Unity' (Revd F. Dvornik); 'St Thomas and the Christian Tradition' (Revd Victor White OP); and 'Platonism as a vital Force in Christian Theology'. The next conference in October 1945 focused on the theological divergence between East and West. Topics included the Orthodox conception of Grace, and Augustine on Grace. Professor Hilary Armstrong presented a paper on St Bonaventure's 'On the Divine Simplicity', and Dom Clément Lialine (editor of *Irénicon*) on Gregory of Palamas.

Speakers at these conferences came from the Roman Catholic, Orthodox, and Eastern Catholic traditions. Occasionally meetings were chaired by an Anglican. Dom Bede gained support from the Jesuits, Oratorians and initially the Dominicans. The eminent Jesuit Fr Tom Corbishly wrote in April 1948 that 'in my opinion the Conferences are productive of nothing but good. It seems to me that it is very important for non-Catholics to meet Catholics and see what intellectual Catholicism is like and the Conferences provide such a mechanism.'

However, in spite of his best efforts and much support, in the spirit of the times before the Second Vatican Council, permission to hold the Conferences was eventually withdrawn. The presence of the Anglican Revd E.L. Mascall who chaired one of the meetings was a choice not welcomed by the Catholic hierarchy. The Archbishop of Birmingham wrote to Dom Bede on 28 January 1953 when the question of reviving the Conferences was being considered, expressing the opinion that: 'I really do not see that any great good comes from

these conferences. Learned men read and discuss their own papers, but I think you give yourself and others far more trouble than the results are likely to be worth.'

Therefore, as with his dream for a monastery for reunion, so his hopes to revive the conferences were shattered. Before his sudden death, on 30 October 1959, although much loved and revered, he must have felt very saddened and thwarted.

By the mid-1960s several people who had worked closely with Dom Bede felt that something had been lost as *One in Christ* began to develop into a general Catholic ecumenical review with less emphasis on the Christian East. Under the patronage of the Melkite Patriarch, Maximos IV, and with Barbara Fry as editor, a new journal, the *Eastern Churches Review*, made its first appearance in the Spring of 1966. Attributing the new journal to Dom Bede, the inaugural editorial paid tribute to Dom Bede: '[He] had a very deep and imperturbable vocation to work for the Eastern Churches and for Christian unity, and he worked in an eirenic and ecumenical spirit—far ahead of his day. He suffered for this vocation—like all Catholics in this field—before the Vatican Council opened things up and made the whole Church ecumenically minded ... but he had great confidence in the future and in "the Holy Ghost working things out". How he would have rejoiced at the outcome of Vatican II, at the Jerusalem meeting and the lifting of the anathemas.'

Eastern Churches Review outlived Barbara Fry, and Fr Kallistos Ware, Fr Robert Murray SJ and Br George Every became the next editors. In the 1970s there was a sharp decline in Catholic interest in the Eastern Churches, costs increased, and the trustees came, regretfully, to the conclusion that the journal could not continue on its own, but with the agreement of the Council of the Fellowship of St Alban and St Sergius, it was amalgamated with the journal *Sobornost*. The last issue of *ECR* appeared in 1978. In the editorial, Archimandrite Kallistos Ware pays tribute to Dom Bede, quoting extensively from a paper (by way of epilogue as he so aptly puts it) that Dom Bede gave in 1953. The following is an extract which expresses Dom Bede's aspirations:

The Eastern Churches hold a very important position in any work for Christian unity. It is obvious what a tremendous effect such a union of the Eastern Churches and Rome would have on Christians as a whole, even if we only think in terms of a Christian front, or are only considering numbers... What is far more important is the effect that

such a union would have on the thoughts of Catholics and how this integrating of the two great Christian traditions would prepare the way for the complete healing of divided Christendom. Never was the West, with its liturgical, scriptural, and neo-patristic movements, so ready to meet and understand the East... The monastic life is often spoken of as the first meeting-point of the two traditions.

Dom Bede goes on to exhort western monks to learn from their eastern counterparts, pointing specifically to the Jesus Prayer, the saying of which he recommended to others; he hails the advent of a greater availability of the eastern Fathers, noting Fr Daniélou's works on Gregory of Nyssa. Kallistos Ware continues to quote Dom Bede:

In meeting this new Christian world movement, I believe the Orthodox hold a unique position... Our approach to the Orthodox must be one of love, of willingness to own our past mistakes, clear-sightedness and understanding, and then, through the Holy Spirit, unity will come. This is the work and aim of *ECQ*.

Archimandrite Kallistos quoted these words of Dom Bede in 1978, remarking that, though twenty-five years old, they remained 'fully relevant now'. A further thirty years on, I dare to say that his words are even more relevant.

It was not until 1992 that the Society of St John Chrysostom decided at their AGM to publish a journal, and the first copy appeared in 1993 as the *Eastern Churches Journal* edited by Serge Keleher, with Bishop Kallistos on the editorial board. In memory of Barbara Fry and Dom Bede, the editorial echoes the words of Bishop Kallistos in 1978: 'May God bless our efforts as we strive to continue the work to which Dom Bede and Barbara Fry were dedicated.' And so the vision continues.

In the opening editorial of *ECJ* are the words 'we hope that *ECJ* will be a meeting place where those interested in the various expressions of the Christian East may find much in common with one another'. In the editorial for vol. 6, Spring 1999, it is reported that annual *Oriente Lumen* conferences have been held and, I quote: 'Dom Bede Winslow must be praying for us, he dearly loved to organise such conferences.'

The Story of his Dream-vision for a Monastery for Reunion

In her *Memoir of Dom Bede Winslow* (in *Rediscovering Eastern Christendom*, 1960) Barbara Fry notes: 'no account of his life is complete' without mention of his hope to found a monastery for reunion. It began in the early 1930s and continued, literally I am told,

to the very day he died. It was to be unlike Chevetogne, in that it was to be exclusively Latin, for in *general* he never really believed in Westerners taking or using Eastern rites. In 1940 a short article appeared in *The Tablet*, after he had been given the permission from his Abbot to explore his idea. He also got the backing of the English Hierarchy.

Although it never took off, one can learn much about Dom Bede from the outline of his dream. He had many supporters not only from the Roman tradition, but also from Anglicans and others.

Conclusion

When in January 1931 Prinknash *Pax* gave hospitality to the first *East and West*, the embryonic *ECQ*, Dom Bede wrote:

The reunion of the Eastern Churches with the Roman Church, must be a subject of constant prayer... Our endeavour in these pages is to do a little to equip English-speaking Catholics with a knowledge of things Eastern ... thus they will not be unprepared when God shall move the hearts of Easterners with a desire for union.

In his letter *Orientalis Lumen* (1995), John Paul II writes: 'The first need for Catholics is to be familiar with that [Eastern Churches] tradition, so as to be nourished by it and to encourage the process of unity.' He goes on to say: 'In addition to knowledge, I feel that meeting one another regularly is very important. In this regard, I hope monasteries will make a particular effort.' A careful reading of the document in the light of Dom Bede's life and aspirations brings new light to bear on the prophetic nature of his life. He lived and died before the Second Vatican Council, and yet he dared to hope that monasteries and lay people would risk dialogue East and West, which would, he believed, bring unity.

He was, it seems, a humble man of few words, who, no doubt, hears with us today the words of John Paul II from *Orientalis Lumen*, with which I would like to conclude:

For us, the men and women of the East are a symbol of the Lord who is to come again. We cannot forget them, not only because we love them as brothers and sisters, redeemed by the same Lord, but also because of a holy nostalgia for the centuries lived in full communion of faith, and charity urges us, and reproaches us for our sins and mutual misunderstandings. We have deprived the world of a joint witness that could perhaps, have avoided so many tragedies and even changed the course of history... May Christ, the *orientale lumen*, soon, very soon, grant us to discover that, in fact, despite so

many centuries of distance, we were very close, because together, perhaps without knowing it, we were walking towards the one Lord, and thus towards one another.

I think Dom Bede knew all along that we were and are very close indeed, walking towards one another. Today as hopes for East/West reunion remain in the hearts of many of us, may his pioneering work find a new place in our ecumenical dialogue and may we not forget this remarkable and humble ecumenist as we recall his passing, fifty years ago.

BOSE: AN ECUMENICAL MONASTERY

Br. Guido Dotti*

The ecumenical monastic community of Bose in northern Italy began at the time and in the spirit of Vatican II, alive to the moment, and drawing inspiration through a resourcement in the monastic traditions of both East and West. It has developed its own Rule of Bose, whose criterion is the Gospel. It lives on the edge of the desert, and looks also to the city. As a community of sinners it seeks to serve the world and the Church, through prayer, hospitality, and honest work. Bose now collaborates in hosting international conferences on Orthodox Spirituality, Reformed Spirituality, and on Liturgy. As an ecumenical community, its members live to realise the Lord's will, 'that all may be one'.

The Grace of Beginning: Turin 1962-65

With the refreshing wind of the Second Vatican Council blowing through the whole Church of God, a group of university students—Catholics, Waldensians, Baptists—come together twice a week in a small flat rented by one of them, Enzo Bianchi, a student of economics. They wish to read the Bible, to study and meditate on the events and texts of the council, to sing the liturgy of the hours. The group, engaged in seeking an authentic Christianity, simply lives, grows, and allows each member to mature in his or her own vocation. When for many of them the end of studies draws in sight, the desire arises spontaneously to continue that experience of fraternity, while in some it develops into a monastic vocation in community. Thus the need arises to find a 'common home': and the choice falls on Bose, a hamlet belonging to the village of Magnano in the Serra, the large morainic hill between Ivrea and Biella (Piedmont), where a Romanesque church in ruins is still waiting for prayers. In the pursuit

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of the monastic call, however, Enzo is left alone, and alone he begins to live in a house rented in Bose: it is the beginning of December 1965, the close of the council that Pope John XXIII wanted in order to reveal to humankind the real face of the Church, mother and teacher of mercy.

Three precious years followed, dedicated partly to prayer and partly to hospitality, offered to those who, every now and then, stopped by Bose for a moment of silence and to listen to the Word of God. During this time Br. Enzo also had the opportunity to deepen his understanding of his vocation, through visits to Catholic monasteries (the Trappists of Tamié in France), Orthodox monasteries (on Mount Athos), and Protestant monasteries (the Taizé Community in France, whose members at that time were all Protestants); and also through conversations and friendships with individuals of profound spiritual insight, such as Father Michele Pellegrino, Cardinal of Turin, and Athenagoras, the unforgettable patriarch of Constantinople.

In addition to the trials of living in solitude, Br. Enzo faced the incomprehension of the local bishop, who in 1967 prohibited all public liturgical celebrations at Bose, due in large part to the frequent presence of non-Catholics among Br. Enzo's guests. In spite of the great pain that this measure caused him, Br. Enzo obeyed completely as he had obeyed the demands of solitary life, convinced that the seed he had planted could only grow and acquire meaning within the church. On 28 June 1968 Cardinal Pellegrino, who had come to Magnano to lead a conference on 'The Primacy of Peter', lifted the prohibition and celebrated Mass with all who were present that day at Bose. A few months later, in October 1968, the long wait ended: two young Catholics and a Protestant minister from Switzerland decided to join Br. Enzo. A sister from the Protestant community of Grandchamp, whose presence Br. Enzo had requested from the prioress of the community, also arrived.

Since that moment, in the morning, at noon and in the evening a sung liturgy of the hours is celebrated, guests are received, serious study of Scripture and research of the patristic and monastic tradition is undertaken, and the difficult but rewarding community adventure is lived. The Word of God, listened to and prayed in the liturgy and in personal *lectio divina*, occupies the central place in daily life, but the fathers of the undivided Church and the fathers of monasticism also provide nourishment, and these are the sources that founded and

shaped the small community nucleus. As the community made the choice to live solely by its own work, some members carried on their professional activity outside the community, while Daniel, an ordained pastor of his Church, received a pastoral mandate to a Waldensian community in Turin. Those were years lived in great poverty: in Bose there was no electricity, the houses were crumbling, food was scarce, the cold was almost unbearable, but charity made up for all. Cardinal Pellegrino's paternal care accompanied Enzo and the first shoots of the community.

In the footsteps of tradition

Monasticism, a form of Christian life, has from its beginnings known different ways in which men and women of every condition and background have tried to live the Gospel in a radical manner, in listening to the Word, in fraternal charity, in celibacy, in the sharing of all goods, in obedience, silence, and in the exercise of hospitality. Carrying out in daily life their ideal of interior unification and of communion constitutes the Christian monastic tradition of East and West: a tradition onto which has been grafted the community of Bose:

Brother, sister, you have been called to follow Christ in community life and in celibacy.

In answering this call, you are not undertaking a new way of living the Gospel. You should be aware of this and know that you are not alone on this road travelled by many Christians over the centuries. Before you, others with the same vocation, expressed in different ways according to the times and places in which they lived, have made this journey: Elijah and John the Baptist, Pachomius and Mary, Basil and Macrina, Benedict and Scholastica, Francis and Claire, and many others. As you can see, you are not alone, but surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses. (Rule of Bose, 7-8)

Gathered together and sustained by the Word of God, the small group at Bose began to search for its roots in the monastic tradition. The first members of the community quickly found themselves in the company of a great cloud of witnesses, companions who had preceded them on the same path and who, throughout history, had sought to live the radical demands of the Gospel in different places and circumstances, always walking in the footsteps of the one Lord and Shepherd of every 'little flock'. From Pachomius in particular came the inspiration that shaped the community according to the model of the 'holy *koinonía*,' in which each member of the community makes him-

or herself a servant of the others, 'washing the feet' of his or her brothers and sisters in response to the *mandatum novum* of the Lord (see John 13: 1-35).

The first rule adopted was the description of community life in the Acts of the Apostles, the 'summaries' (Acts 2: 42-47; 4: 32-35), intended to guide the community until, in response to a concrete experience of daily life at Bose, a rule could be written on the basis of which each brother and sister would be able to make a life commitment.

Brother, sister, if you choose to live in this community, your only goal is a radical commitment to live according to the Gospel. The Gospel will be the absolute and supreme rule. You have come to the community to follow Jesus. The model and inspiration for your life will be the life of Jesus as it is described and presented in the Gospel.

This spiritual rule is provided to help you live according to the Gospel, and especially to encourage in the community a spirit of communion. It is not intended to be a law, but simply a description of life without which nothing can be built or created together with others. It is against this rule that you will evaluate your membership in the community. (Rule of Bose 3, 5)

After the Rule of Bose had been accepted at the community chapter of 4 October 1971, and after the community had undergone a final period of preparation and had received the approval of Cardinal Pellegrino, the first seven members made their monastic profession at dawn on Easter Sunday, 22 April 1973, in the presence of God and before representatives of the Christian churches to which they belonged. They made a permanent commitment to *community life* and *celibacy*, in the conviction that the Christian commitments to poverty and obedience are already implied in the promises made by each person at baptism, the single and definitive event in which the Christian is consecrated to God.

We are simple Christians, God's servants within the Church and who love the Church, but who are like all Christians: no privilege, only communion. Monasticism takes its place among the gifts and services present in the Church, in freedom of the Spirit, who inspires various vocations for building up the entire body of Christ. For the Churches we wish to be the sentinels who await and announce the dawn because they give witness by their celibacy and their common life that the true sun, Jesus Christ, is coming to gather together all God's dispersed children. (Br. Enzo Bianchi, Homily at the first monastic professions in Bose.)

On the edge of the desert

The monks and nuns who have been present in the church from the first centuries have been men and women who, in order to live their Christian vocation as a radical commitment, have felt the need to seek solitude, to live at the margins of society and of the visible church, even at the cost of being marginalized. A monastery is usually in the desert, mountains, or woods... in one direction there is the city, at a reasonable but not extreme distance; in the other direction there is uninhabited space, silence and solitude. The monk looks toward the city and the church and remains in contact with them, never separating himself but expressing his complete solidarity through his prayer and intercession. He sometimes addresses a word or gesture to the city and church, or addresses them through his silence; but much of the time, in order to protect what has been entrusted to him, he finds it necessary to turn toward the desert, giving the impression that he has turned his back on the city and the church. But this turning away is in no way a gesture of disrespect: it is simply a sign of his thirst to return to God, in silence and attention.

Bose likes to call itself a *community on the edge of the desert*: a community in which the treasure of silence and the possibility of listening to the Word are shared among the brothers and sisters, but also a community that seeks to be open, to welcome and listen to all, to share the joy and hope, but also the sorrow and distress, of all people.

The life of each brother and sister of Bose is centred on the service of praise offered to God in prayer, but also on service offered to others through professional work, hospitality offered to guests, travellers and pilgrims, and service offered to the church and to different Christian churches. According to the Rule of St Benedict, the first thing to verify regarding someone who asks to enter a monastery is that he or she 'truly seeks God'. At Bose, the community is also fully aware that it is only by walking in the footsteps of Christ, in service and in giving one's life for all people, that it is possible to seek the true God, rather than an idol.

Why on the edge of the desert, then? To listen to and to know the Lord, and at the same time to understand what it means to live a fully human life. The goal is love.

Brother, sister, you are no longer alone! In all things you should rely on your brothers and sisters.

Love them, since God has given them to you as your primary guardians and companions, in the same way that Christ loved you to the end.

Love this community, and with it and by means of it all people. Love all creatures, praise God for them, and try to find in them purification, instruction and consolation.

You have been called to be a sign of the love that gives itself for others. (Rule of Bose 2)

Love is the *télos*, the goal, of Christian life. It is for this reason that the way of life chosen at Bose has been, from the beginning, life in community: in the daily life of the monastic community, everything should be directed towards communion. The community owns everything in common, in so far as this is possible, as an expression of the shared priority of the Word of God and as a way of making possible a sharing of life radical enough to become a sign of the communion of the Trinity, which opens outward to encompass everything in creation.

The Community Today

Continuing the cenobitic life as it was conceived and pursued from the beginning, the community, at present composed of about eighty brothers and sisters who belong to various Christian Churches, is rooted in the local Church in which it was the Lord's will to place it, the diocese of Biella, whose bishop guarantees communion with the Catholic Church. As a community on the edge of the desert, Bose has always striven to cleave both to silence, listening to the Word, and to fraternal life, listening to and welcoming every human being, sharing with them joys and hopes, sadness and anxieties. Thus with renewed fidelity, the end of monastic life is pursued which, as for every Christian life, is love, charity.

Entering the community

Brother, sister, when you arrive in the community with the desire to follow the Gospel, you do not yet know many things about this life that has attracted you and that you have chosen. You need a period of reflection, during which you can deepen your understanding of the call you have received.

At the time of your *accoglienza liturgica* [liturgical welcome], an authentic love not satisfied with partial or temporary gifts inspires

your commitment to stability in the community, according to the vocation you have received, welcomed and then chosen. At this time, your actions and attitudes begin to take on visibility in the community.

After your vocation has been confirmed within the community, the moment arrives for you, brother, sister, to give your life definitively to God, and to do this in front of the church. The liturgy of the profession begins with the invocation of the Holy Spirit, who will inspire in you a firm and unshakable commitment. You will then pronounce your final, irrevocable and free 'yes' to the call to live in celibacy and community life according to the spirit of the Rule.

Before the church, which will confirm you in the gift you have received, you will pronounce this 'yes' in the Holy Spirit to the Father, through Christ who is the eternal Amen, the true and faithful witness. (Rule of Bose 9-11)

The desire to live according to the Gospel is the only reason for which a new arrival is admitted to the community (see Rule of Bose 3). A new member is admitted when his or her request is approved by the council of brothers and sisters. Those who wish to enter the community begin a period of postulancy, the length of which varies from individual to individual. This is followed by the novitiate, which lasts approximately four years. During the novitiate the novice is guided by the novice master, who helps him or her grow as a person and helps the community discern his or her vocation. The novice's typical day is divided into two parts: the morning is dedicated to professional work, in which the novice receives training, and in the afternoon there are classes and meetings which introduce the new brothers and sisters to monastic life. The novitiate ends with the *accoglienza liturgica*, during which the novice makes a total and definitive commitment to live in celibacy and community with the brothers and sisters who have welcomed him or her. The monastic profession, which takes place after at least three more years, is a declaration in front of the church of the vocation received, welcomed, and chosen: in the liturgy of the profession, the community and the church confirm the brother or sister in the gift he or she has received, and recognize and accept his or her ministry.

During the novitiate the brothers and sisters undertake an intensive period of preparation, consisting of a four-year cycle of courses (in Scripture, liturgy, patristic and monastic studies, etc.) offered by the community. Every course is also open to all of the brothers and sisters of the community, as a way of underlining the fact that one's

preparation is never finished. The community has made every possible effort to create a sizeable library, which currently includes more than 50,000 volumes and almost 200 periodicals. A brother of the community plans and organizes the programme of courses and meetings offered to novices.

Prayer, solitude and lectio

Brother, sister, the first reality you discover when you enter the community is solitude... Devote yourself to the art of discerning the divine presence and become a witness to this presence; learn to pray to your Lord without ceasing. Do not value anything above the love of Christ!

Christ is also in you, and in prayer you will find his presence in you. If you truly want to live in the presence of God, your prayer should be silent, personal, and hidden, according to the example given to you by Jesus. (Rule of Bose 9, 2, 36)

Solitude and personal prayer are fundamental to monastic life. Solitude is an essential aspect of celibate life, but it is just as important—in fact, absolutely necessary—in community life. It is an expression of simplicity, a way of living authentically in the community without imposing one's presence on others. Solitude also allows the members of the community to pursue together a deeper communion in God through prayer, which transforms and makes fruitful every moment spent in solitude.

Personal *lectio divina* is a powerful moment of listening to and ruminating on the Word of God in which, having invoked the Spirit, the monk seeks to penetrate all the text's wealth and profundity, until it becomes a word of life for the believer today.

Personal prayer is also a time for intimate conversation with God, under the direction of the Spirit who adapts his manner to the temperament of each: especially in the evening, having ended one's day and before reciting compline, every brother and sister finds in their cell a time of repentance for sins and invocation of pardon, a time of summing up all events and all persons in the light of the Risen Christ, a time of cosmic intercession for the Church and the world, a time of purification in order to prepare a dwelling for God in one's own heart, a time of silence, in particular to listen to what the Spirit of the Lord says in the heart of each one...

Common prayer follows the rhythm of three daily offices: in the morning and evening prayer, a hymn and the singing of psalms

introduce the proclamation in continuous reading of a passage of the Old Testament and of the Gospel (in the morning) and of the Epistle (in the evening); a brief moment of silence to let the Word penetrate within is followed by the *Benedictus* or the *Magnificat*, then by a litany, an intercession, the singing of the Our Father, and the concluding blessing. The midday prayer is made up of a hymn, the singing of psalms, a patristic or spiritual reading, and concludes with a collect. On Thursdays and saints' days the Eucharist is celebrated instead of the midday prayer. On Saturday evening and on the eves of feasts there is a community liturgical vigil that prepares for the next day's Eucharist. At this vigil the reading of the day's biblical texts, intercalated by psalm 119, is followed by a community *lectio divina*: the prior, or a brother charged with this by him, explains the Scriptures, to help the community and guests to understand their spiritual coherence and the demands their message contains.

The office of the Resurrection opens Sunday, which has its heart in the Eucharist, 'prayer of prayers, in which the risen Christ gives himself to you as food and drink, ill and weak member of God's people that you are. The Word is thus made flesh in you and you receive the total Christ, offered to you in the Sacrament until he comes again' (Rule of Bose 37). Compline, with an admonition by the prior inspired by the epistle proclaimed at vespers, closes the day in the peace of the Lord. Over the years the community has elaborated its own liturgy of the hours, which it owes to the great liturgical and monastic traditions of the Eastern and the Western Churches, and which respects the different liturgical and spiritual sensibilities of its members: selection and composition of prayers and intercessions, elaboration of antiphons and of Biblical responsories, a new translation of the psalms and biblical canticles that is faithful to the original text and suitable to be sung daily in grateful praise of the Lord—all have been brought together in the four successive editions, each richer than the last, of Bose's 'Daily Prayer: an Ecumenical Office for the Liturgical Year'.

Work and poverty

Brother, sister, your poverty according to the Gospel means sharing everything you own and living, as much as you can, from one day to another, in a provisional way: this will allow you to follow Christ who emptied himself completely, and to have in yourself the attitude of the one who, though he was rich, made himself poor among us. Your poverty will mean reducing your life, day after day, to what is essential:

this daily work of simplification will make you one of the poor of Yhwh.

Poverty for you will also mean working like everyone else. You will work because the apostles and fathers worked for a living, because you are not allowed to make others serve you, because through your work you collaborate in the work of creation accomplished by the Wisdom of God, and because you must demonstrate your solidarity with all people by working with them. (Rule of Bose 21, 23-24)

Daily work, the only source of the community's maintenance, is carried out with seriousness and to professional standards in various sectors: market gardening, beekeeping, making jam, preserves and herbal teas, in workshops for pottery, icons, candles, weaving, carpentry, in Qiqajon publications, Biblical, liturgical, and catechetical research in the great Hebrew and Christian tradition, translations of the fathers of the Church and of monasticism. In all this we simply seek to carry out our task well, not in a spirit of competitive productivity, but of healthy industry.

A few brothers and sisters are engaged professionally outside the community, in health and education. External activity in service of the Word is also intense, in various communities and local Churches: it is animated by 'solicitude for all the Churches' and takes the form of days of reflection, talks, Biblical courses, spiritual retreats preached in Italy and abroad to the faithful, catechists, priests, religious, monastics, missionaries...

Income from the various works and activities is handed over to the person in charge of this, to make radical the sharing of goods. Furthermore, everyone in the community does manual work, including the humblest chores (kitchen, dishwashing, cleaning the houses reserved for guests and common areas...) knowing that this is a way of serving one's brothers and sisters, and the guests.

Poverty, lived especially through work, is viewed as a radical sharing of both material and spiritual goods, as a stripping of self, a reducing to the essentials of each one's requirements, a striving not to attach oneself to anything or anyone, in view of simplifying oneself for the sake of greater interior unity. It is not lived, however, in a legalistic way and entails no denigration of created realities: rather, we seek to use them, giving thanks, accepting and bringing out the beauty and goodness inherent in creation. Creation, as the apostle Paul teaches, is willed and maintained by God and awaits its liberation so that it too

may enter into the freedom of the children of God (see Rom. 8:21).

The Rule, the prior, and the synodal structure of the community

Brother, sister, the Gospel will be the absolute and supreme rule.

No single community or person can fulfil in a definitive way all of the demands of the Gospel. Only the universal church, over the course of its history, is able to express all of the possible vocations the Gospel contains.

But since you have chosen to live in community and in celibacy with brothers and sisters for whom you are responsible, you will not be tossed about by every gust of wind. With the Gospel remember to keep in mind your brothers and sisters: they are your living rule. Christ will speak to you in them every time you find it necessary to admit that you do not see clearly, and every time you find yourself unable to respond joyfully to the demands of the Gospel.

Do not forget that Jesus is your model of obedience: he 'became obedient to death.' His life on earth was a life of complete obedience; he lived repeating the words, 'Not my will but yours be done.' Therefore, to be a brother or sister in Christ, you must do the will of the Father. Your obedience is directed to God.

But this obedience to God also asks to be expressed in a concrete and visible way as obedience to the community, which means to your brothers and sisters.

The community expresses its aims and intentions, to which you are bound, in its council.

It is certainly true that it is not possible to determine a precise condition in which the community, in expressing its aims and intentions, necessarily reflects the will of the Lord. There are no assurances of this, and nothing can absolutely guarantee that obeying the council of the community automatically means obeying God and obeying the Gospel. However, you should listen to and obey the decisions made by the council, since every agreement reached by the brothers and sisters during the council is the result of a sincere effort to discern the will of God for you and for the community. Each person brings his or her own gifts and strengths to the council, and all of these gifts together make possible the building up of the community and its progress day by day.

Presiding over the unity of the community means no more than putting into practice a gift for assuring unity in the community. The one who presides should serve his brothers and sisters, not dominate them. The gifts of solidity and discernment are essential for him. Solidity will allow him to strengthen his brothers and sisters: he is a sinner like Peter, who denied Christ three times, but like Peter he will

undergo conversion and will then be confirmed in the solidity that will allow him to confirm and strengthen the community. The other gift he must have is the gift of discernment, through which unity in the community is established. (Rule of Bose 3-4, 26-27, 29-30)

The Rule of Bose is not intended to be a law but rather an instrument of communion, in response to which each person is asked to evaluate his or her membership of the community. The Rule reminds those who read it that 'the Gospel is the absolute and supreme rule,' and that 'your brothers and your sisters are your living rule'. Obedience is also understood first and foremost as obedience to God, which finds its sacrament in submission to one's brothers and sisters in the community, to all people, to all of creation. Obedience cannot be reduced in a legalistic way to a 'law,' and it is not owed only to the person who presides in the community. Obedience to the prior is actually only one example of Christian obedience.

The prior, who presides in the community by virtue of his gifts of soundness and discernment, has the task of assuring unity. In his ability to bring about *koinonía*, to function as 'the eye of the community,' and in his task of guiding the community on its path and of watching over each brother and sister, he resembles the Basilean figure of the *proestós* or *praepositus*. The pattern of community life over the years has made visible other aspects of his ministry. As a spiritual guide for the community, he breaks the bread of the Word and interprets it in each situation in which the community finds itself. He is also a spiritual father to each professed brother or sister of the community, as in the monastic tradition of Egypt.

The Rule of Bose provides for other structures of authority in the community in addition to that of the prior. These additional structures are intended to maintain a synodal (from the Greek *synodos*, 'walking together') structure in the community: that is, a form of community life in which each member of the community participates in community decision making. The spiritual growth of the community, its growth in numbers, and the other changes it has experienced over the years have led the community to gradually modify the means by which it seeks to maintain this 'co-responsibility' in its decision making. However, it has always been the conviction of the brothers and sisters of Bose that a complete and mature response to the demands of the Gospel, as the community perceives them day after day, is only possible with the participation of each and every

member of the community. These structures are the *council*, in which all brothers and sisters who have made their monastic profession participate; the *general chapter*, in which everyone participates who has completed the *accoglienza liturgica*; and finally, the *assembly*, attended by all brothers and sisters who have received the liturgical robe worn during community prayer. The liturgical robe is usually granted at the beginning of the novitiate, and is a first recognition by the community of the monastic journey begun by a new brother or sister.

Serving the Church and Humankind

Guests at Bose

Brother, sister, when you welcome guests, be aware that it is God who is coming to you as a pilgrim. You will welcome every guest as you would welcome Christ. You will treat all guests who come to the community with honour, simplicity, and refinement, and you will try to believe that Christ is present in them.

It is not by chance that the community welcomes guests: hospitality is a ministry you offer to the world in the name of Christ. (Rule of Bose 38, 40)

Friend, guest, or pilgrim, you have come for many reasons: perhaps you are looking for a quiet place to rest for a moment, a hill where you can pray, brothers and sisters with whom you can experience community life, a place to listen to the Word of God, a place of silence. Now you are here, and the community is happy to welcome you...

You will meet here Christians of different denominations, Christians whose tendencies and ideas may not match yours, people who cannot believe and who may be concerned about the social and political situations in which they live, and also men and women whose lifestyle you may not agree with. Try to see the face of Christ in them, do not do anything to hurt another person, and listen to everyone with the intention of perceiving the spark in the hearts of the people with whom you speak...

At the end of your visit, do not be reluctant to return to your daily life: God wants to make you an instrument, a witness to the message of the Gospel where you live. You did not come here to avoid reality, but to be reconfirmed in your faith and in your commitment to those with whom you live and work. (From the brochure left in guest rooms.)

Hospitality is a ministry that can be practised with particular dedication by those who live in celibacy. The many guests who visit Bose (now more than 20,000 each year) come for different reasons—

some are Christian and some are not, some work in the church and some have little contact with the church, some live on the edge of society—but everyone is welcomed with the same attitude: ‘You will welcome every guest as you would welcome Christ.’ The monk, who practises the art of discerning the presence of God, should be able to see the face of Christ in each guest and should perceive, in the great mystery of communication with others, the reality of the hidden presence of Christ in every person, even in those who are disfigured by pain or illness or marked by their faults. Practising the ministry of hospitality means welcoming and listening to all, seeking to understand the other in his or her ‘otherness’ and presenting him or her to God in prayer, consoling those who are in situations of trial, and expressing solidarity with those who are marginalized. Expressed in these ways, the ministry of hospitality can constitute an implicit but direct appeal to a society at times tempted to dehumanize interpersonal relationships.

In order to welcome, without relying on simple spontaneity and improvisation, the growing number of guests who ask to visit Bose, the community has found it necessary over the course of the years to create a team of brothers and sisters whose full-time work is the welcoming of guests. However, hospitality remains a fundamental ministry of every brother and sister of Bose.

Guests are invited to participate in the three daily prayers of the community and in a daily meeting offered to all guests by a brother or sister, a moment of *lectio divina* on the Gospel reading of the day. The community also offers guests the possibility of individual retreats guided by a brother or sister of Bose, and meetings and conferences on topics of particular spiritual interest. During the summer there are week-long courses, open to all, on topics related to Scripture or spirituality, week-long sessions of spiritual exercises for priests, and courses on the Bible for children and young adults.

Aware that many Christians today are looking for alternatives to their local parish communities, the Community of Bose reminds all of its visitors, especially those who take part in the Sunday Eucharistic celebration, that it does not consider itself in any way a parish church and does not wish to lead guests and friends of the community away from the churches to which they belong or from their daily work environments, in which each person is called to live his or her faithfulness to the Gospel. For those who wish to travel, in their daily

life, in the direction of the kingdom of God, Bose would like to be nothing more than a small oasis along the path.

For the sake of the Church

Brother, sister, it is not for yourself that you have come to this community, but for your brothers and sisters in the church and in the world. The element of mission belongs to every function of the church, and you will express this element of your vocation in your relationships with those who do not believe in Christ. The community is not an end in itself: it is called to go forth into the world to proclaim the good news of the Gospel. The life of the community should be pervaded by this understanding of its mission.

To carry out this mission, the community may decide to create fraternities. Like the disciples of Christ sent out two by two, the brothers and sisters living in fraternities are a sign of the person and message of Christ.

Brother, sister, you belong to a particular Christian church. You have not come to the community with the intention of re-designing a church according to your own ideas: you belong to Christ through the church which generated you as a Christian in baptism.

For this reason you will recognize and appreciate its ministers and leaders in their diversity, and you will always seek to be a sign of unity.

Beware of criticizing the church with bitterness, with pettiness, without love. You will be tempted many times to do it. But look first at the life of the community: do you not see in it just as many deficiencies as you see in the church? (Rule of Bose 41-43, 45)

No one at Bose is inclined to speak about a separation from the world (what the community does seek to separate itself from is worldliness and the idols that can also be found in a monastery!), and the community has even less reason to consider or practice a *fuga ecclesiae*.

Without having sought it expressly, but receiving it as the Lord's great gift, the community from its beginnings has been composed of brothers and sisters belonging to various Christian confessions. Born in years filled with hope for ecumenism, the community continues today, in what are certainly less exhilarating times, its laborious and patient search for a life of faith in common after centuries of separation. The one Word of God, the spiritual wealth of the different Churches and traditions, a shared rhythm of spiritual life, acceptance of one sole community: all of these continually strengthen the elements of unity as opposed to those of division. Faithfulness and

obedience, courage and prophecy animate a constant journey of conversion, which is a return to the one Lord and to his will 'that all may be one.'

The first fraternity was opened near Neuchâtel, Switzerland, where from 1972 to 1977 two brothers lived a precious ecumenical presence among Catholics and Reformed.

In order to know better the Jewish roots of Christianity, to widen understanding of the Scriptures common to Christians and Jews, and to live in communion with all the Churches, from 1981 the community is present in Jerusalem with a fraternity of three brothers. They seek to bear witness to the striving towards that peace and unity that are proper to the Christian faith, in the city that is a symbol of the contradictions between God's call and man's response. Another fraternity has been present since 1998 in Ostuni in Puglia, a region that historically has been close to the Christian East and in which from the very beginnings of the Bose experience profound ties of friendship have been formed.

With the intention of serving other Churches, first of all by learning to listen to them and to know them, each year since 1993 the community has organized and hosted the International Ecumenical Conferences on Orthodox Spirituality in collaboration with the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople and the Patriarchate of Moscow. These conferences enable scholars and Church people, from Orthodox and other Christian confessions, to meet in order to increase communion through mutual knowledge and deeper understanding of the spiritual treasures of the traditions proper to each. In a similar spirit, since 1996 the community has begun to promote a series of Conferences on Reformed Spirituality, in collaboration with the Protestant faculties of Geneva-Lausanne-Neuchâtel and Strasbourg. Since 2003, in collaboration with the 'Office for the Cultural Patrimony of the Church' of the Italian Bishops' Conference, the community has organized the International Liturgical Conferences, addressed to specialists and to all who wish to reflect on the relationship between liturgy and architecture.

Aware that it is sinful and no better than others, the community is careful not to pass mean-minded or petty judgement on the Church's griefs. Instead, in the strength of the Gospel, which is the power of God, it makes bold to remind itself, and any who ask for its word, of the need for conversion, and to guard against the temptations it

discerns which may lead the Church, and the course of history, away from the Gospel.

Conclusion

Brother, sister, you would not have been able to accomplish very much alone. Together with others who share your vocation, you can remain in the unity of a faith capable of transporting obstacles as big as mountains.

The community, even if its members are few, remains the 'little flock' that hopes against all hope.

For you, poverty will mean a daily effort of simplification that will make you one of the poor of Yhwh. You know very well that even if you do not show exterior signs of your vocation, the visibility of the community will make it difficult, if not impossible, for you to share the poverty of those who are destitute, rejected, and oppressed. You will find it easy to be welcomed, honoured and respected, which the poor are not. For this reason, your own poverty must be accompanied by a spirit of great humility, both in the community and outside of it: a sense of your own smallness and an attitude that flees honours and distinctions. (Rule of Bose 12, 23)

The 'little flock' has grown in size, and the small sign it constitutes has assumed, over the years, a visibility of which the community often feels unworthy. The community often feels 'overexposed', especially within the church. It is aware that the flock, in order to remain faithful to its vocation and continue toward the promised kingdom, must remain 'small', that is, always conscious of being nothing more than a community of sinners who receive forgiveness from God to the extent in which they recognize their own sin and their own smallness. The community knows that the flock can be led together to salvation only through its trust in the one Shepherd. Even though it sometimes finds itself the object of criticism, distrust or malevolence, even from friends, it continually examines itself not on the basis of the approval or disapproval it receives from others, but on the basis of the quality and authenticity of its own *sequela Christi*.

'If we have grown into union with Christ through a death like his, we shall also be united with him in the resurrection' (Rom. 6:5), writes St Paul. We also believe and want to proclaim with our lives, to everyone we meet, that it is only by searching for and finding a reason for which it is worth dying that we are also given a reason to live.

‘LIFE PRECEDES LAW’: THE STORY SO FAR OF THE CHEMIN NEUF COMMUNITY

Timothy Watson*

Born out of a charismatic prayer group in Lyon, France, in 1973, the Chemin Neuf Community is one of a number of ‘new communities’ to have appeared in the years following the Second Vatican Council. The Community’s vocation of unity and reconciliation – unity of the person, the couple, the churches and the world – finds particular expression in its ecumenical character, whereby members seek to ‘give their lives for the unity of Christians’ while remaining in the closest possible communion with their own churches. Chemin Neuf’s spirituality of unity, which permits the Community’s diversity and gives it its apostolic dynamism, may have something to offer to the churches as they face the challenge of the call of Jesus to be Good News together for the world.

Introduction

On Pentecost Sunday 2009, a crowd of six thousand people gathered at the Sacré-Coeur Basilica in Montmartre, Paris, for an unusual celebration. In the presence of several Roman Catholic bishops and of representatives of a dozen different denominations, Cardinal Walter Kasper, President of the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of Unity between Christians, ordained eight priests for the Chemin Neuf Clerical Religious Institute, and Laurent Fabre, leader of the Chemin Neuf Community, received the life commitments of forty-two members from a dozen different countries. Among those taking their life commitments (in total ten married couples and twenty-two consecrated celibates), were two Lutherans, one a consecrated celibate, the other a married deacon; and so Cardinal Kasper’s homily was followed (after a suitable pause) by an exhortation by the

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Lutheran pastor André Birmelé, honorary dean of the Protestant Theology Faculty, Strasbourg and a leading member of Faith and Order.¹

The seven young people who founded Chemin Neuf in 1973 could hardly have imagined that within 35 years their little community would have become an international apostolic order, with more than 1,200 members in 26 countries and an associate membership of nearly 10,000. Neither could they have guessed that the Community would be led on a path of institutional ecumenism, encouraged and accompanied at the highest level by the authorities of the various churches. The celebrations of Pentecost 2009 provide a good vantage-point from which to review the history of the Chemin Neuf Community to date: first situating it in the context in which it was born and has developed over four decades; then examining some of its more distinctive features, and particularly asking how the Community has managed to hold together so much diversity while retaining its structural integrity and the support and encouragement of the Church.

1) **The Charismatic Renewal in context**

To understand the Chemin Neuf Community, it is necessary to understand its origins in the Charismatic Renewal, the popular neo-Pentecostal movement that emerged in the traditional churches of the West in the 1960s. The history of the Renewal has so far proved extremely difficult to write. Many of those who experienced the movement in its early years are still alive and active in the Church, but their personal testimonies are of a bewildering variety that escapes easy classification. The passage of time has also given the Renewal a patina of nostalgic familiarity. The best-known classic accounts such as *The Cross and the Switchblade* are period-pieces that have entered the popular imagination, but which now seem as dated as *West Side Story*. Nor are charismatics quite as strange as they used to be: one anthropologist who has studied the Catholic Renewal since its origins recounts that, whereas once people had never heard of it, these days the typical response is 'Oh my aunt is part of that' or 'My mother tried

¹ A 30-minute DVD of the ordination celebrations, including extracts from the talks by Kasper and Birmelé, is available from A.M.E., 10 rue Henri IV, 69002 Lyon, France.

to get me to go to a meeting'.¹ In part this reflects the success of the movement in renewing the Church from within, and therefore disappearing into it;² but it also begs the historical question of the Renewal's distinctive contribution in its many and varied manifestations.

Grasping the distinctiveness of the Charismatic Renewal has also proved to be a challenge for theologians, who have subjected the movement to analyses that are often highly tendentious. This is notoriously true of the Baptist theologian Harvey Cox's often-quoted assessment that 'If Jimmy Swaggart is the Mick Jagger of pentecostalism, the charismatic movement is its Guy Lombardo'. (By his own confession Cox finds the Renewal 'tepid and derivative', though he is happy to admit that this may simply be a question of taste; he also wonders if he has not unconsciously absorbed the hostility of 'real' Pentecostals towards their cousins in the traditional denominations.³) Florid manifestations such as the Toronto Blessing have tended to attract particular attention, which is understandable, but can hinder attempts to give a more rounded and unspectacular account of the movement. For their part, Christians acquainted with the Renewal have not always done enough to redress the balance, perhaps because they do not necessarily have the right theological tools to describe their own experience.⁴ Walter Hollenweger observes that Pentecostals with their preference for experience over doctrine tend not to write systematic theology, whereas Charismatics in other churches (notably Roman Catholics) are more concerned to

¹ Thomas J. Csordas, *Language, Charisma and Creativity: Ritual Life in the Catholic Charismatic Renewal* (New York: Palgrave, 2001), xiii.

² This was of course a stated goal of pioneer figures such as Suenens: Olivier Landron, *Les communautés nouvelles. Nouveaux visages du catholicisme français* (Paris: Le Cerf, 2004), 72-3.

³ Harvey Cox, *Fire from Heaven. The Rise of Pentecostal Spirituality and the Reshaping of Religion in the Twenty-first Century* (London: Cassel, 1996), 152-3. Readers of *One In Christ* may not know that Guy Lombardo was a Canadian easy-listening bandleader famous for his New Year's Eve concerts; they probably know who Mick Jagger is.

⁴ A point well made by Peter Hocken, 'The significance and potential of Pentecostalism', in Simon Tugwell et al., *New Heaven? New Earth? An Encounter with Pentecostalism* (London: Darton Longman and Todd, 1976), 38-9.

demonstrate their faithfulness to their respective traditions than to examine what unites them.¹ It is thus broadly true that, as Dan Hardy and David Ford have noted, there remains a gulf of indifference and suspicion between the 'twin explosions'—of academic theology on the one hand, and renewed forms of praise and worship such as neo-Pentecostalism on the other—that have characterized Western Christianity in the late twentieth century.²

At the same time, it is a commonplace that Christians of all denominations have since the 1960s begun to seek forms of devotion that are 'more intense, more festive, more emotional', and more holistic; in doing so they are echoing Pentecostal critiques of the lifelessness and 'withered piety' that is a risk for all institutional church life.³ One cheerleader for this tendency is Karl Rahner, who remarked that 'the devout Christian of the future will either be a "mystic", one who has "experienced" something, or he will cease to be anything at all';⁴ unsurprisingly Rahner was supportive of the Renewal, indeed his last published work was an article exploring the links between the charismatic movement and his own Ignatian tradition.⁵ The quest for authentic experience need not take the charismatic route, of course: it is precisely this desire that makes the Latin Mass an attractive option for a younger generation of Roman Catholics, or that explains the renewed interest in pilgrimages. But charismatic spirituality corresponds closely to the desire for embodied religious experience, not least in the fundamental experience of 'Baptism in the Holy Spirit'. Cox also notes that its distinctive forms such as glossolalia, properly understood as 'ecstatic utterance', do seem to have a particular 'power to tap into a deep substratum of human religiosity', as well as being a sign that the available religious idiom has become inadequate.⁶ The Renewal is therefore not some kind of half-baked Pentecostalism, but a fresh idiom giving contemporary

¹ Walter J. Hollenweger, 'Pentecostalsms': <http://www.epcra.ch/articles_pdf/Pentecostalsms.PDF> accessed 24 April 2009, 6-7.

² David F. Ford and Daniel Hardy, *Living in Praise. Worshipping and Knowing God* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 2005; revised edition), 4.

³ Cox, *Fire from Heaven*, 105; Hollenweger, 'Pentecostalsms', 11.

⁴ Cited by Ronald E. Modras, *Ignatian Humanism: a Dynamic Spirituality for the 21st Century* (Chicago: Loyola Press, 2004), 236.

⁵ Philip Endean, *Karl Rahner and Ignatian Spirituality* (Oxford: OUP, 2001), 8.

⁶ Cox, *Fire from Heaven*, 90-91, 315.

Christians the means to express a deeper and more integrated experience of faith.

But the fruits of the Charismatic Renewal are not just personal. Since the start the movement was characterized by a corporate concern for unity in the Spirit, which gave it an unprecedentedly ecumenical character, and which also inspired new forms of common life that were particular expressions of that unity.¹ The embodiment of ecumenical aspirations in a common life is a powerful symbol of the desire 'that they might all be one', while the kind of sacrificial commitment that is inherent to community living provides a context within which that call to unity can be lived out realistically, and can mature through a shared experience of suffering and hope. Community life is also (to adapt Hollenweger's suggestive analysis of Third World Pentecostalism) inherently 'non-Aristotelian': its categories are 'not the book but the parable; not the thesis, but the testimony; not the dissertation, but the dance; not concepts, but banquets; not a system of thinking, but stories and songs; not definitions, but descriptions; not arguments, but transformed lives.'² These are also the categories of much post-modern discourse, with its mistrust of grand meta-narratives and its appreciation of embodied cultural-linguistic traditions which can be vehicles of meaning and of moral values.

At a time when the late modern narrative of ecumenical progress has stalled, amidst confusion about the appropriate criteria for judging its success or failure, one might do worse than seek sources for refreshment in the roots of the Renewal. Intentional 'new communities' such as Chemin Neuf, which grew organically out of the Renewal, can provide a valuable case study of how the particular idiom of 1970s charismatic Christianity can be institutionalized in a way that releases its potential in a sustainable way, and makes it available to new generations of believers. They also provide a self-regulating environment which relativises individual charismatic experience without devaluing it, thus encouraging spiritual maturity; this is particularly the case where the ecumenical intuitions of the early Renewal have survived in something like their original form.

¹ Peter Hocken, *One Lord One Spirit One Body. The Ecumenical Grace of the Charismatic Movement* (Paternoster, 1987), 96.

² Hollenweger, 'Pentecostalism', 7.

Finally, their own practice of ecumenism might have some lessons for the current so-called ecumenical winter: theologians such as Bernard Sesboüé and André Birmelé have recently begun to emphasise the urgent need for concrete examples of reconciliation that cross the thresholds of our current ecclesial divisions, and enable our denominations to move into a new phase of conversion and convergence.¹

The Charismatic Renewal in France

The Chemin Neuf Community describes itself as 'born out of a charismatic prayer group in France in 1973': a phrase that needs a little unpacking for an English-speaking readership. The first prayer groups of the French Renewal grew out of contacts in the early 1970s with the Catholic Renewal that had begun in America a few years earlier. These first contacts came about either through Americans visiting France (as in Laurent Fabre's case, see below), or through French visitors encountering the Renewal in the USA (Xavier Le Pichon and Albert-Marie Monléon OP, who helped to found the Emmanuel Community). This gave suspicious French observers an excuse to dismiss the Renewal as yet another unwanted American import; but it also enabled the embryonic French movement to learn critically from the American pioneers. Thus the development of 'covenant (non-residential) communities' in France from 1975 was inspired by The Word of God in Ann Arbor, which had pioneered this model; at the same time, members of the Emmanuel Community on a fact-finding visit to Michigan felt free to reject aspects of the North American movement that were not suited to their French context, notably an approach to the Bible that flirted with fundamentalism and a discourse of 'headship' which minimised the role of women in leadership.²

France in the early 1970s provided distinctive social conditions that favoured the new movement's growth, not least owing to the impact upon the post-conciliar Church of the events of May 1968. On the one

¹ Bernard Sesboüé, *L'évangile et la tradition* (Paris: Bayard, 2008), 226; André Birmelé, lecture at the Collège des Bernardins, Paris, 31 May 2009.

² Hervé-Maria Catta and Bernard Peyrous, *Le feu et l'espérance. Pierre Goursat, fondateur de la Communauté de l'Emmanuel* (Paris: Editions de l'Emmanuel, 1995), 104-5; for the American context, see Csordas, *Language, Charisma and Creativity*, 5-19.

hand, that year saw an unprecedented crisis, with the emptying of seminaries and a general questioning of authority in all its forms; on the other hand, sensitive religious commentators such as Michel de Certeau SJ and the Protestant philosopher Paul Ricoeur were able to discern within the student movement a genuine (if confused) desire for new forms of communal and spiritual life.¹ Forty years on individual members of Chemin Neuf have very different views on this contentious topic, but many of the older generation will testify that May 1968 opened their minds to the idea of living in community. But there were deeper roots too. It is no coincidence that so many of the major theologians at Vatican II, such as Congar, Chenu, Daniélou and de Lubac, were French, and there was a particular desire in France to put into practice the intuitions of the Council regarding active lay participation, building on a vigorous pre-conciliar tradition of lay organisations such as the Catholic scout movement (France being the only country in the world where Baden-Powell had allowed the scouts to divide on denominational lines) and Action Catholique.² The Renewal also met this desire, though with a characteristic emphasis on the spiritual, somewhat at the expense of the social.

For their part, a number of French bishops, conscious that their Church was facing an unprecedented period of turbulence, had the vision to respond creatively to this new movement of the Spirit. Mgr Matagrín of Grenoble expressed this elegantly: 'I can put in the plumbing, install taps, and lay pipes around the house, but I am incapable of making the water flow!' In contrast to the situation in Germany, where theologians such as Heribert Mühlen argued that the Renewal should be under the oversight of the parish clergy, or in Italy, where the energies of Renewal were channelled into a single national structure, bishops such as Cardinal Renard of Lyon were happy to let the situation develop organically and allow the new 'charismatic' communities to find their own way. The 1982 Marcus Report of the French Bishops Conference gave the Renewal general credibility, and led to the appointment of diocesan Renewal officers throughout

¹ Interview with Laurent Fabre, January 2009. On Ricoeur and May '68, see the wonderful biography by François Dosse, *Paul Ricoeur: Les sens d'une vie (1913-2005)* (Paris: La Découverte, 2008; revised edition).

² Landron, *Les communautés nouvelles*, 83-84.

France in 1983.¹ For their part, many of the movement's pioneers were churchmen keen to maintain communion with their superiors: Monléon was a Dominican, Fabre a Jesuit, Pierre Goursat (first moderator of the Emmanuel) a consecrated layman who had had the Archbishop of Paris as his spiritual director. Traditional French religious communities also provided support and context, for example the monks and nuns of Le Bec-Hellouin under Dom Philibert Zobel who prepared a French translation of Kevin Ranaghan's *Catholic Pentecostals*, one of the very first books on the new movement.²

Finally, the French Renewal reflected the denominational profile of the country, which is to say that Roman Catholics were in a clear majority: this arguably enabled the French Catholic Church to be open to its ecumenical dimension without feeling threatened by it. A few exceptional pastors such as Louis Dallièrre and Thomas Roberts (the latter a septuagenarian Welshman based in Paris who had himself been converted during the Welsh Revival) gave the Renewal a public ecumenical profile, while the Taizé Community provided a unique ecumenical space and spirituality.³ But charismatics from the traditional Protestant churches could feel squeezed, painfully aware not just of their minority status, but also that their own churches were in some ways less open to the Renewal than the Roman Catholic Church; while, inevitably, contentious theological questions such as the place of Mary created tensions on the ground between the denominations. In the medium term only a small number of the new communities (of which Chemin Neuf is perhaps the most prominent example) managed to integrate a substantial presence of Christians from other churches, and this required costly commitment from the non-Roman Catholic members and the development of a mature

¹ Interview with Laurent Fabre, January 2009; Heribert Mühlen, 'Vous recevrez le don du Saint Esprit.' *Le renouveau spirituel. I. Introduction et orientation* (Paris: Le Centurion, 1982), 10-14; Landron, *Les communautés nouvelles*, 329-334.

² Landron, *Les communautés nouvelles*, 194. (Zobel was also a committed ecumenist, and founder member of the French Anglican-Roman Catholic commission.)

³ Raymond Pfister, 'Pentecostalism and Ecumenism in France. A Critical Examination of Seeming Antipodes': <http://www.epcra.ch/papers_pdf/leuven2/pfister_2001.pdf> accessed 24 April 2009, 2-3; Landron, *Les communautés nouvelles*, 39-46.

ecumenical spirituality of patience, realism and hope.¹ Here too there was a precious French inheritance to be built upon in the person of Abbé Paul Couturier, the pioneer of 'spiritual ecumenism' and founder of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. Couturier's 'Prayer for the Unity of Christians' is said daily in the Chemin Neuf Community.²

The Charismatic Renewal and the Roman Catholic Church

The thinness of charismatic theology in mainstream Protestant churches has long been a major concern of thoughtful critics such as Tom Smail.³ It is therefore fascinating to note that from the very earliest years of the Renewal movement in the Roman Catholic Church, not only was that Church's hierarchy involved at the very highest level, but also many of that tradition's finest theologians were co-opted to help guide the new movement. This is strikingly apparent in the Malines conferences organised by Cardinal Suenens from 1974, with participants including Killian McDonnell OSB (USA), Salvador Carillo MSPS (Mexico), Ralph Martin (USA), Albert-Marie de Monléon OP (France), Heribert Mühlen (Germany), Veronica O'Brien (Ireland), Kevin Ranaghan (USA), and a team of consultant theologians including Dulles, Congar, Laurentin, Kasper, and Ratzinger.⁴ The first Malines conference laid down many helpful markers for the interpretation of the Renewal: that all Christians are by definition charismatic; that the criteria for discernment of charisms should be 'those of traditional mystical theology'; that particular charisms such

¹ Landron, *Les communautés nouvelles*, 46, 197-203.

² On Couturier, see the magisterial study by Etienne Fouilloux, *Les catholiques et l'unité chrétienne du XIXe siècle. Itinéraires européens d'expression française* (Paris: Le Centurion, 1982). The Prayer reads: 'Lord Jesus, who prayed that we might all be one, / We pray to you for the unity of Christians, / According to your will, according to your means. / Give us the grace to experience the suffering caused by division, / To see our sin, / And to hope beyond all hope. Amen.'

³ See for example Tom Smail, Andrew Walker and Nigel Wright, *Charismatic Renewal. The Search for a Theology* (London: SPCK, 1995): Smail, 49, cites Yves Congar's *I Believe in the Holy Spirit* as a fine example of the kind of scholarship to which the Anglo-Saxon Protestant Renewal should have paid more attention.

⁴ *Le renouveau charismatique. Orientations théologiques et pastorales. Colloque de Malines, 21-26 mai 1974* (Paris: Cahiers du Renouveau, s.d.; a reprint of the original edition: Brussels: Lumen Vitae, 1974), 6.

as glossolalia needed to be seen as clearly subordinate to a wider understanding of the fullness of life in the Spirit; and that the Renewal's prayer groups might have a role to play in renewing the experience of Christian initiation, notably for the benefit of 'baptised pagans'.¹

The involvement of Suenens and others should not be understood as the 'gentrification' of the charismatic movement², but rather as an example of Church leaders taking their theological responsibilities seriously in the light of *Lumen Gentium* 12. It can indeed be argued that such formal ecclesial oversight (when it works!) is a key factor in avoiding the kind of degeneration into self-gratification and 'experiential hedonism' which writers such as Andrew Walker and Martyn Percy have identified as a risk for charismatics.³ This is not necessarily to advocate a naive acceptance of current power-structures, but simply to point out that the success or failure of the Church's ministry of oversight can also be legitimately assessed in terms of its self-proclaimed models of best practice. Laurent Fabre has noted that a key factor in the distinctive development of the 'new communities' in France was precisely the way in which the French bishops 'did their job'.⁴

Roman Catholic theologians also addressed from the start the paradox of the Renewal's innovative characteristics, not the least of which was the fact that it was 'ecumenical by its very nature'.⁵ On the one hand, as expected, they were careful to reassure fellow-Catholics that personal experiences of spiritual renewal should 'help to understand the presence of Mary at Pentecost, lead to a new understanding of the mystery of the Church and favour a loyal

¹ *Colloque de Malines*, 10, 32, 36, 49.

² In the unfortunate expression of Andrew Walker, 'Thoroughly Modern: Sociological Reflections on the Charismatic Movement from the End of the Twentieth Century', in Stephen Hunt, Malcolm Hamilton and Tony Walter, *Charismatic Christianity. Sociological Perspectives* (London: Macmillan, 1997), 29-30.

³ Walker, 'Thoroughly Modern', 34; Martyn Percy, 'The City on a Beach: Future Prospects for Charismatic Movements at the End of the Twentieth Century', in Hunt, Hamilton and Walter, *Charismatic Christianity*, 205-228.

⁴ Interview with Laurent Fabre, January 2009: 'il [Renard] a fait son boulot d'archevêque'.

⁵ *Colloque de Malines*, 42.

adhesion to its sacramental structure and magisterium'.¹ For these writers, as for Vatican II, there was by definition no contradiction between the Church as hierarchical and the Church as charismatic; but equally, as for Vatican II, the Spirit was free to act outside the visible structures of the Church. It is especially interesting to note the reluctance of these early Catholic observers to form too rapid a judgement on the new expressions of community life (such as that at Ann Arbor) emerging from the Renewal, and in particular their refusal to describe them in existing ecclesial categories. The Renewal itself is described as having no founder or programme, and as depending directly on the Spirit, while the new communities are not to be seen as similar to traditional religious orders (with their founders and missions), but rather as 'pilot projects which are a prefiguration of the kind of human community for which the world is searching so painfully'.² There is in these writers an awareness of something prophetically new taking place, particularly on the ecumenical front, in which charismatic life revitalises existing structures and leads organically to a reassessment of their role and function.³

The 'new communities' born from the Renewal, as they have developed over the past forty years, have naturally gone through a process of ecclesial institutionalization, not least at their own request but also for their own benefit. Some Catholic commentators are nowadays less concerned to make the distinction between traditional and new communities, more ready to identify the latter in conventional terms (with a founder, a particular mission, and so on).⁴ Nonetheless, the difficulty of finding appropriate canonical shapes for these new movements continues to indicate that their distinctive forms of life do represent something genuinely new.⁵ Catholic

¹ *Colloque de Malines*, 7, 17.

² Suenens, quoted by George Every, 'Prophecy in the Christian era', in Tugwell, *New Heaven? New Earth?*, 197.

³ *Colloque de Malines*, 9, 27-28; see also Walter Hollenweger, 'Foreword', in Tugwell, *New Heaven? New Earth?*, 12.

⁴ See articles by Cardinals Angelo Scola and Stanislas Rylko in *La beauté d'être chrétien. Les mouvements dans l'Eglise. Actes du IIème Congrès mondial des mouvements ecclésiaux et des communautés nouvelles. Rocca di Papa, 31 mai - 2 juin 2006* (Vatican, 2007).

⁵ See the authoritative overview by Michel Dortel-Claudot, *Communautés nouvelles et liberté d'association dans l'Eglise. Cours donnés aux Facultés*

theologians such as Peter Hocken who have followed the Renewal since its beginning take pains to encapsulate something of the original vision: the process of structuring the gift should not quench its spirit, but should rather create paradoxical spaces, fully embedded in the traditional churches (to guarantee the catholicity of their ecumenical vision), but in which the fullness of the experience of God can be manifested in ways that overflow our 'reduced denominational containers'.¹ Without being quite so explicit about the ecumenical implications, Joseph Ratzinger has also observed that the Charismatic Renewal's organic growth will inevitably not fit neatly into existing ecclesial structures, and that in such circumstances the duty of Church authorities – sometimes against their initial instincts! – is to keep the door open and prepare the way for something new to happen.²

2) The Chemin Neuf Community then and now

New communities can have a disconcerting tendency to spiritualize their origins in the form of foundation myths (such as the receiving of names in prayer) that seek to resist historical analysis.³ In this context, Chemin Neuf's own foundation story is reassuringly down-to-earth: the Community's name derives not from a charismatic prophecy, but from the street where it began. It was in October 1973 that seven young single Roman Catholics began an experiment in community

Jésuites de Paris (Centre Sèvres) en janvier 2005 (Lyon: A.M.E., 2006).

¹ Hocken, *One Lord One Spirit One Body*, 42-46, 93-102.

² 'Je trouve merveilleux que l'Esprit, une fois encore, se montre plus fort que nos planifications, et qu'il se mette en valeur d'une manière toute autre que nous avions imaginé. En ce sens, la rénovation est en marche, sans attirer l'attention, mais efficacement. D'anciennes formes, embourbées dans l'autocontradiction et dans le goût pour le négatif, quitteront la scène; *et le nouveau est déjà en chemin*. Assurément, à peine a-t-il voix au chapitre dans le grand dialogue des idées dominantes. Il croît en silence. Notre devoir est de lui tenir la porte ouverte, de lui préparer une place. Car les tendances actuellement encore dominantes vont sans doute dans une autre direction.' From Joseph Ratzinger, *Entretien sur la foi* (1985), 47-48; quoted by Landron, *Les communautés nouvelles*, 316 (my emphasis).

³ Csordas, *Language, Charisma and Creativity*, 104 (The Word of God); Christine Caillat-Pina, 'Le renouveau charismatique français', in Georges Bertin and Marie-Claude Rousseau (ed.), *Pentecôte. De l'intime au social* (Laval-Nantes: Siloë, 1997), 53 (the Beatitudes).

living at number 49, *montée du Chemin Neuf* ('New Road up the Hill'), a house in which a charismatic prayer group had already been meeting for some months. The happy coincidence of the street name might be said to fit well with the Community's Ignatian charism of 'finding God in all things'. More to the point, there is an important sense in which the Community was born organically from a charismatic prayer group, and in which its founding charism or intuition is that of community life itself.

It is however Laurent Fabre who is specifically recognised as the Community's founder. Fabre was a young Jesuit who had trained as a leader of group dynamic workshops, and his observation that mixed groups often had a healthier and happier dynamic had already led him to envisage the possibility of mixed community life. His own discovery of the Renewal came in 1971, thanks to an American Jesuit, Mike Cawdrey, who was a fellow-student at the Lyon scholasticate. At first wondering if his fellow student had psychological problems, Fabre was intrigued enough to join Cawdrey's small prayer group. Then in the spring of 1972 he had a transformative experience of 'baptism in the Holy Spirit' during a weekend of prayer with Cawdrey and a couple of American pilgrims hitchhiking from Taizé to Jerusalem, one of whom (Brother Moses) was an Episcopalian of Jewish origin. Fabre's unwavering commitment to ecumenism dates from this moment.¹ After visiting new communities in the USA in the summer of 1972, Fabre and others set up a prayer group in Lyon in the autumn, and in the spring of 1973 he asked his superiors for permission to begin an experiment in community life. With their encouragement, the Chemin Neuf Community came into being in October of that year.²

Community life: structures and simplicity

In its very earliest stages Chemin Neuf had no official leader, and (according to stories handed down within the Community) its domestic arrangements grew organically. The decision to appoint a member as housekeeper, for example, was made only when the Community was given a fridge and no one could decide where to put

¹ Though he does confess that he said a 'Hail Mary' under his breath while Moses prayed for him, to ward off any risk that he might become a Protestant!

² Landron, *Les communautés nouvelles*, 218-220; 'Interview du Père Laurent Fabre', in Frédéric Lenoir, *Les communautés nouvelles. Interviews des fondateurs* (Paris: Fayard, 1988), 177-180.

it: the fridge thus sat in the middle of the kitchen for a week until a constitutional solution was found to the problem. The sharing of resources evolved in a similar way: members simply put their income into a shoe-box on top of the fridge. Thirty-five years later, this example is still used by the Community's financial director to describe how Chemin Neuf organises its finances, though the shoe-box has been replaced by a string of bank accounts in 26 countries.¹ More generally, the principle of flexibility and of the lightest possible structure is still held up as an ideal by the Community's current leadership, who see it as a guarantee of openness to the Spirit and as a safeguard against excess institutionalisation. This is also the basis on which the first Protestant members, and also the first families, were welcomed on equal terms into the Community as it evolved: 'why make things complicated, when they can be simple?'²

Chemin Neuf has therefore evolved a structure that is extremely flexible, allowing various levels of commitment and various ways of living out the same sense of call. Members of Chemin Neuf can choose either to live in Community accommodation ('common life fraternity'), in which case they share their incomes, or in their own homes ('neighbourhood fraternity'), in which case they are invited to tithe. They are free to move from one style of life to the other as their life circumstances change. Currently a quarter of members are single, three quarters are married (both spouses must join); single members may take a vow of celibacy if they choose. After a novitiate lasting two years, members take a three year commitment, renewable indefinitely; life vows are optional. In every case the core commitment is identical: members meet weekly in a small fraternity (6-12 people), and attend a weekly charismatic prayer group; they commit to personal prayer, simplification of life, financial sharing, annual retreats, availability for mission, practising reconciliation, and—last but not least—regular times of celebration. All members will also normally have followed a three-month residential discipleship programme (see below). The Community's unity is therefore spiritual rather than formal:³ a

¹ Interview with Jacques Lettu, 'intendant général de la Communauté', *F.O.I.* 20 (2009/1), 66-68. (*F.O.I.*, published by Chemin Neuf, is the magazine of the International Ecumenical Fraternity; no. 20, a special edition on the history of the Community, was published to coincide with Pentecost 2009.)

² Interview with Laurent Fabre, *F.O.I.* 20, 19.

³ Interview with Laurent Fabre, *F.O.I.* 20, 23.

Parisian businesswoman with a family and busy professional life takes the same commitment as a celibate brother running a retreat house in Chad, though of course the availability of the celibate for mission will in practice be greater. Since 1990 there is also the possibility of associate membership, known as the 'Chemin Neuf Communion', which is a kind of third order.

Many of the Community's options and orientations have this same flexible character. Thus Chemin Neuf does not have a habit, but a colour scheme (white and beige, with optional cross) which members are invited to wear when on mission together. The Community's liturgical rhythm is also adaptable. In abbeys and other residential centres, it is common practice to celebrate two daily offices and a regular eucharist (according to the denominations represented, and respecting their norms and regulations); a neighbourhood fraternity might only meet once a week for a morning office. But the core liturgical commitment is to the weekly charismatic prayer group, a time of worship and open prayer where members wait on God and receive words and images which are shared for the edification of the Community.¹ Charismatic prayer groups are also a key component of the Community's Ignatian retreat programmes, and they provide the structure for times of Community discernment such as the annual Community Weeks. All such gatherings also include regular times of 'review' when all present can express what they are thinking and feeling. Thus the Community leadership seeks to be open to the surprises of the Holy Spirit, discerned through the disciplines of common prayer and fraternal sharing.

Chemin Neuf's structural arrangements have evolved considerably since the beginning, not least as it has grown internationally; these structures have tended to adopt a pyramidal Ignatian model, well suited to holding together an increasingly diverse community. The leader, or 'shepherd', is elected by the members without a fixed term, giving him a key role of unity and continuity, though he may step down when he wishes (or if he is invited to do so by the Community). Laurent Fabre, the founder and current 'shepherd', was not initially the leader, as we have seen; Fabre's nomination within a couple of years of the Community's foundation expressed the first members' recognition of his key role in founding Chemin Neuf, and also of his

¹ Jacques Monfort, 'Ce groupe de prière, où s'éprouve notre foi', *F.O.I.* 20, 28.

particular charism of discernment.¹ In the early years decisions were taken at annual meetings of all the members, but as membership climbed into the hundreds and became more international, the decision was made in 1995 to create a chapter with 72 elected delegates, meeting every seven years to appoint an International Council (four elected and two co-opted members). The Council appoints national leadership teams, usually a *troika* (a couple and a celibate), as well as the leaders of the main international mission programmes; the national teams appoint the local leadership. Discernment and listening at every level are crucial to the functioning of this kind of pyramidal system, and Community members are encouraged to share their own needs and desires and to practise intelligent obedience, which of course includes the option of saying 'no' to a proposed mission or role. The building of relationships of trust allows increasing freedom, and Chemin Neuf members will often testify that the Community has given them the opportunity to take on responsibilities that they would never have suspected themselves to be capable of.

Mission: conversion and formation

Chemin Neuf is an apostolic community, heavily involved in mission activities that are nourished and shaped by the intuitions of community life. Mission and community are seen as complementary: community life flourishes into mission, while mission draws people into community life. All such activity is centred on the practice of 'baptism in the Holy Spirit', understood (in the classic terms of the Catholic Renewal, notably expressed by Rainero Cantalamessa²) as the personal and experiential re-appropriation of baptismal promises, and as a wholehearted 'yes' to God which releases His grace in unexpected ways. While some Catholic theologians are wary of the expression 'baptism in the Spirit', Chemin Neuf uses it both because it is biblical, and because it stresses the need for a transformative experience of conversion and commitment that is 'not normative, but indispensable!'³ Laurent Fabre argues that baptism in the Spirit should

¹ Interview with Jacques Monfort, January 2009.

² See for example Rainero Cantalamessa, *Sober Intoxication of the Spirit: Filled with the Fullness of God* (Ohio: Servant Books, 2005).

³ In the words of Gustave Martelet SJ, at a conference on baptism in the Spirit jointly organised by Chemin Neuf and the Jesuit Faculties in Paris (Centre

be at the heart of the process of Christian initiation, echoing Suenens' remark that the Renewal should not be a Gulf Stream warming the coast of the Church but rather a powerful current at its heart.¹ This understanding of baptism in the Spirit is holistic and developmental, and there is no assumption in Chemin Neuf's practice that charisms such as glossolalia will necessarily be linked to it; rather, it is a step of personal commitment involving the laying on of hands by the assembly, at which texts and images received in prayer are given to the person concerned. It also implies a degree of preparation: the Community has made much use of programmes such as Heribert Mühlen's 'seven weeks', and a Chemin Neuf parish in Paris was the first to run an Alpha course in France. The Community has since enthusiastically adopted Alpha, finding it to be an indispensable tool (as well as a precious ecumenical gift to be cherished and shared).²

From the start, however, Chemin Neuf saw the need to provide theological and spiritual formation to accompany conversion, not least to counteract the intellectual environment of the 1970s characterised by structuralism, relativism, and a general suspicion of the supernatural, but also to protect against the risk of fundamentalism.³ As Killian McDonnell wrote in 1974, it was not that those involved in the Renewal were any more tempted by fundamentalist modes of thought than the ordinary believer, but simply that as they actually *read* the Bible (and tried to live by its precepts), the question of their theological formation was more urgent.⁴ It rapidly became apparent that Ignatian spirituality, with its focus on scriptural meditation and its concern to give rules for the 'discernment of spirits', provided a theology of experience that was particularly well adapted to the needs of the Charismatic Renewal.⁵ Equally, the Renewal gave a new life to Ignatian programmes that ran the risk of losing their focus on the action of the Holy Spirit and

Sèvres), 23 May 1994; see the published papers in *Tychique* 114 (March 1995).

¹ Most recently in Rome in 2006: Laurent Fabre, 'Une grâce destinée à tous les chrétiens', in *La beauté d'être chrétien*, 117-120.

² The 'seven weeks' follows the programme laid out by Mühlen, 'Vous recevrez le don du Saint Esprit'; on Alpha in France, see Landron, *Les communautés nouvelles*, 146-148.

³ Landron, *Les communautés nouvelles*, 111-114.

⁴ *Colloque de Malines*, 35-36.

⁵ See the analysis of Endean, *Rahner*, 243-244.

becoming a kind of psychotherapy, a 'well-oiled machine'.¹ Laurent Fabre's background in group dynamics also fed into the reinvention and adaptation of Ignatian models for the new context of charismatic community life.

From 1976 the Community began to develop its own formations, starting with a three-month residential programme known as 'Cycle A', soon followed by a non-residential version over two years (then called 'Cycle B', now known as 'Emmaus'). The programmes combine lectures in theology and biblical studies, fraternity life, and two retreats: a group dynamic week known as 'Bethany', and a week of the spiritual exercises of Ignatius of Loyola. They are open to all comers, providing a taste of community life and serving in part as the Community's novitiate, in part as a service to the wider Church: participants can include church workers or members of other communities such as L'Arche on sabbatical leave, as well as young people or families simply wanting to take time to listen to God. Alongside these programmes, much of the Community's time and energy is spent on retreat work and spiritual direction: the full Thirty Day Ignatian Retreat is currently offered twice a year in France, alongside dozens of week-long Ignatian retreats of various kinds in many countries.

Chemin Neuf's growing reputation for formation led to new missions which either grew organically out of the Community's own life, like the Cycle A or the Cana programmes for married couples (which started in 1980 and currently run in over fifty countries), or resulted from a partnership with local ecclesial authorities. For example, in 1982 Cardinal Lustiger entrusted Chemin Neuf with the running of the Paris Diocesan students' house, an 80-room hall of residence in the *rue Madame*. By reducing the rent by 30%, requiring the students to take charge of the cleaning and other household tasks, and setting up a fraternity structure, Chemin Neuf created a community environment conducive to spiritual formation;² the Community currently runs several such student houses throughout Europe and Africa. Chemin Neuf's first overseas mission, running a formation centre in the Congo, was in response to a request from a bishop, Mgr Kombo, who had known Laurent Fabre during their

¹ Laurent Fabre, 'Nos racines profondes', *F.O.I.* 20, 24.

² Interview with Laurent Fabre, March 2009.

student days.¹ Today the Community is engaged in apostolic and development work in countries from Canada to Mauritius, and its membership (and its worship style) is becoming increasingly international: a sizeable Community house will often have representatives of a dozen or more nationalities.

Unsurprisingly, ecumenical formation has long been a key priority, but the heart of the Community's ecumenical vocation is rather to be found in conversion: 'the closer we get to Christ, the closer we are to one another'. Conversion leads naturally to a commitment to reconciliation between Christians which forms part of a wider spirituality of reconciliation—of the individual, the family, the churches and the nations—that both builds up the body of Christ and fits it for service to the world. This can take various forms. In 2000 the Community founded the International Ecumenical Fraternity, also known as Net For God, inspired by Abbé Paul Couturier's vision of an 'invisible monastery' encircling the globe. Members attend a monthly meeting where they watch a 30-minute film produced by the Community (and currently translated into twenty languages), and pray for the unity of Christians and peace in the world. At the time of writing there are more than 500 such groups in countries as diverse as Russia, Sri Lanka and Burkina Faso. In 2001 the Community created the Dombes Theological Institute, based at a former Cistercian abbey near Lyon: this is a partnership between Chemin Neuf, the Catholic University of Lyon and the Protestant Theology Faculty of Strasbourg, offering a range of university-level co-taught theology modules to a wide public. André Birmelé has praised the Institute as offering a unique teaching environment in which lecturers and students from different denominations can explore key subjects together in the context of a shared life of prayer and fellowship.

External observers have regularly commented on the Community's particular gifts in this area, highlighting its combination of flexibility and rigour, and the range of associated commitments which have been called Chemin Neuf's 'rings of Saturn'.² For example, participants in Cana retreats are left free to participate in the liturgy (or not) as

¹ Interview with Jacques Monfort, *F.O.I.* 20, 18; Landron, *Les communautés nouvelles*, 447-452.

² Anne Devailly, *Les charismatiques* (Paris: La Découverte, 1990), 66-81; Dortel-Claudot, *Communautés nouvelles*, 35.

they wish, but they also have the opportunity at the end of the retreat to make a commitment to an annual programme of regular fraternity meetings. Students spending a year in a student house sign a contract committing them to attend a weekly fraternity and three short retreats (one at New Year) during the academic year; they may subsequently choose to make a one- or two-year commitment to 'Chemin Neuf Youth'.¹ Individuals are therefore free to make a commitment which is realistic and appropriate, but nonetheless demanding. So, for example, a couple might get involved in the Cana fraternities over a number of years and end up making a formal commitment to the Community; they might then choose to leave the Community a few years later, in which case they will be free to return to the diaspora if they wish. In all cases, the goal of formation is both to stir up the faith of the individual, and to equip him or her to serve the wider Church and the world.

An ecumenical vocation: the Church and the churches

Chemin Neuf's description of itself as 'a Roman Catholic community with an ecumenical vocation' expresses the creative tension at its heart: the desire to work wholeheartedly for the unity of Christians, while at the same time operating within the parameters of ecclesial obedience, in the first instance to the Roman Catholic Church which gives the Community its primary ecclesial recognition. Chemin Neuf's 'humble way of common life' is therefore grounded in the concrete reality of the churches. For example, to respond to a question that is often asked: the Community practises eucharistic hospitality according to the norms and regulations of the churches, above all the Roman Catholic Ecumenical Directory, which means that formal permission to offer hospitality at a Roman Catholic eucharist is always sought from the local Roman Catholic bishop, and his decision is respected. It is of course a joy when bishops feel able to accord such permission, but in any case no Community eucharist can ignore 'the suffering caused by division'. Furthermore, our divisions are asymmetrical and complex: some members of Chemin Neuf belong to denominations which ask their members not to accept Roman Catholic eucharistic hospitality in any case—while others, whose

¹ Landron, *Les communautés nouvelles*, 158; Devailly, *Les charismatiques*, 77-79.

churches operate a more inclusive policy, discover that this can sometimes be a way of avoiding the hard questions of reconciliation. Equally, experience has proved St Paul's dictum that it is perseverance and rejoicing in the face of suffering that builds character and permits hope.¹

Chemin Neuf's desire to live in obedience to its ecclesial superiors was present from the start: Laurent Fabre in particular did not want to be seen as 'yet another Jesuit doing his own thing'. In the first two years of the Community's life, his superiors requested that he continue living in the Jesuit scholasticate, where he returned every night; he observes now that this was a sensible precaution, designed to safeguard the lay character of the Community and prevent him from being identified too readily as its 'chaplain'.² (Some years later, when it became apparent that Chemin Neuf's growth might one day require him to leave the order, Fabre travelled to Rome to seek—and receive—the blessing of Pedro Arrupe, the Jesuit superior-general.) Chemin Neuf also sought the advice and oversight of the archbishop of Lyon, working to build up trust and endeavouring to be available to serve the wider Church. This could take unglamorous but practical forms. When John Paul II visited France in 1986 and spoke to a meeting of 4,000 priests at Ars, Chemin Neuf was entrusted with the catering arrangements. A Community that proved capable of serving 4,000 hot lunches in 15 minutes might be regarded as a safe pair of hands, and perhaps be subsequently entrusted with more imaginative missions. But the Community also sought from the start to work in close collaboration with all the churches, organising festivals with emblematic figures such as Thomas Roberts or Brother Roger, fighting to maintain the public ecumenical profile of the Renewal movement, and resisting the temptation to discouragement as the great hopes of the early years failed to be fully realised.

In the early 1970s, Roman Catholic canon law had not yet caught up with the theological developments of Vatican II, particularly in respect of ecumenism and of the new understanding of the role of all baptised Christians. The new category of *Christifideles* ('Christ's faithful': an

¹ Romans 5:3-4. For some Ignatian resonances of this approach, see Philip Endean, 'On Poverty with Christ Poor', *The Way* 47/1-2 (Jan/April 2008), 47-66.

² Interview with Laurent Fabre, January 2009.

umbrella term for laity, religious and clergy) introduced by the Code of Canon Law of 1983 went some way towards remedying the situation, and in 1984 the Community was therefore recognised as a Public Association of Christ's Faithful within the Diocese of Lyon: this was a significant level of ecclesial recognition, for a 'Public' Association (as opposed to a 'Private' Association) has the right and responsibility to teach in the name of the Roman Catholic Church. The Community wrote its constitutions painstakingly ('inch by inch'), working closely with the eminent canon lawyer Michel Dortel-Claudot SJ, and establishing the principle that all members of Chemin Neuf should seek to be in the closest possible communion with their own denominations.¹ In 1992 a further step was taken with the erection of the Chemin Neuf Religious Clerical Institute for the Community's male celibate Roman Catholics (mostly priests and seminarians) 'within the Chemin Neuf Community (*en son sein*)'. This represents an imaginative (and perfectly legitimate) use by Cardinal Decourtray of canons which had probably not been written with Chemin Neuf's particular character quite in mind: in any case, canon lawyers observe that it is a principle of law that life precedes law.² The Community's current canonical status thus expresses the desire of the Community's leaders and their ecclesial superiors to maintain the creative tension between wholehearted obedience to the current forms of the institutional Church, and public acknowledgement of the new things being brought about by the Holy Spirit.

Chemin Neuf's ecumenical vocation has been brought into particular focus by the presence in the Community of ministers of other denominations, and also by the desire of non-Roman Catholic members to take life commitments (which according to the Constitutions requires the formal permission of their ecclesial superiors). Inevitably this has been dealt with on a case-by-case basis, following the same general principle of the closest possible communion. When in the early years Reformed Church members of

¹ Interview with Laurent Fabre, January 2009; Dortel-Claudot, *Communautés nouvelles*, 6.

² Dortel-Claudot, *Communautés nouvelles*, 75; see also the analysis of canon 605 by Marie-Aleth Trapet, *Pour l'avenir des nouvelles communautés dans l'Eglise* (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1987), 161. Suggestively, Benedict XVI uses the same term as Decourtray ('*en son sein*') to describe the priestly vocations that emerge within the 'new movements': *La beauté d'être chrétien*, 7-8.

Chemin Neuf first discerned a call to pastoral ministry, the Community encouraged them and partly funded their training; this led to a convention between Chemin Neuf and the Eglise Réformée de France by which that Church recognised the Community obligations of the pastors in question. Similar arrangements have been made for a life-committed member of Chemin Neuf who is a minister of the Mennonite Church: representatives of Chemin Neuf and the Mennonite Church meet each year to discern prayerfully how her responsibilities will be allocated. In Germany, a senior pastor of the Evangelical Lutheran Church has been appointed as the Community's vis-à-vis, and she officially represented her Church at the life commitments of the two Lutherans (one an ordained deacon) on Pentecost Sunday 2009. A similar conversation has begun recently with the Church of England. The building of such bridges is painstaking and necessarily risky, but it is the only way to build the relationships of trust which are indispensable to this kind of 'institutional ecumenism'.

It is not for nothing that the expression chosen by the early Renewal communities to describe their distinctiveness was that of 'covenant'. The archetypal covenant is of course that of God with Israel: a commitment that was both an unconditional gift of love, and a call to a new sense of responsibility in a common life. All human covenants are pale reflections of God's promise that he will be with his people and will never forsake them. As Walter Brueggemann has pointed out (and as the Anglican Communion is in the process of discovering), it is only if Christians can recognise God's call as something which precedes and surpasses them, drawing them into a relationship with each other, that they can understand the dialectic of obedience, encompassing both law and grace, which will structure their common life.¹ A community, like any part of God's Church, is not a voluntary association which members join on their own terms, but a place of risky commitment in which we respond to the call to follow Christ poor and humble, not knowing where it might lead. As such, it is the

¹ Walter Brueggemann, *Theology of the Old Testament* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1997), 419-421; see also Paul Fiddes, 'Unity and Universality, Locality and Diversity according to Baptist Thinking about the Church', <http://www.centreforcatholicstudies.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/fiddes-unity-and-universality_website-309.pdf> (accessed 23 April 2009), 9-10.

covenantal commitment of its members that structures a community's life, creating the relationships that give it continuity and are an icon of *koinonia*. And the paradigm for such commitment (not least as the central meditation of Ignatius' Spiritual Exercises) remains the life vows of poverty, chastity and obedience.¹

As well as the traditional three vows, those taking life commitments in Chemin Neuf add a fourth vow, 'to give your life for the unity of Christians'. This is a vow with a history: back in the 1930s Abbé Paul Couturier kept a register of religious (of various denominations) who had made such a vow on their deathbeds, and Laurent Fabre recounts with gratitude that Brother Moses, the American Episcopalian who had prayed for his own baptism in the Spirit, himself made this vow in the 1980s when dying of cancer.² The vow has of course its origins in the prayer of Jesus in John 17, his offering of himself to the Father in which he prays, 'may they be one so that the world might believe'. By offering their lives for the unity of Christians, members therefore make a commitment which they know it is not in their power to keep, a promise which is a radical appeal for grace, an appeal over and above our own reasonable expectations to God's sovereign liberty: unity according to His will and by His means. As Cardinal Decourtray said, on receiving the first life commitments of non-Roman Catholic members of Chemin Neuf in St John's Cathedral in Lyon in 1986: 'c'est un pari', it's a wager (the same term as Pascal's famous wager). Any unconditional gift is necessarily of that order: indeed, one of the most striking experiences for many Chemin Neuf members is discovering in community life how the lifelong vocations of marriage and consecrated celibacy, both unconditional and risky though of course very different, can illuminate each other and lead to a deeper mutual understanding. If, then, it is possible to make this offering in joyful hope, it is only because of a confidence that the Spirit blows where He wills, and that it is truly God's desire to bring about a unity that can as yet only be foreshadowed. By embodying this desire in their own lives,

¹ See Sheila Cameron's account of 'covenant relationships' in the L'Arche Community, 'In Community with the Disabled', a sermon preached at Great St Mary's Cambridge, 20 February 2005, <<http://www.ely.anglican.org/parishes/camgsm/sermons/S2005l/sc1.html>> accessed 29 April 2009.

² Interview with Laurent Fabre, March 2009; see also Lenoir, *Les communautés nouvelles*, 179.

those taking life commitments seek to hasten the coming of that unity, to take what concrete steps are currently possible, and to be prophetic signs of that hope for the Church and for the world. The men and women, from many nations and many churches, who have taken this step stand ready to testify that it is a risk that is well worth taking.

ST ANSELM AT CANTERBURY: HIS MISSION OF RECONCILIATION*

R. W. Southern

St Anselm died nine hundred years ago this year. We reprint here a passage from the introductory essay which Richard Southern (1912-2001), the great medieval historian and Anselm scholar, contributed to a volume of collected papers celebrating the ninth centenary of the enthronement of Anselm as Archbishop in Canterbury cathedral in 1093.

The cathedral community which turned out to welcome Anselm on his arrival nine hundred years ago today was a deeply divided body—not for the first, nor (I imagine) last time in its history. But the division then went very deep indeed. In 1093, nearly thirty years after the Norman Conquest, there was still a great chasm between the older English monks who had belonged to the cathedral before the arrival of Anselm's predecessor Archbishop Lanfranc twenty-three years earlier, and their more recent recruits, chiefly from either Bec or Caen, whom Lanfranc had imported and to whom he had given all the chief offices in the community. Lanfranc's reason for this brutal treatment of the English monks was simple. He wanted to have a nucleus of sympathetic helpers capable of carrying out the sweeping changes in monastic life, in daily services, in the ecclesiastical calendar, and in religious studies, which he had started introducing immediately after his arrival as archbishop in 1070. It may seem that, after this lapse of time, it was a bit too late in 1093 to do anything about it, but this is to underestimate the tenacity of those who have the duty of serving the church at Canterbury. Although in some ways the divisions had become less acute, in others—and especially during the long vacancy in the archbishopric before Anselm's arrival—they had got worse. So the community was still bitterly divided when he arrived, and Anselm was quite simply the only person who could heal the division, and he knew it.

* Reprinted by permission of © Continuum Publishing. First printed in *Anselm: Aosta, Bec and Canterbury*, ed. D.E. Luscombe & G.R. Evans (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996), 20-3.

How he knew this is a long story, and it may seem that we have more important matters awaiting our attention. But since a cathedral community, whether monastic or not, is concerned primarily with worship, and since divisions about the best way of fulfilling this duty threaten the whole foundation of life in a cathedral, we cannot proceed without understanding how Anselm viewed this issue.

To do this, we must go back to the time fifteen or sixteen years before 1093 when the hostility between the two groups in the community at Canterbury was at its most intense. How these two groups had come into existence can be very easily explained. Lanfranc, in the efficient way that was habitual with him, had started at once to bring the daily round of the religious life of the Canterbury community into line with the habits, disciplines and studies of the greater part of western Europe. The changes needed to bring this about involved almost every detail of daily life and worship, and Lanfranc had set to work on his task with great energy, rebuilding the cathedral and monastic buildings, restocking the library and throwing out a good deal of the unintelligible stuff in Old English, writing and bringing into use a new monastic Rule of his own devising. Curiously enough, in his up-to-date way, he had chosen Cluny rather than Bec as his model, and he had reorganized the calendar and liturgy, and cleared out the bodies of long venerated pre-Conquest archbishops and others who were in his view quite ignorantly regarded as saints by the old monks.

In order to do all this, he had introduced into the community about half a dozen monks from Bec or Caen to whom he gave all the main offices in the church, and he had sent the ringleader of the dissident Anglo-Saxon monks to Bec to be disciplined by Anselm. But then a strange thing happened—at least it would have been strange if it had been anyone but Anselm. From this dissident, whom he was expected to discipline, Anselm heard about the Anglo-Saxon saints, and about the Rule of St Dunstan which had regulated the lives of the Canterbury monks before Lanfranc's arrival. Above all he got to know the dissident himself (his name was Osbern) and he wrote glowing accounts of him to Lanfranc: their souls (he wrote) had become so intertwined that he would find it hard to part from him.

We do not know what Lanfranc thought of this eulogy, but he seems to have been willing to take quite a lot from his old pupil Anselm, whom he had long ago saved from a very feckless existence and

introduced to the monastic life. So, at the end of Osbern's penal exile at Bec, Anselm sent him back with strong letters of commendation, both to Lanfranc and to the former monks of Bec whom Lanfranc had installed at Canterbury. Rather vexingly, Anselm also asked to be sent a copy of the old monastic rule of St Dunstan which Lanfranc had scrapped.

And this was not the end of the matter. A few years later, in 1079, when Anselm had just become abbot of Bec, he had to visit his monastery's English estates. Having arrived at Dover, he came straight to Canterbury to see his old friends. Here he followed his usual habit of having long discussions with groups of monks, and he especially singled out the English members of the community to talk to. Naturally they wanted chiefly to talk about the old saints whose bodies Lanfranc had thrown out of the cathedral. Among these, the one whose ejection they most resented was one of Lanfranc's predecessors, Archbishop Ælfeah. Lanfranc's reason for throwing him out was that almost nothing was known about him except that he had been killed by the Danes in 1012 for refusing to pay Danegeld. Lanfranc had judged this to be an insufficient ground for treating him as a martyr, and the English monks anxiously consulted Anselm on this point. Anselm spoke thus: a martyr (he said) is one who has died for the truth. But it appears that Ælfeah died for justice. Yet, if you think about it, where is the difference? Justice and truth are simply different aspects of the same thing: what we call 'truth' is justice in thought; and what we call 'justice' is truth in action. So, in dying for justice, Ælfeah died for 'truth in action', and in so doing he exhibited that quality which we require in a martyr.

I don't honestly know whether a canon lawyer would accept this interpretation, but the English monks of course were easily persuaded. More surprisingly, so was Lanfranc. It turns out that he had himself defined truth and justice in a similar way in commentating on St Paul's epistles some years earlier, so perhaps Anselm knew that he would be easily persuaded. At all events he at once ordered Archbishop Ælfeah's body to be brought back into the cathedral, re-instituted the liturgical observance of his feast day, and set the rebellious monk Osbern to work writing a life of the saint to use in the liturgy of his day.

This triumph of their point of view helped to soften the breach between the two parties among the monks, but it did not heal it, and

the two parties in the Canterbury community continued to look on each other with varying degrees of contempt, resentment and hostility. Especially during the long vacancy after Lanfranc's death in 1089, the English monks took the opportunity of searching among the debris of the old buildings for further evidences of lost relics of the old English saints, which of course they were not slow in finding, for the rubble of great cathedrals—as those who have been investigating the foundations of the nave have once more discovered—is filled with hidden treasures from the past.

One could say very much about the light that this little incident throws on the remarkable way in which Anselm's words, thoughts and mere presence broke down barriers and caused hostilities to wither away. For our present purpose, it may seem that enough has been said to show why Anselm's becoming archbishop helped to bring unity to a still divided community. But it did not end there. When Anselm was still hesitating whether to accept the archbishopric, still writing to the monks of Bec and to the Duke of Normandy about the question of his accepting the archbishopric, Osbern, the old warrior for ancient usages, twice wrote to Anselm in despair at his delay. And, besides, the 'foreigners' in the community whom Lanfranc had brought from Bec, and who were Anselm's closest and oldest friends in the monastic life, also wanted him to come. So it would be an understatement to say that he stood *between* the two parties: rather he personified both. On any practical assessment of the position, therefore, apart from legal forms about which Anselm seems to have been either ignorant or indifferent, he had little choice in the matter.

Everything in the actual situation spoke in favour of his coming, and from the moment of his arrival in Canterbury we may date the beginning of a new age of peace and corporate activity embracing both the old English traditions and Lanfranc's Continental innovations in religious and intellectual life. And this beneficent influence spread from the Canterbury community to other communities in the great cathedrals and monastic churches of England.

A RESPONSE TO R.W. SOUTHERN'S 'ST ANSELM'S MISSION OF RECONCILIATION'*

Archbishop Rowan Williams

Richard Southern's (characteristically) luminous essay on Anselm brings into focus two very significant and very different elements of the saint's legacy—one a more short-term effect on the life of the English Church, yet with its own longer-term theological weight, the other something that perhaps helps us grasp more adequately the inner force of some of Anselm's more speculative work. And both have to do with his 'rescue' of the memory of his predecessor Ælfeah (Alphege).

The positive recovery of the traditions of the pre-Conquest English Church, especially within the life of a great Benedictine House, helped to guarantee that the Norman Conquest would not be remembered as a moment of decisive rupture in the history of the English Church or nation. In the twelfth century, we can already see Benedictine historians and hagiographers weaving together Celtic, Saxon and more recent narratives to compose that distinctive version of British history that dominated the national imagination well into the seventeenth century – from Brutus and Arthur to Bede and Dunstan; and some of the greatest Benedictine houses (Glastonbury, Durham, even Westminster in some degree) were repositories of and visible testimonies to this remarkable construction.

It might have been otherwise. The way in which the Norman invasion was configured as something very like a crusade; the ambivalent standing of Archbishop Stigand, the ignorance on the part of the newcomers about native ecclesiastical tradition (Lanfranc is not untypical)—all this could have marked a very sharp break indeed. But Anselm's affirmation of the older ways and narratives allowed something like a single story to be told, and incidentally allowed the continuities in the Church's life to become a central element in the construction of a 'national' story, anachronistic as that word is in this

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period. There is a single story to be told of Christ's people in this realm; Bede's project of telling the story of the Saxon incursions in the context of a story of the arrival of the unifying presence of the Catholic Church finds a sort of continuation here. And some in the next generation would go beyond Bede in incorporating the Celtic legacy too (think of the twelfth century Welsh monastic houses like Llanccarfan in which the pre-Conquest charters were so imaginatively edited and 'spun', and the lives of the early Welsh saints composed). The Church assists in the making of an identity that holds together the island story.

But it poses an interesting theological question as well. Unity for the Church might be thought of as the capacity to make one story out of the diverse and conflicting narratives of its elements. A unified Church—as more than one major ecumenical figure has implied in the last half-century or so—is not one in which some part of the Church has conquered, in the sense that its version of history has once and for all prevailed. It is one in which each community has become able to recognise itself in a common narrative—a narrative that permits all to look critically at their past and all to look thankfully at their past, and to do this in the company of others. The celebration of saints who lived and died in other Christian fellowships is a part of this, and the recent colloquium at Bose which dealt with the ecumenical celebration of holiness (especially martyrdom) marks a serious step forward in engaging with this task. In this context, unity does not reverse, undo, or simply relativize the diverse histories of Christian communities; it exhibits them as a common inheritance which should stir both penitence and gratitude.

Anselm evidently believed that by doing justice to the memory of a tradition that was initially foreign and obscure in the eyes of his colleagues he was serving the health of the Church overall. He did not live up against the level of Christian division to which we have become accustomed (though he will have been aware enough of the worsening divide with the Christian East); but the principle of seeking unity by doing justice to the stranger is one that might well serve as a motto for much of the ecumenical enterprise as it has evolved, in its search for a language that is not simply one of winning and losing, of the triumph of the history of the victors (as is the world's way).

And this immediately bears on the second insight that Southern's paper prompts. I have deliberately used the term 'doing justice'

precisely because of Anselm's argument about why Alphege should be reckoned a saint and martyr. Alphege died for justice—indeed, he died for much the same reasons that made Anselm himself refuse King William Rufus the subsidies he had demanded on the grounds that he would be laying unjust burdens on his own people. Anselm followed Lanfranc in defining justice as truth in action: justice gives what is due, pays the proper debt owed to the true worth of any thing or person. It is thus an expression of a right judgement of worth, a true valuation. Justice expresses a truthful vision; true seeing ought to make injustice impossible or at least indefensible.

And it is this connection that ought to make sense for us of Anselm's complex and—for many people—apparently alien theology of redemption. He is still accused from time to time of having invented the penal substitution theory of the atonement; or, by those a little more familiar with the history of doctrine, of being in thrall to a feudal concept of honour and insult that makes his ideas about atonement inaccessible. But a careful reading of his works on the subject will show something more. Certainly, he is thinking within a framework of feudal honour and obligation; and no less certainly he believes that the death of Christ pays a debt we are unable to pay (which is not quite the same as nineteenth century Protestant substitutionary theory). But the pivotal argument is in fact about truth and justice: humanity diminished and enslaved by sin cannot see God properly and so cannot 'do justice' to God, cannot relate to God in a way that expresses God's worth, and so cannot do justice to itself, cannot be what it should be. The infinite self-gift of the incarnate Christ, culminating in his death on the cross, is the only way in which God's worth can be rightly responded to, the only adequate act of devotion and worship. To say that in the wake of Christ's death 'honour is satisfied' is not to speak in terms of some impersonal principle that has been vindicated, let alone of an offence that has been fully avenged, but to recognise thankfully that there is something in this fallen world that unequivocally represents the infinite worth of God and in so doing releases us from an obligation we could never meet in our own resource, drawing us into the infinite gift of the incarnate Christ.

This is not all there is to Anselm's theology of the atonement, but it is at the heart of it and it is grounded in the same principle that truth requires justice and that justice is the way to make truth visible. It

was the ground of Alphege's resistance to violent extortion—and Anselm's as well; it was the ground of Anselm's willingness to work for reconciliation at Canterbury; and it was the ground of some of his most sophisticated and original theology. Ultimately, it could even be said to underlie his most daunting speculative flights in the *Proslogion*: the only way to speak adequately of God is to say that he exceeds what can be thought. To do justice to God is to point towards silence and adoration.

Richard Southern's essay is a potent reminder of why Anselm, in this anniversary year, can seem more relevant to our contemporary challenges in Church and society than many another classical theologian. Here is a thinker who threads together the spiritual and intellectual responsibility we owe to the overwhelming reality of God with the practical responsibility we owe to each other, and especially to those who have no-one to speak for them or defend them against aggression and exploitation. And in all this we may also discover his relevance to our thinking about the unity of Christians. Anselm does not have a magic formula for union, but he does at least offer us a test for recognising when union really begins to be realised. The one Church comes to life or to visibility when we (wherever we stand on the spectrum of Christian identities) are able to see the life of the Church through the ages in all its diversity (including all its internal violence, written on the bodies of the martyrs Christians have made of other Christians) as our own story, held together, like the diversity of Scripture itself, in the one Christ, whose offering to the Father is the foundation of all we are and do.

BISHOP GEORGE BELL 1883-1958

Mary Tanner*

2008 was the fiftieth anniversary of the death of Bishop Bell. A series of lectures at Chichester Cathedral explored different aspects of Bell's ministry. Bell the ecumenist, best known for his work in the Life and Work movement, was equally convinced of the importance of the doctrinal Faith and Order agenda for the visible unity of the Church. Cooperation in service was not enough. Three things characterised Bell's work for unity. It was grounded in the deep friendships he made with those from other churches, at home and abroad. He was an all-round ecumenist, building bridges with Protestants and Orthodox, and ahead of his time in pursuing relations with the Roman Catholic Church. He lived out his ecumenical commitment at the international and very local levels. Bell's vision of unity has much to say both to today's fragile ecumenical movement and to the Anglican Communion, struggling to understand its unity and identity.¹

When Paul Collins invited me to give a paper on 'George Bell the Ecumenist' at a Conference on the occasion of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the death of Bishop Bell, and when later the Dean suggested that my contribution might form the basis of a Cathedral lecture, I was bold, perhaps foolish enough to accept. As a committed ecumenist and as a President of the World Council of Churches, George Bell and his influence in the ecumenical movement was not unknown to me. I recognised Bell as one of the giants who constructed the modern ecumenical movement—a leader in the line of Anglican ecumenical giants—William Temple, Oliver Tomkins, Patrick Rodger, and following in their footsteps we can number two of Bell's successors as

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¹ This lecture is reproduced with the permission of the Dean and Chapter.

bishops of the Diocese of Chichester, Bishop Eric Kemp and Bishop John Hind. But I am not an expert on Bishop Bell.

Why then did I accept the invitation? I accepted because I suspected that to be forced to dig deeper into Bell the ecumenist would help me in my own struggle to understand today's complex ecumenical movement—its origins, where it is now, and where it might be going. To study Bell would help me understand better the qualities required in an ecumenist, as well as the peculiar vocation, I believe, that Anglicans have, within the one ecumenical movement. So, I expected Bell, the passionate ecumenist, to offer both encouragement and challenges for our contemporary ecumenical commitment. I was not disappointed. I was constantly excited.

Bell and the founding of the World Council of Churches

There is something appropriate in the fact that in 2008 we celebrate not only this anniversary of Bell but also the 60th birthday of the World Council of Churches for Bell's ministry was intimately bound up with the events that led to the founding of the Council and he directed it in the first years of its life. It is well known that the World Council of Churches, meeting for the first time in 1948, was to bring together three major streams of ecumenical engagement that had emerged in the early years of the twentieth century. In 1910 missionaries from a number of traditions had gathered in Edinburgh to discuss the problem of competition and the possibilities for co-operation in the mission field. This meeting is usually recognised as the beginning of the modern ecumenical movement. Archbishop Randall Davidson was hesitant to accept an invitation to go to Edinburgh as he was under attack from the Anglo-Catholics who disliked the idea of 'interdenominational' meetings. But Davidson did go and he preached the opening sermon, getting it just right with his plea that mission be made central to the life of the Church. Four years later, in 1914, Bell became the very junior chaplain to Archbishop Davidson. Davidson sought to interest Bell in the developing missionary movement and gave Bell opportunities for ecumenical involvement. Ronald Jasper, in his biography of Bell, suggests that even before Bell joined the Archbishop's staff he had pressed on the Archbishop the need for all Christians to face issues together.

It was at Edinburgh that another Anglican bishop, Bishop Charles Brent, from the USA, pleaded that if churches were to work together

in mission then they needed to face up to the doctrinal issues which had been causes of division. Because of the onslaught of the First World War it was not until 1927 that the first World Conference on Faith and Order was held in Lausanne. I was amazed to read the comment of one author on Bell who said that Bell dismissed the Lausanne Conference as ‘a waste of time of self-satisfied theologians’.¹ I find no evidence that Bell ever thought this. Over and over again he talks of the central importance of the doctrinal faith and order agenda for the unity of the Church. In *The Kingship of Christ* he writes that ‘the importance of Faith and Order in the whole context of the World Council is beyond dispute’. Among the four reasons he gives for that is that it will remind the churches that co-operation is not enough and it will point to true unity.²

Bell’s main formation was, however, in a third of the streams that flowed together into the founding of the WCC—the Life and Work movement. He was at the first Life and Work Conference in Stockholm in 1925, edited its official report, and, at the end of the meeting, was elected chairman of the Continuation Committee. The aim of the movement was ‘to unite different churches in common practical work ... and to insist that the principles of the Gospel be applied to the solution of contemporary social and international problems.’ It was not surprising that Bell found this work compelling. As a curate in Leeds parish church he had developed an interest in social concerns, the ‘betterment of the working classes’. He was associated with settlements in Leeds and London. In an essay, as early as 1915, he had written that ‘in the region of moral, social issues we desire all Christians to begin at once to act together as if they were one Body, in one visible fellowship.’³ The meeting in Stockholm in 1925 only strengthened his conviction that an international, ecumenical community would be more effective in responding to social needs. In Stockholm Bell made friendships with influential church leaders in Europe and beyond, relationships that were to have a profound effect on him and his ministry in the coming years and

¹ Quoted but not attributed in Ans J. van der Bent, ‘George Allen Kennedy Bell’, in *Ecumenical Pilgrims*, ed. I. Bria and D. Heller (WCC Publications, 2001), 34.

² G.K.A. Bell, *The Kingship of Christ* (Penguin Books, 1954), 104-106.

³ G.K.A. Bell, *Christianity and Industrial Problems*, 1915.

which were to lead to his remarkable influence on the history of the Second World War. The concerns of the Life and Work agenda were deep inside him and never left him. In the war period he struggled for the care of refugees, for prisoners of conscience and for the recognition of the other Germany. After the war he worked for the rebuilding of Europe and he was courageous in using his privileged position in the House of Lords to keep justice issues alive.

One of the dangers of the World Council of Churches from the outset, and remains so today, is the unnecessary competition between the different strands of ecumenical endeavour, the missionary emphasis, the faith and order work, and the aims of life and work. While Bell was indeed passionate about the struggles for justice, his energies were always primarily focussed in the Life and Work movement. But he held that passion together with a firm conviction that a united Church was absolutely necessary—a united Church in which Christians at the very local level, and at world level, were called to be one—to manifest and live out unity for the sake of service and mission.

Having been involved in two of the three early ecumenical streams, Bell became a staunch supporter of the move to found an ecumenical council at world level. He served on the preparatory commission and then, appropriately, was elected to the most influential position as the first Moderator of the Council's Central Committee. As today, there were those then, like the Bishop of Gloucester, Bishop Charles Headlam, who voiced strong criticisms of the Council, predicting that it would become a super-church, a legislative body, making pontifical statements, or be a triumph for federal ecumenism. Bell insisted that a WCC could have no power to legislate for the churches. It had no ecclesial authority and could not act over the heads of the churches. Nevertheless, it did he believed have great authority because the Holy Spirit can act through the gathering. He wanted to see Church leaders involved in the Council's work who could take the ecumenical agenda back to their churches and speak and lead in their own assemblies. Bell insisted that a Council was not about seeking unity at a lowest common denominator. Each church needed to be secure in its own identity so it might offer its riches to others. The recent emphasis in this country on 'receptive ecumenism' which is causing excitement is not new, and was a cause dear to Bell. If the fellowship of churches in the years that followed the founding of the Council had grasped Bell's

vision for the WCC, many of the recent troubles, not least of all for Orthodox Churches, might have been avoided.

At the end of his ten year term of office as Moderator of the Central Committee, Bell said to the Assembly at Evanston:

What has engraved itself so clearly on my mind in the past six years has been the steady growth of mutual trust and deep understanding, as well as a greater sense of urgency. In subjects which ordinarily afford ample ground for controversy, whether political or theological, complete freedom, frankness and charity have prevailed. There has been no thought, even in the most difficult of matters of one bloc lining up against another bloc; but always ... a common desire to know to the best of our ability, the mind of Christ and to follow its leading in all our relationships.¹

If only life were like that in the WCC today, if only life were like that in the Anglican Communion today! That qualitiveness of life Bell describes in this quotation owed much to the qualities Bell himself exhibited in leading the Council. He had the gift of bringing people together, of listening to them and thinking the best of them.

Bell's motivating vision

As I began to dig into Bell's writings and to read what others had written about him the question I kept asking myself was this: was Bell's view of unity simply one of cooperation of divided churches in causes of justice and peace? It became clear to me that his vision was never one of Christians of different traditions cooperating over the inherited walls of denominational division—a federal view of the Church. The vision that impelled him was of a united Church—the One, Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church—visibly one and credible in its actions of service and love. The more I read about Bell the more I grasped that his passion for the social Gospel was inseparable from his conviction that the unity of the Church was the will and prayer of his Lord, and that a united Church was required, utterly required, for credible service and witness in the world. Preaching in 1958 in Odense Cathedral for the Tenth Anniversary of the Council, the crowning event of Bell's life, he said:

The longer I serve the ecumenical movement, the more I am convinced that the most peace-making, as well as the most important of all the tasks to which the WCC can address itself, is that of the recovery and

¹ Quoted in *Ecumenical Pilgrims*, 34.

manifestation of the visible unity of the Church of Christ to be its Saviour. I would therefore beg for even more energetic obedience to Christ's call to all believers to show their unity in Christ.¹

Bell believed that Christian unity was grounded in the love of God and experienced in shared prayer, in which all could bless, and be blessed, by one another's presence and prayer. His life and his work for unity were grounded in his own rigorous life of prayer. Unity in prayer reflected for him a unity in God, inherent in the Church, not destroyed by outward divisions but which had to take shape in the life of the Church.

But we can, I think, say more than that about Bell's vision of unity. There are two clues I followed.

First, Bell was, as a young man, at the 1920 Lambeth Conference, indeed was the Assistant Secretary to the Conference, the only non-episcopal officer. This was one of the great, if not the greatest, Lambeth Conference. It was the Conference that issued 'An Appeal to All Christian People' and it was Bell who drafted the Appeal, working with a small group of younger bishops. In their Appeal the Lambeth bishops said they were expressing their ideal of Christian unity 'in the hope that it would inspire and guide a new and united movement towards the fulfilment of His [God's] purpose for the unity of the Church.' The bishops said: 'The unity we seek exists. It is in God, who is the perfection of unity, the one Father, the one Lord, the one Spirit, who gives life to the one Body. Again the one Body exists. It needs not to be made, nor re-made, but to become organic and visible.'² Their vision of unity—and that's what the bishops called it—was of 'a fellowship in which all treasures of faith and order bequeathed as a heritage by the past to the present, shall be possessed in common ... and made serviceable to the whole body of Christ.' Each would maintain much that is distinctive in worship and service for 'it is through a rich diversity of life and devotion that the unity of the whole fellowship will be fulfilled'—no vision of rigid uniformity here

¹ These words echo a sermon in Cambridge in 1951 where he told his congregation: 'I do know the more Christians there are who show they are one in Christ, the less reason there will be to fear the domination of war.' *The Approach to Christian Unity* (Cambridge: Heffer, 1951), 57-64.

² *Lambeth Conferences 1867-1930*, (London: SPCK), 199 ff.

but of a unity of gifts offered and received in what today we call 'receptive ecumenism'.

The bishops went on to describe what they believe is entailed in visible unity, what today we might call the 'constituent elements' of unity: an acceptance of 'the Holy Scriptures as being the rule and ultimate standard of faith', 'the Nicene Creed as the sufficient statement of Christian faith', 'the sacraments of baptism and Holy Communion, as expressing the corporate life of the whole community', 'a ministry acknowledged in every part of the Church'—and they modestly added 'may we not claim that the episcopate is the one means of providing such a ministry?' Here are the sinews of Christian unity—unity at 'a bargain basement price', as Henry Chadwick once called them. Bell clung to this view of unity for the rest of his life.

By the time of the next Lambeth Conference Bell was Bishop of Chichester Diocese. He acted as Secretary of the section on the unity of the Church, writing its report which reaffirmed the Appeal of 1920. The report begins with a strong statement that unity is the will of Our Lord and only a united Church can be the means of bringing to Christ, and to unity in Him, a world torn by divisions—economic, social, national and racial.¹ One can almost see Bell, the Secretary, writing these lines in which the emphases on unity, service and mission are kept together

The **second** clue for me to answer the question of what was Bell's vision of unity came in a series of lectures he gave in Sweden in 1948 in which we find his most sustained apologia for Christian unity. Again he reiterates the four elements of the Quadrilateral. He argues his belief about the necessity for an episcopal ministry in succession serving the visible unity of the Church. He defends robustly what often seemed to his continental protestant friends the Anglican preoccupation with episcopacy, explaining that the bishop is an individual in the Church with a status and authority recognised throughout the whole world—a bishop is a bishop of the Universal Church. Apostolic succession means that such recognition has been accounted to the episcopate continuously in the church's history. However his vision of apostolic succession was no arid 'hands on head' vision, but rather a continuity in fidelity to the Apostles' teaching and

¹ *Lambeth Conference 1930* (SPCK, 1930), 110ff.

mission, signed in a succession of bishops. In commending episcopacy as non-negotiable for visible unity Bell's own exercise of it can be said to be one of the strongest arguments for commending it. He made episcopacy a lovely thing. But in these lectures Bell goes beyond the Quadrilateral placing emphasis on the college of bishops as a bond of the unity of the Church. 'It is our belief that Councils of the Bishops were in antiquity, and will be again, the appropriate organ, by which unity of distant churches can find expression without any derogation from their rightful autonomy.'¹ 'Rightful; autonomy'—how I wish Bell had written a treatise on 'rightful autonomy'.

His plea in this important lecture for a proper understanding of the gift of episcopacy, for an understanding of episcopal succession as a sign and means of unity and catholicity, and his belief in councils of bishops remains an important framework for today's ecumenical agenda.

Bell's commendation of episcopacy as one of the constitutive elements of the Church, essential for visible unity, does not, however, mean that he is in any way dismissive or ungenerous to those churches which did not have an episcopal ministry in succession. 'There would be no questioning of the effectiveness of their ministry, no disowning of past ministries of Word and Sacraments otherwise received.' There would be no re-ordination, for they are already ordained as ministers of the Church of God. He was clear: 'We do not ask that any one Communion should consent to be absorbed in another. We do ask that all should unite in a new and great endeavour to recover and to manifest to the world the unity of the Body of Christ for which He prayed.' He was generous in his commending of episcopacy and generous in his attitude to eucharistic hospitality on ecumenical occasions, generous in inviting ministers of other churches to officiate with him in marrying those of inter-church families.

These two clues—Bell's deep involvement in the vision of unity in the 1920 and 1930 Lambeth Conferences, and his lectures in Sweden in 1948—show that Bell was not only a Life and Works man, but was motivated by the vision of unity for mission, the vision of John 17, a vision that he taught us to sing:

¹ G.K.A. Bell, *Christian Unity: The Anglican Position* (Hodder and Stoughton, 1948), 174ff.

Let Love's unconquerable might
 Your scattered companies unite
 In service to the Lord of light.
 So shall God's will on earth be done
 New lamps be lit, new tasks begun,
 And the whole Church at last be One.

So, Bell the passionate ecumenist had an expansive vision of unity, a fellowship of friends living in a communion of the faith grounded in Holy Scripture, the sacraments, and episcopal ministry and collegial life, living with rich diversity of shared gifts, making service in the world effective and credible and thus contributing to the re-making and gathering together of the whole human race by incorporation into Christ.¹ It may at first look like uniformity but it isn't, for Bell was convinced that with these secure bonds of grace, authentic diversity could flourish and abound. As I read more about Bell three things began to strike me about the way Bell worked tirelessly in pursuit of this vision of unity.

Friendship

First and most striking, is how for Bell friendship was the fundamental basis for all ecumenical endeavours, the seedbed in which unity flourishes, and actually is the foretaste now of the unity we seek. We can see this in the close relationship Bell made with Nathan Söderblom of the Church of Sweden, Bishop Eivind Berggrav of Norway, with the German Church leaders and with one of the Serbian Orthodox bishops, Nikolai Velimirovic. But nowhere more poignantly can we see the treasure of friendship than in Bell's close relationship with Dietrich Bonhoeffer. The last message of Bonhoeffer from prison was to Bell with those famous words:

Tell him from me that this is the end but also the beginning—with him I believe in the principle of the Universal Christian brotherhood which rises above all national interests, and that our victory is certain. Tell him I have never forgotten his words at our last meeting ...²

Bell shows us that if the ecumenical movement is to move at all then Christians have to risk coming out of their isolations, get to know and

¹ See his 'Speech to the Central Committee of the WCC', on its Tenth Anniversary.

² Edwin Robertson, *The Shame and the Sacrifice* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1987), 276.

trust those of other traditions, and make friends. Whatever ecumenical activity, whether hard and sharp theological dialogue, or action together for peace and justice, or joint missionary and evangelistic endeavours, friendship is the seedbed in which any of these endeavours flourishes; friendships that are strong enough to survive the hostilities of war and physical separation; friendships that are grounded in a fellowship in prayer, in faith and in baptism which cannot be broken by the fiercest bombings, physical walls of separation, or the divide of oceans.¹

It is no accident that 'Unshakeable Friend' was taken by Edwin Robertson for the title of his book on George Bell and the German Churches.² The story of how, throughout the war period, Bell kept faith with his friends, endeavouring to convince those in places of power, in the House of Lords, of the other non-Nazi Germany and remaining loyal in the face of opposition from politicians and church leaders, is amazing. It was little wonder that Bell was the one person to whom German Christians could, and did, turn in the post-war period.

Discovering the place of friendship on the ecumenical journey, releasing the energy that flows from friendship into the ecumenical cause, was characteristic of Bell, however reserved and sometimes even withdrawn he may have seemed. Bell would surely have rejoiced to see how the friendships he made in Stockholm, deepened in the Anglo-German Theological Conferences and maintained during the bleak war years, bore fruit years later, when representatives from the Evangelical Church in Germany approached the Church of England, met in my room in Church House, and suggested Conversations with the aim of moving into closer fellowship. The approach was welcomed, with gratitude, and we talked then of Bell. Then when the Meissen Agreement was celebrated in Westminster Abbey in 1991 and the entry procession stopped at the tomb of the Unknown Warrior, to

¹ Professor Klaus Scholder writing about Bell and the German Churches says that from the summer of 1933 on Bell followed the Confessing Church indefatigably and without a moment's hesitation or uncertainty, and even during the war, when everything seemed to sink into a flood of hatred, he remained the 'unshakeable friend' of the other Germany, of whose existence and credibility he tried in vain to convince the Foreign Office.

² Edwin Robertson, *Unshakeable Friend: George Bell and the German Churches* (CCBI, 1995).

pray for all on both sides who had been killed in two wars, Bell would surely have wept tears of sorrow and joy, as those of us did at that tomb, to see the friendships he had nurtured blossom now in an agreement of closer fellowship on the way to visible unity. He was always convinced of the way of phased rapprochement. And when weeks later the agreement was celebrated in Berlin, in a reunited Germany, with the wall so recently broken down, Bell would have been moved, as we were, to see young people silently walking into the cathedral with banners proclaiming ‘no money for armaments ... no weapons of war’: the young people calling the church to be a sign of healing and reconciliation in a world they had only known as divided by a wall and torn by violence.

Without the friendships Bell had established and nurtured through the darkest days of war, the new relation of closer communion with the German Churches, in the Meissen Agreement, which is taking root in dioceses and parishes today, would never have happened. In the same way the relationship of communion that the Anglican Churches of Britain and Ireland now enjoy with Nordic and Baltic Lutheran churches owes much to the friendships with the leaders of those churches that Bell shared—and it owes much to the terms in which Bell commended episcopacy and succession that we have seen in those lectures in Sweden. Bell’s life shows the value of ecumenical friendship on the pilgrimage to visible unity, friendship not just of the few international ecumenists but of Christians in local parishes and through twinings and exchanges.¹

When, at the invitation of Bishop Bell, the Central Committee of the WCC met for the very first time in 1949, here in Chichester, the members of the Committee commented on the friendly hospitality with which they were greeted in Chichester and by the welcome of the services in this cathedral. What a lovely reputation—a cathedral given to friendship and hospitality.

¹ This was something he shared with another pioneer and leader of the ecumenical movement, J.H. Oldham. In his superb biography of Oldham, who had been the Secretary of the Edinburgh Conference, Keith Clements underlines that Oldham as a very young missionary in India came to make friends and to see that friendship was the only context in which the Gospel could take root.

It is perhaps the French Protestant leader Marc Boegner who, after his first meeting with Bell in August 1934, sums up so much of what others say about Bell:

It was a great joy to be able to learn to get to know him, to live in the light of his serenity, to see those intensely blue eyes of his fix themselves on one, as one walked up to him. To love him was indeed a blessing from heaven. The friendship he showed me during those crowded days on Fano was the richest memory I brought back to France and I still nurse it intact.¹

Two days later he records his farewell to Bell.

I suddenly saw the Bishop of Chichester enter the hotel bedroom, I was just getting ready to leave. He was coming, in his wonderfully friendly way, to bid me goodbye. Before leaving—and this I can never forget—he asked me to give him my blessing. Rightly, indeed, I could write ‘this man has won my heart’.

A little thing perhaps but an Anglican Bishop then in the 1930s asking a blessing from a Protestant Pastor speaks volumes about mutual trust and mutual friendship—and generosity in recognising ministry. For Bell, even when physically separated from his friends, there was no separation for him, for he believed, bound in the love of God, they met and were united in prayer. I had written these thoughts about Bell and friendship before I came across Bishop Michael Manktelow’s lovely essay on Bell and friendship in which he describes ecumenical friendship as the primary means that Bell employed to create visible unity.²

All-round ecumenism

So, friendship first. The **second** thing that struck me about Bell was that Bell was, yes, he was deeply committed to the German and Nordic churches. But he was by no means an ecumenist looking in one direction only. His commitment was to ‘all-round ecumenism’, to use a phrase often used by Robert Runcie. He supported the establishment of the World Council of Churches which brought together the main Protestant churches, Lutherans, Anglicans and some Orthodox churches. He was brave, in the face of some fierce opposition from within his own church, in championing the formation of the Church

¹ Marc Boegner, *The Long Road to Unity* (Collins, 1970), 75.

² M. Manktelow in *Bell of Chichester 1883-1958*, ed. P.Foster, Otter memorial paper no. 17, 2004.

of South India and dispelling opposition, being prepared to argue for temporary anomaly on the way to a united episcopate in succession—a thing the bishops at Lambeth 1998 came also to affirm, I guess believing that theirs was an ecumenical first! Bell welcomed the setting up of the British Council of Churches, the Conference of Christian Churches in Sussex, and served as the Church of England Chairman of the conversations with the Methodists. What he always regretted was the separation of the Roman Catholic Church from the ecumenical movement and its refusal to join the World Council of Churches. Of course the establishment of the World Council was before the major turning point in the Roman Catholic Church's ecumenical stance made at Vatican II. Bell was one of the few ecumenists of this first generation to actively pursue relations with the Roman Catholic Church.¹ Whenever he saw a spark of interest he would try to fan the sparks into a flame. In this he was ahead of his time. In spite of the great change in response to the ecumenical movement as a result of Vatican II, its huge commitment to theological bilateral dialogues, the full membership of the Faith and Order Commission of the WCC, and cooperation in many of the Council's programmes, the Roman Catholic Church is still not a member of the WCC. Bell's sense of a Roman Catholic shaped hole in the Council is echoed by Anglicans who find it difficult that the largest Church in Christendom, with its unshakeable commitment to visible unity, remains outside the Council. There is no doubt that Bell would, were he still alive, continue to lament this fact though he would surely rejoice in the tremendous expansion of member churches from the original 145 to 345 member churches, the move from a Eurocentric to a truly global fellowship.²

¹ Nathan Söderblom was another who tried to get the Roman Catholic Church involved in the Stockholm Life and Work Conference but with no success.

² Bell was ahead of his time in urging Anglican and Roman Catholic bishops to act together and take a lead. At the Lambeth Conference 2008 the bishops had before them a report from an international group of Anglican-Roman Catholic bishops addressed to all bishops of the two Communion's urging bishops to act together in all things possible and to lead and share oversight in their areas wherever appropriate. I think Bell would have been excited by this and seen it as a fulfilment of what he himself had advocated. See 'Growing Together in Unity and Mission: an Agreed Statement of the International

An all level ecumenist

The **third** thing that struck me about Bell's ecumenical passion was that just as Bell showed himself an all-round ecumenist he was also an all level ecumenist encouraging not only the international dimension of the ecumenical movement in which he was so deeply involved but always seeking to hold that together with national and very local ecumenism. He was an ecumenical jet-setter but at the same time he encouraged the development of ecumenical relations in the Diocese of Chichester, inviting those of other traditions to preach in this Cathedral, which may seem somewhat tame today but in the 1940s and 50s was trailblazing. When the Central Committee met in Chichester in 1949 Bell sent its members out on the Sunday to preach in parishes in the Diocese and he appointed an ecumenical chaplain in Crawley New Town. As an all level ecumenist Bell stressed that the ecumenical movement was essentially lay.

So, in conclusion, I have tried to show something of Bell's passion for visible unity and what characterised his living that out. I had not expected to be so overwhelmed by the person I came face to face with in preparing this lecture. I encountered the ideal ecumenist, the man 'in whom the cause of Church unity, in undiluted Gospel fervour, was incarnate'.¹ I encountered a man self-effacing, never courting the limelight, gentle and with no ambition for himself, preferring if anything to work behind the scenes, a brilliant organiser, an effective, silent note taker, an unrivalled author of ecumenical texts: 'He was the honeybee who absorbed all the sides of the conversations and speeches but remained "the silent Bell"—the best listener I have known' as Nathan Söderblom said. He was someone who never compromised on what he believed to be right, brave in standing for that against opposition from high places, 'the kindest man in England' one refugee called him. 'Bell more than anyone else' says Adrian Hastings, 'represented the incarnation of ecumenical integrity.' All of these qualities he used in pursuing his passionate belief in the call to the visible unity of the Church, a unity in faith, sacramental life,

Anglican-Roman Catholic Commission for Unity and Mission', *One in Christ*, 42 (2008), 371-81.

¹ Marc Boegner, *op.cit.* 224.

ordered ministry, effective service and courageous mission.

What I also discovered, as I encountered this passionate ecumenist, was just how much Bell has to say that is relevant for today's fragile ecumenical movement and just how much he has to say that is relevant for the bishops who will meet in Canterbury next month. Let Bell continue to ring out for the good of our beloved Anglican Communion and for the pilgrimage to visible unity. 'He must remain in the memory of the Church. His blessing for the Church will not cease.'¹

¹ Martin Niemöller quoted in *Ecumenical Pilgrims*.

MIXED MARRIAGES AND SHARING IN THE EUCHARIST: UNIVERSAL CATHOLIC NORMS AND SOME PARTICULAR CATHOLIC NORMS (part 1)

Georges Ruysse SJ*

Neither the Catholic Church's general discipline on sacramental sharing, nor its marriage rite, makes specific provision for eucharistic sharing in mixed marriages. Only the 1993 Ecumenical Directory takes positively into account the possibility of Eucharistic sharing for mixed marriages and families—not only at the nuptial mass, but also during married life. This exceptional admission to the Eucharist is based on the common sacramental bonds of baptism and marriage. The Directory's hint of an opening to other possibilities of Eucharistic sharing rests on the ecclesiological evaluation of a mixed marriage or family as 'domestic church', and of its 'serious spiritual need of the Eucharist', in establishing and building up the marriage. The author calls in evidence the post-synodal exhortation Familiaris Consortio (1981) stressing that precisely in the Eucharist the Christian family, including a mixed family, finds the foundation and soul of its communion and mission.

Introduction

Couples and families in mixed marriages are a more and more visible and urgent pastoral reality on the Church scene, and this is not only in countries where Catholics live side by side with a strong proportion of Christians who are not Catholics, such as Germany, Switzerland or the United Kingdom, but also in countries such as France, Italy and Spain, where mixed marriages are becoming more and more common.

A report of a working party of Churches in Nürnberg, Germany, in April 1995 showed that of 227,906 Catholics, 80,046 were married. Among them were 25,317 marriages between Catholics, 24,065 marriages were Catholic-Lutheran, and 5,347 marriages between Catholics and other Christians. By the end there were more mixed

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marriages than marriages between Catholics.¹ If 50,634 Catholics married each other, 29,412 Catholics were in a mixed marriage. Equally, in Italy, a traditionally Catholic country, the number of mixed marriages is rising, above all due to immigrants belonging to Orthodox Churches, such as Romanians, Ukrainians, etc.

Already, the post-synodal Exhortation *Familiaris Consortio* of Pope John Paul II of 22 November 1981 mentioned the ‘growing number of mixed marriages between Catholics and other baptized persons (which) calls for special pastoral attention...’ (FC 78)²

According to canons 1124/CIC & 813/CCEO, mixed marriages are defined as: ‘the marriage between two baptized persons, one of whom is either baptized as a Catholic, or has been received into full communion after baptism...’ for example, a Catholic-Orthodox marriage or a Catholic-Lutheran, Anglican or Calvinist marriage. The marriage, the couple, and family in this case represent a challenge to the ecumenical movement, and one cannot deny that mixed marriages ‘frequently present difficulties for the couples themselves, and for the children born to them, in maintaining their Christian faith and commitment and for the harmony of family life.’ (ED 144)³

In this paper we would like to concentrate on the question of the access of the couple or of the whole family to Eucharistic Communion, either in the Church of the Catholic spouse, or in the Ecclesial Community or Church of the non-Catholic spouse. In reality, very often couples or families, who have a strong desire to receive Holy Communion together, share the painful experience of separation at

¹ See ‘Arbeitsgemeinschaft Christlicher Kirchen in Nürnberg’, *Zur Frage der Eucharistischen Gastfreundschaft bei konfessionsverschiedenen Ehen und Familien: eine Problemanzeige* (Nürnberg: 1996), 1.

Note from translator: sometimes G. Ruysen uses the term ‘Reformed’ to mean all Churches which come from the Reformation, including the Anglican Church. It has been kept to avoid otiose repetition.

² John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation *Familiaris Consortio*, <http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_jp-ii_exh_19811122_familiaris-consortio_en.html>. Hereafter this will be cited as FC followed by the paragraph number.

³ PCPCU, *Directory for the application of principles and norms on ecumenism*, <http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/chrstuni/general-docs/rc_pc_chrstuni_doc_19930325_directory_en.html>. Hereafter cited as ED followed by the paragraph number.

the Lord's Table.¹ In this first part of our contribution we propose to study the universal norms related to this subject, while in the second part we will analyse some particular norms established by Bishops and Bishops' Conferences on Eucharistic sharing and mixed marriages and households.

General universal norms about sharing in the Eucharist for mixed marriages and households, both at the nuptial Mass, and also after the celebration during married life are not abundant, although this issue has been for a long time subject of pastoral care on the part of a good number of Bishops, Bishops' Conferences, and of members of the Secretariat (hereafter SPCU), later Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity (hereafter PCPCU).

We could mention for example the Directives of the Bishop of Strasbourg, Mgr Elchinger of 1972, the norms issued by Mgr Le Bourgeois for the diocese of Autun in 1972, or the 1975 norms of Mgr Hammes the Bishop of Superior (Wisconsin). There is also the intervention of Cardinal Johannes Willebrands, President of the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity, at the Synod of Bishops on the Family, in October 1980. For the norms and directives which come from Bishops' Conferences on the topic of mixed marriages and sharing in the Eucharist, there is, for example, the Note of the Episcopal Commission for Unity of the French Bishops' Conference of 1980, *L'hospitalité Eucharistique avec les chrétiens des Eglises issues de la Réforme en France*, and the 1998 norms 'One Bread One Body', worked out by the Bishops' Conferences of England & Wales, Ireland, and Scotland. See later in part two of our contribution.

The Codes of Canon Law and the *Ordo celebrandi Matrimonium*

The first Ecumenical Directory, *Ad totam Ecclesiam* of 1967, does not directly address this subject, and does not foresee any specific rule relating to sharing in the Eucharist in the context of mixed marriages and families.²

¹ To be aware of the hurt and frustration of not being able to share Holy Communion together, it suffices to glance at the witnesses of mixed couples and families on the web-site of the Association *Interchurch Families*, <<http://www.interchurchfamilies.org>>

² See SPCU, *Directorium ad ea quae a Concilio Vaticano secundo de re oecumenica promulgata sunt exsequenda, Pars prima Ad totam Ecclesiam* 14

In the course of the preparation of the first Directory, a proposition was introduced in 1965 to allow sharing in the Eucharist outside situations of physical or moral impossibility to have access to one's proper Minister, notably in the case of nuptial Mass or the first Holy Communion by a child of a mixed family. In any case, this proposal was limited to Catholic-Orthodox marriages.¹

Does this mean that the administration of Holy Communion in the context of mixed marriages was henceforth ruled by the general discipline on Eucharistic sharing of the first Ecumenical Directory of 1967?

Let us recall the Instruction of the Secretariat for Christian Unity *In quibus rerum circumstantiis* of 1972 which articulated the idea of 'serious spiritual need of the nourishment of the Eucharist', defined as 'need to increase one's spiritual life, need of a deeper insertion into the mystery of the Church and its unity.' (Instr. 4b) Although the Instruction only mentions the case of Christian 'diaspora', it is clear that mixed marriages were nevertheless present in the minds of the composers of the Instruction, as is shown by Cardinal Willebrands's intervention at the Synod of Bishops on the Family of October 1980.²

The *Ordo celebrandi Matrimonium* of 1969 does not provide the possibility of sharing in the Eucharist in the case of mixed marriage. In principle such a marriage ought to be celebrated without Mass. The local Ordinary could nevertheless, if circumstances require, allow the celebration of a nuptial Mass. But, even in this situation, it was laid down that the non-Catholic spouse could not be admitted to Holy Communion, because the general norms did not foresee this.³ We note that in his Apostolic Exhortation *Familiaris Consortio* of 22 November 1981, Pope John Paul II said: 'With regard to the sharing of

Maii 1967, AAS 59 (1967) 574-592.

¹ See B. Clough, 'Sharing the Eucharist in particular cases: the path to a new legislation in canon 844', JCD Dissertatio Pontificia Studiorum Universitas a S. Thomas Aquinæ in Urbe, Rome, 88-89.

² SPCU, *Instructio 'In quibus rerum circumstantiis' 1 Iunii 1972*, AAS 64 (1972) 518-525. This will be cited as Instr. followed by the paragraph number.

³ See Sacred Congregation of Rites, *Ordo celebrandi Matrimonium*, Vatican 1969, n° 8 et n° 10. Remember that the excommunication foreseen by canon 2319 §1, 1°/CIC 1917 was abrogated by the CDF Instruction on mixed marriages of 18 March 1966. See CDF, *Instructio Matrimonii sacramentum de matrimoniis mixtis, 18 Martii 1966*, AAS 58 (1966) 235-239.

the non-Catholic party in Eucharistic Communion, the norms issued by the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity should be followed.' (FC 78)

The specific norms of the Secretariat, which Pope John Paul II referred to, were those in force in 1980: i.e. the first Ecumenical Directory, *Ad totam Ecclesiam* of 1967, the Instruction *In quibus rerum circumstantiis* of 1972 and the Note *Dopo la pubblicazione* of 1973.¹

The Code of Canon Law for the Latin Church of 1983 (CIC) foresees a specific regulation for sacramental sharing (the *communicatio in sacris*) in canon 844/CIC. A similar rule would later be introduced in canon 671 of the Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches of 1990 (CCEO). In brief, the discipline is articulated around three provisions, recalling first that full sacramental communion, including sharing in the Eucharist, presupposes full ecclesial communion (see canons 844/CIC §1 & 671/CCEO §1). The first provision allows Catholic faithful to receive Holy Communion at the hands of non-Catholic ministers on condition that these ministers belong to a Church which has valid sacraments; furthermore this is only possible in case of necessity or true spiritual need, and so long as every danger of error or indifferentism is avoided, and further, that there is a physical or moral impossibility for the Catholic to go to a Catholic minister (see canons 844/CIC §2 & 671/CCEO §2). Under these conditions the Catholic partner can receive Holy Communion in another Church in which the Eucharist is valid, for example in an Orthodox Church, but not in Ecclesial Communities, because 'they have not retained the proper reality of the Eucharistic mystery in its fullness' (UR 22) and is for example not able to communicate at the Protestant Lord's Supper.² The second provision allows a much easier access to Catholic Holy Communion for faithful belonging to separated Oriental Churches (e.g. an Orthodox, a member of the Armenian Apostolic Church). It suffices that they request it freely, and that they are duly disposed (see

¹ See SPCU, *Nota 'Dopo la pubblicazione'* 17 October 1973, AAS 65 (1973) 616-619.

² Here we notice the ecclesiological difference between a separated Church and a separated Ecclesial Community, which also has consequences for the validity of the Eucharist. See UR 15 & 22, the CDF letter *Communio Notio* of 28 May 1992, 17, the CDF declaration *Dominus Iesus* of 6 August, 17 and the latest CDF Document *Responses to some Questions regarding certain Aspects of the Doctrine of the Church* of 29 June 2007 questions 4 & 5.

canons 844/CIC §3 & 671/CCEO §3). The third and last provision regulates the access to the Catholic Eucharist by 'other Christians who are not in full communion with the Catholic Church' (e.g. Lutheran, Anglican...). The conditions here are much stricter: access is only possible in case of danger of death or of other grave necessity, when the person is not able to have recourse to a minister of his or her own Community. These other Christians must request admission spontaneously, be duly disposed, and above all profess the Catholic faith in the Eucharist (see canons 844/CIC §4 & 671/CCEO §4).¹ Apart from the above mentioned general discipline on Eucharistic sharing, the canonical norms on mixed marriages (see canons 1124-1128/CIC & 813-816, 834, 835, 839/CCEO) do not establish any norms concerning sharing in the Eucharist in the context of mixed marriage or families.

Canons 1128/CIC & 816/CCEO only mention 'that the Catholic spouse and the children born of a mixed marriage do not lack spiritual assistance' and that the local Ordinaries, Hierarchs and Pastors of souls 'are to aid the spouses in fostering the unity of conjugal and family life'.

The new *Ordo celebrandi Matrimonium* of 1991, which limits itself to marriage according to the Latin rite, foresees the case of marriage between a Catholic and a baptized non-Catholic, which in principle is to be celebrated without Mass. A nuptial Mass may be celebrated with the permission of the local Ordinary. Concerning the admission of the non-Catholic party to Holy Communion the *Ordo* of 1991 refers to the norms of canon 844/CIC for the various circumstances.

In the case of marriage between a Catholic and a baptized non-Catholic, one must use the rite of Celebration of Marriage, without Mass. In an individual case, with the consent of the local Ordinary, the Rite of Marriage within Mass can be celebrated. Concerning the admission of the non-Catholic party to Holy Communion the norms issued for the various cases are to be observed.²

Is that to say that Eucharistic sharing at a nuptial Mass between a Catholic and a member of a Reformed denomination, would constitute a case of grave necessity according to canon 844/CIC §4?

¹ For a detailed commentary on canons 844/CIC & 671/CCEO, see G. Ruysen, *Eucharistie et Œcuménisme* (Paris: Cerf, 2008).

² Congregation for the Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, *Ordo celebrandi Matrimonium*, Vatican 1991, n^o 36.

This question was posed in December, 1986—thus before the Ecumenical Directory of 1993—to the Congregation for Divine Worship and Discipline of the Sacraments by a Catholic Minister:

I find it difficult to see how... the occasion of a Nuptial Mass would constitute a grave necessity... However those who have been involved in inter-communion contend that while there may be a general norm, canon 844 §4 provides for the exception... I still need to ask the question: Am I justified in refusing permission for the administration of Holy Communion to a Lutheran in this instance?

The reply from the Congregation of 15 December 1986, was: ‘Canon 844 §4 does not allow that Communion be given to a non-Catholic in the case of Nuptial Mass.’¹

The 1993 Ecumenical Directory

Against this background of canonical and general liturgical norms (i.e. the Codes of Canon Law and the *Ordo celebrandi Matrimonium* of 1991), what is now the position of the new Ecumenical Directory of 1993? The 1993 Directory has certainly the great merit of taking into account the reality of mixed marriages together with the problems experienced by mixed couples on the level of Eucharistic sharing. This is moreover recognised by the Directory:

However, when members of the same family belong to different Churches and ecclesial Communities, when Christians cannot receive Communion with their spouse or children, or their friends, the pain of division makes itself felt acutely and the impulse to prayer and ecumenical activity should grow. (ED 27)

Also, Cardinal Walter Kasper, in his message to the Second International meeting of the Association of Interchurch Families in July 2003 said:

Faithfulness to the guidelines set forth (in the Ecumenical Directory of 1993) especially pertaining to sharing in the Eucharist, will at times mean that you will feel more intensely the pain of division. The pain arises not from the current norms, but from the fact that the separation of Christians has not yet been overcome.²

¹ Canon Law Society of America [CLSA], ‘Intercommunion with a Lutheran at a wedding’, *Canon Law Digest* vol. 12, 624-625.

² W. Kasper, ‘Message of Cardinal Walter Kasper to the 2nd International Gathering of the Association of Interchurch Families, Mondo Migliore, 24-28 July 2003’:

Indeed, it is the first time that a Holy See document has explicitly taken into account the case of mixed marriages in relation to the issue of sharing in the Eucharist (ED 159-60).¹

After recalling that ‘marriage between persons of the same ecclesial Community remains the objective to be recommended and encouraged’ (ED 144), the new Directory takes up the passage from the apostolic exhortation *Familiaris Consortio* of 22 November 1981 (FC 78), which for the first time confers on mixed marriages and families a positive and significant ecumenical role. These marriages, even if they have their own particular difficulties,

contain numerous elements that could well be made good use of and developed both for their intrinsic value and for the contribution they can make to the ecumenical movement. This is particularly true when both parties are faithful to their religious duties. Their common baptism and the dynamism of grace provide the spouses in these marriages with the basis and motivation for expressing unity in the sphere of moral and spiritual values. (ED 145)

ED 66b affirms ‘Mixed marriage families have the duty... the delicate task of making themselves builders of unity’.

While emphasising ‘the positive aspects of what the (mixed) couple share together as Christians in the life of grace, in faith, hope and love’ (ED 148), the Directory does not under-estimate the real differences in religious and denominational traditions which are at the heart of mixed marriages and families, and consequently wishes to avoid any religious indifference (ED 148). Concerning the celebration of mixed marriages the Directory repeats the canonical norms on mixed marriages (see canons 1124-1128/CIC & 813-816, 834, 835, 839/CCEO).

We will not dwell on the norms concerning the permission of the local Ordinary or Hierarch for the celebration of a mixed marriage, the canonical form or dispensation from it, the public celebration required for validity and the prohibition of the ‘double celebrations of exchange of consent’ (ED 153-6). In any case, there can be only one ceremony in which the mutual exchange of consent takes place. When

<<http://www.interchurchfamilies.org/confer/rome2003/message/wkasper-e.shtm>>.

¹ Neither the Encyclical *Ut Unum Sint* of 25 May 1995 nor the Encyclical *Ecclesia de Eucharistia* of 17 April 2003 has a paragraph which draws on mixed marriages or families in relation to sharing in the Eucharist.

invited by the non-Catholic minister the Catholic priest or deacon may recite prayers, read the Scriptures, give a brief homily and bless the couple (ED 157). Reciprocally, the local Ordinary or Hierarch may allow the minister of the Church or Ecclesial Community of the non-Catholic party to participate in the celebration of marriage according to the canonical Catholic form. The Minister may read the Scriptures, give a brief homily, and bless the couple (ED 158).

The Directory insists on the importance of pastoral care of these marriages, and recalls that in the Oriental separated churches 'are to be found true sacraments, and above all, by apostolic succession, the priesthood and the Eucharist, through which they are still joined to us in closest intimacy.' (ED 152)

With regard to the celebration of a mixed marriage according to the canonical form the Directory mentions that the marriage is, in principle, celebrated without Mass:

Because of problems concerning sharing in the Eucharist which may arise from the presence of non-Catholic witnesses and guests, a mixed marriage celebrated according to the Catholic form ordinarily takes place outside the Eucharistic liturgy. (ED 159)

In this, the 1993 Directory follows the two editions of the *Ordo celebrandi Matrimonium*, the 1969 *Ordo* as well as the 1991 *Ordo*. However, a celebration of a mixed marriage within a Mass is not totally excluded by the Directory.

For a just cause, however, the diocesan Bishop may allow the celebration of the Eucharist. In the latter case, the decision as to whether the non-Catholic party of the marriage may be admitted to Eucharistic communion is to be made in keeping with the general norms existing in the matter both for Eastern Christians and for other Christians, taking into account the particular situation of the reception of the sacrament of Christian marriage by two baptized Christians. (ED 159)

Concerning admission to Holy Communion during the nuptial Mass the Directory makes no mention of non-Catholic witnesses and guests. Only the non-Catholic spouse in the marriage can be admitted to Communion.

This implies that the former fall under the above mentioned general discipline for Eucharistic sharing for members of the Oriental separated Churches (ED 125) and for 'Christians of other Churches and Ecclesial Communities' (ED 130-1). Indeed, the fact of being present at

the celebration of a mixed marriage is not, for the Directory, a criterion or a decisive point in order to be admitted to Holy Communion, whereas this is the case for the non-Catholic spouse in the marriage.

The admission of the non-Catholic spouse to Holy Communion must be 'in keeping with the general norms existing in the matter both for (separated) Eastern Christians and for other Christians.' (ED 159) Although the Directory makes reference in a footnote to its own norms, i.e. to ED 125 with regard to members of the separated Oriental Churches and to ED 129-31 with regard to other Christians, 'the current general norms in effect on this subject' continue nonetheless to include also the general discipline of canons 844/CIC & 671/CCEO on sacramental sharing.

If a spouse belongs to an Eastern separated Church, it suffices that reception of Holy Communion is requested spontaneously, willingly and freely, without having been forced or invited, by for example, the other party, the Catholic minister, or influenced by the Catholic environment. The spouse belonging to an Eastern separated Church must also be rightly disposed to the same extent as the Catholic spouse.

For example, it does not suffice when the spouse belonging to an Eastern separated Church, in following the discipline of that Church, is able to obtain a blessing for a second or third marriage. That party must be free to marry in the sense that any previous marriage must be declared null by a double conform sentence from the Catholic ecclesiastical tribunals, or dissolved by application of the *ratum et non consummatum* procedure, or by application of the *privilegium fidei*. Without this parties cannot conclude a valid Catholic marriage.

It is up to the minister who celebrates the nuptial Mass, to take into account that the request for Eucharistic sharing is made in the particular context of marriage. The context of mixed marriage with an Oriental non-Catholic does not in itself add an extra element to the general rule on sharing in the Eucharist for separated Orientals. This rule provides already that it suffices that they request communion freely of their own will, and that they be duly disposed. The context of a mixed marriage strengthens, nevertheless, the right disposition or the serious spiritual need on the part of a spouse belonging to an Eastern separated Church. One should also take into account any risk of scandal, protest, or especially any suspicion of proselytism on

behalf of the faithful or authorities from the Oriental separated Churches.

It is to be noted that the new Directory calls for sensitivity towards the discipline of the Eastern separated Churches, which is generally a 'closed' Communion (see ED 107, 111d, 122 & 125). Consultations with the authorities of these Churches, at least the local ones, are highly recommended.

For other Christians, as non-Catholic spouses in a marriage, the Directory recognizes for the first time that sharing in the Eucharist at the nuptial Mass is not excluded.

This is an important affirmation, given the negative response of the Congregation for Divine Worship and Discipline of the Sacraments of 15 December 1986, according to which canon 844/CIC §4, with its idea of *alia urgeat gravis necessitas*, does not allow Holy Communion to be given to the non-Catholic spouse in a nuptial Mass.¹ It is required though that the recipient's request be made spontaneously, and that the recipient be duly disposed.

Here a problem may arise for those from the Reformed Churches, who are divorced and for whom marriage is not a sacrament, with regard to their free status to contract a new marriage with a Catholic spouse. Their first marriage must be declared null by a double conform sentence from the Catholic marriage tribunals, or otherwise dissolved by the *ratum et non consummatum* procedure or by application of the *privilegium fidei*.

Furthermore the non-Catholic spouse must profess the Catholic faith, or a faith in conformity with the Catholic faith regarding the Eucharist, and must be without access to a minister of his/her own Ecclesial Community. In the context of a mixed marriage this means that during the ceremony the non-Catholic spouse, does not have access to the Minister of his or her Ecclesial Community.

This question prompted the following request put to the Congregation for Divine Worship and Discipline of the Sacraments in October 1986 on the occasion of a mixed marriage:

The Lutheran party would have no difficulty in approaching a minister of his own Community within a day – or at most a week – of his wedding. The question has also been raised as to whether, in the case of the Lutheran minister assisting at the wedding, it would be

¹ See CLSA, 'Intercommunion with a Lutheran at a wedding', o.c., 624-625.

permissible for him to carry Eucharistic species on his person to our Church and administer communion to the Lutheran party at the same time that we do so to the Catholic.

The Congregation replied: 'It would not seem to be opportune for the minister of the Lutheran Church to bring the Eucharist to the Lutheran party.' Huels comments:

The 1993 Directory of Ecumenism employs a broad interpretation of the inability to go to the Minister of one's Community in its provisions governing the reception of Holy Communion by the non-Catholic party of a mixed marriage at the wedding Mass... With a mixed marriage, the impossibility is not due to the habitual physical or moral impossibility to go to the non-Catholic Minister, but rather the immediate impossibility to go to that Minister when one is celebrating one's marriage in a Catholic church...²

This impossibility of access is also true for double celebrations, which are forbidden, that is to say a new celebration of marriage in the course of which matrimonial consent is renewed or given for a second time. See canons 1127/CIC §3 & 839/CCEO, repeated in ED 156: 'To emphasize the unity of marriage, it is not allowed to have two separate religious services in which the exchange of consent would be expressed twice...' We also note that it is forbidden for Catholic priests to concelebrate with non-Catholic priests or ministers, or vice versa, a nuptial Mass. See canons 908/CIC & 702/CCEO, repeated in ED 104. It is equally forbidden to have a religious celebration in which the Catholic Minister and the non-Catholic Minister perform their own rites, asking together, or consecutively for the exchange of consent. See canons 1127/CIC §3 & 839/CCEO, repeated in ED 156: 'To emphasize the unity of marriage, it is not allowed... (to hold) one service which would celebrate two such exchanges of consent jointly or successively.'

The Catholic minister must take into account that the request is formulated within the context of 'the particular situation of the reception of the sacrament of Christian marriage by two baptized Christians' (ED 159).

We also recall that according to the Directory, although the

¹ CLSA, 'Intercommunion with a Lutheran at a wedding', o.c., 624.

² J. Huels, 'A policy on canon 844 §4 for Canadian dioceses', *Studia Canonica* 34 (2002) 106.

‘diocesan Bishop’ is able to allow the celebration of the Eucharist, it is up to the Catholic Minister to judge and verify the required conditions in the case of the admission of other Christians belonging to other Ecclesial Communities. ‘Catholic Ministers will judge individual cases and administer these sacraments only in accord with these established norms, where they exist. Otherwise they will judge according to the norms of this Directory’ (ED 130), that is to say following the general norms established by the Bishops, taking into account the norms which have been established by the Episcopal Conferences or the competent authorities of the Eastern Catholic Churches (see ED 130). The Minister must also verify if the local Ordinary, the Episcopal Conference, or even a Patriarchal Synod have given directives for sharing in the Eucharist in the context of a mixed marriage, and to which extent the non-Catholic spouse may be admitted to the Eucharist, for example in determining the content of belief in Catholic Eucharistic teaching required for admission to the Eucharist.

For example: the French Norms, the document ‘One Bread One Body’ of the Episcopal Conferences of England & Wales, Ireland and Scotland, or the Revised Directory of the South-African Bishops. We look at the particular norms in the second part of this article. In the framework of canons 844/CIC §5 & 671/CCEO §5, those general norms cannot be established without having previously consulted the competent authority, at least at the local level, of the separated Church or Ecclesial Community.

A last question which is worth raising, is to know if a mixed marriage in which the non-Catholic spouse belongs to another Ecclesial Community, constitutes a new category for admission to sharing in the Eucharist. In other words, do mixed marriages form a new category to be put alongside that of danger of death, and the situation of another grave and pressing need (*alia urgeat gravis necessitas*), in the sense of canons 844/CIC §4 & 671/CCEO §4?¹ According to certain authors, with whom we agree, a mixed marriage falls under the situation of a grave and pressing need:

There is however one veiled reference to such a situation (of other

¹ This question is not without interest, given the negative reply from the Congregation for Divine Worship and Discipline of the Sacraments of 15 December 1986, holding precisely that the celebration of a mixed marriage did not constitute an *alia urgeat gravis necessitas*. See above.

grave necessity) that appears in the ED (Ecumenical Directory) in its treatment of mixed marriages... the particular situation of the reception of the sacrament of Christian marriage by two baptized Christians... may perhaps be interpreted to mean that the very occasion of two Christians both receiving the sacrament of matrimony... may somehow create the grave necessity for them to receive together the sacrament of Eucharist as well.¹

It is conceivable that the fact of having in common the sacraments of Baptism and marriage, by which the spouses are more closely united, fosters within them in the context of their marriage, 'a serious spiritual need for the nourishment of the Eucharist.' (Instr. 4b), which thus forms a 'similar case of urgent spiritual necessity' (Instr. 6) to initiate and build up their marriage. Indeed, the Directory recognizes in fact the particular situation of the celebration of a mixed marriage, since Catholic Ministers are called upon to consider the request for admission to the Eucharist by the non-Catholic spouse, 'taking into account the particular situation of the reception of the sacrament of Christian marriage by two baptized Christians' (ED 159). In any case, nothing impedes, for example, a local Ordinary/Eparch, or a Bishops' Conference or the competent Eastern Catholic authorities from identifying the celebration of a mixed marriage with someone who belongs to another Ecclesial Community as 'another grave and pressing need' in the context of canons 844/CIC §4 & 671/CCEO §4.

Such, for example, is the document 'One Bread One Body' of the Bishops' Conferences of England & Wales, Ireland, and Scotland. 'The Directory also envisages that a grave and pressing need may be experienced in some mixed marriages.'²

However, the Directory does not foresee the situation in which the

¹ J.J. Conn, 'Juridical Themes in the Eucharistic Documents of the Pontificate of John Paul II', *Periodica* 94 (2005) 393-394. See J. M. Huels, *More disputed questions in the liturgy*, Chicago 1996, 120 ; M. Wijlens, *Sharing the Eucharist – A theological evaluation of the post conciliar legislation*, Lanham-New York-Oxford 2000, 349 and S. Demel, 'Gemeinsam zum Tisch des Herrn? Ein theologisch-rechtliches Plädoyer zur Konkretisierung der anderen schweren Notwendigkeit des c. 844 §4 CIC', *Stimmen der Zeit* 221 (2003) 671. This opinion will be confirmed by the particular norms for sharing in the Eucharist.

² Catholic Bishops' Conferences of England & Wales, Ireland and Scotland, *One Bread One Body. A teaching document of the Eucharist in the life of the Church and the establishment of general norms on sacramental sharing*, London 1998, n^o 110.

Catholic spouse in a mixed marriage, obtains a dispensation from the canonical form (cf. canons 1127/CIC §§ 1 et 2 & 834 §2, 835/CCEO) and of which the celebration takes place in another separated Church or Ecclesial Community. In this case the admission of the Catholic spouse to non-Catholic Eucharistic Communion will be subject to the general rules in this matter. In this case we refer to the first provision regarding sacramental sharing for Catholic faithful given in canons 844/CIC §2 & 671/CCEO §2.

We notice, however, the delicate question of the reciprocity within Catholic-Reformed families, that is to say: to what extent the Catholic spouse is able to receive in his or her turn the Protestant Eucharist? Neither the Directory, nor the canons 844/CIC §2 & 671/CCEO §2 foresee a possibility of reciprocity in this situation, limiting legitimate reciprocity only to the Churches with valid sacraments. This question will be on the agenda of the particular norms for sharing in the Eucharist. Certain Bishops and Episcopal Conferences express themselves on this subject.

Concerning the receiving of Holy Communion after the celebration of marriage the 1993 Directory establishes:

Although the spouses in a mixed marriage share the sacraments of baptism and marriage,¹ sharing in the Eucharist can only be exceptional and in each case the norms stated above concerning the admission of a non-Catholic Christian to Eucharistic communion, as well as those concerning the participation of a Catholic in Eucharistic communion in another Church, must be observed. (ED 160)

Therefore, sharing in the Eucharist remains 'exceptional'. The situation of a mixed marriage couple after the celebration of their marriage is not considered as a new situation which allows sharing in the Eucharist in a more flexible or more frequent manner. Indeed, if the Directory considers the celebration of marriage as a special event from the sacramental point of view (the sacraments of baptism and marriage being shared) it does not seem, at first glance, to consider the conjugal and family life after the celebration of the marriage to be a special situation, whereas the need for the spiritual nourishment of the Eucharist on behalf of the spouses generally becomes stronger in

¹ This was already underlined by FC 57: 'The Christian family's sanctifying role is grounded in Baptism and has its highest expression in the Eucharist, to which Christian marriage is intimately connected.'

the course of their marriage.

The Apostolic Exhortation *Familiaris Consortio* underlines precisely how in the Eucharist

Christian spouses encounter the source from which their own marriage covenant flows, is interiorly structured and continuously renewed... the Eucharist is a fountain of charity. In the Eucharistic gift of charity the Christian family finds the foundation and soul of its communion and its mission. (FC 57)

Though simply referring to the conditions for sharing in the Eucharist as laid down by the general norms of paragraphs 125 and 130-2, the Directory (ED 160) clearly underlines the particular situation of the spouses because of their double sacramental bonds of baptism and marriage. It contains a discreet opening to other possibilities, although exceptional, for sharing in the Eucharist.

According to Jean Claude Périsset, ED 160 contains such a discreet opening, on condition the spouses live authentically their Christian faith in their joint commitment as a couple and household (see ED 145). In this context sharing in the Eucharist may be limited to important events in the life of the couple and family, such as, for example, baptism of children in the Catholic Church, their first communion, confirmation, or at family events such as an ordination or funeral.¹ We quote as well the opinion of Ruth Reardon, the co-founder of the English association Interchurch Families:

They (interchurch families) need public recognition of their situation... Recognition that the other Christian spouse can be lawfully admitted to communion in the Catholic Church under certain conditions... This is precisely why the Directory was so welcome. No longer did they have to say: 'If we come together, will you feel you must refuse the other Christian spouse?' They (interchurch families) could say: 'If we come together, will you admit us together?' They knew that according to the terms of the Directory, a Catholic Minister was now authorised to say: 'Yes', provided the conditions for admission are met by the spouse who is not a Catholic...²

Indeed, there is nothing to stop further situations arising out of 'other

¹ J. Cl. Perisset, 'Le implicazioni ecumeniche del Diritto canonico e le implicazioni canoniche dell'ecumenismo', *Periodica* 88 (1999) 85.

² R. Reardon, 'One Bread One Body: a Commentary from an Interchurch Family Point of View', *One in Christ* 35 (1999) 123.

grave and pressing need’—in the sense of the canons 844/CIC §4 & 671/CCEO §4, repeated by ED 130—within the context of a mixed marriage or family.

The general norms and the pastoral directives from Bishops, Bishops’ Conferences, and the competent authorities of the Eastern Catholic Churches are able to provide enlightenment on this question, and foresee, for example, admission to Holy Communion of the non-Catholic spouse at the first communion of a child, or the funeral of the Catholic spouse, or other significant moments of the liturgical year. Another question will be to understand if the idea of ‘exceptional sharing’ is limited to unique occasions which are unrepeatable, or if this sharing, while remaining exceptional is able to be repeated. See for example the document ‘One Bread One Body’ of the Bishops’ Conferences of England and Wales, Ireland and Scotland, the Revised Directory of the South African Bishops, and certain norms of the Australian Bishops. We will return to this in the second part of the article.

However, the general discipline for sharing in the Eucharist, differentiating between faithful of Eastern separated Churches and Christians belonging to other Ecclesial Communities must be observed and likewise when Catholic spouses have recourse to non-Catholic Ministers (see canons 844/CIC §2 & 671/CCEO §2).

The basis for possible openings lies precisely in the ecclesiological evaluation of the mixed marriage and family as ‘domestic church’ and of its ‘serious spiritual need of the Eucharistic nourishment’ (see Instr. 4 b).

Mixed marriage and family as ‘domestic church’

It is in this context that we wish to draw attention to the intervention of Cardinal Johannes Willebrands, then President of the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity, on the subject of mixed marriages in relation to sharing in the Eucharist at the Synod of Bishops on the Family in October 1980;¹ we would also point out its connection with the post-synodal exhortation *Familiaris Consortio* of 1981. The Cardinal’s starting point is that, according to the teaching of the Church, all valid marriages between baptized persons are real

¹ J. Willebrands, ‘Mixed marriages and their family life: Cardinal Willebrands’s address to the Synod of Bishops, October 1980’, *One in Christ* 23 (1981) 79.

sacramental marriages, and constitute with the family a 'domestic Church'.¹

Equally, the apostolic exhortation *Familiaris Consortio*, following the Synod on the Family, speaks of the family as 'the Church's Sanctuary in the Home' (FC 55) and as 'domestic Church' (FC 65). We recall that already *Lumen Gentium* (11) made this link when it declared: 'The family is so to speak, the domestic church' (In hac velut Ecclesia domestica). In its turn, *Apostolicam Actuositatem* (11) says: 'The family... as the domestic sanctuary of the Church' (Haec familia... tamquam domesticum sanctuarium Ecclesia).

This is also valid for a mixed marriage.

Therefore it can be said of the marriage of two Christians who have been baptized in different Churches, as it is of a marriage between Catholics, that their union is a true sacrament and gives rise to a 'domestic Church'... which reflects the union of Christ with the Church... Thus the family itself, like as a little Church, is somehow called, in a similar way to the Church itself, to become a sign of unity for the world.²

We recall that already Pope Paul VI in his apostolic exhortation *Evangelii nuntiandi* of 8 December 1975, par. 71 affirmed that:

Families resulting from a mixed marriage also have the duty of proclaiming Christ to the children in the fullness of the consequences of a common Baptism; they have moreover the difficult task of becoming builders of unity.³

Forming one single body at the image of the covenant of love between Christ and the Church (see LG 11, GS 48, OT 10 and AA 11) and being 'a domestic Church' or 'the Church's Sanctuary in the home' (FC 65, 55), each marriage, including a mixed marriage, points towards the unity of the Church. The Christian couple, the Christian family, as domestic church, thus shares in the mission of the Church in so far as it is both

¹ On the topic of mixed marriages and households as domestic Church, see the latest articles on this subject: T. Knieps-Port le Roi, 'Being at Home: Interchurch families as domestic Church', *One in Christ* (2008) 341-359; G. Ruysen, 'I matrimoni misti e la comunione eucaristica', *La Civiltà Cattolica* (2008) IV 581-591.

² J. Willebrands, 'Mixed marriages and their family life...' o.c., 79.

³ Paul VI, Apostolic exhortation '*Evangelii nuntiandi*': <http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/paul_vi/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_p-vi_exh_19751208_evangelii-nuntiandi_en.html>

a sign and means of the unity of humankind with God and the unity of the whole of humanity (see LG 1). The apostolic exhortation underlines, amongst other tasks, 'the priestly role which the Christian family can and ought to exercise in intimate communion with the whole Church, through the daily realities of married and family life. In this way the Christian family is called to be sanctified and to sanctify the ecclesial Community and the world.' (FC 55) The sacrament of marriage, (including mixed marriages), and its extension in the family shows and thus reinforces as a 'small church' the ecclesial unity (see LG 11).¹ This is similar to the sacrament of the Holy Eucharist which also signifies and reinforces this ecclesial unity.

The Eucharist, as sacrament of ecclesial unity, reflects therefore a unique signification in the context of a mixed marriage, 'the Church's sanctuary of the home' (FC 55). The matrimonial and family life must, in effect, be nourished by the Eucharistic bread, strengthening the love and unity at the heart of the couple and the family. The apostolic exhortation *Familiaris Consortio* expresses this admirably in terms of the mission of holiness of the family at the heart of the ecclesial Community and the world.

The Christian family's sanctifying role is grounded in Baptism and has its highest expression in the Eucharist, to which Christian marriage is intimately connected... The Eucharist is the very source of Christian marriage. The Eucharistic Sacrifice, in fact, represents Christ's covenant of love with the Church... In this sacrifice... [they] encounter the source from which their own marriage covenant flows, is interiorly structured and continuously renewed. As a representation of Christ's sacrifice of love for the Church, the Eucharist is a fountain of charity. In the Eucharistic gift of charity the Christian family finds the foundation and soul of its 'communion' and its 'mission': by partaking in the Eucharistic bread, the different members of the Christian family become one body, which reveals and shares in the wider unity of the Church. (FC 57)

It is on the basis of a similar reflection that Cardinal Willebrands underlined that the 'spiritual communion' of numerous mixed marriage families 'eventually affects even sacramental life and

¹ LG 11: 'Thus, by virtue of the sacrament of marriage, by which they (the spouses) both share in and symbolize the unity and the fertile love between Christ and his Church (see Eph. 5: 32)...' The same idea is found in GS 48, OT 10 and AA 11.

prompts the partners to ask permission to approach the Holy Eucharist together. For this is a moment at which they keenly feel their division, and also feel keenly their need for the spiritual nourishment that is the Eucharist.¹

The Cardinal thus suggests considering the possibility of admitting non-Catholic spouses in mixed marriages to Holy Communion. He limits this to individual cases, and refers to the Instruction *In quibus rerum circumstantiis* of 1972. He underlines the condition of ‘serious spiritual need of Eucharistic nourishment’ (Instr. 4b), defined as ‘a spiritual need for growth in spiritual life, a need of a deeper penetration into the mystery of the Church and its unity.’ (Ibid.)

Mixed marriages could therefore be considered as another case of ‘serious spiritual need’ (Instr. 4b) or of ‘similar urgent necessity,’ defined as ‘situations of great spiritual necessity, not limited to situations of suffering and danger,’ (Instr.6) similar to those of a Christian ‘diaspora’.

Certain authors go further, in speaking of a grave theological and dogmatic necessity in the case of mixed marriages. Essentially they base this on the idea of marriage as an image and sign of the spousal union between Christ and his Church, and on the understanding of the family as ‘domestic Church.’ For example:

It seems to us that in interchurch marriages the notion of ‘other grave and pressing need’ of canon 844 §4 CIC should not be only understood in the sense of a spiritual-moral need but much more as theological-dogmatic necessity...²

In the reciprocal case, that is to say the possibility for the Catholic spouse in a mixed marriage to receive Holy Communion in the Church of the non-Catholic spouse, Cardinal Willebrands said in his synodical intervention, that ‘the Catholic Church cannot grant such reciprocity in the case of those Churches which we believe, especially because of the lack of the sacrament of Orders, have not preserved the genuine and total reality of the Eucharistic mystery (see UR 22).’³ The

¹ J. Willebrands, ‘Mixed marriages and their family life...’, o.c., 80.

² S. Demel, ‘Gemeinsam zum Tisch des Herrn?...’, o.c., 671-674 (our translation). See H. Jorissen, ‘Gemeinsam am Tisch des Herrn? Katholische Erwägungen zur Eucharistiegemeinschaft in konfessionsverbindenden Ehen’, in J. Brossecker & H. Link (ed.) *Eucharistische Gastfreundschaft. Ein Plädoyer evangelischer und katholischer Theologen* (Neukirchen-Vluyn, 2003), 107.

³ J. Willebrands, ‘Mixed marriages and their family life...’, o.c., 80.

communion between the Ecclesial Communities and the Catholic Church is less close than the one between the Catholic Church and the Eastern separated Churches. Nevertheless, 'this communion should find expression in our pastoral practice regarding family life' in the sense that 'it should show a real solicitude for mixed families. For a mixed marriage that is inspired by a Christian spirit can do much to further the unity of Christians.'¹

Further, it must be remembered that, obviously, mixed marriages are not the ordinary means to restore the unity of Christians. The Cardinal recalls however that in spite of serious divergences on certain points there are points of convergence which allow common witness on Christian marriage, such as its sacred reality; even if it is not a sacrament for the Reformed Churches, and even if, concerning the acceptance of the principle of indissolubility, in practice divorce is accepted.²

The most important contribution of the intervention of Cardinal Willebrands and of the apostolic exhortation *Familiaris Consortio* is that a mixed marriage creates bonds at the heart of the couple and within the family, which form the basis of a 'domestic Church,' reflecting the mystery of the Church itself as a sacrament, that is to say as sign and means of the union of humankind with God, and the unity of the whole humanity (see LG 1). These ecclesial bonds between the spouses are very strong due to the fact that the spouses are united in an ecclesial communion through the sacrament of baptism and the sacrament of marriage, being itself an image of the covenant between Christ and his spouse, the Church (see LG 11, GS 48, OT 10 and AA 11). Equally, the Eucharist is in its turn, a 'representation of Christ's sacrifice of love for the Church' (FC 57)³ and it is precisely in the Eucharist that the Christian spouses find the living source of their spiritual life, and which constantly fashions their union and their conjugal love.

To the extent households—including mixed marriages and

¹ Ibid. 81.

² See *ibid.* 81.

³ The union between the sacrifice which Christ offered out of love for his Church, and the sacrament of marriage is expressed by St. Paul in the letter to the Ephesians: 'Husbands, love your wives as Christ loved the Church, and was given up for her ... In the same way husbands must love their wives.' (Eph. 5: 25, 28)

families—form a small Christian community, or a ‘domestic Church’, one could also add that: ‘No Christian community, however, is built up unless it has its basis and centre in the celebration of the most holy Eucharist...’ (*Presbyterorum Ordinis* 6).

Being slightly provocative, and paraphrasing the decree *Unitatis Redintegratio* (15), one could ask: to what extent and under what conditions is it conceivable that sharing in the Eucharist ‘is not only possible but to be encouraged’—in order to meet the serious spiritual need for Eucharistic nourishment, which is felt at the heart of mixed marriages and their families?¹

¹ We simply raise the question, without taking any position. The books, websites and articles from writers and associations of mixed marriage couples and households which call for a more flexible approach to sharing in the Eucharist, including a more frequent and even continuous and reciprocal sharing, are numerous. See the site <<http://www.interchurchfamilies.org>> which has links to other associations; the review *Interchurch Families Journal* which can be consulted on the site of the same name; and also R. Reardon, ‘Forty years of Interchurch Families’, *One in Christ* 42 (2008) 400-406.

In addition to the authors already mentioned we add: ‘Sharing Eucharistic intercommunion in the context of an interchurch family: survey by the Association of Interchurch Families’, *One in Christ* 19 (1983) 42-87; R. Reardon & M. Finch (ed.), *Sharing Communion: an appeal to the Churches by interchurch families* (London, 1983); R. Reardon, ‘Communion in Interchurch families’, *One in Christ* 19 (1983) 31-41; S. Williams, ‘Sharing Communion: a common inheritance’, *One in Christ* 31 (1995) 348-364; L. Örsy, ‘Interchurch Marriages and the Reception of the Eucharist: Present and Future’, *One in Christ* 33 (1997) 31-34; E. Falardeau, ‘The Church, the Eucharist and the Family’, *One in Christ* 33 (1997) 20-29; E. Falardeau, ‘Growing as Domestic Church through the Eucharist’, *One in Christ* 34 (1998) 18-28; E. Falardeau, ‘The Eucharist and interchurch families’, *Emmanuel* 102 (1996) 617-621 and *Emmanuel* 103 (1997) 489-492; 538-541; T. Scirghi, ‘One body, two Churches: sharing the Eucharist in an interchurch marriage’, *The Jurist* 59 (1999) 432-447; J. Vanderwilt, ‘Sharing in the Eucharist: revising the question’, *Theological studies* 63 (2000) 826-839; W. Brown, ‘The Eucharist and mixed marriages’, *Studia canonica* 38 (2004) 509-526, which gives a synthesis of the most recent theological and canonical commentaries on this subject (Örsy, Falardeau, Scirghi, Vanderwilt); G. Hintzen, ‘*Gratia procuranda quandoque commendat*. Überlegungen zur Zulassung evangelischer Partner konfessionsverschiedener Ehen zur katholischen Eucharistie’, *Catholica* 41 (1987) 270-286; P. Neuner, *Geeint im Leben, getrennt im Bekenntnis. Die konfessionsverschiedene Ehe*, (Düsseldorf: 1989); P. Neuner, ‘Ein katholischer

Without venturing a reply to this question we associate ourselves with what Cardinal Walter Kasper stated in his message to the second international meeting of the Interchurch Families Association in July 2003:

On the one hand, each of your families is a Community of love and life, a school of communion, the primary place in which unity will be fashioned or weakened each day. Many of you share in what the Catholic Church understands to be a sacramental marriage; in this you share in a great mystery, which expresses the spousal love of Christ for the Church, and which is called to radiate the Gospel of Christ. On the other hand, in your marriages, husband and wife have been formed and belong to different ecclesial communions, which are not in full communion with each other. You are not a problem, but you are living in the midst of the serious problems of the divisions within Christianity; in your marriages you have to face this problem daily, and face it with integrity.¹

The Cardinal underlined more precisely three contributions from mixed marriages and households:

Firstly... interchurch families have something to teach us in terms of ecumenical exchange of gifts... Secondly (they) have an important contribution to make in terms of spiritual ecumenism, which is the heart of the ecumenical movement... Thirdly, interchurch families are already engaged in a common mission, the mission of living deeply the covenant of love which binds you together.²

Translated by James Cassidy CRIC, Diocese of Northampton

Vorschlag zur Eucharistiegemeinschaft', *Stimmen der Zeit* 211 (1993) 443-450; G. Hintzen & P. Neuner, 'Eucharistiegemeinschaft für konfessionsverschiedene Ehen?', *Stimmen der Zeit* 211 (1993) 831-840.

¹ W. Kasper, 'Message of Cardinal Walter Kasper...', o.c.

² Ibid.

ON BECOMING A CHRISTIAN: COMMENTARY ON THE FIFTH PHASE REPORT OF THE INTERNATIONAL CATHOLIC/PENTECOSTAL DIALOGUE

Ralph Del Colle*

The Fifth Phase Final Report of the International Catholic-Pentecostal Dialogue examined the role of Christian Initiation in the Scripture and in the Church Fathers. By investigating the role of conversion, faith, Christian formation and discipleship, experience, and Baptism in the Holy Spirit, the dialogue broke new ground in opening up space wherein Catholics and Pentecostals can recognize the authenticity of Christian life in each other. Although the difference between sacramental and charismatic economies of grace remains, they are not seen to be mutually exclusive, thus preparing the way for further dialogue wherein the outpouring of the Holy Spirit is central for Christian conversion and witness.

Introduction

On Becoming a Christian: Insights from Scripture and the Patristic Writings with some Contemporary Reflections is the title of the most recent Report from the International Catholic/Pentecostal Dialogue. Sponsored by the Catholic Church through the instrumentality of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity (PCPCU) and 'Some Classical Pentecostal Churches and Leaders,' the dialogue was conducted from 1998 to 2006. It is the third substantial Report that has dealt with a single topic following respectively the third phase entitled *Perspectives on Koinonia* (1990) and the fourth phase on *Evangelization, Proselytism and Common Witness* (1997). Previous phases published shorter reports on a number of combined themes.

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Consistent with the intent of the dialogue since its inception in 1972, it does not aim at 'structural unity' but rather the fostering of 'respect and understanding between the Catholic Church and Classical Pentecostal churches' (3).¹ The specification of 'Some Classical Pentecostal Churches and Leaders' simply means that Pentecostal team members were either official representatives of their denominations or not, the latter usually due to the stated non-involvement policy of the denomination in regard to the ecumenical movement. Catholic team members (of which the author was one) were appointed by the PCPCU.

Two reasons led to the choice of topics, both significant in themselves. The first is the perceived need of how to recognize Christian life in the other communion. This is not incidental since it has not always been the case that Pentecostals and Catholics have acknowledged each other as fellow Christians (6). In addition to stereotypical depictions of the other which require clarification and a truthful representation of each tradition, it also involves questions of fidelity to Christian orthodoxy (a sometime Catholic concern) and the expectation of the tenor of religious experience associated with becoming a Christian (especially from the Pentecostal side with its dominant practice of believer's baptism). While both traditions face pastoral challenges of nominal membership among its respective adherents, the nature of this bilateral dialogue accentuates Pentecostal suspicions that many sacramentalized Catholics are in need of evangelization, something not unfamiliar to Catholic pastoral discernment and strategy.

The second significant reason for the study was the publication of the book *Christian Initiation and Baptism in the Holy Spirit: Evidence from the First Eight Centuries*, co-authored by Kilian McDonnell and George T. Montague.² Fr McDonnell OSB had been a long time Catholic co-chair of the dialogue and who with his co-author suggested that Baptism in the Holy Spirit 'belongs to that which is "constitutive of the church"' (7).³ Apart from its reception by fellow

¹ Citations refer to the numbered paragraphs in the Report.

² Collegeville, MN: A Michael Glazier Book/The Liturgical Press, 1991, 2nd Revised Edition, 1994.

³ Kilian McDonnell retired as Catholic Co-Chair during the course of this fifth phase.

Catholic scholars (not all uncritical), its appeal to Pentecostals cannot be underestimated. By thematizing Spirit baptism as central to Catholic identity in the patristic era it elicits from Pentecostals a re-examination of a restrictive *sola scriptura* position vis-à-vis ecclesial tradition and a not infrequent account of ecclesial decline during this period due in no small part to a sacramental ecclesiology—at its worst positing a church 'holding to the outward form of godliness but denying its power' (2 Tim. 3:5).¹ In other words, it could offset the tendency among some Pentecostals to paint the period between the primitive church of the apostles and the Protestant Reformation as nothing more than an ecclesiastical betrayal of the gospel except for a faithful remnant in a particular movement, e.g. the Montanists, or in an exemplary Christian, e.g. Francis of Assisi.

In this dialogue, however, both teams could agree that the Church Fathers possessed a 'privileged place in the post-biblical church' (13) because of the close connection between their 'theology and pastoral concerns ... doxology and devotion to God ... [and] the moral and ethical demands of discipleship' (13). Not only is there a recognition that the patristic period was decisive for true and 'precise expressions of central Christian doctrines' such as 'the Trinity, Christ, the Holy Spirit, and salvation' (12), but because of their proximity 'to the time in which Jesus and His disciples lived', the Pentecostal team affirmed that their writings 'might prove instructive ... to understand how the earliest Christians were moved from the point of conversion to full participation in the life of the church' (10). There is no question that sacred scripture still possesses the 'highest authority' for the faith (13); however, the acknowledgment that 'patristic writers helped the church to translate the *biblical faith* into the conceptual frameworks of the people dominant in cultures different from those ... in which the Bible was written' (12, italics mine) is significant. The Pentecostal team in this effort to engage the ancient Christian tradition chose not to identify with the strict biblicism that characterizes some sectors of the movement.²

I have attended to these preliminaries to underscore that the

¹ The King James Version is more poetic: 'Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof.'

² The same can be said for the majority of Pentecostal scholars as represented, for example, in the Society for Pentecostal Studies.

dialogue did not so much formally address the issue of the authoritative status of tradition relative to scripture—the positions remain relatively consistent with what each tradition historically has taught—but that it paved the way for actual engagement with the patristic writings and their legacy for the life of the Church including Pentecostal ecclesial communions where they are not normally referenced in teaching, preaching, and catechesis. It also requires that just as Pentecostals must reconsider their ecclesiological paradigms in the light of what the Church Fathers have to offer, so too, Catholics need to attend to the charismatic dimension of the church in evidence during this period.

The Report follows the same pattern for its five thematic chapters. Following an introduction it gives an account of biblical and then patristic perspectives on the theme and concludes with contemporary reflections that note both Catholic and Pentecostal distinctives and convergences. Chapters I through V respectively explore Conversion and Christian Initiation, Faith and Christian Initiation, Christian Formation and Discipleship, Experience in Christian life, and lastly, Baptism in the Holy Spirit and Christian Initiation. Needless to say the Report early on recognizes that the terminology of Christian Initiation stems largely from Catholic usage rather than Pentecostal although in utilizing it the intent is to achieve better understanding. The same is true for the term 'Baptism in the Holy Spirit,' a doctrine and experience known to Pentecostals and charismatics (15).

Section I

The first chapter on 'Conversion and Christian Initiation' revolves around several themes that continue to emerge throughout the document. They include the relationship between event and process in religious experience and the workings of divine grace, human and divine dimensions of the same, and how both are construed relative to the theological thematic under discussion. At a popular level the two traditions have seldom meant the same thing by conversion although there are similarities. In a tradition that primarily advocates and practices believer's baptism many Pentecostals can often date the time of their conversion, distinct from water baptism, sanctification and Spirit baptism. It is 'a reorientation of a person's pattern of attitudes, beliefs and practices' (27) in which a person repents, comes to faith in Christ, and undergoes regeneration often in an experiential register

that one has now received new life in Christ and is assured of salvation by virtue of the divine promise of free grace and the witness of the Spirit that one is a child of God. Catholics have utilized the term conversion for those who become Catholic, but also for the already baptized as an ongoing process within the spiritual life, e.g. continual conversion, or as three stages in the spiritual life: the purgative, illuminative and unitive ways.

By focusing on the different dimensions of Christian Initiation the chapter underscores those elements of conversion that both traditions commonly embrace such as 'proclamation of the Word, acceptance of the Gospel, profession of faith, repentance, a turning away from sin and turning to God, the bestowal of the Holy Spirit ... as well as the incorporation of the individual into the Christian community' (27). This quote from the Pentecostal paragraph is nearly identical to that used by Catholics from the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, except for the equivalent phrases 'entailing conversion' and 'admission to eucharistic communion' (26). Absent from the Pentecostal reiteration is baptism which is quite understandable (aside from the issue of paedobaptism vs. believer's baptism) considering that the Report does not attempt a convergence or agreement on the nature of the sacraments, especially their efficacy from a Catholic perspective.

The commonality underscored is reinforced by their readings of the biblical and patristic sources. Noteworthy is an implicit convergence that is not developed by an examination of their respective theologies of grace. The chapter speaks of 'the mysterious interplay between the human and the divine, primarily the human response to divine initiative' (40), an assumption shared by both traditions. In other words, the role of human agency in grace—what Catholics insist is a necessary dimension of cooperative grace—is fertile ground for further exploration, something that can be noted in Catholic-Wesleyan conversations as well. The theme is continued in the patristics section—'transformation of the person through the interaction of divine grace and human freedom' (43)—but in the service of 'the stories of marvelous conversion and transformation which God has worked in the lives of his saints' (42). The evidence gleaned signals this transformation as the fruit of regeneration and although frequently associated with baptism by the Fathers, Pentecostals eschew the sacramentalist interpretation, e.g. whether John 3: 1-8 refers to baptism or strictly to new birth without baptismal

overtones (47).

In light of these similarities and differences the final section on 'Contemporary Reflections on Conversion' focuses on the Catholic *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults* (RCIA) as a way 'to deepen agreement ... about conversion and about becoming a Christian,' specifically because the post-Vatican II rite retrieves scriptural and patristic sensibilities (48). While there are points of affinity between the two traditions such that Pentecostals encourage Catholics to practice a more widespread adaptation of the rite for catechesis of the already baptized in order to address the pastoral challenge of nominal practice, it does not resolve the differences over sacramentality.

Further dialogue could proceed along the following contours. First, radical Christocentricity is embedded in both traditions (49). Conversion, as a gift of God, is to the person of Jesus Christ (59) and involves 'cognitive development, affective growth and behavioral change' (51). Second, Catholics and Pentecostals are opposed to nominal faith adherence and agree that the formation of Christian culture is a good thing so long as it is understood within the context of nurturing 'committed discipleship' (55). Third, there is no one model of conversion that would displace the diversity of levels, stages and dimensions of the human person that are operative— affective, cognitive, dramatic, volitional (57). Fourth, the relationship between ritual and the experiential aspects of grace requires further investigation. The document utilizes the language of 'liturgical actions' and 'spiritual event' as the rubrics for how the RCIA enacts conversion in the sacramentality of visible sign and invisible grace (50). The certain relationship between the two (as in the Catholic *ex opere operato*) is problematic for Pentecostals. Thus the chapter closes with the statement that although there is much agreement and convergence, Catholics and Pentecostals 'may not always agree about what constitutes a valid experience of conversion' (59).

Section II

Chapter II of the Report continues the logic of inquiry by turning attention to 'Faith and Christian Initiation.' Faith is central to Pentecostalism and is the measure of whether one has a 'personal relationship' with God, a frequent rhetorical witness utilized in Pentecostal evangelization. The faith queried in this chapter is not the *fides quae creditur*, the faith which is believed, but the *fides qua*

creditor, the faith that believes; the act of faith rather than the content of faith. In fact, an agreed definition of such faith opens the chapter.

Faith is a gifted response to God's revelation, involving an opening of the heart, an assent of the mind and actions which express our trust.

(60)

The New Testament references review instances of conversion in the Acts of the Apostles including those in which the different aspects of Christian Initiation noted in the previous chapter are in evidence. Hence the pattern of Acts 2:42—'they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers'—is noted as emblematic of ongoing attention to Christian formation. Also, the narratives often employed by Pentecostals to support the doctrine of the baptism in the Holy Spirit as subsequent to conversion/regeneration are examined. The significance of these passages cannot be overestimated for Pentecostal doctrinal construction wherein subsequence is argued more from the narrative of Acts than the didactic epistles of Paul. Subsequence, however, is not the focus of this chapter. The narratives of Pentecost (Acts 2: 1-42), the conversions of the Samaritans (Acts 8:12-17), Paul (Acts 9), Cornelius' household (Acts 10:34-46), and of the disciples of John the Baptist at Ephesus (Acts 19: 1-7), all suggest a distinction between regeneration and Spirit baptism, i.e. the gift of the Holy Spirit, or, in a Catholic register, the sacraments of baptism and confirmation—more of this later. In these passages (along with the conversion of Lydia [Acts 16] where no such distinction is implied) the chapter chooses to emphasize the living faith that is operative within an ecclesial framework, and is summarized as follows:

The activity of the Christian community in welcoming new members and in helping them mature as faithful disciples clearly shows that faith and Christian Initiation are closely tied together. (74)

The same is true when it discusses baptism, rehearsing again the differences between paedobaptism and believer's baptism and the role of faith in each.

The section on the patristic writings cites the catechumenate and its mystagogical instructions from the ancient church leading the dialogue to affirm that the church during this period 'fully accepted and tried to put into practice the biblical teaching about the importance of faith in the process of becoming a Christian' (85). It is

clearly important for both teams, especially non-sacramentalist Pentecostals, to acknowledge that 'the personal expression of faith was obviously bound to the process of becoming a Christian' (82) in the rites of initiation. Surely that means that living faith and liturgical ritual are not inimical to one another. It may seem that this is weighted in the direction of Catholic sacramental practice but one should remember that the challenge in this dialogue proceeds from both sides. If indeed baptism is understood and practiced by the ancient church as the 'sacrament of faith: *sacramentum fidei*' (85), this may well register with Pentecostals as an authentic witness of Christian faith. For Catholics the focus of the dialogue on this issue (as subsequent chapters verify) underscores 'the moral and spiritual life expected of a Christian' (84). However, not all differences are reconciled as the section on contemporary reflections investigates.

The rehearsal of differences over the theology and practice of baptism continues to resurface throughout the document. In this section the hope is that the 'deep relation between faith and the series of events by which one becomes Christian' will deepen agreement and clarify the differences that remain (86). However, one wonders to what extent such clarifications can ever result in a substantial convergence. The adjudication of how to negotiate these differences becomes a matter of simply reading the biblical sources differently. For example, Catholics interpret 1 Cor. 6:11 ('But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God') and Titus 3:5 ('he saved us ... according to his mercy, through the water of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit') as referring to baptism, whereas Pentecostals simply see in them conversion (87). The Report provides no resolution to these hermeneutical differences even if one must admit that sacramental and non-sacramental readings of New Testament passages have not been uncommon in the history of Catholic and Protestant exegesis. Nevertheless, a principle is suggested that could have significant ecumenical consequences.

In light of such examples, it is possible that some of the diversity of our focus and emphasis simply reflects the diversity of focus and emphasis present within the New Testament itself, a healthy tension that ought not to be artificially or otherwise inappropriately resolved. (89)

The Report is not content with the statement of this principle with respect to either its material or formal aspects. In regard to baptism,

while Pentecostals cannot admit to its sacramental efficacy, e.g. as it being an instrument of regeneration, they do encourage its universal necessity for all believers and even suggest that for some Pentecostals (not all!) it functions as more than 'a sign or testimony but also as an ordained means for the communication of saving grace, delivering power and saving life, effected by the power of the Spirit.' How that differs from new birth is not specified but it is considerably more than an 'outward but necessary sign ... of a transformation that has already occurred by grace through faith,' a position held by other Pentecostals (88).

But is it the case that interpretation is simply the consequence of examining the sources from the context of one's own tradition? The Report suggests such a possibility. Sacramentalist and conversionist perspectives might blind the interpreter to the implicit reference of texts to water baptism or not, thereby 'earmarking hermeneutics' as a future theme for the dialogue. Preliminary reflections outline the nature and authority of tradition for each communion, less formal and authoritative for Pentecostals—'a kind of Pentecostal "tradition" as an authority of discernment' (90). At the present stage the attempt at convergence may appear to be only incremental. In noting that some Christian parents in the patristic era withheld baptism for their children Pentecostals point out that the concern for living faith was evidently present. In other words, 'transformation of life' was a persistent concern for the ancient church. In this regard the activity of the Holy Spirit and the patristic emphasis on ascetical and moral preparation for baptism highlight Pentecostal concerns for a living faith (91-92). However, the same does not hold for the patristic integration of Eucharist in Christian Initiation for Pentecostals (93), although the communal dimension of conversion (as in the 'preparation and initiation of new members') is a point of agreement (94).

The section concludes with a summary of how these respective readings of patristic Christian Initiation reflect contemporary Catholic and Pentecostal convergences. In large part the presenting issue is how to negotiate the general agreement that conversion involves both event (a Pentecostal emphasis) and process or series of events (a Catholic emphasis). Catholics will find Pentecostal efforts to read a non-sacramental account of conversion in the patristic church as somewhat tendentious. After all, the basic thrust of this attempted

common reading of the Church Fathers is to acknowledge a developed sacramental practice and theology. So, it is more by way of implicit exception from sacramental categories that Pentecostals argue for the necessity of a living faith, one in which the ‘individual must receive this gift and believe in order to become a Christian’ (96). In Catholic terminology Pentecostals worry about sacramentalized but unevangelized Christians. Whether this was a problem in the patristic church is not addressed but the fact that there is a mutual concern that to be sacramentally initiated does not preclude a living faith—in fact, usually presumes it—is a measure of progress that is evident in this Report. This section II can close with a fairly robust agreement.

Reflecting upon biblical and patristic perspectives about the relation of faith to becoming a Christian could allow Pentecostals and Catholics to affirm together that the church is a communion in faith whose nature is essentially missionary, impelling it to foster the profession of faith by each of its members and to invite into this communion of faith others who do not yet know the joy of believing in Jesus Christ. (96)

Section III

Section III of the Report is entitled ‘Christian Formation and Discipleship’. Compared to the previous two sections it is indeed the case in both style and content that the teams ‘found a good measure of convergence in ...[their]... understanding of discipleship’ (98). The terminology employed is intended as complementary with discipleship understood as ‘a category of relationship,’ indeed a ‘personal relationship with Christ.’ Christian formation is defined as ‘a dynamic process in the power of the Holy Spirit’ that is comprehensive in scope in regard to ‘the whole of existence in Christ and ... the transformation of all dimension of human life’ (97). Building on the foundation of Christian Initiation that embraces ‘faith, conversion and experience’ (97), both traditions can affirm that ‘[f]ormation is an on-going process’ in which there is a ‘growing experience of conversion and regeneration’ (98), an interesting choice of words. It would seem that Pentecostals, too, speak of ongoing conversion, a commonplace in Catholic spirituality.

Pentecostals usually confine the term ‘conversion’ to its initiatory stage in new birth or regeneration, often portrayed as an instantaneous experience in Pentecostal witness and testimony. In fact, Catholics and Pentecostals can agree that regeneration is an

event, an ontological one at that whether sacramentally construed or related to a conscious conversion to Christ. The process that leads to conversion can be accounted for by the work of prevenient grace eliciting a free and conscious response to God. At stake in the above phrase is that the notion of ongoing conversion is theologically legitimated by the increase of the new life in Christ imparted in regeneration. Another name for this is sanctification (to be dealt with in section V) wherein Catholics and Pentecostals share some common ground. The relationship between sanctification and justification is not examined in the Report. It is fair to say Pentecostals inherit and affirm the Reformation distinction between justification and sanctification with the former never warranting increase as does the latter—justification being a matter of the imputation of Christ's righteousness not the inhering of righteousness in the believer as the Council of Trent teaches. Nor do Pentecostals, as do Catholics, describe sanctification as the increase of justification although regeneration—distinct from but simultaneous with justification—is considered the beginning of sanctification. This section does not investigate this doctrinal complex, but rather chooses to portray the life of discipleship and Christian formation in descriptive terms, what the increase of new life in Christ looks like in the process of ongoing conversion.

The section of biblical perspectives integrates the notions of communion ('to be with him') and mission ('to be sent out') as the heart of discipleship and does so in a manner that combines the epistolary and gospel literature of the New Testament. In other words, the following of Jesus as presented in the gospels is not in tension with the identification with Christ in his death and resurrection and their transformation into his image in the Pauline corpus. There is no split between the so-called historical Jesus and the Christ of faith. 'Therefore, "to follow" Jesus goes beyond his historical existence' (101). This is due to the strong pneumatology that pervades the entire Report. And despite their differences the *Christus praesens* (the self-presentation of Christ) is a hallmark of both traditions in either sacramental or charismatic modalities.

The patristic section takes a different tack by reviewing the diverse ways of following Christ, the role of the Holy Spirit, and how Christian formation is instanced within catechesis and the catechumenate. By recognizing the Christian life in martyrdom, missionary commitment,

ascetic and monastic life, as well as in daily life as the fruit of the Holy Spirit's work in regeneration, sanctification and empowerment, a diverse paradigm is established for how the inner work of the Spirit is consonant with external manifestations (120). That allusion is not unimportant for the uniqueness of this bilateral dialogue. External manifestations of the Holy Spirit are central for Pentecostalism's charismatic theology beginning with their unique doctrine of 'speaking in tongues,' i.e. glossolalia, as the initial physical evidence of the baptism in the Holy Spirit. That ascetical and monastic life may also be envisioned as an external sign of the Spirit's empowerment is significant for the Pentecostal discernment of other spiritual traditions wherein the spiritual life, i.e. *vita spiritualis*, may be an indication of God's work even before one enters a dialogue over doctrine.

The concentration on spirituality or Christian experience (section IV is devoted to it) is an important hermeneutic for this dialogue. It provides an approach not only with respect to the mutual understanding between Catholics and Pentecostals but also in their reading of biblical and patristic texts. In reviewing catechesis in the patristic church, for example, you find the following statement.

Scripture, creed and sacrament were the overall topics covered in the baptismal instruction. But the instruction was far from being simply 'doctrinal'; it included a strong spiritual dimension, with such features as discussion of prayer... and instruction about the moral obligations of living as a Christian. (130)

The section ends with the two communities elaborating in doxological fashion their shared commitment to the life of the apostolic community as portrayed in Acts 2:42—the Apostles' Instruction, the communal life, the breaking of bread, and the prayers. Although no common doctrinal statements are put forward, there is a strong sense of the spiritual ecumenism that constitutes a real but imperfect communion between Catholics and Pentecostals. It is a call to the richness of discipleship that each community knows and continues to desire.

Section IV

Section IV of the Report queries the subject that in many ways is at the heart of this dialogue, one that 'naturally evokes reflection' (138). Entitled 'Experience in Christian Life,' it examines the role of

experience in becoming a Christian and in Christian community within both ecclesial expressions. I say that it is at the heart of this dialogue since it is the experiential texture of Pentecostalism that is most telling. Its signature doctrine of Spirit baptism is wholly a matter of receiving and experiencing it, preferably with the evidence of speaking in tongues. Since Catholics do not usually begin with experience—evidence other bilateral ecumenical dialogues—it is significant that in this section Catholics are able to adopt an experiential register. But as the introduction makes clear Pentecostals are able to nuance this category as well.

The first task is to define religious experience. Two categories are proffered: distinct religious experiences and the religious dimension of human experience. The first has to do with explicit religious affections; what one experiences in various modes of prayer, whether it be charismatic or mystical. In Protestantism this came to the fore during the Evangelical Awakenings of the eighteenth century; Jonathan Edwards even writing *A Treatise Concerning the Religious Affections* (1754) in defense of the revivals in New England. Since it is best to interpret the rise of Pentecostalism within the trajectory of this enthusiastic form of Evangelicalism, it is significant that the Report is as careful as Edwards was in its elucidation of religious experience.

Both of our traditions acknowledge the experiential dimension to faith although we affirm that faith is not limited to experience. (141)

The same could be said for grace.

The second modality of religious experience embraces 'all experience, including various levels of human experience, joys and tragedies and even mundane affairs of daily life' (139). Often the subject of fundamental theology, it is the former category that is the focus of the section although both modalities of religious experience are understood as event or process. Furthermore, the Report affirms that experience is a dimension of all the topics covered. Also, it argues—if only briefly touching by implication on the hermeneutics of experience—that 'over the centuries ... experience involves an awareness of encounter with the living God' (142).

The biblical subsection adverts to many religious experiences in scripture although one wonders if the authors could have been more precise. The miraculous is named and what the later tradition will describe as consolations from God. The charismatic is in evidence, but so too are descriptors that have apparent existential import. But are

they of the same order experientially? For example, in the Pauline corpus do the charismata and the fruits of the Spirit impact the believer in the same experiential register? It is one thing to experience a prophetic gift, another to be patient and gentle. Is patience an experience in the same modality as the gifts of the Spirit? The same may be said for the virtues of the theological and moral life.¹ Is the net being cast too widely? The intent is to underscore the experience of God as central to the Christian life. But what is the relationship between an experience of God as an influx of new grace (which may or may not be experiential) and religious feeling or affections?

The same may be said for the patristic section where in fact one can harvest a variety of testimonies to religious experience, from gifts of illumination to the conversion stories of Jerome and Augustine. The former is important so as to include within the spectrum of experience the intellective as well as the emotive. But does the baptismal tri-immergence of catechumens in the nude, as was the custom (147), constitute what the dialogue is after as evidence of the experiential? The emphases in this section are on the mystical graces that were familiar to the fathers and less on the charismatic (which will be more evident in the next section on Spirit baptism). The pneumatological aspect is also strong as, for example, when it quotes Cyril of Jerusalem testifying to the Spirit's coming as gentle, fragrant, his burden being most light (150). At the same time, the apophatic dimension of Eastern Christian spirituality is also noted by referencing Gregory of Nyssa on the essence of God 'beyond all experience' (149). As with the previous section it also closes on the note (again quoting Cyril of Jerusalem) that since the spiritual dimension of baptism is most important, this could reinforce existing differences over its sacramental efficacy.

The contemporary subsections give voice to the present perspectives of each communion. Pentecostals still emphasize that for many it is still the case that they can pinpoint the time of their conversion (154). Process is not excluded and more gradual conversions may be more numerous in the present as contrasted to the early period of the movement (156). On the matter of communal conversions (such as Cornelius's household in Acts 10) Pentecostals affirm that the Spirit can work through social networks but this still requires personal

¹ I am using 'theologal' as indicative of a life centered on God, not formal or informal theological reflection.

professions of faith (157). The section returns to the nuanced account of faith and experience suggested in the introduction.

Affective experiences in conversion are highly valued and expected by Pentecostals, but they are not regarded as necessary for salvation. (155)

In other words, experience is secondary to faith founded on God's Word and the change of life that results from conversion.

The communal aspect of Pentecostal experience revolves around the charismatic flavor of its worship. More specifically, under the rubric of 'Experiencing Christian Life in Community' various experiences are recounted that help lead the faithful into a deeper relationship with God. '[S]ensing the presence of the Lord' leads to 'personal and corporate encounters with God.' Divine and human agency are involved. The 'infusion of grace enables the Christian to be open to the things of God ... and to give an enthusiastic response to all the promptings of the Holy Spirit' (165). One should take note of the Pentecostal ownership of enthusiasm considering the traditional critique exercised against it. A quote from Ronald Knox's book of that title is sufficient (from the Catholic perspective).

But the implications of enthusiasm go deeper than this [its anthropocentric bias]; at the root of it lies a different theology of grace. Our traditional doctrine is that grace perfects nature, elevates it to a higher pitch, so that it can bear its part in the music of eternity, but leaves it nature still. The assumption of the enthusiast [one could say Pentecostal] is bolder and simpler; for him grace has destroyed nature, and replaced it. The saved man has come out in a new order of being, with a new set of faculties which are proper to his state; David must not wear the panoply of Saul.¹

The Report does not offer a detailed theology of grace but the Pentecostal team underscores the priority of grace as well as the human response to grace. There is no indication Pentecostals expect such a replacement of one's faculties. They do anticipate that the Spirit may bring them to various postures and attitudinal responses to what God may be doing in their lives. These include silence (a 'holy hush'), shouting, song, dance, tears, and speaking in tongues (166). They all require 'careful discernment' and the proviso that the 'life of faith ...[should]...not...[be]... overly dependent on them.' Nor should

¹ Ronald Knox, *Enthusiasm* (Westminster, MD: Christian Classics, 1950, 1983), 3.

the more extraordinary experiences (shaking, rolling, falling, etc.) be sought as something in themselves since their only purpose is to draw one closer to God (172). It is also the case that Pentecostal experience—or at least Pentecostal witness—is not confined to charismatic worship. Social action, evangelization of culture, and the pursuit of justice and peace are increasingly becoming venues for Pentecostal service, and some in a more public manner than was previously the case. Variety and new experiments also characterize the broad spectrum of Pentecostal faith and practice.

The Catholic account of Christian experience focuses on the sacramental initiation experienced by new converts and for children baptized as infants and raised in the church. The process is described, including signs and symbols of sacramental life, with the assumption that many take to heart the formation that is being offered. This is true even for children being formed and nurtured in the church such as what many testify to in their First Holy Communion and Confirmation. Drawing on the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* the various aspects of Christian Initiation are summarized.

The spiritual, affective, and aesthetic dimensions of Christian Initiation therefore communicate the wonder and awe of communion with God, who is all holy and yet shares the divine glory with us. These serve as a gateway into Christian discipleship, the pursuit of holiness and a ‘vital and personal relationship with the living and true God’ (CCC 2558). (163)

In the subsection of ‘Experiencing Christian Life in Community’ the Catholic perspective correlates spiritual experience with a Catholic theology of grace. After reviewing the cautious attitude of certain strains of Neo-Scholastic theology regarding the ‘psychological awareness of grace’ (175) it strongly affirms that the transformation that grace effects ‘includes a disposition, an ongoing process in one’s life, as well as the readiness to respond to God’s call in particular moments’ (177). Building on the axiom that grace perfects nature it attempts to provide a spiritual and pastoral tone to the supernatural character of grace taught by the church.

God takes us where we are with our temperaments and talents and perfects them at a supernatural level by both healing the effects of sin in one’s life and elevating one to participate in the divine life such that Christian virtue exceeds what is possible at the natural level alone... (177)

It also draws on ‘the spiritual traditions of the church’ with its ‘rich experiential tone of the Christian life.’ In a Catholic version of relating

spiritual experiences to the working of God's grace without reducing the latter to the former the Report defines spiritual consolation 'as an awareness of God's presence that increases faith, hope and love' (recalling St. Ignatius Loyola's definition in his *Spiritual Exercises*) while at the same time quoting the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* that 'grace escapes our experience and cannot be known except by faith' (CCC 2005). The explanation given is worth quoting in full.

This means that God's grace exceeds our experience of it and is present even when we may not be aware of it, in both the consolations and desolations of the spiritual life, in the raptures of exaltation and in the wilderness of what is called the dark night of the soul, and most of all in the everyday realities of life. (178)

Although the charismatic renewal is mentioned (176) it is clear that the Catholic team chose to represent the broader Catholic tradition in engaging issues of grace and experience. It then extends the implications of this teaching with regard to consecrated life and lay life, Marian devotion, the communion of saints, and eschatology.

Section IV's subsection on convergences is irenic and is intended to offset perceptions of other's piety and spirituality that 'may seem worlds apart to some' (191), especially the notion that 'Pentecostals largely live in their hearts and emotions while Catholic life is solely determined by theological abstractions and outward rituals' (184). It then proceeds to delineate the ecclesial context of each communion, how both are drawn to the church fathers because they combine 'faith, spirituality, and holiness of life,'—'integrating doctrine and life'—while they still differ on the authority of the fathers (185). Most importantly it proffers a number of agreed principles that is the fruit of this dialogue, having reaped from both of their traditions:

- 'We agree that affective experience is not an end in itself but a means through which we encounter God.' (186)
- 'The discernment of experiences is a necessary and present dimension of contemporary church life.' (187)
- 'We have also come to the insight that our religious experiences overcome an unwarranted dichotomy between the personal and social or individual and communal dimensions of experience.' (188)
- 'Our dialogue has alerted us to the fact that both dimensions [of experience, event and process] are present in each of our

traditions although with different levels of expectation and evaluation.’ (189)

- ‘In all this we are aware that God leads us in a wide range of spiritual experiences, extraordinary and ordinary, joyous and sad, and those which make us aware of spiritual riches or poverty, where we share in the suffering, death, and resurrection of Christ.’ (190)

Section V

The culminating section is devoted to the ‘Baptism in the Holy Spirit and Christian Initiation’. As already stated this is the signature doctrine of Classical Pentecostalism—‘a cornerstone in Pentecostal life and spirituality’ (192)—and is known to Catholics (not without modification) through the Charismatic Renewal. Because this phase of the dialogue has chosen to investigate Christian Initiation along with the leitmotif of religious experience the importance of Spirit baptism cannot be overestimated. It begins with an affirmation that constitutes a positive evaluation or discernment, as it were, of Pentecostalism both in itself and in the historic churches. This also extends to a similar evaluation by ‘many (though not all) Pentecostals’ of the renewal movement in the Catholic Church including their loyalty to Catholic faith (195).

The Catholic renewal as well as the existence of this dialogue underscores the positive significance of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements for the whole church. These movements are one of the signs of the Spirit’s enduring presence in the church and the world. (196)

The challenge then remains of how to theologially consider its doctrinal expression in Spirit baptism.

First, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, including charismatic manifestations, is significant for the life of the church (193). Implicitly this excludes cessationist theologies that deny the operation of charisms beyond the apostolic period. Second, it must negotiate the distinction between the Spirit’s work in regeneration and in empowerment. In fact, Catholics and Pentecostals share a twofold reception of the Spirit in sacramental and non-sacramental versions respectively.

Both of our traditions identify two principal moments for the reception of the Spirit. For Pentecostals these moments come in conversion and

Baptism in the Holy Spirit. For Catholics they come in the sacraments of baptism and confirmation. (194)

In this respect the dialogue moves beyond previous phases in what now may be considered preliminary statements on Spirit baptism which asserted that, while the Holy Spirit dwells in all Christians, Spirit baptism enables an 'expanded openness and expectancy with regard to the Holy Spirit and his gifts' (198).

The Report traces the use of Spirit baptism in Scripture—never used in its nominal form but only verbal—and admits to a certain complexity 'when Scripture is explored to account for the experience referred to as Baptism in the Holy Spirit' (203). This is an interesting turn of phrase since the experience in question covers mainly 'charismatic manifestations at the outpouring of the Holy Spirit' (206). There are other effects of this experience as well, such as greater awareness of the risen Christ, empowered witness and 'a deeper dimension of prayer and worship' (207). As indicated earlier in the Report Spirit baptism (or being filled with the Holy Spirit, receiving the Holy Spirit) is perceived as distinct from the Spirit's work in conversion/regeneration. The Report follows the typical Pentecostal apologetic of Spirit baptism by attending to those narratives in the Acts of the Apostles where such manifestations are in evidence, e.g. the evangelization of the Samaritans (8: 9-19) and of the disciples of John the Baptist (19: 1-6).

The patristics section is more complex and largely dependent on the work of Kilian McDonnell. It is a brief summary of texts from the Greek, Latin and Syriac fathers that manifest the presence of charismatic gifts and manifestations associated with the rite of baptism. The intention is not to resolve the debate over whether this refers to the baptism in the Holy Spirit (208) but simply to give testimony to the power of the Spirit at work in the ancient church. In this regard there is no evidence of two stages in Christian Initiation but there is plenty evidence that reception of the Holy Spirit brings with it 'powerful graces and charismatic gifts' such as cleansing, wisdom, knowledge, holiness, etc. (217).

The import of these insights from scripture and tradition awaits mediation through the contemporary perspectives on Spirit baptism. For Catholics, for whom there is no explicit doctrine on the baptism in the Holy Spirit, one must consider the dogmatic tradition, especially the sacraments, and the reception and interpretation of Spirit baptism

that has taken place in the Catholic Charismatic Renewal. The former requires that the interpretation of Spirit baptism does not diminish the sacramental graces offered in baptism and confirmation. Although in the Catechism baptism is described as 'baptism in water and the Spirit [that] will be a new birth' (CCC 720) this does not refer to charismatic Spirit baptism (218). Nor does it take away from the distinct sacrament of confirmation whose effect is not only a 'special strength of the Holy Spirit' (CCC 1285) but is 'the full outpouring of the Holy Spirit as once granted to the apostles on the day of Pentecost' (CCC 1302) (221). In other words, confirmation is the Catholic sacramental equivalent to the Classical Pentecostal baptism in the Holy Spirit. It is subsequent to the washing of regeneration in baptism and communicates a distinct grace as well as another character (or mark) as well.

After a brief review of the history of the charismatic renewal the Report turns to two major schools of theological interpretation of Spirit baptism that emerged from the renewal. The first is the position of the 1974 Malines Document that situates Spirit baptism 'as part of the fullness of Christian Initiation' (230). Coming into Spirit baptism (as in a charismatic prayer group) releases in a greater way the graces of baptism and confirmation. It also 'belongs to the church at a fundamental level' (230). The German Bishops' Conference in 1987 offered another interpretation. Charismatic Spirit baptism is a new sending of the Spirit 'alongside the continuous indwelling of the Spirit in baptism and confirmation' (232). This less sacramental interpretation allows for Spirit baptism to be considered a grace in the life of the church that is distinctive but not normative (as are baptism and confirmation) for the whole church. By contrast the Malines interpretation suggests the normativity of Spirit baptism for the entire church. The Report does not decide for either interpretation but simply highlights the strong points of each, alerting the church to its charismatic dimension, and that all gifts of the Holy Spirit are intended for 'the service of charity which builds up the Church' (CCC 2003) (235).

The Pentecostal subsection rehearses the history of Pentecostalism in the predecessor holiness movements of the nineteenth century and their reaction against what they believed to be a compromised church. They utilized an ecclesiological schema of decline and restoration, and anticipated with eschatological fervency a new outpouring of the Holy

Spirit, which was believed to have commenced with the Azusa Street Revival in Los Angeles in 1906. The provenance of the doctrine of Spirit baptism proceeds from the different views of sanctification held by the Wesleyan-Holiness and Keswick sectors of the holiness movement and their respective influences on Pentecostalism. Wesleyan-Holiness preachers already taught two works of grace, regeneration and entire sanctification. Spirit baptism, as an experience of empowerment with the evidence of speaking in tongues, was considered a third work of grace. Keswick teachers advocated a similar experience of Spirit baptism as a second work of grace with sanctification being an ongoing process commencing in new birth. Those who became Pentecostal added the charismatic dimension to Spirit baptism. This division over the nature of sanctification eventually split the movement into two wings, the 'Finished Work' stream (out of the Keswick background) and the Wesleyan-Holiness stream. Oneness Pentecostals were born out of the 'Finished Work' stream in a 1913 revival in Arroyo Seco, California. They adopted a modalist view of God and thus became the smallest wing of the modern Pentecostal movement. They combined new birth and Spirit baptism with water baptism in the name of Jesus Christ (Jesus being the one name of God) into one act of Christian Initiation.

Needless to say this history reveals a variety in Pentecostal interpretations of Spirit baptism. For the most part (with minor exceptions) they hold to the doctrine of speaking in tongues as the initial evidence of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit. The section concludes by recognizing diversity in both communions, the importance of this dialogue due to the sheer numbers of Catholics and Pentecostals in worldwide Christianity, and a shared conviction about the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the church today (262).

Conclusion

The 'Conclusion' of the Report highlights the convergences already mentioned from each of the five sections with suggestions for future discussion. They include 'a restorationist view of Christian history, the nature of sacraments and ordinances, and the exercise of authority within the church, in addition to our varying principles for interpreting Scripture' (283). The Report urges at the very least a 'spiritual ecumenism,' a recognition 'in each other [of] a deep commitment to Christ,' and a call to an examination of conscience by

Catholics and Pentecostals who have referred to each other as members of a 'sect' or as 'non-Christian' (284), a necessity in some areas where there is still conflict between Catholics and Pentecostals, e. g. Latin America. Overall, the spirit of the document reveals a profound engagement between the communions that was as spiritual as it was theological.

Evaluation and Assessment

The Report is an ambitious contribution to ecumenism and one that operates on several levels. It grew out of an organic but unexpected confluence of interests within the actual world of renewal sparked from its origins in turn-of-the-century Pentecostal revival. In several places the Report intimates the working of divine providence. I have already mentioned the recognition of the Pentecostal movement as a work of God. The Report also envisions the ecumenical movement in similar terms (274). In the Conclusion of the Report the dialogue notes a 'fascinating parallel' on 1 January 1901 when Agnes Ozman prayed in tongues after seeking the Baptism in the Holy Spirit at the Bethel Bible College in Topeka, Kansas. It—Spirit baptism with evidential tongues—had been taught by Charles Parham whose student William J. Seymour later led the Azusa Street Revival in Los Angeles. On the same day 'Pope Leo XIII entrusted the new century to the Holy Spirit' (271). Whether readers want to recognize in this an act of divine providence remains to be seen. The Report does not say as much, but the reference is intriguing for a Final Report of an international bilateral dialogue.

Add to the above that one of the motivations for this topic emerged from Kilian McDonnell's study, an instance of how Catholic reception of Pentecostal experience and doctrine—the baptism in the Holy Spirit—led to a rereading of the tradition. Then, as a gesture in the reciprocity of gift-giving, Pentecostals engage their Catholic confreres in a mutual examination of the subject as it applies to Christian Initiation. In itself this represents a unique form of ecumenical study. Each communion explores new territory; Pentecostals investigating the Church Fathers and Catholics being receptive not only to charismatic phenomena but to the Pentecostal interpretation of it. The fruit of the dialogue awaits its reception in the churches and further developments if and when the bilateral continues. As for this Report several issues stand out.

First, short of the future work required on the hermeneutics of tradition, does the fact of this combined Catholic and Pentecostal reading of the Church Fathers help restore an urgent sense of the charismatic dimensions of Christian and ecclesial life? If, as Pentecostals believe, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit 'is a gift for the whole church' (279), how might this insight and invitation be further appropriated by the various ecclesial communions? I do not intend this as a promotion of charismatic renewal. Rather, what does the Pentecostal/Charismatic renewal signify for the churches and ecclesial communities?

Second, considering that experience is a pervasive category in contemporary theology and church life, does the sustained attention to experience in the Final Report enhance the assimilation of this rubric? I would answer in the affirmative since discussion of the relationship between grace and faith on the one hand, and the religious affections on the other, is crucial to maintaining the focus on experience within the broader context and framework of evangelization and Christian discipleship. While the markers may not be the same in other ecclesial traditions, these two communions on quite different ends of the spectrum of Christianity have managed to discover some common principles for embracing experience in service of the grace of Christ and deeper union with him. At stake is the authenticity of conversion along with the necessity in ecumenical dialogue of discerning how the work of the Spirit is operative in other ecclesial traditions while being receptive to the insights and gifts of one's interlocutors. By introducing experience into the gateway (Christian Initiation) and path (discipleship/Christian formation) of Christian life the dialogue implicates a broad sense of renewal that is evangelical and catholic.

Third, although one might have expected more agreement on the role of Spirit baptism or its equivalent in Christian Initiation, the Report did not arrive at a consensus except to 'recognize that the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, including the charismata ... is a source of renewal for the contemporary church' (279). I am not suggesting that this is a failure of the dialogue at this stage. However, it is noteworthy that biblical and patristic testimony to becoming a Christian and entering into the fullness of Christian life invites attention to the Spirit's empowering and strengthening as well as to new life in Christ. If Catholics and Pentecostals share this common

witness despite remaining differences, then this is a significant contribution to all ecumenical efforts wherein any real progress is a grace and gift from above. Such sentiments were likewise the exhortation of Pope John Paul II.

The power of God's Spirit gives growth and builds up the Church down the centuries. As the Church turns her gaze to the new millennium, she asks the Spirit for the grace to strengthen her own unity and to make it grow toward full communion with other Christians (*Ut unum sint*, 102).

THE SCOPE OF SALVATION: A WESLEYAN REFLECTION PROMPTED BY THE JOINT DECLARATION ON JUSTIFICATION

Norman Young*

*The Declaration on Justification made jointly by the Roman Catholic and Lutheran Churches, and with which the World Methodist Council concurs, is most significant, resolving as it does the longstanding dispute about **how** one is saved. However, a major question remains, namely **who** are the saved, main answers to which (predestination or universal saving grace) have divided the Christian community for centuries. This issue is further complicated by the way 'no salvation outside the church' has been interpreted. Here a way forward is suggested.*

The Joint Declaration on the doctrine of justification¹ is of great ecumenical significance because, as the preface notes, this doctrine 'was particularly asserted and defended in its Reformation shape and special valuation over against the Roman Catholic Church and theology of that time, which in turn asserted and defended a doctrine of justification of a different character.'² That the World Methodist Council has made its Statement of Association with the joint declaration³ is also of great importance because Wesley, like Luther, saw justification and its role in salvation by grace as central to Christian faith, holding to it as the main bulwark against what he saw

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¹ The Joint Declaration on the doctrine of justification by the Lutheran World Federation and the Catholic Church, 1999 (hereafter: JDDJ).

² Preamble, 1.

³ Methodist Statement of Association with the JDDJ, 2006 (hereafter: Statement).

as the grievous errors of Roman Catholicism. Along with Luther he was convinced that ‘nothing but this can effectually prevent the increase of Romish delusion among us ... it was this doctrine, which our Church justly calls the strong rock and foundation of Christian religion that first drove Popery out of these kingdoms, and it is this alone can keep it out.’¹ Strong words indeed, typical of Protestant opinion of the time (although out of harmony with Wesley’s later eirenic stance in his ‘Letter to a Roman Catholic’ of 1749); but now some 250 years later, ‘the Churches joined together in the World Methodist Council, welcome this agreement [on justification] with great joy. We declare that the common understanding of justification as it is outlined in the Joint Declaration corresponds to Methodist doctrine.’²

How has such convergence become possible? Nothing short of the history of the ecumenical movement, especially of the years since Vatican II, would give an adequate account. But without embarking on such a project, one thing is clear: as the Declaration indicates, ‘in their respective histories our churches have come to new insights.’ How did they come to these? Significantly, because of ‘our common way of listening to the word of God in Scripture.’³

This readiness to begin dialogue, not from set denominational doctrinal positions but with a mutual study of scripture and then a reappraisal of doctrine in the light of such study, has been a feature of most national and international dialogues of the past fifty years.⁴ So this is the approach followed in the Joint Declaration, whose major section on ‘The biblical message of justification’ cites a multitude of references from the Old Testament, and from the Gospels and Epistles of the New. All of these relate in one way or another to the question of

¹ John Wesley, *Sermon on ‘Salvation by Faith’*, Jackson 14 vol. edition 1856, V, 13. Insofar as this opposition to ‘popery’ had a theological basis, it was the view that Catholics held to a doctrine of justification by works. However, the Council of Trent documents make it clear that the Council anathematized such a doctrine (Session VI, Jan. 1547), so that those Catholics who did hold such a view were going against official Catholic doctrine.

² Statement, 2.

³ JDDJ, 2.

⁴ As I can testify from my own involvement in Methodist and then Uniting Church dialogue with the Catholic Church in Australia, and in Methodist/Catholic dialogue internationally.

how we are saved—by grace through faith—enabling the affirmation to be made: ‘Together we confess: By grace alone, in faith in Christ’s saving work and not because of any merit on our part, we are accepted by God and receive the Holy Spirit, who renews our hearts while equipping and calling us to good works.’¹

* * *

While rejoicing in this convergence of views on how we are saved and Methodist association therewith, I think it is important to reflect on a divergence between Luther and Wesley on one significant aspect of justification, namely ‘**who** are the saved?’ Nowhere in the Joint Declaration is there indication of who the ‘we’ refers to in such statements as ‘by faith ... we are accepted by God’, and in all the citing of biblical texts, none are included that refer to election, predestination, God’s choosing. But it is precisely when biblical references that affirm salvation by grace through faith and not any merit of our own are set alongside others on judgement that imply ‘not all are saved’ that the question of who are saved arises, both as a problem for theology and a challenge to faith. If salvation comes from God alone and does not depend upon people deserving to be saved, why are some accepted into God’s kingdom and others not?

Over the centuries Christians have been divided on this, opting for one of two different approaches, both of which have scriptural warrant and various nuanced versions.

One claims that God chooses to save some and not others, citing Rom. 8:28-30 for example in support (*Whom God foreknew he also predestined...*). The other asserts that some choose to accept the salvation offered in Christ, others reject it, citing such passages as John 3:16ff (*Those who believe in him are not condemned; those who do not believe are condemned already...*). While Luther and Wesley were at one at so many points and Wesley acknowledged Luther’s transforming influence in his own life,² they came to different conclusions about this issue of salvation and election, Luther opting for the first approach, Wesley the second.

¹ JDDJ, 15.

² As did brother Charles. John’s ‘heartwarming’ experience occurred, as is well known, while listening to the reading of Luther’s preface to Romans. Not so well known is that Charles’s similar experience at about the same time was associated with his reading of Luther’s commentary on Galatians.

Questions arise, of course, with both approaches. The first raises all the problems associated with election, especially of God's selectivity, partiality, and the injustice of perceived arbitrary choosing, and of human responsibility if response is already predetermined. The second raises questions about God's sovereignty if human capacity to reject God's offer of salvation is stronger than his will to save, and also about human freedom of choice. Is such freedom to respond real when circumstances prevent the hearing of the genuine Gospel?

Those who have espoused one view or the other have endeavoured to address the problems associated with their approach. Luther and Calvin, following Augustine, maintained that in the fall, natural freedom to choose the good is totally destroyed. Only those whom God chooses to receive justifying grace are able to come to that faith through which salvation is received. The rest remain forever outside the sphere of salvation.

It should be noted in this regard that the Lutheran 'Formula of Concord' (1577) distanced itself from some of the conclusions that could be drawn from Luther's view of 'the Bound Will'. Agreeing that 'We are not to investigate predestination in the secret counsel of God, but it is to be looked for in his Word', this leads us to the scriptural witness to Christ 'which clearly testifies that "God has consigned all men to disobedience that he may have mercy on us all" (Rom. 11:32)' and that 'he does not want anyone to perish but that everyone should repent and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.' And in opposition to the Calvinist doctrine of double election, repudiates the assertion that 'God has predestined certain people to damnation so that they cannot be saved.' (Article XI)¹

The Council of Trent followed the other approach, maintaining that natural freedom and goodness are not totally destroyed. Justification by faith alone is universal and unconditional, whereas sanctification depends upon human response and obedience. Sanctification, real growth in holiness, is imparted through the work of the Holy Spirit, whereas for the Reformers, sanctification as well as justification is imputed insofar as those who are in Christ are clothed with his righteousness without being able to claim any of their own.

Wesley can be seen as taking a mediating position with, it has commonly been said (not entirely accurately) 'a Protestant view of sin

¹ 'The Formula of Concord' in *The Book of Concord* (Phil.: Fortress, 1959).

and a Catholic view of grace'. With the Reformers Wesley maintained that natural freedom and goodness are totally destroyed by the fall. But, he maintained, none of us is now in a mere state of nature because of the universal effects of the atoning work of Christ, chief among which is the restoration of natural freedom through prevenient grace. This sets us free in faith to choose to receive, or not to receive, God's saving grace. Thus justified, growth in holiness toward perfection becomes possible through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

So, although he does not side with Trent in asserting freedom to choose as a natural endowment, Wesley does agree that it is now universal. He also agrees with the Catholic view that sanctification is not 'alien', but a growth in real holiness through the work of the Spirit. And in answer to the predestinarian objection that choosing to reject God's offer of salvation is to deny God's sovereignty, he maintains that the Creator-God 'self-limited' in the first place by granting freedom to human creatures. Such divine self-limitation is manifest again in the incarnation.

* * *

It will not be surprising to the reader to know that as a Methodist within the Uniting Church in Australia, the approach that I find most persuasive is Wesley's version of saving grace, 'free for all and in all'. Nevertheless there is more to be said.

First, Luther was never easily to come to terms with the doctrine of predestination. On the contrary, it should be remembered that Luther's crisis of faith as an Augustinian monk came about through his horror at the notion of a God who predetermined the fate of human beings, no matter what they did and said, and with no way of knowing whether they were among the saved or not. However, under the guidance of his confessor and through diligent study of scripture a different view of God came to claim Luther's allegiance: not the God of judgement but the God of mercy. 'The judge upon the rainbow has become the derelict upon the cross ... in the very act of judging the sinners he has made himself one with the sinner.'¹ There is no way that reason can fathom this; it can be grasped only by faith. This appeal to faith rather than to reason is a constant theme when Luther addresses the doctrine of election. For example:

¹ Roland Bainton, *The Reformation of the sixteenth century* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1963), 34.

God hides His eternal and unspeakable goodness and mercy under eternal wrath, His justice under injustice. And herein is the highest degree of faith: to believe that the God who makes so few souls blessed is nevertheless the most merciful God; to believe that the God whose will it is that some should be condemned is nonetheless the most just God ... as reason cannot understand, faith is there, and you can practise faith when such things are preached to you.¹

It is this faith in a merciful God to which Luther directs those who are deeply troubled, as he had been, by the notion of predestination. A letter to Barbara Lisskirchen (30 April 1531) is most significant in this regard, warranting an extensive quotation:

Your dear brother Jerome Waller has informed me that you are sorely troubled about election. I am sorry to hear this. May Christ our Lord deliver you from this temptation.

I know all about this affliction. I was myself brought to the brink of eternal death by it. I shall show you how God helped me out of this trouble and by what means I now protect myself against it every day ...

In this way and no other does one learn how to deal properly with the question of predestination: It will be manifest that you believe in Christ. If you believe, then you are called. And if you are called then you are most certainly predestinated. Do not let this mirror and throne of grace be taken away from before your eyes.²

For Luther then, while the doctrine of election could not be denied because grounded in scripture, it portrayed a view of God not readily reconciled with the God of compassion revealed in Jesus Christ. Moreover, any attempts to fathom this mystery by reason are bound to fail and are to be avoided as the work of the devil. The fact of election must simply be accepted in faith and then dwelt upon no longer. Luther's counsel to those who remain troubled is always the same: 'Nothing but anxiety can be gained from forever tormenting oneself with the question of election. Therefore, avoid and flee from such thoughts as from the temptation of the serpent in paradise and

¹ Martin Luther, 'On the enslaved will.' Quoted in *Day by day we magnify Thee* (Phil.: Muhlenberg, 1950), 239. This appeal to faith ('open thine ears') rather than to reason ('shut thine eyes') is made repeatedly when Luther addresses the most profound aspects of belief, e.g. the incarnation, 'that the Creator should become the creature ...'

² *Letters of spiritual counsel* in Library of Christian Classics, vol. XVIII (London: SCM, 1955), 115-6.

direct your attention to Christ.¹

Luther's advice in this regard and his invoking the Romans passage as the context in which to consider election finds a striking parallel in Susannah Wesley's response to son John when, in 1725, he sought her advice on the same issue:

I have often wondered that men should be so vain to amuse themselves by searching into the decrees of God which no human wit can fathom ... such studies tend more to compound than inform the understanding and young people had best let them alone. But since I find you have some scruples concerning our article on predestination, I will tell you my thoughts on the matter ...

I firmly believe that God from all eternity hath elected some to everlasting life, but then I humbly conceive that this election is founded in His foreknowledge, according to Romans viii, 29, 30 ... Whom He did foreknow He did also predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son. Moreover, whom He did predestinate, them He also called, and whom He called, them He also justified, and whom He justified them He also glorified ...

[this] does in no way derogate from the glory of God's free grace, nor impair the liberty of man; nor can it with more reason be supposed that the prescience of God is the cause that so many finally perish than that our knowing the sun will rise tomorrow is the cause of its rising.²

As Harrison, in quoting this letter, comments, "This letter is worth quoting ... because John Wesley was largely what that remarkable woman, his mother, made him."³

A further note on Wesley. For many years he held that rejection of the doctrine of predestination as Luther and Calvin held it was a matter belonging to the centre of the faith and not 'mere opinion'. However, in accordance with his conviction that the validity of belief should always be judged by experience, later in life he was inclined to move the doctrine more in the direction of opinion. So, in a letter of 14 May 1765, to an unknown friend, he wrote:

My brother and I reasoned thirty years ago, thinking it our duty to oppose Predestination with our whole strength, not as an opinion but as a dangerous mistake, which appears to be subversive of the very

¹ *Letters of spiritual counsel*, 138.

² 18 July 1725, cited in A.W. Harrison, *Arminianism* (London: Duckworth, 1937), 189-90.

³ *Ibid.* 190.

foundation of Christian experience; and which has, in fact, given occasion to the most grievous offences.

That it has given occasion to such offences I know; I can name time, place and persons. But still another fact stares me in the face. Mr H— and Mr. N— hold this, and yet I believe these have real Christian experience. But if so, then it is only an opinion: it is not ‘subversive’ (here is clear proof to the contrary) ‘of the very foundation of Christian experience.’ It is ‘compatible with love to Christ, and a genuine work of grace.’ Yea, many hold it, at whose feet I desire to be found in the day of the Lord Jesus.¹

Second. Although those of us who stand in the tradition of Wesley find his affirmation of grace ‘free for all and in all’ more acceptable than that of ‘saving grace only for the elect’, nevertheless for each interpretation there is a dimension of mystery, a problem that cannot be answered without destroying a basic tenet of the approach taken. For predestinarians, the question: ‘Why does God elect these and not those?’ is not merely difficult to answer; it cannot be answered without destroying God’s sovereign freedom. For Wesleyans, the question: ‘What leads some to accept God’s grace while others do not?’ cannot be answered without destroying human freedom to choose. In addition Wesleyans need to acknowledge that the claim that freedom of choice destroyed in the fall is restored by the atoning work of Christ begins to look like no more than a theological construct when the experience of many is taken into account. What of those who have never heard of Christ, or have heard of distorted versions that warrant rejection, or are immersed in the culture of a different religion? If their salvation does depend upon their choice, do they have real choice, or have circumstances effectively denied it?

Third, it is reflecting on this last issue in particular that has led me to take an alternative approach which I hope is true to Wesley in this regard—that it is an attempt to reconsider doctrine in the light of experience. It begins with questioning one of the two propositions that has led to the ‘free grace or predestination’ dispute from the beginning, viz. the assertion that ‘not all are saved’. This questioning may seem to fly in the face of numerous New Testament passages about judgement at the last day that picture separation of the righteous and the saved from the unrighteous and the lost, with the latter condemned to eternal punishment. But do these passages have

¹ Wesley, *Works III*, 201-2.

to be interpreted as prediction of what **will** inevitably happen, rather than of what **may** happen? Is it not possible to read these as prophetic warning intended to redirect the recalcitrant so that they may be saved, just as Jonah's dire warnings to Nineveh achieved God's aim, much to the prophet's chagrin! This is not to say that I am able to affirm the universalist 'all will be saved.' Rather I hold out the hope that in the providence of God the category 'not saved', which, given human freedom, must remain open, may ultimately turn out to have no members.

Karl Barth, it will be remembered, reinterpreted the doctrine of election by maintaining that God still speaks the 'no' and the 'yes', but that in Christ God has taken the 'no' upon himself so that the 'yes' may now be spoken to all. When criticised by those who charged that this was 'universalism', Barth replied:

Does this mean universalism? I wish here to make only three short observations, in which one is to detect no position for or against what passes among us under this term.

One should not surrender himself in any case to the panic which this word seems to spread abroad, before informing himself exactly concerning its possible sense or non-sense.

One should at least be stimulated by the passage, Colossians 1:19, which admittedly states that God has determined through His Son as His image and as first-born of the whole Creation to 'reconcile all things (ta panta) to himself', to consider whether the concept could not perhaps have a good meaning. The same can be said of parallel passages.

... This much is certain, that we have no theological right to set any sort of limits to the loving-kindness of God which has appeared in Jesus Christ. Our theological duty is to see and understand it as being greater than we had seen before.¹

* * *

A final observation. One might conclude from what has been written above that post-Reformation the question 'Who are the saved?' leads to a largely intra-Protestant debate. There is, however, an important feature that has also led to its being an issue between Protestants and Catholics, namely how to interpret the time-honoured dictum *salus extra ecclesiam non est*, 'outside the church there is no

¹ K. Barth, *The humanity of God* (London: Collins, 1961), 61-2.

salvation', first formulated by Cyprian of Carthage. His concern was to repudiate the validity of baptisms carried out by a heretical group, and to deny that such baptisms could initiate into the true church and thus to the sphere of salvation.

This same principle has been invoked in various contexts ever since by theologians and Councils, declarations and encyclicals. Innocent III, for example, in his affirmation prescribed for the Waldensians (1208) declared: 'There is but one Church, the Holy Roman Catholic Church, outside which we believe that no one is saved.' Similarly the Fourth Lateran Council (1215) in opposition to the Albigensians. Boniface VIII took a decisive step in his *Unam Sanctam* (1302), making it clear that 'the Church' in this dictum referred to that body whose head on earth is the bishop of Rome: 'We declare, say, define, pronounce that it is absolutely necessary for the salvation of every human creature to be subject to the Roman Pontiff.' This view was reiterated by Eugene IV in *Cantate Domino* (1441): 'None of those existing outside the Catholic Church... can have a share in life eternal.'

Although coming, of course, to define 'church' differently,¹ Luther himself subscribed to the *non salus...* dictum. As he wrote: 'He who would find Christ must first find the Church ... the company of believing people; one must hold to them and see how they believe, live and teach; they surely have Christ in their midst. For outside the Christian Church there is no truth, no Christ, no salvation.'² Those, however, who maintained that true Church existed only where the authority of the Pope was accepted, were convinced that Luther and other Reformation leaders had put themselves and their faith-communities (including, of course, Lutherans and Methodists) outside the sphere of salvation, and that view prevailed officially in the Roman Catholic Church until mid-twentieth century.³ As late as 1943 the *extra ecclesiam* stricture was invoked, once again when there was a perceived threat to the life of faith and the integrity of the Church.

¹ Typically expressed in the Confession of Augsburg, 1530 as 'the congregation of the saints, in which the Gospel is rightly taught and the sacraments rightly administered.'

² Sermons II, vol. 52, 39-40. Cited in Luther's Works, ed. Hillerbrand and Lehmann (Phil.: Fortress, 1974).

³ Karl Rahner sought to modify the definitive nature of the exclusion by allowing salvation to what he called 'anonymous Christians', and others shared his views, paving the way to the change of emphasis at Vatican II.

The expanding ecumenical movement leading to the founding of the World Council of Churches was seen to undermine the vital significance of the visible unity of the Church under one Head, replacing it with what was interpreted as a diminished if not spurious 'spiritual' unity of like-mindedness and good intentions. Hence *Mystici Corporis* (1943):

It is an aberration from divine truth to represent the Church as something intangible and invisible, as a mere 'pneumatic' entity joining together by an invisible link a number of communities of Christians in spite of their differences in faith ... We invite those who do not belong to the [Roman Catholic] Church to yield their free consent to the inner stirrings of God's grace and strive to extricate themselves from a state in which they cannot be secure of their salvation.

Vatican II confirmed a major, some would say seismic shift in the Catholic Church's approach to this issue. Contrast the foregoing with some sentences from *The Decree on Ecumenism* (1964):

Despite our disagreements, people whose faith has brought them acceptance with God in baptism are incorporated in Christ. It is right that they should be distinguished with the name Christian and they deserve to be recognized by the children of the Catholic Church as their brothers and sisters in the Lord ... Many of the sacred actions of the Christian religion are performed among our separated brethren. There is no doubt that they are capable of giving real birth to the life of grace in which they differ according to the nature of the individual Church or community, and it must be granted that they are capable of giving admission to the community of salvation.

Such a forthright declaration and the attitude it represents have given rise to the various dialogues, national and international, in which the Roman Catholic Church has been engaging, resulting in a number of landmarking documents and agreements, including, of course the Joint Declaration on Justification which has prompted this article. But what now is the status of the *extra ecclesiam non salus est*? Logic suggests either that it is no longer applicable, or that the definition of Church is no longer to be so closely tied to accepting the Primacy of the Bishop of Rome. However, neither option seems to have been unambiguously embraced.

Certainly nowhere in documents emanating from the Vatican (including those of Vatican II) have churches originating at the Reformation been referred to as part of 'the Church', and in order to

correct any tendency so to do among the Catholic faithful the Clarification from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith 'on questions relating to the doctrine of the Church' (2007) insists that those ecclesial communities that stem from the Reformation should not be called 'Church', because:

According to Catholic doctrine, these Communities do not enjoy apostolic succession in the sacrament of Orders, and are, therefore, deprived of a constitutive element of the Church. These ecclesial Communities which, specifically because of the absence of the sacramental priesthood, have not preserved the genuine and integral substance of the Eucharistic Mystery cannot, according to Catholic doctrine, be called 'Churches' in the proper sense.

Has then the doctrine 'outside the Church, no salvation?' been abandoned? Although there has been no explicit denial, a careful reading of *Dominus Jesus* (2000) reveals a subtle shift in the way the link between salvation and the Church is understood. The necessity of the Church for salvation is reaffirmed, but not the absolute necessity of being 'formally and visibly members of the Church' in order to be in the sphere of salvation. However, the exact relation between the Church and saving grace for those outside its membership remains a mystery.

It must be firmly believed that the Church, a pilgrim now on earth, is necessary for salvation: the one Christ is the mediator of the way of salvation; he is present to us in his body which is the Church ...

For those who are not formally and visibly members of the Church, salvation through Christ is accessible by virtue of a grace which, while having a mysterious relation to the Church, does not make them formally part of the Church, but enlightens them in a way which is accommodated to their spiritual and material situation ... This grace comes from Christ, and is the result of his sacrifice and is communicated by the Holy Spirit; it has a relation with the Church which according to the plan of the Father, has her origin in the mission of the Son and the Holy Spirit. (par.20)

It seems to me that this does amount to a re-phrasing of the original dictum—from *outside the Church there is no salvation* to *without the Church there is no salvation*. Luther would concur with both of those versions, Wesley with the second, and both would agree that in the final instance the 'who' as well as the 'how' of salvation lies in the mystery of God's gracious dealing with the whole of humanity.

THE FIGURE OF MARY FROM ISRAEL TO THE CHURCH IN THE ORTHODOX TRADITION

Dom Nicholas Egender OSB*

Both Catholic and Orthodox traditions lay particular stress on Mary's role in the history of salvation. The Catholic West's tendency to express this through dogmatic definition is at first sight regarded as an ecumenical difficulty. The East's religious imagination, expressing faith and devotion within the liturgy, can be even more arresting than the various Catholic declarations. The early Jerusalem feasts, Scriptural texts and hymnography concerning Mary in the Eastern liturgical traditions, reveal veneration for Mary as more than corroboration for belief in the Incarnate Christ, as she embodies all the images and faith anticipating his coming throughout the Old Testament, from the Burning Bush, to the Temple and the Ark itself. Similarly, the East's long identification of Mary with the Divine Wisdom remains a living tradition, penetrating the mystery of the Church where her Motherhood within, rather than above, sanctifies it and makes the tradition bear its fruit.

The Orthodox theologian Sergei Bulgakov titled his book on the 'Virgin Mary Most Holy', which came out in 1926, *The Burning Bush*.¹ He was thus re-receiving one of the images from the Bible that the

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¹ French translation, *Le Buisson Ardent*, by Constantin Andronikof (Lausanne: L'Age d'Homme, 1987). English translation, *The Burning Bush: On the Orthodox Veneration of the Mother of God*, by Thomas Allan Smith (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009).

Christian tradition—with particular favour in the East—applies to Mary. The burning bush, one of the incidents from the Exodus accompanying the giving of the Torah on Sinai that transformed the people of the Hebrews into the *people of God*, was linked from the outset with the mystery of the incarnation of the Word and the Theotokos.¹ The manifestation of the Divine Name (in other words, the very being of God) brings together the revelation of Emmanuel (meaning *God-with-us*, which corresponds to the Name revealed at the burning bush, *YHWH, the One Who Is Present*) and his Name *Yeshua, Jesus, God-who-saves* (Matt. 1:21-23). This image thus demonstrates how inseparable the mother of Jesus is from the mystery of Israel and the mystery of the Incarnation.

There are other examples of the same idea. The three major Marian feasts—her Nativity on the 8th September, her Presentation in the Temple on the 21st November and her Dormition on the 15th August (the first and last introduced into the West in the seventh century and the 21st November in the fourteenth century)—were each feasts of dedication at churches in Jerusalem honouring Mary. They are:

- the Church of St Anne for the Nativity;
- the new church of the Theotokos, the *Nea*,² built by Justinian to commemorate the Council of Chalcedon and consecrated on 21 November 543. Its proximity to the site of the Temple suggested the choice of the name, which was also inspired by the Proto-Gospel of St James.
- As for the Dormition, the death of Mary, kept on the 15th August,

¹ Trans. note: Being nowadays very familiar, the term *Theotokos* is left untranslated rather than rendered where it occurs in Dom Nicholas' text as 'Mother of God' (which is not an exact translation), or 'God-bearer' (which would translate *Theophoros*, a title applied to the human Jesus according to the error of Nestorius and therefore doubly inappropriate for referring to Mary). The Latin equivalent, *Deipara*, does not directly translate into English, and so the better known *Theotokos* is preferred.

² The Church of the Holy Mother of God, was built as the New Temple on the western hill of the city of Jerusalem, in what is now the Jewish Quarter, to overlook and surpass the old Second Temple, which had been destroyed by Hadrian, and to restore the ancient First Temple in scale, sacred furnishings and aspects of worship—the mystery of the Mother of God thus realising as a spiritual temple the faith of ancient Israel. See Margaret Barker, 'The New Temple', in *Sourozh*, February 2006.

this is associated with the dedication of a church on the road from Jerusalem to Bethlehem, on the site of the well of Abraham, where Mary and Joseph had stopped on their way to Bethlehem. It was here that Mary, realising her death was close and wanting to see once more the place of Jesus' birth, stopped for a rest (*Kathisma, Mariarast*) on her journey.

These happy associations of place and story put Mary forward as symbol, type of the Church; but the way they do this is by retracing their steps through the Scriptures back to Abraham. Thus a single vision of Mary brings together the Church—the people of God, the new Israel—with the Israel of the Covenant at Sinai, with Moses and Abraham.

In a subject so vast as the figure of the Theotokos in her relation to Israel and the Church, I would like just to pick out three strands:

- First, by making an inventory of some of the Biblical images applied to Mary;
- Secondly, by seeing how the liturgy and above all Orthodox hymnography makes use of these images; and
- Third, by identifying the images relating most closely to the Temple, the Ark and Wisdom.

1) **Biblical Imagery**

The Biblical images referring to Mary in the Orthodox tradition are beyond counting, especially in the liturgy. One could say, 'in terms of inspiration arising from the Scriptures, the Eastern liturgy far surpasses the liturgy of the West, especially the Roman liturgy.'¹

Much more than with other truths of the Christian faith, speaking of Mary demands a spiritual sensitivity of the finest subtlety, characterised with discretion and poetic awareness.

In a way, Mary appears 'clothed' with the whole of Scripture. She is not only the new Eve, but the Burning Bush, the Branch of Jesse, Jacob's Ladder, the furnace in Babylon, the tongs of burning coal in Isaiah's vision, the symbols of the Exodus and the Temple—the Tabernacle, the Ark of the Covenant, the Mercy Seat, the table for the bread of the presence, the altar of burnt offerings, the altar of incense, the lampstand, the censer—the rod of Aaron, the cloth of royal purple

¹ Thierry Maertens OSB, 'Le développement liturgique et historique du culte de la Vierge', *Paroisse et liturgie*, vol. 36, (Brugge, 1954), 249.

(recalling how Mary from her own blood 'weaves' Jesus in her womb), Gideon's fleece, the misty, luminous cloud which gives birth to the light, the mountain of God, Mount Zion and the house of Wisdom. All of these symbols have their roots in the mystery of the Incarnation that they seek to illustrate. Mary, the Theotokos, the mother of Jesus, she who has been the parent to God, is the hearth at the centre of them, the *focus* (fire) on which they all converge, the tangible sign, the key to what the halting speech of humanity is trying to express about this central mystery of God's plan for salvation, which,

*ineffable to Angels and to humans,
the strange mystery, prophesied from eternity
is conceived today in the womb of chaste Anna,
Mary, child of God, prepared as a dwelling
for the universal King of the ages
and the refashioning of our race.*¹

In approaching this inexpressible mystery, Orthodoxy prefers just to move within the context provided by the wealth of Biblical imagery. It has never seen the need to proclaim Marian doctrines, being content with the Council of Ephesus in 431. The reactions of Orthodox theologians towards defining the Immaculate Conception (in 1854)² and also the Assumption (in 1950) as necessary dogmas are well known. They criticised the definitions for being superfluous, since in the first place people had always believed them and in the second it was the West that adopted the observance of both feasts from the East to begin with. Orthodoxy is no less reticent and critical about some of the titles accorded to Mary in the West, such as *Co-Redemptrix* (deliberately avoided at Vatican II) or *Mother of the Church*.³ Yet at

¹ Byzantine Vespers for the 9th December, Conception by St Anna, mother of the Theotokos, First Tone, by St Germanos. Translation © Archimandrite Ephrem from the Menaion—see <<http://www.anastasis.org.uk>>.

² Sergei Bulgakov's book, *Le Buisson Ardent*, is an answer to the definition of the Immaculate Conception as a dogma.

³ Alexis Kniazeff in *La Mère de Dieu dans l'Église orthodoxe* (Paris: Cerf, 1990), 215, expresses his reservations in a spirit of ecumenical dialogue: 'This formula seems to place the Mother of God above the Church. But, she is in the Church and not above the Church considered as a distinct entity. One could even say that she is the Church, in that by dint of her role as Mother towards all the redeemed she bears within her the mystery of the Incarnation which is also that of the Church. So she is the mystical centre of the Church, its archetype,

the same time it makes use of others that are actually more startling.

2) Liturgy and Hymnography

Furthermore it is in the inexhaustible treasure of the liturgy, and particularly in its hymnography and the selection of readings from the Bible, that Orthodoxy finds expression for its faith in the mystery of the Theotokos, sometimes in quite bold terms that can take Western Christians by surprise. Thus Mary is the only one who, alongside Christ, is addressed with the invocation, 'Save us'—'Most holy Mother of God, save us!' (*Hyperagia Theotoke, sōson hymas*)—while for the other saints the invocation is, 'Pray for us' (*presbeue hyper hymōn*). Orthodox theologians say that Mary exerts more than her intercession or protection: she exerts her mediation. The concept occurs frequently:¹

*Virgin Mother of God, we praise you
as the means of the salvation of our race;
for your Son and our God, who through the Cross
accepted suffering in the flesh he had taken from you,
has redeemed us from corruption,
for he loves mankind.*²

Right from the appearance of the feast of the Theotokos on the 15th August in Jerusalem at the beginning of the fifth century,³ the choice

its personification, the Mother of the living people called to be the Church, but not the Mother of the Church.'

¹ See Joseph Ledit SJ, *Marie dans la liturgie de Byzance* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1979), 303-313; and Constantin Andronikof, 'La Théotokos médiatrice du salut dans la Liturgie', in *La Mère de Jésus-Christ et la Communion des saints dans la liturgie - Conférences Saint-Serge: XXXIe Semaine d'Études Liturgiques, Paris, 25-28 juin 1985*, ed. A. M. Triacca & A. Pistoia, Edizioni Liturgiche, Bibliotheca Ephemerides Liturgicae Subsidia, no. 37, Rome, 1986, 29-44. Andronikof was Bulgakov's French translator.

² Sunday, Third Tone, Vespers, Theotokion. Translation © Archimandrite Ephrem from the Paraklitiki (Oktoechos)— see <<http://www.anastasis.org.uk>>.

³ The *Lectionnaire arménien* (early 5th century), ed. Athanase (Charles) Renoux OSB, *Patrologia Orientalis* XXXVI, fasc.2, no. 168, 1971, p. 355 (217), already knows of this feast being kept 'at the second milestone from Bethlehem'. The *Grand Lectionnaire de l'Église de Jérusalem* (5th-8th centuries), ed. Michael Tarchnischvili (*Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium*, vol. 205, Louvain, 1960, tome II, 26-28) knows of two observances, the first a dedication festival on the 13th August at the *Kathisma*, the Church of Mary's 'reposing', the second at Gethsemane commemorating the Theotokos. At the present day

of readings indicates the meaning of the mystery of Mary:

- Isaiah 7.10-16: 'the virgin shall ... bear a son';
- Galatians 3.29 – 4.7: 'God sent his Son, born of a woman';
- Luke 2:1-7: the account of the Nativity; and
- the two psalms – 109/110, for the enthronement of the Messiah King, and 131/132, for the ascent of the Ark: 'Rise up, Lord, into your resting place, you and the ark of your sanctuary.'¹

The mystery of the Incarnation is central. As the commemoration on August 15th spread to other sites in Jerusalem, like the tomb of the Virgin at Gethsemane, the texts multiplied and the allusions became even more obvious:

- the epithalamium in Ps. 44/45, which truly became Mary's psalm;
- Gen. 28:10-18: Jacob's Ladder;
- Ezek. 43:27-44:5: the closed east Gate of the Temple;
- Prov. 9:1-11: the House of Wisdom;
- Exod. 40:1-34 (some verses): consecration of the Tabernacle; and
- 3 (or 1) Kgs. 8:1-11: consecration of the Temple of Solomon.

Witness too the depiction of the Burning Bush in iconography. The same choosing of Scripture for more explicit allusions to Mary occurred with New Testament readings:

- The Christological hymn from Phil. 2:5-11;
- The description of the Tabernacle, and *Yom Kippur*, the Day of

there is a very popular procession on the 25th August (Gregorian calendar = 12th August Julian) from the little monastery facing the *Anastasis* (the Basilica of the Resurrection integral to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem), once known as 'the House of Mary', in the *Hagia Sion*, the Patriarchal Theological College. The procession makes its way across the Old City to the Tomb of the Virgin, marking the laying down of her body in readiness for the Assumption on the 28th August (Gregorian = 15th August Julian Calendar). The traditional place of the Falling Asleep of the Virgin is marked by the Benedictine Abbey of the Dormition on the hill nowadays known as Mount Zion overlooking the City of David to its east. In 1998 it dropped its old name of Dormition in favour of that of the old Byzantine Church on the site of which it stood—*Hagia (Maria) Zion*.

¹ Ps. 131:8 (132:8), translation from the Septuagint proposed by Archimandrite Ephrem, who observes that according probably to St Nicodemus of the Holy Mountain this verse is used by St Gregory Palamas in a sermon on the Dormition.

Atonement, in Heb. 9:1-7;

- The account of the Nativity of Jesus replaced by those of the Annunciation and the Visitation; and
- The account of the Nativity of Jesus replaced by the gospel narrative about Mary and Martha (Luke 10:38-42), with the addition, 'Blessed is the womb that bore you ... Blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it' (Luke 11:27-28).

The two Biblical feasts of the Annunciation on the 25th March (*Evangelismos*) and the Presentation of Christ in the Temple on the 2nd February (*Hypapantē*, 'meeting' or 'encounter') have furnished the Theotokos with a number of images and titles. The Akathist Hymn, part of which serves as the Kontakion for the 25th March, is a veritable Marian litany, each invocation beginning with the same word used by the angel Gabriel: '*Chaire*' – 'rejoice', or 'hail'. Here are a few of the verses:

Hail, star - that makes visible the Sun,

Hail, womb - of divine incarnation.

Hail, you through whom - creation - is renewed.

Hail, you through whom - the Creator - becomes a babe.

Hail, heavenly ladder - by which God came down,

Hail, bridge, leading - those from earth to heaven.

Hail, wonder - well-known - among the angels,

Hail, wound - much lamented - by the demons.

Hail, acceptable incense of intercession,

Hail, propitiation for the whole world.

Hail, good pleasure - of God - towards mortals,

Hail, freedom of speech - of mortals - towards God.

Hail, food, successor of the manna,

Hail, minister of holy delight.

Hail, land of the promise,

Hail, land from which flow milk and honey.

Hail, tabernacle of God the Word

Hail, greater Holy of Holies.

Hail, Ark - gilded by the Spirit,

Hail, inexhaustible - treasure of life.¹

¹ Excerpts from the Akathist to the Holy Virgin, attributed to St Romanos the Melodist. Trans. © Archimandrite Ephrem, which brings out the contrasts, alliterations and allusions in the couplets in English—see <<http://www.anastasis.org.uk>> and the same author's Orthodox Prayer Book, 2009.

And the processional chant for the 2nd February, which the Roman liturgy adopted from the East and which thus was once chanted in both Greek and Latin (*Adorna*), is well known:

*Adorn your bridal chamber, O Sion,
and receive Christ the King.
Greet Mary, the gate of heaven,
for she is shown to be the Cherubim Throne.
She carries the King of glory.
The Virgin is a cloud of light,
bearing in the flesh a Son before the Morning Star.
Simeon took him in his arms
and proclaimed to peoples that he is the Master of life and death
and the Saviour of the world.¹*

The fund of Marian hymns is inexhaustible. The texts for them flood forth in their hundreds, veritable flowers, genuine pearls – but they show that no one can understand Mary without also understanding both the Old and the New Testaments.

Out of this abundance here are some further examples drawn from the Ethiopian liturgy. This liturgical tradition, which has more than two hundred Marian feasts, is strongly marked by the Hebrew Scriptures, especially where they are at their most lyrically exuberant.

*Come, all the peoples from the East, from the West,
From the North and South, from near and far,
so you may hear and understand
The Book of the Covenant of Our Lady Mary,
Dove of Solomon, Daughter of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.
Our Lady brought down the serpent Badlāy
On the day of the birth of her son Adonāi.
To her be praise, to Him be thanks on earth and in heaven,
In the Cloud and in the abyss, to the ages of ages. Amen.²
You were the hope of Adam when he was chased from Paradise,
The mildness of Abel who was killed out of wickedness,
The virtue of Seth, the good deeds of Enoch,
The Ark in which Noah was saved from the awful Flood,
The blessing to Shem and his inheritance.*

¹ Idiomel from Great Vespers, At the Aposticha, by St Cosmas the Melodist. Translation © Archimandrite Ephrem from the Menaion—see <<http://www.anastasis.org.uk>>.

² Geneviève Nollet, 'Le culte de Marie en Éthiopie', in *Maria: Études sur la Sainte Vierge*, ed. Hubert du Manoir SJ, vol. 1 (Paris : Beauchesne, 1949), 373.

*To Abraham you were his pilgrimage, to Isaac the sweet odour,
 To Jacob the Ladder, to Joseph his consolation,
 To Moses the Tablets, on Sinai the Bush,
 To Aaron the bells on his robe.*

*O fleece of Gideon, basin of silver, Samuel's horn of oil,
 Root of Jesse, and his glory,
 Chariot of Amminadab, lyre of David, crown of Solomon,
 O Mary, daughter of Anne and Joachim, redemptrix of the whole world,
 O Mary, the keys of Peter, Paul's tent of witness,
 O Mary, the boat of Andrew's salvation,
 You, that make clear the vision of John,
 the force in the preaching of James the son of Zebedee,
 O Mary, girding Thomas with virginity,
 The confession of faith by James the son of Alphaeus,
 O Mary, grape from the vineyard of Bartholomew the apostle,
 O Mary, liberator of Matthias in his prison,
 O Mary, sister of the angels, daughter of the prophets,
 O Virgin, crown of the martyrs,
 Mother of the children and pride of the Churches.¹*

In every liturgical tradition, the Song of Songs is applied to Mary. Here is another example from the Ethiopian tradition:

*The beauty of your cheeks, Mary, is like the pomegranate flower
 And for me it has put the joy into my heart.
 Your miracles are more numerous than grains of wheat
 And the fruit of the vine.*

*The Paraclete-Dove cried through my mouth, saying,
 The time for the harvest has come.
 Here are the blossoming and the fragrances,
 Here is the wonder of you, the perfume that delights the Church.
 O Mary, while you let it drive me
 To run on the course of redemption,
 Make me flee like a gazelle or a young stag
 From before the face of sin,
 that sister of the serpent whose venom is death.*

*Rise up, bird of paradise, from the mountains of myrrh and aloes,
 Look into the Church through the windows.
 Mary, dove of prophecy, your miracles are delectable,
 Your wing is adorned with a white plume in silver
 And to your side there is a flower in pure gold.
 The gate of the garden, closed by the seraphim*

¹ Ibid. 377, 379.

*for the fault of Adam and Eve:
 Who could open it again, were it not your righteousness?
 Rejoice, Mary, leading Adam back from captivity.
 When through your miracle you went back in to the land of flowers,
 Eve leapt like a young heifer.¹*

3) Temple, Ark, Wisdom

Within this wealth of Biblical images, the Temple and the Ark are central, operating on two levels: the earthly Temple and the heavenly Temple. We have seen that Psalm 131/132, the psalm of the ascent of the Ark, was there from the first celebration of the feast of the Theotokos. The theme of the Ark as symbol of Mary represents a dynamic that began in the Exodus, with the construction and consecration of the tabernacle of meeting and all it contained, by way of the setting up of the Ark by David in Jerusalem, the Temple of Solomon and its consecration, and on to the Church, with the dedication of the Christian temples and their constant reference to the tangible and visible sign that is the Theotokos. And it leads still further to the heavenly temple into which is borne the Ark of holiness, Mary, on the feast of her Dormition and Assumption: 'Rise up, Lord, ... you and the ark of your sanctity'.²

So in one and the same visionary sweep, Mary is beheld as gate of heaven, an allusion to the Golden Gate of the Temple, closed to all but the Messiah, and the Ark, or, according to the vision of Ezekiel, the sapphire throne for the glory of the pre-incarnate Lord, an allusion to Mary's inviolate virginity.

By resorting to such images as these, the liturgy is not advocating literal interpretations of Biblical texts. Instead, it is offering an all-embracing panorama that suggests a whole range of ways to understand them, not insisting on one way or another, or confining things by too narrow a definition, but, through small hints – and indeed, with the boldness (*parrhēsia*) that comes from the Spirit, the occasional daring paradox – and abundant illuminating references. But the imagery returns again and again to the same mystery as the

¹ Ibid. 401-402.

² NETS. Quotations marked NETS are taken from *A New English Translation of the Septuagint*, ©2007 by the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies, Inc. Used by permission of Oxford University Press. All rights reserved.

texts, that of the Incarnation which reconciles humanity to God, heaven and earth, in the dynamism of God's marvellous design:

*O marvellous wonder!
The source of life is laid in a grave,
and the tomb becomes a ladder to heaven.
Be glad, O Gethsemane, the holy shrine of the Mother of God.
Let us the faithful cry, with Gabriel as our captain:
O Full of grace, hail! The Lord is with you,
who grants to the world through you his great mercy.*

*O wonder of your mysteries, pure Lady!
You were proclaimed the Throne of the Most High,
and you have passed today from earth to heaven.
Your glory is full of splendour, shining with grace in divine brightness.
O Virgins, with the Mother of the King, be raised to the heights.
O Full of grace, hail! The Lord is with you,
who grants to the world through you his great mercy.*

*Come, gathering of the lovers of festivals;
come, and let us form a choir;
come, let us garland the Church with songs
as the Ark of God goes to her rest.
For today heaven unfolds its bosom
as it receives the one who gave birth to him whom nothing can contain.
The earth, as it gives back the source of life,
is robed in blessing and majesty.
Angels with Apostles form a choir as they gaze with fear
while she who gave birth to the Prince of life
is translated from life to life.
Let us all worship her as we beg:
Sovereign Lady, do not forget your ties of kinship
with those who celebrate with faith your all-holy Falling Asleep.¹*

There exists an Akathist for the Dormition, but it is on similar lines to that for the Annunciation on the 25th March.² So instead, here are the antiphons to the *Magnificat*, to Psalms 148-150 and from the Eucharistic liturgy in the Armenian tradition for the feast of the Dormition, which is invariably kept on the Sunday nearest to the 15th

¹ From Great Vespers for the 15th August in the Byzantine Liturgy. Trans. © Archimandrite Ephrem from the Menaion—see <http://www.anastasis.org.uk>.

² Sévérien Salaville AA, 'Marie dans la liturgie byzantine', in *Maria: Études sur la Sainte Vierge*, vol. 1, ed. Hubert du Manoir SJ (Paris: Beauchesne, 1949), 316-322.

August (Gregorian) or the 28th August (Julian):

*You were raised up like an Ark,¹ holy Virgin, Mother of God,
In your womb, without seed, truly you carried God the Word.
Without ceasing, by our songs, we magnify you.*

*Gate of heaven, you carried the indescribable and incorruptible
Rising Sun sent by the Father,
Holding in your arms to feed at your breast,
With your holy Virgin's milk,
The one who took flesh from you.
Without ceasing, by our songs, we magnify you.*

*He has transported you into the heights on the chariot of the Cherubim,
Mother of God, whom the Seraphim serve
And before whom the angel armies bow down.
Without ceasing, by our songs, we magnify you.*

*Wonderful Virgin, like a pearl and clothed in purple,
The Son has taken you, brought you into heaven
And established you in the life beyond telling.
Therefore in our praises we say:
Blessed are you, God, the Only Son.*

*Beyond understanding is the power of the Spirit
Who enveloped with an immense light the Virgin's soul,
Transporting it in the light that words cannot describe,
Inaccessible and eternal.
Therefore in our praises we say:
Blessed are you, God, the Only Son.*

*Flower that never fades, preserved from condemnation,
The branch that grows from the stock of Jesse,
Isaiah foretold that you would be the vessel
For the sevenfold grace of the Spirit.
Mother of God and Virgin, we magnify you.*

*Spiritual seed of succulent fruit,
At your feet the endless harvest of grapes has been gathered for us,
To rejoice those who had been cast into darkness
By eating from the tree of knowledge.
Most holy Immaculate, we magnify you.²*

¹ The translation into French adds a further nuance: 'You were set up like an arch...' (cf. the Golden Gate again).

² Charles Renoux OSB, 'La fête de l'Assomption in the Armenian rite', in *La Mère de Jésus-Christ et la Communion des saints dans la liturgie - Conférences Saint-Serge: XXXIe Semaine d'Études Liturgiques, Paris, 25-28 Juin 1985*, ed. A.

It will be observed that the numerous stories about the Dormition, which the manuscripts have handed down to us in a variety of languages, all contain Judaeo-Christian elements which, outside of the context of the mystery of the Mother of God, are incomprehensible.¹ This takes these stories right back to the fourth and even the third centuries.

The theme of Wisdom building herself a house, applied to Mary, is present in all the liturgical traditions, including the Roman liturgy.² It is inspired by the book of Proverbs and the eulogy of Wisdom in the book of the Wisdom of Sirach, the book of Ecclesiasticus:

*The Lord created me as the beginning of his ways,
for the sake of his works:*

*Before the present age he founded me,
In the beginning.*

*Before he made the earth,
and before he made the depths...³*

*Wisdom built herself a house
And supported it with seven pillars.⁴*

*Before the age, from the beginning, he created me
And until the age I will never fail.*

*In a holy tent I ministered before him,
And thus in Sion I am firmly set.*

*In a beloved city as well he put me down,
And in Jerusalem was my authority.⁵*

M. Triacca & A. Pistoia, Edizioni Liturgiche, Bibliotheca Ephemerides Liturgicae Subsidia, no. 37, Rome, 1986, 252-253.

¹ Frédéric Manns OFM, *Le récit de la Dormition de Marie: Contribution à l'étude des origines de l'exégèse chrétienne*, Franciscan Printing Press, Studium Biblicum Franciscanum - Collectio Maior no. 33, (Jerusalem: 1989), 115ff. See also Michel van Esbroeck SJ, 'Les textes littéraires sur l'Assomption avant le X^e siècle', in François Bovon (ed.), *Les Actes Apocryphes des apôtres: Christianisme dans le monde païen*, (Geneva: Labor et Fides, 1981), 265-285 : 'Dormition de la Vierge'. Also, Simon Claude Mimouni, 'Dormition et Assomption de Marie: Histoire des traditions anciennes', *Théologie Historique*, no. 98 (Paris: Beauchesne, 1995).

² Louis Bouyer, *Le trône de la Sagesse*, Paris, Cerf, 1957, pp. 275-291. Published in English as *The Seat of Wisdom: An Essay on the place of the Virgin Mary in Christian Theology*, (New York: Pantheon Books, 1962).

³ Proverbs 8:23-24, NETS.

⁴ Proverbs 9:1, NETS.

⁵ Wisdom of Sirach (Ecclesiasticus) 24:9-11, NETS.

But for the development of a profound reflection on Wisdom, Mary and the Church, we look to the Russian theologians, such as Vladimir Solovyov (1853-1900),¹ Pavel Florensky (1882-1937),² Evgenij Trubeckoj (1863-1920) and Sergei Bulgakov (1871-1944). Thanks to this tradition, we can speak of a '*mariologie sophianique*', a 'Wisdom Mariology'.³ Thus Mary is called 'the heart of the Church', Christ being the head. Bulgakov writes:

The Wisdom of God is the pillar and foundation of truth, of which the accomplishment is the Mother of God. In that sense, the Theotokos is like the personified expression of Wisdom in creation, the personified image of the Church on earth.⁴

And Father Florensky writes:

Wisdom is Virginhood, the power from above that gives chastity and innocence. She who bears Virginhood, who is the Virgin in the proper and strict sense of the term, is Mariam, the Virgin full of grace, rendered 'grace-bearing' (*kecharitōmenē*) by the Holy Spirit, full of the Spirit's gifts and, in as much, truly the Church of God, the true Body of Christ, for it is from her that his Body has derived. If Wisdom is the whole of creation, so humanity—that is to say the soul and conscience of creation—is Wisdom par excellence. If Wisdom is the whole of humanity, so the Church—that is to say the soul and conscience of humanity—is Wisdom par excellence. If Wisdom is the Church, so the Church of the saints—that is to say the soul and conscience of the Church—is Wisdom par excellence. If Wisdom is the Church of the saints, so the soul and conscience of the Church of the saints is to know that she who intercedes for creation and protects it before the Word of God ... the Mother of God, 'Purifier of the world', is, again, Wisdom par excellence. Now the authentic sign of Mary, full of grace, is her Virginhood, the Beauty of her soul. And it is Wisdom.⁵

¹ See Judith Deutsch Kornblatt, *Divine Sophia: The Wisdom Writings of Vladimir Solovyov* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2009).

² See especially Pavel Florensky, *La colonne et le fondement de la vérité*, trans. Constantin Andronikof (Lausanne : L'Age d'Homme, 1975), Lettre X, *La Sophie* (Wisdom), 209-254. Fr Florensky was shot on 8 December 1937 at the Solovki prison labour camp. *La colonne...* was published in English as 'The pillar and ground of the truth: an essay in Orthodox Theodicy' in *Twelve Letters* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2004).

³ See Bernard Schultze SJ, 'La Mariologie sophianique russe' in *Maria: Études sur la Sainte Vierge*, vol. 6, ed. Hubert du Manoir SJ (Paris: Beauchesne, 1961).

⁴ Sergei Bulgakov, *Le Buisson Ardent* (see p. 134, n. 1 above), 120.

⁵ Pavel Florensky, *op. cit.* 228.

So we see how Florensky moves from Wisdom in Creation to get to the Church, then from the Church to the saints and finally to Mary. He says more:

Just as the Spirit is the Beauty of the Absolute, so the Mother of God, the Theotokos, is the Beauty of creation, the glory of the earth, the adornment of the entire universe.

She who bears purity, the manifestation of the Holy Spirit, the Principle of the spiritual creature, the Source of the Church, the 'girl Spouse of God', and who is higher than the angels, is no longer one among others in the Church; even within the Church of the saints; she is not *prima inter pares*. She is set apart; exclusively she is the centre of ecclesial life. She is the Church.¹

Florensky relies on the writings of St Ambrose of Milan on the Virginhood of Mary.² He says:

St Ambrose interprets the whole of the Song of Songs with reference either to the Church or to the Mother of God, sometimes both together... The Church is indeed the Virgin, just as the Virgin is the Church.

Since the Good News brought to the world through Christianity, in other words the essence of the Church, is purity in and of itself, it is clear that she who is the Centre and the Source of this gift (the Mother of God) is identified with the Church ... It is also necessary to recognise with the Virgin Mary a special relationship with Heaven, a particular heavenly quality ... The Church, Heaven, the Virgin Mary—these names are not synonyms, but they are almost interchangeable ontologically.³

Whatever weight we give to these speculations, their intention is to place in evidence the intimate relationship between the Divine Wisdom, the Church on earth and in heaven, and the Virgin Mary.

And the East has loved dedicating churches to Wisdom. From the fourth century, Constantinople had *Hagia Sophia*, which under Justinian became the most prestigious monument in Christendom; Salonica had its Holy Wisdom too. Then it was Russia's turn, with its numerous churches of the Holy Wisdom: Kiev (1037), Novgorod (1045), followed by Moscow, Vologda, Tobolsk and many other cities.

¹ Ibid. 231, 233.

² St Ambrose of Milan, *Exhortatio Virginitatis* X, 66 and XIV, 93-94 in *Patrologia Latina* 16 (Paris, 1880), 371 and 379.

³ Florensky, op. cit. 238-239.

There exists, too, a special office for ‘Sophia, Wisdom of God’, celebrated on the 15th August and on other Marian feasts in these churches.¹

Conclusion

By way of conclusion, here are some reflections from the Russian theologian, Vladimir Lossky.²

The unfettered devotion of the Church to the Mother of God, which can appear to contradict Scriptural givens when viewed from the outside, has opened up within the tradition of the Church: it is the most precious fruit of the tradition. It is not just the fruit; it is also the seed and the shoot of the tradition. Indeed, it is possible to discern a material link between the person of the Mother of God and what we call the tradition of the Church.

Only the Mother of God through whom the Word took flesh could receive the fullness of grace, attain boundless glory, and realise in her person all the holiness the Church has.

In the person of the Mother of God may be seen the transition from the greatest holiness in the Old Testament to that of the Church. But now that the Panaghia³ has consumed the holiness of the Church, all the holiness possible for a created being, it is a question of a further transition: from the world to come to the eternity of the Eighth Day, from the Church to the kingdom of heaven. This final glory of the Mother of God, the eschaton realised in a person created before the end of the world, must place her from this moment on beyond death, beyond resurrection, beyond the Last Judgment. She shares in the glory of her Son, reigns with him, presides by his side over the unfolding destinies of the Church and the world over time, and intercedes for all before him who will come to judge the living and the dead.

It is difficult to speak—let alone think—of the mysteries that the Church keeps hidden in the background of her interior consciousness ... The mystery of the Mother of God is revealed, within the Church, to the faithful who have received the Word and who strain ‘toward ... the

¹ See Theodose Spasskij, ‘L’Office liturgique slave de la “Sagesse de Dieu” in *Irénikon*, vol. XXX, Chevetogne, 1957; and John Meyendorff, *Wisdom-Sophia: Contrasting Approaches to a Complex Theme* (Washington: Dumbarton Oaks Papers 41, 1987), 391- 401.

² Vladimir Lossky, *Panaghia*, *Messenger de l’Exarcate du Patriarche russe en Europe Occidentale*, Paris, 1950, no. 4, 40-50.

³ The All-Holy Mother of God.

upward call of God in Christ Jesus' (Phil. 3:14). More than an article of faith, it is the foundation of our hope: the fruit of our faith, ripened in the tradition ... If teaching about the Mother of God belongs to the tradition, it is only through the experience of our life in the Church that we could be attached to such unbounded devotion as the Church has dedicated to the Mother of God. And the degree of this attachment will be the measure of our belonging to the Body of Christ.

Translated with additional notes by Mark Woodruff

RE-ESTABLISHING THE SACRAMENTALITY OF CREATION: UNDERSTANDING THE SO-CALLED GNOSTICISM OF PAVEL FLORENSKY

Rev Dr B.J. Lawrence Cross*

The prevailing radical reductionist view of reality and humanity's place within it contains a self-destructing contradiction. It maintains that the mind of man is the final authority in the universe, while simultaneously denying any fundamental significance to human existence. As a sixteenth century Japanese poem described it, human life is 'no more than fleeting foam on the surface of a violent sea'. The Cambridge physicist Prof. Stephen Hawking agrees stating that 'The human race is just a chemical scum on a moderate-sized planet.' The Russian sophiologists, in this particular case Fr Pavel Florensky, negotiate their way between the extremes of so-called empirical reductionism, pantheist atheistic monism, and dualistic cosmology in an attempt to re-establish the Creation as a primal sacrament of the Divine. This paper outlines the contribution of the priest-martyr, Pavel Florensky to this renewed vision.

In one of his 'Father Brown' stories, G.K. Chesterton uses an epigram to distinguish the true mystic from the mystagogue. It runs something like this. When a mystic speaks of the things of God, their statements, on first hearing, sound rather simple, perhaps even a little obvious. However, reflection and study reveal undreamed of depths and inexhaustible vision. The mystagogue, on the other hand, pretends to possess an arcane and exalted spiritual knowledge, and dresses it in

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suitably impressive behaviours and language. However, when the believers ponder what at first seemed so spiritual and expressive, they find that it is mere mystification with which to disguise what lies concealed in the heart of their system, a banality.

Let this be our point of departure. There is indeed a basic problematic posed by Florensky's thought. His concept of dogma and antinomic truth, and his idealisation of particular historical forms of Orthodoxy have seen him accused of obscurantism, while his advocacy of Sophia-Divine Wisdom, Onomatodoxy (*imiaslavie*) and theurgical aesthetics, following in the footsteps of Soloviev and Bulgakov, have led to accusations of modernist heresy.¹ But his whole approach to the theological enterprise arises from developments within contemporary European culture. Florensky, like most of his Orthodox contemporaries, not to mention great western Christian theologians, such as J.H. Newman, was in flight from the philosophical and theologically restrictive categories, terminology and forms of argument prevailing in the Catholic and Protestant universities. However, like a Newman or a Soloviev, he was deeply interested in understanding, interpreting and responding theologically to the deepening spiritual crisis developing within European history and finally the world. To make any sense of Florensky's contribution to the rehabilitation of Orthodox theology and to the re-establishment of a dialogue between science and faith, and his contribution to new philosophical and theological conduits for the expression of Holy Tradition, we must at least say a little about this spiritual crisis.

Essentially the crisis was precipitated by the fatal and deepening estrangement between intellectual culture and scientific knowledge on the one hand, and theology and religion on the other. The irony of the outcome is that the pioneers of the scientific revolution, with its new cosmology developed in the post-Renaissance centuries, were not atheists. They were all devout men who did not intend to banish God from their universe, but they could no longer find a place for God. The new mechanical universe could not accommodate the transcendent.

¹ Robert Bird, 'The Geology of Memory: Pavel Florenskii's Hermeneutic Theology' in *Pavel Florenskij - Tradition und Moderne*, eds. N. Franz, M. Hagemeyer, F. Haney (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2001), 83-95.

As Koestler declared: "Theology and physics parted ways not in anger, but in sorrow, not because of Signor Galileo, but because they became bored with and had nothing to say to each other."¹

Initially science was exhilarated by this parting of the ways. No longer was it weighed down by ponderous metaphysics or bound in scholastic constrictions. Within two centuries it had transformed the mental outlook of mankind and altered the very face of the earth. But, as Koestler observed,

it carried the species to the brink of physical self-destruction, and into an equally unprecedented spiritual impasse ... reality gradually dissolved between the physicists' hands; matter itself evaporated from the materialists' universe.²

Where was man to look for answers? The new explanations, for all their precision, made the question of meaning meaningless. Koestler summoned a pre-apocalyptic vision when he wrote that:

As man's science grew more abstract, his art became more esoteric, and his pleasures more chemical. In the end he was left with nothing but 'an abstract heaven over a naked rock.' Man entered upon a spiritual ice age; the established Churches could no longer provide more than Eskimo huts where their shivering flock huddled together, while the campfires of rival ideologies drew the masses in wild stampedes across the ice.³

Orthodox theologians, like awakened Western counterparts, were conscious of this crisis at least in the nineteenth century. Two approaches to the crisis developed within Russian theology, now freed from what has been histrionically dubbed its 'Babylonian Captivity'. Neither of the two approaches was very friendly to the other. For the first group, whose emblematic exponent was George Florovsky, the main emphasis is laid on 'return to the Fathers'. They see the tragedy of Orthodox theological development as a drifting away of the theological mind from the very spirit and method of the Fathers. The second group, whose emblematic exponents are Bulgakov and Florensky, may even agree on this much. The Fathers are the common element between them. They can also agree that no reconstruction or

¹ Koestler, A. *The Sleepwalkers: A History of Man's Changing Vision of the Universe* (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Pelican book, 1968), 537.

² op.cit. 539.

³ Koestler, A. *The Trail of the Dinosaur* (London and New York: 1955), 245 ff.

new synthesis is outside a creative recovery of that spirit, but they do not agree with Florovsky when he declared that 'There is no one modern idiom which can unite the Church.'¹ For Bulgakov and Florensky and those of like mind, the critique of the theological past includes, although on a level different from that of western theology, the patristic period itself. Orthodox theology must keep its patristic foundation, but it must also go 'beyond' the Fathers if it is to respond to a new situation created by centuries of philosophical development. This resonates with Whitehead's statement:

Religion will not regain its old power until it can face change in the same spirit as does science. Its principles are eternal, but the expression of those principles requires development ... they [theologians] dared not modify, because they shirked the task of disengaging their spiritual message from the associations of a particular imagery ... the churches, in their presentation of their answers ... have put forward aspects of religion which are expressed in terms either suited to the emotional reactions of bygone times or directed to excite modern emotional interests of non-religious character ...²

Whitehead's analysis help us to understand how much the misunderstood 'sophiologists', Bulgakov and Florensky, stepped 'beyond' the Church Fathers only in as much as they remained faithful to their spirit. If any inspired text best describes the whole patristic project, it is 1 Cor. 9:22. 'I made myself all things to all men, so that by all possible means I might bring some to salvation.' Florensky approached this apostolic task in a fundamentally new way, opening a new dialogue with Church tradition, and thereby became a participant in this tradition. As Prince Evgeny Trubetskoi wrote, 'Father Pavel is not the founder of some new movement in Russia, but is continuing Christian tradition, which has existed for many centuries in the life of our Church.'³

However, as Robert Bird explained, as an Orthodox thinker Florensky was faced with reconciling modernist theology based on the individual's experience with the historical continuity and

¹ G. Florovsky, quoted in discussion following 'The lesson of history on the controversy concerning the nature of Christ,' by Archbishop Tiran Nersoyan, *The Greek Orthodox Theological Review*, X, 2 (1964-65) 132.

² A. N. Whitehead, *Science and the Modern World* (Cambridge: 1953), 233-8.

³ Kn. Evgenii Trubetskoi, 'Svet Favorskii i preobrazhenie uma,' *Pro et contra*, 288.

suprahistorical integrity of Revelation.¹ But the times demanded such a reconciliation because of the spiritual devastation caused by theological rationalism and its fatal estrangement of religious teaching from the conditions of life. Because of Florensky's emphasis on the role of individual experience in religion, his critics nevertheless feared that this could open the gate to the kind of liberalism identified by J.H. Newman in his Biglietto Address, 12 May 1879.

Revealed religion is not a truth, but a sentiment and a taste; not an objective fact, not miraculous; and it is the right of each individual to make it say just what strikes his fancy ...

Once again Robert Bird observes that both aspects of Florensky's concept of personal experience are profoundly modern, even modernist.² First he identifies Florensky as an individualist who sought to ground religious values in the needs and experience of the individual believer. Second, this experience is understood as including psychological and even physiological processes. Florensky anticipates Michael Polanyi, the philosopher of science, who says that 'into every act of knowing there enters a passionate contribution of the person knowing ... This coefficient is no mere imperfection, but a vital component of his knowledge.'³

We must now ask whether such individualism jeopardises the status of tradition. How is it possible for Florensky to be within the patristic tradition if he admits new categories? The martyr priest Alexander Men provides an explanation:

When Christianity first appeared in the ancient world, it faced the question: how to treat all this heritage? How to treat the philosophy, art, literature and in general all the great edifice of ancient culture? Should we say it's all rubbish? That it's all out of date? That it should all be thrown away? Many people said precisely that. Many were willing to go down that road. The main answer given by the classic Christian thinkers, who are known as the patristic writers or the Fathers of the Church was, however, a positive one. Christianity could and should be open to all these questions. That's why the Church Fathers were most often the

¹ Bird, op.cit.

² On Florensky's modernism see: P.A. Florenskii, *Detiam moim. Vospominaniia proshlykh dnei*, eds. Hegumen Andronik (Trubachev), M. S. Trubacheva, T. V. Florenskaia, P. V. Florenskii (Moscow: Moskovskii rabochii, 1992), 218; also Berdiaev, 'Stilizovannoe pravoslavie', 275.

³ Polanyi, M. *Personal Knowledge* (New York: Harper & Row, 1964), xiv.

outstanding writers, thinkers, poets and social activists of their time. They did not consider that such things were alien to or unworthy of Christianity.¹

Florensky's total vision does not hinge on his use of individual experience alone, but it is crucial in his response to the modern age which saw the contrasting births of psychoanalytics as against abstract science, existential philosophy as against depersonalized systems, and liberalism against authoritarian politics. Much depends on how Florensky read the spiritual state of the world. It was precisely because he recognized that man had entered upon a spiritual ice age, to use Koestler's phrase, that Florensky included the category of individual experience in his theology, while simultaneously turning to that stream in Orthodoxy which might enable him to express a theological vision to rescue mankind and nature from their satanically induced alienation, both from each other, and from the Source of Life. In his vision man and world live or die together.

The golden seam in the deposit of the Fathers, to which Florensky appealed, begins at Gregory Nazianzus, John of Damascus, Pseudo-Dionysius, St Maximos Confessor and St Augustine, and surfaces again after a six century hiatus once again in St Gregory Palamas, in whom late Byzantine theology asserted that the world presents the many-sided revelation of God's wisdom, πολυποικίλος σοφία του Θεου (Eph. 3:10).² In Palamas' teaching the divine energies have both a divine and creaturely mode of existence and possess an ontological, world-creating and world-sustaining power. The poet's cry from Gerard Manley Hopkins, centuries away and across languages and cultures, recognizes the flash and fire of the life-sustaining divine energies when he cries,

All things counter, original, spare, strange;
 Whatever is fickle, freckled (who knows how?)
 With swift, slow; sweet, sour; adazzle, dim;
 He fathers-forth whose beauty is past change:
 Praise him.

¹ Fr Alexander Men, *Two Understandings of Christianity*, Moscow 25 January, <http://www.alexandermen.com/Two_Understandings_of_Christianity>

² E. Lampert, *The Divine Realm: Towards a Theology of the Sacraments* (London: Faber and Faber, 1943), 27. With the exception of St Simeon the New theologian, this golden stream flowed underground while East and West argued destructively over the procession of the Holy Spirit.

It is now time for the entry of Sophia, the Glory and the Wisdom of God, the idea of which Florensky identified as 'widely scattered throughout all of Scripture and the patristic works.'¹ There is no more vivid and powerful example than that given by Gregory Nazianzus.

The object of his [God's] contemplation (while as yet he had not made the world) was the adorable radiance of his own goodness and intelligence, and the equal perfection of glory of all the thrice-radiant Godhead, no less truly so to Himself in his solitude than to those unto whom he has now revealed it. And likewise that mind, whence the world is begotten, then dwelt in the depth of His mind upon how He should give shape to that world that was afterwards brought into being, and which even then was present to God.²

But despite its patristic pedigree, there has been a great deal of argument about the precise identity of Sophia, the All-Wisdom of God, with the neo-Orthodox condemning 'Sophiology' as heretical gnosticism. However, while refusing to accept the charge of gnosticism, Florensky does not make the task of definition any easier. Given his scientific training one might expect some attempt at a more precise definition. Instead, he virtually does the opposite, listing a whole host of namings, such as Sophia Wisdom existing before the world; the Heavenly Jerusalem; the Church in its heavenly aspect; the Kingdom of God as the Ideal Person of Creation; the Guardian Angel of Creation; the Hypostatic system of the world-creating thoughts of God; the True Pole and Incorruptible Aspect of creaturely being;³ the Memory of God; true Creation; Creation in the Truth;⁴ all of Creation; soul and conscience of Creation; Mankind; the Mother of God, the beauty of the soul of Mary and the Holy Spirit in its deification of creation.⁵ Florensky overwhelms his reader with these images.

Some fault may indeed be attributed to Father Florensky, in that he declined ever to offer a definite and final explanation of the exact identity of Sophia. This may indeed have been deliberate, precisely to avoid rigid formulation and to negotiate a mythic path between the

¹ Florensky, P. *The Pillar and Ground of Truth: An Essay in Orthodox Theodicy in Twelve Letters* (Princeton & Oxford: Princeton University Press, 1997), 239.

² Gregory Nazianzus, *Poemata dogmatica, De mundo*. as cited in Lampert, *The Divine Realm...* 26.

³ *The Pillar and Ground...* 241.

⁴ *Ibid.* 283.

⁵ *Ibid.* 253.

extremes of pantheist, atheistic monism on the one hand, and dualistic cosmology on the other. Curiously, Florensky identifies Gnosticism with 'metaphysical speculation'.¹ Thus Florensky's critics, while accusing him of expounding some form of neo-gnosticism, themselves have a very naïve understanding of the essential foundation common to all forms of gnosticism. The true and classical gnostic, ancient or modern, would flee from Florensky's cosmological ideas. His Sophia, who and whatever she or he might be, is not the fallen aeon of Valentinian and Basilides. Florensky's Sophia is a Christian-philosophical myth designed, with almost intentional ambiguity, to transcend the sphere of discursive reasoning and to propose a more apophatic approach to theology with the introduction of discontinuity, paradox and antimony.

Like Bulgakov before him, Florensky recognizes that the fundamental realities of Christian revelation are full of antinomies. This places Florensky, in his modern way, closer to the methods and intention of the early Christian Fathers than any of his modern conservative critics. It also makes him better equipped to enter into a dialogue with post-modern thought. He also enables Orthodox Christian theology, and the sacraments in particular, to refresh themselves after the much-complained-of 'Babylonian captivity' to western rationalist categories by proposing creative approaches to the great primary cosmological question, namely, what is the world in God, and God in the world?

With Robert Bird we would propose that Florensky is too firmly embedded in modernity to ignore the 'forgetfulness' of God that has pervaded culture, to recognise the limited mystical potential of modern man, and to seek to restore it by arousing the ontological memory of previous cultural layers that lies dormant in modernity. Sophia is a device to demonstrate that religious symbolization and religious experience are inherent in the structure of human existence, and that all reductionism must be abandoned.² Such a symbol expresses reality and is not reducible to an empirical proposition. This approach is called 'symbolic realism'³ and it delivers Florensky from

¹ Ibid. 236.

² Robert N. Bellah, *Beyond Belief: Essays on Religion in a Post-Traditional World* (New York: Harper & Row, 1970), 250.

³ Ibid.

the suspicion of pantheistic monism, with its dual tendencies, either to divinize the cosmos, or to divinize man. Symbolic realism allows the possibility, inherent in the creature, to question its own meaning and existence, and to point to the transcendent, to the 'other-one', and in so doing, to read the transcendent cipher of being. As Evgeny Lampert observed,

Monism is always the denial of this transcendent-immanent mystery and dialectic of being, its dialogical character as two-in-one, i.e. what in Christian language is called God-manhood.¹

The most respected theologians have complained of Orthodox theology's erstwhile submission to western categories and methods in theology, such that creation itself is totally misunderstood and reified, not recognizing how much Russian 'sophiology' assists to re-establish the cosmos as living being. Referring to Florensky's use of the 'geological metaphor' Robert Bird has argued that Florensky's scientific background made it impossible for him to dismiss the challenge of science, and that it was science that provided him with an image rich with consequences for his understanding of Revelation and for the retrieval of tradition. We agree and propose that his Sophia, the All-Wisdom of God, is an even more important image, but with much the same function, which is to widen the meaning of Revelation in its cosmological dimension, and to retrieve the 'golden seam' derived from the Fathers, in order to re-invest humanity and the cosmos with transcendent meaning in the face of existential meaninglessness. The multi-faceted image of Sophia also serves to inspire both the artist and the mystic in their mutual longing to create or re-create the world in beauty, to redeem and overcome the forces of demonic chaos. Holy Wisdom is not a fourth divine person in the Godhead, but is a quality of the divine life, 'the love of loving'. As Archbishop Williams explains, referring to Bulgakov's brand of Sophiology,

[t]here is a quality of loving wisdom in the very heart of God's life; it is that quality which is then shaped in the heart of the world. The mode, the rhythm, call it what you will, of divine life, becomes the wellspring, the central energy of created life also.²

¹ Lampert, *op.cit.* 12.

² Rowan Williams., *Creation, Creativity and Creatureliness: the Wisdom of Finite Existence*, at <<http://www.archbishopofcanterbury.org/997>>

The image of Sophia helps us to understand how God forms a cosmos out of nothing, which is to say out of Himself, out of his own divine eternal being. This means that God loves and is loved not only in himself, but also in the life of His creation, in other being. This is why Genesis repeats the refrain, *καὶ εἶδεν ὁ Θεὸς ὅτι καλόν*. Thus, creation is an act of supreme love, which is the very being of God. God gives himself away in establishing created, relative being.

This is light years away from the pessimistic cosmology of Plotinus on the one hand, who believed the created material world to be evil, and dualistic atheism on the other, which also viewed creation as 'outside' of God, locked in a never-ending struggle with material darkness. Plotinus and dualism are the seed ground of Gnosticism. The gnostic abhors the material world. Matter is entrapment, the cosmic flypaper of an Ahriman. Consequently, it is absurd to accuse Fr Florensky of being a gnostic. If to have been afforded a mystic's insight into the theandric nature of creation is to be a gnostic, then Florensky is indeed greatly a gnostic. But if to be a gnostic means to seek escape from change and mortality through esoteric arts and arcane knowledge, Florensky and his Christian cosmology is the gnostic's very nightmare. Let Archbishop Williams have the last word on the identity of Sophia, an identity and understanding which lays the ground for a sacramental understanding of creation.

Holy wisdom ... is what you might call the area of overlap between divine and created life ... that point at which the realities meet, overlap, intersect, interpenetrate ... It is God's own being reflecting lovingly upon its own loveable-ness, and in that reflection and relation, opening itself out to the sharing of love beyond the divine being.¹

Father Pavel Florensky is one of Holy Russia's most important contributions to the return of contemporary Christian thought to the traditions of the Church Fathers, in the return of Christianity to an open model, which participates in the whole movement of human society, to what Berdyaev called 'the churching of the world', which does not mean the imposition of historical church incidentals on the secular culture of the world. Rather, it means that there is no such thing as the secular.²

¹ Ibid.

² Fr Alexander Men, *Two Understandings of Christianity*, Moscow 25 January 1989. <http://www.alexandermen.com/Two_Understandings_of_Christianity>.

'NOTHING BUT GOD'

Dom John Mayhead OSB*

A homily given at a Service for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, Churches Together in Harrold and Carlton, Bedfordshire on 25 January 2009.

I am looking out of my window in an anxious and resentful state of mind ... suddenly I observe a hovering kestrel. In a moment everything is altered. The brooding self with its hurt vanity has disappeared ... There is now nothing but kestrel.

Iris Murdoch, *The Sovereignty of God*.

Janet Martin Soskice describes this process as one of 'unselving'—of paying attention to something outside oneself and finding oneself made whole.¹ You may all recognise such an experience yourselves—something unexpected happens which takes us 'out of ourselves', which, even momentarily, helps us to forget ourselves and yet at the same time to be at home with ourselves, at peace. Or one may simply lose oneself in one's work: by paying close attention to one's writing or reading or cooking or digging in the garden, time, in a sense, stands still and one comes away feeling better, or changed. It doesn't happen all the time, which is why we notice it when it does. And it's very close to what we might otherwise call 'contemplation'—something then that not only monks do but which can happen to us all. Janet Soskice describes it as 'attentive love' and although she doesn't think 'contemplation' is possible with a bawling baby she might agree that 'attentive love' is, and indeed that a mother attending to her children is all about focusing outside oneself—and can bring peace.

Now what has this got to do with ecumenism and the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity? Well, I would suggest that underlying all our differences there is already an experience of unity. Like the mother with the bawling baby or the monastic superior with a hundred different jobs to be done, the problem isn't a lack of unity but of how to access it, how to know the peace which goes beyond all understanding. For we are already 'one in Christ', and if we see Christ

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¹ I am indebted to Janet Soskice's *The Kindness of God* (Oxford: OUP, 2007).

as A and Ω , as creator as well as redeemer, then we can also see all people and all creation as already one. That is why the doctrine of evolution is so exciting because it's all about interconnectedness, and interdependence, the cosmos as one, reflecting the oneness of God. Why even a kestrel can speak to us of God, and *in a moment everything is altered. The brooding self with its hurt vanity has disappeared ... There is now nothing but kestrel*—nothing now but the experience of oneness—of unity. Perhaps what ecumenism needs are more 'hovering kestrels'. For *I am looking out of my window in an anxious and resentful state of mind*, because I see the churches in disarray. The Anglican-Roman Catholic dialogue seems to have come to a full-stop, the Anglican Church has started too many hares and its apparent disunity has made it a difficult partner with which to dialogue. And a closer look at the Roman Catholic Church reveals all sorts of problems too—its unity perhaps only apparent also. And a closer look at all the churches reveals a similar picture, it always does. Decline, for example, seems to be the order of the day. But what about the Pentecostals—surely they are getting it right, the fastest growing, perhaps the only growing church, or rather churches, in the country? But a closer look will again reveal problems—not least perhaps a lack of regard for other churches, a certain triumphalism in being *the way* God is working *now*. If this sounds familiar it's because each of our churches has *been* there at one time or another, and has taken a certain delight, or Schadenfreude, in others getting it wrong.

We come back then to our kestrel, still hovering—how can it stay in one place for so long, how can it be so centred? How can *we* be so centred?

I've just come back from a three-day conference on 'Receptive Ecumenism'¹ at Ushaw College. It was a wonderful experience, two hundred dedicated ecumenists all in one place, displaying sparkling intelligence and a real passion for Christ, for their faith, however expressed. The purpose of the Conference was to find a way forward for ecumenism, since so many of the major dialogues seem to have ground to a halt, or more worryingly, not to have been received within

¹ 'Receptive Ecumenism and Ecclesial Learning: Learning to be Church Together', 11–15 January 2009, Ushaw College, Durham. See *Receptive Ecumenism and the Call to Catholic Learning*, ed. Paul D. Murray (Oxford: OUP, 2008).

the churches concerned, not to have made any difference, that is, in church practice. We're still largely doing things separately and making decisions independently even after agreed statements have been published. Now you may correct me on this in your practice here in Harrold and Carlton. However, I would suggest that our own self-understanding as Catholics is still largely one of being comfortable within our own skin, with an expectation that others have much more to learn from us than we have from them. This isn't true of everyone, but it is a perennial danger within the Roman Catholic Church. There is a centralising tendency in Rome which always risks seeking to eliminate difference within the Catholic Church, let alone outside. Which is perhaps why the Conference was all about valuing difference within the one body of Christ and often citing the Trinity as a template of how oneness and difference can coexist. If God can manage to be three and yet one surely there's a chance for us also; it all depends on what we understand by 'unity'.

And so we come to the passage we have just read from St John's gospel (John 10: 14-16). Jesus compares himself to a shepherd, and not to any old shepherd, but to a good shepherd, one who knows and cares for his sheep to the point of laying down his life for them. This is true 'loving attention', true 'spiritual accompaniment'—that coming alongside one another which makes a real difference to us. 'Receptive Ecumenism' differs from 'ecumenical reception' in just this—it's not about waiting for an agreed statement on common doctrine or even on a way forward. It is being prepared to receive help from one another in our present wounded states, just as in the Trinity no one Person can exist without the others. We are already one, we are already children of God, but what we are to be is still veiled and still uncertain, for we live in time as a sinful people. Some of us have got it right in some areas but wrong in others, and we need to share our ecclesial gifts and insights with one another ... No one church tradition has the complete truth. What Catholics have to offer is for others perhaps to decide, but what we are badly in need of is an understanding of how lay people can be better heard and better appreciated, of how Scripture can be better used, and of how the earth itself matters. Anglicans and United Reformed, Methodists and Orthodox all have something to offer here that Catholics need to receive. We need you to take us 'out of ourselves'. We need you to remind us that the Holy Spirit works outside our own tradition as well

as within it. We need, *you* to be different as creation is different and all the more splendid for it. Above all we need your 'loving attention' or 'attentive love' to remind us that *that* is at the heart of what being church is all about... Our weaknesses then become not a source of Schadenfreude but an expression of need and a force for unity. When we lose ourselves in this service of one another then we will discover ourselves to be both many and one.

I am looking out of my window in an anxious and resentful state of mind ... suddenly I observe a hovering kestrel. In a moment everything is altered. The brooding self with its hurt vanity has disappeared ... There is now nothing but kestrel.

Nothing but God.

REPORTS & EVENTS

**A SERMON BY THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY AT A EUCHARIST
ATTENDED BY THE ABBOT AND MOTHER PRIORESS OF THE ABBEY OF
NOTRE DAME DU BEC TO CELEBRATE THE 900th ANNIVERSARY OF THE
DEATH OF SAINT ANSELM OF CANTERBURY, 1109-2009***

Canterbury Cathedral, 23 April 2009

‘No-one comprehends what is truly God’s except the Spirit of God’

What is our task at this Eucharist? What are we actually here for? First and foremost to give thanks to God for his great glory. We are here because we have learned from God in Jesus Christ that our peace and healing is to be found simply and definitively when we pray to the Father in the words of Jesus and so acknowledge the Father’s glory as it deserves to be acknowledged. There is, you could almost say, an ‘aesthetic’ of salvation: we are whole, we are at one, when we offer a truthful response to the truth given to us, when we respond in complete harmony with what has been spoken to us. Christ eternally responds in such a way to the Father, the truth echoing the truth. For us, the task is to let that truthfulness of answer to the Father’s self-giving come alive in us. And the action of the Eucharist is no more and no less than this: as Christ’s Body, we both claim our identity and renew it in sharing it through the elements of bread and wine, so that Jesus the Word Incarnate lives in us and we in him, and God is fittingly thanked for who and what he is.

Perhaps that is as good a place as any to start in understanding St Anselm. When he writes in perhaps his most influential book that the atoning work of Christ on the cross is an offering made to repair the insulted honour of God, we may recoil in alarm: doesn’t this suggest a God who is obsessed with what is due to him, in a way that we should rightly condemn in a human being? What on earth does it mean to say that he cannot simply write off the offence to his honour which sin implies? Isn’t all this not only a scheme that privileges justice over mercy but treats justice itself as a narrow matter of satisfying

* © Rowan Williams 2009

inflexible and impersonal requirements?

Anselm himself, I think, would have found such objections strange, chiefly because he would have wanted us to start where St Paul starts in our epistle (1 Cor. 2:10-16). Understanding the work of God must presuppose that we are already attuned to the Spirit of God. Every question needs to be treated within the landscape of God's self-definition, the truth God has told us about who we are in relation with him and who God is in relation with us. This and this alone makes sense of the curious way in which Anselm tries to argue for the necessity of Christ's life and death on what seem to be abstract first principles—what God *must* have done if God is truly God and we are as we recognise ourselves to be, helpless and untruthful. In Anselm's own writing, this is simply a way of saying that once we have understood something of the nature of God, God's eternal, necessary, utterly coherent being, and once we have realised that this God is also free and loving in relation to what he has made, we begin to see that the only story that could ever be told about our salvation is one in which absolute divine freedom restored the relation which we could not restore. If you begin by standing in contemplative wonder before the pure and unconditioned self-consistency of God's being and also in contemplative gratitude before the fact of grace at work—and there is no other rational place for the Christian to stand—you will, like the disciples on the Emmaus Road, begin to see that it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and so enter into his glory. No abstract first principles, then, but the perfectly specific stance before an active and wholly consistent God. Just as in his famous—so-called—argument for God's existence, Anselm is not playing with words and concepts but exploring what is implied in the act of prayerful adoration.

So if we want to reconstruct what he argued about the redemption wrought in Christ, we need to start with this perspective. What Anselm sees is a humanity trapped in untruthfulness. We cannot give to God what it is our calling and our destiny and our gift to give—loving obedience, mirroring God's own life in our mortal context. We cannot honour God in the simple sense that we cannot allow God to be God in our lives, and so we cannot allow ourselves to be ourselves. When all's said and done about the feudal background of Anselm's thinking, we should remember that this works in more than one direction. This is the Anselm who in 1090 refused to send King William Rufus the subsidy he had demanded for a military expedition

because he believed the request was an injustice—a dishonour—to his own tenants and bonded labourers from whom the money had to be raised. Dishonour and injustice are about the effort to reduce another to the scope of your own needs and demands. Honour and justice are about respecting the truth of another's reality. So far from being a remote feudal point, Anselm's theology and ethics have a painful contemporaneity in this world of endemic 'dishonouring' of the dignities of so many—of the powerless millions coping with the effects of western economic crisis or civilians under the threat of death in Sri Lanka as the armies play out their lethal dramas.

Thus it is that sin can be seen as a deadly deficit of truthfulness: there is no health in us because we cannot do what we are created to do—and it doesn't make a difference if God says 'never mind'. The problem is not that God is clinging to his offended dignity but that we are being prevented—through our own grievous fault—from reflecting back to him his glory as we ought. We cannot live in a way that has true and objective *worth*. And that is why our salvation depends on an action that is not just apt or fitting or morally correct but *precious*—an act of immeasurable worth. Christ's self-giving to the Father through his death on the cross is a perfect divine response to the self-giving of the Father—an infinitely precious and beautiful response to an infinitely precious and beautiful gift, a perfect echo of the eternal outpouring of God the Father in his generating of the Word. But it is also a human act: Jesus' human freedom has chosen to act out the eternal love without reserve, accepting death as the cost of this acting-out. Humanity has at last done what it is created to do, and so a relation of truthfulness is at last restored. Our nature has been made capable of echoing God's. We can give God back the gift he has given us, life, freedom and love. Honour is satisfied—not in the sense that some impersonal and inflexible requirement has been met, some divine box ticked, but because justice has been done to God himself by creation and so justice has been done to creation, and especially to the human creation.

Here is Anselm himself theologising as he loves to do, on his knees and in the context of the Spirit-filled sacramental life of the Body of Christ: 'Let your heart feed on these thoughts, chewing on them continually, sucking and swallowing them when your mouth receives the body and blood of your Saviour. Throughout your life, make these thoughts your daily bread, your diet, your rations...Good Lord

Jesus...like the sun you shone forth upon me, and showed me my condition. You threw off the lead weight that was dragging me downwards...Bent over as I was, you straightened me up to look you in the face, saying, "Be confident, I have redeemed you and given my life for you" ...I owe my whole self to your love because you created me; I owe my whole self to your love because you redeemed me; I owe my whole self to your love because of the greatness of your promises. Indeed, I owe your love much more than my whole self—as much more as you are greater than I am...Let me experience by feeling what I experience by understanding. I owe you more than my whole self, but I have no more to give. And in my own strength I can't even give you my self. So draw all of me, Lord, into your love. All that I am belongs to you as my maker; now make it yours through devoted love.'

This is the honour and the justice that Anselm seeks to set before us as the foundation of our faith. It is the honour and justice that sets the Church free to witness to the dignity of human beings over against tyranny and violence. And it is the honour and justice that we do here at the altar, praying in the Spirit with the word and power of Christ to the Father, acknowledging *dignum et justum est, aequum et salutare*, 'it is indeed right, our duty and our joy.'

ANGLICANS IN ROME 2009**Frederick Bliss SM***

Though 'Anglicans in Rome' is the title of the book I published in 2006, I want to return to the subject, this time with a particular focus on the contemporary role of the Anglican Centre in Rome. Although there are Churches of many denominations, no other Christian community has established a physical presence in Rome which includes among its purposes the promotion of ecumenical relations with the Catholic Church. This Centre, established in 1966, one year after the ending of the Second Vatican Council, also acts as an important resource for information on Anglicanism and as a welcoming point for visitors to the eternal city.

Since its inception in 1966, when Archbishop Ramsey visited Rome, the Centre has had an interesting journey. That story is told elsewhere, but among its eight directors, some gave priority to representing the Archbishop of Canterbury in dealings with the Holy See, others were more concerned with directing the Centre, and some with participation in the *ARCIC* dialogue. All of them, though, liaised with Vatican departments and hosted visitors to the Centre, or organized courses and tutored students who were researching Anglican subjects at Roman universities. But for all the directors, the annual Week of Prayer for Christian Unity made them the most sought-after preachers at churches and institutions around the city!

The ninth Director, the Very Reverend David Richardson, is an Australian, former Dean of Adelaide Cathedral and more recently of Melbourne Cathedral. In his early career David did post-graduate work in Birmingham, followed by a stint of chaplaincy at Girton College (1976-1979) and ministry at the University Church of Great St. Mary's, Cambridge. David, with wife Margie, settled comfortably into the eternal city in mid-2008. Professionally Margie is a clinical psychologist who also taught a doctoral programme at the University

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of Melbourne. They have two adult children.

I spent time with David exploring how he understands his position at the Centre. He spoke of a perceived winter of ecumenism, in the face of which a re-defining of the Director's task becomes inevitable. After discussion among the Governors and consultation in Rome and with Archbishop Rowan Williams, it was decided that he would continue as the director of the Centre in conjunction with an upgrading of his role as the representative of the Archbishop of Canterbury to the Holy See.

Having identified and named his priority as being the representative of the Archbishop David is seen often enough at the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity where he enjoys very good relations with its officers, and in other Congregations and Councils of the Vatican, when required. It is precisely this representative role which counts, in terms of being respected and effective in his work. Given the Roman scene in which he works the question has been asked more than once: 'Should he be made a bishop?' David's response, given in the light of his understanding of Anglican ecclesiology, is that we ought not create bishops simply to make the job easier! It is the office represented, that of the Archbishop of Canterbury, which gives the job its authority.

A further aspect of the Director's position in Rome is to be an agent dedicated to the reception of *ARCIC*. But 'reception' is a process that has to be understood, as Cardinal Murphy O'Connor, a veteran of *ARCIC* and *IARCCUM*, explained at the Lambeth Conference on 25 July 2008. 'One thing we have gradually come to realize', the Cardinal said, 'is that the reception of any dialogue document involves far more than just the publication or even an official response. It takes time and discussion at every level of the life of the Church.' The Centre's presence in Rome demonstrates the Anglican long term commitment to furthering the reception of the *ARCIC* corpus. What is more, this living and visible presence is a constant reminder to the centre-point of the Catholic Church that the Anglican world is serious about deepening the relationship between the two Churches, despite difficulties in the path. The Centre is also an important resource for those who seek to deepen their understanding of Anglicanism and of the importance of the relationship between the two communities.

Courses at the Centre

As part of the Centre's productive presence in Rome, it has consistently offered a range of courses to interested people. Given the current credit squeeze, the Centre is revising its programme, planning a number of shorter and less costly courses. In 2010 there will be a two day workshop (6-7 May) on *Canon Law in the Service of the Church: Prejudices and Possibilities* under the direction of Professor Norman Doe of Cardiff University. The following month, 20-26 June, a summer school on *Early Christian Art and Architecture in Rome* is intended as an introduction to early Church history through an appreciation of Christian art and architecture. In October, 25-28, a mini-pilgrimage has been designed to assist independent travellers explore their faith in the context of Rome and its centrality in Christian history. It will include guided tours of the excavations under San Clemente and St Peter's and visits to the Council for Christian Unity and Vatican Radio.

A course designed to further the reception of *ARCIC, Lead Kindly Light: Leading the Church Today* is planned for 15-21 February. As its title implies the course is intended for leaders, lay and ordained, and promises to be an enriching experience. The study document for this course is *Growing Together in Unity and Mission* (2007), which is 'a call for action, based upon an honest appraisal of what has been achieved in our dialogue' (Preface). This particular document, so recently published, has yet to become widely known and appreciated, so a word here is appropriate. It grew out of a desire to further the reception of the many Agreed Statements of the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission (*ARCIC*) which emerged over the period 1971-2005. The **first stage** of the process was to assemble a selected number of Catholic and Anglican bishops from 13 countries. These pastors went two by two to Mississauga, Canada in May 2000, to consult together on how to take the agreements back into their dioceses where they work—Anglicans and Catholics—on '**joint witness and mission in the world**'. Cardinal Kasper, at the Lambeth Conference in 2008, reflecting on the Mississauga experience, commented: 'I have been to many ecumenical meetings in my life, and I am happy to say that this was one of the best meetings I have ever attended. The spirit of prayerfulness and friendship, the serious reflection not only on the work of *ARCIC* but also on ecumenical relations in each particular region represented, and the profound desire for reconciliation which pervaded the Mississauga gathering,

renewed hope for significant progress in relations between the Anglican Communion and the Catholic Church.’

The **second stage** of the Mississauga process required a special committee to turn the bishops’ thoughts into a work plan. The outcome is the document, rich in ideas and suggestions, called *IARCCUM* or *Growing Together in Unity and Mission*. And the **third stage**, of course, is to lead people into a deeper understanding of what Catholics and Anglicans can do together. For this reason the Anglican Centre is offering the course under the leadership of Dame Mary Tanner who was a significant presence at the Canada meeting. She has an extraordinary ability and will carry the special spirit of Mississauga to the February 2010 meeting at the Anglican Centre.¹

There are other interesting components in this leadership course. One is a focus on a timely subject – Interreligious Dialogue – which includes a visit to the relevant Pontifical Council. Further stimulating discussion will be on Church and Politics under the direction of Ambassador to the Holy See, Francis Campbell and a day with Dominican Timothy Radcliffe on the spirituality of leadership. The recommendation is that 15-21 February 2010, should be noted in the diaries.

Preparing for ARCIC III

It has to be acknowledged that in recent times there has been a dulling of Catholic-Anglican relations to the point that some have wondered if the dialogue has a future, and if the Centre has a continuing role to play in the reception of *ARCIC*. The problem rests in the decision in many Anglican Churches to ordain women to the priesthood and to the episcopate; and has been compounded by the ordination of an openly gay bishop, and the issue of the blessing of same-sex relationships.

With respect to the ordination of women the Catholic view, expressed in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, n. 1577 is that only a baptized man can receive Sacred Orders, adding ‘The Church recognizes herself to be bound by this choice made by the Lord himself.’ Pope John Paul II, during the latter years of his pontificate, decreed that it was beyond the Pope’s powers to depart from this

¹ See Mary Tanner’s article on ‘Growing Together in Mission and Unity in *One in Christ* 42 (2008) 371-381.

practice, one which holds not only in the Latin Church, but also in the tradition of the Oriental Churches.

During the 2008 Lambeth Conference, three Cardinals gave input on the Anglican choice of ordaining women and each of them—not unexpectedly—backgrounded their comments with references to ‘ecclesiology’ and ‘tradition’. On the eve of the Lambeth Conference, 27 June 2008, Cardinal Bertone, Vatican Secretary of State wrote to Archbishop Williams in the name of Pope Benedict XVI saying that ‘The ecclesiological questions which form the framework of your deliberations are a reminder that ministry conferred by ordination is bound by the apostolic faith handed down from the beginning.’ Later, the two Cardinals who were present at Lambeth, Walter Kasper and Cormac Murphy O’Connor, spoke in terms of a disturbance to an emerging acceptable ‘ecclesiology’. Whereas Kasper saw the successive *ARCIC* dialogues contributing to an ‘ecclesiological closeness’, these recent actions of some Churches have directly impacted on ‘the goal and alters the level of what we pursue in dialogue’, that is, the restoration of a complete communion of faith and sacramental life.

Murphy O’Connor spoke of ecclesiology being hidden in the shadows which he identified as the thread which ties together the work of *ARCIC*. He posed a question: ‘How do we understand the Church?’ ‘I am sure that the dialogue statements of *ARCIC* whether or not they are accepted in their entirety, do signal real convergence ... If truth really is expressed in these agreements they must sooner or later bear fruit.’ Murphy O’Connor further explained that ecclesiology is fundamental to all of *ARCIC*’s work, which is none other than a deepening doctrine of the Church, about which the dialogue looks to a solemn and binding agreement.

Rather than relying on tradition and the discipline of ecclesiology, various Anglican spokespeople ground their remarks in the reality of events that have occurred which await ecclesial reception or otherwise. Among them is Bishop Christopher Hill who prefaces his observation with an important message for the Catholic ear that ‘In spite of our apparently contradictory behaviour Anglicans remain committed to the goal of full visible unity.’ While acknowledging the importance of ‘tradition’, he gives ‘reception’ a place in the discussion. To this end he poses a question: has the matter of the ordination of women been extensively and seriously engaged by the ‘mind of the Church’? The discussions are so recent, he claims, that a case could be

argued that we are in a time of reception or rejection, and the outcome has yet to surface.

An Anglican theologian from Canada, Canon Gibaut, Director of Faith and Order, has difficulty accepting that 'full visible communion as the goal of our dialogue has receded.' He goes further, arguing that 'I am not sure that the ultimate goal of full visible communion has changed, or can change, since the goal is that unity for which Christ prayed on the night before his suffering and death.' Gibaut does accept that the immediate goals of our dialogue can change and have changed, but the ultimate goal—the goal willed by Christ—is still intact. David Richardson is of like mind, claiming that theologically the goal which Christ prayed for has not and cannot change. 'So long as we are clear about the Church's sacramental nature we have a goal.'

No authoritative voice has suggested that the dialogue ought to end. There are questions, however, about the goal and about how to proceed. That is why the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, the Anglican Communion Office and Lambeth Palace are looking at the compass in order to secure the right direction for an *ARCIC III*. They have put in place a planning Commission which is exploring a likely subject: 'Relations between the Local Churches and the Universal Church.' The Anglican members of the planning group are Bishop David Moxom of New Zealand and Dean David Richardson of Rome, and the Catholic members are Bishop Bernard Longley of Westminster and Doctor Adelbert Denaux of Louvain, with Mary Tanner as secretary. The proposed subject has widespread interest, not only within Churches but especially in their relationships one with another and with the Church universal.

CHEMIN NEUF'S COMMUNITY MANIFESTO: SERVING THE CHURCH AND THE UNITY OF CHRISTIANS. 1986-2009

At Easter 1986, to celebrate the life commitments of Protestant and Catholic members of the Chemin Neuf Community, a 'Community Manifesto' was distributed to all those attending the celebration at St John's Cathedral, Lyon. The Manifesto sums up the reasons why these men and women, couples and celibates, decided to make this irrevocable commitment for the service of the Church. It was republished at Pentecost 2009, on the occasion of the life commitments of 42 Protestant and Catholic members at the Sacré-Coeur Basilica in Montmartre, Paris, in the presence of Cardinal Walter Kasper. It is printed here with a commentary by Fr Laurent Fabre, founder and leader of the Chemin Neuf Community.

Because Jesus 'having loved his own who were in the world, loved them to the end', and because Jesus committed his own life to give us life: in our turn, conscious of our weakness, definitively,

We commit our lives.

Laurent Fabre [LF]: Wisely, it is possible in our community to commit oneself every three years, and in our brief history there are already some brothers and sisters who have made this three year commitment a dozen times. In other words, one can be a member of this community for a long time, and even spend one's whole life in it, without making a definitive commitment. This 'optional' definitive commitment conveys no special rights or duties, except that of fidelity. But it is probably the very freedom of this choice which gives it its power and its originality. The only true reason for this lifetime commitment is as a response to the radical nature of Christ's commitment of himself. The gift of his life gives us the joy and the boldness to reciprocate.

Because the hunger of those who die of hunger can only be ended by our sharing, and because it is not enough to dream of a juster, more fraternal society...

From now on, from today, we share our goods.

Because our children love this community life, and because many other children are poor and naked, we want them to inherit from us the meaning and reality of a better world,

We choose to share our heritage.

L.F.: Twenty-three years ago, on the square in front of the primatial cathedral of St John the Baptist in Lyons, when several members of

Chemin Neuf made their life commitment during the Easter celebrations of 1986, we distributed this 'Community Manifesto' which today, as we celebrate the life commitment of forty-two of our brothers and sisters in the Basilica of Montmartre, is more relevant than ever.

In 1847, in another corner of Europe, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels together published their 'Communist Manifesto' which at first glance seems to have little in common with our modest Christian manifesto. And yet, more than ever, the parable of Lazarus (Luke 16: 19-30), between the poor man Lazarus and the nameless rich man, is terribly relevant. In so many ways, the Holy Spirit is active throughout the world, instigating projects of community life which all have their origin in this sort of crazy wind, this Pentecost, which contradicts the spirit of the age by a new way of living, and the astonishing common ownership of goods of the first Christian communities.

The Communist International's apocalyptic dream of revolution is ever ready to become nightmare, in millions of dead in Cambodia, Russia or elsewhere, if Christians do not take seriously the Gospel call to share. Without these 'spiritual awakenings', the relentless dialectic of Master and Slave and of revolutionary warfare may yet prove Marx and Hegel right: only violence can change history!

Today, after thirty-six years of community life, we rejoice that we can comment with greater confidence on certain resolutely prophetic aspects of our community manifesto.

In Paris, René Rémond, the distinguished contemporary historian and member of the Académie Française, said to me one day: 'Praising the Lord with your arms in the air and living in community with a group of celibates does not strike me as anything particularly new in the 2,000 years of the Church's history. However, sharing one's inheritance, and offering community life to families does surprise me, and strikes me as something new in the Catholic world.' For myself, as priest and religious, I have the safeguard of living in a community where clothing, shelter and food are not lacking. I am not threatened with redundancy. But I greatly admire and applaud these couples who in choosing a simpler life and the sharing of goods give up, for example, building a family home for their children and grandchildren.

It is true that France, as a rich country, is littered all over the place with second homes which most of the time lie empty. Yet a large part of the planet's population is in refugee camps, poor housing, or simply homeless. It's true that if I had children I would rather leave them the

love of sharing, more valuable to my mind than a beautiful private property which they would one day try and share without too much dispute.

Because, consecrated as we are in celibacy or in the bonds of marriage, we desire a life conform to the Love of God,

We rely on the help of our friends to grow in fidelity.

LF: When our 42 brothers and sisters, like seeds sown in the earth, clad in their white albs, prostrate themselves in the Basilica as a sign of their life commitment, it will be hard to tell what is their state of life: clothed in the same white baptismal robe (Rev. chapter 7), they will commit themselves together, couples and celibates. This mix of couples and consecrated celibates might seem disorderly to some, and yet we habitually say, and we can verify, that conjugal love sealed in the permanent bonds of marriage, and celibacy for the sake of the Kingdom, are like two sides of the same gold coin: a priceless gift for the Kingdom. The gift of marriage and the gift of celibacy rely on each other. Our weaknesses, our shortcomings, and also sometimes our solitudes get strength from a common fidelity.

Because Truth is priceless, because lies are the common currency, and because the truth will set us free,

We try to be true with each other.

LF: In this phrase which evokes our appeal for 'transparency', there is something strange and new which cannot be understood from the outside. One day when one of us was trying to explain to a group of male and female religious how it is that we try to live within our fraternities, a well known priest who is a friend stood up to say that we were proposing something dangerous and that this search to be truthful with each other was simply a naïve illusion. On reflection, the negative reaction of this priest has an element of truth that we must heed, for we are not saints and do not claim to be 'true' or 'transparent'. However, following the example of St John's epistles which frequently speak of those who seek 'Truth', we try to live gradually more and more in truth with each other. This process of hidden sharing and fraternal forgiving at the heart of each fraternity is a very simple path of reconciliation with oneself and with others. It is a path of poverty which, paradoxically, is a great source of strength!

Because divisions between Christians constitute the greatest obstacle to evangelisation, and because we believe that Jesus

Christ's prayer for unity, 'that all may be one so that the world may believe', will be heard,

Together, Orthodox, Protestants and Catholics, we delay no further, and take the humble way of a shared daily life.

LF: I very much like this expression: 'take the humble way of a shared daily life' for it has the air of the Beatitudes, of Jesus's sermon on the mount. More and more I have the feeling of living a silent revolution, a peaceful protest! Quietly, year after year, day after day, from one minute to the next, we demonstrate that what divides us is weaker than what unites us. Without exactly shouting it from the rooftops, today we do wish to sing it in the shadow of the hill of martyrs, in the shadow of the hill of Montmartre: 'That all may be ONE. As you Father are in me and I am in you, that they may be one, so that the world may believe that you have sent me.'

To those who with a suspicious air ask us how we can accept that non-catholic members can make such a definitive commitment to a Catholic Public Association, our reply is that we are obeying the Popes and the second Vatican Council. Six times in an official address to other Churches Pope John Paul II said: 'Everything which we can do together, let us do together.' We can pray together, we can serve the poorest together, we can pray the Bible and say the Creed together, we can evangelise together... while hoping that one day we will be able to communicate together at the same table. Each in our own way we obey our own church, and strangely enough our awareness grows, step by step, and trial after trial, that Vatican II's option for ecumenism is 'irrevocable and irreversible', simply because it is made in obedience to the Spirit of Jesus who still lives at the heart of all our Christian Churches and Communities. It is also true that we Catholics, for our part, especially acknowledge and admire our brothers and sisters from other churches who take this step of definitive commitment, since their commitment represents a faith of a different order, in a sense riskier than our own. In so doing they are building bridges which are durable, even definitive!

Because we wish to make ourselves available for the harvest which is great, and because Jesus saves the world through his obedience,

We decide to live obedience and fraternal submission.

LF: What can we say about obedience? Is it not dangerous to talk of 'fraternal submission'? This is something that might worry our families who come in such numbers to this Pentecost feast, 2009. Can

we reassure them, explaining that this choice of obedience is no alienation of our free will, but on the contrary, an experience of freedom?

Here we come to the most profound aspect of our commitment, and the most difficult to explain to our families and friends, believers and non-believers alike. How can we explain that we do not wish to obey men, but God? How to explain that we are validating what St Paul wrote to the Corinthians: 'Where the Spirit of the Lord is present, there is freedom' (2 Cor. 3:17)?

The disciples themselves took time to appreciate the full implications of Jesus's ascent to Jerusalem for his Passover, to see it as an act of obedience in love, an offering culminating in the joy of the Resurrection. When two spouses give each other the sacrament of marriage, it is an act of love for ever, and in giving themselves they are not sacrificing their freedom but expressing the best of that very freedom: freedom in love. The commitment of our brothers and sisters on this Pentecost Sunday, 2009 shows us very clearly that we must not confuse the love of freedom with the Freedom of Love. God loves us and this love frees us. Our community life is possible, and joyous, by reason of the reality of the love of God for all, and therein we find the profound reason for this commitment: our desire to announce together this very Good News.

Because the power of the Holy Spirit has the measure of the problems of our time, and because the strength of God triumphs in our weakness,

We ask the aid of the Holy Spirit.

LF: Our community was born in 1973 at a time of Charismatic Renewal, in the period following Vatican II when, in Cardinal Ratzinger's own admission in his preface to Fr Cantalamessa's book on the *Veni Creator*, the Holy Spirit was for Catholics the 'unknown God'. Today that is no longer the case. Very happily, the Catholic Church is more open to this 'power from on high' promised by Christ himself.

For this is a Spirit of Unity.

Because we love each other, because our joy is the greater,

We commit ourselves for life in the Community of Chemin Neuf to serve the Church and Christian Unity.

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FATHER ROBERT GIBBONS

Melkite priest from St John's Skete, Oxford,
lecturer in Liturgical and Theological studies

MOTHER JOANNA

Orthodox nun from The Holy Myrrh Bearers' Skete, Cambridge,
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BOOK REVIEWS

Etty Hillesum. A Life Transformed, Patrick Woodhouse (London: Continuum, 2009), paperback, 160. ISBN: 9781847064264

In March 1941 Etty Hillesum, a 27 year old Dutch Jewish student living in Nazi-occupied Amsterdam, began a diary that was to become a chronicle of an extraordinary spiritual journey. Her short life was to end in Auschwitz two and a half years later. As Patrick Woodhouse comments in his first chapter, Etty Hillesum did not emerge from adolescence as a balanced young person who was already on the way to becoming a saintly figure. The beginning of the diary reveals an insecure, emotionally disturbed and chaotic young woman whose turbulent inner life sometimes left her in deep depression. An intense relationship with a gifted but highly unorthodox psychotherapist called Julius Spier helped her find order and self-knowledge and led to a religious faith that was to sustain her as her world was overwhelmed by darkness and ultimate catastrophe.

Etty Hillesum did not develop her spiritual life as a result of an interest in religion or intellectual enquiry. Woodhouse explains that her spirituality found its origin not in an attempt to grasp life through thinking but rather as a response of the heart simply attending to and receiving what is. Sitting in the sunshine one day in March 1941, she says that she no longer felt the need to understand her experience and put down in words why she found it so beautiful: 'As I sat there like that in the sun, I bowed my head unconsciously as if to take in even more of that new feeling for life. Suddenly I knew deep down how someone can sink impetuously to his knees and find peace there, his face hidden in his folded hands.' Woodhouse traces Etty's inner journey which turns unexpectedly into a way to God. This was God discerned in the inwardness of her life and in a sense of communion with a depth that she can only call God, a place of at oneness with all of humanity.

Her prayer life was equally unexpected: 'Last night I suddenly went down on my knees in the middle of this large room between the steel chairs and the matting. Almost automatically. Forced to the ground by something stronger than myself... some time ago I said to myself, "I am a kneeler in training." I was still embarrassed by this act, as intimate as gestures of love that cannot be put into words... except by

a poet.'

Woodhouse's narrative has an account of the terrors that were gradually engulfing the Jews of Amsterdam as a counterpoint to Etty's developing spiritual life. Etty rapidly abandoned any expectation of Divine intervention in human affairs, which is the Biblical conception that dominates Jewish liturgy and calendar, but, contrary to some readings of her texts, her understanding of God was in no sense lacking in saving and transcendent power, despite her awareness of the vulnerability of the divine in the context of brutal and remorseless political evil. It was Etty's overwhelming sense of the reality of God that sustained her and ensured that her inner world was never dominated by the darkness that was rapidly intensifying around her. Unlike many of the people she encountered she never succumbed to hatred as a response to her persecutors. The interiority of her faith did not lead her to any indifference to the suffering of others; on the contrary she refused to go into hiding when she received the summons to Westerbork, the transit camp which was the beginning of the journey to Auschwitz for more than a hundred thousand Dutch Jews, because she would not abandon her people in their time of greatest need. She was often shaken and afraid, but like the Psalmist she did not fear evil even in the valley where it cast its darkest shadow.

In his final chapter, Patrick Woodhouse reflects on Etty's life and argues that she has much to say to us today, particularly to those of us who are sceptical about faith, despairing of the future, or succumbing to an easy hatred of our enemies as our only response to the present. For those of us who do not respond to formal worship Etty offers new understanding of what it is to pray. If we have lost sight of the holiness of creation amidst the unremitting busyness of our daily existence we are gently reminded that for Etty Hillesum listening was the primary mode of her believing and that it was the practice of paying deep attention that truly transformed her.

This is a very precious book that left me feeling very grateful for the life of Etty Hillesum. Patrick Woodhouse has written about her with a clarity and unobtrusive simplicity that is wholly appropriate. He has rightly concentrated on her spirituality and not spent time in theological explorations, but these too are important: Etty Hillesum's understanding of God's power is very close to contemporary feminist theology and has much to say to those who have tried to write

theology of the Holocaust, but no doubt this will be taken up in due course. Woodhouse, again rightly in my judgement, did not spend time looking at Jewish and Christian influences on Etty Hillesum's spiritual development, but her life does provide a landscape which both communities will find both challenging and deeply enriching and which certainly deserves further attention.

Jonathan Gorsky, Heythrop College

Inter-Church Relations: Developments and Perspectives. A Tribute to Bishop Anthony Farquhar, ed. Brendan Leahy (Dublin: Veritas, 2008), 203, paperback. ISBN: 9781847300952.

In 2008, Bishop Anthony Farquhar, auxiliary bishop of Down and Connor (Northern Ireland) celebrated the 25th anniversary of his Episcopal ordination. In order to honour his longstanding commitment to Christian unity, nineteen contributions were gathered together for publication. Coming from different denominations (Roman Catholics, Orthodox, Anglicans, Presbyterians, Methodists, and Quakers) all the authors reflect on the current ecumenical situation, particularly in Ireland. Archbishop Conti's question: 'Ecumenism, *unde venisti et quo vadis?* (From where have you come and where are you going?)' (40) could have been an apt title for the whole collection.

Brendan Leahy offers us a challenging and interesting ecumenical polyphony, there are no dissonances and three themes seem to run throughout all the contributions: the first relates to the question of the reception of the theological debates: 'How are new insights and understandings to be conveyed to the faithful so that their lives and discipleship may be informed and enriched?' (Gillian Kingston, 66). Cecil McCullough (77) and Bishop Crispian Hollis (150) express their frustration about this important challenge facing ecumenists today. For her part, Susan Gately describes with enthusiasm the Third European Ecumenical Assembly in Sibiu and informs us that 'the group of participants returning to Ireland expressed the wish that the Sibiu meeting would not finish there' (139). As there was a year between the Sibiu meeting and the publication of this book, it would have been interesting to discover how the Ecumenical Assembly was received in Ireland at grass roots level during this period.

The second point is about self-sufficiency and uniformity: all the

contributors agree on the fact that we need one another and that unity includes differences. From the outset, the Editor warns us that the book is an opportunity for us 'to listen to updates, insights and perspectives from different traditions' so that we may 'be enriched' (14). Differences are made for enrichment. Acceptance of one another with our differences (Ray Davey, 28) is a key element for a unity based on the model of 'reconciled diversity' (Cecil McCullough, 75). Moreover, in a very enlightening text, Michael Earle reminds us of 'our incompleteness without each other' (129). This theme is enriched by the very pertinent words of Tom Norris (inspired by John Paul II) on 'the new methodology of the "exchange of gifts"' (155) and the necessity for our Churches to become partners in dialogue.

The last aspect concerns the goal of our work, prayer, and dialogue for unity. Where are we going? It is important to begin by recognising that the title of the book does not speak about the end but about the journey: *Inter-Church Relations: Developments and Perspectives*. Even the word *perspectives* does not orientate us toward a precise goal. Bishop Farquhar reflects this when he writes: 'You shall not confuse ecumenism with community, political or social relations' (23). Gillian Kingston is the most passionate about the subject, reminding us that the Fourth Report of the Methodist/Roman Catholic International Commission (Nairobi 1986) stated that the goal of this dialogue is 'full communion in faith, mission and sacramental life' (62) and quoting Benedict XVI: 'I encourage all those involved in this work never to rest content with partial solutions but to keep firmly in view the goal of full visible unity among Christians which accords with the Lord's will' (68). These statements are strong enough to make us wonder why Cardinal Seán Brady seems so timid in his foreword when he writes twice that we are called to work 'towards greater and improved inter-Church relations' (13). To work for Inter-Church relations is important but it seems to me a step below what we are called to aim at. In his contribution Bishop Samuel Poyntz asks about the ecumenical journey: '... is a further step required?' (176). It may be that the step required of us is to commit ourselves to work for nothing less than full and visible unity here and now (cf. Archbishop Conti, 43). This difference of approach finds a powerful illustration in the image developed by the Chief Rabbi Sir Jonathan Sacks (quoted by Bishop C. Hollis, 146-147). Speaking of the building of our society he offers three models: 'society as a country house, as a hotel or as a home we build

together'. In the country house, 'the guest is welcome but the host always calls the tune', in the hotel, 'nobody really belongs to or "owns" the hotel', in the home we have 'a community which has shared values and gifts'. Bishop Hollis has no difficulty in showing how these three models may describe the goal we have in mind when we speak of Christian unity.

From a Northern Irish perspective, I must acknowledge that the two contributions I found the most stimulating are: 'Journey Towards Shalom' by the Church of Ireland Bishop Samuel Poyntz and 'In the World but Not of It' by the Presbyterian David Stevens, leader of the Corrymeela Community. On one side, Bishop Poyntz's words on forgiveness are very courageous and penetrating, and on the other side, David Stevens shares with us a very enlightening analysis of the role of the Churches in the Northern Ireland conflict. I encourage those who wish to deepen their understanding of the Troubles to read these pages very attentively.

It seems to me that in this polyphony there is one voice missing, one element which should have been mentioned: prayer. Archbishop Conti is the only one to address the subject (though only in passing) reminding us that prayer is the 'soul of the ecumenical movement' (45). I suppose that Bishop Farquhar could not have journeyed ecumenically without regular personal and shared ecumenical prayer. Pope John Paul II said: 'The change of heart which is essential for every authentic search for unity flows from prayer and its realization is guided by prayer' (*Ut Unum Sint* 25).

For the reader, the variety of contributors is at one and the same time a richness and a weakness. One cannot find the same interest in all the papers, and yet the overall impression is one of a thought-provoking read.

Dom Thierry Marteaux, Rostrevor Monastery.

Rereading Paul Together: Protestant and Catholic Perspectives on Justification, ed. David E. Aune (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2006), 279, \$26.00. ISBN: 9780801028403.

With the 1999 signing of the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification* by the majority of Lutheran Churches, the Catholic Churches, and in 2006 by the Methodists of the world through the World Methodist Council, a new high-water mark has been set in common biblical interpretation among the churches of the West.

Since the sixteenth century differences on the hermeneutics of Paul's soteriology and its situation within the biblical canon of views on salvation, have divided Catholics and Protestants on the interpretation of the role of justification, faith, works and the role of the Church in mediating the saving work of Christ on the cross to a sinful people.

The careful biblical scholarship which made this agreement possible is best known in the English speaking world through the work of Raymond E. Brown, John Reumann and Joseph Fitzmyer. The German and Vatican initial responses to the draft text, in 1998 and before clearly illustrate that this scholarship was not widely known, or seriously engaged even within the traditions that had produced together these fresh readings of Paul, and New Testament soteriology in general. Likewise, since this reconciling scholarship occurred a decade or two ago, serving this reconciling text, a whole school of 'new perspectives' on Pauline studies has emerged which place the sixteenth century hermeneutical debates in a totally new context, now not only ecumenically reconciling but also engaging, again, Christian approaches to Judaism.

This volume recounts an important 2002 colloquium cosponsored by Valparaiso and Notre Dame Universities. It includes key voices that were engaged in the drafting of the JDDJ, which makes it essential for understanding the history of the document and its process. It features scholars who engage the reservation of German Lutherans and of the Vatican text, helping to both contextualize these critics and refute their conclusions. It provides responses that deepen and broaden the ecumenical implications of the agreements embodied in the text. It also adds essays on patristic, medieval, reformation and modern readings of Paul, helping to situate the various theological and confessional uses of Paul's soteriology historically as well as ecumenically.

Important amplifications of certain dimensions of the very compact JDDJ enable the reader to see how the internally differentiated consensus can allow both for unity in the core truths of the Gospel relating to God's saving work in Jesus Christ, and our human response in good works; and the stark, but no longer church dividing, differences of emphasis carried in the piety, practice and theological emphases of the three traditions.

For example, the biblical scholars are agreed on the ten soteriological images put forward in the Pauline corpus, and on the

fact that justification is the most frequently used among these images. The text of the JDDJ can also agree that justification then is a criterion for interpreting the whole of the biblical message of salvation. However, Catholics are reluctant to see justification as *the* criterion among these soteriological formulations, while Lutherans who criticize the text would insist on its criteriological singularity.

The final essay, by the editor of the volume, brings the conversation up to date by reviewing the larger new Pauline perspectives debate. The new perspectives situate the soteriological question in a whole new context. The work of E.P. Sanders, James Dunn and N.T. Wright has put forward an interpretation of Paul that would not see his polemic as anti-Jewish, tout court, but rather as a polemic against some legalist aspects of Second Temple Judaism that would deter the recognition of Christ's saving and redeeming role. The anti-Judaism of Luther in his interpreting of Paul, seeing Judaism as a religion of works rather than a religion of grace, is shared by medieval and early modern Christian hermeneutics.

The 'new perspectives' approach would revise this anti-Judaism, recognizing how it served the anti-Semitism of Luther and of twentieth century Christians, and in Luther's case was used as an anti-Roman polemic. Both Judaism and Catholicism, for Luther, were religions of works, over against a Pauline doctrine of justification of grace through faith. This 'new perspective' does not, of course, take away from the earlier agreements on the issues that polarized Christians for the last half millennium; but it does lay a common base for seeing these polemics even further muted by a, now, common approach to interpreting Paul's evaluation of the Judaism of his era in a new light.

Each ecumenical step forward holds out new hope, not only of deepening the bonds of communion within the Christian community, but also of renewing our common appreciation of the biblical witness and the faith of the Church through the ages. A renewed appreciation of Paul, of God's unique grace in Jesus Christ, and even of our common outreach in understanding the historical Jewish people and their present community in our midst, are only the first fruits of this seminal ecumenical text and the biblical research behind it.

Brother Jeffrey Gros FSC, Memphis Theological Seminary.

Growth in Agreement III: International Dialogue Texts and Agreed Statements, 1998 – 2005, ed. Jeffrey Gros FSC, Thomas F. Best, Lorelei F. Fuchs SA. Wm B. Eerdmans's Publishing Company/World Council of Churches Publications Faith & Order Paper, xvii + 615. ISBN: 9782825415115

It is common in these isles to speak of a 'Winter of Ecumenism' but when a tome of this weight lands on one's desk, which gives the texts of forty-three Agreed Statements, Joint Letters, Agreements, Reports, etc., then one might be excused to ask, 'winter, what winter?' This book takes us away from what can be our own very limited horizons and raises our eyes to the bigger picture.

The book is divided into five sections: a) dialogues and common declarations with Eastern and Oriental Orthodox participation; b) those which have Roman Catholic participation; c) dialogues between various Reformation churches; d) reports from the Joint Working Group of the Roman Catholic Church and the World Council of Churches; and e) the WCC ecclesiology text from Porto Alegre, Brazil. These are not just reports to be filed, the book carefully put on the shelf. Joint Statements are a rich source of innovative theology, they re-work, re-examine, the established positions from two (or three) view-points and produce a development, this is crucial to the growth of theological understanding—or even of liturgical understanding, as the Agreement between the Chaldean Church and the Assyrian Church of the East shows. One has to be careful to remember that these are agreements not between experts, who might be expected to agree, but official agreements: they have weight, in Catholic terms they are now part of the 'magisterium' of the Churches.

Yet this weight has to be accepted not only by the authorities of the Churches, but by the person in the pew, the average believer. This is the difficult journey; akin to the educationalists' description of the journey of knowledge from the head to the heart. For example, in England we have the Anglican/Methodist covenant, and the acceptance of this within individual churches is variable. The denominations have to work with an understanding of the *sensus fidelium*—the believing of the faithful: not just the passive belief, but the growth of understanding by all the faithful. This should be active, with a positive engagement by clergy and laity. The teaching of these documents should be integrated into the lives of the Churches, into the denominational preaching, etc. In the Catholic Church it has to be

asked if the long established Catholic/Anglican and Catholic /Methodist conversations have impinged on the average congregation and if they have had any effect on the relationships between denominations in a local area? Bishops, Superintendents and the rest all talk to each other (usually) but has this filtered down to each and every community? This requires a development of understanding and an awareness that the Christian belief should be dynamic, not an ossification of 'what I learned at school' or (for Catholics) 'this is what the catechism said.'

There is not the space in this review to examine each document, but three joint reports spring out because they are not just about mutual relations, but about the mission of the Church: the Catholic/Anglican 'Communion in Mission' of 2000; the Catholic/World Evangelical Alliance Report of 2002; the Lutheran/Reformed 'Called to Communion and Common Witness' of 2001. Yet, how, nine years after the Mississauga declaration, are Catholics and Anglicans working out the 'joint commitment to our common mission in the world'? (§9) Have Catholics and Evangelicals stopped trying to 'win members from each other by unworthy means' (Swanwick Declaration §61)? Have the Lutheran and URC congregations in England collaborated more since the Geneva Declaration? The questions arise, but the answers, even if not negative are unknown and unpublicised.

The reports from the WCC/RC Joint Working Group were unknown to me until I read the book; but they are well worth reading. They provide a summary of work together, which is probably more extensive than usually recognised. There is a brief page and a half on 'Areas of shared concern regarding social issues' which tells of some collaboration, but ends, almost plaintively with the sentence, 'There is much room for increased cooperation with both Vatican and Catholic constituencies within the framework of the DOV' (523). ... the DOV? This is the 'Decade to Overcome Violence (2001-10)' which had also passed me by. This underlines the amount of activity which is happening, both ecclesiastical and non-ecclesiastical, and which does not impinge on the average person. I doubt if there are any posters, even nine years old, about the Decade to Overcome Violence in our churches. This exemplifies the distance between what we could class as the centre and the periphery. Another opportunity has been lost because of the lack of communication.

The book, rich and authoritative as it is, serves as a prod—the texts, the aspirations, even the reality, are present here in essence. The prod is not only for the believers to develop and grow, both in themselves and in their relationships with other Christians, but also for the leaders of the Churches to ensure that the simple faithful are engaged in the endeavours of Christendom. This work must include proclamation, and the striving for the peace and justice of Christ, as well as moving towards the unity for which Christ prayed.

Although the texts are positive, even if the subsequent actions, if any, may not always be equally enthralling, there is a further sadness about the book. It is a reminder of the brokenness of the Christian Church; that collaboration is needed for the mission of the Church. As has been said, all the churches have wounded hands, and need the hands of others to bind up and heal the wounds. This valuable book provides the bandages for the work, if only the Churches could grasp them, but perhaps the hands are still too frail.

James Cassidy CRIC, Diocese of Northampton

'Because He Was a German!' Cardinal Bea and the Origins of Roman Catholic Engagement in the Ecumenical Movement, Jerome-Michael Vereb CP (Grand Rapids, Michigan/Cambridge, UK: Eerdmans, 2006), 332, cloth. ISBN: 9780802828859

When opening this book, one gets the impression that one has to go through a lot of preliminaries before coming to its essence. It starts with a 'Foreword', followed by a 'Bishop's Introduction', a 'Preface' and a 'Note of Gratitude'. Then we have a 'Prologue' and a first Chapter which is titled 'Prelude' and which begins with an 'Introduction'. However, after one reads (or thumbs) through these parts of the study, there opens a wide range of fascinating facts and findings on this important issue, namely the role of Augustin Cardinal Bea in the opening of the Roman Catholic Church towards ecumenical endeavours, and the significance of his German background in this task.

The book consists of six parts. First, the author gives an overview of the approach of the Catholic Church to ecumenism prior to Vatican II. The next chapter describes the 'German Theatre' of ecumenical activity which is mostly determined by the coexistence of both Catholics and Protestants in Germany, and by the situation of the Catholic Church and theology during the Nazi regime. Then, the

author describes the personality of Augustin Bea and his unexpected rise to the cardinalate. In Germany, the Archbishop of Paderborn, Lorenz Jaeger (1892-1975, archbishop 1941-1973, cardinal in 1965) took responsibility for ecumenical affairs very early; his correspondence with Bea is analysed in chapter four. The fifth one is simply titled 'The Letter'—this refers to a letter written by Jaeger to Pope John XXIII in which he proposes to found the 'Secretariat [Jaeger: 'Commission'] for Promoting Christian Unity'. This letter was drafted, written and sent in close cooperation between Bea and Jaeger. It is published by Vereb in English translation. (On pages 183 and 311 we are told that the Latin original of the draft is to be found in the appendix, but this is not the case.) The last chapter deals with how in the late 1950s and early '60s the ecumenical idea became an issue in Rome, especially in the preparation of Vatican II, and it describes Bea's role in this process and in its broader context. An elaborate conclusion, followed by a bibliography, an (as already indicated) incomplete appendix, and an index, concludes this study.

This book brings the reader in a fascinating way back to the origins of the Catholic engagement in the ecumenical movement. It is a study of the events and developments within the Catholic Church itself; other churches and their activities play only a minor role. The author has used sources some of which were previously unknown (especially those from German ecclesiastical archives), and he has spoken to people who were active at the time and who could witness to circumstances and details. He puts Bea's (and Jaeger's) activities in their true context, namely: that of the German historical and confessional situation; of the Catholic Church in Germany during and after the Nazi regime; and of significant theological developments, such as the new emphases on church history and on biblical studies (Bea himself was a biblical scholar!). Pope John XXIII's former secretary, Archbishop Capovilla, when asked by the author why the Pope involved Bea in so many different issues, responded with the phrase which gave this book its title: 'Because he was a German!' The German context, the specific German experience as the country of the Reformation and as a country which was in many ways divided, played in the eyes of the author a decisive role for Bea's and Jaeger's contribution to Catholic ecumenism. The book gives a convincing demonstration of these connections.

However, one must also make some critical remarks. Being a

German myself, I cannot read about 'the tragedies suffered by the German nation from 1918 through the Cold War' (p. xx) without adding 'and the tragedies caused by Germans to other nations in the same period of time.' This is an example of the author's sympathy with the subject of his study, and that subject's nation, which sometimes results in judgements which need qualifying. The volume also contains several repetitions, due to its structure which is not strictly chronological but systematic. There is no such place as 'Ohomatz' (150)—perhaps it is Olmütz, today Olomouc in the Czech Republic.

The formula Archbishop Jaeger uses in the very beginning and at the very end of his famous letter to the Pope, 'prostrate at the feet of Your Holiness', shows how things in the Roman Church have changed in the last five decades. (I am not familiar with the correspondence of bishops with the Pope but I presume that such a formula would not be used any more today.) Things have also changed in the engagement of the Catholic Church in ecumenical affairs. A daring and uncertain start led to the Church's entering into dialogue with many other Churches and communities, in cooperation with ecumenical bodies and in an irreversible commitment to the unity of all Christians. Cardinal Bea was one of the most important personalities in the first phase of this process, laying the foundations for what developed later. It is the merit of this book to shed new light on this man.

Thomas Bremer, Münster

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Pour un monde transformé, Aram I (Liban: 2008), paperback.

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