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TOGETHER IN CHRIST



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EDITORIAL

We have a distinct historical flavour from the offerings this time. Mr Paul Clark writes of a friendship that crosses the religious boundaries of the Puritan age. Next Fr Kevin Robinson, sheds light on the King James Bible. He set out to write a few lines but it grew! It has been edited into three stand-alone parts to be serialised for October and February next year. Sorry, you'll have to wait.

Desmond Miller joined the Ecumenical Marian Pilgrimage at Walsingham and reports how Mary is widely appreciated. While there he viewed the new Catholic Parish Church of the Annunciation recently dedicated by Bishop Michael Evans.

In the February edition Dr Miller informed us of the place of the Hijâb in Muslim culture following it's raised profile in the National press. Sr Jo Harvey has responded to describe how she came to own one.

Continue, please to canvass your parish, friends and local churches to become subscribers. Remember that there is no postage for five or more copies to one address! If you need to get a free sample to promote *Together in Christ* send in the details and we will sent it out.

May God bless and protect you.

Michael

A Tale of Two Poets

If we ever feel discouraged by the slow and halting pace of ecumenical progress in our own time it's worthwhile to bear in mind that 'ecumenism' has a longer history than we sometimes tend to suppose, and to recall inspiring examples of it from times of great intolerance, when the ecumenical flame must have seemed about to go out forever.

In 1644 Anglican clergy found themselves in a difficult position. In the Civil War they had, of course, tended to support the King, as head of the Church of England, but now, following the victory of the Parliamentary Army at Marston Moor earlier in the year, it was becoming clear that they were on the losing side. Power in Parliament had shifted to the Puritans, who had now strengthened their position further by entering into an anti-Royalist alliance with the Scots – a 'Solemn League and Covenant', which contained a number of clauses that were bound to upset many of the clergy and lay folk of the English national church. Both signatories formally committed themselves to 'The reformation of religion in The kingdoms of England and Ireland, in doctrine, worship, discipline and government, according to the Word of God and the example of the best reformed churches, and popery and prelacy should be extirpated'

The Anglicans wondered, 'What reformation? We've had the Reformation already, haven't we?' Yes, up to a point,' replied the Puritans, but now we're going to finish the job properly.' They had the whip hand and were ready to do whatever enforcing might prove necessary.

This wasn't altogether a bolt from the blue, Already there had been an ordinance authorising the 'sequestering of the estates' of Anglican clergymen who had been active in the Royalist struggle against Parliament. But now there was also to be a purge of non-activists who supported the King and the national church as currently established. Local committees were set up with powers to

identify 'idle, disaffected and scandalous clergy' – which meant anyone whose personal life style could be impugned in any way, or who was not willing to comply with the Covenant's policy or church reform. Resistant clergy were to be ejected from office and their property confiscated. Initially, parishioners and other members of the public were encouraged to come forward to shop their Royalist/Anglican parish priests and schoolmasters, but when this didn't produce the desired results the committees were packed with local Puritans, who showed more zeal (and sometimes less scruple) in making allegations against local clergy stick. It was a messy business. The aim was, 'if possible, to nail the suspect on grounds of immoral life – drinking, womanizing or neglect of duties' – but if that proved impossible it wasn't usually necessary for the committees to actually perjure themselves to get a conviction. They simply proceeded to apply the acid test – did this man support the Covenant or did he not? And if he refused to sign a statement supporting it he was out.

All this was a bitter experience for the members, clerical and lay, of The Church of England, for whom religious persecution had come to be something to inflict, if necessary, on others, not something to be inflicted on them. The persecution of Roman Catholics, in particular, had been standard practice for about two hundred years and it had usually been done in the name of and for the benefit of the Church of England. Catholics were mistrusted as 'enemies in our midst' - treasonable agents of foreign Catholic powers looking for a pretext to invade and restore the old pre-Reformation link of obedience between England and Rome. And indeed some of them – but by no means all – were reasonable in that sense. So over the years Parliament had passed a whole catalogue of anti-papist laws. Priests were banished and sometimes executed. Saying and attending Mass were criminal offences. Attendance at Church of England services and reception of the Anglican sacrament were compulsory, and those who refused to comply stood to be comprehensively 'asset-stripped' by successive swingeing fines, and possibly imprisoned. Precious little respect was shown for Catholic

consciences, or for Catholic civil rights; there was a law of ‘fixed abode’ which, though difficult to enforce was designed to make the work of police surveillance easier: Catholics (with some discretionary exceptions for tradesmen) were not allowed to travel more than ten miles from their home, without a permit.

Lord Cecil made no bones about all this. He explained quite candidly that as the intention was to exterminate the evil of popery from the kingdom entirely, and as quickly as possible there was no point in half measures. Catholics owed allegiance to a ‘foreign potentate’ and no state that valued its national independence could be expected to tolerate them.

As the struggle between the increasingly Puritan/revolutionary Parliament and The monarchy came to a head the attitude of King Charles I to the question of religious tolerance excited particular mistrust and resentment. His queen Henrietta Maria, a French Catholic, was known to be using her considerable influence to encourage her husband to try to ease the plight other co-religionists. Charles was sympathetic but had little room for manoeuvre. Public opinion was massively against him on this. He was the Head of the Church of England, of course, but few in that church shared his tolerationist tendencies. or trusted his motives. Elsewhere, amongst Presbyterians and Independents, anti-popery was even more virulent. In any case, after Marston Moor there wasn’t very much he could do about anything any more. The idea of religious tolerance was going down with the Royalist cause.

Amongst the many lives ruined and consciences outraged by the local committees were those of the Fellows of Cambridge University who were rounded up, interrogated and required to sign the Covenant, affirming that they accepted the further reformation of the national church along the lines proposed by Parliament. Sixty-five of them refused to sign, were summarily ejected from their tenures and warned that further penalties would ensue if they didn’t think again. One of the sixty-five was the 28-year-old scholar-poet Richard Crashaw. He did think again. He converted to Catholicism (or perhaps just ‘came out’ as a Catholic) and fled to

Paris. There, in 1646, his Cambridge friend and fellow-poet Abraham Cowley, a staunch Anglican who had been deprived of his Fellowship in the same way, found him living in dire poverty. Cowley persuaded Queen Henrietta Maria, herself now exiled in France, to grant Crashaw a small pension, and later, when she had come to know and admire his religious verse, she arranged for him to be appointed Canon of Loretto. Shortly after taking up his duties there, however, Crashaw died of a fever. He was about 35.

Cowley showed a wonderful – and, for its time rare – ecumenical spirit, as well as his affection and respect for his friend, by writing ‘On the Death of Mr Crashaw’ – a poem, praised by the not-especially-ecumenically-minded Dr Johnson – which includes, these fine lines:

How well (blest Swan) did Fate contrive thy death,
And made thee render up thy tuneful breath
In thy Great Mistress’ arms! Thou most divine
And richest offering of Loretto’s shrine!
Where like some holy Sacrifice t’expire,
A Fever burns thee and love lights the fire.
Angels, they say brought the fam’d Chapel there
And bore the sacred load in Triumph thro’ the air:
‘Tis surer much they brought thee there: and they,
And thou, their charge, went singing all the way.
Pardon my mother Church, if I consent –
That angels led him when from thee he went;
For ev’n in error sure no danger is
When joined with so much Piety as his.
Ah! mighty God, with shame I speak’t, and grief;
Ah! That our greatest faults were in Belief!
And our weak Reason were ev’n weaker yet.
Rather than thus, our Will’s too strong for it!
His faith, perhaps, in some nice tenets might
Be wrong; his Life. I’m sure, was in the right:
And I myself a Catholic will be,
So far at least, great Saint! To pray for thee.

Paul Clark

THE KING JAMES BIBLE (Introduction)

Great and manifold were the blessings most dread sovereign which Almighty God, the Father of all mercies bestowed upon the people of England when he first sent your majesty's royal person to rule and reign among us!

These grandiose words come from the preface to the *Authorised Bible* (AV) and are rendered to none other than that well known predatory homosexual, profligate spendthrift and indulger of all passions King James I. He was the estranged Son of Mary Queen of Scots. By the time that James came to the power of the English throne, her sad decapitated body had lain for just sixteen years at Peterborough Cathedral. Executed on Feb 9th 1587 she had actually remained unburied for five months until 31st July. Later by James' royal command her body was exhumed and reburied with great splendour at Westminster Abbey in Sept 1612. Subsequently her tomb was destroyed by Cromwellian puritans circa 1650.

Previously to this, Elizabeth I had succeeded in reinventing both the English monarchy and the national church. During her long reign of forty-five years, she had become the self styled *Virgin Queen*. The arrangement was known as the *Elizabethan Settlement*. On March 24th 1603 with the passing of *that bright occidental star* (AV preface) the first Elizabethan age came to a solemn and long awaited conclusion. Much as we see, towards the close of this second Elizabethan age, the future both of monarchy and established religion were fragile and uncertain. Without any immediate heir. The English throne defaulted to the King of Scotland whose succession had reluctantly and hesitantly been endorsed by Elizabeth in the latter years of her life.

Before Mary Queen of Scots' long imprisonment, James, a ten month infant, had been snatched from his Catholic mother and schooled thereafter in the new Protestant religion. But whatever else he may or may not have been, by today's standards King

James I (VI of Scotland) was an extraordinary scholar, and his own man. On his journey south towards his English coronation in 1603 he encountered a procession of dissenting Anglican clergy who presented ‘the Millenary Petition’. Their cause was to see a national church purged of every remaining *popish practice*. Their demands included the abolition of the liturgical sign of the cross, the exchange of blessed rings at a marriage, the use of surplices (that simple white garment used in divine worship) the ministry of priests with absolutions, and such like. Beyond this they wanted to see an end to that contentious remnant of old times, the office of Bishops, including the rite of Confirmation and finally the expunging of those sacred books from scripture which no longer accorded with their purpose and were known disparagingly as *Apocrypha*. All this and more comprised the Puritan agenda, which would gradually see a separatist movement forming secret congregations and ultimately large-scale emigrations to the ‘New World’.



**King James (Stuart) I of England
and James VI of Scotland**

The Puritans hoped to develop a new *Presbyterian* church as seen in Scotland, with the support of the king. They were to be disappointed. James was looking for something different. In the year following his coronation, against the advice of government ministers and prelates, he summoned an ecclesiastical conference at Hampton Court. James wanted to consolidate his kingdom with an ecclesial body based firmly on his own concepts of church tradition. He was looking to marry the sovereign powers of English monarchy with the mystical body of the church. Whereas Elizabeth

had succeeded in displacing the Queen of Heaven with herself in the public affection of the people, James now assumed the role of a new King Solomon if not actually Christ himself. All this is writ large in the preface of the AV. James is the *Wonder of the World*, the new rising *Sun* dispelling every cloud and darkness and giving an unhealing blow to that *man of sin*, the Pope, living across the seas!

In this arrangement the final authority in divisive matters of religion and national life would rest not with any apostolic patriarch, pope or bishop, nor even with any self styled council of *elders* (presbytery) but with himself as king. He would become some refashioned progeny of the biblical David. He was after all 'divinely appointed' and recognised for his learning and wisdom. The plan lacked any safeguard against the advent of a king more like the tyrannical Ahab (1 Kings 16ff) than a saintly Josiah (2Kings 21ff). Whereas on the continent new protestant ideas had served to undermine and overthrow old crowns and state governments, in England, Protestantism and Monarchy achieved a unique coalescence so that one depended on the other. This was the new *Establishment*. 'No bishop no king' was the watchword, and vice versa. It is hardly surprising that in the short period that followed, the nation veered from one crisis to another: 1642 civil war, 1649 regicide and a Puritan republic, 1660 restoration of the Stuart monarchy and an Episcopal church, 1688 ejection of James II (a confirmed and benign Catholic) and importation of the Dutch King William (of Orange) and Mary.

The last episode is an interesting and neglected period of Anglican history. Having sworn allegiance to James II a significant group of clergy felt compelled by conscience to resign office. They could not break that oath and serve an alien usurper. They were known as the *Non-jurors* many of whom embraced ascetic destitution as they surrendered their livings. As an ecclesial group (including such notables as John Dunn) some of them sought to become a new jurisdiction of the Eastern Orthodox Church.¹ The eastern churches being more nationalistic shared many ecclesial similarities with Anglicanism. Although their plans came to

nothing they did much to advance the status of Anglicanism in the understanding of Orthodoxy. In the light of other developments such claims are now largely abandoned.

Now all these events took place a long time ago. Perhaps they should serve for nothing more than historical curiosity. Nevertheless the legacy is ongoing and accounts for much of the condition of Christian life as it is today in England and America. There is a psychological inheritance written deeply in the collective DNA of Anglo-Saxon people for the last 400 years. It warns that religion is deep and dangerous and while revered politely at certain key moments in life it is probably best avoided. So much for the reformation, but what of Jesus and the Bible?

The most remarkable product of the Hampton Court Conference in 1604 was the decision to embark on a new 'once and for all' translation of the English Bible. This would become the Authorised, or 'King James Bible'. The Authorised Version remains the touchstone of English Bible translations by which all other versions are measured. James wanted a project that would unify the leading religious men throughout the realm consolidating the newly united kingdom of England, Scotland and Wales, hopefully with one church. It is significant that at the very time that the Authorised Version was being produced, Shakespeare was writing his greatest plays. Enthusiasts may debate Shakespeare's Catholic sympathies (or otherwise) but there is no doubt that his plays illustrate the period. For example; the story of King Lear is a parable of the time. Whereas King James worked with singular authority towards a United Kingdom, *King Lear* illustrates what happens when a King abdicates his sovereign duties and allows a kingdom to divide. Lear casts care to the wind, devolving regional powers to lesser houses. The result is chaos and disaster. Truth and love die with the youngest child and only the fool speaks wisdom. And so it was, *as a project for national and religious unity*, that the AV Bible came to birth. James commanded that all available previous translations should be consulted and considered. From these the most effective and reliable translation should be produced and especially *to be read in Churches*.

The *Authorised Version* or *King James Bible* as it is still known today, was first published in 1611. Until this date a simplified account would suggest that there were already four available Bibles printed in English. William Tyndale completed his New Testament in exile between 1522–25 but the Old Testament was never completed.

Bust of Willam Tyndale
St Dunstons in the West
London



Calvin's *Geneva Bible* of 1560 supplied the verse numberings as devised by Robert Estienne in 1551 (chapters had been numbered by Abp Stephen Langton in 1226).

The *Great* or *Bishop's Bible* (1539-41) the first official vernacular version was already in general use in Anglican churches. It was a clumsy and unwieldy product undergoing a continuous process of revision at the hands of various bishops through the reigns of Henry, Edward, Mary, and Elizabeth. It remained without a conclusive edition. It is interesting that the process of refining the *Bishops' Bible* had continued even during the reign of Queen Mary when the English church was briefly reconciled to Rome including the rite of Mass in English!

The *Douay–Rheims* version of the Bible was produced by Catholics in exile in 1582 – the New Testament at Douay, and in 1609 the Old Testament at Rheims. Although it is nowhere credited, there is textual evidence to indicate that the AV translators consulted this translation before the final completion of their work. It is an irony that while the *Douay–Reims Bible* was thoroughly discouraged in England, it was unintentionally promoted by an extreme Elizabethan Puritan called William Fulke. Sometime in the 1580's he published an attack on this Catholic translation of the

New Testament including the full text alongside the text of the *Bishop's Bible*. His project backfired. He aroused so much interest that the Catholic translation became favourably imprinted in the minds of many English readers.

With each of the earlier Bibles there were difficulties. Tyn-dale's work had been produced overseas while on the run. He had not had access to good Hebrew or Greek manuscripts, but he used Erasmus' first printed Greek text, which we shall speak of later. *Calvin's Bible* (Old and New Testament) was splendidly printed with maps and explanations but many of the marginal notes were thoroughly distasteful to English statesmen and undermined concepts of monarchy.

The *Great Bible* lacked any consistency of style and expression. It was difficult to read because it followed too closely the awkward patterns of Greek and Hebrew without due care to the rhythm and clarity of spoken English.

What was needed was a carefully researched translation referring to the best available ancient manuscripts culminating in a flowing style of English which was at once intelligible throughout the land. King James summoned a commission of some fifty scholars. With the supervision of Richard Bancroft (Archbishop of Canterbury) the scriptural books were divided between six groups with roughly eight scholars apiece. Each group was to render an agreed translation of the appropriate texts. When they had resolved a conclusive edition their completed work was to be passed to each of the other groups and to any other learned men for final comments and an ultimate revision to create a unified style. The whole project took roughly eight years. Would that there were so many competent scholars today who could command Latin, Greek, Hebrew and Syriac let alone English!

Perhaps the main difficulty in the translation of any text is to find words that accurately convey the intention of the original writer. Sometimes it is not possible to convey the whole sense of a text especially when a writer makes a play with words to convey two meanings! For example when Jesus holds up an ear of corn and announces 'He who has ears to hear let him hear' (Mark 4:9) the

humour works well in English but not in every language. Calvin's Bible was commonly known as the *Breeches Bible*. When God was looking for Adam and Eve in the garden and they found themselves to be naked, Calvin's text says 'they took fig leaves and sewed unto themselves breeches (trousers)'. When King Saul goes into a cave to relieve himself (1 Sam 24:3) a contemporary American text says 'he went to the bathroom'! Polite glosses such as these hardly convey the timeless character of the sacred text. But there again Adam actually means 'red earth' and Timothy means 'Honour God'. It was a sensible rule of the AV translators to leave the biblical names of places and prophets just as they appear in the text.

A new fashion creeping across 16th Century England, especially in puritan strongholds like Northampton and Sussex was to name children with biblical catchphrases. Baptism registers show children named *Fear-not*, *The Lord is Near*" and very popular *Sin-deny* or *Deny-Sin* (nowadays perhaps Sidney or Denise). The custom travelled especially to the USA where names like Mercy, Constance and Patience all became popular. This was inspired especially by Calvin's *Geneva Bible* where the names of prophets and places had been translated by meaning.² No doubt the practice was also a deliberate measure to break with the names of traditionally venerated saints. After all, if Hosea in the OT could name his own children *Not Pitied* or *Not My People* why not *No-Merit*, *Sorry-for-Sin* and *More-Trial*, names all appearing in English registers of the time (compare Hosea Ch 1 in AV and JB).

Next time we will look at the consequences this for our day.

Fr Kevin Robinson

[1] Notwithstanding Art. 19 of the Thirty-Nine Articles of the C of E: "As the Church of Jerusalem, Alexandria and Antioch have erred so also hath the Church of Rome, not only in their life and manner of ceremonies, but also in matters of faith".

[2] Adam Nicholson "Power and the Glory" *Jacobean England and the making of the King James Bible*, ©Harper Perennial, 2004, page 74 ff.

Third Biennial Ecumenical Marian Pilgrimage Walsingham March 2007

This pilgrimage is supported by the Ecumenical Society of the Blessed Virgin Mary, The Catholic League and the Fellowship of St Alban and St Sergius. It is run as a separate Trust ably organised by Fr Peter Marr of Plymouth. There were ninety-seven of us representing the Anglicans, the Churches of England and Scotland, Methodist, Presbyterian, Roman Catholic and Orthodox Churches of which there were members from the Antiochian, Coptic, Greek, Melkite, Russian and Serbian Churches – a truly ecumenical gathering. We were comfortably accommodated at the Anglican Shrine.

For three days there was a rich programme of prayer, meditation, and instruction. Fr Philip North, the Shrine Director, welcomed us on the Tuesday afternoon with an excellent talk in which he portrayed Mary as the evangelist. There followed a Holy Communion Service in the Methodist Chapel conducted by Rev. Samuel Harris of the Church of Scotland. In his homily Rev. Dr Jonathan Pye of Wesley College, Bristol, spoke of Mary's vocation as Mother of Christ; her love is empathetic – a love which is willing to enter into another's suffering – enduring – constant and passionate.

After supper Bishop Kallistos Ware (Greek Orthodox) led a meditation inviting us to keep in mind the catacomb image of a woman with hands raised in prayer. Is she the *Maria Orans*, the Church, or a Christian soul in prayer? Perhaps she is all three. Taking Luke 11:28 as his text: "Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and keep it!" he spoke of the Holy Spirit as the *Panagion* and the Blessed Virgin as the *Panagia*. Mary is the Icon of the Holy Spirit. A Liturgy of Reconciliation ended the day.

On Wednesday morning Dr Pye (Methodist) led us in an Ignatian type meditation on Luke 2:41-52 when Jesus was *Lost and*

Found by his mother and St Joseph. He brought the story alive with an account of his own experience and the agony of losing and finding his son when on a day outing to the beach.

Then Fr Anthony Clements (Coptic) gave a thumbnail sketch of the Coptic Church. Coptic simply means Egyptian. After this we found our way to the Catholic Reconciliation Chapel for a celebration of the Mass at which the Papal Nuncio presided. Archbishop Muñoz called us to respond to Christ's love reminding us that Christ draws us to himself in order to unite himself to each of us so that we may love one another with his love.

After a packed lunch Dom Anthony Sutch OSB developed the theme *The Human Face of God*. The Rule of St Benedict is a method by which the monk is encouraged to listen to the voice of God in Christ and recognize the importance of the community and the individual within the community. Disunity is a scandal if we are not prepared to seek the truth in all honesty. We are to take seriously the command to love. We are to be the face of God to each other.

This talk was followed by the ESBVM Ecumenical Office after which we returned to the village and to the Catholic Church of the Annunciation for Benediction. This church has been rebuilt on the original site. The architect has created a fine church which blends in perfectly with the surroundings. The interior is remarkably spacious and functions liturgically very well.

For those with stamina there were the Shrine Prayers and Rosary at 6 o'clock. After Supper, Dr Sebastian Brock, Reader (retired) in Syriac Studies in the University of Oxford spoke of *Mary in the Syriac Tradition*. A particular characteristic of early Syriac tradition was the expression of theology through poetry of which St Ephrem (ca. 306–373) was the great exponent. He has been called 'the harp of the Holy Spirit'. Because God is without bounds he disliked definitions, and relied on paradox and symbol.

He is noted for his sympathy for women and his poems on Mary have earned him the title ‘Marian Doctor’.

Thursday commenced with a Roman Catholic Mass in the village Church. After breakfast Rev. Leon Carberry (Anglican) led us in a mediation based on Acts 1:12-14 which describes the nascent Church, the apostles together with Mary at prayer in the upper room. We too are called to pray and await the Holy Spirit who will establish unity. Mary is our exemplar; through her prayer and openness to the Holy Spirit, she was enabled to respond in obedience to the Angel at the Annunciation, and with Jesus who, in loving obedience to the Father’s will, suffered at Calvary to reverse the effects of the disobedience of Adam and Eve.

The Anglican Eucharist was celebrated by Bishop John Broadhurst of Fulham. In his sermon he emphasized our social nature and dependence on community where as present day society focuses on the individual. Jesus was born into a family – an extended family. Devotion to Our Lady takes many forms, but we should beware of taking her out of context. She was predestined to be the Mother of the Saviour. She is the foremost among the community of saints.

In the unavoidable absence of Sister Benedicta Ward her paper on *Our Lady: Aspects of Early Anglo-Saxon Devotion to Mary* was read for her. Sister Benedicta gave a general survey of Anglo-Saxon devotion to Mary. Of interest is the suggestion that the origin of the title *Lady* in Anglo-Saxon was derived from the word for bread and for kneading. Our Lady is indeed the maker and giver of The Bread. That Mary is the *Star of the Sea* was suggested first by Jerome. The Venerable Bede combined *Lady* and *Star of the Sea*.

The afternoon talk was to have been given by Archbishop Gregorios in the Anglican Church of St Mary, but was unable to attend. In his stead Bishop Kallistos gave a most stimulating talk on Mary in the Byzantine tradition. He began with a quote from one of St Nicholas Cabasilas’ homilies (14th century)

She is the cause of all beauty, magnificence and of everything that human kind honours with hymns. All praise is to be ascribed to her alone. Indeed she is even regarded as the cause of our daily existence as human beings. It is because of the Blessed Virgin that the heavens and the earth and the whole universe exist. Christ chose her to be His mother because she is the best of all.

This is high praise indeed, but Cabasilas also wrote sound theology. The Incarnation is the central point of human history and Mary is God's instrument.

In the evening the Akathist Hymn was beautifully sung in the Shrine Church. This was followed by a Panel Discussion.

The Friday programme began with a reflection lead by Dom Alberic Stacpoole OSB. In the Liturgical Calendar we focus on Christmas and Easter, but perhaps we should take a much broader view to include the whole life span of Jesus and Mary. On the feast of the Annunciation we celebrate the Incarnation of Christ, the beginning of his earthly life which comes to completion with the Resurrection and Ascension. Mary's life story begins with her Immaculate Conception and is fulfilled in her Assumption body and soul into heaven. It was brought to my attention sometime ago that in the Orthodox tradition the liturgical year which begins on the first of September is bracketed by Mary's Nativity on 8 September and her Dormition on 15 August.

After praying the Stations of the Cross we climbed the hill to the Church of Saint Seraphim for a celebration of the Orthodox Liturgy of the Pre-Sanctified – the full Eucharistic Liturgy is not celebrated on week days during Lent. However they do have many more *Alleluias!*

Final prayers were said in the Shrine Church at 1.30 p.m. led by representatives of the traditions present.

It was a great experience and, please God, it will bear much fruit.

Desmond Miller

A Parish Church for a Pilgrim People The Church of the Annunciation Little Walsingham

Walsingham, famous as England's Nazareth, has been a place of pilgrimage since 1061 when the Lady Richeldis de Faverches built a replica of the Holy House in response to a request by the Blessed Virgin. With the dissolution of the Priory in 1538 pilgrimages ceased, but a revival began in the late 19th century and Walsingham is again a centre of pilgrimage and ecumenical activity.

In March 1997 Bishop Peter Smith set up a working party to plan a worthy replacement for the Catholic Parish Church – a temporary building constructed in 1950 with an expected life of ten years. Mr Terry Norton of Wearing, Hastings and Norton was principle architect assisted by Anthony Rossi, a local man, as the design consultant. They have devised a truly magnificent church with a spacious modern interior and a traditional exterior which blends well with its surroundings. It has been built on the site of the old church making excellent use of the very limited space.



Approaching the church from Friday Market one is immediately impressed by the flint faced circular tower in the Norfolk tradition. The entrance is to the left of the tower. The layout is such that the sanctuary is in the centre of the long right hand wall. It is circular in shape with an apse let into which is a beautiful stained glass window depicting a symbolic fish. Superimposed on this window

is a newly commissioned bronze sculpture of the crucified Christ, but unfortunately it is difficult to see it against the light.



The far end window has an arrangement of coloured leaded glass representing the liturgical year. All furnishings are in very good taste and artistically pleasing.

A parish room has been constructed over the sacristy and is accessed by a spiral staircase in the tower. The Angelus is rung each at midday using the bell from the old church which has been re-tuned and hangs in the tower.



The Font with glass fronted cupboard for the Holy Oils let into the wall.



Tabernacle with window and Crucifix

The need to be carbon neutral has been anticipated. Heating is under-floor by means of hot water piped up from three 90 metre geothermal probes under the forecourt. Electricity is supplied to the pump from massive solar panels on the south side of the roof – surplus electricity being fed into the national grid.

Hand-over took place at the end of October 2006 and the Church was dedicated on 26 March 2007 by Bishop Michael Evans on the delayed Feast of the Annunciation, the patronal feast of the Church. A considerable sum of money has yet to be raised and donations will be welcome. *Desmond Miller*



The Dedication of the Church

My Hijâb

I was most interested in Desmond Miller's article on the hijâb and would like to share how I came by mine.

In 1953, I began my postulancy in the Roman Catholic religious congregation of which I am a member – The Handmaids of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

For the last twenty years I have been able to join in the Sunday worship of other Christians on a regular basis. It is Christ's prayer that we be one, which prompts me to do this and the fact that my local church has six weekend Masses makes the practice feasible. It has brought untold benefits.

Two years ago a change in my daily schedule enabled me to give time to cultivating inter-faith relations. I use public libraries for reading material: the librarians have proved to be very willing to obtain relevant new books whose reviews I give them. But how was I, in a largely WASP area, to meet members of other faiths? My practice among other Christians provided the answer: "Ask their places of worship if you can be alongside them in their worship".

As to Islam, having met several setbacks from the three mosques nearest me, I remembered the East London Mosque near the Whitechapel Art Gallery. I was told I might join the women for Friday prayer. There I discovered that churches are not the only places of worship where a devotee will point out to visitors where they are wrong – gestures, postures etc. It was my covered head which caused one woman distraction; sprigs of my hair would fall out from under my new scarf!

A young worshipper pointed out that many others were wearing two scarves – that would do the trick. But alas the next time that I turned up with two scarves, bits and pieces of my hair still escaped. So I waited for my next visit; knocked on the office door and said, “Can you help me control my hair?” Amid laughter and giggles three women said they could, if I returned to the office after that worship session.

I returned, and one of the three took me out of the Mosque, along Whitechapel Road. We entered a shop crowded with Friday worshippers as well as all-sorts of exciting ‘Muslim things’. My friend went to a pile of wrapped up hijâbs (I would never have recognised them) and asked me the colour I would like. So now I attend prayer at the sun’s zenith in an off-white hijâb. No one tells me my hair is showing. Mine is a hijâb in the right place at the right time.

Jo Harvey HSHJ



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