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**YEAR OF FAITH
2012–13**

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IN CHRIST

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EDITORIAL

Mr Terry Davies was an enthusiastic ecumenist. He died on St David's Day aged 71 and had supported the Unity Commission and Churches Together in Beckenham, always being ready to try something new. At one stage he was selling (or giving away) more TiC's than most other parishes could. He wrote 'Two Hundred and Fifty Ecumenical Visits' in issue 86 in 2010, each visit was made on Sunday morning around the Beckenham churches. I reproduce his 'A Slow Reproachment' from issue 68, 2004 as it sums up his uncanny way of uniting people through his own generous gifts.

A very special funeral and then a wonderful Ordination are described by John Woodhouse; we see a poetic side to Fr Michael Lovell for this year's Good Friday Walk of Witness at Brockley, and Dr Desmond Miller recalls a talk he gave, but was not published at the time. I examine the clues to Pope Francis' ecumenical standing as he starts off his new role as Bishop of Rome and Shepherd of Our Lord's flock.

If, like Terry, you need samples of TiC to give away, let me know.

Michael

A Slow Rapprochement

After his retirement Eucharist on 9 June 2002, Canon Derek Carpenter, Rector of St George's, the original Parish Church of Beckenham, began listing a few gifts. Then he struck me speechless by saying 'In my study I have a portrait of the Pope which I value highly. I am giving it to Terry Davies, who is one of the most ecumenical people I know. He is a Roman Catholic from St Edmund's but comes here often'.

When I had recovered my sang froid I took the portrait home to hang it in my lounge. When I realised that few would see it there, I decided to present it to my Parish Priest, Canon Jack Madden, to hang it in our beautifully re-decorated Lady Chapel, where people would appreciate it. I suggested that beneath it be displayed this inscription. 'Presented by Canon Derek Carpenter, on his retirement as Rector of St George's, Beckenham on 9 June 2002 to Canon Jack Madden of St Edmund's as a symbol of the slow rapprochement between the Anglican and Roman Churches'.

Canon Jack and Fr Malcolm – successor to Canon Derek at St George's – were concerned to choose the right day for the formal hanging of the portrait. I pressed for action but Canon Jack's mind was working at a different level altogether! To my surprise, fifty two weeks after I was given the portrait, he suddenly said, 'Let's do it next weekend for Trinity Sunday'. Happily this date was agreeable to Fr Malcolm. Canon Jack was celebrating the fortieth anniversary of his Ordination that Saturday at a concelebrated Mass so it seemed an ideal choice. The church would be packed!

So, at the end of the Mass, Canon Jack presented Fr Malcolm with the portrait on the altar steps. After a short address, during which he referred to the Pope as the 'Holy Father', Fr Malcolm handed the portrait back to me and the three of us processed to the Lady Chapel, holding the portrait high, like a Missal.

Success! I was, at last, after fifty three weeks, able to hang the portrait there, to my great relief, joy and pride.

In our next Newsletter, we were able to highlight the changed attitudes over the last forty years since the Vatican Council in that new Anglican Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Rowan Williams, and nearly ten years ago the Pope himself reflected on the need to develop the ministry of the Holy See as a source of unity, not division among Christians

Clearly Canon Jack's choice of date was inspired! Particularly when I tell you that he did not know that Canon Derek, who had given the portrait to me, was also celebrating his own fortieth anniversary of Ordination the very same day as Jack. Some coincidence!

Don't you agree? I learnt that two weeks later when I met Derek who was acting as 'locum' that day at the Beckenham URC. I was able to tell him 'We've hung it up at last! He was delighted. I'm sure that he will call into the Lady Chapel on his next visit to Beckenham. He used to say the Pope 'was signalling a wide at the Oval'. If you are puzzled by that, just call in and see. And please offer up a prayer for both our Churches, and for the Pope and for me, too!

Terry Davies.



Extracts from Pope Francis' address to the Churches,
Ecclesial communities & other Religions, 20 March 2013

Before His Holiness Pope Francis was elected, there is very little information revealing his views on Ecumenism. This means he is still free to form his own approach to the other denominations without the baggage of a pre-formed attitude in this matter.

At the time of writing this, he has only spoken, as Pontiff, directly to the other churches and religious communities once. He had just been enthroned and expressed admiration for the work of Blessed Pope John XXIII that made Vatican II truly ecumenical. He says, in particular to the Christian representatives at this Audience,

“It is a source of particular joy for me to meet today with you, the delegates of the Orthodox Churches, of the Oriental Orthodox Churches and of the Ecclesial Communities of the West. I thank you for taking part in the celebration which marked the beginning of my ministry as the Bishop of Rome and the Successor of Peter.

Yesterday morning, during Holy Mass, through you I felt the spiritual presence of the communities which you represent. In this expression of faith, it seemed that we were experiencing all the more urgently the prayer for unity between believers in Christ and at the same time seeing prefigured in some way its full realization, which depends on God's plan and our own faithful cooperation.

I begin my apostolic ministry during this year which my venerable predecessor Benedict XVI, with truly inspired intuition, proclaimed for the Catholic Church as a Year of Faith.

With this initiative, which I wish to continue and which I trust will prove a stimulus for our common journey of faith, he wanted to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the beginning of the Second Vatican Council by proposing a sort of pilgrimage towards what all Christians consider essential: the personal, transforming encounter with Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who died and rose for our salvation. The core message of the Council is found precisely in the desire to proclaim this perennially valid treasure of faith to the men and women of our time.

Along with you, I cannot forget all that the Council meant for the progress of ecumenism. Blessed John XXIII, in his memorable opening address: "The Catholic Church considers it her duty to work actively for the fulfilment of the great mystery of that unity for which Jesus Christ prayed so earnestly to his heavenly Father on the eve of his great sacrifice; the knowledge that she is so intimately associated with that prayer is for her an occasion of ineffable peace and joy" (AAS 54 [1962], 793).

‘Yes, dear brothers and sisters in Christ let us all feel closely united to the prayer of our Saviour at the Last Supper, to his appeal: *ut unum sint*. Let us ask the Father of mercies to enable us to live fully the faith graciously bestowed upon us on the day of our Baptism and to bear witness to it freely, joyfully and courageously. This will be the best service we can offer to the cause of Christian unity, a service of hope for a world still torn by divisions, conflicts and rivalries. The more we are faithful to his will, in our thoughts, words and actions, the more we will progress, really and substantially, towards unity.

For my part, I wish to assure you that, in continuity with my predecessors, it is my firm intention to pursue the path of

ecumenical dialogue, and I thank the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity for the help that it continues to provide, in my name, in the service of this most noble cause. I ask you, dear brothers and sisters, to bring my cordial greetings and the assurance of my prayerful remembrance in the Lord Jesus to the Christian communities which you represent, and I beg of you the charity of a special prayer for me, that I may be a pastor according to the heart of Christ.”

Francis then gives greetings and reaffirms his wish to continue the church’s work with the Jewish people re-iterating the ‘special spiritual bond, since, as the Second Vatican Council stated “the Church of Christ recognizes that in God’s plan of salvation the beginnings of her faith and her election are to be found in the patriarchs, Moses and the prophets” (*Nostra Aetate*, 4).’ I trust that, with the help of the Most High, we can make greater progress in that fraternal dialogue which the Council wished to encourage and which has indeed taken place, bearing no little fruit, especially in recent decades.’

For the other Religions he pressed the need for friendship and respect, ‘... seen in the important work carried out by the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue. The Church is likewise conscious of the responsibility which all of us have for our world, for the whole of creation, which we must love and protect. There is much that we can do to benefit the poor, the needy and those who suffer, and to favour justice, promote reconciliation and build peace. But before all else we need to keep alive in our world the thirst for the absolute, and to counter the dominance of a one-dimensional vision of the human person, a vision which reduces human beings to what they produce and

to what they consume: this is one of the most insidious temptations of our time.’

He closed by calling on everyone to search for the Truth that exists in God:

‘We know how much violence has resulted in recent times from the attempt to eliminate God and the divine from the horizon of humanity, and we are aware of the importance of witnessing in our societies to that primordial openness to transcendence which lies deep within the human heart. In this, we also sense our closeness to all those men and women who, although not identifying themselves as followers of any religious tradition, are nonetheless searching for truth, goodness and beauty, the truth, goodness and beauty of God. They are our valued allies in the commitment to defending human dignity, in building a peaceful coexistence between peoples and in safeguarding and caring for creation.’

Let us redouble our own prayers and work towards Unity, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit that Francis may succeed to rebuild the Church of Christ as his namesake was led to do.

The full text is available at:

http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/francesco/speeches/2013/march/documents/papa-francesco_20130320_delegati-fraterni_en.html

A TRULY ECUMENICAL FUNERAL

Rosalie Hughes was an amazing person. She remained a faithful Methodist, but as she was married to Arthur for fifty-five years she brought up all her children as Catholics. Christ Church Methodist, Addiscombe, was packed for her funeral on January 31. Fr Joe O'Connor and many members of the congregation of Our Lady of the Annunciation were present. The bowling club turned out in force!

Before the service Alan Hickox, who now lives near Chichester, played a selection of organ music ranging from Mozart's *Ave verum* to Handel's "How beautiful are the feet". The booklet page for the first hymn "Dear Lord and father of mankind" featured a lovely photograph of Arthur and Rosalie in Galilee. Nick Hughes sang "If with all your hearts" from "Elijah", Arthur read from 2 Cor. 4 and Kath Dixie, her daughter, read the Gospel of the Samaritan woman. Peter Clarke the Methodist minister preached about communion and Rosalie's role as a communion steward among many other things she had done at Christ Church.

Before leading the prayers Fr Joe gave a tribute to Rosalie and said that she really belonged to both congregations. Dr Simon Hughes gave the eulogy with humour and a true reflection of his mother's character.

This was a truly ecumenical event and one man remarked that it was the best funeral he had ever been to. The hymns "Lord for the years", "Oh Lord my God" and "Love divine" were all sung with full gusto. The welcome from the Methodists was as warm as ever with refreshments provided for all. The lady next to me remarked that she had never been in a non-Catholic church before and how much she had appreciated the service. She said she missed the Mass but sadly that would not have been appropriate. However we were all united in our wish to comfort the family together.

She will be much missed. May she rest in peace.

John Woodhouse

An Ordination in Kerala.

Over the years I have been involved in many ordinations and so when Xavier Tharamel asked me to come to his ordination I was delighted. Then I asked where it was and he said Kochi in Kerala! I first met Xavier at the planning meeting for the Heythrop interfaith sharing meetings and he is a member of my M.A. in Christianity and interreligious relations class. His quiet smile and gentle comments are always welcome.

And so Liz and I set off before Christmas for three weeks in Delhi, Agra, Jaipur and Udaipur and then to Kerala. During our time in Kerala we were impressed by the huge number of active churches. The impression that the church was struggling was certainly untrue. The Syro-Malabar Mass we attended in English was in the large Little Flower church which is comparatively wealthy and attracts large congregations. We were able to visit two churches of that tradition which trace their origins back to St Thomas! In many cases there were Hindu elements in the architecture and practice notable large stands for oil lamps in the Hindu style and garlands of flowers placed on and around statues. There is also an Orthodox influence in the idea of veiling the sanctuary with a curtain which is drawn back during the liturgy. The monks of Kurisamala ashram belong to this Rite and wear simple brown robes in the style of a guru. We attended Midday prayer in their simple church where the curtain was drawn back before the prayer to reveal a simple altar and cross.

Many Christians are Dalits and have developed an active Dalit theology akin to liberation theology. The church is certainly thriving in some parts of India with fine large churches and schools whereas in other areas there is tension and persecution.

The ordination day January 5 itself was amazing! We arrived at the Little Flower church in Pottakuzhi, Kaloore in Kochi to find large banners showing Xavier and the Archbishop, the Rt Revd Dr Francis Kallarackal, Archbishop of Veraploy. The welcome was indeed warm and I was much amused to be greeted as Father by many of the priests, no doubt because I was wearing my small Palestinian cross. My reply was 'Yes I am a father, but not that sort of father'.

Maud Matley, a parishioner from Corpus Christi, Brixton takes up the story. ‘We arrived in the church forecourt just in time yet most conspicuous in our Western attire, me in my trusty big white hat. A kindly nun called Sister Assunta scooped us up, introduced us to Xavier’s brother, Anthony, and we became aware of hundreds of other people waiting expectantly under glittery silver paper-chains. A boys’ brass band was standing to attention. Also I saw a canopy held by four men in impressive ceremonial collars, rather like the Guild of the Blessed Sacrament. A red carpet led to the church door and we could already see that the whole event promised to be much bigger than we had anticipated.

Then, with great panache, the Archbishop’s shining black car, sporting a Vatican flag, pulled on to the red carpet. As he stepped out, a salvo of fireworks erupted noisily and the band burst into music. I was totally overwhelmed! We were ushered in the procession of VIPs into the Little Flower Church, a line of young boys in white suits flanking one side of the red carpet and little girls in white frocks and veils to the other side: all with hands piously folded. They looked at us with solemn curiosity, very well trained, but did not move a muscle. Our Sister ushered us to good seats in the third row with the other European guests.

When I looked up at the altar I saw a breath-taking sight. Thick hedges of flowers, white, marigold and green decked the altar, the statues and edged the altar-steps. The tabernacle was the focal-point with long rays of bright white lights beaming out. A big realistic crucifix hung over the tabernacle. To the left was the Little Flower statue and to the right, Our Lady.

The procession to the altar had begun. First came the altar-boys, then our dear “Deacon Xavier Tharamel” all in white and looking very pure and young. He was carrying a neat pile of priestly vestments with great ceremony on his arms in front of him (this is different from English custom) and still wearing his deacon’s stole. He saw us and gave a very faint smile of recognition. His brother and sister-in-law followed him supportively. Then came two dozen priests in plain white chasubles, then the officiating priests, among whom was our “most beloved Father Michael Kirwan” from Brixton. As he passed, he

handed us his shoulder-bag and asked us to look after it! Finally, came the Archbishop who looked most affable and stately.

Initially, Xavier sat with his brother and sister-in-law on the three chairs placed in a sea of children who sat on the floor with a few teachers and nuns. About a thousand in all were either in the church or walking around outside, visible through the open doors. A strange juxtaposition occurred: very loud lively amplified music blared out, but was greeted with utter silence and stillness by the congregation. I was next to two old ladies in splendid gold saris who kept their hands folded in prayer and knelt during the solemn procession, maintaining intense piety throughout the proceedings. Vincent had removed his shoes in accordance with local custom. In front of us sat a family from Germany – Xavier used to stay with them – and a couple from Heythrop – that's us!

The Mass started and the Liturgy of the Word was delivered by three young people in splendid attire – though the young man singing the psalm did appear to have jeans on! He sang beautifully. Xavier read the Gospel; this was quite different to ordinations in England where another deacon usually reads. The fans whirred busily on all sides and there was a sense of focus and grand occasion. We all sat in great expectancy. Xavier then moved up to a red plush seat on the altar to be addressed by the Archbishop in his homily. Fr Michael kept his eyes closed and it was good to see his so familiar English face.

It looked as if a little bed was being arranged for Xavier's prostration – a thick rug with a cushion for his head. A very long litany of the saints was sung by the kneeling Archbishop in joyful spirit. Among the saints invoked was Alphonsa, a Keralan saint. Xavier arose and knelt centrally in front of the altar then all the priests came and placed their hands on his head with great solemnity. There seemed to be an endless circle of them and I hoped Xavier felt strengthened by their solidarity. Then the actual ordination took place.

Suddenly we were ushered to the back of the church to take part in the Offertory procession. Some people led the procession carrying candles with marigolds around their bases after which came the gifts. Vincent had a heavy basket of five loaves and two fishes while I had a basket of very white eggs. We walked with great solemnity and handed our

gifts to the seated Archbishop who extended his ring which we kissed reverently. He said “thank you” in English to us.

The words were in the rolling cadences of Malayalam, but of course it was exactly as in England and quite easy to track with the repetitions like “Holy, holy, holy”. The music continued to boom out and I was struck by the tremulous strings of the keyboard for the solemn prayers spoken by the Archbishop. One of the most moving things was when Xavier spoke his first prayer as a priest.

At Communion, our Sister firmly ushered us into the two lines of people privileged to receive the host from Xavier. He was handed the host by an acolyte, tintured it in the chalice and we received on the tongue. I felt a little awkward about being in such a favoured position compared to the members of Xavier’s parish who had nurtured him for so long.

Before the final blessing Xavier made a speech, calmly, formally and with strong voice, thanking everyone.

The Mass came to an end and we were again summoned up to the altar-steps where Xavier, the Archbishop and officiating priests were being photographed. It was good to see Xavier’s little baby niece being held in arms next to him, that his family was fully acknowledged as a major part of his life. We returned to our seats, but were again ushered up to the altar to kiss Xavier’s newly consecrated hands.

The final excitement was the formal speeches in the parish hall (rather more grand than in Brixton). Here sat Fr Xavier and Fr Michael on a sofa under further garlands of flowers while speeches were made by various people in Malayalam and a little English. Fr Michael beamed like a proud uncle and Xavier looked solemn, thoughtful and extremely still. Among those present was Joseph Mathew Puthenpurackal, S.J., also a student at Heythrop. One major difference was that the priests greeted Xavier at the end of the liturgy. This worked much better than the practice in England where the new priest is greeted after the ordination.

The next morning January 6th we were back at the church by nine a.m. and Fr Xavier’s first Mass. Before the service hundreds of children including teenage boys gathered in groups for catechism class. Women

and men sit separately. At the peace everyone turns to their neighbour and bows with hands joined. At communion the people turn to form two lines so the priest can move between them. This was much more orderly than the English practice. Xavier remarked that our presence spoke of the universal nature of the church. On our return to England I was delighted to be at Xavier's first Masses at Heythrop and Brixton where he preached without notes and with quiet authority. It was clear that he is much loved in Brixton.

I was most impressed by the number of churches in Kerala and the large devout congregations. There is no illiteracy and unemployment is very low. Education is the key to this.

Musically the use of a small group singing into microphones accompanied by a keyboard with rhythmic backing was ubiquitous. Unfortunately the people do not join in much and there was no sign of movement to the drums. We did encounter hymn books in Udaipur and the Syro-Malabar church in Erakulam which showed much American 70s influence but otherwise there appeared to be no books to follow. We were able to follow the Syro-Malabar rite in English with booklets and there were many added prayers and Orthodox influence. This church holds that it was founded by St Thomas and is in communion with Rome.

A special moment in Kerala was a visit to Kurisamala ashram where Bede Griffiths had been a monk. We attended midday prayer sung by the monks in their simple brown robes.

All in all it was an amazing experience and we were so glad that we had accepted the invitation.

John Woodhouse
2nd year Postgraduate
SW Area Member

MARY: A SIGN OF HOPE OR A SIGN OF CONTRADICTION?

A paper presented to the Ecumenical Commission for Bishop Henderson's Area by Dr Desmond Miller, 7 September 1982.

*She shines forth on earth, until the day of the Lord shall come,
a sign of certain hope and comfort to the pilgrim People of God.ⁱ*

Thus say the Fathers of the Second Vatican Council speaking of Mary in *Lumen Gentium*. But could it be, that Mary is so identified with her Son Jesus that the Prophecy of Simeon applies to her as well?

*He will be a sign from God which many people will speak against,
and so reveal their secret thoughts. (Lk 2:34-40)*

We have only to refer to the ARCIC *Final Report* to confirm that Mary is an obstacle to unity at this time. The dogmas of the Immaculate Conception and the Assumption raise a special problem for those Anglicans who do not consider that the precise definitions given by these dogmas are sufficiently supported by scripture. For many Anglicans the teaching authority of the Bishop of Rome, independent of a Council, is not recommended by the fact that through it these Marian doctrines were proclaimed as dogmas binding on all the faithful.

OBJECTIONS

Eastern Orthodox and Anglo-Catholic objections are often technical, rejecting not the substance but the status of dogma. Most Protestants reject the teachings themselves, though frequently less attention has been paid to the dogma than to the underlying cultus of Mary.

The cultus is objectionable, on four counts.

1. It is contrary to Scripture.
2. It is a doctrinal distortion.
3. Religiously it is dangerous.
4. It is a non-Christian phenomenon best explained by comparative religion.

This is supported by:

- a. The late date of any marian cultus.
- b. Dubious orthodoxy of those who first paid attention to Mary.
- c. The cult took over shrines to ancient heathen divinities.

d. The link between the expanding cultus of Mary in the Middle Ages and the growing emphasis on celibacy.
Was it a psychological compensation?

ANSWERS

Scriptura sola. The period, when the controversies between Catholic and Protestant about our Lord's Mother were crystallized, i.e. from the Reformation to the mid 19th century was one where all were agreed on the principle: all dogmatic statements must be found, at least implicitly, in Scripture.

It was therefore a matter of deciding what the Bible really taught. When Catholics appealed to Tradition they meant that the teaching of the Roman Catholic Church expounded the true interpretation of Scripture, not that there was an unwritten source of doctrine which could add to what was contained in the Bible.

Following the definition of the Immaculate Conception in 1854 some Catholic theologians perceiving the weakness of the biblical justification offered in support of the Dogma began to claim that the doctrine, though not witnessed in the Bible, had been handed down from apostolic times by unwritten oral tradition. Many Protestants assumed the admission to be true and assailed the Roman Church as one which had not merely misinterpreted the Scriptures, but had wilfully and explicitly departed from them.

Dogmatically Marian development is a distortion.

From a Protestant point of view, it is a distortion, a heresy. That is assuming that the Lutheran/Calvinist doctrine of justification is correct. But if the view of the Council of Trent is correct then we have a different justification which for the Protestant means that 'a veil is drawn over our sins' whereas for the Catholic it means that God's power transforms our nature in this life.

Consequently the Catholic sees in Mary this power at its fullest. It is soon preserving her by the merits of her Son from ever being affected by original sin, and once her life is over, bestowing on her the fullness of heavenly glory. Mary is a creature, but one in whom is manifested the fullness of grace. Also, God wills us to be saved and to work out our salvation as members of one body, the Church. Praying

for one another in this life is normal for Christians and we feel that those who have departed from this life will not cease to pray especially before the throne of God. Here Mary must be in a privileged position. Conscious of our own inadequacy it is natural that we should ask one who is so close to God to intercede for us.

Religiously it is dangerous

There certainly have been, still are and probably always will be abuses in Marian devotion. The Popes and the Church have consistently condemned them. The Church continually needs to be renewed and to purify its understanding and practice of its faith.

A non-Christian phenomenon

It is true that around the Mediterranean the earliest cult of Mary was closely connected with centres where a mother-goddess had been revered in pagan times, e.g. Ephesus. The early Church saw this need in people and regarded it as a (divinely inspired) *praeparatio evangelica* and used the figure of Mary as virgin and mother in order to purge the old shrines of their grosser characteristics. The Church had a great battle with the worship of Venus – the worship of sex – a problem not unknown today. Properly understood, the presentation of Mary as both virgin and mother strikes a psychological balance that is needed in every age.

The teaching of the Church today

The bare truths of marian dogma can be stated very succinctly: Mary is the Theotokos, the one who conceived and gave birth to the God-man while remaining a virgin; she is the Panagia, the all holy one who in the first instant of her conception was preserved from all stain of original sin in consideration of the merits of Jesus Christ the Saviour. When the course of her earthly life was run, she was assumed, body and soul into glory.

The Ecumenical significance of *Lumen Gentium*

The Roman Catholic Church has restated its basic Marian position in the Second Vatican Council's document, *Lumen Gentium*, Chapter 8. It is a statement of great ecumenical significance. Firstly, Mary is to be seen in the context of the mystery of the Church. It constantly refers

to scripture and avoids extreme positions and phraseology. The ecumenically difficult title *mediatrix* is situated in a historical row of titles, thus showing it to be one among many and to be understood within this venerable tradition. The ecumenical concern of the document can be seen most markedly in the great care it takes to emphasize the Unique Mediator, Jesus Christ, and to say categorically that if the title *mediatrix* is applied to Mary, it is to be understood in a way that neither takes away from nor adds to the dignity or the effectiveness of the one mediator, Christ.

The Protestant position today

This is less easy to define, but we are aware that many Protestant theologians have returned to their ‘sources’, in their study of the writings of the founders of the Reformation, and that their doctrine is undergoing development. They have new insights into scripture and the teachings of the early Fathers. We are also aware of greater interest in devotion to Mary amongst many non-Catholic Christians.

The way forward

The dialogue has begun and we see the first fruits, especially in a Society such as the Ecumenical Society of the Blessed Virgin Mary, but what is the way forward?

I believe that a greater understanding of the relationship of Mary and the Holy Spirit will be of the greatest ecumenical significance. Many writers support this idea, foremost amongst them being Cardinal Suenens. It is significant that mariology developed at a time when pneumatology was poorly developed and it is interesting that while the Marian Movement developed in the Roman Catholic Church there was a parallel development of the Pentecostal Movement in the non-Catholic Churches.

It was in 1967 at Duquesne University, Pittsburg (run by the Holy Ghost Fathers) that Pentecostalism came to the Roman Catholic Church – now better known as the Catholic Charismatic Renewal Movement. It is essentially and deeply Christ-centred. It is a spirituality focused on the fullness of the life in the Spirit, the exercise of the gifts of the Spirit, directed to the proclamation that ‘Jesus is Lord’, to the glory of the Father.

At first, devotion to Mary was very muted in the Renewal. But as the renewed Christian strove to enter into the experience of Jesus, in His humanity, of what it was to be the Son of God, he realized that the fullness of that experience included Jesus' experience of His Mother.

Mary and the Holy Spirit

In an article entitled *Mary and the Protestant mind*, Mrs Elie Gibson has brought out the mutual difficulty in understanding the respective roles of the Holy Spirit and Mary.ⁱⁱ

It is possibly as difficult for Catholics to understand what Protestants believe about the Holy Spirit, as it is for Protestants to understand what Catholics believe about Mary. When I first began reading Catholic periodicals and books, I was puzzled and offended by the caricatures of our views regarding the Holy Spirit, more than anything else. The Catholic consensus seemed to be that we glorify human impulses and judgements, attributing them to the inspiration of the Third Person of the Trinity. This is a travesty of the Protestant position. When I began the study of Catholic theology, whenever I expected to find an exposition of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, I found Mary. What Protestants universally attribute to the Holy Spirit, was attributed to Mary.

Trying to find a way out of this dead lock she continues:

Within Protestantism, the divine presence of the Holy Spirit is recognized by the holiness engendered, whether this be in the personality, forms of action, or developments in church life. Does the Catholic, perhaps, finding those effects more visible in Mary than anywhere else, glorify the Holy Spirit, by praising what He accomplishes in her? If Mary's life is a first fruit of an anticipatory abiding action of the Holy Spirit in the Church, in contrast to the temporary activity of the Spirit of the Lord in prophetic utterance in the Old Testament. This might help to explain to Protestants, the priority given to her in the Roman Catholic Church.

It is necessary to stress the absolute priority of the Holy Spirit, He is the sanctifying Spirit and Mary is the sanctified one, *par excellence*. Mary is a real creature privileged by the Spirit, living under His inspiration and dependent on Him. We too following her example and

in spiritual communion with her, surrender to the inspiration of the same Holy Spirit.

The Spirit who fills Mary is the Spirit of her Son. Christ can never be separated from the Spirit. This union of the Spirit and Mary is directed to one end – it had only one purpose – to join us more intimately with Jesus.

We cannot picture the Holy Spirit, we can only experience Him. Today many Christians of all churches have come into a new experience of the Holy Spirit and through this experience, they have learnt to recognize the working of the Spirit in others and above all in, Mary. There is a much fuller understanding of her response to the inspiration of the Spirit and of her life in the Spirit. This surely is a sign of hope.

CONCLUSION

If Mary is a sign of contradiction in the ecumenical dialogue, it can only be because we have not fully understood her role in salvation and have failed to express it adequately. There can be no unity without Mary for she is part of the history of salvation. There can be no unity without the Holy Spirit, for it is only through the power of the Spirit that we can reach the fullness of truth.

Let us pray that we will be docile and obedient to the inspiration of the Holy Spirit as was Mary, so that we may all be one.

And may Mary shine forth on earth, until the day of the Lord shall come, a sign of certain hope and comfort to the pilgrim People of God,

Note: Most of the material in this paper was taken directly from a series of articles in *Mary's Place in Christian Dialogue: Occasional Papers of the Ecumenical Society of the Blessed Virgin Mary 1970-1980*, edited by Alberic Stackpool, O.S.B., St Paul's Publications, 1982. It was written before I had learnt the necessity of recording my references. Consequently Una Ratcliff declined to publish it in *Together in Christ*. Later in conversation with Dom Alberic I was told it would be permissible for it to be published. My apologies to all the authors involved. Desmond Miller.

¹ *Lumen Gentium*, Ch 8, n. 68

² Mrs Elie Gibson, *Mary and the Protestant mind*, in *Review for Religious*. Vol. 24, no 3, May 1965

A PEOPLE IN DARKNESS

Are we living in the reign of darkness?
When you look up and see the English sky
– what do you see?
Not just the big planes, coming in to land,
a mass of grey with no sun,
late March, temperatures not much above freezing.

Authorities are saving –
Closing our A & E,
Government is saving –
Cutting bureaucracy.

Shall we save for better economic times?
“...The Bank of England has held interest rates
at half of one per cent” for the umpteenth time.
Some now wonder whether savings themselves are safe.

Many blame the banks, or is it the bankers?
One man’s bonus is another man’s redundancy.

The new Bank is the ‘Food Bank’.
Can we feed our children?
Can we provide heat for the old?

In the midst of the darkness – can we see rays of light?
Are some things working out right?

Many discordant voices, but some stand out.
‘... I am Francis, I come to serve,
I want a Church for the poor.’

‘Who are you, and why have you come?’
‘... I am Justin.
I come in the name of Jesus Christ, and Him crucified.’

‘ ... I am Jesus. Who do you say I am?
It is you who say I am a King.

I have chosen my leaders, the Holy Spirit’s fruit.
Don’t try to turn back time for green leaves,
they are still to come.
Through my cross shines the light of glory.’

‘Jesus, can we entrust the future to you?
YES, WE CAN.

Can we conquer pain with love?
YES, WE CAN.

Can we build the future with your Gospel?
YES, WE CAN.

Can we see you through the trials of our lives,
And know you are close to us always?
YES, WE CAN.

Will we see you, in your glory?
YES, WE WILL!

Fr Michael Lovell, Brockley
Officer with Southwark Unity Commission

Our local Fraternal met to plan our Good Friday Service and Walk of Witness for 2013. Ever on the lookout for new ways to present the chosen theme, and inspired by President Obama who arranged for a poem to be written and read by the poet at his recent inauguration ceremony, I was prompted to suggest we might include a poem in the Service. Unsurprisingly, they said the Catholics could contribute the poem!

In the end, I decided to write it myself. The last section also borrows from Barack Obama in its call and response style. The theme of the Service was *Shalom in the gloom*.

