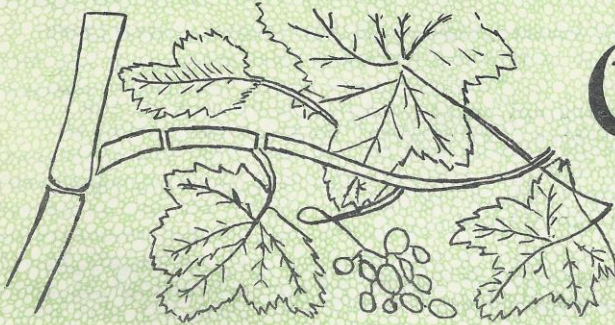


Together

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Vol 4 No 13 Jan 1986

MAIN CONTENTS

Page 1	Editorial	
2	Unity: A Divine Word	Chiara Lubich
3	Not Strangers But Pilgrims	Una and Sidney Ratcliff
7	The Focolare Movement	Ann Harvey
8	Pilgrim to St Alban's	Rev John Davies OFM (Cap)
10	As Others See Us	Canon G Tyers
		Rev I Thomas
		Rev D Monkman
14	Luther's Concept of Free Will	Sister Catherine

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We thank all our contributors for the richness of the material they have produced for us, also our subscribers for constant support and prayers.

(HAVE YOU SENT YOUR SUBSCRIPTION? If not send it now.)

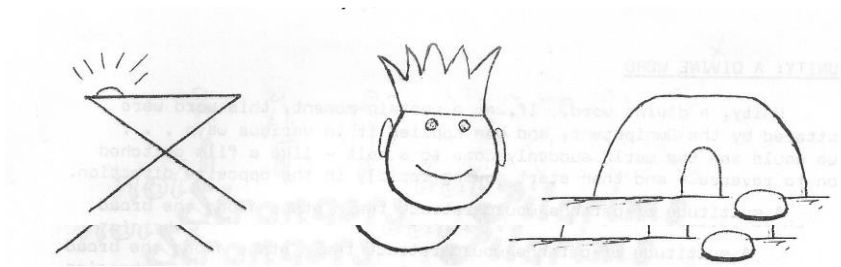
OFFICERS OF THE AREA ECUMENICAL COMMISSION

The Rt Rev. C. J. Henderson, Very Rev. Canon W. Clements

Sister Catherine, (Secretary)

Mr. S.M. Ratcliff,





JOY TO THE WORLD

With that stirring message of the Christmas carol throbbing in our hearts, we enter the New Year of 1986 with love, hope and joy.

"How can you be an optimist bearing in mind the state the world in?" was a question once posed to Archbishop Worlock. His reply was: "Because I believe in the Resurrection."

We present this issue of our bulletin following closely upon Christmas; our next one will follow closely upon Easter. One might feel that editorial greetings are too late for the one celebration and too early for the other. Yet at all seasons, Christians can unite in experiencing personally, and in offering to the world, the thrilling joy of Christmas, the glorious hope of Easter, the blaze of love and power of Pentecost, because Christ, the source of all these gifts risen from the dead, is alive and ever-present with us, and His gifts are inexhaustible.

No human force is a match for the overwhelming power of the love of Christ. Love incarnate. Love arisen. Love bestowed. In that love, we go forward, all Christians, hand in hand together, to feed the world that is hungry for the Bread of Life which is Christ, so that all may share the unspeakable joy which He wants to give us to the full.

For the whole of the New Year then, our wish and prayer is that you may "rejoice in the Lord always" and give joy to the world.

We share with you this prayer from the Rule of Taizé:

"O Lord Jesus Christ, help us to maintain ourselves in simplicity and in joy, the joy of the merciful, the joy of brotherly love.

Grant that, renouncing all thought of looking back and joyful with infinite gratitude, we may never fear to precede the dawn, to praise and bless and sing to Christ our Lord."

UNITY: A DIVINE WORD

Unity, a divine word. If, at a certain moment, this word were uttered by the Omnipotent, and men applied it in various ways.....we would see the world suddenly come to a halt - like a film switched on to reverse and then start moving rapidly in the opposite direction.

A multitude of persons would retrace their steps along the broad road that leads to perdition, and would be converted to God, choosing the narrow road instead; families previously torn apart by quarrels, frozen by mutual incomprehension and hatred, deadened by divorce, would be re-united; children would enter this world and grow in a climate of human and divine love; new men would be forged for a more Christian future.

Factories and workshops, often the gathering places of men who are slaves to their jobs, and who are obliged to work in an atmosphere of emptiness and boredom - if not downright opposition to God - would become places of peace, where each man does his part for the good of all. The teaching imparted in schools would go beyond the limits of science; every form of knowledge would serve as a footstool to the contemplation of eternal truths; and contact with short formulae, simple laws, even numbers, would lead the child at school-desk to the daily intuition and unveiling of new mysteries.

Parliaments would be the meeting places of men who, putting aside all deceit toward other persons, or other countries, would be more concerned about the common good than about each one's individual task.

The world would become a better place; heaven would seem to descend like a dream come true, upon the earth, and the harmony of creation would offer a frame, a background, to the concord of men's hearts.

Is this a dream? It may seem like a dream! Yet it is this *You* asked for when You prayed: "**Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.**"

In the work of making contacts and facilitating the reconciliation with other Christians, we must keep Mary always before our eyes as our model, developing in ourselves her characteristic qualities: patience, perseverance, poverty - that is, detachment from all our riches, even spiritual ones- silence, temperance, purity, gentleness.... as an expression of our fraternal love for them.

Chiara Lubich



"I don't know of any church in Eaton Square." That was the response of our taxi driver as we moved slowly along in the thick of the London traffic on Friday afternoon, November 8th. However, we reached the Square and then he remembered having seen St. Peter's church. Presumably, we were his first customers to that destination. Had he but known it, something of great significance was happening there.

It was about 5 O'clock as we entered the imposing church and many distinguished people were gathering inside it. There was a warm smile of greeting from Bishop Alan Clark, and we caught sight of Archbishop Worlock and other prominent Catholics.

Most of the congregation were however, - (no, I won't say strangers) members of other churches. The church became filled with a body of pilgrims mustering at the starting point of a pilgrimage of faith, to join in an ecumenical service of thanksgiving and hope .and to participate in the inauguration of the inter-church process entitled "Not Strangers, but Pilgrims.

The soft sweet singing by a soloist of "We are One in the Spirit" prepared us for that openness to the Spirit of Unity who would bind all pilgrims together and make them become more like Christ, so that others would see "they are Christians by their love.

John Bunyan would have been proud of these pilgrims' progress as they fervently sang his famous hymn "To be a Pilgrim", as a processional accompaniment.

Those taking part in the procession were: Archbishop Runcie of Canterbury, Archbishop Habgood of York, Archbishop Worlock of Liverpool, Archbishop Methodios of Thyateira and Great Britain, Archbishop Haggart Of Edinburgh, Rev. Io Smith, Rev. Brian Beck, Rev. Bernard Thorogood, Bishop Lesslie Newbigin, Rev. Philip Morgan and Rev. Desmond Tillyer.

The Archbishop of York's introduction led to a joint prayer of penitence and of response to God's call "to the pilgrim path" to tread it "hand in hand".

Scripture readings came from Genesis 12: 1-4a (God's call to Abram) and mark 10: 32-34 (Jesus' prophecy to of his impending condemnation, death and resurrection): These were read by Gillian Smith, a member of the Conference for World Mission and Marion Morgan of the Bristol Council of Churches, respectively.

Ecumenical occasions, achievements and past pioneers for unity were remembered in prayers of thanksgiving; these included the names of Pope John XXIII and Pope Paul VI. Dr. U. Visser t' Hooft, and the 75th anniversary of the 1910 World Missionary Conference of Edinburgh were especially commemorated.

Then followed the impressive and moving CALL TO PILGRIMAGE. As the (alphabetical) list of participating churches was read out, a representative of those churches came forward to light a candle and place it alongside others symbolising the pledge of that church to involvement in the inter-church process and work for unity. Each representative read an invitation to pilgrimage and each time the response was: "LET US GO FORWARD TOGETHER HAND IN HAND." The Roman Catholic representative (Mgr. Vincent Nichols) said:

"Go forward together with God. Since the time of Abraham he sets his people on their pilgrimage. Go forward in Christ's footsteps and do not look back. He is the way."

The prayer which was said by all present to conclude this ceremony is the prayer for the Inter-Church process "Not Strangers but Pilgrims":

"Lord God we thank you for calling us into the company of those who trust in Christ and seek to obey his will.

May your Spirit guide and strengthen us in mission and service. to your world; and may we be strangers no longer, but pilgrims together on the way to your Kingdom. Amen

We sang the "Echo" Our Father and then turned attentively to Bishop Lesslie Newbigin to hear his stirring address. Dr. Newbigin, who was originally a Church of Scotland missionary, became a Bishop in the Church of South India, a union formed of Anglicans, Congregationalists, Methodists and Presbyterians in 1947, so he had a wealth of experience to call upon.

Dr. Neubigin warmly welcomed the ecumenical involvement and initiatives of the Roman Catholic Church ("The Mother Church of the

west") since Vatican II, but he expressed concern that she might become drawn into the pattern of Protestantism, that in opening herself to the modern world she might become too much at home in it.

He went on to say that denominations could not be the bearers of an authentic missionary encounter with our culture because they themselves were the outward and visible form of an inward and spiritual surrender to that culture. He asked whether the Roman Catholic Church in becoming part of this shared pilgrimage might be drawn into this pattern and see herself as one among the denominations, or whether from her unique point of vantage challenge the rest of them to a more radical criticism of themselves and a more authentic catholicity.

The popular. and appropriate hymn following the address was:
"Bind us together, Lord; Bind us together in love."

Intercessory prayers for all of us included:
in the world - Most Rev. Alastair Haggart,
in the church — most Rev. Derek Worlock,
in unity— Rev. Brian Beck,
in breaking down barriers Rev. Io Smith
in obedience — Most Rev, Methodios.

We sang:

"Guide me., O thou great .Jehovah,
pilgrim through this barren land ..."

expressing trust in God's strength and in the Bread of Heaven.

Archbishop Runcie led a final prayer and gave the blessing. He led the procession out of the church; the representatives of the churches were carrying their candles and everyone was singing the haunting Taize' chant:

"Ubi caritas est amore

Ubi caritas Deus ibi est."

We exchanged greetings with Mgr. Vincent Nichols and with colleagues on the Committee for Christian Unity, Canon Dennis Corbishley, Rev. Colin Davey and Miss Marion Morgan; we chatted happily with some of our fellow pilgrims from other churches. All of us were greeted at the door with handshakes by the Archbishops, Bishops and clergy in the main procession. Perhaps we should mention that one among them, the Rev. Io Smith, was a lady from the Caribbean.

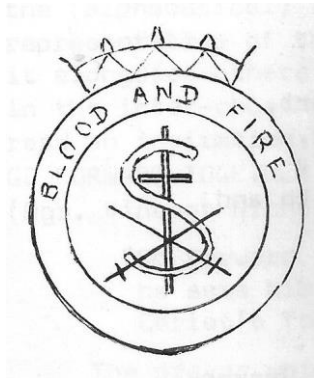
It was indeed a great privilege to have been invited to this service and to have embarked on the pilgrimage. No less than 30 churches are involved.

Not Strangers, but Pilgrims is an Inter-Church process of prayer, reflection and debate together on the nature and purpose of the Church in the light of its mission.

As mentioned in the October issue of *Together in Christ*, one practical expression of the process in which everyone is urged to take part is the "Lent '86" programme, entitled "What on Earth is the Church For?"

Remember, many people - like our taxi driver- "Don't know of any church. Invite them to join in. Listen to the Radio course or hear the cassettes, read the resource books, and especially- PRAY. Then please send in your response.

Una and Sidney Ratcliff



Recently, considerable structural alterations in our church involved the dismantling of the original altar.- Enclosed within the altar (and now replaced in the new one) was a copy of the "Catholic Herald", dated April 6th 1951, which I was given the opportunity of examining.

The Editor of the paper at that time, Michael de la Bedoyere, ran a sort of "bits and pieces" column under the pseudonym of "Jotter", which he called "In a Few Words." Readers of *Together in Christ*

might be interested in a paragraph from that feature on April 6th 1951:

"The Catholic daughter-in-law of the late Commissioner Charles Jeffries, of the Salvation Army, has written to thank us for Ivor Hael's review of the second volume of the *History of the Salvation Army*. She underlines the comment that the Army is always most careful to avoid interference with Catholic faith and practice by describing something of her life as a young French Catholic married to one of Commissioner Jeffries' sons. "Never shall I forget that first family evening prayers, when my father-in-law prayed so beautifully I was moved to tears; and when his prayers were over, I just went to his arms and kissed him; we both understood then how much we were in union in our love of Our Lord.

And that was some decades before Vatican II!

A. Parishioner

St. Thomas More's Bexleyheath

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THE FOCOLARE MOVEMENT

I believe that if all Christians do not pray to become "as one", then we've completely missed the point of Christ's teachings.

Unity of the different Christian Churches - ecumenism- is more widely recognised now than ever before. So I offered my services to belong to the Charlton Catholic Church Ecumenical Group.

Shortly after that event, Celia spoke to me of the FOCOLARE movement. I had not heard of it. The movement was holding its MARIOPOLIS at Hull University for a week and she invited me along to "see what it's all about."

It was an experience and a half! Celia was busily engaged most of the week, so I was there on my own - with, approximately, 500 strangers. That fact alone frightened me but from Hull to Charlton is a bit long for a jog, so I stayed.

The Focolare movement is open to everyone - single, married, sisters, priests, young, old, R.C., Methodist, Quakers etc., etc.

What do they do? I hear you ask. They live their everyday life in the way Christ taught us to live, particularly ,emphasising the New Commandment: "Love one another as I have loved you." and they pray together; pray to the same Spirit for enlightenment in their lives.

The movement begun by CHIARA LUBICH who was born in Trent, on 22nd January 1920. Today, the movement has spread to more than 150 countries. The whole of the movement is co-ordinated by a centre which guarantees and inspires the unity.of the whole, presided over by Chiara - a laywoman.

The week me real eye-opener. Never before have I been with so many people of differing denominations - all helping one-another to live Christlike lives. It gave me great hope for our Charlton Ecumenical Group.

Why not, now, get more details for yourselves from The FOCOLARE
MOVEMENT

Ann Harvey

PILGRIM TO ST ALBAN'S

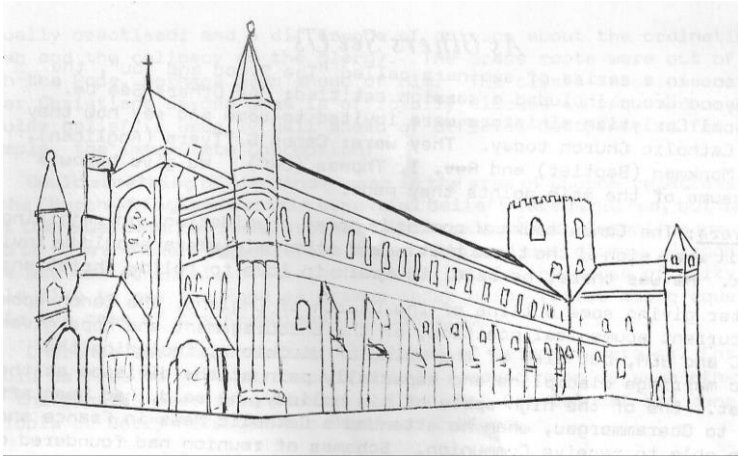
Having heard of the National Pilgrimage to St Alban's from Canon Clements some months ago, and, being told by him that he would not be able to attend this year, I started to make some enquiries. I got in touch with Father Plourde who is a Catholic priest at St Alban's and is attached to the Cathedral staff who gave me some information. So, on September 28th, a Saturday, myself and too parishioners - Miss Mabel Lyons and Mrs Eileen Copas, who is also on our Southwark Ecumenical

Commission - sat out for St Alban's. We arrived at the Cathedral and met Fr Plouda who was most welcoming. We were directed to the river footbridge in Varulamium, Park - a beautiful park which adjoins the Cathedral - where the pilgrimage procession would start at 11.30 a.m. We were introduced to Father Robin Whitney from Palmers Green who had brought a party from his church in North London, so we attached ourselves to him. All the time groups of pilgrims from all over London were making their way to the start of the processional way in the park headed by their parish banners. Most of these were Anglican pilgrims, of course. At noon the Angelus was recited and then the procession started off up to the Abbey singing hymns. When all the two or three thousand had been seated in the Cathedral the Eucharistic Procession came into the Abbey Church. The Bishop of St Alban's was the Celebrant. About 60 or 70 Catholic pilgrims were shown into seats in the south aisle where we could proceed into the Lady Chapel after the Offertory to continue our Eucharistic prayer and Mass and Communion. Fr Whitney and myself con-celebrated for our Catholic pilgrims. It was a most moving experience. Apparently Fr Plourde, who, as has already been mentioned, is on the staff of the Abbey together with a United Reformed clergyman, says Mass in the Abbey every Sunday in the Lady Chapel.

An extensive building attached to the Cathedral has got a very fine restaurant and facilities. After the Eucharist we were free to either take meals in the Cafeteria or have picnic lunches on the grass in the park. At 3.45 p.m. we started to take our seats in the Abbey again for the afternoon Ecumenical service. The Cathedral choir sang and the sermon was preached by Rev. Colin Morris, Head of Religious Broadcasting, B.B.C.. Bishop James O'Brien, Bishop in Hertfordshire took part in the service. At the end of the service the clergy led all the congregation in filing past the shrine of St Alban.

Ever since 209 A.D. Christians have offered prayer here, to the first English martyr. I wondered why we, as Catholics, have not heard more about this annual pilgrimage. I hope that more Catholics will patronise it in future.

(Rev.) John Davies

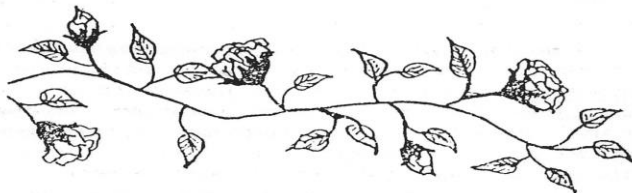


A Prayer at the shrine of St Alban:

"Glory be to you, Almighty God, for this sanctuary built to the praise of Your Holy Name in honour of Blessed Alban, first martyr of this land. Grant that we may so witness to our faith, that encouraged by his example, rejoicing in his fellowship and aided by his prayers, we may enter with him into the fulness of the Kingdom of Heaven. Amen."

In an Apostolic Exhortation on December 2nd, 1984, Pope John Paul II said:

"The (Church of Rome) seeks a unity which, if it is to be the fruit and expression of true reconciliation, is meant to be based neither upon a disguising of the points that divide nor upon compromises which are easy as they are superficial and fragile. Unity must be the result of a conversion of everyone, the result of mutual forgiveness, of theological dialogue and fraternal relations, of prayer and of complete docility to the action the Holy Spirit, who is also the Spirit of reconciliation."

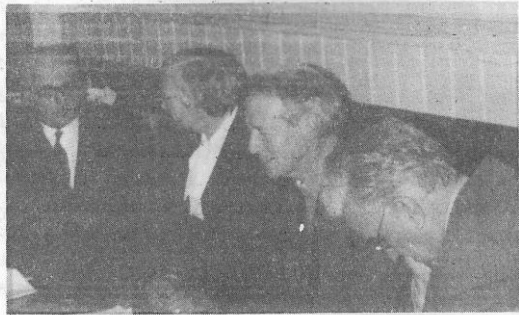


AS OTHERS SEE US

As one in a series of seminars called "The Synod and You", Sidcup Synod Group included a session entitled: "AS OTHERS SEE US" Three local Christian ministers were invited to come and say how they saw the Catholic Church today. They were: Canon G. Tyers (Anglican), Rev. D. Monkman (Baptist) and Rev. I. Thomas (URC). We give a brief resume of the main points they made.

Canon Tyers: The Canon spoke of coming in great trepidation, yet rejoicing because it was a sign of the times that he and other ministers should be invited to speak. He was there, he said, to speak in love to fellow Christians. After giving some outline of the Church of England, the Canon spoke of the current ecumenical position, of the encouragement and hope given by ARCIC and BEN, but also of the pains divisions, including the Catholic marriage discipline and especially pain at the division at the Eucharist. One of the high spots of his holiday, he said, had been after a visit to Oberammergau, when he attended a Catholic Mass in France and had been able to receive Communion. Schemes of reunion had foundered on the question of ministry. The greatest advances would be made if the Roman Catholic Church were to accept the validity of Anglican Orders and Church of England to accept Free Church ministries. ARCIC and BEM give hope for this to become a reality.

Impressions of Catholicism: The Catholic Church always appeared to be authoritarian. Authority told you what to believe and what to do. It had appeal, of course, for those looking for certainties. The Anglican Church had the contrary problem; there was so much



*Rev. D. Monkman, Mrs. U. Ratcliff (Chair)
Canon G. Tyers and Rev. I. Thomas*

democracy that it was difficult to give an Anglican view of anything. The abandonment of Latin in the R.C. liturgy could be compared to the introduction of the first English Prayer Book at the Reformation, and to a lesser extent, the introduction of the Alternative Service Book.

Catholics appeared to have liberated themselves and felt free to think and make up their own minds about faith and especially morals. For example, there is a difference between what Pope John Paul says about Birth Control and what is actually practised; and a difference of opinion about the ordination and the celibacy of the clergy. The grass roots were out of step with the Pope, perhaps even ahead of him. The closer relations with other Christians beyond what is officially allowed is very encouraging. Popular belief is usually well ahead of official doctrine, as for example, the Immaculate Conception.

Could something of the kind happen in the area of Church relationships? In the Church of England certain essential beliefs were required, but beyond that there was room for the exercise of individual minds. Catholics are not used to this and there is therefore some confusion, even dismay. Perhaps the Pope was not so infallible as he used to be. In the cause of unity we should like to see the Pope as *primus inter pares* (first among equals) as the case of the Archbishop of Canterbury.

Churches were not castles but places of welcome where all Christians should be free to go, - barriers should be removed to enjoy each other's, the impetus must come from us - look what Bob Geldorf had done for Ethiopia or Barry McGuigan for Northern Ireland.

Jesus prayed for the perfection of unity reflecting the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Prejudices must be overcome. We cannot settle for less. The Canon concluded by quoting Robert Louis Stevenson:

"To travel hopefully is better than to arrive,
and true success is to labour."

Rcv Thomas; Mr. Thomas was grateful for being invited to the meeting; we had all suffered from stereotypes, we were now smashing those stereotypes and getting to know each other as people.

His own background was ecumenical; he served for many years as a teacher in Bangalore, and had contact in a head teacher's association with a Jesuit headmaster; he had a brother-in-law who was a Jesuit, and another a Catholic layman. He had been a member of the Church of South India, the only Church to bridge gaps to form a united church with Anglicans, Presbyterians, Methodists and Congregationalists.

There were considerable obstacles to unity, especially doctrinal of order. There was great excitement and hope in Bangalore after Vatican II; barriers were swiftly withdrawn and joint action undertaken. Shortly after Vatican II a Presbyterian of the Church of South India and Franciscan Friar were called in to act as mediators in an industrial dispute.

There considerable Interest in the groundswell among lay people and all would be waiting for the outcome of the Synod of 1987. The speaker hoped that the voice of the laity would be heard there; he was aware of the difficulty of the lay voice getting through, it happened happened in the U. R, C, as well as anywhere else.

Other encouraging factors were: the Bible was becoming a common heritage; Dr Thomas and his wife had a set of five tapes prepared by a Catholic priest about the Bible, which they valued. There was an absence of denominational barriers in some activities, such as Charismatic Renewal, C.N.D. for example. Then u jau the sharing of churches at local level in ecumenical projects and particularly covenants.

Liturgical worship too, was drawing Christians closer together. for example, the U,R.C. liturgy allows members to follow Anglican worship and understand the Catholic worship.

We were reminded that Britain was now a multi-faith society, and folk who used a long way away were now our fellow countrymen. These must be taken into account.

The speaker concluded with a plea; Although Catholics were naturally their own Church, they must bear in mind that they were in the country who would be affected by their Synod.

Rev. D. Monkman: After expressing appreciation of the warmth of his welcome, the speaker said he was faced with two difficulties. The first Was the very wide variety of Views among Baptists about most things, and especially Roman Catholics. These ranged from the man who would not even venture into a Catholic Church to. the "rare birds" who would accept the jurisdiction of the Pope. The second problem was that the Catholic Church was a changing Church, both as a result. of Vatican II and the Charismatic Renewal. The speaker would attempt to present the views of the Baptist "in the middle."

On the "plus" side, Baptists applauded the priority given to worship and prayer in the Catholic Church. There was no church which did not give such priority, although it had to be admitted that Baptist emphasis on evangelism could cause prayer and worship to become an adjunct of evangelism rather than its source. This had to be resisted. Then they admired the single-minded devotion of priests and sisters to Christ. both at home and overseas. They admired the emphasis ontho care of the poor, and th wealth of devotional literature from Catholic authors.

On the other hand, he felt that the view that the Catholic Church was the one and only Church of Christ was a most inflexible interpretation of Christ, the Lord of all good life. The Baptists believed that the Church is

everywhere there are people committed to Christ in faith and obedience and that Christ is in the midst of and working through a multitude of divergent factors of Church life.

He was not excusing the divisions in the Church or justifying the vociferous tendencies of Protestantism, but he felt that the monolithic structure Of the Catholic Church did not represent the mind of Christ. There was infinite variety in God's creation, flowers, shapes, colours etc. all giving glory to God. Could this not be so with the Church?

As concerned the Apostolic Succession, he held that he stood in that succession. Where Christ, the Lord of life was in charge, where the Gospel of Christ was preached and where the mission of Christ was shared, there was the Apostolic Succession.

In applauding the greater participation of the Laity in Church affairs, Mr. Monkman said that ho had asked the Superior of the Marist Fathers at Sidcup if any lay people from St. Lawrence's would be attending the Synod of 1987. He had been amazed to learn that although it was a Synod about tho Laity, there would be no lay people there!!! This would be unthinkable in Baptist circles. The Baptist laity would be present In vast numbers, and they would be very vocal!

He concluded by saying that the only reference he would make to the Sacraments was that ho longed for tho day when Catholics would welcome "non-Romans" to their Eucharist as they wore already so very welcome at the Baptists.

This report is an interesting example of ecumenical dialogue, in which Christians speak freely, expressing their views and impressions, end really listen to one another, in readiness for growth in knowledge and understanding. In such dialogue, the impressions of one group of Christians by another may not always be considered to be fully in accord the real situation, and opportunity would therefore be given for questioning,clarification and discussion.

In publishing this resume of the speakers talks (for which they readily gave permission), our readers of all traditions may like to send to the Editor their own reactions to the points expressed.

WESLEY'S WAY

In his journal, John Wesley gives some unusual reasons for feeling fitter than ever at 71, even though the average age expectancy of a man was only 40: "The grand cause is the good pleasure of God who doeth

firstly, Erasmus never really comes to grips with Luther's essential concept. For Luther it is vitally 'important to know "whether the will does anything or nothing in matters pertaining to eternal salvation." He thinks that Erasmus ought to be aware that "this is the cardinal issue between us, the point on which everything else in this controversy turns. For what we are doing is to inquire what free choice can do, what it has done, and what it is in relation to the grace of God." On this, Erasmus is far from clear.

Secondly, in The Bondage of the Will, Luther accepts Erasmus' choice of battleground. He takes the argument of The Diatribe and sets out to answer it point by point instead of giving a systematic clarification of his own position.

Erasmus thinks along traditional lines and thinks in terms of relationship between God and man; human nature and divine grace. Luther, on the other hand, takes a different dualism, that of God and the devil.

Although Luther says that he bases his argument on scripture alone, in fact he draws on Augustine, logic and his own experience. His argument can be seen as theological, logical and psychological; the latter being the strongest.

Augustine: According to the traditional view, man, before the Fall, was endowed with certain natural powers — memory, understanding and Will and also with supernatural grace. To attain eternal life of himself was beyond man, he needed grace, but with the help of grace, man could use his natural powers to attain and merit glory. However, man was free to choose between good and evil. At the Fall he chose to disobey, and as a result lost his supernatural gift of grace and was left in his natural state. How the Fall affected man's natural powers was a subject of debate but it was generally felt that by the Fall, man's natural powers were weakened, but not destroyed. Fallen man, therefore, still possessed the capacity to obey God. There was great diversity of opinion as to how much man can do to merit salvation - what grace was needed? What Erasmus rejected was the idea that man has no active part to play in his salvation; he held that man has freedom of choice. He has power "to apply himself to the things which lead to salvation, or to turn away from them." Luther says that Erasmus never specifies what "those things" are. However, throughout, Erasmus maintains that divine grace "always accompanies human effort" and that nature must cooperate with grace and this is a matter for man's own choice, so man himself is responsible for his salvation. The ability to cooperate with God's 'grace is a grace in itself.

Augustine's idea is that free will can only choose to sin and that good accomplished by grace alone. Luther follows Augustine's theory, saying

that free will is an empty name. Herein lies a weakness in Luther's argument, since will, by definition must be in a state of willing; or it is not a will. Luther holds that before the Fall, man was totally dependent on God and God's unmerited love evoked a response of Faith from man. Man's reason was enlightened by the Spirit of God so that by nature, he wanted to do God's will and so did it freely and spontaneously in the power of God's Spirit. After the Fall, Luther holds that the evil spirit supplanted the Holy Spirit in man and led him to disobedience. Luther sees in this as being effected in the struggle between God and Satan and not in man's free choice. "Having begun in, the Spirit he ends in the flesh. Luther holds that when man acts in accordance with God's will (in his fallen state), it is only in self interest to escape punishment or gain reward.

In Luther's view, freedom belongs to God alone, who is subject to no other power. God's will is righteous - in Christ and in creation it is revealed as love. God does not act with measured love as men do, but with complete freedom. Men are in bondage to Satan. Here we find echoes of Augustine's idea that all flesh is corrupt. "Free choice by its own power alone can do nothing but fall and is capable only of sinning; which is why Augustine calls it an enslaved, rather than a free choice. (page 174, Christian Classics edition Luther and Erasmus: Free Will and Salvation.)

Luther admits that man is free in his relationship to the rest of creation. He can even do good deeds, but because his activation is influenced by the Evil Spirit, those good deeds are ineffective in his salvation. He must first be set free from the Evil Spirit and be brought under the influence of the Holy Spirit. Luther holds that man can never be in neutral ground; he is governed, either by the Spirit of God, or the Evil Spirit. Hence the motivation of his choice is never free. God and the Devil are seen as powers acting inwardly.

Luther agrees with the traditional view that God, in his omnipotence, is the cause of all acts, therefore causes sinful acts, but does not cause the sinfulness, but he cannot agree with the traditional idea of attributing this to man's free choice, because he sees man as being in bondage to Satan. Luther gives no rational explanation for evil. He does not admit that man's original fall into this bondage, or Satan's fall into evil is a matter of free choice.

Logic: Luther, in part of the argument, appeals to reason and later, in part IV says that reason is the death of faith. He says that it is wrong for us to think that God should conform to our ideas of justice; God hides behind opposites to enable Faith. If everything was clear to our

understanding and if we could see it all logically, then there would be no opportunity for Faith. According to revelation God wants all men to be saved, but for reasons that we do not know, not all men are saved. Just as the Crucifixion, in man's eyes, was an apparent failure, but in God's hidden purposes, it was a triumph, so God's hidden purposes are hidden in man's salvation. This is where Luther abandons evidence and argument. Only by the gift of Faith can man accept this, Luther argues that in the light of glory we will see the unquestionable truth of what here we can only believe.

Scripture: The clarity of Scripture is evident, if one does not make the mistake of confusing God and Scripture. God cannot be understood by man, but Scripture is plain for all to see because Christ unlocked it. Some words might be obscure because of our ignorance of grammar, but the meaning is quite clear. In refuting Erasmus' Introduction, Luther denies the Church Fathers' authority. None was ever made a saint in the name of free will. They all worked in the Name of Christ whose doctrine contradicts free will. The doctrine of salvation by faith in Christ disproves free will and in support of this Luther quotes three passages from Romans: Rom3: 21-25; 3: 20 and 3: 28. Rom3: 21-25 is seen as a thunderbolt against free will. No human being shall be justified by works of the Law, therefore the endeavour and effect of free will is nothing. Luther holds that the purpose of the Law is to make us aware of our sinfulness - he classes all the statements about what man should do as subjunctive, not indicative - what he should do if he could, but Luther holds that he can do nothing without God's grace. When we recognise our helplessness, God can help us. We cannot achieve salvation ourselves but we have the capacity to receive it.

Luther's Own Experience: Luther's energy comes from his own experience of life. Some would see this as a way of validating the argument - they would say that you can't trust logic or reason, but experience is one way of testing religious matters.

Luther suffered from a sense of failure to gain salvation, so to discover "justification" was a revelation for him. Luther shows a deeper perception of the human condition than Erasmus. Luther shows that there is a strong indication in Paul's writings that Faith justifies. Otto says Of Luther: "The investigation as to how far Luther took over "doctrines" from Scotus does not amount to much, they stand in most intimate connection with his own innermost religious life, of which they are a genuine first hand utterance and should be examined as such. (page 114 The Idea of the Holy) In his teaching on the hardening of Pharaoh's heart, he is revealing his own belief system and his own conflict of conscience. "Just before his death,

speaking of his book De Servo Arbitrio in which these ideas stand clearly expressed, Luther acknowledges that nothing he wrote was so truly his own". In his personal conflict, Luther sought comfort in the Word of God in Scripture and in Sacramental absolution. Otto says, of The Bondage of the Will, that it becomes a sort of psychological key to phases of his religious experience. In Luther's battles with Satan, in his constantly recurring religious catastrophes and fits of melancholy, in his wrestling's for grace, perpetually renewed, which bring him to the verge of mental disorder, in all these there are more than merely rational elements at work in his soul; his own psychological disorders find expression in his religious orientations.

The key to Luther's theology of salvation lies in his understanding of the way that God deals with men and how he confers on them the salvation procured by Christ. For Luther, grace, was not the ennoblement of sinful men, but simply God's decree of pardon for the elect out of regard for the merits of Christ, who paid the penalty for their sins, in their stead, upon the cross.

In his own agonised search for divine mercy and assurance, Luther found the deepest interpretation of the Christian Gospel as a personal encounter of the individual spirit with that divine pardon, pronounced once for all through Christ's expiatory death. Seeing grace and salvation in this way, there could be no mediation through created channels. The forgiven sinner could only apprehend the divine mercy to him by justifying faith.

In the debate with Erasmus, Luther, believes that he is arguing the case, but he is motivated by something deeper. The style gets enthusiastic and shows something emotional is invested. He is not aware of it. He is at his best and at his worst. His psychological state is reflected. He bends the argument to support his feelings.

"His one-to-one doctrine of divine mercy and of its personal apprehension by justifying faith, spring from a profound religious sensitivity. It inspired first his own prophetic protest against the orthodoxy, then the establishment of a Protestant faith as a great rival of the Catholic faith." (The key to Luther's Theology by F. Clark). Of all the evidence used by Luther to support his argument, that of his own personal experience, arising from his own psychological state, has the strongest influence and deepest effect.

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