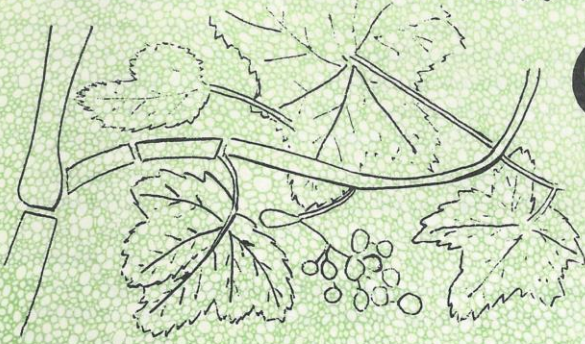


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# Together in Christ



*Vol.1 No.4 Oct.1983*

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BHINNEKA TUNGGALIKA That is the motto shown on the Indonesian coat-of- arms "Garuda" underneath a mythological golden bird, and the motto means: "UNITY IN DIVERSITY". On the shield are five figures representing five principles on which the philosophy of the State is based and which guide the people, the central figure being a star, representing faith in one God.

Some aspects of "unity in diversity" are presented in this issue. Correspondents share their views on the implications of Christians in a united Church. Mention of a new committee on "Catholics and other faiths" reminds us that our ultimate embrace of unity extends beyond Christians, as we hope to meet, under the star symbol as it were, those with whom perhaps we share only a basic "faith in one God".

Bishop Henderson has carefully explained the new scheme for the implementation of the episcopal role, and its particular application to unity; Canon Corbishley elucidates ARCIC and BEFI and highlights their importance, Mr. Pavelin's article should spur us on to constant thought and study of the Vatican documents; Father Haggren has given an impressive personal witness to his "change of attitude" resulting from his Brixton experience, and his remark in regard to other ministers' "I am constantly learning from them", prompts our Q&A this month as we invite you to say what you have learnt from other Christians, or what has impressed you most about them? Views from all Christians please!

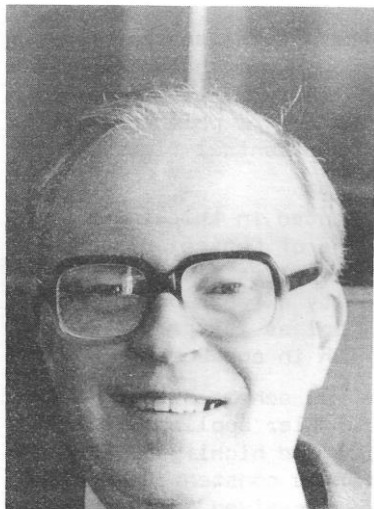
Our article on St. Thomas More might initiate a "Dialogue of Spirituality If we come closer to one another by coming closer to Christ, it should be extremely helpful to ponder on the various ways to sanctity in which the Holy Spirit guides his people. We welcome articles on spirituality, or on the life or writings of Christians, and especially those relevant to unity.

With this issue we come to the end of our first year of publication, and confidently look forward to continuing to serve the cause of unity in this way in the future. May we appeal to those whose subscriptions have now expired to renew them promptly, please, and to all our readers to try and encourage new subscribers?

We are most grateful to all the writers of letters and articles, puzzles etc., to our diocesan printer, Mr. Winchester, and to everyone for the support and encouragement received. We pray for you all.

✳ May the star of faith in God illuminate our minds and thoughts, and may the star of Bethlehem guide us closer to Christ and to one another.

## ARCIC and BEM



It is a favourite saying of mine that the ecumenical movement has given rise to more sets of initials than anything since General Eisenhower's headquarters during the Second World War. I even have in my files a sheet of foolscap, a bit yellow at the edges, which my predecessor covered with examples - and there have been a few more to add since then. This article is concerned with two sets of initials - ARCIC and BEM. It is probably safe to say that most of the people who are sufficiently interested in unity to read a magazine like this will know what A *Canon Dennis Corbishley*

not be quite so familiar. The two items are connected. About the same time that the Final Report of the Anglican/Roman Catholic International Commission was published, another document made its appearance, this time from the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches. Officially, this paper on Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry is known as the Lima document because it was there that the text was given its final shape. It is often known simply as BEM from its initial letters. For our purposes BEM it shall be.

The two documents are connected in two ways. First, they cover much of the same ground: both deal with Eucharist and Ministry. Second, Roman Catholics have been asked by the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity to study them, a request reinforced in the case of ARCIC by the Pope and the Archbishop of Canterbury last year. Readers know of the Study Guide to the Final Report, published early in 1983 to help people to tackle it; and later this year the Ecumenical Commission of England and Wales will be putting out an introduction and a set of questions to help with the study of BEM.

Some people may be surprised at the importance given by the Vatican Secretariat to BEM. They may point out that the Roman Catholic Church is not a member of the World Council of Churches. But it is a member of

that Council's Faith and Order Commission which produced BEM, and Catholic theologians are known to have played a prominent part in the work. Even had they not, the importance of BEM's subject matter is clear to all Christians.

The two documents are different in many ways, in purpose, method and achievement. The purpose of ARCIC was to discuss and resolve outstanding differences in doctrine between the Anglican and Roman Catholic Churches so as to achieve full unity in faith and sacramental life; the purpose of BEM was not to unite all the many churches whose representatives contributed to it but to prepare the way for progress to unity at a later stage. ARCIC has never revised texts once published, though it has several times clarified them and answered questions by means of Elucidations; BEM's text has been discussed by the churches in an earlier draft, and the Lima text is the product of much honing and polishing. Lastly, ARCIC has reached substantial agreement on all but one of the topics it has discussed - the exception is Infallibility - whereas BEM would claim to have reached convergence rather than consensus. But convergence is no mean achievement for a document produced by so many churches.

It is well-nigh impossible to advise people in detail about how best to tackle discussion of two such big items. It is always to be hoped that discussion will be genuinely ecumenical, that is to say that the work should be done with our fellow Christians. The great advantage of BEM is that it directly concerns people who are not Anglicans or Roman Catholics. It is quite understandable that sometimes people might prefer to have some preliminary discussions among themselves before making the work ecumenical. But a fully ecumenical discussion must be our aim: it is not only that fellow Christians have so much to teach and to learn in this way; if they cannot even discuss together there would seem to be little hope for the larger work that Bishop Henderson and Mr. Weller have written about in recent issues when they were describing local covenants. In fact, it is clear that discussions of this kind are among the activities that we are encouraged to covenant for.

There may be something to be said for starting with a general look at the two subjects (Eucharist and Ministry) which are common to the two documents. But there is, I think, a great advantage in starting with BEM's "Baptism" section, which is not difficult and yet includes matter for serious reflection. Then Eucharist and Ministry can be tackled together. Many Roman Catholics and Anglicans will want to have a longer look at ARCIC by itself on these two subjects, for the ARCIC texts are very

closely-written and will repay lengthier study. "Authority" of course is ARCIC only, and a very large matter; one section of Authority 2 is longer than the entire statement on the Eucharist.

It is useful to remember that no prizes are being offered for finishing the course first! There is much to be said for a leisurely approach, not least because the language of these two papers may at times be unfamiliar and some people need a little time to see familiar truths in less familiar terms. An over-hasty examination is more likely to lead to hostility than approval. Approval will come when people take the time to recognise that their faith really is being expressed. Finally, please let us know what you think. For ARCIC, the English Anglican/Roman Catholic Committee has asked that findings of discussion groups be sent to me or to Church House. For BEM, perhaps the best channel is through your diocesan commission, from which they will come to the new Committee for Christian Unity which replaces the familiar ECEW at the end of the year.

And may I just do a commercial for ECEW's latest publication, Local Churches in Covenant, which will be out in early September. In Southwark, one hopes that within a few years there will be few local churches that are not in covenant.

Dennis Corbishley

The ARCIC Final Report (EI .95) and the Study Guide (50p) are both published by the Catholic Truth Society and by SPCK.

The full text of BEM (with an official commentary) is published by the World Council of Churches. The British Council of Churches has published a text with comments and guidelines for study.

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#### VATICAN II AND UNITY

Although it was not the primary purpose of Vatican II to promote Christian unity, many of its consequences, in both its immediate pronouncements and longer-term effects have undoubtedly served the cause of ecumenism. Here are some pointers to the Council's deliberations which seem to me particularly relevant to unity:

The **Dogmatic Constitution on the Church** (*Lumen Gentium*) set out three basic essentials of the doctrine of the Church in a way which is in accordance with Biblical thought: 1. The Church's understanding of herself depends on her understanding of Christ. To quote from the opening words: "Christ is the light of all nations... By her relationship with Christ, the Church is a kind of sacrament or sign of intimate union

with God, and of the unity of all mankind. She is also an instrument for the achievement of such union and unity". (Art. 1)

2. The idea of the Church is linked to the idea of the kingdom of God which has a future as well as a present aspect. To quote again: "Its goal is the kingdom of God, which has been begun by God Himself on earth and which is to be further extended until it is brought to perfection by Him at the end of time." (Art. 9)

3. The Church is the People of God, linked with "the common priesthood of all the faithful" originating in their baptism.

The **Dogmatic Constitution on the Church** also considered the role of Bishops, stressing their functions of teaching and sanctifying the People of God, rather than the concepts of power and authority.

**The Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation** (*Dei Verbum*) placed a strong emphasis on the duty of all the faithful to study the Scriptures. The apostolic testimony was given to a living community, and has been interpreted and re-expressed within it by the succession of bishops. To concentrate exclusively on either Scripture, tradition or the Magisterium of the Church is arbitrary: all three are inextricably linked.

**Ecumenism**, *Lumen Gentium* states: "The Church recognises that in many ways she is linked with those who, being baptized, are honored with the name of Christian, though they do not possess the faith in its entirety or do not preserve unity of communion with the successor of Peter." (Art. 15) The links referred to in this quotation include belief in the Trinity, baptism and other sacraments, episcopacy and Christian zeal. Christian bodies with these characteristics were described as "Churches or ecclesial communities." The significant phrase "hierarchy of truths" appeared in the Decree on Ecumenism (Art.11). This Decree has made possible many shared activities, including worship, between Catholics and other Christians.

The **Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity** (*Apostolicam Actuositatem*) expanded the idea of the Church as the People of God, as expressed in *Lumen Gentium*. By virtue of baptism and living union with Christ, the laity do their work in the world, live their family life, and serve Church and community, as apostles of Christ. The perfect example of this type of life is that of Our Lady.

The **Declaration on Religious Freedom** (*Dignitatis Humanae*) clearly affirmed that religious minorities other than Catholics have the right to religious liberty. "The freedom or immunity from coercion in matters religious, which is the endowment of persons as individuals, is also to be recognized as their right when they act 'in community.'" (Art. 4)

I feel that the ecumenical progress of the past twenty years can be substantially attributed to Vatican II.

Alan Pavelin

## OUR QUESTIONS—YOUR REPLIES

Our questions were :

"How do you envisage a united Church? Must everyone believe exactly the same in it?"

Here are some replies:

"Everyone must accept, must believe the faith taught by the Church, both now and when it becomes united." Everyone must accept the moral code laid down by the Church. For the rest we do what we like, so diversity comes into its own.

I find it impossible to visualise the Church united. The work of unification will be done by the Holy Spirit. We know not how or when, and neither do we know what else He will do "while He is about it". One thing is certain: Unity is what Our Lord wants for His Church. To some extent we already have it, but the more we become united, the closer we shall be to Him. A united Church means a people more united to Him and to each other, in fact a people more steeped in sanctity.

The only parallel that occurs to me between God's Church now and that Church United, is the difference between a saint and a sinner. On this earth nothing is perfect, nor will be till the end of time, but look at the saints of the 1980's, founders of Orders, heroes behind the Iron Curtain, those who though not faultless are yet outstanding. Now look at the ordinary good living Church members, striving for sanctity, yet freely admitting that .between them and, say, a mother Teresa there is a difference. The greater saints are nearer to God. So it will be with a United Church.

S.M.Clare, O.S.B.

"What struck me very forcibly was the challenge of the correspondent's reply (July 1983) which seemed to me to get to the heart of the matter - fear of the unknown, of radical honesty - of stepping out in faith, would think with our entrenched, centralised bureaucracy in Rome and even in Diocesan Chancelleries, we have the biggest problem here. It is back to basic Christian communities as far as I am concerned - sharing locally as much as possible, decentralisation as much as possible. It's sure religious communities could provide the basis for these - even ours! Look what Taize has done!

S.M.Bernard, O.S.B.

As any living community is always evolving, I envisage a united Church as rather more in a state of change than in any of its traditions to represent all the best elements.



Hospitality, wherever possible, across the old divisions - leading to parish communities with a permanent core but shifting "fringe" to which people can be committed for a time to work out their new insights with mutual support. Shared charitable enterprises and resources, with features like those described at Edenbridge, with common diary, directory and membership list, for instance. much liturgical experiment, with Religious communities as both advisers and "guinea pigs"! Take great care not to leave behind the people on the fringes of the old churches who had been quite content with the status quo and avoid creating a new rift! These people, and people who, though committed, were not working too actively for unity, need to be considered specially in moving towards a Common Eucharist, even after mutual recognition of ministries. Would an "Agape" on a regular basis help prepare people emotionally, or create new confusion?

Must everyone believe exactly the same in it? The wording here is rather loaded. Do people within any one tradition believe "exactly the same?" There would have to be consensus on the contents of the creed which is by no means automatically achieved. Apart from that, perhaps, a stressing of "hierarchy of truths" and their organic connection. "The Church is not an institution forcing us to follow its rules but a community inviting us to still our hunger and thirst at its tables. Doctrines are not alien formulations which we must adhere to, but the documentation of the most profound human experiences which, transcending time and place, are handed from generation to generation." (H. Nouwen). This might give gentle encouragement towards agreement in so far as all are disciples.

S.M.Catherine,O.S.B.

Thank you, sisters. Other views expressed in answer to the question were: "...there are certain great fundamental, primary truths which are an essential part of our faith in Jesus. These we must hold; but we shall always be deepening our understanding even of those great primary truths, and so not believe "exactly the same!"

"This is impossible; however, God will do the impossible. How He will do it will surprise us all."

"No. It is not possible for everyone to think exactly the same. We may have the same basic views, but have considerable variations in expressing them."

"There will always be some who will not conform".

Our question to you: What have you learnt especially from other Christians (please say which denomination)? What impresses you most about them? please send your answers to the Editor.

## BRIXTON CHANGED ME!

When I was a boy, we took seriously neither the High Church clergy with their wide dog collars, more Roman than Rome, nor the Low Churchmen with no more than a white line at their necks. When I was studying for the priesthood, it seemed to me quite incredible that other Christians could fail to see in the words of Scripture the implications which are so obvious to us. I even doubted their good faith until a fellow student, the brains of our year and himself a convert, assured me his position before his conversion seemed perfectly logical to him at the time. As a hospital chaplain, I found my colleagues helpful beyond the call of duty, but that was the only regular contact I had with other Christian clergy.

I was not at all happy with the Second Vatican Council's Decree on Ecumenism. I felt strongly that the Roman Curia showed no more understanding of the situation in England than other continental priests with whom I had had dealings. This conviction was reinforced when, in the wake of Vatican II, I attended joint meetings of clergy which were addressed by professors of theology, in good standing in their own Church, who could not have subscribed to the initial declaration of the World Council of Churches: "We are one in acknowledging Jesus Christ as our God and Saviour."

Then I came to Brixton. The very next morning Alan Ramsay called to invite me to the Stockwell Fraternal. When the possibility arose that the National Front might march through Brixton, I attended the meeting called by Bob Nind at which it was decided to form a local Council of Churches. Now I have served in areas where the Catholic clergy did not join such organisations because it was tacitly understood that some other Church would withdraw if we did. But here they even wanted a Catholic on the committee to draft the Constitution! I may be the equivalent of the Statutory Woman or the Token Black member of other committees, but I have been there ever since.

My respect for the ministers of other Churches has developed through appreciation and admiration to warm affection. I am constantly learning from them. I praise and thank God for these men and women who are tending members of the flock of Christ whose spiritual needs we are unable to satisfy because of their different traditions and our own weaknesses and shortcomings. I still wish they could see in the Scriptures the implications we see, but I could no longer write as I did in 1952: "True unity can only be achieved by a return to the Roman Catholic Church."

Vatican II was right. And when the unity of the one Church Christ founded becomes visible, it will incorporate all the insights and riches of the various traditions and meet the different spiritual needs of us all.

John Hagreen

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Transfer the letters in your answers to the clues to their correspondingly numbered squares in the grid below. A quotable quote will emerge. The answer is on page 20.

p  
a  
g  
e

The plenitude of Holy Orders

Hits with the foot

Attraction

A surging mass

A combined group

A river mouth

Part of the face

Foreign

Sincere

To percolate

Kick at goal

Pensive

Type of monkey

Inhabitants

Pillar

Adverse

Partial

13	95	48	5	120	42	88	96	28	107
100	3	38	100	68					
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21	111	26	48	21	123	59	15		
114	26	28	65	125	7				
17	111	39	23	96	118	57	105	1	
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77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95
96	97	98	99	100	101	102	103	104	105	106	107	108	109	110	111	112	113	114
115	116	117	118	119	120	121	122	123	124	125	126	127	128	129	130	131	132	133

## MORE ON UNITY

# I die in and for the Catholic Faith .....

A martyr's words, spoken at his execution, brief words to conclude a life motivated by the love of God and loving loyalty to his Church; brief words to follow the millions of words he had poured out in defence of that faith in which and for which he lived and died. And to complete the summary of his life, he added those words which have echoed down the centuries wherever his story his told "I die, the King's good servant, but God's first."

Those words had the power to move King Henry VIII to bitter tears. For they were words which had come from the King himself when, twenty-one years earlier, he was persuading the future martyr to enter his service "I give you this command, to look first to God and then to the king."

At the execution the king had requested that the victim "speak but little." The few words he uttered conveyed worlds of meaning. That was just one aspect of the genius of St. Thomas More (for it is, of course, to him that I am referring) - he was a genius for words, but when fitting, a genius for brevity and for silence.

One might be tempted to think that a martyr for the Catholic faith who had been a noted theological controversialist and had written massive works, often in strong polemical vein in the manner of his time, would hardly qualify for candidature as an apostle for unity! From his pen flowed *The Confutation of Tyndale's Answer*; the *Responsio ad Lutherum*; the *Dialogue Concerning Heresies*; the *Supplication of Souls* refuting Simon Fish's *Supplication for Beggars*; (which attacked the doctrine of purgatory); *The Apology* (against an anonymously published pamphlet), then, refuting a reply to *The Apology*, *The Debellation of Salem and Bizance*; the *Letter against Frith* (on the Eucharist) and the *Answer to a Poisoned Book*, (against Joye, again on the Eucharist.) *All of More's extant works are being published in the Yale Edition of The Complete Works of St. Thomas More, which will comprise 16 volumes, some in 2 or 3 parts.*

Yet, such is More's genius, that in the love, inspiration, and example of Christian witness and holiness which he gives, he is honoured in

other Churches and regarded as a promoter of Christian unity. From a little booklet on embroidered kneelers in Chelsea Old Church, *The Treasures of Time*, I pick out this comment, relating to More, "Nor does the cause for which he died seem to divide him from those whose inheritance is from the protestantism he could not allow." St. Thomas More used to attend Chelsea Old Church (which is now in Anglican hands); in it is the More Chapel, a chapel rebuilt in 1528 as More's own private chapel, and in the sanctuary of the church is a monument bearing an inscription composed by him, intended as his epitaph. In this Church, an annual Thomas More sermon has been given by illustrious preachers, professors, scholars and clergy of differing denominations, and a collection of these sermons has been published. *Thomas More Through Many Eyes (London, 1978)*

I remember with great joy the special Thomas More Commemoration on July 15, 1979, when Chelsea Old Church welcomed Abbé Germain Marc'hadour, one of the leading world authorities on More, and one whose erudition, eloquence, charm and genius for friendship admirably reflect those qualities in St. Thomas. After praising the speaker's scholarly work and stating that he was the founder-editor of *Moreana*, the journal of the Amici Thomae Mori, the vicar wrote in his magazine, *The Chelsea Anchor*. "As a good example of European Community give and take, we, at the Old Church, receive copies of "*Moreana*", in exchange for the "*Chelsea Anchor*". *The Chelsea Anchor, Vol. 18, No. 209, July 1979.*

St. Thomas More has certainly inspired a fine ecumenical spirit here, where many pilgrims come and pray for unity. A similar situation exists at Canterbury, at the Anglican Church of St. Dunstan's, where in the Roper vault in St. Nicholas' chapel, the head of St. Thomas More is buried. His daughter, Margaret, took the head from London Bridge to Canterbury, wanting it to be buried with her after her death. More should be happy here, for Canterbury reminds us of Thomas Becket and it was after him that Thomas More was named; both were born in Milk St. London. In a poignant letter to Margaret on the eve of his death, more wrote "I cumber you, good Margaret much, but I would be sorry if it should be any longer than tomorrow, for it is St. Thomas even and the utas of St. Peter, and therefore, tomorrow, long I to go to God." How beautiful is this expression of longing for God and the peace of soul which he experienced! It was at St. Dunstan's that King Henry II, doing penance for the murder of Becket, changed into

penitential garb. Two Saints Thomas, both martyrs under a King Henry, are united in commemoration in this Church, which is a focal point for pilgrims praying for unity.

In June 1973 Dr. Ramsey, then Archbishop of Canterbury, dedicated anew window to St Thomas More and also inaugurated the "*Friends of St. Dunstan's*" to foster international relations for the progress of Christian Unity. The window has three main lights; one shows More with civil powers; one has More with his family and centrally is the Agnus Dei and the seven of the Holy Spirit as tongues of fire, above is More serving Mass; on the third light, More is with Colet, Fisher and Erasmus, above he is preparing for execution. (Thinking of windows, I am reminded of a comment by Chesterton : "A mind like More's was full of light like a house made of windows: but the windows looked out on all sides and in all directions." *Article in The Universe May 3, 1974, reprinting "G.K.'s" 1935 article, for the canonisation of St. Thomas More*) Dr. Ramsey spoke of St. Dunstan's becoming more and more identified with the cause of unity; all honoured a Christian for whom loyalty to God came first, and "in this way we salute him (More) as a prophet of truth and a prophet of unity The secret of unity is that we become as Christians closer to one another only through becoming closer to the Lord himself in the way of holiness. in this, the way of More inspires us and his prayers can help us on our way." Dr. Ramsey asked pilgrims to make the prayer of St. Thomas their own : "The things, good Lord, I pray for, give me thy grace to labour for." An excellent spur there, to pray and work for unity, inspired by St. Thomas More and seeking his help and intercession!

These two examples must suffice to indicate the influence on ecumenism as a result of associations with Thomas More, and the fine ecumenical tribute in including in the calendar a commemoration of Thomas More, martyr, on July 6, in the Alternative Service Book in use in the Anglican Church, testifies to recognition of his sanctity.

The rich diversity of gifts which More used to the full for the benefit of others, attract admiration and imitation in many spheres. He is revered as lawyer" magistrate, Speaker of the House of Commons, Lord Chancellor; as eminent ambassador on missions abroad; he is seen as a humanist, social reformer, advocate of education for women; he is held up as a faithful altar server, a marvellous exemplar' of family life, a "man born for friendship"; he is esteemed as a powerful

writer, speaker, translator and lover of the classics; he liked drama, acting, music and animals. Erasmus said of him: "More is the one genius of Britain."

Today, Thomas More unites people all over the world who love him, who share his profession or interests and study his works, and this is an important aspect of unity, for in coming together, they could hardly be unaware of his profound Christian spirituality which is the predominant unifying factor.

A theologian approaching More's theology (he was, of course, a lay theologian) might look at his ecclesiology, especially in the revised *Responsio* and the *Confutation*, and see his emphasis on the Church being "the catholike chyrch, the corps of Crysten people, the mystycall bodye of Cryste, *Confu. CW8, Pt 1, 341/13-14* ; "the hole multytude that professe the fayth of Cryste, whyther they be good or badde:" (348/11-12; *CW13 192/15,-16,19-20*). He could examine More's writings on authority and consensus, on discernment and the action of the Holy Spirit, and appreciate how the conflict with Luther has brought out his developed views on the papacy. He would see his teaching on the Eucharist, as for example in the *Treatise on the Blessed Body*, in which More makes the distinction between those who being unworthy, receive "onely sacramentally, and not virtually:" that is, they do not receive "the grace, by whiche they shulde bee lyuely membres incorporate in Christes holye mysticall body:" And from the vast areas of exploration of More's thought, a theologian might relate some sections to modern works - like the ARCIC Statements, for example!

Lovers of English mysticism and spirituality can trace links between Thomas More and the rich treasury of writings which preceded him. More himself recommended the reading of *The Mirror of the Life of Christ*, *The Imitation of Christ* and Hilton's *Scale of Perfection*. (*Confu CW8 Pt 1, 418/11-12*) More spent four years in the London Charterhouse, and the Carthusian influence on him is studied; also the Franciscan influence has been indicated. *Thomas More's Spirituality*" p. 146 in *G Marc'hadour on Thomas More: Action and Contemplation* , ed. R. S. Sylvester

I can only give brief hints here about these wonderful but rather specialised areas, and move on to consider - again very briefly - how More teaches and speaks to every Christian in this age and every age.

## Humility and Renunciation

Rejecting the temptations of pride, More wore a knotted hair shirt under his robes of office. (in the care of Syon Abbey, near South Brent, Devon.) *Moreana No. 77 (1983), p. 41* More warns repeatedly against the "boysteouse blast of pride" and "the false flatereng world". *A Dialogue of Comfort against Tribulation, CW12, 29/5-7*

More had learnt detachment from material possessions. On September 3, 1529, after hearing of the burning of their barns and all the harvest, he wrote to his wife: "I pray you be of good cheer and take all the household with you to Church and there thank God both for that He hath given us and for that He hath taken from us and for that He hath left us ...."

## Forgiveness

St. Thomas prayed for the grace "to thynke my mooste enemyes my best frendys" and in a prayer for his enemies, he asks God to "make vs saved soules in heaven together where we may euer live and love together with thee and thy blessed saintes." *CW13, 227/17-18; 231/17-19* He typifies that essential aspect of unity - reconciliation and forgiveness.

## Intercession

More knew the pain of division in the family when his son-in-law, William Roper, rejected the Catholic faith. He decided to abandon further argument and "gett me another while to God and praye for him." *Harfsfield's Life of More 87/24* Roper was converted!

## Trust in God

St. Thomas is an outstanding teacher of trust in God, of setting aside the natural fears of persecution and of preparing for death. In *A Dialogue of Comfort* he writes; "how can ye be comfortles in any trybulacion when Christ & his holy spryte, & with them their vnseparable father, yf you put full trust & confidens in them be neuer one fynger brede of space, nor one mynute of tyme from you" *CW12, 5/9-13*

In his last great work, written in Latin when he was a prisoner in the Tower of London, our Saint centres his thoughts on Christ and on His agony; *De Tristitia Christi* reveals his profound compassion for Christ's sufferings, as for example when More pours out these words:



"The gathered storm of all these *Part 1, 49/3-5* evils rushed into his most gentle heart and flooded it like the ocean sweeping through broken dikes". *CW14 Pt1, 49/3-4*

### Listening to God

Throughout the work, St. Thomas hears the voice of Christ - or is this not like the charism of prophecy? After comparing the fearless martyrs with the fearful ones, he has the words from Christ: "But you, my timorous and feeble little sheep, be content to have me alone as your shepherd, follow my leadership; if you do not trust yourself, place your trust in me. See, I am walking ahead of you along this fearful road. Take hold of the border of my garment and you feel going out from it a power which will stay your heart's blood from issuing in vain fears and will make your mind more cheerful..." *CW 14, Pt 1 103/8-10, 105/1-4*

### Prayer

More's biographers witness to his fervent life of prayer and his regular attendance at Mass and the Sacraments, and yet More humbly prays: "Take from me good lorde, this luke warme facion, or rather key colde maner of meditacion, and this dulnes in prayeng unto the." *CW13, 230/23-24*

Frequently More calls us to reverent, attentive prayer. We return to *De Tristitia Christi* for this passage, following his reference to those who criticised Christ by calling him a glutton: "But while these gloomy hypocrites were praying on the corners of the main thoroughfares so that they might be seen by men, He was eating lunch with sinners, calmly and kindly helping them to reform their lives. On the other hand He used to spend the night praying under the open sky while the hypocritical pharisee was snoring away in his soft bed. *CW14, Pt1, 33/8-35/1-5*

And in a haunting passage, More presents Christ reproaching Peter in the garden: "I always made much of you Simon, and yet Simon are you sleeping? I paid you many high honors, and yet Simon are you sleeping? A few moments ago you boasted that you would die with me, and now Simon are you sleeping? Now I am pursued to the death by the Jews and the gentiles and by one worse than either of them, Judas, and Simon are you sleeping?" *CW14, Pt1 165/5-10* Perhaps every Christian would put his or her name instead of Simon!

## God's Mercy

Yet More will remind us of the gentle mercy of God: "Nevertheless, such is God's kindness that even when we are negligent and slumbering on the pillow of our sins, He disturbs us from time to time, shakes us, strikes us, and does his best to wake us up by means of tribulations. *CW14, Pt 1, 203/1-4*

## Love

It is no wonder that in the darkness of his prison, St. Thomas More's intense love of God and of His word in the Bible, and his ardent longing to be with Him shone through his last days as it did through the whole of his life. God's good servant died on July 6, 1535, but he still Shows us God's way of love and inspires us to move forward into a closer unity of love with one another.

Una M. Ratcliff

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## REFLECTIONS ON WORK FOR UNITY

*Arising from the up-dating of the bishops' conference in England and Wales*

The mode in which the bishops of England and Wales have exercised their collegial responsibilities has, over the years, gradually changed. Many factors, not least the second Council of the Vatican, have contributed to these changes. The most recent review, done over the past two years, has been thorough and comprehensive. Appropriate consultation took place.

The recommendations, published initially in a consultative document, "*In the House of the Living God*" (a title appropriately taken from *Lumen Gentium* n.18) and in a Final Report, dated 7th July 1983, "The Review of its Structures and Procedures", are soon to take effect. They should lead to greater efficiency, greater economy of effort, greater involvement of all the bishops in the work and offer a more helpful service to the life and mission of the Church in our countries. The Conference will be better able to be, as the draft text said, bishops acting in collegiality to serve local Churches acting in communion, n.19.

The new arrangement for the bishops' work at national level will be able to offer useful help and guidance to diocesan organisations and

commissions which are comprised of the clergy, religious and laity who serve the local church and contribute to its life.

### New General Law

The new legislation of the Universal Church, the New Code of Canon Law, comes into effect on the first Sunday of Advent 1983.

Requirements of this new law affect dioceses. The new pattern of working for the Hierarchy Conference will help dioceses to meet the requirements of, as for example canons 511 and 536 of the New Code, which refer to: the diocesan pastoral council in which, under the authority of the bishop, a truly representative gathering of clerics, those in consecrated life and laity may consider together the pastoral concerns of the diocese: and the parish pastoral council, which does a similar task in the parish.

The basis chosen for proper consideration of the role of the Bishops' Conference was the ministry of priest, teacher and shepherd, inherent in the office of bishop, through which he acts as Christ's representative. "Episcopal consecration confers, together with the office of sanctifying, the duty also of teaching and ruling, which, however, of their very nature can be exercised only in hierarchical communion with the head and members of the college . . . In fact from tradition it is abundantly clear that by the imposition of hands and through the words of consecration, the grace of the Holy Spirit is given and a sacred character is impressed in such ways that bishops in visible manner take the place of Christ himself, teacher, shepherd and priest, and act as his representatives" (*Dogmatic Constitution on the Church (Lumen Gentium), Vatican II n.21* ) The collegial responsibility of the bishops in the territory of which their local churches (dioceses) are part is exercised through membership of the Bishops' Conference.

In the new scheme for the effective carrying out of their role, the bishops will have six Departments concerned with:

1. Christian Life and Worship.
2. Mission and Unity.
3. Christian Doctrine and Formation.
4. Social Responsibility.
5. Christian Citizenship.

## 6. International Affairs.

### The Unity Aspect

May I now say a word on number 2, the Department of Mission and Unity. In this department there will be six committees, to cater for different concerns of the department. Each committee will have a chairman, who is a bishop, a secretary, members and consultants. The six committees are:—

- a. Christian Unity, including English ARC  
Catholic/Methodist Committee
- b. Catholic Jewish Relations.
- c. Catholics and non—believers.
- d. Catholics and other Faiths.
- e. Home Mission.
- f. Overseas Mission.

From the names of the committees we can glean in very general terms the areas of committed involvement of this Department: and with the combined experience and talents of willing "ambassadors for Christ", who will help, the Church at national level will renew her concern for promoting in friendship the harmonious growth of all peoples according to the mind and heart of Christ Jesus, their saviour. Such influence can only be beneficial to society.

### Mirrored in the Diocese

The review has stressed the need for continual growth in each diocese of concern for local needs corresponding to the national ones. There should be structures locally which allow genuine interaction between the local and national work so that each helping the other effective work might be better achieved.

In Southwark the energetic and zealous members of our three Area Ecumenical' Commissions are developing excellently. The wider orientation of their work, arising from the review of the Bishops' Conference, will offer new challenges and encourage greater growth.

We pray with Pope John Paul II : "Spouse of the Holy Spirit and Seat of Wisdom help us in the great endeavour that we are carrying out to

meet in a more and more mature way our brothers in the faith with whom so many things unite us ... Allow us in the future to go out to meet human beings and all the peoples that are seeking God and wishing to serve him on the way of different religions. *at Jasna Gora 1979*

+ Charles J. Henderson

Chairman of the Ecumenical Commission

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## ECUMENICAL AFTERNOON OF PRAYER FOR THE FULLNESS OF UNITY

i think it is fair to say that pews in churches are, in the main, constructed for utility rather than for comfort, and those at the lovely church of St. Mary at Clapham are no exceptions. It is therefore remarkable to report that there appears to have been no fidgetting or lack of concentration on this account for the whole of the two and a half hours that nearly 200 people spent at St. Mary's on the afternoon of Sunday, September 18, and no wonder; it was a gripping experience.

The occasion was the annual afternoon of prayer organised by the joint ecumenical commissions of the diocese of Southwark, or rather ' by the chairman of the joint commission. It was attended by members of a variety of churches, and in this connection we were glad to note a reunion of a number of pilgrims who had been on the Radio Medway (now Kent) ecumenical pilgrimage to the Holy Land.

The "Our Father" was the theme of the afternoon and prominent members of five different churches were invited to share in leading the meeting and, *mirabile dictu*, they were all able to come; they each had 25 minutes in which to treat one section of the Lord's Prayer and so, successively they covered the whole of it. The afternoon was introduced and ended by our chairman.

Let me tell you who the participants were so that you can judge not only the quality of the leadership of the afternoon but also the importance from an ecumenical point of view of the occasion. They were, in the order in which they spoke:

Chairman: Rt. Rev. Charles J. Henderson, Bishop of Tricaia.

Methodist: Chairman Peter Sutcliffe, B.A.

Baptist: Gen. Superintendent A. Thompson, E. D.  
Roman Catholic: Rt. Rev. Monsignor J. Callanan, M.A., V.G.  
Church of England: Rt. Rev. Bishop Keith Sutton.  
United Reform Church: Rev. Janet Webber.

It is not possible in this short appreciation to summarise all that the leaders said, the best I can do is to pick out a few points in succession without attribution: Human experience of fatherhood and sonship give a pointer to the loving and caring of God as exemplified in the parable of the Prodigal Son. Where is heaven? It is where God is. But God is everywhere. Thus heaven is in the hearts of all who are seeking and are open to Him. To pray for the extension of God's Kingdom is a missionary activity, a prayer for all who preach the Gospel. In this connection we remember Our Lord's prayer for unity "*That they all may be one.*" It is not the unity that is important, but the purpose of that unity: "*That the world may know that it was You Who sent me.*"

"Give us this day our daily bread" is a threefold petition:

For our own needs and those of the hungry of the world.

For our spiritual food: "man does not live by bread alone".

For Jesus Christ Himself: "I am the bread of life".

From the Cross Jesus prayed "Father forgive them for they know not what they do." But what of those who did know what they were doing? What about Peter? What about Judas? At the moment of His betrayal, Jesus called the traitor "friend". Forgiveness was waiting for Judas if only he would repent. God forgives all because of what happened on the Cross. A basic condition of this forgiveness however, is that we forgive those who have offended us.

Jesus was completely human as we are and he was tempted, therefore we should not be ashamed of being tempted, but we should ask the Father for help to overcome temptation. God does not tempt anyone. Perhaps we should see "Lead us not into temptation" as "Let us not enter into temptation" (Give way to it).

Our thanks are due to Bishop Henderson and all the participants for a very rewarding and uplifting afternoon.

S. M. Ratcliff



## SUBSCRIPTION DUE? PLEASE RENEW

### CARDINAL HUME ON UNITY

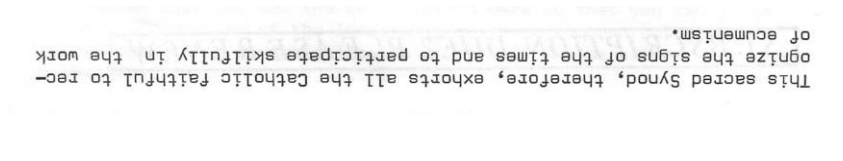
Included in Cardinal Hume's address on Evangelism to the National , conference of Priests in September, were his words on Christian Unity: "It is sometimes said that the ecumenical movement is not progressing as quickly as it should. I do not share this gloom. Progress is bound to be slow, for unless the Holy Spirit guides us along a different way, we have to proceed with caution and circumspection as humans tend to do when faced with matters of grave importance. We are concerned with abandoning ourselves to the truth of the Gospel, not with compromises and accommodations of doctrine. And "doctrine" does matter. That is why the work of the first Anglican/Roman Catholic International Commission, and now of the second, is so important. That is why I welcome, too, the agreed statement known, as the Lima text of 1982, produced by the World Council of Churches: an admirable document. The recently published document "Local Churches in Covenant" provides important guidelines for joint prayer, action and study. Slowly then and, I trust, surely, the churches are growing together, but there will be growing

pains. They are inevitable; indeed they are not undesirable if growth is to lead in God's good time to that full, visible, organic unity which is the aim of all ecumenical endeavour. To that aim the Catholic Church in England and Wales at every level must be committed.

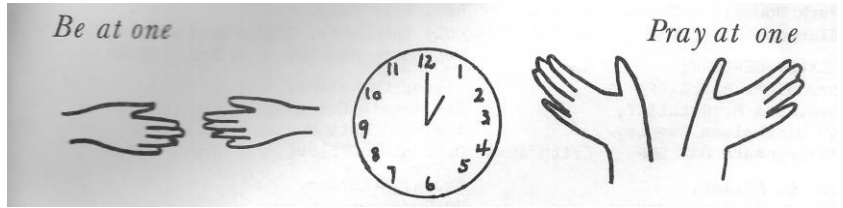
"Be a ferment of reconciliation. In the Gospel, reconciliation is lived here and now. At least once a week, undertake a small pilgrimage of reconciliation, either alone or with others. Or, seek to commit yourself in another way toward reconciliation. What counts most is being yeast in the dough, day after day, wherever you live, in your parish or congregation, in Church movements, or in communities.

(Letter from Taizé)

Answer to Page 9 puzzle:



**PRAYING TOGETHER IN CHRIST**



"Union with God in Christ Jesus through the Spirit is the heart of Christian koinonia" (communion)... Koinonia with one another is entailed by our koinonia with God in Christ. This is the mystery of the Church. (Introduction: ARCIC Final Report)

The sense of koinonia is heightened by awareness of universal celebration of the Mass or when the Prayer of the Church or other devotions are shared daily by so many Christians. With this in mind, we invite you, our readers (and anyone else too) to join together every



day in prayer for the fullness of unity which is the will of Christ, using His words:

MAY THEY ALL BE ONE.  
FATHER, MAY THEY BE ONE IN US,  
AS YOU ARE IN ME AND I AM IN YOU  
SO THAT THE WORLD MAY BELIEVE  
IT WAS YOU WHO SENT ME. (John 17:21)

If you can pray daily at ONE O'CLOCK (p.m. or a.m.!) this will link us more closely in heart and mind.

(It would be encouraging to hear from you that you are doing this. )



“May the God of peace make you perfect and holy;  
and may you all be kept safe and blameless,  
spirit, soul and body, for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.  
God has called you and He will not fail you.” (1 Thess.5:23)

