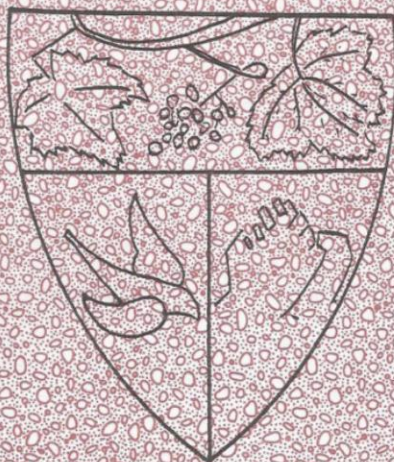


Together in Christ 60p



MAY THEY ALL BE ONE

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Material for publication and all correspondence to be sent to the Editor: Mrs Una Ratcliff.

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Officers of the Area Commissions:

The Rt Rev C J Henderson

S E Area:

Sister Eileen Hewlett (Chair) Mrs. Margaret Moloney (Sec)

S W Area;

Miss Celia Blackden (Chair) Miss Mary Hardy (Sec)

Kent Area:

Mrs Dorothy Morris (Chair) Sr Margaret Mary O'Grady (Sec)

EDITORIAL

"Fair seed time had my soul and I grew up
Fostered alike by beauty and by fear." (Wordsworth)

A new birth, a new beginning, an invention, a fresh discovery, usually excite wonder, gratitude, admiration, together with some reflections on the future. As it is said at the birth of John the Baptist: "What will this child turn out to be?" On a day of glorious sunshine, representatives of 19 churches, staff and Forum members, with a huge congregation gathered at St George's (Catholic) Cathedral at Southwark on September 1st, for the inauguration of one of the four new "ecumenical instruments" — Churches Together in England.

For England it was a completely new beginning; there has not been Council of Churches in England before, although Scotland and Wales have had such Councils. We might well wonder "What will this new venture turn out to be?"

The inaugural service, in which there was a deep sense of unity in prayer and worship and a deep sense of commitment by all present was surely a "fair seed time" for its infant awakening to life. Gratitude was in our hearts first and foremost, as we sang the opening hymn: "Now thank ye all our God! We all received a warm welcome from Archbishop Bowen and then united in prayers of thanksgiving with a rousing musical response of "Halleluia" and prayers of confession with a response of "Kyrie Eleison".

With reverence and solemnity, a Bible was placed on the altar by Rev Hugh Cross, and a candle placed on the altar by Rev Colin Davey. A moment to thank God for all the tremendous work these two ministers have done in the Inter-Church process and the inspiration they have given us.

Readings from the letter to the Ephesians were followed by a splendid address by the Archbishop of York, who took from those readings as starting point for his thought: "I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you therefore to lead a life worthy of your vocation". The word "therefore" was singled out for comment and reflection. It refers to what has gone before in the Epistle - to ail that God has given us. Therefore we respond as St Paul directs us. This was a "therefore" kind of day. We can thank God for all that he has done for us therefore we go forward today. The Archbishop reminded us of the low church attendance in this country, far lower than in Wales, Scotland or Ireland. What is wrong with us? (Something to explore there!) He also said that a high degree of commitment is needed for Churches Together in England to make progress.

Such commitment was expressed as representatives of the participating churches placed a candle on the altar, a sign of commitment to their pilgrimage of unity in faith and mission.

After a Youth delegate had read an extract from the Swanwick Declaration, the four members of the staff of Churches Together in England were prayerfully

commissioned: Canon Martin Reardon (Secretary), Rev Roger Nunn and Mrs Jenny Carpenter (Field Officers) and Miss Ceciley Hooff.

This was followed by the Our Father and the Not Strangers but Pilgrims prayer, after which the now commissioned staff led the act of commitment to which the whole congregation responded: "We will". This act of commitment was echoed in local churches in their celebrations the next day (see p.8)

After the inaugural service it was time for lunch. Many enjoyed their picnics in the nearby park. Forum members were most kindly and hospitably welcomed into local church for lunch, with an opportunity to meet each other or renew acquaintances. Coaches took us there and back, and we had the first meeting of the Forum in the Christchurch and Upton chapel, a meeting which was lively and showed an eager desire to suggest priorities for our future work.

Then back to the Cathedral for the celebration service - proclamation of the Word, beautiful music and hymns, short interviews, a procession of the Swanwick candle led by a Youth delegate; a symbolic dance expressing a coming into unity, appropriately followed by a general sign of peace.

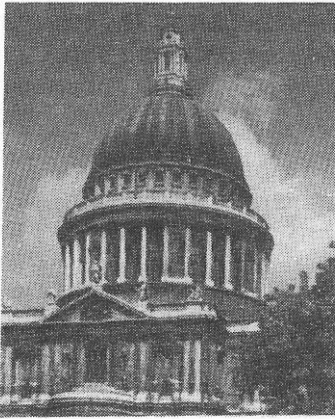
A day of splendour, when the glory of the Lord seemed to fill the Cathedral. A Cathedral of colour, with a huge red banner depicting Churches Together in England over the sanctuary, and the colourful ecclesiastical robes vividly pointing to the rich variety of traditions. A day of fervent prayer and dedication. A day of glorious music - how, for example, the joy and hope in Christ echoed throughout the singing of "Shine, Jesus, Shine"!

Such beauty, glory and praise were fitting accompaniments to the birth of Churches Together in England. (The Archbishop of York said he always was going to use its full title; we dare not do otherwise!) We hope and pray for the fair seed time to continue in beauty, though perhaps, like Wordsworth, we may find elements of fear arising. Yet St Paul reminds us: "I did the planting, Apollos did the watering, but God made things grow".

May God foster the growth of Churches Together in England, and also those in Scotland, Wales and the Council of Churches for Britain and Ireland, with his tender care and guidance, to give it an abundant harvest in the power of the love of his Holy Spirit.

Welcome back to Bishop Henderson. His initiative in arranging gatherings, Cardinal Hume's vision, much prayer, faith and work resulted in a packed St Paul's Cathedral. may other cities and areas do likewise! Welcome too, David Standley who vividly describes two special occasions, and adds his own perceptive and valuable comments. Mr Joe Farelli sent us a address to the ESBVM by Rev C Angeli- our first full-length article devoted entirely to our Lady. Churches Together in England and interesting unity events at Crayford and Bexley complete the issue. Our gratitude to all contributors. Keep the material flowing. God bless you all.

BRIEF BACKGROUND HISTORY TO ST PAUL'S CATHEDRAL SERVICE



The service of Prayer for unity, highlighting the unifying power of prayer and the inherent witness of such a gathering to Christ as Lord and Saviour, took place at St Paul's Cathedral on June 7th 1990. Expectation beforehand, excitement and joy during the prayer, and exhilaration afterwards was a beautiful experience which looked to the future with genuine hope. From the prayer and devoted work of many are growing fruits of unity among Christians from so many varied backgrounds and traditions.

Little did anyone realise four years ago, when the Inter-Church process of prayer, discussion and worship began, that the event of St Paul's would be possible. Highlighted in the process was the Swanwick Conference. The Churches represented there expressed their positive intention to move from simple cooperation and respect to a real commitment to work for full visible Communion.

Necessary to this continuing process was the need for supportive prayer acknowledging that only God could "give the increase". At the final session of the Swanwick Conference the Cardinal and I shared this need to have prayer accompanying the process at every step of the way. At our request this was briefly expressed in the rush of the moment by the Archbishop of York, who presided at the final Conference session.

Reporting to my Ecumenical Commissions on the spirit of Swanwick, the need to pray was mentioned as essential. With their help and encouragement, the group of representatives from the South East of England were invited to meet for prayer and friendship. The generous response and attendance was excellent at our first meeting at Church House in Waterloo. All those present voted to meet again the following Year, and one member suggested that the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster should be asked to join us and address us.

So our second annual get-together to pray took place in Archbishop's House, Westminster, at the kind invitation of His Eminence, who prayed with us and addressed us. In the course of his talk, he mused how wonderful a witness it would be if Christians could fill the Cathedrals of London to pray together for

unity and the needs of our Society. In this was conceived the kernel of our first effort at St Paul's on 7th June 1990.

Following the success of the Westminster meeting, it was decided to ask the Archbishop of Canterbury to pray with us and address us at our meeting in 1990. So at Dr Runcie's invitation, we met at Lambeth Palace and conducted a memorable prayer service and meeting in the 13th century chapel, during which the Archbishop of Canterbury addressed us. At the conclusion of our meeting, all 60 present received the hospitality of His Grace at a lovely reception.

The reception was a fitting social event to close our annual meetings, which, in view of the larger prayer gatherings at London's Cathedrals, we felt were flowering into greater things.

The 7th June at St Paul's marks the first time that all Church Leaders of London, North and South have gathered together in prayer for London and for unity. It has obviously struck a sympathetic note in the hearts of the Christians of London. Over 1,500 attended. So many people have made positive and encouraging comments and are enthusing about next year already!

May the Lord's will be done: may our prayerful cooperation continue year in, year out, so that "the world may believe".

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "+ Charles Henderson:". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'C' and 'H'.

(Chairman, Southwark Diocesan Christian Unity Commissions.)

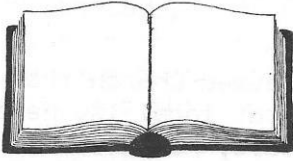
"Seek the welfare of the city and pray to the Lord on its behalf; for in its welfare you will find your welfare" (Jeremiah 29:v.7)

The theme of the service was "**Our City, Our Mission, Ourselves**"
Our mission is to seek the will of God - for the world - for our City - for ourselves.

It will be fulfilled - as we trust - as we pray - as we serve.

Recognising that we are all partners in the Gospel, we have committed ourselves to engage in this task together.

TWO INDUCTIONS



July 1990 saw two new ministers arrive in Bexleyheath; not the political ones (but see later), but ministers of the Gospel, pastors, leaders of the Christian community. The United Reformed Church (Geddes Place) welcomed the Reverend Stephen Taylor. Christ Church on the Broadway received their new vicar, Malcolm Gribble. As yet I hardly know them and look forward to meeting them properly in the near future. But I was pleased to be invited to their ceremonies of induction and found them instructive, both in comparison with each other and with our own Roman Catholic induction of a parish priest.

Stephen Taylor (Baker Stephen Bovington Taylor) comes from Texas, where he was a member of the Churches of Christ, which together with the Congregational Church and the Presbyterian Church form the constituent members of the United Reformed Church in England. As was carefully explained at the beginning of the ceremony, three local URC churches (Burnt Ash, Hither Green and Bexleyheath) were all looking for ministers at the same moment. Small congregations find it difficult to attract ministers, let alone pay them, so in the event they opted to share a single minister between them. They will remain independent congregations in the URC tradition, and they are well aware that it will take tact and generosity all round not to feel they are competing for their minister's attentions.

In the Catholic Church we are accustomed to wait for the local bishop to appoint a new parish priest, and make the best of him when he comes (or if he is too dire, take refuge elsewhere). But in the URC the local church has to advertise and attract its own minister, who is himself then subject to a certain vetting by the local congregation. They will want to interview the candidate, hear him/her preach, then decide whether or not to 'invite'. All very different. How would many of us Catholic priests stand up to such a scrutiny?

These three churches had survived quite well without a minister for months, even years in one case. Elders conduct the life and worship, making use of visiting ministers as and when available. I wonder how a Catholic parish would manage in similar circumstances, for the Eucharist is so central to our life and identity, and without a priest to celebrate for a protracted period the parish community might

break up, dispersing to other nearby parishes, at least in cities; yet in other countries through lack of priests communities do learn to survive with occasional Sunday masses - might we have to learn to do the same here for the same reasons?

At the ceremony in the Burnt Ash United Reformed Church the moderator of the URC Southern Province presided, but local lay people played a prominent part. A Declaration of the Nature, Faith and Order of the United Reformed Church was read out by a lay person, and all present were asked to reaffirm their faith and their promises:

Do you confess again your faith in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit?
WE DO.

Do you receive Baker Stephen Covington Taylor, as from God, to serve among you here, and with you in the world? WE DO.

Will you pray for him, and for each other, seeking together the will of God, and will you give him due honour, consideration and encouragement, building up one another in faith, hope and love? WE WILL, BY THE GRACE OF GOD.

For Stephen this was both ordination and induction. He spoke humbly and movingly about his own personal call to ministry, and of his determination to stay close and true to Christ. The moderator, other URC ministers and representatives of the three local URC churches together laid hands on Stephen at the moment of ordination. This took the form of a prayer for him in his ministry. It felt like a call to minister, rather than the sacramental conferring of Holy Orders through apostolic succession that we are used to in the Catholic Church.

In his address the Reverend Doctor Robert Saul made three points:

- there is only one ministry, the ministry of Christ, in which all Christians share;
- the ordained minister is there to remind the whole community of their own ministry in and to the world, to point them to it. His own ministry to them is meant to be a model of what their ministry to the world might be;
- the ministry of the whole community in and to the world is the sign and reality of the Kingdom of God.

A fine statement. Would most Catholics be happy with that as a description of the role of priest and people together?

At Christ Church it was rather different. Malcolm Gribble had been Vicar of the neighbouring parish of St Andrew, and now the Bishop of Rochester was asking him to move over to the most densely populated parish in the diocese. The huge church is situated along the main artery of bustling Bexleyheath, with all the hazards and opportunities that affords. So there was no ordination, but a grand induction in the presence of the Lord Bishop and the Lord

Mayor. This was Church and State together, not exactly holding hands, not exactly in confrontation. The Mayor said to Malcolm at one point: "We welcome you as a fellow citizen and as a partner in the service of our community." The Bishop chose to see this connection as a reminder that the Church is deeply concerned with the kind of society we are building; government, national and local, can expect priest and Christian people to support policies which manifest Gospel values, and to oppose those which do not. Here was the still-Established Church of England being cautious about the 'partnership' with civil authority, and repudiating any hint of subservience. All this was a useful reminder that the social and political implications of Christian faith and ministry are just as important as the quest for personal salvation. But I could not help wondering how far the congregation of Christ Church is a typical cross-section of the voting public, and would they agree about which Party policies embodied Gospel values, and which did not. But the questions would be the same for Catholic congregations too.

In the ceremony the Bishop instituted Malcolm Gribble into 'a share in our pastoral office', and 'to be a Priest and Pastor of this parish. Receive the cure of souls, a care which is both yours and mine.' It was the Archdeacon who inducted Malcolm into the temporalities of the Church and Benefice of Christ Church, Bexleyheath. The new vicar then went to the main door and tolled the church bell to signify to the congregation and to the parish at large (meaning, for the Church of England, all inhabitants within the parish) that a new stage in its life had begun. Bishop, priest, churchwardens and representative lay people then processed to significant places in the building. The lay person addressed Malcolm at each point:

At the font: "The waters of baptism are a sign of our new life in Christ. Be among us as one who helps us obey Christ's command to make disciples."

At the pulpit, handing him the bible: "This book is the most valuable thing that this world affords. Be among us as one who helps us to interpret the scriptures and joyfully to proclaim the Gospel of Christ."

At the sanctuary: "In the Holy Communion we celebrate Christ's death and resurrection. Be among us to preside at the breaking of the bread and the blessing of the cup, so that we may be renewed in Christ and strengthened for service in God's kingdom."

I need to go back to my own induction and re-read the words - for the main actor they can slip by in the drama of the moment. Yet 'leading actor' is perhaps precisely what none of us was at these different induction ceremonies. The Moderator/Bishop on the one hand, the people on the other, were the principal

actors, putting and receiving the priest/minister in place. We ministers receive authority for our role from the Church, whether in the particular tradition we are given it by the Bishop/moderator or by the people themselves. And we accept the publicly pledged support and welcome of the people we come to serve. In our turn we promise to preach the gospel, in season and out of season, not to seek popularity, but to encourage, to reconcile, at times to challenge, all in the name of Christ. At best there is a marvellous mutuality and partnership between priest/minister and people. But not always easy or comfortable. So help us God.

David Standley

RC Parish Priest of St John Vianney, Bexleyheath.

CHURCHES TOGETHER IN ENGLAND

Act Of Commitment

We commit ourselves, together with other

Christians in this place and community to:—



*hold the Christian faith and continue in the Apostles' teaching and fellowship;

*proclaim the Good News by word and deed, serving Christ in all people;

*work for justice and peace, honouring God in all he has made;

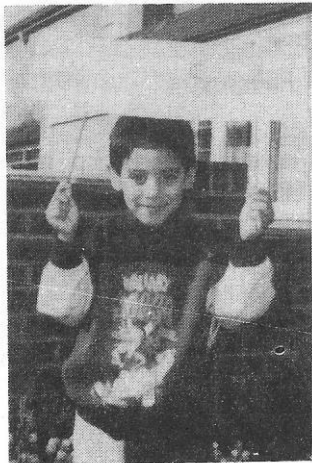
*pray and work for the unity of all Christian people.

As the seed grows secretly in the earth, as the yeast rises in the dough, may the power of God be at work in us.

May we be like a city set on a hill, like a lamp shining in the darkness. may we witness together with all Christians to the glory of God and fulfilment of his kingdom.

CHURCHES TOGETHER IN ENGLAND

Our local celebration



Peter

It so happens that we are lacking a branch of the 'Cherubim and Seraphim Council of Churches' in our local grouping, but a banner on their behalf was happily carried by young Peter D'Silva (aged 4}) in procession during our celebration of the launching of Churches Together in England which had taken place at St George's Cathedral on Saturday, September 1st, the day before our own celebration. At the other end of the scale, the banner for the Salvation Army was carried by a Salvationist in her wheelchair.

These were two of the 28 people who each carried a banner bearing the name of a Founding Member, or Body in Association, of Churches Together in England in procession to the sanctuary of our church.

This procession was led by the clergy and altar servers, and included the (non-banner carrying) the Worshipful the Mayor of the London Borough of Bexley, Councillor Graham Holland, the Mayoress (his wife) and a number of Councillors.

A member of our Liturgy Committee had designed and made an ingenious series of stands on which the banners could be displayed individually in the limited space available, and the presentation of the banners to the clergy and their installation in the stands marked the opening of our service of celebration, to which we were all given a warm welcome by our parish priest, Father Harry Reynolds.

After the welcome, a few words of introduction were given by a Forum member present at the inauguration of Churches Together in England on "What happened yesterday. She described it in the words of Psalm 126: "a marvel the Lord worked for us" and indeed, we were glad.

The mayor read the Gospel and led the Act of Commitment to support the call to unity included in the service (read by a delegate at Swanwick), and the prayers, scripture readings, meditations and intercessions were led by members of the

different churches in our community: the address was given by Rev. Raymond Hawthorne, Superintendent of the Shooters Hill Methodist Circuit. Towards the end of the service, 28 candles on the altar were lit, one for each of the bodies named on the banners.

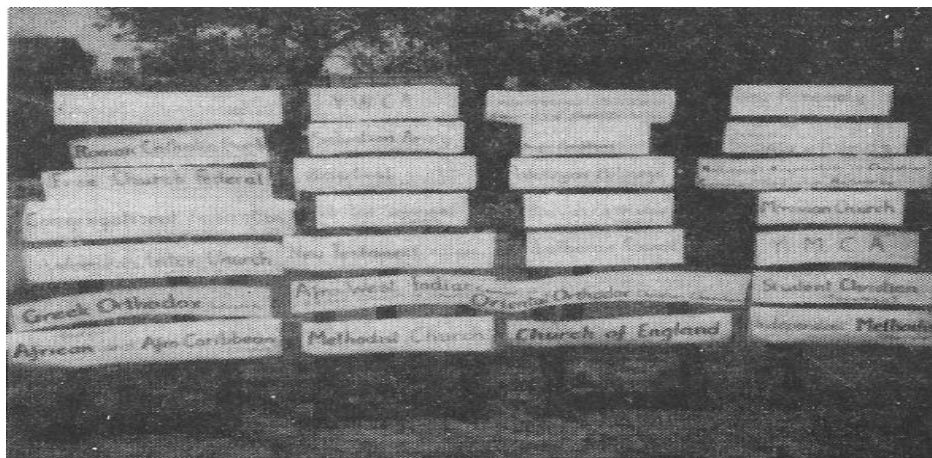
A special mention must be made of the choir (a number of whose members had also sung at the Cathedral the day before) who were magnificent, — music for the Responsorial Psalm was specially composed by one of its members. Hymns, traditional and modern, included "Thy Hand O God Has Guided" which reminded us of the inauguration service of the Inter-Church process "Not Strangers, but Pilgrims" in 1985, when that hymn was also sung.

Just prior to the final blessing, everyone was invited to approach the sanctuary to receive an individual blessing from the ministers and to receive a card incorporating a prayer for unity and the commitment they had undertaken to pray and work together for the proclamation of the Gospel and for the unity of all Christians.

After the service, banners were collected, and the procession reassembled, to lead the way, to the singing of "Bind Us Together", into the church hall for a renewal of that long-standing act of Christian unity already achieved - tea, cakes and chat!

If the events at St George's, Southwark on September 1st and at St Thomas More's, Bostall Park on the 2nd are any guide, Churches Together in England is off to a flying start!

S.M.R.



BEHOLD YOUR MOTHER (John 19:25-27)

(An address given to the Ecumenical Society of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the Jerusalem Chamber of Westminster Abbey on the 12th October 1989, by the Rev Charles Angell, S. A., M.A., S.T.D., associate professor of ecumenical theology of the Pontifical University of St. Thomas, the Angelicum, Rome.)



Commenting on the text of John 19:25-26 in which Jesus on the cross tells his beloved disciple John to regard Mary as his mother, the *Oxford Annotated Bible* observes this indicates the genuine humanity of Jesus and his concern for human values.¹ While that is certainly true, Roman Catholics have seen in the same text much more. The *Jerome Biblical Commentary*, for instance, contends that given the highly symbolic character of John's Gospel, we are entitled to see John representing us all.² Thus many Christians have used this text to indicate the spiritual motherhood of Mary and her continuing

role in the Church. I hope it will be helpful in an ecumenical setting to look carefully at this topic of Mary's motherhood of Christians as a means of seeing some of the underlying problems which in the past (and even today) have given rise to conflict.

While doing research for this paper, I was delighted and surprised to come across a book about Rosary meditations by Rev Neville Ward, a Methodist! Yet even so brave an ecumenical spirit as he was forced to observe: "The Virgin Mary's motherhood is a particular aspect of her being that will always have meanings for some Christians that will perplex others."³ One nourishes the hope that Methodist Ward would be comforted by the exhortation of Paul VI that "every care should be taken to avoid any exaggeration (of Marian piety) which could mislead other Christian brethren about the true doctrine of Catholic Church."⁴ And it is an important point indeed, because I believe that which most alarms those outside the Roman Catholic fold is not always official doctrine, but the popular practices of the pious, which seem to others a far cry from scriptural categories. The document I have just cited, *Mariialis Cultus*, is a rigorous critique of Marian devotional practice, and it points up the constant necessity to distinguish in ecumenical dialogue between the official positions of our churches what we might term their popular cultures.

All Christians are surely agreed that Mary must have a place in the Gospel proclamation. The German Bishops' new adult catechesis points out that modern

evangelical sources in that country affirm Mary's role as the one who hears the word of God and keeps it, and the seeming 'rebuke' of Luke 11 : 27-8 must surely be seen as rather a new definition of the spiritual motherhood we ascribe to Mary; it is based on her "Yes' to God, as Pope John Paul underlines in his Marian encyclical *Redemptoris Mater*.⁵ Echoing the German Evangelicals, he asks: "Is not Mary the first of those who hear the Word of God and do it?"⁶

Christians agree that the response of faith in each believer must be our response to the loving God coming out to us. In Mary we see that response pre-eminently verified; she is the example of that response. Cardinal Ratzinger says: "Mary, who took up the faith of Abraham and led it to its goal, is now the blessed one. She has become the mother of believers through whom all the generations of the earth obtain a blessing".⁷ *Lumen Gentium*(pp.54) put it: "She embraced the salvific will of God with her whole heart, unhindered by sin, herself wholly as handmaid of the Lord to the person and work of the son. Thus she was united with him and under him in the grace of the most high God to the mystery of the redemption. When Paul VI reflected on those truths he thought needed to be emphasized again to Catholics after the confusion of the years immediately following the Council, he included the following assertion: "We believe that the most Holy mother of God, the new Eve, the Mother of the Church carries on in heaven her maternal role with regard members of Christ, cooperating in the birth and development of the divine life in the souls of the redeemed".⁸

But wait a minute, I seem to hear someone say; it is one thing to say that Mary is a model for all of the faithful in her individual fiat of faith, but it is quite something else to ascribe to her motherhood a continuing role in the life of Christians. In other words, some would say that she is an historical example, and perhaps even a singular one, but does she also act in some way as a mother to us all? At the Council of Ephesus in 431 the Nestorians were willing to call her "mother of Christ", but not "mother of God". In affirming the later title, the Church not only affirmed the true humanity and true divinity of Jesus, thus rejecting Christological errors which would have made Jesus either just a nice man or a God who appeared -among us clothed in something less than a real human nature, but it also is the place where in the history of the Church and its developing proclamation of the full Gospel tradition we find a clear statement that Mary is the mother of the whole Christ, Head and members, thus leading to the modern title, used by Vatican II, "Mother of the Church".

The spiritual motherhood of Mary thus follows from the Pauline conception of the mystical Body of Christ, and it is for this reason that Pope Paul VI observed: "Knowledge of the true Catholic doctrine concerning the Blessed Virgin Mary will always be a key to the exact understanding of the mystery of Christ and of the Church".⁹ catholic to I would like therefore to suggest that perhaps in back in

some of the disputes, about Mary, in the history of the Church lay problems about the nature of the Church itself.

The motherhood of Mary, solemnly confirmed by the Council of Ephesus teaches that Mary is the mother of God (Theotokos) since by the power of the Holy Spirit she conceived in her virginal womb and brought forth into the world Jesus Christ, the son of God, who is one in being with the Father. (DS 250-264)

What *Lumen Gentium* means is that since we are united to Christ in baptism in the Church, and since Mary is Mother of Christ who is God and Head of the Church, we His members share in that filial relationship to her in a spiritual way. Christ is one of us. "Mary, as the Mother of Christ, is in a particular way united with the Church, which the Lord established as His own body". (LG 52) Just as one cannot speak of the reality of the Incarnation without Mary, so one cannot speak of the Church, the mystical Body of Christ without Mary. The present Pope speaks of Mary going before us, the members of the Church, in our journey of faith. She, the woman of faith, goes before the faithful in ecclesial journey of faith.¹⁰

This journey of faith, stemming from her fiat at Nazareth, constitutes Mary in the divine plan of salvation as the sign placed among us of the eschatological fulfilment of the Church. (LG 65) Translated out of theological language, this means that Mary shows us in her pilgrimage-response of faith what it means to be a member of the Church. "In the most holy Virgin the Church has already reached that perfection whereby she exists without spot or wrinkle (cf. Eph 5: 27)" John Paul II explains it this way: "The pilgrimage of faith no longer belongs to the mother of the Son of God; glorified at the side of her Son in heaven, Mary has already crossed the threshold between faith and that vision which is "face to face" (1Cor 13:12.) At the same time, however, in this eschatological fulfilment, Mary does not cease to be the "Star of the Sea" (*Maris Stella*) for all those who are still on the journey of faith. If they lift their eyes from their earthly existence, they do so because 'the Son whom she brought forth is he whom God placed as the first-born among many brethren' (Rom 8:29) and also because 'in birth and development of these brothers and sisters she cooperates with a maternal love'.

I would like to pause and contrast this genre of expression with the Anglican, A. M. Allchin. Writing on *The place of Mary in the life of the Christian*, he says: "The lives of all of us begin in the body of our mother. We are related to that piece of the material world in a way in which we are related to no other place. When reflect on facts like these in relation to the human development of Jesus, we begin to see more of the hidden reasons for the tradition of devotion to his mother. As a former Archbishop of Canterbury says about the way in which Jesus learnt to

pray, so we watch mother and Son at prayer and in doing so we tread on holy ground.¹²

I have cited this Anglican source to indicate that while Marian devotion in its general theological outlines has a place among them, I think it would be fair to say that the kind of specification I have cited from Roman Catholic sources might find a cool response among many members of that Communion. There is obviously a contrast of style of language in this citation, perhaps expressing well the ethos of Anglicanism. We always have to take account of diverse ecclesial cultures when engaged in ecumenical dialogue. But one is left with the impression from the Roman Catholic side that perhaps the Mario-logical theologizing we have offered is a bit rich for the taste of some outside the Roman Catholic tradition. Since the dialogue is the exchange of self-definition, let me offer some further analysis of Roman Catholic conceptions concerning the motherhood of Mary and the Church.

The virginal motherhood of Mary is the starting point and foundation of all other assertions about her. Anything we say about her and her role follows from that closeness to Jesus as his mother. The various so-called Marian dogmas like the Immaculate Conception and the Assumption are seen to flow from this foundation, not with necessary logical deduction, but with a well founded development. Like us she is redeemed by Christ, but in a singular manner preserved from original fault in view of the merits of Jesus Christ our only Saviour.¹³ How did the Roman Catholic Church come to define such a proposition, to the great scandal of the Protestant world of the last century? Surely, couldn't we have let well alone and not added to the ecumenical burden we all carry? To give an insight into the development of Mario-logical statements as a reflection of how the Roman Catholic Church views itself and the development of doctrine, I would like to offer a rather lengthy excerpt from the work magisterium by my friend, Fr Francis Sullivan, S. J. of the Gregorian University in Rome:

"it is already explicit in the New Testament that her role was not one of purely biological maternity. (cf. Luke's account of the Incarnation and John's account of what happened on Calvary). As devout Christians continued to contemplate the mystery of Christ and of his mother, they came to see, for instance, that since the Son of Mary is truly divine, it is correct to speak of her as "Mother of God". Further contemplation led them to see more of the consequences which such a relationship must entailed for the mother who shared so intimately in the mystery of her Son. It led to the realisation that, having been so closely associated with her Son in his incarnation and passion, she must also share in a unique way in the fruits of his death and resurrection. And so, over the course of the centuries, the conviction grew that Mary could never have been alienated from God by original sin, and that she must already share, body and soul in the glory of the resurrection which is his. Admittedly, these conclusions do not

follow with metaphysical necessity from what Scripture tells us about Mary. They are seen to be contained in the total mystery of Christ, by a kind of intuition rather than by a process of logical deduction. As contained in this total mystery, they are believed not only to be true, but to be revealed, since it is the whole Christ event which is God's word to man."¹⁴

Who is to Judge that these "contemplations" are true? Here again, we see the necessity to understand the Roman Catholic conception of the Church to understand her Mario logical assertions. *Lumen Gentium 12* says: "The body of the faithful as a whole, anointed as they are by the Holy One (1 Jn 2:20,27) cannot err in matters of belief. Thanks to a supernatural sense of the faith which characterizes the People as a whole, it manifests this unerring quality when, "from the bishops down to the last member of the laity", it shows universal agreement in matters of faith and morals. For by this faith which is aroused and sustained by the Spirit of truth, God's People accepts not the word of men but the very word of God (1Thess 2:13). It clings without fail to the faith once delivered to the saints (Jude 3), penetrates it more more deeply by accurate insights, and applies it more thoroughly to life."

This very important passage of Vatican II documents enables us to understand the process of the development of doctrine within the Church. But we must go further in those documents to understand that it is the role of the Magisterium to discern and define this sense of what is apostolic doctrine and its consequences for the faithful. Thus both Pius IX for the declaration of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception and Pius XII for the Assumption asked the bishops throughout the world if these were in fact believed by the faithful of their respective local churches to be true and worthy of being defined. The solid affirmations of the bishops preceded the papal declarations, and in this manner, even though not assembled physically in one hall as in an ecumenical council (symbolically the most fitting setting for such a declaration) they, as successors of the apostles in the leadership of local churches could discern and declare the faith held by their people. (Note, in Roman Catholic ecclesiology, the bishops of the world cannot err when united with and under the leadership of the Bishop of Rome, they make a declaration concerning faith and morals, just as the Pope, Successor of St. Peter, the leader of the Apostolic College, can in case of need make a similar infallible declaration in the name of the bishops and their faithful.

A few important disavowals here are needed. Neither the Pope, all the bishops or the faithful, even though endowed with "infallibility" under certain very closely defined circumstances, can add to the faith delivered by the Apostles to the Church, even though the "contemplation" of the apostolic faith by the faithful can lead to a deeper understanding of that faith. What has been and is

believed by the Church is our basis here, not some open-ended possibility of whatever might be invented in the future. We seek, as Christians, whatever our church, to profess the full apostolic faith taught by the Church in every age to all peoples through the power of the Holy Spirit.

i hope it will be recalled here that I have stressed the theme of the solidarity of Christ and the members of the Church, thus leading one to an understanding of the Communion of the Saints. Originally this term referred to the sharing in holy things, especially the Eucharist. By extension this sharing in the eucharistic communion was extended to the bonds which unite all of us, living and dead, with Christ our Head. Just as we pray for each other during life, so the faithful departed are not separated from this communion by death. We can pray for them (the souls yet in purgation awaiting entrance into final glory) and they can and do pray for us. After what we have said about the closeness of Mary to Jesus, is not her intercession before her Son that which we should seek above all others? Yet recalling what was said about Mary as a creature whose every role must be subordinated to that of Christ, we must see her intercession as her sharing in the work of redemption, as a finite, creature participation through grace in the work of Christ which, by its nature, is all sufficient. If Paul can say in *Col 1:24* (RSV): "Now, I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I complete what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church ...", why can we not speak of Mary who followed Jesus to the cross in the same manner without detracting in any way from the one, all sufficient, historically unrepeatable sacrifice of Christ, and as ARCIC I does in consideration of the Eucharist speak of our "entering into the movement of his self-offering?"

Just as I have reservations about the term co-redemptrix because it could easily be misunderstood (like infallibility, and many other of our Roman Catholic terms), so I would caution that when we speak of Mary's intercession in her role of spiritual motherhood of Christians, we speak only analogously of participation in the intercession of Christ before the Father.

Just as Mary was concerned at Calvary not only for the physical condition of her Son but entered by compassion into his saving work, so she continues to be concerned for those called to the journey of faith to the Father by the grace of the Holy Spirit through the reconciliation of her Son. As all the saints in heaven do, she prays for us. What makes her concern so special becomes understandable only when we see the Church as a personal communion in grace - a personal relationship with God the Father through Christ in the Holy Spirit and with each other. By God's plan, Mary, the example of our fiat of faith, the one in whom we see the Christian's response to the Saviour, continues her mothering to the

mystical Body of her Son, always as a creature, always with, in and through Christ her Son, our only saviour and mediator.

NOTES:

1. The Oxford Annotated Bible with Apocrypha, RSV, Oxford University Press
2. The Jerome Biblical Commentary Raymond E. Brown et al
3. Five for Sorrow, Ten for Joy: a Consideration of the Rosary, J Neville Ward,
4. To Honour Mary; Apostolic Exhortation Marialis Cultus, Pope Paul VI,
5. The Church's Confession of Faith, Originally Published by the German Bishop's Conference.
6. Redemptoris Mater, Pope John Paul II, On Mary, the pattern of the Church's yes to God, see Lumen Gentium (Decree on the Church in Vatican Council II; the Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents, Austin Flannery, O P,
7. Cardinal Ratzinger, Communio, XVI/1 .
8. Pope Paul VI, Credo of the People of God.
9. Pope Paul VI, Discourse of 21 Nov (1964).
10. Pope John Paul II, Redemptoris Mater,
11. *ibid*, p 12—13, pp 6, The single quotes refer to citations from Lumen Gentium
12. The Joy of Creation: An Anglican Meditation on the Place of Mary, A M Allchin
13. Pope Pius IX: Declaration of the Dogma of the Immaculate Conception, DB
14. Magisterium: Teaching Authority in the Catholic Church, Francis A Sullivan, S J.
15. ARCIC 1 Final Report.

In the general preparation of this paper I am indebted to the article on "Mariology" by Michael Schmaus in *Sacramentum mundi*

CRAYFORD CHURCHES IN COVENANT

It has been a full year here in Crayford. On Wednesday in HolyWeek, 80 members of the covenanting churches (RC, Anglican, Methodist) and 10 Baptists were joined by Bishop Henderson for a candlelight service of the Passover Meal which was a fitting start for the Walk of Witness and re-enactment of the Passion on Good Friday.

On June 8th, 20 people from the covenanting churches went to StGabriel's Conference and Retreat Centre, Westgate, for a week end of prayer and discussion with the theme of "Pilgrims Together". One of the fruits of our time together has boon the setting up of a small prayer group.

The children too have been busy. 90 "scarecrows" with some parents and helpers spent four days working, playing and praying together at the end of August. As the new academic year begins, we welcome new Anglican, Methodist and Baptist ministers to Crayford, and we pray that God will bless them.

Win Threlfall.

