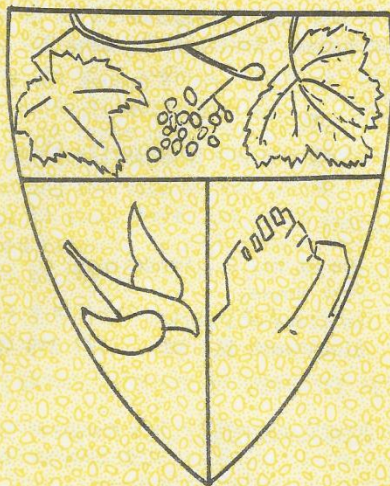


Together in Christ

60p



MAY THEY ALL BE ONE

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EDITORIAL

"Small is beautiful", they say. This editorial is certainly shorter than usual, and the beauty of it is that so many other contributions have come in that space is very limited! We offer our warm thanks and appreciation to all contributors, with a special welcome to those new to our pages - Mrs Kate Moir, John Wilkinson and Dr Ian Netton.

God's beauty shines through all our work for unity; many aspects of which are presented in this issue - the beauty of His healing touch and reconciliation; His beauty in our churches and acts of worship; His beauty working through minds grappling with an Ecumenical Directory establishing an ecumenical centre, recognizing the value of theological reflection, presenting the task of evangelism, in ecumenical encounters, in racial justice, in study days. Let us be open to recognize the wonder of God's beauty and presence in each person, for every act of creation is a manifestation of His beauty and unifying love.

CATHOLIC/METHODIST COMMITTEE MEETING

In the February issue of *Together in Christ* I wrote about the recent Report of the International Roman Catholic/ Methodist Committee on The Apostolic Tradition. I also referred to the work of the English national Committee which supports this dialogue.

We have just had our annual residential meeting, from teatime on Monday, May 11th, to the early afternoon of Tuesday, 12th. We met at the Convent of Marie Reparatrice in Wimbledon, a venue well-known to everyone In the S.W. Area of the Archdiocese.

We met under the chairmanship of Bishop Charles Henderson and the veteran Methodist scholar, Rev. A. Raymond George, who is also Warden of the New Room, Wesley's chapel in Bristol and the oldest Methodist church In the world. It was Bishop Charles' last meeting with us, since he is relinquishing some of his ecumenical duties in order to concentrate on his new responsibilities in Catholic / Jewish dialogue. The meeting extended its thanks and heartfelt best wishes to him; Bishop Charles has ever shown himself a great friend of Methodism as well as a devoted servant of the Catholic Church; his warmth and friendship will be greatly missed.

Four main sessions took place. In the first, I spoke to a paper I had prepared on "Reception" (a topic on which I also wrote an article for this magazine) and Mgr.

Martin Molyneux and others responded, work in reception has been greatly stimulated by the recent Report on the Apostolic Tradition. Later that evening, we also had an update on the International dialogue from our two current representatives on it - Rev. Michael Richards (Catholic) and Rev. David Butler (Methodist). The International Commission will meet in October to plan its priorities for the future.

On the Tuesday morning, we had two extremely interesting papers. The first, by Dr. Margaret Harvey, a Catholic historian and lecturer at Durham University, dealt with the question of how we should use Church history. She pointed out that, in the past, church history had often been written as propaganda, to try and prove that one side or another in a conflict was right and that partisan history often conceals how complex things actually were. She took as an example the 11th century reform of the Church, which tightened discipline and ended some abuses in the church, but which can also be seen as 'over-centralising' it. Developments are usually complex, there are usually losses and gains; we shouldn't assume that in past periods things were 'better' or 'worse' than now. We decided that Dr. Harvey had raised some key questions and Marion Morgan talked of the possibility of assembling a short book of members contributions on this theme.

Rev. Robin Hutt, a Methodist minister from Liverpool, whose brother is a priest in the Archdiocese of Birmingham, read a paper on the "Fall." We struggled with different ways of looking at 'original' sin and how we are to understand human estrangement from God and how we can overcome it in us.

In our desire to think creatively, we don't ignore practicalities. Mrs. Gilian Walsh, a Methodist laywoman, spoke to us about Inter-church Families Association and once again we talked over some of the problems faced by such families.

A Methodist Eucharist was celebrated on the Monday evening and a Mass on the Tuesday morning. members of both groups shared in parts at the services; we experienced again the joy of partial communion and also the pain of separation at the climax of the services. So close, so tragically separated; that was how I felt; so close because the actual words and framework of the services are so similar, and it is the one Lord whose saving work we celebrate and the one Lord whom we receive in communion; yet so separate because we still cannot share at the altar. we can and do rejoice in what Wesley calls 'sure and certain hope' that one day things will be different, and we are grateful for being allowed to play a small part in that process. We commend our work to your prayerful support.

David Carter

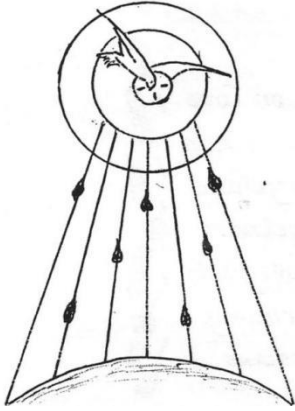
DICTIONARY OF THE ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT

Ed. by Nicholas Lossky, José Míguez Bonino, John Pobee, Tom Stransky, Geoffrey Wainwright and Pauline Webb

In his "Preface" to this superb and invaluable reference work, Emilio Castro, General Secretary of the World Council of Churches writes "It may... be seen as a kind of parable of ecumenism". His remark reflects not only the diverge religious of the distinguished editors and editorial board but the ironic spirit of so many contributors. Castro goes on: "Writers and editors from a wide range of contexts and Christian traditions - chosen for their familiarity with how the 20th century ecumenical movement has unfolded and for their engagement in the diversity of issues on the agenda of the churches as they grow together towards unity - have worked together to create a resource whose scope and usefulness go far beyond what any individual could produce". And as the "Introduction" points out: "Future historians will almost certainly regard the ecumenical movement as one of the remarkable features of Christianity in the 20th century". Such a movement requires a guide and, moreover, a friendly, gentle and scholarly guide, familiar with the hazards and pitfalls, as well as the joys of the journey. This *Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement* is that guide. With over 600 alphabetically arranged entries, there are few matters of significance that are absent here. Of course, everyone can play the 'What's missing game'. So: there is an article on Sexism but not on Ageism. And with a constantly developing art ('science'?) like ecumenism, it is inevitable that the omissions will grow. Thus the article Roman Catholic Dialogue was written and printed before the formal Roman Catholic response. But while time will continue to render incomplete, or even outdated, some of the Encyclopaedia or Dictionary, most will survive both to inform and inspire. The entry on *Justification*, for example, (pp. 560-553) is a moral entry, both in terms of illustrating the general structure of the Dictionary's longer entries (main text with sub-headings, cross-references and concluding bibliography) and in demonstrating what a good synopsis of a difficult subject should look like anyway. (Even this entry will require "completion" if the work of ARCIC II is ever brought to a mutually satisfactory final conclusion.) After a general introductory paragraph, the entry looks at the Biblical origin of justification and follows this logically, with a survey of patristic usage. The important 16th century controversies are then surveyed before an examination of recent history. The author writes with authority, sympathy and hope. Indeed, these three words may be regarded as three of the key points which infuse and inspire the whole of this magisterial undertaking. Despite its somewhat expensive price, this a work which should be on the bookshelf of every churchman and layman. major libraries will buy it as a matter of course.

Ian Richard Netton.

THE HEALING MINISTRY



I have been involved in the Healing Ministry more than ten years. I began my healing work at the Catholic church in Chessington, and then moved to Tolworth where I now have an Ecumenical Ministry consisting of Anglicans, Catholics, Muslims and others of no particular religion. The Ministry at Tolworth is an individual ministry where those in need of help can come on a one-to-one basis. These are people who have problems which they wish to discuss privately. or who will perhaps not go to a group healing for they feel that it is not personal enough. Sometimes there are many tears and

upsets; this sort of ministry suits them best. The other ministry I work with is the Charismatic Renewal based at Westminster Cathedral, organised by Father Benedict Heron and Father Norman Brown. This is a group healing, and is made up of clergy and laity. A number of the lay people are consultants from London hospitals. Sometimes we work in pairs, at other times on our own. This again is an ecumenical group. Many of our visitors come from other cultures and religions. We have a very large West Indian and Irish following. We often have Japanese and Chinese visitors as well as other nationalities from all over the world come for healing while they are in London. At this ministry we often have the homeless, many of whom sleep near the Cathedral. Many of the homeless come in just to sit in the warm, and they often take part in the Service. I'm sure they benefit from joining in.

Throughout the ages great saints and teachers have taught healing and the ability to heal. The greatest of these was the master, Jesus. In the darkness of our world today, healing is needed more than ever. If we stop to think, there is so much more we can do to improve ourselves and our health by accepting more self-responsibility. We are not just the physical beings into which so many of us have developed through our total involvement in material things, we are threefold beings, made up of body, mind and spirit. But the mind has lost Its way in so many instances, and wanders aimlessly into such a dense undergrowth of materialism that it becomes lost and confused and unable to orientate itself. The spirit, too, has become suppressed over the years of adult life that in many cases existence is completely forgotten. Yet it is this spiritual part of us that is the real Immortal us. Within each of us is the Divine Spark which gives us our being, linking us with all forms of life and with the source of creation. This Inner self is a

vital source of peaceful, calming energy, always there for us to draw on. Yet so many have isolated themselves by a hard crust of materialism.

Inner Peace and the Spirit

In the world we live in today it is almost impossible for any of us to find complete peace. There is too much darkness and Fear. Fear of illness, fear of death, of a lack of money, of relationships and so on; the list is endless. But with prayer and fasting we can learn to control our problems and so become better able to cope with them. I believe that the Earth is a school of learning, and that if we can follow the tide of life, accepting all its sorrows and joys, rather than working against them, we would survive.

In healing I ask those who come to me to try to contact the inner source, the spirit, through meditation. Meditation, therefore, is the act of entering into the stillness of one's being, into the stillness of the creative source of all life. It requires no conscious effort. There is no need for long periods of ritualistic techniques or chanting. It is an automatic function of our being, to withdraw into the stillness of our being. Silence. "Be still and know that I am God". We can meditate at any time of day, no matter whether we are walking in the garden, sitting in a bus or in a church, or walking in the countryside. When we meditate we become one with the Source of Life, uniting ourselves with the Universal mind. Many people prefer to use the bedroom for meditation where they can lie down with eyes closed, invoking the Holy Spirit. Great peace seems to come from this, and, because of the relaxation, blood pressure is considerably reduced, bringing on a personal calmness. Twenty minutes to half an hour is long enough. I have heard of people who had dreadful migraines which disappeared after resting in this way, A healing had taken place. The majority of humanity has forgotten how to rest the body, mind and spirit. As we look around at the endless television, the traffic noises, the noise of people, the overeating and over-drinking, is it any wonder that people are now trying to find an alternative way to achieve inner peace?

Healing and the Spirit

With spiritual healing we are dealing with a form of energy which to date has defied scientific measurement on any instrument. There are now considered to be magnetic energy fields around the body. But these are not responsible for bringing about the exceptional chemical and physical changes which are manifest through the spiritual source, and which often take place in the space of only a few minutes. Such changes come within the total laws of nature, but not necessarily on the physical level. Medical science, concerned as it is with the physical body, cannot always meet the full needs of the patient. There is, and always will be, a spiritual need. Healing should be holistic, treating the spiritual as well as the physical being. It is the combining of these two pathways that should concern the people

who are using God's healing power for the overall well-being of the person seeking healing. There can be little doubt that many forms of energy remain yet to be discovered by man. Research into the psychic and spiritual levels of existence has disclosed much evidence of this. The facts of a tumour being dispersed under the hands a healer, calcified joints being restored to normal mobility, of misplaced discs without physical manipulation on the part of the healer, all point to the existence of a great superior power, the power of God. Doctors who have witnessed such healings are agreed that they cannot be explained by orthodox medical theory. Since 1959 people involved in the healing ministry have been admitted into one thousand five hundred National Health hospitals to cooperate in the healing of the sick. In one Anglican church in London. the healer works alongside the NHS doctors. If a doctor feels that a patient needs healing, the patient will be transferred to the healer.

Here I would like to say that everyone is helped but not everyone is cured. As I said before, the Earth is a place of learning and suffering. Sometimes we need to suffer to become better people. Sometimes we need to suffer to become aware of other people's needs, not our own. Many find Christ in their sufferings. The pattern of healing has changed over the past ten years. When I first began to pray with people, more often than not it would be for bad backs, headaches, cancer, women's problems, broken marriages; in other words, mainly physical problems. Now mental and stress-related difficulties predominate, with cancer taking second place. Fear is the most common basic problem.

Although God's power can work wonders, the people looking for healing must also be ready to help themselves. An alcoholic once came to us for healing. After six weeks he was cured of his dependence on alcohol. But then he became hooked on drinking twenty-five cups of coffee a day, He was an obsessive drinker. On arrival at healing he would at once go into the kitchen to make himself a cup of coffee. This is a classic example of someone who must help himself. I know and he knows that he receives healing. But he must exercise the power of his will in order to defeat his addiction. There are many such examples. What should be taught in the healing ministry is the power of the positive thought and the power of prayer. Nowadays it is difficult to be positive because there is so much darkness. But even people with very severe, or terminal, illnesses, often find a positive side which enables them to accept their condition, whatever it may be. And it is astonishing how many who come to healing return to their faith after an absence of years.

Who comes to Healing?

Members of all religions, including Muslims and members of the Spiritualist church, people from all walks of life, many with no religion at all come to healing,

all with one thing In common, to get well. For example, people who work with the very negative elements in society, people such as social workers and police. Very often the frequency of the crimes and abuses with which they have to deal has a damaging effect on them, particularly in the area of stress. In many aspects of the lives of Christian families, healing is required. The problems of drugs, child abuse, sex abuse and alcoholism, and, of course the break-up of marriages, are all too common. Getting the members of the family to pray together, wherever possible, is most helpful and rewarding. People who work in business and politics frequently come for healing. I always find more stress among these people than among any others. Very often boardroom politics lead to jobs disappearing overnight. Impossibly long hours, including working through the night, to complete promised contracts or to pass important bills, demoralize the people concerned and cause great stress, both at home and at work. Healing can do, and has done, so much for such people. Many members of the medical profession come for healing and, indeed practice healing themselves. A surgeon who had suffered a stroke and was subsequently unable to operate came for healing. To begin with he was quite anti-healing and rather bitter at what had happened to him. After he had prayed with us on several occasions he came and said: "I only ever believed in the healing for which I was trained, but I now know that there is another source which I do not understand. But whatever it is, it has made me less bitter and I have come to terms with my life and my illness."

This source of healing is available to all of us. Jesus once said: "Ask and you shall receive, seek and you shall find, knock and it will be opened to you." Sadly, most of us have forgotten how to tune into this source.

The Risks of Healing

Many jump on to the healing bandwagon. The question I always ask is: "Are you healing with a true inner desire to help your fellow human beings and to further the divine source? or are you trying to heal for self-gratification or gain?" If it is done for self, then it will not succeed. The divine healing power will be greatly impeded. No one will benefit. But by healing with love and compassion and by reaching out to those in need, we are doing our Creator's will and will be rewarded abundantly, not with material gain, but with spiritual love.

Sometimes fear is associated with healing. Some people suffering from headaches or nervous trouble have been told that there are dark forces at work in them, or that their previous life-styles are to blame for their present illness. If the healer is Christ-centred he will generate peace at all times, never fear. No one can tell another how to heal; that is individual to the person. But healers should be trained in how to use the power, and how not to provoke fear, but to use wisdom. I feel

that a healing commission, or guide-lines on healing, would be helpful in this district.

Anyone involved in healing must protect themselves by prayer and fasting, especially if they are dealing with the occult. There is, and always has been, a darker side of life. At times that darker side manifests itself in people, for example in obsession and in possession. Obsession, with such things as drugs, sex, witchcraft and alcohol, is the more common. But on very rare occasions there have been instances of bodies being apparently taken over by evil spirits. In ten years of healing I myself have only met this once. A young lady needed deliverance, and a Catholic priest, an Anglican minister and I prayed with her for an hour. Thank God, we do not often meet this problem in our work.

We are all here to serve God in one way or another. Healing is part of that service. As a healer once said many centuries ago: "As I am happy to serve you, so may you be happy to serve others as I serve you, expecting no reward. may you grow to understand that the path to God lies in service, and that, as you uplift the least one of your brothers or sisters, you are uplifting God himself. To this end, may your motto each day always be: 'Service with compassion and a smile'."

Kate Moir.



Cost is only £2.50 for 1 copy (3 issues) including postage. Other rates on renewal forms. So keep your treasurer happy now! Thank you all.



CHURCHES COMMISSION FOR RACIAL JUSTICE

The member churches of the Council of Churches for Britain and Ireland to which the Roman Catholic Church belongs, have decided to establish a Churches Commission for Racial Justice (CCRJ). The CCRJ will enable the churches to engage effectively in the struggle for racial justice in co-operation with others involved in that struggle.

The task will now be to encourage race relations work within the member churches and co-ordinate those efforts.

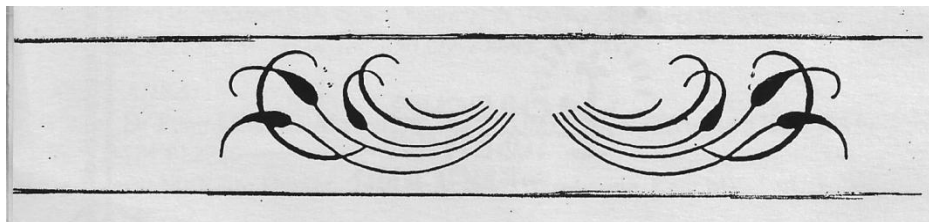
The Commission will relate to the churches directly through:

- (i) those appointed to the Commission by the member churches,
- (ii) reporting to the Church Representatives Meeting (CRM),
- (iii) the attendance of the moderator of the Commission at the CRM, and
- (iv) a co-ordinating secretary bringing together the race relations work within the member churches.

Membership of the Commission will be up to 25 members of whom 20 be appointed by the churches, the remainder by the CRM. It is anticipated that full and part-time staff of the member churches engaged on racial justice work will be part of the Commission. A Projects Fund that assists with grass roots development will continue and be the responsibility of the Commission.

The Catholic' Association for Racial Justice looks forward to the success of the CCRJ when it commences work on 1st September 1992.

(Thanks to Anthony Lobo, KSG of the Catholic Association for Racial Justice for sending this information. -Ed.)



THE ANGLICAN CENTRE IN ROME

For over 25 years now the Anglican Centre in Rome has been an effective instrument strengthening relationships between the Roman Catholic Church and the Anglican Communion. As we pray that Dr Carey's visit to Pope John Paul II in Rome will continue to bear fruit in greater understanding of one another's Churches, *Together in Christ* looks at the background to the Centre and to its future.

Even before the Second Vatican Council opened in 1962, Archbishops of Canterbury, first Archbishop Fisher and later Archbishop Ramsey, had a personal representative in Rome. This itself was unique and unprecedented. There was also a long standing Anglican presence in the form of the two Anglican churches, All Saints' and St Paul's. These ministered mainly to expatriate Anglicans from many nations.

The idea of a Centre

The Centre was established both as a result of and in response to the Second Vatican Council. The Archbishop of Canterbury had been the first world Christian leader to accept the invitation of Pope John XXIII to send observers to the Council. Among the Anglican observers were bishops and priests from Jerusalem, Canada, Sri Lanka, USA, India and the UK. As the Council progressed the Anglican observers and the authorities in the several Anglican provinces they came from, became increasingly convinced that after the Council there would be many new developments in relations between Rome and Canterbury. A continuing Anglican presence in the city was required.

The idea of a Centre, inspired initially by Bishop Moorman (Senior Anglican Observer at the Council) was firmly backed by Archbishop Michael Ramsey. The Centre would be the residence of a continuing representative of the Archbishop of Canterbury and of the other Anglican Primates. The Primates wholeheartedly supported the establishment of the Centre when they met in Jerusalem in 1966. The Centre would also be a source of serious and scholarly information about matters Anglican.

When Dr Ramsey visited Pope Paul VI in the Vatican in March 1966 he opened the Centre which is located in the Palazzo Daria Pamphilij in the heart of the historical centre of Rome, in reasonable walking distance from the Vatican and many major institutions. The Centre owes much to the Doria Parphiiij family who have supported the venture from the outset.

The role of the Centre

The resident Director represents the Anglican Communion in Rome. The Anglican Communion is composed of 28 autonomous provinces, and there are an estimated 74 million Anglicans in 164 countries. The See of Canterbury acts as a reference point for the whole Communion.

The Centre's first Director was Canon John Findlow. He was followed by Dr. Harry Smythe and then Professor Howard Root who, together with his wife Celia, further developed and extended its work and effectiveness. Last September a new Director arrived. He is the Reverend Douglas Brown, an Australian who belongs to the Society of the Sacred Mission. Together with another member of the Society they form a small religious community. Prior to this appointment he was Chaplain to the British Embassies in Bucharest and in Sophia, Where he established excellent relationships with the Orthodox Patriarchs of Romania and Bulgaria. Present at his official installation as Director last November were Bishop Mark Santer and Bishop Cormac Murphy O'Connor, the two Co-Chairmen of the Anglican/ Roman Catholic International Commission for dialogue between the two Churches (ARCIC)

As well as representing the Anglican Communion in Rome, the Director is responsible for taking a variety of initiatives to encourage dialogue between Anglicans and Roman Catholics who come to Rome from around the world. These include seminars for Anglican clergy and laity, the annual Summer School ("ROMESS") and occasional lectures. There are also one or two places available for research students to live at the Centre. Recently it was decided to increase the number of courses available in collaboration with the Anglican Churches in Rome, the Pontifical Universities (the Gregorian and Angelicum) and the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity. One of the Centre's strengths is a first class library. It has some 10,000 volumes and is the only serious collection of Anglican theology, history, and literature on the mainland of Europe, attracting scholars from institutes in Rome and further afield.

The Centre is at present in need long term funding and an appeal was launched publicly by the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster at Lambeth Palace on May 6 this year. Speaking of the appeal, Bishop Mark Santer affirmed that "the Centre is more than a bridge linking the two great Communions, it is a means by which the spirit of ARCIC can penetrate down. People are helped by it to increase their knowledge and understanding of our past, the present state of matters and our visions for the future". Naturally, as the Centre is an important "bridge" in the building up of good relations, both Anglicans and Roman Catholics are invited to collaborate in raising funds.

Celia Blackden

CHURCHES TOGETHER IN EVANGELISATION

Some forty-five of us forwent (or escaped?) the T.V. marathon the Cup Final to assemble on May 9th at St Simon Stock school, Maidstone for the study Day on the topic "*Churches Together in Evangelization*", organised by the Kent Area of the Christian Unity Commission, chaired by Dorothy Morris and led by Father Paul Cannon of the Catholic Missionary Society.

We learned much from Father Paul's careful thought and preparation, his practical common sense, his considerable experience and his 'Bacup' bluntness. We did not just sit back and listen; Father Paul demanded some hard thinking of us. The small discussion groups and sessions of reporting back, though hard work, quickly led to a sense of fellowship, sharing and common concern.

The Day began with prayer and the study of Luke 4: 16-21. we considered this as a formula for evangelisation. Concentrating particularly on the verse:

"He has sent me to bring the good news to the poor,
to proclaim liberty to the captives and to the blind
new sight, to set the downtrodden free, to proclaim
the Lord's year of favour",

We split up to discuss the ways in which people are poor today, what holds them captive, what is their blindness and what has trodden them down (religion was one of the responses elicited!)

In this way we were brought to see how we could make the Gospel relevant to today, how outreach has to precede evangelisation, how we must listen to people's real concerns and needs. We saw how evangelisation was an essential and not an extra, that it was more an attitude than a programme and that our business should no longer be just serving the assembled but, rather, assembling those who need to be served. we came to realise the force of the words of Paul VI in *Evangelii*

Nuntiandi:

"Evangelisation will lose much of its power and efficacy if it does not take into consideration the people to whom it is addressed, if it does not make use of their language, their signs and if it does not offer an answer to the questions which are relevant to them, if, in a word does not reach and influence their way of life"

Discussion and fellowship continued in a more informal way over packed lunches.

The afternoon began again with prayer and a Gospel passage to ponder: this time John 17: 20-23, In group discussions on this passage we considered that Jesus said that the unity of his followers would be a sign to the world of his having been sent by the Father. Did the fact that there were so many different Christian Churches prevent people from believing in Christ? What unites these Churches and what divides them? Pope John XXIII was quoted:

"When we die we will not be asked if we have achieved unity, but if we have worked, prayed and suffered for unity."

Any tendency we had towards cosiness and complacency was challenged when we were asked to consider how we and our Church communities would be judged on this basis! We considered all the more carefully and humbly what were the areas for improvement and what initiatives we might attempt.

We were somewhat cheered from our chastened state when Father Paul summarised the stages in achieving Church Unity as Competition, Co-existence, Cooperation, Commitment and Communion. In the lifetime of the middle-aged and upwards we had at least moved one or two stages from somewhere very near the beginning of the list. He then suggested a whole list of initiatives which might be undertaken.

An ambitious idea was a Stewardship or Neighbourhood Contact Scheme on a Church Unity basis. Each steward would be responsible for, say, twenty-five houses in his or her immediate area. The steward would make contact, invite people to Church services, leave leaflets detailing Christmas and Easter events, greet new arrivals and tell them of Local churches, clergy and services, inform clergy or church workers of sickness or death or particular need, etc. Such a scheme, though unrealistically demanding on any one Church, would be perfectly feasible were the responsibility to be shared by all the Churches in an area.

Stewards would need to be trained and would be commissioned at special Church Unity services. Services would be held regularly to support and celebrate the work being done. Such a scheme would not only foster cooperation, interdependence and trust among the participants; it would also be a powerful sign of unity to the unattached and uncommitted.

Other areas in which Churches acting together could both draw closer and evangelise more effectively included providing Christian literature, having processions or other displays of witness, producing Passion plays or pageants, having flower festivals that rotate around different Churches, working together on common projects and appeals such as Christian Aid and organising combined Youth missions.

Voluntary agencies, Charity shops, pop-in-parlours, Half-way Houses and soup runs would all welcome help from Churches acting together. Meetings of Clergy, Probation Officers, Youth Workers, Teachers; Police and Councillors to discuss common concerns could be organised. Churches could combine in outreach to the disabled and disadvantaged. They could make better use of free newspapers to spread awareness of joint endeavours, compile and distribute joint leaflets and Christmas cards, organise joint Lent courses, Bible studies and marriage preparation talks.

We were warned though, that no scheme, however cleverly thought out or enthusiastically entered upon or busily worked at, would succeed without earnest and persistent prayer. We must invite and surrender ourselves to the power of the Holy Spirit and not pride ourselves on our own resources. We must be humble, discreet and sensitive.

After prayer in which we were invited to acts of repentance, dedication and commitment, Father Paul was heartily thanked, we dispersed with much to think and pray about, but with enhanced hope and vision.

John Wilkinson.

COME AND SEE

In Birchington the clergy, Catholic, Anglican, Methodist, United Reformed and Baptist, meet every two months for prayer, theological discussion, business and luncheon together. We take turns to act as host. We have a friendly relationship, and are frank in discussion.

Recently we came up with the idea of inviting our people to visit one another's churches, not for a service, but simply to look around and to learn about one another's customs and traditions. We call the programme "Come and See" (John 1:39).

To our pleasant surprise, about 70 people turned up at the Church of our Lady and St. Benedict at 3 o'clock on Saturday afternoon, June 13. We had hung some of our best vestments, of all four colours, on hangers and placed a monstrance, chalice, ciborium and pyx on a table. We already have beautiful statues of our Lady and St. Joseph, but for the occasion I added statues of St. John Fisher and St. Thomas More.

After welcoming all present, I gave them a talk on the following lines:—

The Church is PEOPLE, not buildings or things. We are all CHRISTIANS a word first used as a nickname at Antioch (Acts 11:26). Like yourselves, we Catholics are followers of Jesus, believing in him as Son of God and Saviour. We venerate the Bible as the inspired word of God "in all its parts". (Council of Trent) Scholarship is needed to understand the Scriptures, together with the acceptance of oral and written traditions handed down within a living Church to which Christ promised, "I will be with you always". We believe in the living presence of Father, Son and Holy Spirit in the graced soul and in the whole Church. Christianity is a way of life, "The Way".

For us the Christian assembly is pre-eminently the Holy Eucharist (The Mass; the Lord's Supper, the Holy Communion, the Lord's Ordinance) we do what Christ did at the Last Supper and on Calvary. Originally there was no set form of words and no special vesture, just the faithful people gathered, with an ordained celebrant presiding, first "breaking the Word of God" and then taking the bread and wine and doing what Jesus did, giving us himself as food and life; making his "once and for all" sacrifice mysteriously available to us.

I went on to explain briefly how, over the centuries, various ceremonies have been added, like the setting which enhances the jewel- candles, altar cloths, vestments, liturgical colours, incense and song. I mentioned Benediction, Holy Hours, Reservation (especially for the sick), the sanctuary lamp, visits to the Blessed Sacrament.

We then broke up and walked around the Church and sacristy, examining everything whilst I and other Catholics answered questions. Then we came together again for some further explanation based upon those questions. We were asked about Confession, Stations of the Cross, veneration of the Saints, Votive candles, Special ministers of the Eucharist. We finished with a word on the government of the Church, the priestly People of God, with the Bishop and his clergy presiding, and the Holy Father holding us together in unity of faith. We mentioned the Deanery and the Parish Council. All this had taken just over one hour. We then adjourned to the hall for a friendly tea together.

A month later, on Saturday afternoon, July 18, about 70 people gathered at Birchington Baptist Church. The young minister, Rev. Christopher Young, welcomed us and said how he valued these meetings as an opportunity to gain understanding and dispel ignorance about each other. Ignorance leads to fear, myths, suspicion and bigotry.

Baptists, he said, do not differ greatly from other Christians in basic beliefs. They see themselves as followers of Jesus Christ in company with all those who believe

in Him as the Son of God, trust Him for their salvation and offer Him their obedience. They accept the Bible as Scripture and demand that religious belief and practice conform to its essential teachings. From those Scriptures emerges a belief in the Holy Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit; God who is Love.

Baptists (the word was originally a nickname) hold 3 distinct beliefs:

1 Believers Baptism. Baptists refuse to baptise infants, and insist that only persons who are capable of a personal commitment to Christ should be baptised, and then by total immersion, which was the original and biblical practice.

2 Local Autonomy. Strictly speaking there is no such thing as "the Baptist Church". For them, a church is simply the gathering of local believers into a local congregation, which makes its own decisions, maintaining unity in thought and action, doctrine and practice. The congregation sees the Gospel ordinances as entrusted to its keeping, elects its own officers, calls its own minister and exercises discipline over its members. membership is both a privilege and a responsibility.

3 Priesthood of all Believers. Ordained ministers, men and women, mostly full-time are called by God to serve as preachers of the Gospel and to serve the Church. A particular ordained minister is called by the local church to be its minister, after hearing him preach and after interview by the local elders or deacons. Celebration of the Eucharist is not seen as the essence of his ministry. In Baptist churches laymen and lay women are frequently to be found presiding at the Communion table, or conducting marriages or funeral services. Lay people also take an active and essential part in ordination services, and thus express in practical terms what Baptists mean by the priesthood of all believers. Well, the Rev. Christopher Young certainly made us think. The questions came readily, and revealed what he called some "grey areas" which demand further discussion. One such question was mine - "How do you reconcile the autonomy of the local church with Christ's prayer that we may all be one?"

We then inspected the church, simple and austere in its furnishings, with the emphasis on pulpit rather than altar. Especially interesting was the in-built pool used for baptism - and boarded over when not in use - the size of a swimming pool.

Again, the meeting was followed by tea and a chance to meet one another informally.

In October we shall be visiting the Methodist Church, and visits to All Saints (the pre-Reformation Anglican church), and the United Reformed Church will follow in due course.

Canon William Clements.

ARCHBISHOP CASSIDY ON ECUMENISM - A NOTE AND A COMMENT.

Archbishop Edward Cassidy is now well settled into his job as Director of the Pontifical Council for Christian Unity.

Just over a year ago, at the *Centro Pro Unione* in Rome, he gave a significant address entitled "The Catholic Church and Ecumenism as we approach the Third Christian Millennium. In this address Archbishop Cassidy sought to reassure Catholics, and other Christians, that the Roman Catholic Church had lost none of its commitment to ecumenism, but, at the same time he sought to point out that we are now moving into an era when there will be real difficulties to be faced - on all sides.

The Archbishop pointed out that in some ways the early stages of ecumenism were easy since they involved relatively simple exercises in charity; ridding ourselves of prejudices and opening our hearts and minds to listen to each other and to ensure that we were gaining a real appreciation of the graces given to fellow Christians of other churches; it was easy, in the face of the difficulties of the last few years, to forget exactly how far we had come and how much had been changed for the better.

Now, however, to quote Archbishop Cassidy:

"Our ascent of the ecumenical mountain has entered a new stage, and the going becomes more difficult, simply because the ground that we seek to conquer is all the more important for the successful outcome of our endeavours."

The Archbishop is referring to the problems of theological dialogue, and to the fact that we really must be able to be sure that we are at one in the essentials of the faith before unity can come. He refers to the fact that many people are impatient with such an approach and are inclined to believe that such matters can be left to one side while we get on with the real work of living and sharing together. However, he sees such an approach as false to the true integrity of ecumenism, and quotes Cardinal Bea:

"Nothing is more foreign to the spirit of ecumenism than doctrinal indifferent-ism".

Doctrine is important since it expresses our convictions about the total nature of God and His saving work in our lives; it affects our devotional life and our life of service in the Church and the world. We can, however, take heart from the fact that many past doctrinal disputes have been found, by new approaches, to be resolvable. Archbishop Cassidy instances the old quarrel in Christology between the Oriental Orthodox and the rest of Christendom; he might also have mentioned that the old Reformation controversy over faith and works has also largely died

the death. He points out, quite correctly, that there is a difference between the essential deposit of faith and the way in which it is formulated, and that sometimes, different formulae can be shown to express the same truth in alternatively valid ways.

However, the Archbishop also points out that some problems apparently remain, so far, intractable, and that new problems can arise. The ordination of women to the priesthood in sections of the Anglican Communion has raised major problems for the ARCIC dialogue in terms of the question of authority, the issue being that of the authority of *sections* of the Church to initiate departures from the traditional practice of the Church.

The Archbishop is, I think, right to raise this issue; certainly the question of authority has been underplayed in recent dialogues and is overdue for consideration. But, if I may interject from the point of view of Methodists and members of the Anglican and other Free Churches, the question is also one of the right use of authority. We all accept that there is a need for a legitimate exercise of authority within the Church to maintain the integrity of her teaching and the effectiveness of her mission, but is it not also possible for authority to be *over-exercised*? many Anglicans and Free Churchmen feel that the Roman Catholic Church has erred not in terms of defining false doctrine so much as in terms of requiring assent to opinions which may be pious and even devotionally fruitful, but which cannot be proved to be central to the Christian faith, and over which it scarcely seems right to give or withhold Communion (provided, of course, there is agreement on fundamentals). Whatever view we take, it is still clear that there is much hard work to be done on the question of legitimacy of diversity in teaching, and here we must all be at one with the Archbishop; these are serious issues.

Finally, Archbishop Cassidy points to some flaws in communication. He points out the failure of his own Church, and, perhaps, even more, other Churches to see that the results at the international dialogue are communicated down to ministers and faithful at the local level; here I must heartily concur and confess that the performance of Methodism, in particular, has not been satisfactory. He calls for more emphasis on ecumenism in priestly formation. He also calls for more involvement of national and diocesan commissions for Christian Unity in the reception of new insights. It is here, of course, that the responsibility passes very directly to us at the local level.

David Carter.
