

TOGETHER IN CHRIST



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EDITORIAL

"Never give in then, . . . never admit defeat; keep on working at the Lord's work always, knowing that, in the Lord, you cannot be labouring in vain." (1 Cor 15:8)

St Paul's stirring words encourage all Christians today, as in his own time. We present in our Unity bulletins examples of witness from our contributors, many of whom have been praying and working for unity for several years, and are "still keeping on working". Their labours will not be in vain!

We are delighted to welcome back to our pages Bishop Charles Henderson, who shares with us his vital message of "Unity in Love" We also present

- ❖ the rich variety of work done by Churches Together in Kent,
- ❖ the special series by "Churches Together in Lent" in Bexleyheath
- ❖ a response to the report of Simultaneous Eucharists
- ❖ Review of *A People of Priests* and AT YOUR SERVICE
- ❖ an interesting account of the Huguenots
- ❖ The Charismatic Movement and its ecumenical aspects
- ❖ a glimpse of the work of our diocesan commission.

Plenty of diversity in unity there! Please keep on letting us have accounts of what you do for the Lord.

ASSOCIATION OF INTERCHURCH FAMILIES (AIF): we are grateful for a prayer card received from A IF requesting prayer for interchurch families "that they may witness to unity within the Household of God." This is the prayer:

"Father, we have given ourselves to you and you have given us to one another. Deepen and strengthen our love and unity through your Holy Spirit. Lead us along the way you have chosen for us which human sin has made into the form of a cross. Hold ever before us the Vision of the unity of all in your love, so that we may fight against all that divides us. Draw us closer to you, the source of our love and unity, so that we may become closer to one another and more fruitful channels of your creative and reconciling love for all people; till we come to the source and end of all and are raised from death to share in the marriage supper of the Lord, Jesus Christ.

THE FORUM OF THE CHURCHES TOGETHER IN ENGLAND will take place at Swanwick, Derbyshire, July 14-16. The theme is "CHURCHES TOGETHER- THE VISION AND THE REALITY. " Please give it your prayer support.

UNITY IN LOVE

It is always a joy to be with those who seek goodness for all through the Unity of Christians. Let us pray together:-

"Ever living God, direct our steps together in unity, in the way
Of your love; so that our whole life may be fragrant with all
we do in the name of Jesus, your beloved Son. " (cf Breviary.
3rd Sunday in Ordinary time.)

"You are Christ, the Messiah, the Son of the living God" (Mt 16:16)

From the beginning the Church has proclaimed the truth. It is a truth revealed by God. It is fundamental. It is a truth which was given to us directly by the Father of Jesus Christ (cf Mt 16:17).

The Church's Mission: The Church (i.e. all of us) must always hold in vision the 'saving activity of God' which is directed to the whole world. "May they be one so that the world may believe that you (Father) sent me" (John 17:21) • "My Father is the gardener, the vinedresser" (Jn 15: 1)

God's saving activity is mediated to the world through Christ and those who stand in the world for Christ, i.e. his Church - you and me. "It is to the glory of the Father that you should bear much fruit." (Jn 15:8), "that your joy may be complete" (Jn 15:11) . The words addressed to the disciples are addressed to us today.

Human completeness, human fulfilment, human happiness is a fruit which comes to us if we remain close to Christ and listen to his words, his message, so that the will of the Father might be accomplished..

There are many areas of life where we must offer this life-giving appeal to the people around us; and it is a task which is best done in unity. All areas of human need are our concerns.

Jesus realised the value of unity and prayed that we should be ONE in Him, "so that the world might believe" (Jn 17:21).

Unity efforts and struggles: The pathway to unity has been undertaken with renewed vigour in my lifetime. I never cease to thank Almighty God for this grace in my life. The human sources of this upsurge for unity are many. The history of the 20th century, when it is fully and correctly recorded, will reveal that the search

for unity is its greatest achievement. And this despite the record, standing alongside, of the most degrading atrocities of human history.

The great declarations of human rights and liberty made by the churches, the United Nations and many individual countries, testify to the growing awareness of the human peoples as one family. . . though we have a long way to go to understand and accept what they say and put their content into practice at all levels of society.

Together: The Church in its universal character (all of us acting together) must surely play an important role in promoting true values based on revealed truth. We cannot repeat often enough for all to hear and reflect upon - especially ourselves the statement so crisply spoken by Pope John XXIII, "What separates us as believers in Christ is much less than what unites us" This reality of our imperfect communion (Koinonia) must be at the centre of our ecumenical thinking and action.

So St Paul's appeal (1 Cor 1:10) is as relevant to us today as when he wrote it, "I do appeal to you for the sake of the Lord Jesus Christ to make up the differences between you and instead of disagreeing among yourselves to be united again in your belief and practice."

Divisions are present despite our efforts (or maybe our lack of effort). We are certainly divided in some important truths concerning authority, ministry and Eucharist .

We remain so for many reasons: lack of time to dialogue and pray together; the traditions we have accepted and their cultural aspects and, perhaps, the fear of change and the lack of security it brings; maybe, sadly, lack of good will. The Holy Spirit can address all these issues with us and supply solutions.

Forgiveness: the hardest element of real love. In handing out blame; in the accusations we make against each other; in the lack of trust we have in each other etc. we manifest our unreadiness to accept each other in our imperfect Koinonia and therein lies our lack of forgiveness. How different relations would be if only we could forgive and heal!

Overcoming divisions through prayer together, through dialogue together and action together, perhaps enriched by the extra grace of Covenanting which should be formally agreed after appropriate preparation, AND praying for true love for each other and trust to enable us to forgive the harm we accuse each other of

perpetrating REQUIRE of us to see Unity as a gift from God which we must accept and use.

Hope for the future: The pathway to acceptance will be clearer the closer we are to Christ the Son of the living God in whom we have all truths, the guaranteed way and the example of the sacrifice we require to change our thinking and our habits.

When we are in perfect Koinonia in Him, then there will be hope that our world might believe.

Charles J Henderson.

(Address given to the Bexley Group of Churches at Blendon Methodist Church on the Sunday within the Octave of Prayer for Unity, 22..1.95)

CHURCHES TOGETHER IN KENT (CTK)

The Annual Report for 1994 received, indicates a wide variety of activities and concerns, and we are pleased to summarise news of some of them.

PRAYER AND MUTUAL EXCHANGE: CTK emphasises the importance of prayer and the need for a deeper understanding of each other's traditions. The first hour of each meeting is set aside for prayer and theological discussion. Topics In 1994 included authority and the place of Scripture in each denomination.

THE COUNTY ECUMENICAL OFFICER, Canon Alan Dawkins has worked and travelled 4,000 miles to promote ecumenism in Kent, and is supported by a team of ecumenical officers. He has produced a series of leaflets: — *Marriages in shared buildings, Guidelines for Consultants to LEPs, Church of England Ecumenical Canons, Christian Initiation and Church Membership, Church as Communion (ARCIC). So you 're thinking of signing a Covenant! , Has the ecumenical movement run out of steam?, Telling the Good News Together, The Church and Politics, Ecumenical Audits.*

ECUMENICAL OFFICERS' TEAMS covering the County aim to develop personal links with LEPs and organise reviews if required, and hope to extend their care to local Councils of Churches.

A FORUM was held in Maidstone entitled 'Lighting the Touchpaper!' attended by 150, with Rev John Reardon as key-note speaker .

35 LOCAL ECUMENICAL PARTNERSHIPS are registered, some visits and reviews made ,

MEDIA IN KENT: a Forum on Religious Broadcasting will be held at Aylesford on May 19, focussing on ecumenical aspects.

A POLICE CHAPLAINCY SERVICE is established, with 6 chaplains appointed.

WELLSPRING '95: Which aims to celebrate the unity of the Churches in Kent takes place on June 17, 1995 at Aylesford Priory, and hopes to attract 5,000 people, with a special programme for young people.

Other concerns and plans include: a proposal for CHURCH LEADERS MEETING in Kent; an ECUMENICAL PASTORAL PLAN; a study of HOSPITAL CHAPLAINCIES and its ecumenical aspects; CODE OF GOOD PRACTICE commended; NETWORKING ecumenically, encouraged; RURAL ECUMENISM studied and visits made .

Substantial progress has been made in setting up an ECUMENICAL SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY GROUP and action organised.

Congratulations to all concerned on such impressive progress!

"It is already a wonderful gift of God's grace that we concur in acknowledging that ecumenical relations are an essential requirement of our obedience to the Lord. Jesus in fact prayed to the Father for his disciples 'that they may be one that the world may believe' (Jn 17:21) . We can all be so encouraged at the progress already made along this road." (Quoted from *The Pope Teaches* No 12, C. T. S. 1994, from an address on November 7, 1994, to a group of Catholic Bishops from the USA who were making a pilgrimage to Rome and Canterbury.)



ON THE SIMULTANEOUS EUCHARISTS AT THAMESMEAD

The opening line of a popular song of many years ago goes:

"Accentuate the positive, eliminate the negative." differing attitudes of positive and negative are epitomised in the story of two men in a public house. One looks at his glass and says sadly: "My glass is half empty." The other also looks at his glass and says: "But mine is half full."

I feel that much of our attitude to the ecumenical adventure, especially where a novel approach is put forward, tends to be dominated by the accentuation of the negative ("they" don't believe this, "we" mustn't do that, etc.), and nowhere is this more apparent than in a consideration of the Holy Eucharist, as witness the reactions outlined by Father John O'Toole in his excellent (as I think) thesis on the Simultaneous Eucharists at Thamesmead.

The first problem Father John mentions is what the joint services should be called. Well, I suppose the name would depend on what is being done jointly, and here perhaps, we should clarify our terms. For us Catholics, the Holy Eucharist is the Sacramental Communion which forms the culmination of the Sacrifice of the Mass; to many of our fellow Christians the Eucharist is the complete service. It would follow that although the majority of the liturgy is shared up to the administration of Holy Communion, there must be a certain ambivalence in some of the prayers, particularly of consecration. Such an ambivalence would not invalidate the whole enterprise, after all, if there were anything intrinsically wrong with the experiment it would never have been permitted to start in the first place. We have to remember that a Catholic Bishop is a member of the Sponsoring Body and he would most certainly not sanction any unlawful novelties.

The obvious negative aspect of the joint services is that a separation takes place for the distribution of Holy Communion. This cannot be eliminated yet, but what positive can be accentuated? What good is being achieved? Here I call to mind a dictum of St Paul. "Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." (Phil 2: 9-11) In these joint services, with one voice, the entire congregation acclaims Jesus as Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Is that bad?

A negative which could be eliminated is the suggestion that as no further progress can be made until full Communion is established, the experiment has served its purpose and may now be called off. I should have thought that after all the years it

has been in operation it is time to stop calling it an experiment and refer to it as a practice. But that by the way. It is true that no advance seems to be possible until full Communion is achieved, as indeed it will in God's good time, but in thinking of the general proposition, I am reminded of my first introduction to the area around Thamesmead (long before Thamesmead was thought of) .

In the early 1940's, as a young soldier I had been sent to the military depot at Woolwich to await a posting "somewhere over there" (a very comfortable billet as it turned out). For the few days I was at Woolwich, together with a lot of others, we were a bit of an embarrassment because there was nothing for us to do. The answer to that was to take us out on route marches over south east London. Traffic was, of course, much lighter than it is today and there was petrol rationing too, but nevertheless we met the occasional obstruction; for example the traffic lights had to be obeyed. When the head of the column reached a traffic light switched to RED, the officer in charge ordered "Mark time", he did not say "Halt, stand at ease". In that way we were prepared to continue our march as soon as the light changed. At Thamesmead Central, as soon as the Communion green light appears, that community can immediately get on with the new development, whereas in other areas where no preparation has taken place, they will have to start from scratch as it were.

It is said that services such as those under discussion stress the pain of separation. To accentuate the positive here, one could say that the more that pain is stressed the more should be one's efforts to alleviate it. Perhaps here too, we could call to mind the words of Pope John XXIII:

"You will not be judged on whether you achieved unity,
but whether you worked and suffered for it. "

Sidney Ratcliff.



MICHAEL RICHARDS - A PEOPLE OF PRIESTS, Published by Darton, Longman and Todd, 1995

Canon Michael Richards will be well known to many readers of Together in Christ. For many years he was editor of the Clergy Review. He is a member of the national and international Catholic-Methodist dialogue Commissions. A year or so ago, he conducted a Study Day on the current state of the dialogue for our own Archdiocesan Commission for Christian Unity.

This book is a study of the place of the ordained ministry within the Catholic tradition, as it has been understood in the light of the teaching of Vatican II. According to Canon Richards, this ministry must be understood within the context of the emphasis that Vatican II placed on the royal priesthood of all the faithful. He examines the oft-commented on statement of Vatican II that the priesthood of the ministry and the laity, thought orientated to each other, 'differ essentially and not only in degree'. He argues that the essential difference lies in the responsibility laid on the ordained ministry to proclaim and faithfully transmit the Word; above all, they are 'servants of the Word' . (Acts 6: 2)

In exploring this line of enquiry, Canon Richards is making an important contribution to the dialogue of the Roman Catholic Church with the Reformation Churches. Those who are familiar with the Catholic-Methodist dialogue, and, in particular, with the most recent report on the 'Apostolic Tradition' will recognise how his thought on ministry has influenced the dialogue and been influenced by it.

Priesthood and ministry are usually thought of as particularly intractable questions in dialogue between Catholics and Protestants. It is not always realised how much common ground in fact exists. Both Catholics and Protestants agree that Christ superseded all previous forms of priesthood. He is the one High Priest, as the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews puts it. There is, in the Christian Church, no priesthood which is in any sense independent of Him; any priesthood that exists only does so in Him and in virtue of His power.

Both communities also agree that the entire body of the faithful baptised is a 'royal priesthood', as St Peter calls it (1 Pet 2: 9), and is such through incorporation into Christ, in and through whom it receives the power 'to make spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God' (Rom 12: 2). It is when the question of 'ministerial priesthood' has come up that Catholics and protestants have been divided. As the Canon points out Protestants have not wanted to call their ministers 'priests' out of a fear of attributing to them a priesthood not essentially linked to that of the whole Church, while Catholics, until Vatican II, have often confined the word 'priest' to

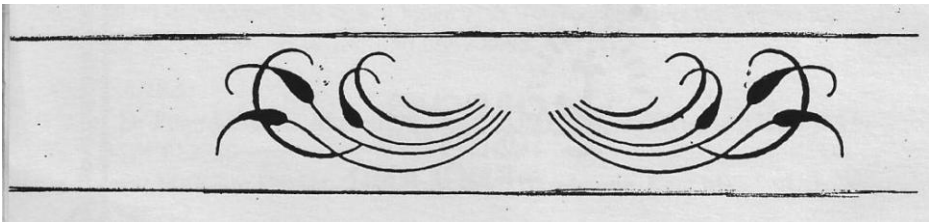
'presbyters' and have forgotten its proper application to all Christians. However, Protestants have traditionally emphasised the preaching function of ordained ministry, and its necessity within the Church. Canon Richards emphasises that the key function of Catholic bishops, aided by priests and deacons is to be 'servants of the word' in succession to the apostles, ensuring that the word is faithfully transmitted, and that developments in understanding of it are faithful to the apostolic faith. He analyses carefully the language used of the pastoral ministry in the New Testament. He emphasises the centrality of the 'shepherd' and 'steward' images, images which been central in Protestant thought. The Methodist Deed of Union of 1932, for example, calls ministers 'stewards in the household of faith'.

The Canon's book helps to show how much convergence there is between Catholic and Protestant concepts of the role of the ordained ministry within the whole body of Christ. It does not, of course, settle all the problems. The issue of how ministerial authority can be transmitted and whether it requires strict, unbroken succession remains.

The book is well and clearly written. It contains a beautiful chapter of reflections on the priesthood of our Lord. I will quote just one of several moving paragraphs: "Christ did not simply teach about worship; he was in his very being a perfect example of what worship is. Every detail of his life was lived in love and obedience to his heavenly Father, and in love and service towards the men and women he came to serve. The way of worship he had come to make possible for us he himself embodied in his life amongst us".

The author concludes with some reflections and suggestions about recruitment to and practice of ministry in the Catholic Church today. He is clearly concerned to deal with pastoral problems that affect all the contemporary churches. His book is important for this reason as well as for its ecumenical relevance.

David Carter.



TALK ON THE HUGUENOT CHURCH

After alarming us by beginning his talk in French, Dr Henri Boudin smilingly reverted to English - telling a story about a strange sort of English learnt from the shortwave radio.

History: He began his talk by pointing out that there were two distinct French Protestant Churches, which amalgamated when the adherents found refuge in England. The Walloons came to England at the time of the Reformation, a century before the French Huguenots

The Etymology of the names: Dr Boudin maintained that the name 'Walloon' was derived from the word 'Gaullois', the French 'G' being equivalent to Germanic 'w' from a prototype 'Gw'. For the word 'Huguenot' there have been many theories as to its origin, ranging from being a corruption of the German word 'Eidgenoss', to confederates from Switzerland to the 17th century Protestants in Tours adopting the name of the local king 'Hugo'.

The Walloon Church: In the 16th century, the seventeen provinces of the Netherlands were ruled by the Spanish King Philip of Spain. When the Reformation came, some inhabitants of the Netherlands seized the chance of spiritual liberation from Rome and national liberation from Spain. There were uprisings and the northern provinces achieved their independence, but not the southern. So it was at this time that the southern Protestants, the French-speaking Walloons, sought refuge in England, already a Protestant country.

In France the French Protestants left their country later in the 16th century and mainly in the 17th century after various persecutions. After the Reformation there were wars of religion in France ten of them between 1562 and 1598. Catherine de Medici's aim was to keep her sons on the throne, so she practised a balancing act, sometimes persecuting Catholics, sometimes Protestants.

In an attempt to reconcile the two religions in France, Catherine de Medici arranged a marriage between the Protestant Henry of Navarre and her daughter Marguerite. All the Protestant notables and the Catholics came to the wedding, and at the height of the festivities the doors were shut and all the Protestants, including *Gaspard de Coligny*^{*}, were massacred. This gave a signal for a general massacre of Protestants throughout France - the notorious eve of St Bartholomew in 1572.

Coligny's brother, Odet de Coligny went to England and died while in Canterbury, he is buried in Canterbury Cathedral;

Although most of France was still Catholic, there were regions of Protestantism, e.g. Alsace, the Cevennes and Bearn; a guerilla war was waged in these pockets of resistance.

Protestants in France were persecuted in subtle ways: no Protestant was allowed to be a midwife, a doctor or a lawyer. The marriages they contracted were not recognised as legal. Burial rights were not granted and burials took place in cellars or in unconsecrated ground along with plague victims. In the Poitou and Languedoc, soldiers were billeted on Protestant families in the villages to make life unpleasant for them, but to stop short at killing them, and to produce 'conversions'. These practices were known as 'dragonards'. At this time too, prophets arose among the Protestants. In 1685 Protestant worship was forbidden and pastors had to leave France.

Refuge in England: The French Protestants now felt that they had no rights in France, so many took refuge in England, a Protestant country. Earlier Edward VI had granted a charter to these 'strangers'. There were 538 Huguenot communities in England. Later many were absorbed into the national church.

The Walloon Protestants spread into Holland and Sweden and Northern Germany; there is a Huguenot church in Berlin. London had 60 Huguenot and Walloon churches; there was a Dutch church in Austin Friars and a symbolic cemetery remains as a patch of grass in front of it today.

Today in England there is a French church in Soho Square and one in Brighton and another in Canterbury. The ones in Edinburgh and Glasgow have disappeared. In Rochester there is an almshouse called 'La Providence' for those who can prove descent from the Huguenots. There is a Huguenot Society of Great Britain and Ireland to help them.

Organisation: The church in Canterbury is autocephalic - it has its own head. However the Superintendent of the Huguenot Churches in England comes under the jurisdiction of the local Anglican bishop, here, the Archbishop of Canterbury. The French Protestants were given the Black Prince's Chantry in Canterbury Cathedral to be their place of worship and so it has been for the last 430 years.

There are about 80 Huguenots in the area; about 25 attend a Sunday on average. These are made up of hard core members descended from the original Huguenots, Christians who come for a service in French, those who wish to support the Huguenot Church and not see it disappear and tourists and visitors.

There is no hierarchical clergy. A Synod made up of an equal number of pastors and of laypeople guides the Church. Women pastors are elected. The French Protestant Church supports the Church Council and are members of Christians Together in Canterbury.

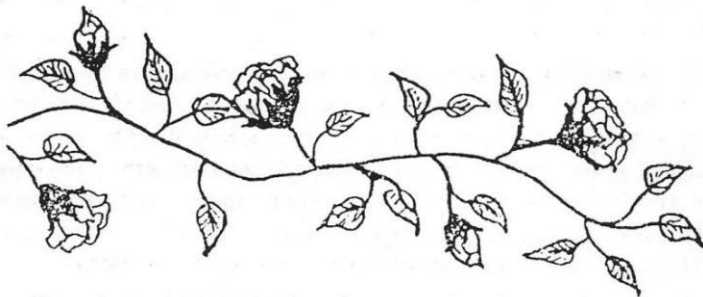
Beliefs: Basically they are Trinitarian believing in God the Father, His Son, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. They believe all that is in the Creed and doctrines defined by Ecumenical Councils. They believe themselves to differ from Catholics in believing in justification by faith alone, by holding services in the vernacular and by having no clergy - only laymen with a mission under the sovereignty of God.

The form of Sunday service: Once a month they celebrate the Eucharist, sharing bread and wine round a table. Otherwise the service consists of an invocation, the confession, a psalm, the Creed, readings from the Bible, a sermon and a hymn.

Pastor Boudin: on being asked, sketched his life and training. He is a Belgian and studied theology for five years in Lausanne and then did his doctorate on ecumenism based on the Y.M.C.A. ideal. He worked in Geneva, Meinau, Lake of Constance; he was a teacher, an inspector, a religious broadcaster and finally for many years rector of the Protestant Theological College in Belgium, one of only three bi-lingual Colleges. When he retired, he was elected Pastor of the Walloon and Huguenot Church in Canterbury.

Joan Crosland (Canterbury)

* Gaspard de Coligny (1519-72) : a French aristocrat, the acknowledged leader of the Huguenot cause. (Ed.)



AT YOUR SERVICE

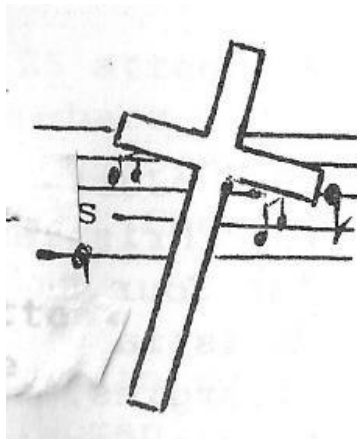
Just about six years ago, our Bishops' Conference Committee for Christian Unity I used a pair of companion booklets entitled "At Your Service". These booklets contained 24 services for Christians worshipping together. In introducing this selection of liturgies, the then secretary of the Committee, the late Canon Dennis Corbishley, said: "The need is obvious; we all know how many people complain of the dullness and lack of imagination in the fare served up on ecumenical occasions."

The accuracy of this statement was demonstrated in the volume of the demand for the booklets, and a second printing had to be made. In view of this need, a second series of these liturgies has been collated and edited by Una Ratcliff, who is a member of the Bishops' Conference Committee for Christian Unity.

In her editorial Una says: "In presenting our second series of *At Your Service*, we are deeply aware of the need for spiritual ecumenism to be the top priority in our progress towards Christian Unity", and she concludes: "We rejoice that so many Christians can share fully in these services of worship, and so celebrate God's gift of the real, although partial, unity already received."

There are 20 services in the new publication; these are capable of adaptation if needed, and the list of contributors and their differing traditional backgrounds is impressive. Many of the services (some with very original ideas) have been used with success in their source locality.

S.R.



TOGETHER IN LENT WITH HOLY MUSIC

A group of churches in the Bostall Park area of Bexleyheath, Kent, united for an unusual series of talks on the five Tuesdays in Lent, 1995, in which they examined and joined in singing some of the hymns written to celebrate the Death and Resurrection of Jesus. The Anglican, Methodist and Catholic churches hosted the evenings, and provided the speakers.

The series, which was enlightening and uplifting, presented the following "Holy Music through the years" :

The Medieval Period: hymns of the early Church Fathers,
The 16th Century: hymns of the Reformation period,
The 18th Century: hymns of the Evangelical Revival,
The 19th Century: hymns of the Victorian Church,
The Modern Period: hymns of the 20th Century.

The Speakers were Rev S Varney, Mr J Scrafton, Mr E Gale, Mr J Prichard and Rev D Milner. The sessions began and closed with prayer; they were intended as a help to Lenten devotions, and speakers recalled that "singing is part of our joyous response to Jesus and the Gospel" and that "singing is a gift from God to human beings from the beginning of creation, and is a wonderful privilege."

The review of music in the medieval period by Rev Varney (Anglican) included musical psalms and canticles; the first substantial writer of Christian hymns - St Ambrose; the development of Gregorian chant; the elaboration of Plain chant and how the celebration of Holy Week was a time not only of remembering the past, but of entering into the experience, and what it meant for the believer.

The hymns expressed three ways of understanding the death of Jesus:

1. in terms of the victory of Christ, a dominant theme for about 900 years. Christ breaks the powers which enslaved human beings sin, evil, death, the devil, and sets us free. Venantius Fortunatus, Bishop of Poitiers, poet and hymn-writer, wrote six hymns on the Cross of Christ, two of which are sung today; the theme of victory predominating.
2. in considering the cost of Jesus death, - we were bought with a price. Hymns emphasize the Passover Lamb and atonement, the unblemished victim, the sacrifice of Jesus, and His Blood poured out as a sign of the Covenant, a ransom for many - Jesus paid the cost for our sins.

3. the idea that the death of Jesus is an example of love the wonderful revelation of God's love.

The talk by Mr Gale (Methodist) presented 18th century hymns, with brief biographical details of some of the major hymn writers. There was, for example, Isaac Watts, who wrote 600 hymns; he learnt Greek, French, Latin and Hebrew, and took Holy Orders in 1707. His well known hymn "When I survey the wondrous Cross" was sung with great feeling. And of course, there were Charles and John Wesley. Charles Wesley produced a colossal output of 6,500 hymns and exercised a constant ministry of preaching, travelling many miles: Charles Wesley's personal experience not only of the time when he committed himself to Christ, but also of his continual experience of Christ 's power - inspired many of his hymns. A hymn by Wesley chosen for singing was "And can it be that I should gain admittance in the Saviour's life".

Then there was William Cowper - who first studied law; he had a mental breakdown and was sent to an asylum; there he read the Bible, and handed over his life and troubles to Christ. He went to Olney and there with John Newton wrote several hymns.

Thomas Kelly, another law student, ministered in a church which he built in Ireland, and wrote "The Head that once was crowned with thorns is crowned with glory now" - and that was the concluding hymn of the evening.

Anticipation of the Resurrection was also included by speakers. Charles Wesley's well known hymn (which was written for the opening of a Wesleyan chapel on Easter Day) : "Christ the Lord is risen today - Halleluia" was sung with joy.

We can only give this brief insight from two of the speakers, but we hope it reflects something of the spiritual value for Lent of the whole series.

*'That they all may
be one'*



THE CHARISMATIC MOVEMENT

The Charismatic Movement, or, as it is called by some, the Neo-Pentecostal Movement, is startling to some and a great spiritual, experience for others. It may shock people like myself, who shrink even from an over-exuberant shaking of hands at the Peace, but it draws in young people who find the ordinary services of the established Churches a dead bore.

Perhaps in this year, when we are celebrating in a special way the feast of Pentecost, it may be a time to find out a bit more about this movement. A great deal has been written about it, about its relation to the Pentecostal movement dating from the turn of the century, and about the different waves of revival and renewal associated with different preachers and leaders. A very detailed account of this period is to be found in William J. Holloway's *The Pentecostals* (SCM Press, 1972), which deals with the various Churches which have emerged all over the world. Two facts, however, which stand out about the Movement today are that it is ecumenical, and that it has not usually resulted in the setting up of new Churches, although, sadly, it has sometimes divided congregations. It is ecumenical in that it has affected clergy and people in all the major Churches - Roman Catholic, Anglican and Free Church - and that those who share its reality are drawn together across denominational divides. It also attracts those with no previous allegiance.

It is characterised by its insistence on the central experience of 'baptism in the Spirit' and its reaffirmation of the importance of the gifts of the Spirit to be found in abundance in the Early Church: the gift of tongues and the interpretation of tongues, the powers of prophesy and healing, and of the exorcism of evil spirits. The more thoughtful theologians of the Movement stress that their concern is to focus attention on forgotten or half-remembered truths, and that there is no intention to deny the importance of other, , less exciting spiritual gifts.

Fr Emmanuel Sullivan SA, in *Baptized into Hope* (SPCK 1980) , says that 'these gifts or charismata witness to the renewed activity of God in the individual and within the community of believers' but also that these 'gifts include those of a more permanent institutional nature, such as sacraments and ministerial offices'. It is renewal of the whole Church that is desired, and the influence of the Charismatic Movement, even when not specifically recognised, may be traced in the value found by many in prayer groups and retreats.

There is a small paperback, published by SPCK in 1993, which gives some idea of the background of those who have experienced 'baptism of the Spirit' and the directions in which it has led them. It is called *The Charismatic Revival: The*

Search for a Theology by Tom Small, Andrew Walker and Nigel Wright. They are respectively a Scottish Presbyterian minister, a Baptist preacher and a man born in the Elim Foursquare Gospel Church (Old Pentecostalist) who had found his way into the Russian Orthodox Church.

The book is divided into three sections and the three authors make contributions to each. In the first they give their personal experience of spiritual renewal, found through prayer in small groups, through the message of individual preachers or even through the study of Church history. One states that 'it was not a coming to faith, but rather a personal entry into the good of what I have always believed'. Another speaks of encountering 'in a new way the Spirit of prayer, the Spirit of Love and the Spirit of Victory'. The third writes of discovering that 'Orthodoxy has its charismatic tradition but that its cultural and spiritual roots lay in Eastern spirituality and contemplative prayer rather than in Western enthusiasm and frenetic singing'. All write of the experience of 'speaking with tongues' as a real way towards God, a gift to be welcomed even if not originally desired.

In the second section the authors discuss some of the Theological implications of the charismatic stress on the overwhelming importance of the power of the Spirit. This, one of them felt, might minimise the centrality of the Cross in the Bible message. The others write of some of the dangers inherent in the dependence on signs and wonders, and of being over concerned with the need to fight the power of the devil.

In the final section they write of some of the particular attributes of the Charismatic Movement - the excitement of worship, the belief in the prophetic ministry - and give some criticism of the reliance on healing and miracles. There is more in this book than can be summarised here; it is criticism from within as well as appreciation, and is a well-balanced Introduction to the subject.

Heather Bell

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UNITY COMMISSION NEWS.

The Annual General Meeting Of The Diocesan Commission, under its Chairman, Bishop Charles Henderson, take place on Saturday, September 9th at Aylesford.

The three Area Commissions pray and work hard during the year in various ways to promote unity. UNITY CONTACTS have been appointed in several parishes, acting as a valuable link between the Commissions and parishes, and disseminating news of activities, etc. They are invited to attend Commission meetings. The Bexley Deanery has meetings of Unity Contacts when necessary, and is developing this important area of communication. (Do you know who is your Parish Unity contact?)

PENTECOST '95 engages the attention of the South East and south West Area Commissions at present, and a wide variety of events is planned - some propose a picnic in the park or in church grounds, others (perhaps considering the English weather) have arranged gatherings with a meal in halls, or small groups may meet in homes! Christians all over London unite with non-Church members. Don't forget the book *Church for the City*, written for Pentecost '95, edited by Eric Blakeborough (Darton, Longman and Todd).

'PROJECT '81" In the South East Area continues, with Commission members visiting parishes at a weekend, speaking at Masses and meeting with the priests and parishioners before and after their weekend visits. (Has your parish been visited yet?)

The Diocesan Commission has UNITY LEAFLETS and a UNITY INFORMATION PACK, containing much helpful information and prayers.

Please don't hesitate to contact the Area Commission Secretaries (Inside front cover) If you would like to know more about the Commission's work, or would be willing to assist in it. Above all PLEASE PRAY FOR UNITY!
