

# TOGETHER IN CHRIST



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EDITORIAL. "There is one Body, one Spirit, just as you were all called into one and the same hope when you were called." (Eph 4:4) .

The call to unity to which St Paul implores a response, is no less strongly heard today, and is directed to each person. In our country, we are engaged in the Called to be One process, initiated in Churches Together in England, and the 1997 Forum (July 16-20) will be devoted to it. Please pray for this important event.

In this bulletin, we are happy to include two thoughtful responses to the publication Called to be One to be carefully considered. Canon Clements has provided an excellent insight into "Light from the East"; and David Carter's interesting reviews and experiences are much appreciated. The important Sarum Conference is fully reported.

As we offer our thanks to all contributors, we repeat our usual request for a continued supply of material, and do please note the copy dates as printed on the inside cover.

May you have a blessed, happy and ecumenically fruitful New Year.

## REFLECTIONS ON CALLED TO BE ONE

The Way Forward Together - Chap. 7

*(Responses to Called to be One have been requested, and we are pleased to publish a summary of a response from Anne Donoghue. Anne has been an active member of Ecumenical Societies for a long time and has realised the scandal resulting from divisions in the Church, also persecutions, antipathy and enmity.)* Anne writes:

"Unity is the perfection of God's love; therefore, we have to encounter one another, and to know one another in order to love one another, and to love one another in order to unite. Centuries-old divisions cannot be healed overnight, but by stages, guided gently by the Holy Spirit. Today it is necessary to deepen together the faith we have in common, and search for the fulness of truth.

Belonging to a National Ecumenical Society, with frequent talks by Christian denominations not only forges links in the wider sense but helps us to understand and discuss each other's disciplines. This became very real to me when I took part in a Conference in Northern Ireland. Hopefully, the N. Ireland members, very new to the Society, will take part in the next Conference, and friendly links will be ongoing. I recommend this."

At a local level, Anne recommends:

- \* keep each other informed and advised on important and relevant decisions taken In the parishes (preferably discussed and consulted)
- \* Ecumenical implications to be considered at all times, so the churches would be seen to be working together (but always with the approval of the Magisterium)
- \* some joint training for ordinands
- \* invite each other to church services, enabling knowledge and understanding of other traditions, and entering into dialogue about our histories and differences
- \* Praying together is essential. so have definite and special times for this. Share various forms of prayer, thanksgiving, praise and put before God common needs and

problems - peace, justice, poverty, ecology, etc. Share Gospel values and human values.



Local community needs should be addressed by ecumenical cooperation. Arrange panels of speakers and discussions to involve the whole Christian community. Up to now, parochial societies seem to minister to Church members rather than to the needy of the area. It would be a powerful influence on bringing people to God - which is our main mission in life - if those outside the Church see us working as friends through the love of God and each other for the good of all.

An ecumenical centre would be an ideal goal - for shared pastoral/ social work, studies, courses, drama, music, conferences; a place where non-believers

would be welcomed, and come to understand Christianity. A joint newsletter could be issued.

Anne reports that a very successful 3-day Ecumenical mission was held at Bearsted. A giant marquee was erected for the occasion and joint organisation was exceptional. Afterwards house groups were set up to discuss, comment on, and recommend further progress, and their reports were sent to the local priest-in-charge to be collated. Unfortunately, since his transfer, a follow-up has not proceeded. Had there been an ecumenical centre, progress would have been assured.

Anne concludes : "There is still much talking and discussion to be done - for me personally - on Christian Family Life and its implications; on life itself, and issues of abortion, euthanasia, etc. We must have clear adherence to God's Commandments and the Sacraments. I look forward to opportunities for talks and discussions, hopefully to be arranged by the appointment of an Ecumenical Moderator, in an Ecumenical Centre. The Christian message of reconciliation loses credibility when Christians themselves cannot, or will not, be reconciled to one another.

Anne Donoghue (Maidstone Deanery)

SARUM CONFERENCE "Unfortunately, this appears to have been so successful that people want another." Such was the editorial comment in reviewing the Sarum Conference, in the newsletter of the Joint Liturgical Group - the group which



organised the event, held in Salisbury, from September 23-26, 1996.

I was impressed at once by the friendly atmosphere and the facilities of Sarum College, which is ideally situated in the Cathedral Close, Salisbury. The College is now the home of the Institute for Liturgy and Mission, with Fr Christopher Walsh as its Principal.

It was a joy for me to revisit the magnificent Cathedral, completed in 1258, which has the tallest spire in Britain, and looking out from my bedroom window at night, I could see the top of the spire lighted up - a worthy witness, I felt, to the light of Christ. On the first evening I went to Evensong in the Cathedral at 5.30pm. and then returned to the College for supper, which gave a good opportunity to meet some of the other participants, who came from all over Britain. I had met only four (out of about 60) before; they were Sister Hilda, (Publications Secretary of *All Year Round*), and Stuart Jenkins, another colleague on that publication; and Dr Dagmar Heller and Rev Rodney Matthews whom I had met at the World Council of Churches' Conference on Liturgy at Ditchingham in 1994.

I quickly discovered that the Conference had drawn together people from a wide variety of Christian traditions: Roman Catholic, Church of England, Methodist, Baptist, Free Church Federal Council, Church of Scotland, Salvation Army, New Testament Assembly, Greek Orthodox, Black Churches group, Churches of Christ, Mennonites, Scottish Episcopal Church and House Churches. There were people from

well known organisations - for example, the BBC, Churches Together in England and the Council of Churches for Britain and Ireland, Make Way Music, Decani Music, McCrimmon Publishing, Praxis, the World Council of Churches, the Royal School of Church Music. (I was grateful to accept the invitation from the Council of Churches for Britain and Ireland and was kindly sponsored by the Roman Catholic Bishops' Conference Liturgy office.)

Our programme outlined the ten sessions, each lasting one and a half hours (including half an hour for discussion) , but unfortunately, Pastor Doug Williams who was due to speak on Black-led traditions, was prevented from coming on account of illness.

Participants united for morning worship in the Centre, attended the Cathedral for Choral Evensong and Vespers; and there was opportunity for attending the Eucharist at 7.30 am. The College chapel was available for private prayer.

## 1. CULTURAL DIVERSITY and the FUTURE OF WORSHIP; CULTS, RITUALS and COLLECTIVE EFFERVESCENCE.

Dr Philip Mellor (Roman Catholic) a sociologist from Leeds University, certainly set us thinking deeply. With reference to many sociologists, liturgists, historians etc. he gave an erudite exposition of the related aspects of culture and worship, leading us through these sections: The Primacy of Culture; Cult and Culture; Medieval Catholicism; the Sublimation of Ritual ; secularisation and Cultural Diversity; the Return of the Sacred; and the Future of Worship.

The concept of "collective effervescence" (emanating from Durkheim) and taken up later in discussion, is one which may well be applicable to patterns of future worship. Collective effervescence relates to social solidarity. Dr Mellor said it "harnesses the *individualising* impulses and passions of humans to socially expressed emotional and conceptual forms *shared* between people.

Dr Mellor's list of references includes nearly 100 names. I was happy that I had met one or two of the people named; Fr Anscar Chupungco, whom I met at Ditchingham, and Dr Eamon Duffy, author of that excellent book *The Stripping of the Altars*, and I had heard lectures by Dr Hornsby-Smith and some of the other authors' names were familiar. Dr Mellor's paper gives one a spur to engage in further study of the subject.

## 11. THE BIBLE IN WORSHIP

A married couple from Oxford, both Mennonites, gave a joint presentation on this theme. Alan is a historian, Eleanor a musician They spoke alternately, expressing their concern that the Bible and its stories should come alive and infuse the community gathered for worship; the people should internalise the Word of God, and so become empowered for their ministry.

The couple recommended dramatising Bible stories, especially for young people at worship. Memorising significant Bible passages was also important; mention was made of a group of six people, who memorised the Passion story, and one felt that their proclamation of it would have had a strong impact. Other practical recommendations were made, and deep love of the Bible and the centrality of the

place it should have in liturgy echoed throughout the presentation. In the ensuing discussion, a warning note was sounded: the Bible should not be rewritten or embroidered.

#### 111. ECUMENISM AND WORSHIP

Dr Dagmar Heller, of the World Council of Churches, who had come from Geneva, in speaking of worship and ecumenism, said "Worship, in my understanding, is at the heart of the ecumenical quest in more than one sense."

She gave a historical survey of developments in ecumenical worship, from its tentative beginnings at meetings to the more recent rich ecumenical worship life of today. She referred to the 1994 Consultation, organised by the Faith and Order Commission of the WCC, held at Ditchingham (at which I was privileged to take part) with the theme "Towards Koinonia in Worship", which was fully reported in the publication *So We Believe, So We Pray*.

The Ditchingham Consultation saw a structure of worship based on the two elements of Gathering and Sending as a "common shared inheritance"; so there would be: "an introductory part where people are gathered"; a "central part that makes it clear around what people are gathered"; and a final part where gathering is "linked to the world into which the participants will be sent out".

Dr Dagmar then focussed on two areas of ecumenical worship: services of the Word, and services of the Eucharist.

In services of the Word, there is an *ordo* which the churches generally have in common, including hymns, psalms, Biblical readings, homily or silent reflection, intercessions, the Lord's Prayer, and perhaps sign of peace and benediction.

In regard to services of the Eucharist, Dr Dagmar spoke of the Lima liturgy, and of the history leading up to it. This expresses meanings of the Eucharist, and the various liturgical elements used in the rite. The Lima liturgy has been celebrated often, but has also received some criticism. Such a liturgy, the speaker commented "can only be truly ecumenical if the question of ministry is solved."

The conclusion of the paper set out general criteria for worshipping ecumenical services (whether of the Word or of the table) noting that the "gathering and sending pattern" will be adapted to meet particular situations; that texts, music and other cultural elements from different traditions should be included, and that as many people as possible should actively participate in an ecumenical service of worship in responses, readings, intercessions, etc.

#### IV. LIFE-CYCLE LITURGIES

The Rev Dr Paul Sheppy (Baptist), Secretary of the Joint Liturgical Group, directed our attention to the liturgical celebration of births, marriages and deaths as he presented "a Series of reflections upon pastoral practice and an attempt to address the issues which the Church confronts" on these occasions.

**BAPTISM:** Dr Sheppy raised some theological questions, spoke about infant baptism and believer's baptism, and of the variety of Practice among Christian ministers, as for example, in response to parents who come to "get their babies 'done'" yet have no

church adherence, or whether the baptismal rite should normally involve the total immersion of the candidate.

MATRIMONY: The speaker noted the reasons for marriage as set out, for example, in the *Book of Common Prayer*, the *Alternative Service Book*, and in a brief reference to the *Sarum Rite*. Yet he affirmed "the exclusive nature of marriage and its life-long commitment remain at the heart of our liturgies. He went on to consider the failure of many marriages, the questions of remarriage and divorce, also betrothal, and the appropriate liturgical rites.

DEATH: The rites of passage surrounding death were the next focal points for attention with deep consideration of various situations and liturgies. (The speaker's doctoral thesis was on Liturgy and death).

PERSONAL SPIRITUALITY: this was the subject of the final section of the paper, with comments on Bible reading and Prayer (The Joint Liturgical Group is producing a series of books on prayer - to be called *Windows into Prayer*).

This was the paper's challenging conclusion: "Worship is prophetic and visionary, it is mystical and transforming. Whatever we liturgists and worship leaders do in the future, if we do not lead the people of God into this encounter, we shall have done nothing."

## V. WORSHIP IN BRITAIN - AN OVERVIEW

If you watch "Songs of Praise" for example, you will note at the end of the programme - Editor: Helen Alexander. Helen (Anglican) from the BBC, a lady with great responsibilities regarding religious programmes on TV and radio and a wide knowledge of the variety of Christian worship in our country, presented an overview giving various statistics and using visual aids.

"Do you think the majority of viewers of "Songs of Praise" are committed church-going Christians?" she asked. In fact this is not so. Among the viewers are those with Christian belief but without adherence to a church; those who are doubtful, sceptical and non-believers.

We watched as Helen illustrated on the screen some of the enormous variety of patterns of worship and many different styles of music - whether High Church solemnity, Gregorian Chant, Taize music, the Glastonbury experience, house groups, exuberant youth worship; the charismatic worship; women as well as men being worship leaders - all this and so much more, being worship in Britain today.

Helen elaborated further on trends in our land, noting that we are here to hand on tradition; there were thoughts of rural communities and Mums together at prayer; lunchtime services for shoppers; the healing ministry, the value of contemplation, meditation, reflection, recalling Ampleforth's popular 5 C.D.'s. There's the cultural tradition from other lands and its power, the black led worship; the youth culture; sometimes "rave" worship; the need to gather together at times of births, marriages or death and the accompanying religious experience. There is the power of music or silence; the language we use to be carefully considered; there's the awe, the majesty, the wonder of worship.

The big challenge is how to create liturgies to express such a variety of the needs of people in worshipping God.



## VI. CHARISMATIC AND HOUSE CHURCH TRADITIONS

"Shine, Jesus, Shine" is one of the choruses still widely used in services. It's composer, Graham Kendrick, was our next speaker, who had just flown in from Texas!

He gave us some biographical detail. His father was a Baptist minister; his wife came from a Methodist background - they were married in a Methodist church; he attended the Anglican church in Wolverhampton and St Michael Belfry in York. He came to London and joined the Icthus Fellowship, becoming part of the team. Icthus embraces several styles of worship.

Graham spoke of the charismatic movement, with its openness to the Holy Spirit and His gifts, the spontaneity and participation of the groups, and the influence it has had in many ways. We heard of Graham's involvement with music and composition and of his missionary endeavours, here and in the U.S. There was his experience of going out on the streets of Soho (with some embarrassment) evangelising through music, trying to create forms of praise which people could join in, thus releasing their praise. There were prayer walks, processional walks, the Make Way marches, March for Jesus, and the use of scripture and the Apostles' Creed - all of which demonstrated his zeal and fervour. He also acknowledged humbly that his compositions would not always be in demand. In speaking of informal liturgies, he recognised the need for some shape and structure.

Graham's fundamental conviction is that "worship is a whole way of life - what happens in church is only real if people attempt to give every day to God."

## VII. MUSIC AND WORSHIP

The Rev John Bell (Church of Scotland), a member of JLG, who led our morning worship, dared to look ahead to the year 2004, speaking of the development of technology which is already affecting some churches with overhead projectors. video screens, taped music, firms offering karaoke hymn accompaniment, computer technology enabling automatic renderings, and so on.

Yet, there are also very positive achievements in religious music - major British churches producing new hymn books, and other publications on music; a conference last year of 300 Roman Catholic musicians of the Network of Pastoral Musicians; Britain chosen as the venue for the World Symposium on Church Music; Anglicans reflecting on the role and theology of liturgical music; and various study courses.

Urging attention to the state of music, "because it is both the conveyor of and the complement to the Gospel" , John asserted: "What we sing, we end up believing. Therefore we must care for that which people sing. What we hear played or sung, deepens or diminishes our sense of the all-pervasive importance of faith."

John then set before us four main issues: PERFORMANCE, PARTICIPATION, LITURGICAL APPROPRIATENESS and MUSICAL INTEGRITY.

PERFORMANCE is "a matter of the performer using his or her skill to glorify God on behalf of and with the assent of the congregation" GOD is the audience - therefore the highest standards attainable must be offered to God. The performance

must suit the liturgy, it must also enable the congregation to focus on God, and to prepare for prayer and reflection on the Gospel.

**PARTICIPATION** - there are different gifts to different people, everyone cannot do everything! John mentioned how musically untutored people can respond to a difficult musical challenge. On one occasion he had taught a group of young people one such piece of music, and then he initiated the Conference group into the joy of singing a 3-part Alleluia from Zimbabwe (where none of the parts move in the same direction) , It sounded wonderful!

**APPROPRIATENESS:** Is the music appropriate for the space, for people, and for the occasion? To give one example from John's experiences, he was invited to celebrate a service for inmates of Brixton prison. He felt the appropriate *Kyrie* to sing would be to sing very slowly and softly: "It's me.. . it's me . . it's me, O Lord standing in the need of prayer."

It was very poignant then, and appropriate; and it was very touching for us too. John sang it for us.

**MUSICAL INTEGRITY:** Among other aspects of this theme, John pointed out that various styles of tunes are not all intended for organ accompaniment (e.g. plainsong, metrical psalm tunes, some folk tunes). We need to recognise that instruments other than the organ may be appropriate. He concluded: "There you have it, four themes:

Performance - Participation - Appropriateness and Musical integrity,  
And the greatest of these is love."

## VIII. LITURGICAL TRADITIONS

This session was shared by of two members and of JLG. the Rev Charles Robertson and Rev Michael Vasey (Church of England).

Mr Robertson gave us an insight into the development of liturgy, stating the importance of knowing the traditions of our ancestors, and how some of the prayers link us with the early Christians. He warned against "being driven by the consumer spirit" when "people want to get what they like"; we should be God-centred primarily. After noting some liturgical developments, the speaker outlined the contents of the recent Common Order in the Church of Scotland, which includes services for morning and evening; Baptism (for children and adults); Eucharistic prayers; services for special occasions and various prayers.

Mr Vasey referred to revisions and alternative prayers being proposed for the Church of England. He mentioned developments in liturgy in the Methodist Church and also in the Roman Catholic Church. He was "full of admiration" for the *RC Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults*, also the *New Order for Christian Funerals*. He stressed the importance of focussing on the spiritual and liturgical formation of Christians and of welcome and support for new Christians.

## IX LOOSE ENDS AND FAR HORIZONS

This was chaired by Rev Charles Robertson. Two set responses by Mrs Judith Lampard (Churches Together in England) and Rev Kate Coleman (Baptist) paved the way for open discussion.

Judith recommended clarity in explaining changes in liturgy, in symbols etc.; the need to be creative, and to listen to all voices in the churches.

Kate spoke of "Sarum - the Sequel" advising use of meaningful language; awareness of perspective in other cultures; continuation of exploration of alternative forms of worship, and of reaching out to those who believe without belonging to a church.

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This stimulating and informative Conference was an undoubted success; and there was a strong desire for a future one. A decision about this will be made at the next JLG meeting in March. Our most grateful thanks are due to Rev Dr Paul Sheppey and all the JLG who worked so hard to organise the event; and to the Sarum centre for the welcome and help.

Una M Ratcliff



## ECUMENICAL. FRIENDSHIPS AND TRAVELS

Two years ago, fortuitous circumstances brought me a new friendship which I now greatly value. I was involved then in the setting up of a new 'Society for Ecumenical Studies' as its Secretary.

I received a letter from a Belgian enquiring about our plans. I sent a polite reply, saying that we had no plans, at least in the short term, for any activities outside of Britain, though we should not wish to discourage anyone from joining us. I expected to hear no more, but instead, received a very full and friendly letter from the person concerned, Fr Pierre Parre, the ecumenical officer for the diocese of Malines-Brussels. A few months later he needed to come to England, but his plans for accommodation elsewhere fell through, he asked if he could stay with us. I, in turn, asked if he could attend a meeting of the English Roman Catholic/ Methodist Committee which was due to take place during his visit. He duly came.

In the five days of his visit we developed a firm friendship. I discovered he was a strong Anglophile, with considerable knowledge of England, which he likes to visit every year. After Vatican II he was asked to take special charge of the Belgian Catholic Church's relationships with Anglicans, and he has made himself quite expert in the matter. His library in Brussels includes nearly as many books in English - many of them by leading Anglicans - as it does French theological works.

Pierre has an immensely warm personality. He enjoys people and has had long spells as a teacher in secondary schools, as well as being a parish priest and also

chaplain for some years at Belgium's prestigious Catholic university of Louvain. He knew little about Methodism but showed himself very anxious to learn and to foster contacts.

I had never realised before getting to know Pierre how Significant the Belgian Church has been in ecumenism. I had heard of the famous Malines Conversations between Anglicans and Catholics of the 1920's, a pioneering example, albeit unofficial, of ecumenical dialogue, but I had not fully realised how important Belgians had been subsequently in ecumenism. In many ways it is not easy for them to practise ecumenism. There is only one tiny Protestant church in Belgium. There are a few Orthodox and ten Anglican parishes, primarily for British and American people living in Belgium. Pierre does much to help the local Anglicans. There is an official Belgian 'ARC' and an informal group that meets once a month for study. Both of these groups do work that would be the envy of much bigger bodies, and Fr Pierre is tirelessly active in promoting this.

The ancient Catholic university of Belgium was divided about 20 Years ago into two, one Dutch-speaking, occupying the old town Of Leuven, which, like Oxford and Cambridge, is full of ancient and attractive colleges. The other is French-speaking, at the specially constructed new site of Louvain-la-Neuve. Both theological faculties have a Professor of Ecumenics, which is more than British Universities rise to! On visits to Belgium I have been shown round both universities. In February last year I was asked to give a lecture, in French, on Methodism and ecumenism. We think this is the first time Louvain has ever had such a lecture. I was most charmingly entertained by the young Professor of Ecumenics, Joseph Fameree, and the Professor of Liturgy, Andre Haquin. They asked me for my text, for publication. Pierre kindly corrected much of my rusty French, and now it is waiting in the academic pipeline.

I have now made four trips to Belgium in a year. Pierre lives in a splendid old house not far from the centre. It is crammed with books and ecumenical files, so when he is busy - he still does hospital chaplaincy and plenty of ecumenical work - there is always masses for him to read. We read, pray and talk together. He has a great devotion to the Holy Spirit and lives the joy of the Spirit, he doesn't just talk about it.

I have received some fascinating insights into the life of the Belgian Church. On my first visit I attended a Confirmation Mass, which was remarkable for the fact that the service seemed almost entirely taken by the young people being confirmed. They gave what English Protestants would call their 'testimonies'. I was sorry that, sitting at the back, with inadequate French, I did not understand more of what they were saying, but clearly they were articulate young people, well able to speak of their Christian experience. I found the atmosphere in Belgian Catholic churches warm and positive, and seemed to me in many ways to combine many of the best features of Protestant and Catholic life as we know them here.

At the end of August I went to Malines, along with Rev David Chapman, a Probationer minister in the Wimbledon Circuit, who is one of our ablest young Methodist scholars. Fr Parre was keen that we should be the Methodist presence at the celebrations organised to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the beginning of the famous 'Malines Conversations' which were the first serious attempt at ecumenical dialogue in this century. A small group of Anglican and Catholic pioneers met at the

invitation of Cardinal Mercier, the then head of the Belgian Church. Many Catholics and Anglicans disapproved of what they were doing, and in the end the Pope used his authority to stop the conversations, but not before they had done a lot of useful work, and established the basic ecumenical principle that the way forward was to work for reconciliation of churches as such and not for individual conversions. They created an interest in and commitment to ecumenism that persisted in the Belgian Church till, at the time of, and in the more promising circumstances of Vatican II, Cardinal Suenens was able to sanction new ecumenical approaches.

The guests at the celebrations stayed in the old seminary in the delightful Cathedral city of Malines, about 20 miles from Brussels. The celebrations were timed to coincide with the latest session of ARCIC. A tripartite meeting of members of the English, French and Belgian ARCs was also held to discuss common problems. We were given copies of a commemorative book relating the history of Anglican-Catholic ecumenism since 'Malines', lovingly presented by Fr Parre and his study group.

On the Saturday morning there was a high powered study session. Professor Deneaux of Leuven, who like the Methodist minister, John Newton, is an honorary canon of Lincoln Cathedral, gave a history of Belgian ecumenism since the 1920s. Fr Tillard, the renowned French scholar, who is the leading theological light on ARCIC, spoke about its achievements and prospects, as did Canon Christopher Hill, a former secretary of ARCIC, Archbishop Carey and Cardinal Daneels, the present Belgian Cardinal, brought greetings. After that, we sat down to a superb lunch, followed by a tri-lingual service of thanksgiving in the cathedral, even the hymns were sung in three languages, English, French and Dutch, Altogether a memorable occasion. Perhaps the best feature of it was that members of ARCIC felt they had been reaffirmed in their important work, and that they had gained new confidence to go forward in their work, which once again, is trying to wrestle with some of the problems of authority, I felt it had been a most moving ecumenical occasion, and one of many encouraging signs for the future.

David Carter.

#### DYING TO BE ONE - ENGLISH ECUMENISM: HISTORY, THEOLOGY AND THE FUTURE, by DAVID BUTLER. 1996.

Some readers of *Together in Christ* will remember David Butler from the time when he was Methodist minister in Beckenham. Then, as now, he was heavily involved ecumenically. He is currently Lecturer in Church History at Queen's College, Birmingham, an ecumenical college which trains people for the ministries of the Anglican, Methodist and Reformed Churches, and works closely with the Catholic seminary at Oscott.

Just over a year ago, Mr Butler produced his *Methodists and Papists*, a study of Catholic-Methodist relations in the 18th century, a book which was justly acclaimed. Now he has just produced, in more popular vein an introduction to ecumenism, focussed on the English situation.

There is a serious shortage of accessible books giving a thorough introduction to ecumenism for interested laypeople and clergy who are thoughtful and want to understand the situation, without, however, having the leisure or resources to pursue

the subject in great detail. Perhaps the last book comparable to Mr Butler's in scope was Chris Ellis' *Together on the Way*, which Mr Butler indeed cites appreciatively. However, that book is now six years old. Ecumenism has moved on with *Ut Unum Sint* and *Called to be One* representing important new departures. David Butler has much to say about the lessons of the last few years. As his book was finished just before the launching of *Called to be One*, it does not discuss it, though it does help us materially to understand the background out of which it emerged.

The book takes a broadly historical approach, explaining how the variety of churches has come into existence. Two particularly valuable chapters describe the rise of the 'Black-led' churches and the charismatic and house churches have come on to the scene in the last 40 years or so. They give, in a succinct manner, information that is not easily available elsewhere.

An early chapter gives a useful thumbnail sketch of the theology of ecumenism, pointing to the importance of such concepts in the New Testament as peace, *koinonia*/fellowship and reconciliation. Two chapters outline the achievements of the Catholic-Anglican and Catholic-Methodist international dialogues. The result of these dialogues, and others are far too little known. Often the reports are not widely circulated. They are rarely studied, partly on account of their complexity, but it is important that the faithful of the church communities realise what important work is being done in their name. Mr Butler, with a deft use of telling quotations to mark the major advances in consensus, is one of the very few theologians ever to have made the attempt to introduce people, at a more popular level, to an appreciation of the dialogues.

A chapter on *Ecumenical Convergence in Spirituality* points to the extent to which we now borrow and learn, as never before, from each others' traditions or prayer and spirituality. Emphasis on this form of mutual enrichment has been a highlight of the Catholic/Methodist dialogue and is stressed by the Pope in *Ut Unum Sint*.

Two chapters, entitled *Strange Ideas: Protestant*, and *Strange Ideas: Catholic*, give an overview of key Protestant and Catholic emphases. Catholics, in particular, will appreciate the careful and delicate manner in which David Butler explains both Papal Infallibility and Marian Devotion. In the latter case, he makes the interesting observation that there are more verses in the New Testament about Mary than about the Eucharist. This is a sobering statistic for those Protestants who are still suspicious of what they regard as an undue Catholic emphasis on Mary to ponder. It is just one among several illuminating asides in this book.

One feels that in a few cases the wealth of historical detail swamps the highlighting of key issues for continuing debate. However, in general, this is an extremely useful book, giving an unrivalled introduction to the context of English ecumenism and setting it well in the context of wider developments. It deserves to be well used.

David Carter.

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## ALICE, WHERE ART THOU?

In section 2 of *Called to be One*, the compilers of the report deal with The Church, referring specifically to the question "How does your church understand the meaning of the word Church, and how do you use the word?" From the reply of the Church of England at paragraph 2.6 is quoted: "During this century it (the Church of England) has gradually come to govern its own affairs, having to resort to Parliament's approval for fewer measures, although in law parliament still retains ultimate authority in many matters."

To assure member churches of Churches Together in England that unity does not mean uniformity, the term "Acceptable variation" was adopted. It is not to be expected that the fact that one member has to defer to a body outside itself for approval of its decisions could come under the heading of an acceptable variation. Whatever advantages state control over the Church of England may have had in the past, it surely is an anachronism in the context of Churches Together in England today.

In this connection, the authors of the report say (2.24) : "Establishment is a complex web of Church-State relationships and attitudes which have changed considerably in this century": they then go on to their analysis of the opinions offered on this subject which they had received from Churches Together in England member organisations.

These opinions range from about Theta to Omega. I sense a vacuum at the Alpha end of the scale because, it seems, from the comment of the Church of England at 2.6, quoted above, that even that Church feels it has an albatross around its neck.

Disestablishment has, of course, been mooted many times, but this is negative and suggests the elimination of much that is good in the present dispensation, a couple of such items are mentioned at 2.24. My own feeling is that when the unacceptable aspect of establishment is expunged and unity achieved, the acceptable areas would continue in the united Church.

The unacceptable aspect is, of course, Parliamentary domination of the Church of England. Caesar arrogating to himself that which does not belong to him, a Caesar in the shape of an assembly comprising not only Anglicans, but other Christians, those of other faiths and those of none.

How can this problem be overcome?

Good question. It is a bit of an *Alice in Wonderland* situation isn't it? As Parliament has the ultimate authority in the Church of England it is only Parliament that can shed itself of it, and the giving up of power voluntarily is seldom on the agenda of a Politician; the *turkey voting for Christmas* syndrome. Of course, if we were in Wonderland, the Archbishop of Canterbury could proclaim a Unilateral declaration of independence, or alternatively, the four Presidents could invite the British Parliament to become a Body in Association with Churches Together in England; but as we are not in Wonderland we shall have to wait and see what the Holy Spirit has up his sleeve for us.

Sidney Ratcliff

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## LIGHT FROM THE EAST

During 1995 Pope John Paul II produced two important documents on Christian Unity. On 2nd May he wrote an Apostolic Letter *Orientalis Lumen* concerning the separated Eastern Churches, and on 25th May an Encyclical Letter *Ut Unum Sint* on commitment to Ecumenism. Both were addressed to the Bishops, Clergy and Faithful. It is natural that we have concentrated on the latter, as more directly concerning us in our relationship with our fellow Christians here in England. But the Pope emphasises that the Eastern Churches are our concern too.

*Orientalis Lumen* is in three parts:

1. Introduction
2. Knowing the Christian East
3. Encountering the Christian East.

INTRODUCTION of Jesus Christ our Lord, Redeemer of man and hope of the world, as the Light from the East (*Orientalis Lumen*) who appeared as a Rising Sun (Luke 1:78). Christianity is not a Western religion, for it was from Jerusalem, the Mother of all the Churches, that the Gospel was preached to all nations. In the process, various cultures and traditions were embraced and welcomed.

A hundred years ago, Pope Leo XIII sought to safeguard the significance of Eastern traditions in the Church, and the present Apostolic Letter commemorates the letter *Orientalium Dignitas* which he wrote at that time. Those traditions are an integral part of our Christian heritage, and we of the Latin Rite should be familiar with them, and nourished by them.

Twice the present Pope, "son of a Slav people", mentions Saints Cyril and Methodius as examples of inculturation (or as it used to be called, missionary adaptation). They immersed themselves in the cultures and lives of the peoples they had come to evangelise, yet, in their search for communion between East and West, retained a passion for the universality of the Church. Liturgy and catechesis were adapted to the culture and language of the people.

The Pope sees one of the special accomplishments of the various Eastern Churches as being this ability to achieve 'Christian inculturation'.

Our ideal must be harmony in a plurality of forms. There can be no second thoughts about pursuing the path of unity. It is a longing we all share, and the process is irreversible. We must answer together the cry of men and women today who seek meaning for their lives. We should concentrate on the essentials, not on jealous attachment to feelings and memories.

KNOWING THE CHRISTIAN EAST The different approaches and methods adopted by East and West lead to a fuller appreciation of the various aspects of one mystery. They are complementary rather than conflicting. Taken together, they give a more complete response to the expectations of men and women today.

**a) The Liturgy** Everyone knows with what love the Eastern Churches celebrate the sacred liturgy. Through the Eucharist, our source of divine life and pledge of future glory, we enter into communion with the Most Holy Trinity, eminently real, though



unknowable to us; and we become 'sharers of the divine nature'. In Eastern Liturgy and theology there is a great emphasis on the role of the Holy Spirit. In the Eucharist the Word becomes flesh, and we become one with Him; 'kinsmen'. And the Eucharist is the pledge of future glory, the *maranatha* constantly repeated and lived. The whole of creation finds its perfection in the liturgy. Each human person is involved in his/her totality. Bodilyness is summoned to praise; beauty appears everywhere - in the design of churches, in the sound of music, the colour of the splendid vestments, the light of candles and the perfume of incense.

In the very length of the Eastern liturgy, the whole person, feeling and reasoning is taken up. Matter is not rejected, but transfigured. The dignity, respect and purpose of the whole of creation, and especially of the human body, is affirmed.

Eastern liturgy expresses the reality of both tradition and expectation. We are not prisoners of the present; we look back to the past (tradition) and forward to the future (eschatological expectation). Tradition is the living memory of the Risen Christ, handed on and guaranteed by apostolic succession and witnessed to by Martyrs, Fathers and Saints, and by all Christians. It is not an unchanging repetition of Formulae, but the living memory of the Church, the Bride of Christ. However, the Holy Spirit has something to say to the people of every age. We must not make an absolute of what we are doing now, or have done in the past. With eschatological expectation and longing we are open to God's future. We are urged to become what we have not yet fully become. It may be for others in the future to bring our efforts to fulfilment.

**b) The Monastic Life** In the East, life of the monk or nun is seen, not so much as a separate way of life for a few, but rather as a reference point and pattern for all Christians; as a symbolic synthesis of Christianity.

The monk responds to the Word of God calling him to obedience, to the listening that changes his life. He reads, understands, assimilates and finally sings with his brothers the prayer that sanctifies time. He pleads for forgiveness and glorifies God.

In his prayer, he sees all creation through history as progressively identified with the whole Christ. We become gradually 'conformed to Christ' detached from external things, in a constant process of conversion and inner quiet, gradually getting rid of all duplicity and ambiguity. We go on searching for God, and find Him in the depth of our hearts.

The monk prays for the world. His vocation is born of the Church and is for the Church. He prays for all men and women and for all creation. His openness to God makes him a man of charity, for whom love is above all law. His love is shown in service of his brethren, and of the whole Church community, in social service, and especially in evangelisation.

Because Jesus alone is 'the Way, the Truth and the Life', for the monk spirituality and theology are united. The Word became flesh in order that man should 'become God'. The bitter taste of human limitation and sinfulness does not depress him, for man is not left alone to attempt the ascent to heaven. Divine and human meet in Christ, and can never be separated. Through grace we 'become God'. To know the Holy Trinity as a community of love is to realise God's love for us, sinners though we are. The Father desires that we be moulded in the image of His Son, 'icons of the Icon'.

The mystery of God's love is shown in the death and resurrection of Christ, the guarantee that no one can destroy love.

The more we come to know God, the more we realise His absolute transcendence, and are reduced to silence, lest we create an image of our own in place of God. That silence is filled with His presence. In worship, prayer and preaching we make room for God's presence, avoiding self-celebration. Man deafens himself with noise, fearing the emptiness that makes him ask about the meaning of life. We need silence to allow God to speak, and ourselves to hear Him.

Each monk has a spiritual father, and his way to God is personal and varied. Some brothers and sisters are recognised as gifted spiritual guides, helping others to find the way of truth. We need such guides, who do not try to make us like themselves, but help us to find our own way. In all this, the life of a monk is seen as the pattern for all Christians.

2. ENCOUNTERING THE CHRISTIAN EAST It is now 20 years since Vatican II, when we all realised the need to come together. We have had many meetings in that time, calling for union between our Churches and peace for the world. Both sides, East and West, have often been to blame for our sad divisions. We must make fresh courageous gestures in the cause of unity. We must go further, not turn back. The sin of our separation is very serious.

The history of the Early Church shows a full communion of faith. People overcame misunderstandings and respected the identity and specific features of different parts of the Church They felt at home in any church, praising the Holy Trinity and celebrating the Holy Eucharist in a variety of liturgies, languages and music. The first General Councils bear witness to that enduring unity In diversity. There were, of course, dogmatic misunderstandings, often magnified by political and cultural differences, and these led to divisions, yet unity between Rome and Constantinople endured for a thousand years. The reciprocal excommunication of 1054 (abrogated by Pope Paul VI and Patriarch Athenagoras I in 1965) was caused, not so much over historical episodes or arguments about pre-eminence, but by progressive estrangement, so that diversity came to be seen, no longer as a treasure, but as a matter of incompatibility. St Peter was charged by Christ to confirm his brothers in faith and unity, and that is the Pope's task today, not creating obstacles but opening paths. Hence Pope Benedict XV in 1917 created the Congregation for the Oriental Churches and the Pontifical Oriental Institute; Pope John XXIII, in 1950, founded the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity; and in 1990 the present Pope promulgated a new code of Canon Law for the Eastern Churches. Past efforts have been limited by the mentality of the times and our imperfect understanding of the Church.

When Jesus charged St Peter to 'strengthen your brethren' (Luke 22:32), he went on to warn Peter of his human weakness, "before the cock crows you will deny me three times". As if to say: "You too, Peter, need endless conversion. You cannot teach or live the truth except by loving."

Unity will only be achieved if the churches want it together. Each must respect the other's dignity. The Latin Church must not claim that all her usages and customs

are more complete, or better suited to showing the truth. There must be an 'awareness of communion', not only among leaders but permeating the whole Church. Our love must be sensitive and creative, perhaps going beyond forms already tried in history. Communion will be achieved only when and how the Lord requires.

The Pope urges the Catholic Eastern (Uniate) Churches to be aware of their own originality and authenticity, keeping to their ancient traditions. In spite of past misunderstandings with the Orthodox, both sides need a constant, shared conversion. The Latin Church must fully respect the dignity of the Eastern Christians and their essential contribution to the full realisation of the universality of the Church

As St Paul, writing from the East, showed appreciation of the faith of Roman Christians, and longed to meet and share with them (Rom 1 : 8-10) so should we of the West today appreciate and long to meet the East as brothers and sisters.

Recent events in Central and Eastern Europe have meant that Christian brothers and sisters are regarding one another with suspicion and fear, just when greater hopes of freedom are appearing. There have also been certain tensions between Rome and the Eastern Churches following events in Eastern Europe and Russia. We need to open our hearts to each other, take courageous, concrete steps, break through clichés, and feelings of resignation and stalemate. In helping those in need, let there be no humiliation or rivalry. The Pope asks especially for prayers for himself and for Catholic Bishops. We cannot be fully credible, he says, when celebrating the Eucharist, the Sacrament of Communion, if we remain divided. He urges Catholics, especially priests and seminarians, to improve their knowledge of the Eastern Churches through study and dialogue - their liturgy, their spirituality, their methods of inculturation. Monasteries are asked to make special efforts to meet their Eastern brethren; as also are Universities. He recommends twinning of parishes, joint pilgrimages and joint veneration of martyrs.

In lands of the diaspora (e.g. North America, Australia and England) where the faithful of Eastern Churches live scattered in a mainly Latin environment, our Bishops are urged to be welcoming, to share teaching resources, etc , but at the same time to encourage Eastern Catholics to hold on to their own traditions. Catholic Bishops of Eastern and Western Rites are urged to work together in the apostolate, and Eastern Catholic and Orthodox Bishops to cooperate in an atmosphere of brotherhood. Eastern Catholic Churches are urged to follow the monastic life as a means of church growth, effective pastoral ministry and greater stability.

The Pope ends his Apostolic Letter with a final message to the Patriarch Bishops, priests, deacons, monks, nuns, women and men of the Eastern Churches. We are brothers and sisters redeemed by the same Lord. We feel a 'holy nostalgia' for the full communion in faith and charity of the first millennium. Our sins and mutual misunderstandings have deprived the world of a joint witness which could have avoided tragedies, and perhaps changed the course of history.

Mary, icon of the Church and model and hope for us all, points us to the *Oriente Lumen*, the star which will rise again in the East.

Sadly, says the Pope, we cannot yet share the same Eucharist. The words of the West need the words of the East (elsewhere the Pope has spoken of East and West as the 'two lungs' through which the Holy Spirit breathes). We shall surely meet in

heaven, but why not now on earth? May we soon, very soon, see that we are walking towards one Lord, and thus towards one another. So may the people of the world find reason to believe and to hope.

*This short summary cannot do justice to all that the Pope has said, but I hope it will encourage you to read *Oriental Lumen* for yourself and to take a deeper interest in the Eastern Churches.*

CANON WILLIAM CLEMENTS

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