

CR



QUARTERLY REVIEW OF THE COMMUNITY OF THE RESURRECTION

Lady Day 2011

Number 433



Title: Leopard and Kid

Media: Oil on wood

Size: 20" diameter

Artist: Revd Matthew Askey

Picture Prayer Meditation – A Peace that Unites

- ⁶ The wolf will live with the lamb,
the leopard will lie down with the goat,
the calf and the lion and the yearling together;
and a little child will lead them.
- ⁷ The cow will feed with the bear,
their young will lie down together,
and the lion will eat straw like the ox.
- ⁸ The infant will play near the cobra's den,
the young child will put its hand into the viper's nest.
- ⁹ They will neither harm nor destroy
on all my holy mountain,
for the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the LORD
as the waters cover the sea.

(Isaiah 11: 6-9. NIV)

‘...*the leopard will lie down with the goat,*’ is an image of reconciliation and peace, but also an image of two quite unequal creatures in the scheme of creation being united in spirit and peace – the goat kid being the natural prey and food for the leopard. As an image of peace it is an interesting one, filled with contradictions as it defies our expectations. The lion will eat straw like the ox... It is an image of differences being overcome and accepted in order to find peace. It is clear from the scriptures that God loves difference – different creatures and ways of being abundant in creation; God abhorred Babel (*Genesis* 11) and its attempt at a totalitarian state where all had to speak the same language; God wants us to be different and to hold different opinions and traditions. It is also clear that God doesn't like division (*1Cor* 1:10ff) but wants us to share a united spirit of mutual love and care. So, *difference* = good; *division* = bad.

The vision of God's Kingdom, seen in this image and from our passage of Isaiah 11, and shown by Jesus, is a vision of difference welcoming difference; of being united but not alike. *Amen.*

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Superior's Notes



The photo shows brethren and friends putting our first Appeal Newsletter into envelopes – a mammoth task that took three mornings to complete. 3,500 went by post and 750 by email. We hope to produce a newsletter every few weeks, but due to the costs and labour of posting, they will be mostly sent by email. If you miss out, do let us know.

Our fundraising consultant is astonished at the level of support we have had from our friends – ordinary donations are now approaching half a million pounds. Thank you all for this wonderful support. We have now begun a drive on approaching potential large donors and applying to trusts for grants. The target is to raise a further £500,000 from these sources by August. There will still be further to go of course, but we are now confident that the work is do-able – the builders will be starting on 4th April, with an end date for phase 1 of 6th November, after which we will be able to move back into the church. On the Inside Back Cover of this issue is a computer-generated impression of how the church will look when complete.

Jacob Pallett was made a novice on 27th February; we now have two novices, with a third expecting to come in the summer. The producer of the TV series *Hairy Bikers* has visited to talk about basing an episode here, which might go out in the spring. Guy Laurie our General Manager is busy developing the use of the site

and hiring out facilities to increase our income – already some wedding receptions are booked this year to be held at the College. At the Community, a fresh coat of paint on the ground floor has made us ready for groups who will be hiring the Community's facilities.

The Community continues to study, minister and pray, and to help us keep to it we have introduced an additional annual retreat, after Christmas. The task of discerning what it is to be faithful to God in modern times is as demanding for us as it is for other Christians, and we regularly spend time reflecting on this with the help of our professional facilitators. We have recently had discussions on the challenge of giving ourselves wholly to our calling: in the midst of potential distractions, like all Christians we have continually to stay awake and pray for a full engagement with our vocation. In that vein, we wish you a constant renewal in your discipleship and, in due course, a joyful Easter.

George Guiver CR

Development of a Spiritual Centre

Impressions of the January General Chapter at Mirfield

The close bond between our Community and the Anglican Community of the Resurrection in Mirfield has found expression in different ways over the years. We make the annual group visits, individual brothers also pass by on holiday, and in these there have always been practical opportunities for cooperation, particularly in the context of ecumenism. The most recent sign of our close brotherhood was an invitation from the Mirfield brethren for me to take part in their week-long January Chapter to accompany and advise them both fraternally and professionally in their building and development plans. The detailed discussions during this week had been preceded by lengthy and comprehensive planning processes for the church refurbishment and re-ordering, the building of a new monastery, and the overall concept for the site's development. By inviting me as a both monk and a town planner the brethren hoped I would enable some useful insights into the difficulties of the planning process, which was now at the stage of basic and final decisions.

With this as the background I was able to set up three sessions through the week. My aim was to enable the brethren to build a bridge between the seemingly very different worlds of religious communities and planning authorities, and so to bring into the process some new skills and insights. First of all the brothers were asked to draw a picture based on the Biblical text of the New Jerusalem (see Rev.21.9 – 22.5) – both as a loosening-up exercise and also as an introduction to a practical approach to town planning via an appropriate text. The second step was for the brothers to place a small icon of Christ on a part of the site which particularly spoke to them of encounter with Christ, and then to discuss it. I began the final session with some telling observations and questions, some of them provocative, about the present and future plans. A varied and stimulating discussion followed, out of which we identified practical areas for action and tasks to undertake.

Overall this cooperative working together was felt by everyone to have worked very well: the brethren were motivated and open at each step of the process, and said it had left them with many new insights and ideas for the ongoing process of developing the site. I was very happy with this, as I could see I was being useful as a bridgebuilder. It was a very positive experience of brotherly cooperation with obvious good will and wonderful hospitality, and I returned home very thankful. These enriching and moving experiences have deepened my personal relationship to the Community of the Resurrection and to individual brothers. As a gift for our Community I was able to bring back the certainty that this encounter would also help strengthen the close bond between our two communities.



Brother Simeon Friedrich OSB St. Matthias, Trier.

The Font and the Spiral

I served my curacy in a strangely designed church in Galesburg, Illinois. It was a historic parish, but the original building that they had constructed downtown exceeded its sell-by date in the early 1960s. The property on which the old building stood was highly coveted by the downtown hospital, which made the parish an offer they couldn't refuse. A new much larger property was purchased on the edge of town, and an up-and-coming church architect was hired to design the new physical plant. The parish instructed the architect to design a building for the 21st century which could incorporate Christian symbols new and old. The completed building shocked and displeased some of the parish, but many of them were thrilled at its innovative design: it is a spiral, with the sanctuary at the center, radiating out into fellowship space, classrooms, and offices at the outermost edges. To justify his design, and to stave off his detractors, the architect explained how the logarithmic spiral was the ideal Christian symbol for a new millennium.

The logarithmic spiral is a mathematical feature that occurs in nature at every imaginable level. It turns up in surprising places, from the arrangement of seeds on a sunflower's head or petals of a rose to the shape of galaxies; from the way water swirls down the drain to the way subatomic particles behave. The mathematics behind this spiral allows people to draw connections between objects which seem totally dissimilar and remote from one another. To the architect of Grace Church Galesburg, it spoke of the beauty and balance of nature, the interconnectedness of all things, as well as the need for Christianity to utilise science and mathematics as tools for evangelisation and mission. If we give any credit to natural theology, the idea that nature is shot through with signs of the Creator, then surely, from its sheer ubiquity, this spiral must be something like the thumbprint of God.

Mathematically, the logarithmic spiral occurs naturally as the combination of two other fundamental mathematical objects: the circle and the exponential curve. Historically, the circle has



certainly done its bit as a fundamental symbol of Christianity: it points to a pattern with no beginning and no end; it reminds us of the cycles of our days, our seasons, and our liturgical year; it is our advent wreath; it is the crown of thorns; it is the wedding band. And what's more, nature is absolutely full of circles. The exponential curve, discovered in the 16th century, is rather more modern idea. But nature and the mathematics that describe it are just as shot through with this figure. This curve surfaces whenever we talk about birth and death, life and growth, inclusion and incorporation. Mathematically, it has all the hallmarks of simplicity and balance and beauty that attract the scientific mind, and leave it to ponder questions of meaning and origin that are strictly beyond the bounds of science; and any mathematical study of nature must include this figure. The logarithmic spiral is the synthesis of these two mathematical objects, the circle and the growth curve. It is the combination of our tried and true symbol of eternity and unity and this symbol of new life and growth. It can be viewed as flowing outward, symbolising divine emanation and growth, or it can be seen as flowing inward, symbolising the ever more intimate pilgrimage into the heart of God.

In practice, the spiral had mixed results as an architectural model for the new church in Galesburg. It produced a building which was disorienting to visitors because of its long curving passages, and problematic for the placement of square church furnishings like pews and carpets. Grace Church was not a place where you could really have a proper solemn high procession with the station at the shrine of our Lady (although that didn't stop them from trying). People tripped over one another on the way to and from communion, and every once in a while someone who thought they were sneaking quietly into the back of the church snuck in through the main sanctuary door. But did that make the architect's vision of the use of the spiral as a symbol of the meeting between new life and eternal life worthless? Certainly not. Symbols are not ends in themselves, but means; they are used to direct our minds toward a deeper reality. At their best, they challenge us and push



us toward new and undreamt of possibilities and connections.

My training incumbent, who was a staunch traditionalist, complained that the spiral was ‘an innovation’, and that the Church had no need of new symbols. The spiral is anything but new, however; it is most commonly associated with the early Celtic Christian tradition, but it can be found in the symbolism of early Judaism and primitive Christianity as well. The symbolism of the spiral was not lost on the illuminators of the Book of Kells or the Lindisfarne Gospels; two spiral arcs form the *ichthus*, one of the earliest Christian symbols; and the geometry of the spiral was an essential element in the design of the Second Temple in Jerusalem. While for some, the use of Celtic symbols in Christian worship feels ‘new-agey’, surely the fact that the worship of the Primitive Church, and likely of Our Lord Himself in the Temple, included the spiral symbol, is sufficient to rebuff any claims of needless innovation associated with its use.

When I heard of CR’s plan to install a font in Upper Church in the shape of the spiral, my immediate reaction was one of caution. After all, I had recently spent time trying to figure out how to conduct a solemn Te Deum in an awkward spiral-shaped liturgical space. But no such compromise is necessary here. Instead, it seems a well-considered approach to symbolism and meaning has been blended with the functional needs of the Community and College. I confess I also wondered what need an ageing monastic community had of a font at all, but then I recalled that not only is the monastic church the heart of the College’s and Community’s Paschal celebration, but also that the best theology of the last century has proven to us that vocation and formation are inseparable from the mystery of baptism. It is the baptismal covenant, more than any other sacramental covenant, that the Community strives to live out authentically, and it is in the context of the call to baptise the nations that priestly formation can occur. It is my hope that this new font in Upper Church will serve as a constant physical reminder of those mysteries, while challenging our minds to meditate on the beauty of creation and the growth of the Kingdom of God.

Michael Green,
former student CoR and now Parish Priest at
St Luke’s, Dixon, Illinois, USA

Monks and nuns meet at The Huysburg



November saw Antony and Thomas make a trip to the Abbey on the Huysburg, the eastern wing of the Community at Trier with which we have been happily linked for more than forty years. The Abbey on the Huysburg is an upstart in comparison with St Matthias – only going back to the beginning of the last millennium. It has been extensively restored and is a pilgrimage site in the diocese of Magdeburg.

Antony and I were there for a conversation on monasticism in a secular world which involves the brethren from St Matthias and also sisters from Dinklage and Alexanderdorf, near Osnabrück and Berlin respectively. Our reflections were introduced by a sister from the Benedictine community in München, where members do everyday work to support themselves. A sociologist she introduced to us an analysis of German society using the concept of ‘milieu’ to break down the various ways in which Germans relate or do not relate to the church. ‘Milieu’ denotes a grouping, a kind of life world of shared values and attitudes, with certain economic and social aspirations.

A recent survey (2010) has presented three milieux which give the church a hearing, are ‘addressable’. These take up about two fifths of the population. As one might expect it includes people of conservative religious outlook as well as those who

live in relationship with tradition and according to the morals and values which feed on it. One of the striking results of the survey was the degree to which even among those who thought they gave heed to the church and teaching, there were many who were inclined to pick and choose among things to do and believe.

This tendency makes itself apparent in all milieux; there is in all parts of German life an increase in people doing their own thing often in lived contradiction to other aspects of their world outlook. In milieux where the church was not present, there were expectations of what the church should be and how relationship to God might exist. Two of us were struck by the extent to which God and the church did figure in the responses to the survey and how little evidence of an outlook hostile to God was found.

In these respects one suspects that the United Kingdom would yield different results were the survey to be conducted here. Religion has a greater role in Germany than in the UK and where is no place yet for the intellectually yobbish atheism that is becoming the new affectation of the liberal bourgeoisie here. One suspects however that the individualism, with its claims to a self-determining autonomy, has sunk deeply its roots also in the UK.

Such suspicions are but speculative; this was a survey which was to open up reflection on how we as religious might seek to relate better both to the milieux which are already accessible and also to those which are not. Happily, the conference was not seduced by the idea of adapting everything to every possible shape or allowing a perceived set of mores to sing the tune to which we dance. Such approaches are rarely fruitful and, as is generally recognised, amount to a form of self-abolition.

Four questions were posed to the conference, which divided also into four groups, ‘what do you think there is about our life which is attractive?’, ‘what do you bring with you from the milieu of your brothers/sisters?’, ‘what does enclosure mean in the world of mobiles and internet?’, ‘how do we sit at the lodge of our monastery so as to communicate the gospel?’ A long list of responses assembled itself – with areas of weakness identified in our lives which seemed to be common to all our

communities – I am not sure whether I should feel anxious or at ease that getting hold of a brother/sister is as much a hard climb in Germany as it is in Yorkshire! There was a shared view that being a place apart, where speech to and about God is both real and possible is something found a pull about the way we lived. A readiness for adaptability within the freedom given through the vocation received was noted, but it was thought important to have one to one contact with those in the milieux apart, such as those in the arts or the performing worlds.

Perhaps sadly, perhaps predictably, much attention was given to the challenge to the faithfulness of our life, which the arrival of the modern media presented. All the older brethren lamented that ‘we did not do that in our day’, but younger brethren were not so easily persuaded that it was only in recent years that we had all gone individualist. ‘Did not that brother wear long hair in the 1960s and red socks in choir?’ No-one would suggest that anyone needed a Blackberry, but would it not be a good thing if we were all accessible to one another if we all had a mobile and would not that assist our interdependence? Not everyone was convinced; was promiscuous accessibility really a good? Were not there better ways to further transparency to our brethren? Certainly this seems an area where some work might be done.

This is where we ended up; perhaps it was not the most useful place to end. Of more import was the suggestion made from the banks of the Isar, that we would do well to develop competence in speaking the languages of the various milieux, becoming multilingual. Mixing the metaphor somewhat, it was urged to listen to those milieux which were far from the church, not to get them into the boot of the church’s car, but to hear what they had to tell us about God.

Thomas Seville CR

Type in *Sinus-Milieus* on google
for more about this sociological approach.

Highly Recommended!

The day had arrived. Everything was ready. We looked out of the window and couldn't believe our eyes. It was snowing. Hopefully not for long or were we being optimistic? Did we need to cancel? Would we get there and more importantly would we get back with the star of the evening?

Thankfully by lunchtime the snow had turned to rain and we set off to pick up the guest who was coming to entertain us. We managed to get back despite the fog. Would people turn out?

Oh ye of little faith! Companions, friends, members of the congregation and others gathered at Goldthorpe parish hall. The pie and pea supper got us off to a good start.

A solitary table and chair on the stage awaited the guest speaker. Following introductions and explanations as to why we were there our guest climbed the steps. Could the green balloons attached to the chair be a clue. Yes. Fr John CR had arrived to entertain us with "an evening of Blarney". And he did ---- as those of us who had experienced his storytelling before knew he would. The laughs came in the right places, some of the punch-lines already anticipated, old memories from childhood and adolescence were stirred, every aspect of life touched upon and there were one or two tears.

It was a great evening – not my words but those of the people who were there. They were still talking about it the following day. All for a good cause.

If you haven't booked Fr John yet arrange a date as soon as you can. If you were there why not host an evening in your parish? I'm assured there are more stories.

Thank you, Fr John.

Pauline Briscoe Companion CR



SWAP YOU FOR YER DANDY

An Evening of Blarney

In which Fr John Gribben will read the adventures of a group of young rascals from the streets of Belfast in the early fifties.

If you are a glutton for nostalgia, if you like old comics, if you are not put off by rude playground humour, if you enjoy a good laugh (and a good cry) why not come along and relax for the evening and take a trip down memory lane?

e-mail: jgribben@mirfield.org.uk to arrange an evening

Of Penzance, Port Royal and Puntland

“Hurrah for our Pirate King,” sings the chorus in *The Pirates of Penzance*, and the man himself continues,

“And it is, it is a glorious thing
to be a Pirate King.”

The rocky coves of the Cornish coast harboured many a wrecker and provided safe hideouts for smugglers, but W.S. Gilbert’s lyrics suggest that more pirates are concealed in the “cheating world ... where pirates all are well-to-do”, than on the sea shore. The writers poked fun at the double standards that often pass as staid respectability. By contrast, the Pirate King is boldly honest about his crimes.

“When I sally forth to seek my prey
I help myself in a royal way.”

The pirates have a fearsome reputation, but tender-heartedly let go of any sailors who claim to be orphans, because they were orphans themselves. By the end of the operetta the audience is completely sympathetic as the forces of law and order step back, and everything is forgiven. We love the rogues.

A lovable rogue appears also in Captain Jack Sparrow (who, I hasten to add, is no relative of mine) in the series of films *Pirates of the Caribbean*. Imaginatively portrayed by the actor Johnny Depp, the pirate captain draws our sympathy and stirs our affection, as he, the underdog, struggles, survives and prevails against mightier and more powerful foes. He risks his own life to try to save his crew and his ship. With the help of special effects created in the Walt Disney studios, the films portray a world far removed from reality. These films have done much to shape the image of pirates in the popular imagination: swash-buckling, anti-establishment heroes, who are good guys at heart. These “pirates” have accumulated takings of almost three billion US Dollars, and they are still counting.

Also still counting are the pirates of Puntland. No-one really knows how much money they have taken – it is certainly a very lucrative business. Ships and their crews are hijacked and taken to the pirates’ bases in north east Somalia, and ransoms are demanded. In the early cases, six years ago, the demands were hundreds of thousands of US dollars, but the pirates’ success has led to ever

increasing claims. Now the figures are routinely between three and five million. It is said that nine and a half million dollars was paid in December 2010 for the release of an oil tanker.

Are *these* pirates lovable rogues? Some think so. Writing in *The East African* (October 13-19, 2008), Paul Goldsmith claimed, "The Pirates of Puntland are social bandits in the tradition of Robin Hood, not buccaneers. They steal from the rich and share the cash with extremely poor communities." A chaplain of The Mission to Seafarers was quoted in *The Church Times* (3 July 2009) advocating the same point of view. A British Royal Marine on anti-piracy patrols in the Gulf of Aden told me that he and his colleagues felt sorry for the young, stick-thin pirates.

If we should feel sorry for them it is because those semi-educated young men are being used by rich and powerful people to carry out criminal activities. Before the Robin Hood argument appeared, attempts were made to justify the pirates' activity as a defence against illegal fishing in Somali waters. That was shown to be no more than a public relations ploy, when the pirates extended their reach far beyond the 200 mile economic zone, roaming all over the northern Indian Ocean. Ships have been attacked close to Oman and India, the Seychelles and Tanzania. Mother ships are used to launch several small high speed boats. The pirate gangs are trained to carry out fast surprise attacks. They surround a merchant vessel and fire AK47s and rocket propelled grenades, intending to force the ship to stop. Once they take control of a ship, they order the Master to sail to Somalia. Evidence from former hostages and other sources tells that once off the Somali coast the hijacking gang are paid off and replaced by other men. No doubt the young men are well rewarded, but what they get is only a small proportion of the eventual ransom. Where do the millions of dollars go? Most of Somalia is said to be controlled by a few powerful warlords. The civil war continues and arming militias costs money. We read of Somali businessmen investing large sums in Kenya, Dubai, Canada and other countries. The money is certainly not being used to improve the lot of extremely poor communities in Somalia.

Unlike Gilbert and Sullivan's pirates, these do not, tender-heartedly, let go of their captives. This is no Walt Disney fantasy world, but harsh reality. Seafarers have told me of their sheer terror as the pirate boats approached at speed, with the pirates firing their

weapons. Some unsuccessful attacks are mercifully brief, but others go on for extended periods. The unarmed merchant ship is harried and fired upon for 1½ or 2 hours, before eventually escaping. Those boarded by pirates are forced at gunpoint to co-operate. Released hostages have told me how they were [are] treated. In most cases, all the ship's personnel have been kept together in one room day and night, under armed guard. One crew told me they were forced to squat on their haunches with their hands clasped behind their necks for hours on end. Another crew told me that they had to sleep at night wherever they could in the wheelhouse for the four months they were held. Conditions on board become very unhygienic. The water and food run out. Rice is brought from the shore, but often it is barely edible. Psychological pressure is applied. Sometimes one man will be taken out by the pirates and no-one knows his fate until he is returned some while later. Telephone calls are put through to the seafarers' families at home, increasing distress all round. As ransom demands increase, so the seafarers' captivity lengthens. The average is currently four months, but some are held for six or seven months or more. When the crew is eventually released, they are often left with nothing more than the clothes they are wearing. The pirates go through the cabins, and take almost everything.

There is a perception that Somali pirates do not harm the crews. That is not what I see and hear. Physical harm seems to be limited to those seafarers who resist (eight men from a North Korean ship were hospitalised in Mombasa after fighting off a pirate attack – three were critical). Psychological harm is more difficult to assess, but almost all seafarers held hostage, and many who suffer attacks at sea, experience some after-effects of the trauma. Some will never sail again. It is alleged that some of the hostages are used as human shields by pirates carrying out new attacks. As 2010 passed into 2011, more than six hundred seafarers were hostages in Somalia. Further successful hijackings took the number above seven hundred by the end of January.

If seven hundred civilians were being held hostage by armed men demanding ransom money in London, or Berlin, New York or Tokyo, it would not be tolerated. Why is it different for international seafarers?

What are the world's politicians doing? They talk of the answer



Captain Jonathan Funa of the m.v. Safmarine Bandama is showing me the remains of two rocket propelled grenades fired at his ship during an unsuccessful hijacking attempt, May 2009

being a stable government in Somalia but at present, after twenty years of anarchy, that is a pipe dream. In 2010 a senior officer of EUNAVFOR, the European Union's anti-piracy naval task force, told me that it had been decided to take a more robust approach to the pirates because the economic costs had become too high.

The East African countries are suffering from the increased cost of imports. Trying to evade pirates, ships make longer voyages, consuming more bunker oil and paying high rates for insurance, as well as incurring expense for special security measures on board. The talk of stable governments and economic costs shows that politicians are not taking seriously the critical situation that faces seafarers now. Last year the European Union's naval liaison team was evicted from their office in Mombasa because the rent had not been paid.

"The reality in Somalia is that the pirates are not trying to steal the cargo or the ship itself – they're trying to take control of crew so they can ransom them," said Roger Middleton of Chatham House, in an interview for *Time* magazine. (May 7, 2010). Most seafarers think that not enough is being done to protect them.

Michael Sparrow, Oblate CR

Port Chaplain, The Mission to Seafarers, Mombasa, Kenya.

“I die, therefore I live”

An interview with Dee Howley

Dee you have cancer and you know it is terminal. That sounds like really bad news, but you seem to be full of joy. What would you say about that?

I'm in the midst of life. I feel deprived on the one hand, yes, but I'm being given so much on the other.

Could you tell me the course your cancer took?

Four years ago I was diagnosed with cancer and had all the treatment which took several months, but in the end I was pronounced clear. Then after about a year it was back, terminal.

How did you feel when you were told that?

How did I feel? I had a feeling it was back. I knew that secondaries would mean it was terminal. Still, it was a shock, especially when the doctor said bluntly, “You won't see next Christmas, love.” I felt disorientated. I had built up my life again after the first bout. Everything was going well. I enjoyed my work. I felt cheated. I was angry; also a bit numb.

I like a goal in life. I like to see some time into the future. I like to see a purpose. it took a week for all this to sink in. Then I thought , I can either just cry “Poor me”, or I can set about changing things. so I stopped working as a therapist. I couldn't really engage with people and their problems. But that was hard. Work is who you are.

People feel tongue tied with a person who has terminal illness. What can we talk about without being insensitive or banal?

Float a question (but not in a supermarket!) like, Are you coping? Can we help?

What are the hard things about dying?

The hard thing is the bereavements, the losses. “I won't do this again.” Possibilities of change are no more. Leaving the children and grandchildren is hard. I keep wondering ‘Have I taught them enough?’

But something else has been created which is really wonderful. Because there is no future, the past has become irrelevant. I am no longer held by the past. I must be entirely present in the present which is like a pure space because I'm not really in this world anymore. Because the past is only relevant to the future the past loses its power over you.

I feel this is how it might be in the afterlife. This is what it is to be free for the first time in my life. This is as close to pure living as I can be. The passion for living has increased without pressure or expectation from anyone or anything.

So what do you enjoy in this new life?

Nature. Trees. everything looks bigger, brighter, more beautiful, more colourful. The combinations of colours are amazing. I value relationships more because people can afford to be more real with me and I can see them more clearly. Grief is not having had the relationships you wanted with people when they were around.

How does God come into this?

God is very protective. He feels much closer. I have more time for the relationship with him. I used to tear past God. Now our relationship is deepening daily.

Angels are very close. I feel sometimes wrapped with six wings. I feel so privileged. I am more aware of angels, because so much in this life doesn't matter now. I think I am getting insights and understandings I didn't have before; like forgiveness: everything seems a lot more simple.

The love of God is much more available to me. Maybe I know more about love now than I did before.

Are you angry with God?

Not in the least angry with God. I have not thought for one minute "Why me?" I think we are given choices in our life, but we make bad choices. We are so blind, deaf and self-serving. We don't see the choices. How can I look on this as a bad thing? There are good things about it: I'm not going to get Alzheimers, or rheumatism or have to go into an old people's home.

None of this is easy, but the burden is light.

What about the pain?

Pain and sickness are a nuisance because they stop me thoroughly enjoying this time. But pain and sickness loosen your grip on life, and that is necessary. My overall feeling is of being protected.

You feel this time is a great privilege that you would like to share?

Yes, I would like everybody to have a year when they knew they were dying. I would love people to have the chance for time out of life where judgement, expectations, stresses and pressures were just not there, so that people could understand much more what love is.

And what is love?

Love is what God gives. Because nobody wants anything from me now they can give me a love which is unselfish; it is nothing but itself. I can try and give this back.

Love of God is more real than anything else. Other things seem so shallow. They're not really but by comparison. Death is the next big adventure.

But it is not just about love. There is joy as well. I get so much joy now!

Dee Howley was speaking to **Nicolas Stebbing CR**

Living on the Edge

A few months ago there was a suggestion in the Church Times that those who lived in more socially desirable parts of a neighbourhood should consider moving to one that that was less salubrious. When my husband and I moved last year from a rambling four bedroomed family house to a rented, two bedroomed old people's bungalow on a small housing estate in the market town just across the river, we had no such altruistic motives. The reasons were simply to do with old age, our family gone and a house too big to cope with. We did not want to move away from our lovely part of the Yorkshire Dales where we had lived and worked for fifty years and where I am a Reader in a parish.

The bungalow was not quite where we had wanted to go; we would have preferred one in our own village but we were impressed

with the bungalow as soon as we saw it. It was well appointed, the neighbourhood was quiet and we knew quite a few of the residents. We are pleased to be in a community where there is a good social mix, a variety of age groups and where there are several delightful children. Two years ago, I wrote for CRQR about the one-parent families I had met at a local play group where I took my grand-daughter Ellie. When she came to visit us in our bungalow, she made friends with two of a neighbour's children and I soon discovered one lunch time, how hungry they were. Their mother T. is on her own. She has one son (now 21 and in the Army) by her first partner and the boy and girl we know, by her second to whom she had been married. He is still around but pays nothing for the children, aged 10 and 9. T. is not the only single mother I know who has children by different partners. These men have access to their children but several seem to get off scot-free when it comes to maintenance. The Child Support Agency seems powerless to enforce the law.

Like many more, T. was up to her eyes in debt, some of it incurred by her former husband. Unlike a few other one-parent families I know in the area, T. has no relations to call upon for help. Her own mother left her father when T. and her brother were small and her father died two years ago. Her brother, an uncle and aunt refuse to have anything to do with her, like others who have problem relatives and who cannot cope with the worry and added responsibility. T. does not enjoy the best of health. She has thyroid problems and a hernia which requires hospital treatment, but she says she cannot leave her children. Just before Christmas, she heard from the DHSS that her Income Support Allowance of £65 per week was being withdrawn. Under the new rules, as T's youngest child is 9, T. is qualified to go out to work. A child of 9 is old enough to be left on her own with a brother of 10, so the government now decrees. Eventually, with the help of her doctor, T. was able to qualify for another allowance, which has taken 8 weeks to come through. Meantime, the family were trying to live on child benefit and tax credits while the bills were piling up. As far as T. is concerned, she has yet more forms to fill in and more medical evidence to give to convince the DHSS she is not just work-shy. The DHSS have not suggested where she might find work in this work-scarce rural area with its meagre

public transport facilities.

I continued to give the family food and then approached the priest in charge of our parish who was able to give her £80 out of the parish Relief in Need Fund to enable the children to have Christmas presents and to enjoy a little of the festive season. As I told people in our congregation, there were a few who expressed amazement that this kind of deprivation should be so close “in our area”. Others gave me food and money, (the latter I had never asked for). I kept the money safe until one day I happened to meet at T’s the Family Support Officer, sent from our local church primary school. I learnt that if T. could find £90.00 for a Debt Relief Order, and provided that she could keep up with weekly household payments for a year, her debts of nearly £1000 would be wiped out. It would be a Year of Jubilee for her. I quietly said I had the money – exactly. Their astonishment was considerable. Now the DRO has gone through, T. is a new woman, much more cheerful and positive about the future. She cannot thank our church enough.

At the time I was immersed in T’s problems, two young women who work at the local care home, about to close with the loss of 41 jobs, came and asked me to write to the local paper to highlight their plight. This I gladly did and I was not the only one to do so. Moreover, part of the local creamery will close in a few months time with the loss of 18 jobs. A series of job losses of this magnitude is catastrophic for a thinly populated rural area with a poor public transport service. We are wondering if the DHSS will penalise those who cannot get to a job through no fault of their own. Will those searching in vain lose 10% of their housing benefit and have no benefits for 3 months if no work turns up in a year? Will they have to uproot themselves and their families and go to an urban area?

With all this in mind I began to look around for more professional help. A few months ago, it was announced that the government would be working a pilot scheme with the Trussell Trust, a Christian charity based in Salisbury. A selected number of Job Centres would issue food vouchers to the most needy. These vouchers could be exchanged for food parcels at the nearest Trussell Trust Food Bank. The Trussell Trust has a map on its web site <http://www.trusselltrust.org/> which I find very intriguing. There are 79 Food banks at present, 86 by April. Why are there only 7 north

of the Trent (none at all in Tyne-Tees) and one only in Scotland (Inverness)? Why are there so many (9) in Devon and Cornwall and so many in what we in the North call “the affluent South”? Do we have in the North a different concept of poverty and/or are there more extended families up North to bear the brunt of deprivation amongst relatives and close friends? In actual fact these are academic questions. Poverty is no respecter of persons in the job loss arena and is set to spread its tentacles everywhere.

We decided that in our church we are dealing with only a few food parcels for 2-3 families and that if and when we needed a Trussell Trust Food bank or similar, it should be set up under the aegis of Churches Together or indeed it should be a venture to involve the whole community. Currently a committee to deal with a growing problem in our community is in the process of being set up. When we make up the occasional food parcel from our church, we have found the Trussell Trust Food parcel list of items a useful guide.

The problem of debt relief is a thorny one and needs to be dealt with under the guidance of professionals, like our Schools Family Support Officer. Christians Against Poverty have a scheme for those who wish to train as debt counsellors, <http://www.capuk.org/home/index.php>. Churches Against Poverty are also working in this area <http://www.churches-against-poverty.org/> The Archbishop of York is now patron of a new debt relief charity where those who wish to donate to a specific need can do so on line. See <http://www.acts435.co.uk/> The Trussell Trust itself has resources and works in conjunction with others in the area of debt relief. For churches just setting out to help, food parcels are the best way not only to feed the hungry but to release money for the payment of essential bills. However, the needs of intended recipients are best checked first with professionals like social workers and head teachers. On the Trussell Trust web site, there is a familiar quotation from Our Lord himself.

“For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me...”

Kathleen Kinder Companion CR

Temple and Creation

Have you ever noticed that there are two versions of the ten commandments in the Old Testament, and that they are not quite the same? One version, in *Deuteronomy* 5, says that the Sabbath was kept because Israel remembered slavery in Egypt and so gave every person and every animal a day of rest; the other, in *Exodus* 20, says that the Sabbath was kept because Israel remembered the days of creation and how the Creator had rested on the seventh day. These two versions of the same commandment remind us that there are two streams of thought in the Old Testament: one emphasises the history of Israel, the Exodus, the Promised Land, and so on; the other emphasises the creation and how we are to live in harmony with the works of the Creator.

Unfortunately, the 'history' stream has been emphasised at the expense of the 'creation' stream. For many years, studying the Old Testament meant the history of Israel – learning where the Israelites wandered in the desert and the dates of the kings. 'Creation' was thought to be just *Genesis* 1-3, six days and then Adam and Eve and the talking snake, all a bit difficult to cope with in the light of modern science. The real 'creation' teaching of the Bible was almost completely neglected, and that is why, when people began to be aware of the environment crisis, the Churches had – and still do have – very little to say that is characteristically Christian.

The Bible, and especially the Old Testament, does have a beautiful and sophisticated theology of creation, but there is no single passage that sets it out in detail. It has to be reconstructed from many texts. Further, most of it is written in the pictorial and symbolic language of a pre-philosophical culture, and so there problems of literalism. The Creator drew a circle on the face of the waters to establish the horizon (*Proverbs* 8.27); angels sang when the Lord laid the foundation stones of the earth (*Job* 38.6-7); and the stars were bound in their courses with chains (*Job* 38.31). Nevertheless, this imagery sets out a world view that must be recovered if we are to live within the creation that we did not make and whose rules we did not establish, but whose future lies in our hands.

The greatest symbol of the creation was the temple in Jerusalem. This was a larger version of the tabernacle that Moses had been told

to construct at Sinai, and he had to make it according to the vision he had seen on the mountain (*Exodus* 25, 8, 40). This was a six-day vision of the creation, now found as the preface to the first book of Moses, *Genesis* 1. Each stage in the making of the tabernacle/temple represented one day of creation, and so the completed place of worship ‘was’ the creation.

Day One was the holy of holies, the place of eternal light, but hidden from the rest of the creation by the veil. This was the state of the angels, outside time and matter. On ‘our’ side of the veil was the world of time and matter, represented by days 3-6 of the creation story – whence the hymn: “Change and decay in all around I see, O Thou who changest not, Abide with me.” The heavenly worship of the angels represented the harmony of all creation worshipping the Creator [as in *Revelation* 4.1-11 and the Benedicite]. Human voices joined that praise: “With angels and archangels and all the company of heaven... for ever praising you and saying.. Holy Holy Holy Lord... heaven and earth are full of your glory.” A traditional church still has the temple shape: the choir in ‘heaven’ singing like the angels and the people on earth in the nave.

On the sixth day, the Lord created human beings, and the sixth stage of making the tabernacle was consecrating the high priests. Adam was created to be the high priest of creation; he is never described as a ‘steward’ in the biblical tradition. High priesthood was the intended role for human beings. But Adam disobeyed, and we need to remember *how* he disobeyed. He chose the wrong tree. Adam was intended to eat from the tree of life, whose fruit gave wisdom, but he ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, meaning that he chose knowledge which he could use as he wished – for good or for evil. He was tempted by the freedom to choose.

The role of the high priest, and so the role of Adam, was to uphold the everlasting covenant [first mentioned in the Bible in *Genesis* 9.12-17]. This was the covenant between the Creator and all creation, also called the covenant of peace, in the biblical sense of ‘wholeness’ (*Isaiah* 54.9-10). This covenant was a web of bonds that secured the whole creation and bound heaven to earth. The bonds were imagined as both natural laws and moral laws, and also as the glory of the Lord.

‘Righteousness’, in the biblical sense, meant the state when the

everlasting covenant was unbroken, and also whatever action was needed to maintain that state. The Hebrew word is *zedek*, and Zadok was not just the name of the high priest; it was also his job description. Martin Luther said that Adam lost his original righteousness when he sinned, meaning that when he chose the wrong type of knowledge, he lost his capacity to uphold the bonds of the covenant. Jesus the new Adam reversed this: “He is the image of the invisible God, the first born of all creation... *and in him all things hold together*” (*Colossians* 1.15,17). Jesus was also described as the Righteous One, that is, the one who makes righteous, and as the Author of Life (*Acts* 3.14,15).

Ezekiel saw the polluted temple/society of his time, and saw the glory of the Lord leaving the temple (*Ezekiel* chapters 8-10). Isaiah described the same situation as the broken covenant. Heaven and earth would mourn and wither away when the earth lay *polluted* [Isaiah’s word also means ‘godless’] by its inhabitants, who had broken the everlasting covenant. “Therefore a curse devours the earth and its inhabitants suffer for their guilt” (*Isaiah* 24.4-6).

The temple ritual of atonement was to remove ‘guilt’, which was the result of breaking the covenant. The role of the high priest was to protect the covenant by right teaching, and then to heal any broken bonds by atonement rituals for those who repented and did what they could to make amends. The day of atonement was the great day when the effect of sins was put away (*Leviticus* 16), and the high priest renewed the everlasting covenant with a goat’s blood that represented his own life. In other words, the eternal covenant was upheld by self sacrifice.

Hebrews interpreted the death of Jesus in this way, not as a Passover sacrifice, but as the day of atonement sacrifice to renew the everlasting covenant (*Hebrews* 9.11-14), and Matthew shows that this was the covenant renewed at the last supper: “My blood of the covenant poured out for the putting away of sins...” (*Matthew* 26.28).

Jesus promised his faithful followers that they would again eat from the tree of life (*Revelation* 2.7), meaning that they would again have wisdom. Now wisdom, as shown by the Greek translation of *Proverbs* 8.30, joins all things together in harmony. It is the knowledge that puts into practice the song of the angels. At the centre of the *Book of Revelation*, when the last trumpet sounds and

the Kindgom is established on earth, the heavenly voices sing that it is time to reward the prophets and the saints, and “to destroy the destroyers of the earth” (*Revelation* 11.18). Establishing the Kingdom means putting away the attitude to knowledge that fragments and destroys, and rediscovering wisdom.

Two significant documents launched in by the United Nations in 2000 set out the biblical view of the creation, but neither realised this: *The Millennium Development Goals* and *The Earth Charter*. The latter claimed that its “inclusive ethical vision recognizes that environmental protection, human rights, equitable human development and peace are interdependent and indivisible” and that it provided “a new framework for thinking about and addressing these issues.” New to whom? *The Earth Charter* [and *The Millennium Development Goals*] have very little that is not in the Bible. What is missing from both is God. All the other biblical concepts are there, but the call to self-sacrifice is reduced to ‘acting with restraint’.

So the biblical model works. Indeed it is recommended by the UN as the solution to our current problems. Human beings have the skill but not the will to put things right. This is because our environmental crisis is, ultimately, not a problem for technology and economics or even governments; it is a spiritual problem whose answer will be found only when human beings rediscover their true role as Adam the high priest.

Margaret Barker

Biblical Scholar and Author

“Temple & Eucharist”

...a study day with Dr Margaret Barker

NOW ON SATURDAY 30TH JULY

Bradford Cathedral, 10.30am – 4.00pm.

£5.00

(includes drinks) Please bring a packed lunch.

Morning theme – **The Wine** Afternoon theme – **The Bread**
Atonement, Mary and Holy Wisdom will also be touched on.

For Bookings, please contact the Cathedral:
chris.aldred@bradfordcathedral.org Tel: 01274 777720

Bits and Pieces

I've just been watching the Dave Clark Five. It is hard to believe that this was ever 'pop' music. By that I don't mean hard to believe that it was ever beautiful or talented or fun. It is just that beside modern pop it looks so quaint, formal and innocent. Maybe our parents in 1964 looking back to the days of the Charleston would have said something similar. Ah well, 'Plus ça change' as the Austrians say.

What seeing them perform did for me was to recall an atmosphere – Beetle haircuts, mini-skirts, good movies, ghoulish movies, Kennedy, Luther King, Christine Keeler, One Small Step ... It was the dawning of the Age of Aquarius. What is left of it now? A piece of vinyl picked up in the market, a suit with a velvet collar and blue suede shoes, a better life for American Blacks, a half remembered joke about the sex-life of MPs – it might be summed up by a bit of graffiti seen on a toilet wall, 'Nostalgia isn't what it used to be'.

Since taking on the 'Sale of the Centenary' I have come to a different conclusion – nostalgia is alive and well. Every item in an auction recalls an era, an event in a family's history, a time when someone was happy or sad. The Mirfield auction will take you on an odyssey stretching back perhaps a thousand years. Furniture, artefacts, collectables each have a tale to tell and sometimes the stories become intertwined. Do you remember sitting on a hard chair in the old St James Chapel, perhaps for a session of spiritual direction or as you prepared to make your confession? It is a Regency armchair – someone in 1815 may have sat in it reading the accounts of the Battle of Waterloo.

One of the brethren donated a mysterious wooden panel with a primitive carved face on it which may well be a medieval carving, stolen or rescued from a church at the Reformation. Another donation – a Jacobean candle box – was in use until the early 20th century when there was a redundancy crisis for wise virgins.

Two boxes of intaglios (cameos) remind us that brethren had sisters and female friends in the 19th century who would have made the grand tour in Italy and brought back such souvenirs. Medals remind us of the hell and hardship of war while a lovely little enamelled RAF brooch once given to a wife or sweetheart bravely proclaims 'No, no they can't take that away from me'. If you prefer childhood memories there is the 'Peter Rabbit Race Game' and you can relive your childhood with this and other games or play with the Corgi 'Chitty, Chitty Bang, Bang'

Sale of the Centenary



‘The latter glory of this house will be greater than the former,’ says the LORD of hosts, ‘and in this place I will give peace,’ declares the LORD of hosts.”

Haggai 2:9

The Community of the Resurrection invites all its friends and neighbours to

Help us to restore our House of Prayer

When did you last look in your attic?

Do you have.....

Medals and Badges Jewellery (Costume and the real thing) Uniforms

Memorabilia (War, sport, entertainment) Church items (vestments, ornaments etc but not cassocks) Vintage Comics and Annuals, Post Cards and Envelopes with stamps on (The older the better) Watches (even broken ones but not battery) Vintage medical and scientific instruments Stamps Coins A Bushman’s Thong or Baden-Powell’s woggle?

and

Would you consider using them to the greater glory of God by donating them for a grand auction to be held at the community of the Resurrection on **22nd Oct 2011?**

If so please contact

Fr John Gribben CR 01924 494318 jgribben@mirfield.org.uk

Please do not donate Electrical items, Computers and printers, modern children’s toys, CDs DVDs Videos and Tapes, Modern furniture, modern clothing, modern crockery as these do not sell. If in doubt give me a ring (especially if it has stones in it!).

and have a couple of Rupert annuals to go to bed with.

The House of the Resurrection is an old and romantic Gothic pile. It was built in 1870 for a Yorkshire merchant to house himself and his young bride. They would have bought new furniture but they would also have brought favourite pieces from their former households. In those days people did not through old furniture away and buy

completely new systems so there would like have been inherited items from as much as a hundred years previous. Unfortunately the man died soon after their marriage and she never wanted to live in it afterwards so she moved out and left the furniture covered with dust sheets until CR rented the house in 1898. I am speculating now, but I imagine that when the Community bought the house some years later there would have been some kind of agreement that CR would buy some of the furniture and so it is likely that there are several items which have been in the House of the Resurrection as long as it has existed. As well as that the Community has occupied several Houses in England and as they closed some of the fixtures and fittings found their way to Mirfield so that we find embedded in HR memories of the Hostel at Leeds, all the London Houses and bits from Sunderland and Manchester and there are old trunks with exotic labels from foreign climes.



When my brother came over from Belfast to talk to us about the auction he was able to see what we because we were so familiar with them could not see that there were many pieces of furniture which were quite valuable and we had the potential to come near to or even pass our target figure for the auction. The Community has donated a considerable number of things to the auction, leaving me satisfied that with the help and support of our friends the aim of £10,000+ is not an impossible dream. We will continue to look at the matter to see if there are other things that we possess, that we can do without and the absence of which will not impoverish our life or the lives of those who come to stay with us.

Some of our friends were a little uneasy in case we might be selling our heritage or our history but the things donated so far although lovely and comfortably familiar are things that we can easily do without. Most of the brethren are pleased and relieved at being able to join with our friends who have contributed generously and sacrificially towards our appeal. As monks we may love the things that surround us and be thankful for all that we have received from God and other people over the years that we have been here but we must never become attached to things and so the exercise of allowing others to have the pleasure of things that we have enjoyed during our long sojourn here will be a good one and the results will, I hope, be to the greater glory of God.

So keep those donations coming and put 22nd October in your diaries. The sensational ‘Sale of the Centenary’ is not an event that you want to miss. If you want it, we’ve got it.

John Gribben CR

Companions And Friends

“**L**ove your enemy; pray for those who persecute you”. That is one of the most difficult texts in the Bible for any human person, but especially for Zimbabwean Anglicans today. I saw this myself in January and February in Zimbabwe:

- Almost all Anglicans in Harare and Manicaland dioceses must worship outside their churches – at least 200 metres away;
- Every Sunday Anglican lay people are arrested for entering

- their churches and spend unpleasant nights in police cells;
- One lady has been murdered for refusing to hand over the church keys to the opposition. All the bishops have received very credible death threats;
 - Manicaland particularly is in financial crisis as they have lost all their resources and the area has nothing to draw upon; clergy have not been paid for two months.
 - Anglicans are regarded as pro-MDC and anti government (which of course the government's own policy of persecution has encouraged them to be!) and so are liable for violent retribution as the current election process gets under way.

Despite that morale is high, congregations are growing, new churches are being built, Christian life is deepened. It is a wonderful place to be. Pray for them, please, as they need it, but pray with them also for their persecutors that God's love will enter their hearts too, and that they will turn from their evil ways.

R.I.P.

Pray for the souls of Pat Kendal and Joyce Kitchen, both energetic and long staying branch secretaries who have passed to the nearer presence of the Lord whom they served so faithfully all their lives. Have a glorious Easter as befits those who follow the Lamb as the Risen Christ!

Nicolas Stebbing CR

Companions Study Week

"An Anglo-catholic Today?- Sacraments, Church And Mary"

14th – 18th September 2011

Is it still possible to be a catholic Anglican? What does it mean now? These few days will be spent looking at the central beliefs of Catholic Christianity, and we will take part in the Walsingham Festival day at York Minster.

The cost will be £200 to include full board.

**Please book yourself in for the Day by 1st August
with Paul Taylor and include a £25 deposit:**

paul-taylor@gmx.co.uk or 3 Mile End Park, Pocklington, York YO42 2TH

Companions Day

**Companions Day this year will be here at Mirfield,
on *Saturday 23rd July.***

Companions day is the day on which our Companions renew their commitments, but it is open to all other friends of CR. All are welcome to take part in the events and the worship. In fact we would love to see you!

Programme:	10.00.	Start with tea/coffee
	10.30	Talk by Iain McKillop – priest and artist
	12.00	Mass
	1.00	Buffet lunch
	2.00	Talk by Rachel Young – priest and musician
	2.40	Update on CR affairs
	3.30	Tea and depart

The cost of taking part will be £10.00 a head, including lunch.

For those coming from further afield (or indeed anyone wanting to stay) we will be offering accommodation for both Friday and Saturday nights in the college or the retreat house. Some may wish to stay over to take part in the Fun Day on the Sunday afternoon.

Please book yourself in for the Day by 1st July with Paul Taylor:
paul-taylor@gmx.co.uk or 3 Mile End Park, Pocklington, York YO42 2TH



Easter Egg Hunt

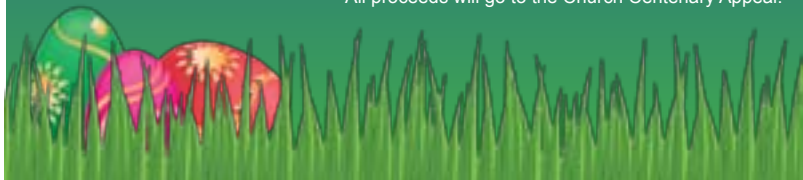
Easter Monday 25th April

Egg Hunt Puppet Show Plant Stall Refreshments Hard Hat Tours

If you wake up on Easter Monday still craving more chocolate but feel a little guilty about the extra calories then you can get some much needed exercise at the Community of the Resurrection by joining the kids on an Easter Egg hunt at the site.

The event will be available between 1pm and 5pm and anyone wishing to solve the trail of clues can collect a quiz sheet and map from the front door of the House of the Resurrection. The event is suitable for all the family with the chance for kids to enjoy a special Easter puppet show at 3pm. Other attractions include a home-grown plant stall with bedding plants galore, tea coffee and sandwiches from the main Community kitchen, and hard hat tours of the church to let you see the refurbishment underway.

All proceeds will go to the Church Centenary Appeal.



Book Reviews

Sources of Transformation: Revitalising Christian Spirituality. ed. Edward Howells and Peter Tyler. Continuum. 2010.
Isbn 978-1441-12575-0 £17.99

There is a saying in the Orthodox world that a good theologian prays at his desk and studies theology on his knees. That well describes how the two parts of a theologian's life (or indeed, any Christian life) need to be united. On the whole this is not a western view. In the west theologians can be atheist, agnostic or anything else so long as they study well and write learned articles about it. In the west people pray with the heart, the feelings and if they read books about prayer these will tend to be fairly slim, largely autobiographical and easy to read. Not surprisingly, western theology is often dry and contributes nothing to faith, while spirituality tends to be sentimental and self centred.

In the book under review the several authors aim to show this need not be so and are engaged in a project to study and discuss spirituality at the same level as any other theological discipline. The essays are therefore of excellent quality and, written by eminent theologians such as James Alison, Bernard McGinn, David Lonsdale, Bernadette Flanagan and several others, they demand serious attention.

They do, however, raise a number of problems for this reviewer which are not, I hasten to say criticisms of the book or the project itself, but probably of me.

The first is simply that to gain real benefit from reading these excellent essays you really do need to know quite a bit about St Augustine, the *Imago dei*, St William of Thierry, 15th Century theology and a host of other related subjects. Most of us do not have that knowledge and one hopes this book will encourage us to acquire it. This does rather expose the shortcomings of our present theological education which leaves most of us without the kind of equipment that would enable us really to engage with it.

The second is simply ask how in fact these discussions do influence our prayer today when the language and expectations of prayer have changed so much? To start at the modern end of the scale – the essay on Patrick Kavanagh made an immediate impact on me because he thinks in the same categories (albeit expressed in poetry) as most of us do today. So too did Michael Sullivan's essay on the experience

of a woman who suffered childhood sexual abuse trying to form a relationship with God. We can relate to that kind of struggle even if it is not our own. But joining up our own experience of prayer with that of Richard Rolle, Teresa of Avila or even Ignatius of Loyola is much more difficult and makes it hard for us to gain real access to their teaching.

Perhaps the next part of the project for those who are concerned (very rightly) to bring serious thinking back into spiritual life would be to provide that joining up. Translating texts into modern English is easy compared with the task of showing how those texts may really influence the way we pray; but that latter work needs to be done.

Nicolas Stebbing CR

Cave, refectory, road: monastic rhythms for contemporary living. *Ian Adams.* Canterbury Press. 2010. £12.99.

Isbn 978 1 84825 028 4

This is a book about the religious life for all Christians. Ian Adams believes that the pattern, rhythms and promises made by monks, nuns and friars have much to teach all followers of Christ today.

The pattern he sees in the religious life is **cave, refectory, road**. **Cave** symbolises a place of withdrawal from the world for stillness, study and prayer. **Refectory** is the place where a community meets for meals and fellowship, offering hospitality to the world. And **road** symbolises a place of engagement with the world, meeting people at their point of need. We can see something of this pattern in Our Lord's active ministry as it is recorded in the gospels.

Another rhythm he sees in the monastic life is to do with priorities and the use of time. The monastic life is centred on God. So the monastic day is a balanced day, giving time for the important things – silence, study, prayer and worship, as well as work and recreation. The monastic week and the liturgical year keep monks and nuns focussed on the life, death and resurrection of Christ and the coming of the Holy Spirit.

And then the promises, which religious make, are all designed to help them to follow Christ. **Poverty** in this context means simplicity of life – willingness to share what they have with each other. **Chastity** is to do with the devotional life of religious. They see their lives as in partnership with Christ; they can have a passionate love for God.

Obedience means following a rule under an abbot or prior whose

task is to orientate the community at all times to Christ. And then **stability** – the intention of religious is to commit their lives to Christ to the end.

Ian Adams suggests that all Christians may profitably incorporate something of the pattern, rhythms and promises of the religious life into their own lives. I recommend this book.

Timothy Stanton CR

Real Presence. *Sister Wendy Beckett.* Continuum Publishing, 2010.
Isbn 978 1 4411 5887 1

Sister Wendy Beckett, who became famous as television’s “art nun,” was very deliberate in her selection of a title for her book that would convey the sacramental quality of her subject matter. Jesus is present in the bread and the wine of the Eucharist, and so too Christ is present under the appearance of an icon.

One of the challenges of writing about icons is that our human vocabulary falls so far short because, as Sister Wendy says, an icon strives to be “an intimation of the truth of heaven into which we are drawn as we contemplate.” Describing in words things heavenly and divine is a task which she tackles commendably as she brings to this book a synthesis of her life in religious profession and her aptitudes as an art historian.

The entire book focuses upon the early icons that survived the destruction of the Iconoclastic controversies, and with only a few exceptions all of the icons featured in this book come from the Monastery of St. Catherine at Mt. Sinai. Every icon depicted dates back to the seventh century or earlier. These early icons speak through their simplicity as they come to us from a time closer to Christ and the first apostles than the more stylised icons of later centuries. Thus they are a powerful visual link for us with our roots in the early Christian communities of the eastern Mediterranean. Sister Wendy says that these early icons capture “the emotion and drama of early Christianity” as they convey the sacrificial cost that was involved in being a follower of Jesus in an era when Christians were persecuted.

The author’s primary purpose is to explore the spiritual significance of these early icons, but there also is some historical and theological content within her text. One of the weaknesses of this book is the very subjective nature by which the featured icons were

selected. By her own admission, Sister Wendy acknowledges that she decided “only to share with you [*the reader*] those icons to which I myself have responded.” The result is that the icons depicted are not as representative as they might have been if a different criterion of selection had been pursued by the author. However I agree with the author that icons are meant to appeal to the spirit and that they only really work when put to personal use, so perhaps it is understandable that this book contains only those icons that spoke to Sister Wendy’s spirit. I guess that you will have to purchase it to see if these same icons speak to you?

Dennis Berk, nCR

Meeting Christ in his Mysteries: A Benedictine Vision of the Spiritual Life. *Gregory Collins.* Columba Press, 2010.

Isbn 978 1 85607 682 1

The experiences acquired through having lived for nearly a quarter of a century within the vows of religious life pervade this book by the Benedictine monk Gregory Collins of Glenstal Abbey. The book consists largely of his reflections upon the mysteries of Christ as celebrated in the liturgy and experienced in prayer, and he states his intended theme right at the very beginning when he says that the guiding idea that anchors his book is “the mysteries of Christ through which we are called into union with God.”

The first half of the book focuses primarily upon scripture, baptism and the Eucharist as means through which the manifestation of God is made known and received by us. Then in the second half the author proceeds to examine the various feasts of the liturgical year. A useful phrase employed within the book is “disclosure zones.” Collins applies this term to the sacramental mysteries, saying that they are the forums of divine love where the Holy Spirit reveals God’s presence. Entering into these “disclosure zones” opens us to receiving the love of God that transforms us into the fullness of Christ.

Through our participation in sacramental worship and liturgical prayer, God opens up a door into our hearts, steps into our world and manifests his real presence. The theme of manifestation is present throughout this book, and Collins expertly weaves together his personal experiences with the solid scholarship of the theological content. The intimacy of his personal touch is shown when Collins

says that “Monastic theology aims not just at theoretical or abstract knowledge but at the knowledge born of love as it emerges in spiritual experience.” The emphasis upon the practical dimension of the topics pursued in this book is one of the features bringing a refreshing earthiness and reality to his text even whilst he is delving into the ancient spiritual resources of the monastic tradition.

Collins’ strength of academic credentials should not put anyone off from reading this book because, by the author’s own admission, it was written for “non-specialists.” There are extensive notes and an impressive bibliography at the end of the book which are fertile grounds for those desiring more intensive exploration, but the style of his writing is easily accessible for everyone and I encourage you to “meet Christ” through the insights contained within this book.

Dennis Berk, nCR

Living the Hours: Monastic Spirituality in Everyday Life.

Anthony Grimley and Jonathan Wooding. Canterbury Press, 2010.

Isbn 978 1 85311 971 2

The target audience to whom the authors address this book is anyone who is questioning the balance, priorities or focus of their life. Neither author is a monk nor even a member of the clergy. Although the Christian faith of each author is manifest clearly throughout their writing, yet they assert emphatically that they are writing as “secular” members of society seeking to address the needs of people who are immersed within life in the real world.

Wooding wrote the first two chapters, and Grimley wrote the remainder of the book. The question addressed by each of them is “What can monasticism offer to people outside the monastery?” In response to this enquiry they focus primarily upon what they call either “new” or “secular” monasticism. These are non-traditional expressions of community, composed of either residential or dispersed members, who live under some sort of Rule of Life. Various examples of such communities are given throughout the book, but since almost all of them are quite newly established experiments in communal living we must await the verdict of time before we shall be able to evaluate the permanence of these non-traditional religious communities.

I was pleased that Grimley identified something that I’ve seen as a potential weakness of these new communal groupings when

he acknowledged that their spirituality “can easily allow self-manipulation and its accompanying temptation to watering down the bits of monasticism that we find most challenging or costly.” A particularly helpful feature of this book are the questions for reflection and the list of books suggested for further reading that are provided at the end of each chapter. Although I would have liked more coverage of traditional religious life, yet this book is helpful in pointing the reader towards finding a balance between work and prayer within the context of life lived in the “everyday world.”

Dennis Berk, nCR

The Word is very near you: Feasts and Festivals. Reflections on the lectionary readings, years A, B & C. *John Pridmore.*

Canterbury Press. 2010. Isbn 978 1 84825 031 4. £12.99.

Recently called upon to preach at a parish church dedication festival, I found this book already to hand, providing a perfect antidote to the happy triumphalism and nostalgia that can accompany such occasions.

The tension between the Temple as God’s dwelling place, and as a place of corruption, is examined and John Pridmore is not afraid to end his notes on the readings with a very disturbing note: “We shall want to ask too whether the time has not come to find an upper room somewhere else and start again.”

This is a more than worthy sequel to John’s *The Word is very near you: Reflections on the Sunday lectionary readings*, 2009, and to his more autobiographical *The inner-city of God*, 2008, reviewed in this journal numbers 428 and 424 respectively.

Antony Grant CR

The Steve Biko Memorial Lectures 2000-2008

The Steve Biko Foundation. Pan Macmillan.2009.NP

Isbn 978 1 77010 163 0

On 12th September 1977 Bantu Stephen Biko died in Pretoria Prison from the brutal treatment he suffered at the hands of prison warders there and in Port Elizabeth. He was the most significant, young, anti-apartheid activist of his generation. I had the privilege of meeting him briefly when he was banned and restricted to King William’s Town. Our late Father Aelred Stubbs CR was a close friend of Biko

and edited *I write what I like*, a selection of Biko's writings, which are extensively quoted by the distinguished speakers of these memorial lectures.

Biko pioneered the Black Consciousness Movement, which aimed to enable blacks to 'rid their minds of imprisoning notions which are the legacy of the control of their attitudes by whites.' The BCM revived the political aspirations of black people across South Africa after the banning of the ANC and PAC and proved unstoppable.

The nine speakers of these memorial lectures are a remarkable proof of the claims of the BCM. Two former presidents of South Africa are contributors, also our Archbishop, a former university chancellor, four professors and a former Finance Minister. They spoke not just about the past but comment critically on the state of the country since Biko's death, recognising what has been achieved but also the failures. Here is a reliable insight into the developments in South Africa in recent years.

Crispin Harrison CR

Born of the Eucharist. A Spirituality for Priests. Ed Stephen Rossetti. Ave Maria Press.
2010. £8.99. Isbn 13: 978-1-59471-217-3.

The First Mass celebrated by a newly-ordained priest is an occasion of great joy, for the priest himself, for his family and friends, and for his congregation. Rightly so! As Pope John Paul II once said that the priest is 'above all, a man of the Eucharist'. Msgr Stephen Rosetti has assembled thirty moving testimonies by American cardinals, bishops and priests to the rich meaning the celebration of the Eucharist has for them. We are taken behind the externals of the rite, however reverently and beautifully performed, to the interior faith and experience of those privileged to preside at the Holy Mysteries. Priests who read their words will no doubt say 'Amen' to the thoughts they express so well and find themselves moved to reflect on what the liturgy that they so often offer means to them.

This is a book primarily for priests and would be ideal retreat reading, but all who participate in the Eucharist and receive Holy Communion will be helped to a deeper understanding of the many-faceted dimensions of what the Lord Jesus has ordained to be done in remembrance of him.

Crispin Harrison CR



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A computer-generated image of how the renovated church will look – it is difficult to achieve correct colours, and many small items are missing from the picture, but it gives a general idea. The edge of the new font is shown in the lower right-hand corner.

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Legacy stewardship is an expression of our devotion and faith, not unlike an inheritance we provide for our family.

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I GIVE free of duty to the Members of the Society at Mirfield in the County of West Yorkshire known as the "Community of the Resurrection" to be applied for the general purpose of the said Community under the direction of the Chapter the sum of £.....

AND I DECLARE that the receipt of the Bursar for the time being of the Community of the Resurrection aforesaid shall be a good and sufficient discharge to my Trustees for the same.

2. To the College of the Resurrection

I GIVE free of duty to the College of the Resurrection (Incorporated) situate at Mirfield in the County of West Yorkshire the sum of £..... for the general purposes of the said College AND I DECLARE that the receipt of the Treasurer for the time being of the said College shall be a good and sufficient discharge to my Trustees for the same.

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Thank you.

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