

QUARTERLY REVIEW OF THE
COMMUNITY OF THE RESURRECTION

ST JOHN THE BAPTIST 2018

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Dancing - A Meditation



While spending a blissful few days recently at the Community of the Resurrection and sitting amongst swathes of bluebells in the Rose Garden, I was struck by how the flowers danced in the breeze. An awareness of dancing led to the following reflection which seems especially meaningful as I write on Trinity Sunday.

Gazing at the blueness and movement around me became a kind of synaesthetic experience as music then came to mind. Surprisingly this was, at first, an old (and mischievous) Irish song – ‘Lanigan’s Ball’ – which describes the seductive power of dancing when the singer encounters a certain ‘Julia’ as they rhythmically ‘step out and step in again’ and learn to dance together. My thoughts then moved to Renoir’s painting, ‘Dance at Bougival’, which captures the spirit of dancing so beautifully. I can feel the movement; hear the music. I want to join in the dance as the colours and the dancers swirl and entwine.

My thoughts move on again to a memory of a most unexpected but joyful experience in the unlikely setting of a Morrison's supermarket. As I entered the store, a man was playing a piano accordion to raise funds for charity. He was playing 'Love is the sweetest thing' – a lovely waltzing rhythm – and suddenly a couple began to dance to the music. Spontaneously, other shoppers started dancing in the aisles! It was as if we couldn't help ourselves. Dancing with strangers in amongst shelves of food and household supplies was the most natural thing to do! There was laughter. Some people sang along to the tune. There was a round of applause when the song ended, and then everyone returned to filling their trolleys. What an outburst of joy this had been. As my Spiritual Director sometimes says, 'You couldn't make it up!'

That experience resulted in my poem 'The Dancing' which combines St. John's Gospel narrative with the song by Ross Noble and my own words.

My bluebell-gazing moved my thoughts on again to a memory of a crowded chapel in Assisi when, during a lengthy Eucharist, three children (two boys and a girl) left the queue, joined hands and danced together – another spontaneous and joyful act which spread delight and is acknowledged, I think, in many attempts to depict or grasp the mystery of the Holy Trinity.

In the Foreword to 'The Divine Dance' by Richard Rohr with Mike Morrell, we read that: '*The Divine Dance* explores the early Christian image of the Trinity: *perichoresis*, a circle dance. The unending flow of giving and receiving between Father, Son, and Spirit is the pattern of reality. God is not only a dancer, but the Dance itself! We're all invited to participate in the rhythms of New Creation.'

I find this certainty of being invited to the dance can, ironically, bring me to my knees to give thanks with all humility. But the hands of our triune God stretch out to mine. How can I refuse such an invitation?

The dancing Mirfield bluebells delivered God's invitation to me.

May you also join in the dance.



Maggie Jackson

References:

- Above image: from Google images
Dance at Bougival by Pierre-Auguste Renoir 1883
'The Divine Dance: The Trinity and Your Transformation'
by Fr Richard Rohr OFM and Mike Morrell. Published by Whitaker House 2016

See Maggie's poem *The Dancing* on page 26 of this issue of *CR Review*

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A Word from the Guest-Editor CR

Well, here we are in the feast-time of the Baptist once again, who points us beyond himself into the time and way of things to come. It hardly seems like two years ago that I was asked (or maybe *I* offered...) to write a piece for 2016's Lady Day edition explaining how it is that I come to be at CR in the first place. It seems a bit of a leap from that time to now, when here I am 'doing a Prince Harry' and Guest-editing the quarterly with a sense of both privilege and enthusiasm. (No, HRH has never edited this august tome, but he has edited BBC R4's Today programme!)

Does any brother expect to come to temporary profession in the CR? Can anything good come out of Hutton Cranswick, never mind East Yorkshire proper? In God's good purposes, so I have been asked to 'come and see.' I am like Nathanael in his journeying, still looking and wondering; still coming to see. God goes always before, seeing that things are good but never sparing the challenges and deaths which the path of discipleship - (and the context of religious life particularly) - entails.

When one finds oneself encountering these, yet is still able to find the Father's face or to hear his voice in the silent sanctity of Upper Church – a great private chapel to have integral to your house by anyone's reckoning – then perhaps one knows as far as possible that this is the right place to be *now*. We can, after all, only live in the *now*. It is fallacious to think otherwise and can do a lot of unintended harm to those around us when we are possessive over an [imagined] past or doggedly holding fast to something or someone which shores up our perception of the present reality.

Our family guidelines, or constitutions in the community, warn us of the dangers of this. Living in Community consistently has to do with living for the good of the other, wherein we too may find our own good. This is to be the way of finding the Lord in CR. Maybe it can be a way in your family or immediate community? I and my brethren do not always get this spot-on (far from it) but we are called always to keep it to the fore and try each day to make it work. God calls us; He is faithful; He will accomplish it. Do you believe this? Pray that we may all become more like John the Baptist, looking away from ourselves and scanning the horizons of our worldview till the one who has given his us his saving invitation comes again.

Marc Voase CR

Holy / Diabolic Land

My first visit to Israel-Palestine left me hardly able to digest all I had experienced on this do-it-yourself journey on my own. I imagined Jerusalem to be a mixture of old and new, but the old city is tightly enclosed within its mediaeval walls, outside them a sprawling modernity. Another surprise: the number of formally-dressed Jews on the streets in different variations of black hat or skull-cap, shirt with dangling strands, and black suit, their wives with a sort of turban behind the ears, clothed from head to foot. It was as if here Jews could be fully themselves and revel in it. Jewish worship seemed wonderfully practical, ploughing on with the singing of texts, caring nothing of other sounds or conversations, or scraping noises of furniture being pushed around. We have something to learn from people so entirely satisfied with what is given that they simply get on with it without any need to engineer a feel-good factor. Many Jews have a visceral hatred for Palestinians: on my first day the radical paper Ha'aretz (*The Land*) reported of a Palestinian teenager who had thrown stones at a tank – the soldiers chased him in a jeep and shot him dead “as if they were on safari” it said. Palestinian life is treated as cheap, in the midst of this tragedy of peoples overwhelmed by a hopeless cycle of conflict and hatred. Palestinians themselves, however, I always found gentle and friendly.

Things tend to come in strong doses, and the ancient sites were certainly that: the Holy Sepulchre, the pools of Bethesda and Siloam, the Roman remains, and towering over it all the Temple Mount. I had not realised it had survived so intact. Herod's temple walls had been rebuilt by the Moslems, enclosing a vast space that had been one of the wonders of the ancient world. The sheer scale of it stops you in your tracks. It was an institution as colossal as this that Jesus and his fishermen took on with such courage. I was always conscious of a degree of tension in Jerusalem. The Temple Mount, which is in the hands of the Moslems, allows them free entry, while any visiting Jews have to be surrounded by security officers. The predominating sounds in Jerusalem are loud Muezzins from the minarets, and Christian bells – the most the Jews can muster is a rather ineffective ram's-horn you sometimes think you might have heard. This place is all surprises. The Mount of Olives is fairly built-up, the Garden of Gethsemane in a railed-off pen by a busy main road. I decided to walk to Bethany, and got as far as Bethphage, with its nice church and Palestinian custodian, who told me his home was Bethany, but that he can't go back because of the huge wall put up by the Jewish state. Continuing on my walk, I came up against the wall, just like Berlin in the bad old days, except that it was probably taller, topped with barbed wire and watchtowers. There is a continual influx of Jews from other countries, especially Russia, and I was surprised to see in some places the public notices

were in Hebrew and Russian. Some people I countered, a bank clerk, an assistant in a shop, and so on, seemed to me to be traumatised – they had the faces of people who must have seen and suffered terrible things. There is a cost in situations like this which leave you asking who is the oppressed and who is the oppressor.

Jerusalem is in a narrow tongue of land, almost surrounded by the Palestinian Territories, and my bus to Nazareth, next port of call, made a great detour for the 100-mile journey. I expected to see middle-eastern countryside, but got a modern motorway journey through built-up landscapes with apparently little regulated planning. I bought an old bike in Nazareth and set off for a short stay on Mount Tabor, then on to Tiberias by the Sea of Galilee. It was all good modern roads, but cycle-tracks can be treacherous, with incredibly sticky mud like pure potter's clay. The intense green of the countryside was more vivid than in Britain, the hills covered with little plants of a very bright green. The gears on the bike played up, and I made the whole of my one-day sponsored ride round the Sea of Galilee in one middle gear for safety: everything came in a rush – the Jordan, old monasteries, the country of the Gerasenes, Golan, the nearby Syrian border and signs warning of land-mines, Bethsaida, the Jordan again, Capernaum and so on. It is a sea that looks



The Wall divides communities



Sea of Galilee

huge, perhaps partly because the surrounding land is so high up, its edges beetling down steeply to the water (treacherous for pigs!), while in fact only 35 miles round. Little groups of animals like large hamsters rushed under rocks as I cycled by – these are the conies of Psalm 104. The forecast promised a midday storm of New-Testament proportions which sadly didn't materialise.



Peter's house

About 10 miles from home the gears and chain disintegrated, leaving me to walk back smartly in the dark on a narrow, busy main road pushing the bike, which at least had bright lights. Of all the unexpected things I discovered, perhaps I was most struck by the remains of “Peter’s house” in Capernaum near the synagogue, with its graffiti going back to the 2nd century, referring

to Peter. Was it really here that Peter’s mother recovered from her fever? All the buildings around Galilee look grim, built from black basalt, whose boulders also litter the water’s edge. Did Jesus choose Capernaum as a base because it was on the busy, commercial road to Damascus, both bustling and prosperous?

Then came a sponsored bus ride back to Jerusalem through the Palestinian Territories on an “armoured” bus looking little different from our 253 to Bradford, except that I was the only passenger not in military uniform. We passed by Jericho, and as the road from there arrived at Jerusalem, up came the Wall, and a very upset young Palestinian was taken off the bus by police – a daily experience for Palestinians. A few minutes



Jordan rushes under a concrete bridge

later he returned looking very relieved. The two sponsored rides have raised over £1,000 for the Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel (EAPPI), which deploys volunteers to support Palestinians encountering difficulties in passing through the Wall, an equivalent sum going to CR’s fund for our new monastery building. Thank you, supporters!

There is no space to report on all that crossed my path, but just to say what a life-changing privilege it is to go there, a land whose people need all our prayers and efforts to help them towards justice and peace.

George Guiver CR

Three Tariro Kids

This is Christopher, one of our most troublesome boys. It has been quite a saga getting him to this point. Actually, he's a very nice boy but he has spent his life in children's homes, not very good ones. He had to fight for survival. He had some pretty bad influences around him. He had to suffer the contempt of other people because he is an orphan. It is not surprising he is angry and loses his temper rather easily. Despite this he has made it through to Sixth Form and will be writing A levels in Maths, Physics and Chemistry this year. It is terribly important he concentrates on that for the next few months, and controls his temper.

He is smiling here because he has just been talking to one of the new Tariro trustees in Zimbabwe, the headmaster of one of the best schools in the country. (The cabbages show he is also a good farmer!) Here Christopher has found understanding, support and respect. In fact, another new trustee (a retired headmaster) has offered the same kind of support and understanding. With their help I believe we can keep Christopher moving forward until he can stand confidently on his own feet.



Valentine and Talent are rather different from Christopher. Their father died when they were young leaving their mother with just a small patch of ground to grow crops to support herself and the girls. It has been a tough life for them all, but stable and mother is a nice lady. The girls could never have paid their school fees so Tariro stepped in and did that. Now Talent is in her final year at University. We paid for that.

And Valentine is about to begin a diploma in book keeping and secretarial work at the local polytech, having just passed 2 A levels. The girls always manage to appear beautifully dressed, poised and confident; the kind of young ladies you could take anywhere.

It's dealing with these different kinds of young people that makes work with Tariro so endlessly fascinating and satisfying. Every boy or girl has their own needs, character, abilities and troubles. If it weren't for us they would be going nowhere. Now they are on the edge of adult life.

Life for them will still be tough. Economic change has still to come to Zimbabwe. The new government under President Mnangagwa is no better than the old. It is corrupt and devoid of ideas. The big difference is that they are insecure. They can't throw their weight around. People now talk politics openly and criticise the political leaders openly. If the next election is free and fair there should be radical change in Zimbabwe. Then life will open out for youngsters like Christopher, Valentine and Talent.

Nicolas Stebbing CR

Pale Young Curates To Be

The College of the Resurrection celebrates its Foundation every year on the Feast of the apostles St Simon and St Jude, 28th October. Fifty years ago the students from the Hostel of the Resurrection in Leeds used to travel to Mirfield by coach in the morning. In the afternoon the Hostel and College teams played rugby on the field by the river. After dinner about a hundred or so students and CR brethren crammed into a lecture room at the College to watch a play performed by the College students.

On Collop Monday, two days before Ash Wednesday, the Hostel was the venue for a similar programme. It was a long standing custom for the visiting institution to try to discover the name of the play to be performed and when successful to send a telegram announcing the fact.

I can remember one autumn evening going to Mirfield with most of the Hostel students to raid the College in the hope of finding copies of the play being rehearsed. We arrived just before Compline when we knew all the students would be in the church. We approached through the quarry and lay in the grass watching the students making their way in the dark from the College to the Community Church. As soon as the bell announced the beginning of the office we rushed into the College building. We had just fifteen minutes to search and then as the students returned we ran out of the front door, down Stocks Bank Road back to Mirfield Station, which was a mile away, with the College students chasing us.

They caught us on the platform waiting for the train and a tussle ensued because we had taken various objects from the College including a picture of our Founder, Bishop Charles Gore. In the fracas a large plate glass window in a building that in those days stood on the platform, got smashed and the police were called. Four of the students in that raid later joined the Community and were professed.

The following year a different approach was used by the Hostel students to discover the name of the Foundation Day play. One of the new first-year students had done national service in the military police. A complicated scheme was devised using him, whom we shall call 'Police sergeant Jack'* , and another first

* Later a respected canon of Southwark Diocese, recently deceased. RIP.

year student who were to pose as Leeds police officers, wearing uniforms kindly lent by the city police.

The plot required that these two were not known to anyone at Mirfield. Two other Hostel students who were known to the brethren and to College students also wore borrowed police uniforms. One evening a week or so before Foundation Day the four of them drove over to the House of the Resurrection and got there just after Compline.

The two first-year students rang the front door of the Community house, which was answered by the Superior, Father Raymond Raynes CR. The student who had been in the military police did the speaking because he knew how policemen spoke when on duty. Sergeant Jack explained that they had found these two students masquerading as police down by the Three Nuns public house. They claimed to be from the College of the Resurrection. 'In that case,' said the Superior, 'you need to speak to the College Principal. I shall telephone him. You had better come in and wait.'

Eventually Fr Andrew Blair CR came up from the College where he had been preparing to go to bed. When he was shown the two students in the car he immediately recognised them as Hostel students. The Superior said that they had better telephone the Warden of the Hostel, Fr Nicolas Graham CR, even though it was now ten o'clock at night. So Sergeant Jack found he was speaking to Fr Nicolas as though he was a real policeman and not one of Fr Nicolas's students. He began to explain the situation with the Superior and Fr Blair standing next to him while Fr Nicolas was saying to him, 'Is that you David? What is going on?' Naturally he received no answers to his questions. Eventually the policeman said that they would drive the two offending students back to Leeds and contact the College Principal next morning. So they left and the Superior and CR fathers returned to observing the Greater Silence.

Next morning I had to call Fr Blair pretending to be the Deputy Chief Constable of Leeds City Police. He was giving a lecture when he was called to the phone but broke off to talk to me. I asked him to explain why the two students from the Hostel in Leeds were wearing police uniforms and what they were doing in Mirfield. He surmised that it was all to do with finding out what play the College students were going to perform on Foundation Day. 'And what play is that?' I asked and he told me.

That was not the end of the matter because later that morning Fr Nicolas telephoned Fr Blair to tell him, 'The policemen were all Hostel students'.

'Yes, two were.' said Fr Blair.

'No all four are students at the Hostel!'

Fr Blair was tremendously angry and insisted that in future there must be no more attempts to find out the name of the Foundation Day play, and that was that!

Crispin Harrison CR

The Prodigal Returns!



It was during my years in the early Sixties at St. Michael's Theological College, Llandaff, Cardiff when I was first introduced to the the Community of the Resurrection. The members were regular visitors to the College as confessors and spiritual guides. At St. Teilo's Priory in the Roath area of the city I with many other students were often generously welcomed for afternoon tea by Fr. Peter Hewitt and the other brothers.

Their ministry shaped my desire to consider a vocation to the Religious Life and so it was after my Ordination in 1965 that I first visited Mirfield when Fr. Hugh Bishop was Superior. For the following two years I stayed on a number of occasions as an Aspirant to experience monastic life in what was then referred to not as the Monastery but as the Mother House which served the work in this and other countries. My memories of Mirfield from that period were of a large number of brothers; so much so that the hall was very congested as we gathered before daily meals. My Diocesan Bishop though kindly disposed was unhappy with me wanting to enter the Community and felt that I should postpone any plans for some years. This was in the days when bishops sometimes used the phrase 'unwilling to release you' and when they could also determine when Ordinands may marry. So it was that in 1967 I came away from Mirfield to concentrate on my parish ministry and my life eventually took on a new pathway with marriage in the Seventies.

The Mirfield experience though left an indelible impression on me. The core values of prayer, worship and service were things to which I aspired in my

various parishes. The placing of The Mass at the centre of life became my first priority in each parish alongside teaching how the church in that place could live out the Eucharist in the wider community. In this I sometimes invited Mirfield Fathers to make their special contribution. On one memorable Parish Mission in Wrexham, I remember the irrepressible Fr. Beaumont CR introducing me to the pubs in the parish where if a piano was available, he would instigate an instant party and intrigue the customers with his modern hymns!

It was for Holy Week 2017 that I returned to Mirfield after 50 years and it proved a profound and creative time. I much appreciated the inclusive atmosphere reflecting the changes in society and the generosity of the brothers' welcome. Back in 1967 I felt one had to have a reason to be at The House of The Resurrection. Above all I was struck by the clean lines of the reordered Church with its matching simple dignified liturgy.

St. David the Patron Saint of Wales is known for saying 'Cofiwch yr pethau bychan - Remember the small things'.

I have since been reflecting upon the 'small things' about the Community which have had a profound effect on my life. Amongst these was the initial warm welcome given to me at St. Teilo's Priory, the care taken today in the reordered church to offer the very best in worship now with a more pronounced Benedictine focus; the reverencing of the Holy Table both sincere and profound not a cursory nod; the thoughtful readings of Scripture and the reverent chanting of the psalms with their reflective pauses.

My aspirations throughout my life to reflect my spirituality in social action have been I believe as a direct result of the Mirfield influence. On Holy Saturday as we shared in the cleaning of the Church, I was unexpectedly given the task of polishing the Processional Cross. St. David's 'small things' acted as a catalyst impacting greatly on me for the rest of that day. Prayer and labour bore fruit that Easter Eve for I reflected how the two dimensional shape of the Cross, vertical and horizontal, perfectly expresses love for God and love for others. The catastrophic imbalance which occurs when as a church we fail to hold these two perspectives in creative tension is sometimes all too painful to see. The Mirfield Fathers, I believe, have preserved that balance so impressively in their common life down the years, helping all by virtue of being Christian to see themselves also as the Community of The Resurrection.

There is an anonymous saying which I have often used when leading pilgrimages in Wales 'Traveller, there is no road; the road is made as you travel'.

Last year I came to Mirfield specifically for the observance of Holy Week without the expectation that it would redirect my steps in life. I feel joyful to have been welcomed back after all these years and given the invitation to travel on as a new Companion together with the rest of the CR family.

Canon Glyn Conway

Do You Love The Old Testament?

Do you know the Old Testament? Do you read it? Do you love it? If you don't, you are not following in the footsteps of Christ. That may be a surprising thought. The Old Testament was the only scripture Jesus knew. Nothing of the New Testament existed when he was on earth. He read and studied the Law; he heard teachers teach about God; he prayed the psalms every day (as we do when we pray morning and evening prayer from our prayer book).

We shouldn't really call it the Old Testament when talking about Jesus' use of it as there was then no New. They are the Hebrew Scriptures, the revelation of God to his people Israel. Jesus learned from the Hebrew Scriptures that he had a Father in heaven, and this Father loved him. He learned from these Jewish writings that God was One, not one of many, like the Greek, Roman, or other pagan gods. He learned here that we must love the Lord our God and our neighbour as ourselves. (Deut. 6:4-5; Leviticus 19:18) He learned that God cares about the widow, the orphan and the stranger (Deut. 10:18). He read in Amos, Micah and Isaiah how angry God gets with the rich people who oppress the poor and "buy the poor for silver and the needy for a pair of shoes." (Amos 8:6) God must be very angry with the rich people in Zimbabwe who do not care about the orphans on the streets; or the rich people in England who do not care about the refugees dying in the Mediterranean.

Jesus often quoted Scripture. He told the Devil, "Man does not live on bread alone" (Deut. 8:3) Indeed, in the story of the temptation in the desert (Matthew 4) the devil himself quotes Psalm 91 to try and get Jesus to jump off the temple roof, but Jesus quotes back, "You shall not tempt the Lord your God." (Deut 6:16) And on the Cross in his agony he turns to the first verse of Psalm 22, "My God, My God, why have you forsaken me."



The Old Testament has the reputation of being rather serious and dull. In fact, it is also great fun. It's not all laws and wars. Read the book of Jonah: here a prophet runs away from God and God brings him back by the scruff of his neck and with the help of a big fish who vomits him up on the beach. Poor Jonah doesn't get to keep his dignity! Jonah doesn't want to prophesy destruction to Nineveh because he knows what will happen: he tells God straight that God is soft and merciful and will let the Ninevites off their well deserved punishment. This is exactly what God does. So Jonah sulks like a spoiled child!

Or read the Song of Songs where two beautiful young people are passionately in love with each other and can't wait to get into bed together. God is not mentioned in the book, yet Jews and Christians have always seen it as a parable of the love of God, for us!

Another beautiful book to read is Esther. It is quite an exciting story of one of the many occasions when secular rulers wished to persecute and destroy the Jews. We know about that sort of thing from the Second World War when the Nazis tried to do it. That was not the only time it happened. Esther tells a tale where it looks as if it will happen all over again, but at the last moment the villain of the piece is found out and brought to justice. It's quite funny really in a dark kind of way.

You could also read the First Book of Maccabees in the Apocrypha. You might find that a stirring war story, or a depressing tale of violence. For me it is a healthy reminder that war is always terrible and civil war is the most terrible kind of all. Some of it reminds me of my own experience in Zimbabwe over 2,000 years later. Some things about humanity never change. The author sees God being glorified in this violence and Christians have often seen God glorified in our wars. Today we are more doubtful about that. Maccabees makes us think about what our attitude should be to war even for a righteous cause.

When we read the Old Testament we enrich our faith. We learn more and more about the God Jesus knew was his Father. We see God loving his disobedient Israelites with a love greater than that of a mother for a child: "Can a woman forget her sucking child?" (Isaiah 49:15) We can be sure he loves us even when we sin.

Anglicans have always read the Old Testament. Morning and evening prayer contain an Old Testament reading as well as a New and always include some of the Psalms. This expresses our Anglican view that if we want to know Jesus better we need to read the books he read and learn about the Father he discovered in these marvellous Hebrew writings.

Nicolas Stebbing CR

Working Guest



Hello I'm Richard. I'm preparing to leave the Monastery after nearly three weeks here as a 'Working Guest'... 'Guest', certainly and I've been most welcomed with hospitality, unprecedented ... but 'Working' ... I'm not sure of!!!! I have helped Br. John organise his auction items for about two hours a day. but that's all. That has been a pleasure in itself. John is such a delight to be with. Wisdom and compassion emanate in his presence. All my pleading for "more work" seemed to fall on 'deaf ears'. Perhaps 'work' has

a different connotation here at the monastery. Perhaps my prayer and meditation is as much 'work' as what I do practically. Living with the Franciscans last year and working in the gardens for much longer has made me think I should do the same 'profitable labour' here. It's sixty years since I first came to Mirfield as a school boy, studying Divinity with an enlightened headmaster. He thought it would "do me good". I still remember the young American novice who took care of me. His attractive enthusiasm captivated me. He is still remembered here by the older brothers. In the sixty years since then, my spiritual journey has taken me through evangelical, liberal, progressive, agnostic and almost atheistic dimensions. But the roots still lie in that divinity class and the wise headmaster whose traditional theology brought me here in 1958. Should I have heard a call to the monastic life then? Perhaps so. Nevertheless my life has led me to teaching, marriage, children, divorce, community living and to be an artist ... what a rich experience!!! Now at seventy seven I'm back at the Monastery asking "What's next ?" My 'balloon' will pop sooner or later and the celebrations will continue in a new and infinite dimension. I will no longer have to struggle with the words 'God', 'Church' 'Sin' and wish we could find alternative words not full of preconceived concepts or ideas. At last I will come to experience fully those fruits of the Spirit we have asked for at Pentecost ... Love, Joy, Peace ...

One of the outstanding memories I will have of my stay here is the sight of a group of school children who, after sitting still and in silence for Midday Prayer and having sung a well rehearsed song, came out onto the community lawn running, jumping and rolling down the grassy slopes, full of life and excitement.



It encouraged me to continue the theme of my recent art work called 'Entering the Kingdom'. This is simply based on Jesus' words... "Unless you become like little children you cannot enter the Kingdom" That's a challenge...to me, to other guests and to the residents of the community...isn't it ?

Thank you.

Richard Popplewell

Discovering St Benedict

Over the past few years our Community has been discovering the Rule of St Benedict as a resource and guide to the religious life we are trying to lead. Since readers of this journal are all friends of ours you may like to know what we have found in Benedict that actually serves as a guide to all Christian life.

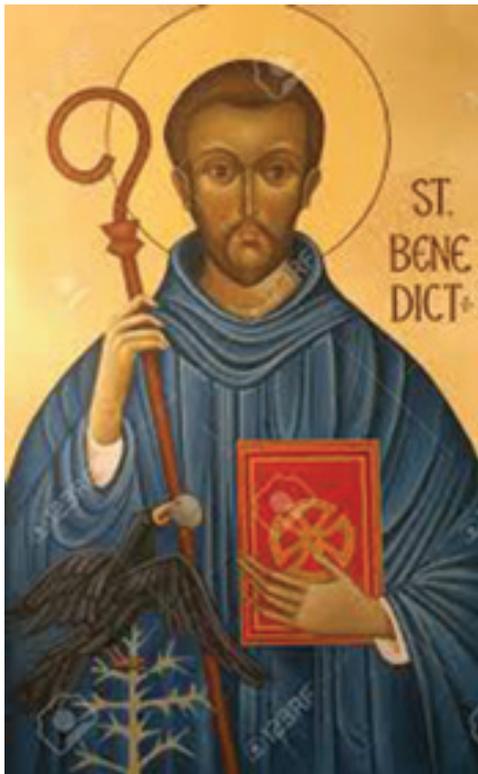
The Rule begins with a summons to anyone who "who will have life, and desires to see good days" (Ps 34:12). That is a really interesting description of Christian life: it is life giving and full of enjoyment. Such a person, Benedict says, must not sit around lazily doing nothing. We must listen to the voice of the Lord calling us, for, "What can be sweeter to us, dear ones, than this voice of the Lord inviting us?" The Prologue is full of this delight in following Christ. Yet how do we show we are following Christ? Basically, it is by avoiding evil and doing good. A monk, or a Christian of any kind is one "who walks without stain and practices justice; who speaks truth from his heart; who has not used his tongue for deceit; who has done no evil to his neighbour; who has given no place to slander against his neighbour." Christian life is not difficult to understand, though it is usually quite difficult to do!

The Prologue finishes with a wonderful description of what we are aiming at: “as we advance in the religious life and in faith, our hearts expand and we run the way of God's commandments with unspeakable sweetness of love.” Is that not what all Christians should want to do?

The first surprise of the Rule may therefore be that it is a summons to a joyful, fulfilling way of life. That is not what most people think the monastic life is going to be. The second surprise, for me, at least, was that it says practically nothing about prayer, or what people think of today as the spiritual life. Of course, Benedict expects his monks to pray together, singing the psalms and prayers which have always been part of Christian life. He says there must be a proper oratory where they can pray and that it must be kept clean,

free of junk, and it must be quiet. Monks should be able to go there to pray but shouldn't get too carried away with loud, emotional prayers. Monks must be on time for prayer. They must also expect to spend time in reading, usually books of the bible, or books of the fathers and spiritual giants who have gone before them. That really is all he says. The modern obsession for books on spirituality, endless concern for taking our spiritual temperature and talking with people about how we are getting on with prayer seems far from Benedict. He is quite business like about prayer: say (or sing) the offices; read the Bible; find time when you can to pray your personal prayers to God, and otherwise get on with the business of living. This pragmatic view of prayer may be just what some of us need; basically, get on with it!

In fact, much of the Rule is about how we deal with each other. The Abbot is central to this and the Rule is really a very good guide to how we should behave when we are in authority. That authority may be the role of a parish priest, the role of a parent, the role of a good employer. Benedict asks us to think of the other person. They are not cogs to be oiled, or robots to be deployed. They are people who need to be helped to fulfil their purpose in life, in the case of the monk to achieve salvation. The Abbot must keep studying his monks



to see how they differ from each other, what abilities they have, who needs to be encouraged to greater effort, or who, perhaps, needs a lighter load. He recognises some are weak and need special care. Sick brothers may eat meat to make them strong and may even take frequent baths. (Benedict thinks bathing for healthy monks is decadent.) He would like his monks to fast all the time, but recognises that modern (i.e. 6th Century!) monks are not up to it. So he allows them wine and plenty of vegetarian food and encourages them to fast just in Lent. He shows caring touches in his instructions: monks who have to serve meals must be allowed to eat and drink something first so they don't have to watch others eat while they are hungry. He recognises that young brothers need more to eat than older ones and the very young generally do need more care. Considering how schools, orphanages and institutions in the past have often starved and maltreated the young it is interesting to see that Benedict knew better 1500 years ago.

Benedict has a special section on the tools of the monastery. These must be carefully looked after and always returned to their proper place. Partly, that is for the convenience of other brothers who may need them and won't otherwise be able to find them. However, with our modern concern for the environment this can be seen as an instruction to care for everything around us and ensure nothing is wasted.

Benedict is not soft, however. He recognises that monks sometimes need tough treatment. He recommends a good beating for any monk too stupid to understand his wrongdoing in any other way. That is not now a monastic practice! He also insists on strict excommunication of misbehaving monks, yet allows this to be moderated to bring about conversion.

One really interesting aspect of the Rule is that it is not a set of rules where can simply look up what we should do in given situation. It provides guidelines, but we must constantly engage with them to see what guidance they give us in modern life. So, for instance, being Italian, he allows his monks a portion of wine everyday. That is not a common English practice and we haven't taken it on, but it does give us permission to celebrate feast days with wine, as has long been our custom.

Becoming a Benedictine is a bit like becoming a Christian. There is a clear starting point, but the process is one of growth; we spend our whole lives growing into the kind of person which Jesus describes in the Sermon on the Mount. Learning how to love God and love the people around us takes a lifetime. It is a big task, but Benedict puts it into everyone's reach. His rule is not just for the spiritual athletes. It is simply a "little rule that we have written for beginners." Benedictine life, like Christian life, starts with humility.

Nicolas Stebbing CR

To England, with Love – Russian Monks visit

Sixty years ago, a group of Anglican Religious from the Church of England made an historic pilgrimage to Russia at the invitation of the Patriarchate of the Russian Orthodox Church.

The Community of the Resurrection has had a Russian connection for over a hundred years which began when Walter Frere CR who was Superior at the time went to Russia in 1909 representing Cambridge University, attending the celebrations in connection with the novelist Gogol. On a more official capacity he was invited by the Russian Society for promoting Rapprochement between the Anglican and Eastern Orthodox Church in 1914, to deliver a series of lectures on similar lines to those delivered by Father F. W. Puller SSJE in 1912. Father Mark Tweedy CR had led the 1958 delegation represented by four other Anglican communities – this pilgrimage was the first of its kind since the 1917 Russian Revolution and was supported by the Archbishop of York Cyril Garbett. After the historic visit, the *Church Times* ran a series of articles by Father Mark Tweedy CR and a seven part series “Diary of a Visit to Russia” written by Father Mark Gibbard SSJE.

Two years later, in June 1960 at the invitation of the Archbishop of York, Michael Ramsey and with the blessing of the Patriarch of Moscow and all Russia, a delegation of Russian Orthodox Monks arrived in England to visit Anglican Religious orders. The three Monks were Nikodim, Archimandrite, now Bishop who was leader of the delegation, The Archimandrite Philaret, Rector of the Kiev Seminary, and Father Bartholomew of the Monastery of the Holy Trinity and S. Sergius. They arrived in London on 14th June and were met by Sir Patrick Reilly, a representative of the British Ambassador to the Soviet Union and Father Mark Tweedy CR, a representative of the Anglican Religious Orders, Father John Satterwaite, Secretary of the Church of England’s Council on Inter-Church Relations and Father Vladimir Rodzianko, a priest of the Serbian Church as well as others including a representative of the Soviet Embassy.

The three monks travelled by car to central London where they arrived at the branch house of the Society of S. John the Evangelist, S. Edward’s House, Westminster which became their base for the next fortnight. From S. Edward’s House they travelled to other parts of England to gain more knowledge of the organisation and life of Anglican Religious Communities.

The following day the delegation visited the Fellowship of S. Alban and S. Sergius, a society consisting of both Anglicans and Orthodox which aims to promote a greater understanding between the two Churches. The Fellowship has its own chapel where Anglican and Orthodox services are held. After a visit to see Bishop Anthony Bloom of Sergievo, head of the Russian diocese of London belonging to the jurisdiction of the Moscow Patriarchate who entertained the monks with a luncheon, the monks went to the Serbian Church, where services



Visiting the Priory of S. Paul, Holland Park, London with Father Trevor Huddleston CR.

are held for Serbian-Orthodox led by Father Nikolich, priest-in-charge and representative of the Serbian Patriarch. On the same day, the Monks got to know the brethren at the Priory of S. Paul, Holland Park, a branch house of the Community of the Resurrection.

On 16th June they travelled to the Midlands where they arrived in Coventry to see the bombed-out shell of Coventry Cathedral as a result of the blitz during the Second World War. Next to it was the unfinished new cathedral in stark contrast to its 14th century predecessor, although services were being held in it, the Russian delegation were able to visit the new cathedral. From Coventry the Monks were taken to Kelham, a small village outside Newark-on-Trent in Nottinghamshire where they arrived at the House of the Sacred Mission, Mother House

of the Society of the Sacred Mission and were greeted by the Director of the Society, Father Paul Hume SSM. The Society has branch or daughter houses in South Africa, Australia, and Japan.

After Solemn Evensong which the Father Director officiated, the Monks spoke with brethren and students from the Theological College* and touched on questions



Visit with the Father Director, SSM - Bretheren and Students at Kelham.

* The Theological College of the Sacred Mission originally began at Mildenhall, Suffolk in 1897. It became Kelham Theological College after it moved with the Society of the Sacred Mission to Kelham in 1903.



The delegation visits the House of the Sacred Mission, Kelham.

about the life and organisation of Russian Orthodox monasteries as well as seminaries and academies. Conversation was quite free and easy, warm and friendly.

The following day the Monks had a tour of the House and College, sat in on a lecture on the Old Testament and spoke with students doing the two year course. After a friendly brotherly farewell, they returned to London. The next day 18th June was spent seeing the sights of London. In the afternoon the Monks journeyed to Oxford to the House of S. Gregory and S. Macrina with its Orthodox chapel. The Oxford congregation is not large, consisting of several Orthodox Russian families. During term time, students come to the chapel:

Orthodox Greeks, Serbs and others. On Sunday 19th June the Monks celebrated the Liturgy. Among the congregation were Christians of other nationalities. After the Liturgy there was dinner and others present were not only Russians but many English people who were sympathetic towards the Russian Orthodox Church.

On 20th June the delegation went to Christ Church college and after a walk-about tour, Dr Eric Mascall took them to the University Church and later they arrived again at the House of S. Gregory and S. Macrina where a reception was held in their honour. Those present were the Bishop of Oxford, Dr Carpenter who had taken part in the theological conversations in Moscow in 1956; Bishop Basil of Brussels and All Belgium; professors and students of the University, and Anglican Religious.

During their two day stay in Oxford, the Monks enjoyed hospitality offered by the Cowley Fathers – Society of S. John the Evangelist at their Mission House in Marston Street. The Society was founded in 1866 by Father R. M. Benson and is the oldest Anglican Religious Order for Men in the Anglican Communion. The Society consisted of three Congregations: English, American and Canadian. The English Congregation has branch houses in London (S. Edward's



Russian Monks staying at the Mission House, Cowley S. John, far left: Father Dalby, Superior-General SSJE and Father Hemming SSJE extreme right.

House), India (Bombay and Poona) and South Africa. The American Congregation has houses in Boston and Cambridge, Massachusetts, and Japan; the Canadian Congregation has a Mission House in Bracebridge, Ontario.

On 21st June the Monks from Russia returned to London and in the evening they attended the fiftieth anniversary of the Ecumenical Movement at a service in Westminster Abbey, where they were given special places of honour before the procession of choristers, Canons, Anglican bishops and representatives of the Constantinopolitan and Serbian Patriarchs and Archbishop of Canterbury.

Of the five principle religious orders, the closest to Orthodox monasticism is the Benedictine Order at Nashdom. Nashdom Abbey or “Our House” in Russian was built in 1910 by the Dolgoruky family in the Russian style, the Architect was Lutyens. The Offices and Liturgy were in Latin.



The Russian Monks visiting Nashdom Abbey, with Dom Robert OSB and the Abbot of Nashdom.

The Order has a branch in America at Three Rivers, Michigan. With forty monks of the Benedictine Order, their primary duty is worship, liturgy and Office. In addition they also have a small plot of land, a joinery and a workshop, where they make incense for themselves and for sale to the public. The order sends spiritual directors to parishes and to several women’s Communities. The Russian delegation noticed a candle burning in the chapel which is lit every Thursday for the unity of all Christians in remembrance of Our Saviour’s prayer “That they all may be one.” The next day the Monks attended the morning Office and the Liturgy then a tour round the grounds, buildings and workshops and the library.

On 23rd June the delegation went to Windsor and was met by the Dean of S. George’s, Bishop Eric Hamilton who showed us round the chapel after which they were taken to Windsor Castle.

From Windsor the delegation returned to Nashdom, then by car to Plaistow in the east end of London where the House of the Divine Compassion is a branch house of the Society of S. Francis.

The Society carries out its work among the working class and friars teach in schools, preach among young people and give help to parish clergy. In the West of England the Friars work among sailors. Not far from their house is the parish church of S. Philip. They were taken to some buildings given over to work with young people. There were games rooms, a cinema and so on. They met parishioners who had come to Evensong and talked to them about the religious life in the Russian Orthodox Church.

After the discussion the Anglicans applauded the delegation for a long time. The meeting with the Franciscans concluded with a visit to two ordinary homes in old and new houses.

On 24th June the delegation attended a morning service in Westminster Abbey and with the Dean, looked around the Abbey and adjoining chambers, they were joined by a group of young Christians from Sweden. In the Jerusalem Chamber the Dean of the Abbey and Archimandrite Nikodim exchanged greetings and souvenirs. Later that day the monks were invited to make an appearance on television in which they answered questions about the life of the Russian Orthodox Church and their visit to England. In the evening a dinner was held in their honour, among the guests were the Bishops of Fulham, Bishop James (of the Patriarchate of Constantinople), Bishop Anthony Bloom, religious and clergy of the Anglican Church, academics and representatives of the press and television. They included Orthodox, Anglican and Roman Catholics. The delegation was welcomed at the dinner by the Bishop of Fulham, and Archimandrite Nikodim replied.

On Saturday 25th June the delegation were received by the Archbishop of Canterbury at Lambeth Palace and the Revd John Satterthwaite representing the Church of England Council on Inter-Church Relations. After attending Morning Prayer in the chapel they were shown round Lambeth Palace and Archimandrite Nikodim presented a letter from His Holiness the Patriarch Alexis, addressed to the Primate of All England, Dr Geoffrey Fisher. After the visit to Lambeth the delegation went to Canterbury, one of the oldest cities in England. It was St. Augustine who was sent here by Pope Gregory I from Rome to promote the Gospel and receive the title: Archbishop of Canterbury. Dr Hewlett Johnson, the Dean of Canterbury received the delegation who showed them round the Cathedral, the oldest part which dates from the 6th century.

On the same day the monks visited Bishop James, the representative of the Archbishop Athenagoras was visiting the parishes of Western Europe and kindly showed them the Greek Cathedral built in the Byzantine style with its marble, gold and mosaic icons it made an impressive sight.

In the evening they attended an all-night vigil in the Russian Church of the Moscow Patriarchate celebrated by Bishop Anthony and the Bishop of Brussels and All Belgium. On Sunday 26th June the Divine Liturgy was celebrated attended by over two hundred parishioners. Archimandrite Philaret preached followed by the Archimandrite Nikodim offering greetings to the congregation and presenting an Ikon of Christ the Saviour with the blessing of the Patriarch Alexis. Sunday afternoon they took a train to the North of England to the House of the Resurrection, Mirfield, home of the Community of the Resurrection who joyfully received the delegation. The Monks attended Matins and Evensong as well as the Liturgy and afterwards spoke with the Brethren of the Community and told them about Russian Orthodox monasteries.



The Russian delegation visiting the House of the Resurrection, Mirfield with the Superior Father Jonathan Graham CR and Father Mark Tweedy CR.

The Community has a Priory in London dedicated to S. Paul and daughter houses in South Africa, Zimbabwe and Wales where the brethren are engaged in missionary activity especially in the field of theological education and ordination training, sermons, retreats, missions, and pastoral work in church and society and running a large Retreat House. On 27th June the delegation went to York where they arrived in York Minster and were met by the Dean who gave them a tour of the Cathedral, one of the largest in England. On the same day a visit was paid to the Archbishop of York, Dr Michael Ramsey who wore a cross given to him by the Patriarch Alexis in 1956 at the time of the theological conversations in Moscow. After greeting each of the delegates the Archbishop led them to his domestic chapel where prayers were said before a Russian Ikon of the Mother of God, and they were asked to sing. Afterwards they were invited to the Archbishop's drawing room for informal conversation before their departure from York to Mirfield.

The next day 28th June the Monks departed by train for London and in the afternoon paid a visit to the British Council of Churches where they were warmly received by the Secretary-General Mr Slack who had visited Moscow in 1954 as a member of a Church delegation. The Monks two week stay in England came to a close during which time they made many new friends, experienced the warmth and hospitality of their hosts and gained a closer knowledge of Anglican religious life.

The brotherly visit made it possible in some degree towards drawing together the two Churches and to further strengthen friendly relations between Britain and Russia. On 29th June the Russian Monks departed London and returned to Moscow.

The Russian delegation also visited three women's communities: West Malling Abbey, the Community of S. Mary the Virgin, and the Society of the Precious Blood.

Steven Haws CR

The Dancing

*“Love is the sweetest thing;
What else on earth could ever bring
Such happiness to everything
As love’s old story?”*

**On first hearing the music,
fingers strummed upon unmoving knees;
every second foot tapped tentatively up and down;
a desire to sway rippled round the room,
but uncertainty kept us fastened in our seats.**

When they had eaten, Jesus said to Simon Peter,
‘Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these others do?’
He answered ‘Yes, Lord, you know I love you.’
Jesus said to him, ‘Feed my lambs.’

*“Love is the strangest thing;
No song of birds upon the wing
Could make our hearts forever sing,
Like love’s old story.”*

**The second time round,
smiles surfaced and laughter bubbled;
we soaked up the rhythm and we confidently rose;
hips and shoulders flexed and melted
as our hearts and instincts felt the life-giving beat.**

A second time he said to him,
‘Simon, son of John, do you love me?’
He replied, ‘Yes, Lord, you know I love you.’
Jesus said to him, ‘Look after my sheep.’

*“Whatever hearts may desire,
Whatever life may send,
This is the tale that never can tire,
This is the song without end.”*

**But at the third time of playing,
hands grasped hands as we whirled and swirled,
hearing anew our names being called;
responding from some deep well of longing,
we said “Yes!” at last, and made the dance complete.**

Then he said to him a third time, ‘Simon, son of John, do you love me?’
And Peter said, ‘Lord, you know everything; you know I love you.’
Jesus said to him ‘Feed my sheep.’

*“Love is the greatest thing;
The oldest, yet the latest thing.
I only hope that fate may bring
Love’s story to you!”*



Maggie Jackson

Scripture: John 21:v15-17. Poem Maggie Jackson. Lyrics © R.Noble 1978.

Companions CR

RIP: Robert Palmer; Fr. Rowan Smith.
'May they rest in peace and rise in glory'

CoR Pilgrimage to Walsingham... **'Honk if you love Jesus and our Lady!'**

The happy birds 'Te Deum' sing; 'tis Mary's month of May.' Well, it wasn't quite, although when eleven CoR ordinands and I gathered in the college car park following Mattins on the morning of April 13th, there was a definite spring atmosphere and sense of expectancy presaging our pilgrimage. Thus, we embarked in the spirit of Our Lady of Walsingham's intercession to rural Norfolk and her shrine in this renowned place. John CR, a long-time Guardian of the Shrine, gave us God's blessing and sprinkled the cars prior to departure, and we were off in thankfully clement travelling weather!

Happily, there was a mix of pilgrims on this trip, first-timers as well as seasoned visitors to the Shrine. I had not accompanied ordinands before on such a trip, let alone offered hermeneutical insights to them, so I was slightly wary of what might be expected of me and whether I would be able to deliver anything at all of import on the theme, *'Mary, Star of Hope.'* Nevertheless, the very challenge of accompanying the pilgrimage weekend added to my personal appreciation of Walsingham as a pilgrimage site and served to excite my attitude. It was certainly good to be in mostly age-similar company for a time. (One place in which religious life is often found wanting!) I have good relationships with our students, and was keen to hear how things were going for them, and not least with those who will have left by the time you're reading this!

Following a very welcome stop at a farm-shop *en route*, we entered the village of Little Walsingham mid-afternoon to the joyful strains of the pilgrim hymn. (At least in the car in which I was travelling!) That said, we were also soundscaped by excerpts from *Aspects of Love*, *Brideshead Revisited* and *the St Magnus Singers* throughout the journey, so were pretty hoarse by the end of it! (Oh, perhaps that was only me, then!)

It was a delight to have Fr. Andreas Wenzel, the Shrine priest, saying Mass for us upon arrival to the Holy House. He has a quiet, hospitable way with him which I think helped to refresh and calm everyone down from the excesses of driving and travel in order to focus on the spiritual business at hand. There

was a brief respite before Shrine prayers and Vespers, and following on from the excellent food served at dinner we headed to the Bull to exercise our skills in pastoral ministry! It's a great way to get to know one another as well as to meet fellow-pilgrims at the start of a weekend.

I was grateful for the level of care that Ben and Sebastian, CoR pilgrimage officers 2018, put into the administration of the weekend, and not least for our own daily offices prayed together after the manner of the community and college. This helps with both the primary Christian bond we share as disciples, but also strengthens the fraternal ones as contemporaries and those who live together at Mirfield. We had use of the Barn chapel for both offices and addresses: it is a delightfully liminal space, where the crucified Christ is depicted on a 3-D wire-mesh Cross; at one and the same time beautiful and haunting. There could be no denying his being in the midst of us here.

The chapel was also where I gave the two addresses on the Shrine's pilgrimage theme, *'Mary, star of hope.'* In this vein, I was pleased to be able to do some preliminary thinking about how Our Lady is comparable to a star. Only at the eleventh hour did I discover that one of our party is about to complete her PhD thesis in astrophysics! I only hope I did some spiritual if not scientifically accurate justice by my comparison! Perhaps the Sunday morning address was slightly more generalist ground: 'Always be ready to give an account for the hope that is in you.' Taking St. Peter's charge to the Christians in Asia Minor,





I challenged us to think about our own readiness to give account to whosoever might ask. Did the prospective deacons have food for thought? They assured me that this was so, and indeed we had a couple of good one-one conversations afterwards, which pleased me. My intention was to be a supporter and friend as well as a preacher on this weekend.

The Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham serves as a reminder that we are all entrants into the pilgrimage journey of faith; this is a feature of the Christian life which unifies us whatever our stage or calling as followers may be. Furthermore, we do not stop journeying, for even our death marks the end of but one stage. Or is it the beginning by the beginning from the beginning which knows no end, as St Gregory of Nyssa saw it?

I felt for my own part, that purely the space to be solitary and join in something as basic as the rosary for the Shrine prayer intentions was deepening my engagement with the praying life of this place as well as uniting me with the more mysterious intercession of the saints. Walsingham does seem to be a place in which one gets ‘caught-up.’ Wherein? Well, into the numinous, into the wide space who is God. Express it as you will, but it is there, and it is by no means difficult to see what enthralled so many visitors year on year. Perhaps it is no coincidence that ‘Hope’ was the very name of the Shrine restorer (Fr. Hope Pattern), as well as being the name of our pious beanie mascot who himself got in on the talks and provided a tester for one ordinand to consider his diaconal praxis in blessing objects!

An important highlight of visiting Walsingham again for my own part, was being able to see the simple yet profound headstone beneath which the ashes of our former brother Mgr. Augustine Hoey are interred. Having with me *Trembling on the Edge of Eternity* as reading matter greatly fostered the long-standing importance of Walsingham to Augustine, and it still very much feels as though his spirit resides there. Completed by a visit to St. Mary’s parish church for Sunday Mass, we all very much felt a part of something greater, of a narrative beyond thought which could only be the work of God mediated through his saints down the ages.

The unfurling of the weekend saw a great interplay between the social and devotional aspects that make for good fellowship in the Christian life. It was enjoyable, interesting and my brothers and sisters from the college were a pleasure to be alongside. We even met some friendly rivals from a planet called Cuddesdon! The church is a small place, and yet it belongs to those whose hearts are so obviously aflame with the love of God, that it yet retains all power to transform the world for love of him. This much was assured for me, not only as I laid hands on the faithful in the Shrine church, but throughout our visit. It is to be hoped that the fruit of our visit will ripen in others’ discovery

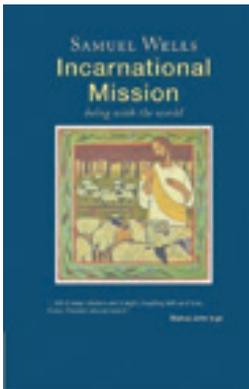
of the Father's love for them as he ministers to them through us, and as Mary his handmaid, the Star of Hope, prays alongside.

Marc Voase CR



Book Reviews

Incarnational Mission: *Dr. Samuel Wells*
Canterbury Press: ISBN: 978-1-78622-036-3



I came fresh to this text, appraised of Sam Wells' considered writing from the opinions of others, and quite keen to decide for myself what my own view may be. I feel that for an experienced priest, (if I may be forgiven,) the book is something of a curate's egg!

Much of this may well be because it is a companion volume to Dr. Wells' other book, *Incarnational Ministry: being with the Church*, hence possibly better to be read in concert therewith. He attests at the beginning that it may stand alone, but judging by some of the references to it, the reader does seem to be slightly disadvantaged without familiarity with this and his other previous work.

Nevertheless, Wells is a sound empirical theologian, and this lights up his prose, filled as it is with anecdotal examples of his own life as a priest 'in the mission field,' and equally of other sociological instances in which the business of mission is made incarnate. Such instances are highly current and relatable, giving the textual data a broadly contemporary feel and offering the work as something of a *vade mecum* for different missionary contexts.

Commendably, we never seem to lose sight of the central notion for Wells that mission is indissoluble from incarnation. This is premised upon the notion of 'being' (itself something of a tenet for his earlier published work.) In this volume then, we explore the scenarios of 'being with' as a hinge on which mission can swing freely, with Wells seeking to expand what has become an emerging theme in his academic work as a priest-missilogist.

The various chapters as they unfurl, examine some of the different contexts in which 'being with' can happen: amongst the lapsed, seekers, those of no professed faith, the hostile, and the institution, to give a selection. These are interesting and highly thoughtful subdivisions, and Wells opens his discussions by seeking to ascertain what he means for each one, before going on to exemplify them with diverse stories and no lack of current analysis informed by his own study and experience. Whilst this makes an interesting and comprehensive read, it also becomes occasionally wordy and it would perhaps be easy for someone coming to the subject-matter for the first time to lose their train of thought amidst what is ostensibly good discussion.

I think many of the chapters stand alone in their own right. They work well, supported scripturally as they are, and with the helpful use of bold typeface when keywords occur and recur pertinent to the overall discussion. 'Presence' and 'enjoyment' were two that surfaced for me as these are markers appropriate to more than one scenario of mission. Indeed, if one's mission is to have an incarnational quality, then these words seem especially apposite in my view. It is good to have key words reiterated like this so as to see the range of settings in which they are applicable to the work of mission. Indeed, it is a book which successfully stretches our appreciation of just what the word means.

I found myself often needing to re-read bits of the text to ensure understanding of the discussion in hand; this is quite a demanding book and not at all foundational. Rather, it demonstrates a thorough working understanding of how mission might work in the scenarios (and others) given above and helpfully attaches a range of aspectual considerations to these scenarios: (an individual's age, life-stage, ethnicity for instance,) identifying the pastoral approach which must accordingly juxtapose with all of these in order to present the Gospel authentically.

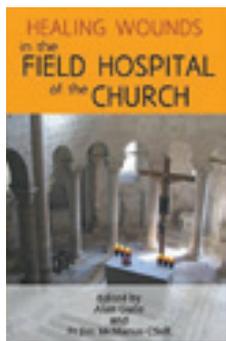
Wells aims to create both 'a polemic for a different approach to mission and a meditation inviting both devotion and reflective practice.' I am personally sceptical about his successful achievement of these aims as far as Mrs Christian in the street is concerned. In his favour however, he maintains that there may well be necessity to re-read and consider the elements of the text at the outset. Whilst this is not an easy read, it seems to adequately reflect the fact that mission is far from a simple consideration in our Christian vocation and requires ongoing theological landscaping if we are all to understand well the different

ways of ‘being with’ in the church as those who are gathered and sent for the work of God.

I offer this text especially to those who are teaching and learning missiology and perhaps to you if you’re after a challenge in your thinking on this subject. It’s worth the time and thought.

Marc Voase CR

Healing Wounds in the Field Hospital of the Church Eds. Alan Guile & Fr. Jim McManus. CSsR Gracewing 2017. ISBN: 978-0-85244-918-9



I have been impressed by this recent publication of essays, which successfully combine applied theology with a profound humaneness of insight. In April 2015 Oscott Roman Catholic College held a symposium inspired by His Holiness Pope Francis’s then still recently expressed vision of God’s church as, ‘a field-hospital after a battle.’ It is the Holy Father’s belief that a Church’s offering the ‘medicine of mercy’ serves to tend and relieve the frequently deep and invisible wounds of God’s people which succeed only in impeding their relationship with Him. The authors’ summation is that healing and reconciliation both mental

and otherwise are the pigeon of His whole Church.

The scope of the text is broad, yet accessible. (It is worth reading *verbatim*, although this does require time.) The twenty chapters discuss the healing ministry of the church both in its various types and its various contexts. For example, those with specific ministries to children and young people write in detail of their experiences alongside them in the ‘binding-up’ process ensuing from cases of neglect, attachment issues and loss to cite but three aspects of the wide remit of this work. Further, there are explorations of intergenerational healing within the family unit as it has been manifested through the offering of the Mass; a brief but important chapter on exorcism and deliverance ministry by those directly experienced in it, moving in later sections to overviews of healing and evangelisation in prison amongst convicts, work done with victims of sexual abuse and the importance of the parish context in the outworking of recovery from trauma. Thought is also generously given to the roles of priest and laypersons within the ministration of healing and promotion of wholeness amongst the broken.

The book is generated from a fine experiential pedigree. Alan Guile felt called to give up his job as a professor of chemical engineering in 1984, in order to set up home in a new area and devote himself entirely to the ministry of prayer for interior healing. Six hundred people have visited him and his wife at their

home since then, to be listened to and prayed with – not merely Catholics, but even he recalls, ‘one who had been a Buddhist [until he] came into the Church after prayer ministry.’ (p. 23.) Similarly the last forty years of Fr. Jim McManus’s priestly ministry have centred on developing programmes, retreats and courses focused on healing. Both men have written widely on the subject and express themselves cogently and compassionately concerning it. Their overviews are validated by the expertly offerings of various contributors.

The book is strikingly ecumenical forasmuch as it is obviously Roman Catholic in inspiration. We have HH the Pope’s exhortation to, ‘heal the wounds’ always before us, together with trenchant examples from scripture (Jesus’ attitude to healing) and liturgy (the prayers of the Church) to support the thesis offered by the book. What appears to rest at its heart however is that universal vocation of the baptised to evangelism. ‘Go forth and tell’ seems to be a suitable dictum for the propagation of all healing work, since the Gospel itself is ‘salvation for everyone who believes.’ (*Rom* 1.16)

I am impressed by the strong sacramental poise of the text, outlined transparently as it is in the opening chapters, wherein is also the biblical precedent for healing as well as the mandate of the Roman catechism. All of this strengthens the foundations of what are sustainably diverse and interesting discussions throughout.

There is much to commend the volume to the laity as well as to religious and those in diaconal or presbyteral orders. It is exciting to my mind that there is equal weight on discussions about both statuses; the religious and lay state treated as vocations entire in themselves. Once again, the emphasis continuously seems to spool back to our universal vocation as those baptised into Christ. Oneness and healing as ‘everybody’s pigeon’ cannot be understated in this reading. For the editors and their contributors both, the attainment of healing comes about when the Church is being Church: helping one another as God’s gathered people. Whatever our individual role or status then, we have to act as the agents of the healing we wish to see.

Chapters are helpfully supported by the anecdotal examples and testimonials of those who have received or administered healing ministry in the area under particular discussion. These excerpts are deployed saliently; they are highly subjective and often emotive, and do much to sustain engagement with what might otherwise be a toilsome read. Narrative is ably balanced with statistics quite regularly, and this varies the volume’s presentation and expands our thinking helpfully. Because of the topical breadth of the essays, it is surely possible to connect with or discover an aspect of healing or dimension thereof by which one is stimulated or even enthused. For me, the whole text masterfully appraises this subject for the late 2010s, and has definitely placed it higher up in my own thinking than perhaps was previously the case.

Chapter nine on the healing of children and teenagers was of especial interest to me as someone with an education background. It is worth noting that the plenteous practical explanations demonstrating resolution in individual cases in this and other discussions really help us to appreciate the seriousness of the subject. Whilst it is arguable that this might be overdone in the inclusion of appendices detailing two key stories referenced earlier, it is also gratifying that publications are beginning to give credible voice to the notions of ‘need’ and ‘condition’ and searching to bring amelioration and relief to them. This in itself is timely; Anne’s story and the reconciliation of the Cenecolo brother with his parents bear reading. They ought to cause us to reflect on our own brokenness and our imperative need for the mercy of God.

I am glad of this text and hopeful for its implications. Healing often falls foul of denominationalism. Guile and McManus remind us with fresh and insightful teaching that we ought all to be ‘evangelical,’ and their book promotes this vision intently for the betterment of a Church and world which earnestly needs to see and believe.

Marc Voase CR

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