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Editorial

The publication of the new report by the Liturgical Commission, *Transforming Worship*,¹ coincided with a rather larger piece of liturgical news: the issue by Pope Benedict of a *motu proprio* easing restrictions on the use of the older form of the Mass. This struck me as appropriate, for at one point the report uses language which, in its emphasis on the value of givenness in liturgy, might be recalling the Pope's own approach when, as Cardinal Ratzinger, he wrote *The Spirit of the Liturgy*. The passage in *Transforming Worship* I have in mind speaks of the 'twofold aspect of liturgy, as both human construction and divine gift', and relates this to 'two broadly different approaches to liturgical change, which sometimes stand in considerable tension to one another'. What follows this needs to be quoted at some length:

In the first approach, which is the most widespread in traditional societies and which cultural anthropologists would regard as the more usual, liturgies cannot be changed by processes of explicit negotiation, because they just *are*. They are earthly copies or manifestations of transcendent divine realities. . . . This view of liturgy is highly characteristic of the (eastern) Orthodox tradition. . . . Orthodox worshippers simply accept the liturgy as given, and it is just this sense that an unchanging heavenly reality is breaking into our present world through the liturgy—the liturgy of the angels leaking for a moment into the earthly realm—that makes the Orthodox liturgy so powerfully attractive to many western Christians. On this view of liturgy you cannot negotiate liturgical change, and the point is never to change the liturgy but to allow the liturgy to change you.

This approach is in marked contrast to the view of liturgy that has been prevalent, usually unconsciously, in the mind of successive Liturgical Commissions, and dominant among those responsible for the liturgies of the western churches in the twentieth century, for whom the liturgy is a thing to be consciously and thoughtfully shaped, so that it becomes the most effective means for helping us to worship. Indeed, for some who take this view of liturgy, the process of re-shaping must always be going on, as the circumstances in which Christians meet for worship change over time or vary from place to place. Liturgical revision is then not an occasional process but a continuous one—a tap which is never turned off.

Both these understandings of liturgy are present in the Church of England, and much confusion is caused when each side remains

¹ *Transforming Worship: Living the New Creation* (GS 1651).

unconscious that the other is approaching the subject from completely different presuppositions. There is a particular irony in the fact that Cranmer's liturgy has become the vehicle for those who are most concerned in the contemporary Church of England to take liturgy as a given, when Cranmer himself was a modernizer who wished to reshape the liturgy radically to express what he saw as a freshly recovered sense of the Gospel.¹

It is good to see explicitly recognised matters which *Faith and Worship* has discussed repeatedly.² What I find especially interesting here is the implicit recognition that the second of the two views described—the view that ‘the process of re-shaping must always be going on’—is historically abnormal. If it has been ‘prevalent in the mind of successive Liturgical Commissions’ that has not been (we are permitted to infer) an unalloyed good. The ‘tap’ of liturgical revision has at any rate now been turned off; *Common Worship* is complete; and the task of ‘liturgical formation’ to which the Liturgical Commission has now turned is to include formation in the Prayer Book tradition, with the Prayer Book Society as a ‘partner organization’ (p. 18). The Commission regards it as ‘important that the Prayer Book remains in widespread and regular use in the mixed liturgical economy of the present-day church’, and recommends that ‘parish churches which already have a tradition of BCP use should be encouraged to use as wide a range of BCP provision as possible.’ It recommends too that ‘archbishops and bishops should give attention to the use of BCP at episcopal services’, and that ‘those preparing for ordained and licensed ministry should be given consistent exposure to the BCP, and should be grounded in its historical and theological context’ (p. 40).³

All this is very welcome—if nothing else (and this has been one reason for quoting the report so fully) it provides ordinary worshippers with official approval for their efforts to defend Prayer Book services from the assaults of unsympathetic incumbents. And the help offered goes beyond the specific practical recommendations—by giving a recognised place to the sense of ‘givenness’ in liturgy, and by implying the normality of such a sense, the Commission has provided an underlying rationale for the defence of the Prayer Book. For members of the Church of England it is the unique vehicle for the apprehension liturgically that (in Pope Benedict's words) ‘something is approaching me here that I did not

1 Ibid., pp. 9–10. 2 E.g. editorials in Nos. 57, 58 & 59.

3 The report notes on p. 31 that ‘in some ministerial training, special emphasis is laid on the planning of special and experimental worship, sometimes at the expense of mainstream study and use of *Common Worship* and the *Book of Common Prayer*. This is especially unfortunate if (as often happens) ordinands enter . . . with little experience of structured liturgy using established forms and texts—either because they have only recently become Christians or because they have been nurtured in churches which sit lightly to the official provision.’



Editorial

produce myself,' offering 'entry into the great reality that through the rite is always ahead of us and can never quite be overtaken.'¹

That is not, of course, the only rationale for the defence of the Book of Common Prayer. *Transforming Worship* also observes that the Book of Common Prayer 'is doctrinally normative for the Church of England in a more immediate way than other liturgical forms because it is one of our church's historic formularies'² (it is in this context that the report stresses the importance of the Prayer Book remaining in 'widespread and regular use'). Or as another recent report has it: 'what Anglicans believe [as discovered in the Prayer Book] . . . is, of course, expressed in liturgical and doxological language, not in doctrinal definitions . . . [it] has been expressed in an indirect way according to the principle *Lex orandi lex credendi*: the rule of praying is the rule of believing.'³ In other words a liturgy cannot be 'doctrinally normative' unless it is used. The point is often, I think, overlooked—it is quite common to see the Book of Common Prayer referred to as if one could employ it as a kind of doctrinal reference book, and as if there were no need for it to be in the hands of worshippers. But it is only by being used that a liturgy can be normative as a doctrinal standard. 'Widespread and regular use' of the Prayer Book is important, on this view, not just to a coterie of enthusiasts but to all members of the Church of England, whether they know it or not.

1 Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, San Francisco (2000), pp. 165, 169.

2 *Transforming Worship*, p. 40.

3 *Living God's Covenant: Second Interim Report (2207) of the Joint Implementation Commission under the Covenant between the Methodist Church of Great Britain and the Church of England*, Peterborough (2007), pp. 72–3.



Collected, Corrected

JOHN RODWELL

(A Sermon preached at the Cathedral Eucharist during the 2007 Blackburn Branch Festival)


Riding westwards into Devon in Whit week 1549, Walter Raleigh, the father of the famous sailor adventurer, came upon a woman on her way to church, saying her rosary. Being an enthusiastic supporter of the religious reforms then rapidly gathering pace, he upbraided her with a warning of the consequences of her behaviour, for her body and her soul. Hearing of her treatment when she arrived at her church, her congregation, gathered for worship, went wild and nearly lynched Raleigh, burned down a local mill and started a rebellion which spread across the West Country and saw the ruthless butchery of the protestors by the King's troops.¹

Much of this resistance to change was focused on the new Prayer Book, made obligatory that Whitsunday 1549, the First Prayer Book of Edward VI and the forerunner of the Book of Common Prayer we know.² It is difficult to comprehend the radical shift in religious practice and belief that the first Act of Uniformity represented with its drastic transformation of the Mass, its abolition of almost every one of the familiar signs and symbols of the sacraments, its sweeping away of the rich medieval calendar, the sudden silencing of cathedral, chapel and church choirs, their Latin repertoires made obsolete at a stroke. It was nothing less than the obliteration of a deeply embedded sense of identity and belonging that had shaped individual piety and community life for centuries. Sounds familiar maybe, so not so difficult to comprehend?

Of course, we see *ourselves* as the beneficiaries of those changes then and in the subsequent revisions of the Prayer Book, in 1552 and 1662—the establishment of a single, simple liturgy, in words we could hear and understand, with actions we could comprehend, and in language of startling power and rhythmic beauty. Thus enriched, so should we look with compassion on those who paid the price then to give us what we love by losing what *they* treasured—and at a time of much greater fear



¹ These events are described by Eamon Duffy in *The Stripping of the Altars* (1992), a book which provides the most potent account of the disintegration of traditional religion in England at the Reformation. To understand the impact of the changes on one parish and its priest, see his *Voices of Morebath* (2001).

² The *First & Second Prayer Books of Edward VI of 1549 & 1552*, the precursors to the 1662 Book of Common Prayer, are published by the Prayer Book Society (1999).



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and threat than now. Even though many feel robbed of a right, yet I do not remember myself being visited by the armed thugs of the Bishop of Salisbury and his Liturgical Commissioners to confiscate my precious books of prayer. Nor shall we find ourselves, nor see him and them, done to death should the monarch (or the Prime Minister) change. So do we mourn not only poor Thomas Cranmer and the other martyred reformers who gave us what we treasure, but also our forerunners in the faith of the older rites, dead and gone now yet 'they with us and we with them' as the generous words of the 1549 Burial Service put it. Ponder that loss, as you hope that others will ponder yours, because those before and those who come after us, we all, 'they with us and we with them', hope for salvation together. 'Wherefore my beloved brethren,' and the words of the Epistle for today were written for us all, 'Wherefore my beloved brethren, let every one of you be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; for the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.'¹



Riding westwards to Montgomery on Good Friday 1613, John Donne, a courtier and diplomat of sorts, a womaniser of some renown, a poet already and thinking (perhaps) of ordination to the priesthood—riding westwards on Good Friday 1613, John Donne had an altogether vaster vision than Walter Raleigh of the journey and destination of the human soul and how, whatever our purpose, whatever our allegiance here and now, we might be turned full back, from west to east as it were, brought face to face with God himself, hanging on the tree, wearing our flesh, 'rag'd and torn'.² Thus corrected might we be made swifter to hear the pardon of God that we should treat him so, than to attend to our own complaints; thus are we made slower to speak about our own loss, in the silence of that divine sacrifice which ransom'd us; thus are we brought more slowly to wrath, by the mercy of God in restoring us. So of one thing we can be sure, that these wounds were not borne by God, this pardon not given, this ransom not paid, so that we might have the Book of Common Prayer, rather it is that we have the Book of Common Prayer the more readily to have our souls turned to that great beneficence, that, on whatever journey, whether, as Donne put it, we are about business or pleasure, subject to whatever foreign motions, whether at the Zenith or Antipodes of our lives, with whatever hopes or resentments, 'among all the sundry and manifold

¹ James 1:17–21 is the Epistle for the Fourth Sunday after Easter in the 1662 Book of Common Prayer and the 1549 First Prayer Book of Edward VI.

² 'Good Friday, 1613. Riding Westward' can be found in John Donne, *Complete Poems* (1974). There is a discussion of its meaning in John Donne: *Man of Flesh and Spirit* by David L. Edwards (2001) and, from a more partial standpoint, in John Donne: *Life, Mind & Art* by John Carey (1981). E.M.W. Tillyard in *The Elizabethan World Picture* (1972) provides a fascinating account of the symbolic world in which Donne (and Cranmer) lived.

changes of the world, our hearts may surely *there* be fixed, where true joys are to be found.’


Failing this crucial test, then our commitment to the Prayer Book may turn out to be little more than an enthusiasm for its language, astonishingly beautiful language, certainly, but which then does not speak of divine desire, only our own need for euphony and exultation. Failing this crucial test, remembering its treasure trove of oft-repeated sounds has less to do with bringing to mind the saving acts of God in Jesus Christ, than with our own comfort and nostalgia. Failing this crucial test, then its loss becomes just one more grievance to add to, for example, our complaints about the sex of the clergy, the sexual orientation of the clergy, liberal theologians, the euro, lazy asylum seekers, the art of Tracey Emin, noisome mobile phones on trains in an endless capacity for indignation from which the love of God may be only reluctantly squeezed like the last drop of tart juice from a wizened lemon.

To be able to redeem these worst parts of our histories, as John Donne called them, this is our privilege and calling, a grace rehearsed over and again in the liturgy of the Church so that, ‘among all the sundry and manifold changes of the world, our hearts may surely there be fixed, where true joys are to be found.’ These words are probably Cranmer’s own, this collect for the Fourth Sunday after Easter a startling example of the man’s extraordinary talent in the 1549 Book for transforming the severe Latin of the Sarum Missal prayers into rich poetic beauty. The 1662 version of the collect gives us a further change of great felicity in the opening address to a ‘God who alone canst order the unruly wills and affections of sinful men . . .’¹ We would have to say, I think, with Percy Dearmer, that the Prayer Book collects are not *all* flawless² (no cause, especially that of heaven, is helped by a lack of discrimination) but it would be hard to conceive of a prayer more beautifully persuasive than this, with its rhythmic rehearsal of God’s power to bring the still from the raging, the fixed from the turning, the divine will and promise from human desires. What more potent metaphysic, what more perfect picture of that arc of redemption, turning us round to the face of God, what clearer example of the whole purpose of a collect, the *collecta*, that it should bring us to a point—be a collecting of the people in the unity of worship, a gathering of the peoples’ wits so as to be attendant upon the saving singularity of God’s grace?³

1 The changes in the Collect for the Fourth Sunday after Easter, from the Sarum Missal through the 1549 Prayer Book to the 1662 Book of Common Prayer, can be traced in Martin R. Dudley, *The Collect in Anglican Liturgy*, Collegeville (1994).



2 For this and other views about the literary merits of Cranmer’s language, see W.K. Lowther Clarke in ‘The Prayer Book as Literature’ in *Liturgy and Worship* (1933), pp. 806–12.

3 The various meanings of the word ‘collect’ are considered by G.G. Willis in ‘The Variable Prayers of the Roman Mass’ in his *Further Essays in Early Roman Liturgy* (1968).



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To collect the Church together in celebration of this redeeming gift, to focus the wits of the people on a divine will and purpose for the world, this is less easy without common prayer: that is, without one text, said, sung and celebrated unvarying by all everywhere, acquiring thereby a potency such that its words somehow sink into that place where the soul hides and yet which soul needs only hear the familiar cadences to venture unafraid into the presence of God, once more. It can somehow stand repetition and, heard out loud or mouthed over and again, comes to be known devotedly by heart. Such a liturgy may be searching, astonish even, by its boldness and wealth of meaning, that does not unfold itself once at one go, yet it does not discomfit by surprise or novelty. It has a narrative, an unfolding thread, an assurance of its own that what comes next will lead us home. The weight of authoritative sanction lends an expectation of use. For all Anglicans for long, for some still, this reality has been the Book of Common Prayer.



That one book might suffice, both for all the offices of the Church, daily or occasional, and the Eucharist, and for private prayer; that one book might do for life, providing consolation and challenge from the breaking of the waters to the disintegration into dust; a book comfortably portable, not needing to be replaced and becoming irreplaceable, acquiring a patina of wear that may outlive its user even, such that it tells a story of its own, this is immensely appealing. The Book of Common Prayer was such an extraordinary novelty when it appeared, reducing many books to one, harmonising diverse regional usage into one national order, written in the vernacular and benefiting enormously from the printing press which could put it cheaply and without hindrance into the hands of one and all, the scrip whereby divine service might be done.

In that language of the Prayer Book, we have counted ourselves especially blessed as Anglicans, more so than other Reformed churches of that time of its appearance, to be the beneficiaries of the King James Bible for readings and canticles (a committee job as it happens), the Psalter that Tyndale and Coverdale crafted for the 1539 Great Bible and, above all, to have the genius of Thomas Cranmer in prose and prayer, eclectic in his sourcing, discreet and subtle often in his translations and changes and with a grasp of grammar that, in its very progress and punctuation, seems to mediate our approach, hesitant yet invited, into the presence of God.¹

More than that, through the ubiquitous presence and prestige of these texts—the Great Bible placed in every church in 1539, the King James Bible of 1611 ‘appointed to be read in churches’ and the Prayer Book

¹ Thomas Cranmer’s particular role in the writing of the 1549 and 1552 Prayer Books is discussed by R.T. Beckwith in ‘Thomas Cranmer and the Prayer Book’ in *The Study of Liturgy*, edited by C.Jones et al. (1978), pp. 70–4.

enforced by Act of Uniformity in 1549, 1552 and 1662—their language acquired a level of influence on the evolution of English, and a continuity, through rhythm and idiom, with the tongue used for much else, commerce, pleasure, education, a confluence of voice in national pride, trade, learning and belief.¹

That such a coherent culture, life, language has disintegrated into many voices, some strange, their vocabularies less well-rooted in familiar ground, their meaning often shallow, their grammar casual; that one book was replaced by a multiplicity of booklets or a sheet that varied week by week, their flimsiness a seeming intimation of their weightlessness and likely brief life as liturgy, or as a faithful accompaniment to our own journey from womb to grave; that one shared order of worship fell apart into a diversity of unpredictable rites of uncertain shape and theology, so variable as to be hard for many to take seriously or to heart—these changes, though felt by us through the challenge to the use of the Book of Common Prayer and its persuasive power outside the Church are, in fact, no conspiracy by liturgical reformers, nor modern theologians, nor wayward synods nor hierarchies. They are a reflection of wider shifts in society—and not just in Britain—that have transformed the context in which we have to seek and celebrate the presence of God in our worship, to understand his person and his workings in our theology and to feel that the bowels of our compassion are stirred to bring ‘divine succour, help and comfort for all that be in danger, necessity and tribulation’.

For it is not simply that now there is little opportunity for the few or a ready ear among the many to be drawn into the riches of God’s grace through such language in the Prayer Book. As any university lecturer will tell you, it is, for example, hopeless now to expect much response to any Biblical, Shakespearean or classical allusion because those who listen have grown up in more diverse cultures or none, and do not share a common cultural heritage. ‘The eye of man hath not heard, the ear of man hath not seen, man’s hand is not able to taste, his tongue to conceive, nor his heart to report what my dream was.’ St Paul perhaps? No, it’s Bottom from *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*.²

And it is not just that keeping a treasured Book of Common Prayer alive and for life seems more pointless to many now, it is that fewer people have a single life with a stable thread through which to get the measure of God’s constancy but live rather in an extempore, interactive world of text messages, emails and blogs, where it is seems not so necessary to string

¹ The influence of the various translations of the Bible and the Book of Common Prayer on the development of English are set in a long historical context by David Crystal in *The Stories of English* (2005).

² Quoted by Frank Kermode in *Shakespeare’s English* (2000), a rich consideration of the language of this writer who lived between the various first editions of the Prayer Books.



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bytes and digital experiences into one determinative narrative or to maintain any role for grammar and punctuation for communicating starts, stops and pregnant pauses.¹

And it is not only that a family gathered for Baptism cannot now mouth from memory the words of the Lord's Prayer (looking uncomfortably like John Redwood at the Welsh Tory Party Conference years ago pretending to know the words of 'Mae hen wlad fy Nhadau'), it is that common curricula in education are more omnivorous and shifting, the family bookshelf more ephemeral, if it exists at all, while reading aloud to others, learning by heart, singing playground rhymes in unison are all an unfashionable novelty in the world at large.

For many, worry about the future of the Prayer Book in such a transformed world is not in fact primarily to do with liturgy but is a lament for the lost authority of the Church—an authority which reassures us what we should all believe, which tells us how we should all worship, and which provides a reassurance thereby of that God 'with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning' as today's Epistle has it. Yet here are we brought together today under such authority, by the grace of such a God to await the gift of the Holy Ghost which blows where it wills and which, St John tells us in the Gospel,² will through the Church of which we are part, tell the world of which we are also part, how wrong we can all be about sin, and about who is right, and about who is condemned. Only of his own choosing does God's ghostly presence make itself felt through the Book of Common Prayer and inspire us.

And it is the blessed coincidence of inspiration and authority which gives order, rules and regulation their poetry and music and donates to beauty its persuasive power to save and moral weight. This coincidence is hard to find. For example, poetry abounds in the bookshops, many poets writing explicitly Christian verse—the Welshman R.S. Thomas, the Irish priest John O' Donohue, the Polish Czeslaw Milosz, the Australian Les Murray, the English W.H. Auden (now there's a queer fellow to find among Prayer Book enthusiasts, yet such he was)—yet much modern liturgical language is strikingly flat. We now thankfully have a new book of common prayer, yet the prefaces there to the eucharistic prayers don't scan and the Offertory and Post-Communion prayers, the reappearance of which promised an echo of the riches of the Veronese Sacramentary, are often vacuous. The coincidence of inspiration and authority is a gift and for the Church it seems it is sometimes even harder to find than in the rest of the world.

¹ Lynne Truss in *Eats, Shoots & Leaves* (2003) provides a spirited and entertaining defence of the meaning of and need for punctuation.

² John 16:5–15.



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Thomas Cranmer found it, though it is clear from any reading of his life—such as is revealed for example in Diarmaid MacCulloch’s wonderful biography¹—that he was a complex person, thoroughly a man of his own difficult times, often uncertain when pressured as to where inspiration and authority really lay. And as we think how to rehearse his gift to us and commend it to others, we should remember that he was also by no means as hostile to contemporary changes in society, to shifts in vernacular language, to developments in new technology, like printing then, as some of us are wont to be. Indeed, it was these very sensitivities, working through his academic mind, through his literary gifts, through his deep belief and traditionalism, that made the Book of Common Prayer the uncommon success that it was. Maybe, then, he felt the inspiring fire of the Holy Ghost more in the writing than we are sometimes able to do in the hearing of his words. Certainly, he felt another fire, the bonfire on which he was burned for his beliefs, which end we will mercifully be denied. Resistance at the last to any authority that was not truly divine, this is what impelled him to stay true to the Prayer Book, shouting above his accusers in the church of St Mary the Virgin in Oxford, asserting the primacy through all of the generous inviting love of God. This is what impelled him, at his burning, to plunge that hand, agent of such beauty in telling us of that love, agent lately of such regretted denial, first into the flames. Thus did he know, collected in his wits now, corrected by the Holy Ghost, the pull of God’s own hand, drawing him into eternity. May our own hands be so cleansed to receive God’s gift of life to us today.

Addendum: Late in the writing of this piece, I discovered an extraordinarily rich bibliography of literature about the Book of Common Prayer, with over 8500 references. It has been compiled by Professor William S. Peterson of the University of Maryland and can be downloaded from the internet as a database or in pdf or html format from <http://www.english.umd.edu/englfac/WPeterson/ELR/bibliographies/documents>.

(The Revd Canon John Rodwell has been a priest and scientist for over thirty years. He was until recently Professor of Plant Ecology at Lancaster. He is attached to the priory of St Mary the Virgin in Lancaster and is an Honorary Canon of Blackburn Cathedral.)

1 Diarmaid MacCulloch, *Thomas Cranmer* (1996).



Liturgical Preaching and Psychological Type: the SIFT Approach within the BCP Context

LESLIE J. FRANCIS

Personal Prolegomenon

As Professor of Practical Theology in University of Wales, Bangor, my day job encourages me to study and to research the practical aspects of ministry, like liturgy and preaching. As Non-Stipendiary Curate in the Parishes of Llanfairpwllgwyngyll with Penmynydd with Llanedwen with Llanddaniel-Fab in the Diocese of Bangor, commitment to parish ministry offers me the privilege of conducting liturgy and preaching in the Book of Common Prayer parish of Llanedwen.

It is there within a beautiful Anglesey church, uncontaminated by innovations like modern liturgies or electric lights, that I have continued to develop and to refine a fresh way of studying scripture and of proclaiming the word of God among the people of God. It is there within the unchanging context of Anglican liturgical tradition that well-established Book of Common Prayer readings are interpreted afresh for a new generation through the SIFT method of biblical hermeneutics and liturgical preaching.

The SIFT method of biblical hermeneutics developed originally as a consequence of my professional work among clergy and preachers. I recognised the diversity of messages which different preachers proclaimed from the same passage, but I also began to recognise a pattern within those differences. It is these patterns that began to make sense to me as a psychologist trained in personality theories. A similar thought had occurred to Bishop Peter Atkins in far away Aotearoa, New Zealand. Peter and I settled down to make a systematic study of the theoretical influence of personality on preaching, and we co-authored three books on the interpretation of Matthew, Mark and Luke.¹ Now we were convinced that personality needs to be taken seriously into account as part of the hermeneutical process.

1 L.J. Francis and P. Atkins, *Exploring Luke's Gospel: A Guide to the Gospel Readings in the Revised Common Lectionary* (2000); L.J. Francis and P. Atkins, *Exploring Matthew's Gospel: A Guide to the Gospel Readings in the Revised Common Lectionary* (2001); L.J. Francis and P. Atkins, *Exploring Mark's Gospel: An Aid for Readers and Preachers Using Year B of the Revised Common Lectionary* (2002).

Meanwhile another colleague in the United Kingdom, Dr Andrew Village, began to talk to me about his parallel field of research, listening to ways in which lay Anglicans interpret scripture. Here, too, Andrew was attracted by the ability of personality theory to account for some individual differences in interpretation, as he explains in his new book.¹ While personality psychology has refined and works with a number of somewhat different models of personality, Bishop Peter Atkins, Dr Andrew Village and I have concentrated particularly on the model of personality developed initially by Carl Jung² and made widely known through self-completion measures like the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator,³ the Keirsey Temperament Sorter⁴ and the Francis Psychological Type Scales.⁵ This model is known as 'psychological type'.

It is these two sets of contemporary ideas (concerning biblical hermeneutics and psychological type) that continue to be explored at Llanedwen church within the context of the Book of Common Prayer liturgy. I will now examine both issues in greater depth, drawing on a somewhat longer and more detailed study I provided for the journal *Liturgy*.⁶

Biblical Hermeneutics

A major development in the theory and practice of biblical criticism in recent years has concerned the emergence of the crucial issue of perspective or standpoint in the reading and interpretation of biblical texts. The issue of perspective or standpoint takes seriously the role of the reader in interpretation. Within this tradition of biblical hermeneutics, particular attention has been given to the formative influence of the social location of the reader, as so well illustrated by the title of the volumes edited by Segovia and Tolbert, *Reading from this Place*.⁷ In their preface to this collection of essays, Segovia and Tolbert draw attention to the way in which the foundation was set by such movements as feminist criticism, literary criticism, sociological analysis, and liberation and contextual theologies, all of which questioned the implied claims of the older and established exegetical and theological methods to promote universal and objective interpretation under the analysis of an objective and scientific reader. Thus, according to Segovia and Tolbert:

1 A. Village, *The Bible and Lay People: An Empirical Approach to Ordinary Hermeneutics* (in press).

2 C.G. Jung, *Psychological Types*, The Collected Works, Volume 6 (1971).

3 I.B. Myers and M.H. McCaulley, *Manual: A Guide to the Development and Use of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator*, Palo Alto (1985).

4 D. Keirsey, *Please Understand Me: 2*, Del Mar (1988).

5 L.J. Francis, *Faith and Psychology: Personality, Religion and the Individual* (2005).

6 L.J. Francis, 'Psychological type and liturgical preaching: the SIFT method', *Liturgy* (2006): 21(3), 11–20.

7 F.F. Segovia and M.A. Tolbert (eds.), *Reading from this Place: Social Location and Biblical Interpretation in the United States*, Minneapolis (1995); F.F. Segovia and M.A. Tolbert (eds.), *Reading from this Place: Social Location and Biblical Interpretation in Global Perspective*, Minneapolis (1995).



Liturgical Preaching and Psychological Type

factors traditionally left out of consideration were now becoming areas of exploration—for example, gender, race, ethnic origins, class, sexual orientation, religious affiliation, and socio-political contexts—with a focus on real, flesh-and-blood readers . . . whose reading and interpretation of the texts were seen as affected by their social location.¹

In other words, concepts, theories and heuristic tools of modern sociology were becoming powerful instruments in the discipline of biblical hermeneutics.

The key perspective of sociology within the process of biblical hermeneutics is made explicit in an essay by Segovia.

I believe that the time has come to introduce the real reader, the flesh-and-blood reader, fully and explicitly, into the theory and practice of biblical criticism; to acknowledge that no reading, informed or uninformed, takes place in a social vacuum or desert . . . with a view of all readings as constructs proceeding from, dependent upon, and addressing a particular social location I should like to propose, therefore, the beginning of a hermeneutical framework for taking the flesh-and-blood reader seriously in biblical criticism, not so much as a unique and independent individual but rather as a member of distinct and identifiable social configurations.²

Taking seriously the issue of the perspective or the standpoint of the reader, the SIFT method of biblical hermeneutics and liturgical preaching maintains that the concepts and tools of sociology alone are insufficient to provide an adequate account of the horizon from which the text is regarded by the reader. This method is in basic agreement with the position encapsulated by Segovia above that the flesh-and-blood reader needs to be taken seriously in biblical hermeneutics not so much as 'unique and independent' individuals but rather as members of 'distinct and identifiable' groups. Their point of contention, however, is that such groups can be explained not only in sociological categories, but also in psychological categories. In other words, they propose that tools of modern psychology in general and the concepts of psychological type in particular need to be taken more seriously in the discipline of biblical hermeneutics.

Psychological Type

Psychological type theory distinguishes between four bipolar psychological perspectives: two orientations, two perceiving functions, two judging functions and two attitudes.

1 F.F. Segovia and M.A. Tolbert (eds), *Reading from this Place*, ed. cit., p. ix.

2 F.F. Segovia, 'Toward a Hermeneutic of the Diaspora: a Hermeneutic of Otherness and Engagement', *ibid.*, pp. 57–73.

The two orientations are concerned with where energy is generated and focused. On the one hand, extraverts (E) are orientated toward the outer world; they are energised by the events and people around them. They enjoy communicating and thrive in stimulating and exciting environments. They tend to focus their attention on what is happening outside themselves. They are usually open people, easy to get to know, and enjoy having many friends. On the other hand, introverts (I) are orientated toward their inner world; they are energised by their inner ideas and concepts. They enjoy solitude, silence, and contemplation, as they tend to focus their attention on what is happening in their inner life. They may prefer to have a small circle of intimate friends rather than many acquaintances.

The two perceiving functions are concerned with the way in which people perceive information. On the one hand, sensing types (S) focus on the realities of a situation as perceived by the senses. They tend to focus on specific details, rather than the overall picture. They are concerned with the actual, the real, and the practical and they tend to be down-to-earth and matter-of-fact. On the other hand, intuitive types (N) focus on the possibilities of a situation, perceiving meanings and relationships. They may feel that perception by the senses is not as valuable as information gained from the unconscious mind as indirect associations and concepts impact on their perception. They focus on the overall picture, rather than on specific facts and data.

The two judging functions are concerned with the criteria which people use to make decisions and judgements. On the one hand, thinking types (T) make judgements based on objective, impersonal logic. They value integrity and justice. They are known for their truthfulness and for their desire for fairness. They consider conforming to principles to be of more importance than cultivating harmony. On the other hand, feeling types (F) make judgements based on subjective, personal values. They value compassion and mercy. They are known for their tactfulness and for their desire for peace. They are more concerned to promote harmony, than to adhere to abstract principles.

Most operationalisations of Jungian psychological type theory¹ also make use of a fourth index, the attitudes toward the outer world. The two attitudes toward the outer world are determined by which of the two sets of functions (that is, perceiving S/N, or judging T/F), is preferred in dealings with the outer world. On the one hand, judging types (J) seek to order, rationalise, and structure their outer world, as they actively judge external stimuli. They enjoy routine and established patterns. They prefer to follow schedules in order to reach an established goal and may make use of lists, timetables, or diaries. They tend to be punctual, organised, and

¹ See for example, D. Keirsey and M. Bates, *Please Understand Me*, Del Mar, California (1978).



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tidy. They prefer to make decisions quickly and to stick to their conclusions once made. On the other hand, perceiving types (P) do not seek to impose order on the outer world, but are more reflective, perceptive, and open, as they passively perceive external stimuli. They have a flexible, open-ended approach to life. They enjoy change and spontaneity. They prefer to leave projects open in order to adapt and improve them. Their behaviour may often seem impulsive and unplanned.

Jung's view is that each individual develops one of the perceiving functions (sensing or intuition) at the expense of the other, and one of the judging functions (feeling or thinking) at the expense of the other. Moreover, for each individual the preferred perceiving function or the preferred judging function takes preference over the other, leading to the emergence of one dominant function which shapes the individual's dominant approach to life. Dominant sensing shapes the practical person. Dominant intuition shapes the imaginative person. Dominant feeling shapes the humane person. Dominant thinking shapes the analytic person.

The SIFT Method

The SIFT method of biblical hermeneutics and liturgical preaching argues that the perceiving processes (sensing and intuition) and the judging processes (thinking and feeling) are core to the way in which text is read, interpreted, proclaimed and heard. The orientations (introversion and extraversion) and the attitudes toward the outer world (judging and perceiving) influence the preferred modes of study, preparation and delivery, but are not directly implicated in nuances of interpretation.

In order to allow the distinctive voices of the four psychological functions of sensing (S), intuition (I), feeling (F) and thinking (T), to engage fully with a passage of scripture, the SIFT method addresses each function in turn. The sensing function sets the scene by getting to grips with the passage. The intuitive function forges links between the passage and other concerns. The feeling function deals with the matter of human concerns. The thinking function faces the hard questions raised by the passage. These four steps will now be examined in greater depth.

There are two main, interrelated but distinct theological reasons behind this approach. The first theological reason is grounded in an appreciation of individual differences. It is recognised that different individuals in the congregation will be able to relate more easily to one of these four functions than to the other three. Faith in a God who creates diversity and who rejoices in individual differences demands that each psychological type should be properly included and embraced in the act of preaching.

The second theological reason is grounded in an appreciation of the quest for wholeness and completeness. Although each individual may prefer (and



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therefore develop) one of the four functions, human development presses towards properly embracing and developing all four. It is precisely in humanity's encounter with the creator God revealed through the text of scripture that the individual is challenged to love God with all his or her mind: with sensing, with intuition, with feeling, and with thinking.

Sensing

Individuals who prefer sensing perceive information primarily through their five senses. They attend to practical and factual details, and are in touch with physical realities. They observe the small details of everyday life and attend to actual experience. They prefer to let the eyes tell the mind.

Sensing types often have acute powers of observation, good memory for facts and details, the capacity for realism, and the ability to see the world as it is. They tend to rely on experience rather than theory and prefer to put their trust in what is known and in the conventional.

Sensing types usually reach their conclusion step by step, observing each piece of information carefully. They are not easily inspired to interpret the information in front of them and they may not trust inspiration when it comes. They learn best about new ideas and theories through practical applications.

When sensing types hear a passage of scripture, they want to savour all the detail of the text and may become fascinated by descriptions that appeal to their senses. They tend to start from a fairly literal interest in what is being said.

Sensing types may want to find out all they can about the passage and about the facts that stand behind the passage. They welcome preachers who lead them into the passage by repeating the story and by giving them time to observe and appreciate the details.

Sensing types quickly lose the thread if they are bombarded with too many possibilities too quickly. They distrust preachers who jump too far and too quickly from the text which they purport to be addressing.

The first step in the SIFT method is to address the sensing perspective. It is the sensing perspective which gets to grips with the text itself and which gives proper attention to the insights of biblical scholarship. The first step asks, 'How does this passage speak to the sensing function? What are the facts and details? What is there to see, to hear, to touch, to smell, and to taste?'

Intuition

Individuals who prefer intuition perceive information primarily by seeing patterns, meanings, and relationships. They tend to be good at reading between the lines and projecting possibilities for the future. They prefer to focus on the 'big picture'. They prefer to let the mind tell the eyes.



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Intuitive types have the ability to see abstract, symbolic, and theoretical relationships, and the capacity to see future possibilities. They tend to put their reliance on inspiration rather than on past experience. They trust their intuitive grasp of meanings and relationships.

Individuals with a preference for intuition are aware of new challenges and possibilities. Their interest is in the new and untried. They are often discontented with the way things are and wish to improve them. They dislike doing the same thing repeatedly.

When intuitive types hear a passage of scripture they want to know how that passage will fire their imagination and stimulate their ideas. They tend to focus not on the literal meaning of what is being said, but on the possibilities and challenges implied.

Intuitive types may want to explore all of the possible directions in which the passage could lead. They welcome preachers who throw out suggestions and brain-storm possibilities, whether or not these are obviously linked to the passage, whether or not these ideas are followed through.

Intuitive types quickly become bored with too much detail, too many facts and too much repetition. They distrust preachers who stick too closely to the words and to the literal meaning of the text.

The second step in the SIFT method is to address the intuitive perspective. It is the intuitive perspective which relates the biblical text to wider issues and concerns. The second step asks, 'How does this passage speak to the intuitive function? What is there to speak to the imagination, to forge links with current situations, to illuminate issues in our lives?'

Feeling

Individuals who prefer feeling make decisions and judgements primarily based on subjective, personal values. They tend to place people, relationships, and interpersonal matters high on their agenda. They develop good skills at applying personal priorities. They are good at weighing human values and motives, both their own values and other people's values. They are characterised by qualities of empathy, sympathy, and trustfulness.

Feeling types like harmony and will work hard to bring harmony about between other people. They dislike telling other people unpleasant things or reprimanding other people. They take into account other people's feelings.

Feeling types are often sympathetic individuals. They take a great interest in the people behind the job and respond to other people's values as much as to their ideas. They enjoy pleasing people.

When feeling types hear a passage of scripture they want to know what the passage has to say about personal values and about human relation-

ships. They empathise deeply with people in the story and with the human drama in the narrative.

Feeling types are keen to get inside the lives of people about whom they hear in scripture. They want to explore what it felt like to be there at the time and how those feelings help to illuminate their Christian journey today. They welcome preachers who take time to develop the human dimension of the passage and who apply the passage to issues of compassion, harmony, and trust.

Feeling types quickly lose interest in theological debates which explore abstract issues without clear application to personal relationships. They distrust preachers who concentrate too exclusively on the abstract, theoretical or theological issues and problems raised by the text.

The third step in the SIFT method is to address the feeling perspective. It is the feeling perspective which examines the human interest in the biblical passage and learns the lesson of God for harmonious and compassionate living. The third step asks, 'How does this passage speak to the feeling function? What is there to speak about fundamental human values, about the relationship between people, and about what it is to be truly human?'

Thinking

Individuals who prefer thinking make decisions and judgements primarily based on objective, impersonal logic. They tend to place truth and reason high on their agenda. They often develop good powers of logical analysis. They tend to use objective and impersonal criteria in reaching decisions and to follow rationally the relationships between cause and effect. They may develop characteristics of being firm-minded and reasonable. They may sometimes appear sceptical.

Individuals with a preference for thinking tend to prize integrity, truthfulness, and fairness. They are usually able to put people in their place when they consider it necessary. They are able to take tough decisions and to reprimand others. They are also able to be firm and tough-minded about themselves.

Thinking types need to be treated fairly and to see that other people are treated fairly as well. They are inclined to respond more to other people's ideas than to other people's feelings. They may inadvertently hurt other people's feelings without recognising that they are doing so.

When thinking types hear a passage of scripture they want to know what the passage has to say about principles of truth and justice. They get caught up with the principles involved in the story and with the various kinds of truth claims being made.

Thinking types are often keen to do theology and to follow through the implications and the logic of the positions they adopt. Some thinkers



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apply this perspective to a literal interpretation of scripture, while other thinkers are more at home with the liberal interpretation of scripture. They welcome preachers who are fully alert to the logical and to the theological implications of their themes. They value sermons which debate fundamental issues of integrity and righteousness.

Thinking types quickly lose interest in sermons which concentrate on applications to personal relationships, but fail to debate critically issues of theology and morality. They distrust preachers who concentrate too exclusively on applied examples of Christian living without identifying and analysing the intellectual problems raised by the text.

The fourth step in the SIFT method is to address the thinking perspective. It is the thinking perspective which examines the theological interest in the biblical text and reflects rationally and crucially on issues of principle. The fourth step asks, 'How does this passage speak to the thinking function? What is there to speak to the mind, to challenge issues of truth and justice, and to provoke profound theological thinking?'

Conclusion

The SIFT method of preaching has been developed on the basis of three principles. The first principle is that an understanding of biblical hermeneutics and liturgical preaching as dialogue between the text of scripture and the worldviews of preacher and listener properly involves the discipline of psychology as a key tool in the analysis and development of the place of preaching in the Christian community. The second principle is that the Jungian notion of psychological type provides an insightful and accessible model of the human psyche which is of practical relevance to the preaching process. The third principle is that there is good theological justification for the preaching event to address all four of the psychological functions identified by Jung in response to the first of the great commandments to love the Lord our God with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our mind, and with all our strength (Mark 12:30).

(The Revd Canon Professor Leslie J. Francis is Director of the Welsh National Centre for Religious Education, Professor of Practical Theology at the University of Wales, Bangor, and Canon Theologian at Bangor Cathedral. He employed the SIFT method of biblical hermeneutics and liturgical preaching during the Sunday morning Eucharist at the annual conference of the Prayer Book Society in Oxford, September 2006.)



Hymns, their Rhythm and Tempo

DAVID WULSTAN

For hymns to be well handled by the organists and congregations alike, as at the Prayer Book Society Conference in Oxford last year, is unusual: there are various pitfalls for shepherd and sheep, for there is much divergence on the question of rhythm and tempo, both in hymn books and in the way they are interpreted. The notes that follow are therefore in the nature of preaching to the converted in relation to PBS events; nevertheless, I hope this might be a useful discussion of some of the pastoral problems that befall unhefted sheep, particularly for the novice attempting to bring them into the fold.

First, the question of speed, for the tempo of a hymn tune needs to be related to the sense of the words. It is obvious that the third and fourth lines of

O worship the King,
all glorious above;
O gratefully sing
his power and his love;

should be sung in one breath. There is an enjambment of sense ('running-on') that would be plainer if the rhymes of the even lines were ignored as, wisely, in *Ancient and Modern* (A&M) which set the verses out in longer lines. Unfortunately the *English Hymnal* (EH) and *Songs of Praise* (SP) kept to the original short lines, as seen above, encouraging the famous disregard for punctuation and enjambment by congregations which has led to such denials of the Christian message as 'Jesus lives no longer now' and 'My God I love thee not, because . . .' There are many other, less hilarious, instances of fatuous end-stopping and ludicrous punctuation, but these matters are not always the direct fault of the singers themselves. Nor are they effectively mitigated by the exaggeratedly self-conscious running-on accompanied by the breath-busting crescendo known in the trade as 'the RSCM lurch', a silliness only matched by the Standard A&M's *dims* and other affects to which organ and choir often respond with comical results.

In 'O worship the King' sung to *Hanover*, the long notes at the end of the alternate lines ('... above', '... love') allow them to be clipped, and a breath to be taken; so provided that the speed is conducive to lines 1 and 2 being sung as one, the long notes of 'above' and so on should not be problematic and can be shortened by the voices while the organ keeps the rhythm. Here, neither rhythm nor tempo militate against the words. But where the rhythm of the tune does not allow for natural breathing spaces, and when the tempo is too slow, difficulties arise.



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Consider ‘How sweet the name of Jesus sounds’. Here, the first line must run on to the next, ‘in a believer’s ear’; so the comma in the music provided by the old EH is not helpful, nor is that which it gives for the end of line 3. Nevertheless, the three-beat notes at the ends of the even-numbered lines of the tune *St Peter* allow breath to be taken at these points (‘...ear,’ etc.) and the necessary enjambments to be observed. Take, however, ‘New every morning is the love’: here the connexion with the next line (‘our wak’ning and uprising prove’) is severed by the editors of the EH who mark a pause at this point, and indeed at the end of every line of *Melcombe*, a tune in virtually unrelenting minims. The specified metronome mark is $\text{minim} = 69$, so perhaps there is not much hope of the congregation catching its breath otherwise; yet why is ‘Awake my soul and with the sun’ (to the tune *Morning Hymn*, having a similar progression of essentially unrelenting note-values) printed in crotchets, with the mark $\text{crotchet} = 96$? There is no comma ending the first line of the latter tune (so ‘thy daily stage of duty’ runs on appropriately) although one is provided at the end of line 2 (though not at the end); but why is a pregnant pause specified between lines 3 and 4—‘. . . and joyful rise [pause sign] to pay thy morning sacrifice’? There is infirmity of purpose here. I am speaking about the original editions of the EH, henceforward signalled as EH—not to the *New English Hymnal*, which although innocent of metronome marks, has dubious tempo markings, otiose commas and pause-marks and indeed recrudesces, as will be mentioned in due course.

Despite the somewhat ponderous tempo recommended by EH (all of these remarks apply also to SP, under similar editorship), congregations have a reasonable chance of making sense of ‘How sweet the name of Jesus sounds’ to *St Peter*, apart from the otiose comma already mentioned. Why Vaughan Williams (‘RVW’) should have taken leave of his musical senses in this way is even more difficult to contemplate when his own fine tune for ‘Come down, O love divine’ (*Down Ampney*, for which he specifies a singable tempo) is likewise treated to bizarre breath marks and pointless pauses which frustrate the syntax in one or more stanzas of the hymn. (It was pleasing to note that these unnecessary marks were ignored by the LMH organist at Oxford.) Similarly RVW’s ponderous tempo marks for ‘All people that on earth do dwell’ (*Old Hundredth*, with its proper long notes) was quickened to a singable tempo.

Why did RVW get it so badly wrong? Ralph Allwood has told me that Vaughan Williams had no metronome, and that it is said that he calculated the tempi from his watch, which had no second hand.¹ I remember, too, that I wrote to the composer concerning the speed of his song *The New Common-*

¹ As David Russell Hulme pointed out to me, RVW’s vagueness is confirmed by Roy Douglas in his book *Working with Vaughan Williams* (1988), pp. 113–14.



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wealth, on a tune from his film music for *The 49th Parallel*. He answered that it should be *minim = 92*, clearly mistaking the crucial difference between this and *crotchet = 92*. In any event, although the marking communicated to me was impossible, the quicker one is somewhat too fast also: the tempo heard on the film is more relaxed, not to say *rubato*.

All of this, however, is by no means the only reason for RVW's impossible metronome marks, for the preface to *EH* (1906, ^R1933) spoke of hymns being in those days taken 'much too fast' and that many were sung 'at about twice the proper speed' (having rightly poured scorn on words such as 'correct' in other contexts). It is true that a good choir should be able to sing in a sustained manner very slowly; but it is unreasonable that a congregation whose physique does not allow it to get properly to its knees to pray should be expected, even standing, to have the vital capacity to sing at such a dignified tempo, unless, of course, the dignity of the words is to be abased. What was once the shortest note-value, the *breve*, lengthened over the years with the concomitant slowing of tempo, eventually becoming so protracted that it is now virtually extinct. There is evidence that this slowing-down has been the fate of many kinds of music in various eras, most obviously so in the progression towards the leviathan-like tread of the German chorales and in the sprightly 'Genevan Jigs' adopted in English metrical psalmody becoming ever more pedestrian and their 'gathering-notes' being abandoned in favour of undifferentiated note-values, still slower.

The well-known opening stanza of Kethe's paraphrase of the Hundredth psalm (first printed in 1561) is:

Áll péople that on éarth do dwéll
Síng to the Lórd with chéerful vóice
Hím sérve with féar, his práise fóρθ téll
Cóme yé befóre him and rejóice

The beginnings of the lines are characterised by level stresses (lines 1, 3 & 4), 'reversed feet' (line 2) or indeed unaccented syllables (as in another stanza: *For it is séemly só to dó*). These variant accentuations are enfolded by the opening long notes of the tune (underlined, taken from the 1563 version) as are the divergent patterns at the line ends (also to long notes, underlined). The doxology, common to all metrical psalms of the same metre, runs:

To Fáther, Són and Hóly Ghóst
The Gód whom héaven and éarth adóre

Here, the underlying upbeat nature of the alternating metre, realised at the beginning of each line, is obvious; the doxology would not jar if sung to an equal-note rhythm beginning on an upbeat, which was the later fate of



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the ‘Old Hundredth’. Yet these patterns are graceless, to say the least, when applied to the first stanza—All **P**eople . . . ; Sing **t**o . . . —and so on, just as in Isaac Watts’ 1719 paraphrase of Psalm 90, which originally read:

Our God, our help in ages past
Our hope for years to come
Our shelter from the stormy blast
 And **o**ur eternal home

which fits the tune well if the initial long notes (indicated by spacing—stresses now by bold type) of *St Anne* are preserved, but less happily if they are ironed out—the very reason for the later alteration by John Wesley, who pollarded the first ‘Our’ to ‘O’. This was not the only casualty, for ‘**U**nder the shadow of thy throne’ was altered to ‘Benéath the shadow . . .’. The original final stanza survived unaltered, however, and here worse havoc was wrought by the equal-note version of the tune: the words hitherto emphasised portentously by the long notes

Time like an ever rolling stream
 B e a r s **a**ll its sons away
 T h e y **f**ly forgotten as a dream
Dies at the opening day

were now distorted by the unlikely accentuation Time **lí**ke; and so the dignity of Watts’ peroration ended like a calypso which Dies **át** the opening day. *St Anne* and the *Old Hundredth* were originally sung fairly fast, as their sobriquet ‘Genevan Jigs’ suggests. In Germany, too, the early chorales were neither doleful nor four-square: some of them were distinctly dance-like. Soon, however, the sprightly cross-rhythmed ‘Mein Gmüth ist mir verwiret’ (Hassler, 1601) became the solemn common-time ‘Passion chorale’ of Bach at the end of the century; and in England, the varied measures and rhythmic schemes of the psalm-tunes became woefully standardised to a few metrical patterns, slowing to a relentless succession of minims as time passed. As the sources show, this process was already under way in the sixteenth century. The Anglo-Genevan version (1561) of the *Old Hundredth* has more long notes than that printed by Day in 1563, who preserved the long notes at the first three line-ends which then vanished in the editions of 1583 and later. The 1583 rhythm was stable for a time: it is found as late as 1674, in Playford’s *Introduction to the Skill of Music*, though it had meanwhile lost the long notes of the final line-end of the stanza. By the end of the eighteenth century, however, the *Old Hundredth* had been flattened out to the relentless equal-note form, where the early nineteenth-century metronome mark seen in Jacob (1817)¹ confirms its

¹ Benjamin Jacob, [1817] *National Psalmody . . . A Collection of Tunes with Appropriate Symphonies . . .*, p. 21, set to Ps 104.

'Rather Slow' rubric (curiously, Jacob's metronome mark is identical to that given by Vaughan Williams for his elaborate setting of the *Old Hundredth* sung at the 1953 Coronation). The varied rhythms of the 'Old Version' had dwindled to a few by the end of the seventeenth century: in the *New Version* of Tate and Brady printed in 1696, the shop-soiled remnants are the counterparts of the 'chevy-chase' and 'poulter's measure' of the old ballads.

It was at this period that metrical psalmody (paraphrases of the biblical psalms and a few other pieces) was giving way to a freer hymnody. Apart from Wesley, the name of Isaac Watts, often regarded as 'the father of English hymnody' is pre-eminent. A.E. Housman said of Watts that his verses, 'bad rhyme and all' were 'poetry beyond Pope'.¹ Matthew Arnold, too, paid tribute to him, saying that 'When I survey' was 'the finest in the language'; Robert Bridges agreed, asserting that it 'stands out at the head of the few English hymns which can be held to compare with the best old Latin hymns of the same measure'. How could these critics, distinguished poets themselves, have been so deluded? Anyone who has sung 'When I survey' to its usual tune, 'Rockingham', knows that bad rhyme takes second place to the metrical shortcomings apparent in the text:

See, **from** his head, his hands, his feet,
Sorrow and love flow mingling down;
and
Were **the** whole realm of nature mine

In Watts' original (1707) things were worse, for the hymn began:

When I survey the wondrous cross
Where **the** young Prince of Glory died . . .

Plainly, the metrical difficulties pertain to the beginnings of lines. Indeed, the accentual problems have to do with the patterns already discussed in connexion with the *Old Hundredth*, which perfectly fits the Watts hymn, and relieves its difficulties. In the Preface to his *The Psalms of David* (1719), Watts specified the tunes, including the *Old Hundredth*, that should be sung to his hymns. He also complained that these traditional tunes were getting slower and the note-values more uniform.²

¹ In *The Name and Nature of Poetry* (1933), p. 30.

² 'It were to be wished also, that we might not dwell so long upon every single Note, and produce the Syllables to such a tiresome Extent, with a constant Uniformity of Time . . . ' (p. viii).

One of the practices that Watts inveighed against was that of 'lining out' whereby the Parish Clerk would read out each line of the hymn before it was sung. Naturally, this created havoc with any rhythm that might originally have imbued the tune. The well-known prelude on the 'Old Hundredth' formerly attributed to Henry Purcell (but by John Blow) uses techniques of drawing out the tunes which are similar to those seen in Daniel Purcell's *The Psalms set full for the Organ or Harpsichord* (c.1717). This work, 'The 100 psalm given out' has the long initial notes of 1651, but the rhythms prior to the cadence-notes are now uniformly short. Although the note-values are the same, the passage-work in semiquavers and some smaller values clearly indicates a substantial slackening of tempo; and 'The 100 Psalm with interludes' would have been a challenge to the Parish



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The poor technique that might be laid at the door of the hymnodist is, then, the fault of the tune, not the words. The upbeat triple rhythm of Miller's 1790 adaptation of *Rockingham*, whatever the other qualities of the tune, cannot properly fit words whose level and reversed stresses were designed for the rhythmic scheme of the *Old Hundredth* (a scheme also in Watts' mind when he wrote his less felicitous paraphrase of the *Hundredth* psalm, 'Before Jehovah's awful throne'). These rhythms formed the foundation of the metric of his hymns.

This being so, the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries have much to answer for, in traducing the reputation of Watts as metrist (and many of his 'bad rhymes' had meanwhile been visited on his lines as a result of evolutionary changes in English pronunciation). This metrical degradation happened not only because of the substitution of tunes with unsuitable rhythms, but by the mangling of tunes such as *St Anne*, already mentioned, which was only docked of its long notes after the eighteenth century.

So the idea that the *Old Hundredth* was originally sung to the walking speed of a centenarian is historically untrue, for the slowing down of tempo (as with the chorales of Bach) is, and was, a recurrent phenomenon not merely confined to today's Welsh congregations and the Vicar's wife; indeed, there is evidence that the gradual dragging of note-values and their eventual revivification was a process repeated many times over two or three millennia, from Old Testament times until now.

Thus, if the editor (be he the composer or not) has failed to help the singer, the organist must. First, the rhythmic form of the tune should be restored if it originally had 'gathering-notes' (a rather misleading phrase coined by Frere, which conjures up the confused mustering of a congregation uncertain as to when it should start to sing); otherwise,

Clerk who would have to read out the next line (in the space of four minims worth of semiquavers) in competition with the 'noise, rattle, hurry and confusion' of the organ interludes, as a contemporary critic put it.

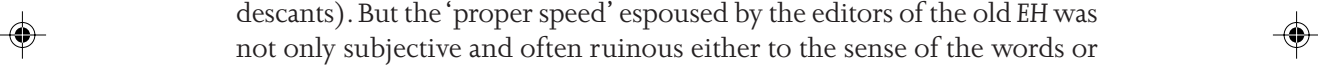
Watts' remarks quoted above begin: 'It were to be wished, that all congregations and private families would sing as they do in foreign Protestant churches, without reading line by line. . . . It were to be wished also, that we might not dwell so long upon every single Note, and produce the Syllables to such a tiresome Extent, with a constant Uniformity of Time.' Avison, in *An Essay on Musical Expression* (1775) quotes this passage, having also complained about the psalm tunes being 'sung without the least regard to time and measure, by drawing out every note to an unlimited length' (his pp.78–9). The 'constant Uniformity of Time' which Watts said 'disgraces the Music and puts the Congregation quite out of Breath' may be seen in the tunes inserted in many extant copies of his *The Psalms of David*. With consummate insouciance, the *Old Hundredth* and *St Anne* are printed with uniform minims (apart from the semibreves at the end of each line). Together with the rests that begin each line, this attests to the slackening of tempo, against the 'greater Speed of Pronunciation' that Watts desired, whereby 'we might often enjoy the Pleasure of a longer Psalm, with less Expense of Time and Breath; and our Psalmody would be more agreeable to that of the ancient Churches, more intelligible to others, and more delightful to ourselves' (p. viii).



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unvarying note-values must be relieved by rational pauses (e.g. the line-ends 2 and 4 in *Morning Hymn* and *St Peter* being given three-beat notes as in *Melcombe*) where these cadential points correspond to those of the verse. Second, the speed must be such that the congregation need take no breaths that might do violence to the sense. (When a reasonably fast tempo is chosen, congregations often complain that they have 'no time to catch a breath': what they mean is that they now have every chance of breathing in the right places but their attempts to distort the sense of the enjambments are thereby thwarted.)

On the question of pauses: a pause proper can be observed by an orchestra or choir with a conductor, or even hatched beforehand without one (e.g. '+1' being pencilled in above the third line of the tune); but this is meaningless to the congregation. Unless the organist plays over the tune in a rational rhythm in strict time, and the first verse follows rationally after it and keeps to the set rhythm, congregations will do what they do best, by dragging and showing symptoms of emphysema.



I would not care to impugn the musical taste of *EH*, for its editors banished much dross to the appendix which the less fastidious totters of *NEH* brought back from the dump (and there were other manifestations of a coarser musical judgment, including the provision of pointless descants). But the 'proper speed' espoused by the editors of the old *EH* was not only subjective and often ruinous either to the sense of the words or to the lungs of the congregation, but was often plain wrong from the historical point of view. A 'proper speed' is one that allows the words to make sense to the greater glory of God. If this cannot be done by the means already discussed, then tune, words, or both, should be rejected.

(David Wulstan was formerly Fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford, and Professor of Music at Cork and Aberystwyth Universities. Also Visiting Professor, Dept of Near Eastern Studies, University of California, Berkeley. Presently Research Professor, Dept of European Languages, Aberystwyth, and Fellow of St Peter's College, Oxford.)



‘To Be like the Angels’: the Angelology of Lancelot Andrewes

JONATHAN MACY

Introduction

Christian Angelology is a subject little discussed in what may broadly be classed as Protestant circles. This has generally been because during the Reformation the Reformers made strong moves to reject and then remove popular Catholicism’s patristically and mediaevally influenced understanding—and yet they rarely replaced the theological and devotional void left with anything positive or cohesive. Nevertheless, it was (and is) a fascinating subject that when examined can reveal hitherto unseen depths and tangents within an individual’s thought—and this is very much true of Lancelot Andrewes.

Lancelot Andrewes’ career covered many of the crucial and defining years of Anglicanism—the end of Elizabeth’s reign and the whole of the reign of James I. He was appointed one of Elizabeth’s chaplains around 1586, and received a high position under James, to whom he preached regularly for 18 years—which proved important, as we shall see.¹ While one cannot call him Arminian, he was an anti-Calvinist, since, Andrewes thought, to be as systematic as Calvinism necessarily meant dogmatising about things that were not clear enough to be systematised and dogmatised.² It is no surprise then, that when Arminianism reached England around 1613, he was sympathetic to it,³ yet despite this, Andrewes’ true theological framework was patristic.⁴ He had a flair for the classical languages, which nourished his love for the early Church. For Andrewes, as one who was fully part of the English patristic revival, the Church of England was a continuation, in a reformed form, of the Church that had always existed.⁵ Furthermore, Andrewes’ strong regard for the Church of the Fathers meant that his thought and theology was naturally inclined to a positive view of angels.

Contemporary Influences

At this point I must try to summarise the angelologies and other influences of the time, as this will provide a clearer context for Andrewes’

1 R.L. Otley, *Lancelot Andrewes* (1984), p. 48.

2 P.A. Welsby, *Lancelot Andrewes (1555–1626)* (1958), pp. 38–9, 44.

3 A.W. Harrison, *Arminianism* (1937), p. 122.

4 *Concio Latine Habita In Discessu Palatini* reproduced in *Lancelot Andrewes: Opuscula Quaedam Posthuma*, Oxford (1852), p. 91. 5 Welsby, p. 156

thought.¹ To begin with, Luther retained a general positivity toward the ministry of angels (despite fierce criticism of some aspects of mediaeval angelology), saying that one should 'Let the beginning of all our affairs be prayer to God, and the next the thought of the care of angels,'² and it was this ethos (as opposed to Calvin's) that had an impact on Cranmer's work on the Book of Common Prayer. Richard Hooker then took the liturgical bones which Cranmer had provided, and supplied the theological flesh for a distinctively Anglican angelology that was positively framed and corporately focussed. However, by Andrewes' time, the major continental influence was Calvinism. Calvin's approach differed radically from Luther's. He refused to go beyond the explicitly scriptural,³ and was generally reluctant to find anything positive in the subject at all, saying that only that which was 'distinct and explicit' in scripture should be examined.⁴ For Calvin, any understanding of angels could not be useful in daily Christian life, and it is only a distant, impersonal and generalised angelic role in God's wider providence to which he gives any credence. Importantly, angelology is dangerous and misleading, and it is 'our [Christian] duty to remain in willing ignorance' of it, since 'in obscure matters [we] must not speak or think, or even long to know more than the Word of God has given.' One should direct one's mind to those things that are 'edifying' and 'not indulge in curiosity, or studying things that are of no use.' Angelology is a superfluous area of theology, and studying it a waste of time. Not only that, man's own weakness, sinfulness and proneness to superstition make both the knowledge of the ministry of, and study of, angels dangerous, and to be avoided, as it obscures Christ.⁵

Further to this, and crucially for us, later Calvinism (especially as espoused by such a man as William Perkins) added a further restriction on angelology. There is no space here to fully explore the issue, but basically the strong doctrines of election, providence, and heavy Christocentricity made the entire ministry of angels inessential. Therefore at this point Calvinism essentially saw angelology and a personal understanding of angelic ministry as irrelevant, unnecessary, dangerous, misleading and faith-destroying. This would later become an area of attack for anti-Calvinists like John Cosin, since if this were so, why did God create angels in the first place and give them the ministry as described in scripture? (And it is in this light that Arminianism is important, for while Arminius himself had no developed understanding of angelology or angelic

1 For further detail see 'In a Wonderful Order', Faith & Worship 56 and 'Considering the Heavenly Creatures', Faith & Worship 58.

2 J. Pelikan & H. Lehmann (eds.), Luther's Works, Concordia (1958-86), Vol. IV, p. 265.

3 S. Schreiner, *The Theatre of His Glory* (1991), p. 39; cf. p. 52.

4 John Calvin's Institutes, tr. H. Beveridge (1994): Institutes I.XIV.3.

5 Ibid., I.XIV.8



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ministry, his broader non-Calvinist theology allowed a foothold for others to rediscover and develop a more positive understanding of angels.)

More interesting still is the influence of James I. When James I came to the throne in 1603, he was a surprise to many in his interest in all things theological, which included his writing a number of books and treatises (including one on demons). This interest appears to have embraced angels, since he employed an official court angelologist, the Jesuit-trained John Salkeld (who published *An Treatise Of Angels* in 1613, dedicated to James I), and those who were close to him and the Stuart court also had an interest—for example, Andrewes, John Donne and Richard Sibbes.

Lancelot Andrewes' Approach to Understanding Angels

While Andrewes clearly accepts the basic idea that angels are ministering spirits of light who serve men,¹ the dominant theme of his work is provided by a simple question, based on Matthew 22:30 (Luke 20:36), 'What is it to be like the angels' (ισάγγελοι)? He finds a number of angles on this—it can be in terms of a Godly society, of a moral likeness, of a likeness in nature, and Andrewes also links it to the Eucharist in a fascinating manner. Other issues arise, of course, but this is the recurring theme, and what we see is a development beyond both Hooker and the more Calvinist thinkers of this era. What is clear though, is that the meaning of ισάγγελος is examined from within a non-Calvinist soteriological model, and a high view of the sacraments and the Eucharist is assumed. It is also notable that the most developed parts of his thought appear after 1618, moving on from the embryonic ideas occasionally found in his early works. At a time when he was well trusted by James, and after James had appointed Salkeld, Andrewes was able to develop his idea of 'likeness to angels' alongside a growing range of patristic and mediaeval influences. To bring out this development I will be discussing Andrewes' works chronologically, the earliest being in the 1590s, the last a few months before his death in 1625.

The Angelology of the Sermons of Lancelot Andrewes (1590s–1624)

In one of his earliest surviving sermons, *Temptations of Christ* (1590s), we see that even at this early stage he is not fully in tune with a more Calvinist understanding of angels. Andrewes talks of angels being specifically involved in God's providential works, and comments on Satan's saying that angels would protect Christ from harm that this applies to men also.

1 *Andrewes' Sermons*, Library of Anglo Catholic Theology, Oxford (1841), III, p. 370 [Andrewes' works are cited from the Library of Anglo Catholic Theology (LACT), 1841–54, 11 Vols, ed. J. Bliss & J.P. Wilson].

Angels ‘comfort and confirm us and defend us in all dangers’ and ‘succour us in all necessities,’ spreading their wings over us, and pitching their tents around us (which also hints at a more pastoral role too).¹ However, this is an odd reference, since it joins ideas from Psalm 34 and 91, and in this and other Psalms the role of spreading protective wings is one assigned to God, and not to angels.² It suggests that God’s providence, symbolised by the wings, is something that he uses angels to enact on his behalf—a more practical than revelatory or mediatory role, aspects that Andrewes later developed, as we shall see. This protective role of angels is called ‘God’s providence [which] reacheth even to the hairs of our head’ for they ‘are numbered’; and Andrewes goes further:

This charge of theirs is not only to admonish us when danger comes, but they are actually there to help us, as it were putting their hands between the ground and us. They shall take the rubs and offences out of the way.³

The ministry is described here in terms that are very hands-on, as it were, with no sense of detachment from men, and with angels not merely giving physical protection but being active in helping men avoid sin. Why do angels do this ministry? It seems it is not because they simply choose to, or want to, but it is almost an inherent part of their calling:

This they do not of courtesy, as being creatures given by nature to love mankind; but by special mandate and charge they are bound to it, and have a Praeceptum for it.⁴

Angels do not naturally love man (and so do service for this reason alone)—there also seems to be a mandate and a charge to do so. Their service springs from external instruction, which means that angels are not autonomous in their actions, but are under the command and direction of God. However, Andrewes says though men have this blessing, it should not be abused, nor lead to our misunderstanding the angel’s rightful position, since men must not ‘venture whither and upon what they will; for the angels attend them at an inch. He bids them put in the manner of adventure, and then but whistle for an Angel, and they will come at first.’⁶ Ultimately, Andrewes makes it clear that angels and saints do nothing that Christ cannot do,⁷ and generally does not move to develop his thoughts around providence, retaining a caution in line with the times.

In a similar vein, in his *Sermon Of The Power of Absolution* (1600), Andrewes takes a position that would not have been far out of step with a

1 V, 523. 2 E.g. Psalm 17:8, Psalm 91:4, Luke 13:34. 3 V, 523. 4 V, 523.

6 Loc. cit. The comment is interesting in the light of later writers such as John Cosin, who used a very similar phrase in direct criticism of Calvinism—his broad point being that a strict predestination model would mean that angels save the elect from everything regardless of their sin, so promoting moral and spiritual laxity (LACT, Cosin I, 77–9). 7 IV, 9.



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contemporary Protestant caution toward angelic ministry. While talking of how God communicates with men, he mentions the occasion when St Peter was called to go to Cornelius in order to tell him more of God. In common with writers such as Perkins and Sandys, Andrewes says that even though an angel was involved in the process, it must be recognised that it was Peter who ultimately told Cornelius of Christ. As he points out:

An angel must give the order to Cornelius to send to Joppa for one Simon, to speak words to him by which he and his household should be saved, but the angel must not be the doer of it. That not to the angels, but to men, is committed this office of reconciliation.¹

Angels do not give the Gospel, just guide people towards those who can give it, and from this Andrewes infers that angels are not the mediators of forgiveness either, as this is something given by God to men directly. Clearly he admits that angels can be involved in the wider process of leading men towards God, but even ten years later (c. 1611), he is still careful to make clear that angels are not redeemers,² and angels are not to be prayed to.³

In a sermon on Hebrews 2:16 (1605) we start to see the common themes of Andrewes' later angelology emerge more strongly, as well as an indication of an engagement with patristic sources. He begins with the statement that Christ was not from the seed of angels, and that men are ranked above angels even though the angelic nature is higher than man's. On this last point, Andrewes maintains that angels take no offence at this ordering, and, despite it, never refuse to come to men's assistance. Notwithstanding this ranking and priority, it was the angels who announced the Incarnation, so seeing and understanding it before men did. Clearly angels are superior to men in nature and power, yet despite the difference, 'When [we men] are at our very highest perfection—it is even thus expressed—that we come near, or are therein like to, or as Angels.'⁴

How does Andrewes see this likeness to angels? Here he talks of it in quite a simple way. Angels are perfect in beauty, perfect in wisdom, and perfect in eloquence—and this is man's goal. The contrast between the heavenly and spiritual nature of angels, and the corrupt flesh of men, the heavenly abode of angels and the fallen world of men, is obvious, but Andrewes returns to the point that Christ chose to be of the seed of men, not angels. Angels are in 'every way, in everything else (except being the seed of Christ), above and before us; in this, beneath and behind us.' However, 'we, unworthy, wretched men, are above and before the Angels, the Cherubim, the Seraphim, and all the Principalities, and Thrones, in this dignity.'⁵ Immediately from here,

¹ V, 90. ² II, 259 (1610).

³ *Two Answers to Perron and other Miscellaneous Works*, p.23 (c. 1611). ⁴ I, 4. ⁵ I, 5.

Andrewes goes on to speak of the angelic fall, saying that when angels fell, God made no attempt to reconcile them, but when men fell, God gave all—his Son—to save and reconcile men. Fallen Angels were confirmed in their rejection and refused a return to God,¹ but men were not, which drives Andrewes to ask the psalmist's question—'What is man that Thou shouldst be mindful of him?'² He posits no answer, seemingly lost in the wonder of it, and almost enjoying the tension of the conundrum.

In *Of The Resurrection* (Mk. 16: 1–7) (1608), Andrewes parallels angels and men using the notion of likeness to angels, based on the appearance of the angels at the tomb, and again a development of thought is discernable. While talking of the resurrection body he says that 'it is expressly promised that we shall then be *ισάγγελοι*, like and equal to the Angels themselves.'³ The angel at the tomb tells us much of the resurrection of men. First, the angel had the form of being like 'a young man', and so men will be young, healthy and without sickness; the angel was sitting, and thus at rest, so in the resurrection we will not labour; the angel was at the right hand side, thus man in the resurrection will have a place of honour; and finally the angel was clothed all in white, so men will reflect that purity.⁴ However, the difference in nature causes men to fear when they meet angels—even when angels come to do good,⁵ and with this in mind, Andrewes says:

Afraid they are not for any evil they were about, but for that our very nature is now so decayed (the light cannot sustain a nature of iniquity). . . . As the Angels' brightness, for whose society we were created, yet as we now are, bear it we cannot, but need to be comforted at the sight of a comfortable Angel.⁶

This would suggest that the angel came as a young man, because this would be a form that would not frighten Mary—a non-threatening manifestation. Angels and men are not meant to be frightened of each other, but sin causes men to fear. Yet men, however sinful, fallen and 'decayed', are created to have society with angels (as Hooker would have agreed).⁷ With the idea of likeness to angels in mind here, Andrewes says that the problem is connected with men being *as we now are* (sinful) and so presumably, how men will be when in the angelic society (non-sinful) is radically different and will remove all fear.

The movement just in these early years is noticeable. To begin with, in 1600 Andrewes portrays interaction between men and angels cautiously; here in 1608 we see a model where the angel actively and visibly comforts

1 I, 6–7. 2 I, 14. 3 II, 231. 4 Loc. cit. 5 II, 232. 6 Loc. cit.

7 Hooker, I.4.2. 'Of angels we are not to consider only what they are and do in regard of their own being, but that also which concerneth them as they are linked into a kind of corporation amongst themselves, and of a society or fellowship with men.'



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Mary. More importantly, his idea of likeness to angels has grown from a similarity in *beauty, wisdom and eloquence*, to *purity, honour and a youthful health*—aspects which, while both moral in tone, seem more to do with ontology than simply action and manner.

This shift in thought is continued in *The Lord's Prayer* (c. 1611). Under the section *On Earth as it is in Heaven*, Andrewes says that there are a plurality of heavens—three, to be precise, being the earth; the sun, moon and stars; and the heaven where God is—and in all of them God's will is done. The angels in heaven 'fulfil His commandment and hearken to his voice,' and so men should pray to be *ισάγγελοι*—'like the angels', but not only in doing God's will, but as they would be like them in their nature. Andrewes makes a distinction between action and nature, calling men to be like the angels in both, and that which was hinted at in 1608 has become more concrete in his mind. Andrewes notes not only that angels remain in heaven, but, like Hooker, that they ascend and descend according to God's will—Hooker seeing them as descending with blessing for the Church, and ascending with prayers. However, Andrewes says, they prefer to ascend to be with God, than descend, but do God's will without question.¹

In the exposition, on *For Thine is The Kingdom*, Andrewes says that whereas men need to petition God, angels do not, since they

... feel no want of any good thing, and therefore they have no need to make petition to God as we on earth, and therefore all the confession that they make is of God's goodness and power.²

Why wouldn't angels petition God as men do? There are two possible answers. First, is that due to their confirmation, angels now have a fullness of being that means that they have no need to ask for anything from God.³ The second could be that since they are beings of spirit, living in a heaven that is not fallen (whereas men are limited physical beings in a fallen world) the perfection of heaven means that nothing goes wrong which would require any petition. Both reasons (which are not mutually exclusive, but which provide a fullness of being, and of life) would mean that angels have no need to do anything but praise God. Andrewes doesn't examine this, content that he has again indicated where man currently is, and where he will be.

Seven years later, in a *Sermon of the Nativitie* (Luke 2:12–14) (1618) Andrewes examined the organisation of angels, and discusses the angelic

¹ V, 407–9. ² V, 460.

³ Angelic Confirmation: This is the idea that angels were created with freewill, just as humans were. At a point in time, some of the angels (Satan and his demons) abused that freewill and fell. Other angels did not. However, after that event, God fixed or confirmed angels into the positions they had come to be in, so that those who did not fall now could not and were kept sinless. Those who did fall are now irredeemably sinful and cannot return.

choir at the birth of Christ, while taking the opportunity to also investigate a couple of other issues. Who came to sing to Christ? It was the angels, but angels, surely, were regularly portrayed as soldiers and an army, in conflict with men. The cherubim in Eden 'are but one symbol of the enmity between heaven and earth—ever since in arms to this day'—but here they are a choir singing of love and peace towards men. Andrewes explains this by saying that 'upon [the Incarnation] they were to disarm, and though they are in the habit of war, yet [they] sing of peace.' Clearly, Andrewes sees a change of the angelic role at the Incarnation, but what is the change?¹ At this stage, he provides no answer, and continues, leaving the question hanging in the air.

Andrewes next asks what the 'multitude of angels' signifies. The sheer number was not only an indication of heaven witnessing to Christ; it also meant a better choir could worship him! But surely such a multitude would be difficult to organise, since 'when we hear of a multitude we fear a confusion and [we think of a] confused rout.' But angels are an army and 'there is order in an army, there is order in a choir, there is order among angels; coordinate amongst themselves, subordinate to their Head and Leader. So a multitude without confusion.'² And this organised angelic multitude witnesses to the absolute pre-eminence of Christ, and leads man to recognise the same and praise him.³ The organisation of the angels indicates the need for man to be organised under Christ to worship him properly (another hint at what it means to be *ισάγγελοι*), and from here Andrewes moves to a discussion of the Eucharist. The manna from heaven is called the Bread of Angels which fed the Israelites, and the Body and Blood of Christ feed men now—and when men partake in the Eucharist, they move closer to the perfection of 'being like the angels', and in the end men will be 'counted worthy to [worship] on high with the angels in the bliss of heaven'.⁴ Andrewes held to a high doctrine of the Eucharist and Real Presence, and this seems to play a part in men becoming *ισάγγελοι*, since taking the Eucharist gives men the attributes cited earlier. As far as I know, in scholarly circles this has never been discussed, but Nicholas Lossky sees in Andrewes' Eucharistic theology ideas that, when joined with the studies here, make it possible to link the grace given by the Real Presence in the Eucharist with the idea of men becoming *ισάγγελοι*. For example, Lossky sees the Eucharist as the promise of future participation in the Banquet of the Kingdom, yet with a mysterious present reality,⁵ and as the reality of the gift of new life given to men.⁶ It is in the Eucharist that one really and truly unites to and participates in the Body of Christ,⁷ and in the light of Hebrews 12:22 it is not a great theological step to say that

1 I, 210. 2 I, 211. 3 I, 212–13. 4 I, 214.

5 N. Lossky, *Lancelot Andrewes the Preacher*, Oxford (1991), p. 34. 6 *Ibid.*, p. 341. 7 *Ibid.*, p. 96.



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there is a link with the Eucharist and to becoming *ισάγγελοι*. This is an idea with parallels in patristic thought,¹ and is also a definite move away from the thought of Hugh Latimer (1550s), who attempted to remove angels from their sacramental context, and to put them into a solely preaching and teaching context.²

More interestingly, Lossky sees in Andrewes' thought a form of the patristic doctrine of *theosis*. Andrewes had a strong incarnational theology, where men desired to be themselves 'incarnating the incarnation', and the way of doing this was through the Eucharist.³ Man is to partake of the divine nature, and participate in the divine life, and this is achieved by Christ literally 'recreating creation'—recreating man—through the progressive transforming work of the Holy Spirit.⁴ Similarly, A.M. Allchin notes that the link of the resurrection and incarnation was common in Andrewes, as was his then linking this to the Eucharist.⁵ While neither Allchin or Lossky then make the link between *theosis* and becoming *ισάγγελοι*, it was a standard thought that angels were made in the image of God,⁶ and so a likeness toward the angels would necessarily be an increasing likeness to God. Andrewes' idea of *theosis* and his stress on being *ισάγγελοι* makes good sense within his general soteriological model.

The following Christmas (1619), Andrewes again preached on Luke 2:14, and he picks up where the last sermon left off. Beginning with the angelic choir praising God, he says that when men speak with the tongues of angels they are praising God as the angels do.⁷ Elsewhere, he talks of angels praising God in heaven, as do the saints, and in this way men are to be like the angels in heaven—yet another *ισάγγελοι* reference.⁸ This praise gives glory to God, and next to praise nothing is more valuable than peace—thus, Andrewes claims, the angels wish peace on earth, and so the angelic hymn. Angels 'being Heavenly Spirits, wish not anything at any time but Heavenly; so that a Heavenly thing is peace,'⁹ which means that angelic wants and desires are in perfect conformity with God's will. It is

1 John Chrys: *De Sac.* VI:4. 'The angels surround the priest and the whole sanctuary and the space before the altar is filled with the heavenly powers come to honour Him who is present upon the altar.'

2 Latimer (Parker Society) II, 85–6: 'Whensoever or wheresoever the word of God is preached, there are the angels present, which keep in safe custody all those which receive the word of God, and study to live after it. Thus it is meet for us to come with great reverence to the word of God, where himself with his angels are present.'

3 Lossky, *Andrewes*, pp. 34–6. 4 *Ibid.*, pp. 49, 86, 175, 211.

5 A.M. Allchin, *Participation in God* (1988) pp. 15–23; Allchin also notes that *theosis* may be a part of Hooker's thought (*ibid.*, pp. 7–14), although there is no evidence that I have found where Hooker links this to becoming *ισάγγελοι*.

6 E.g. Perkins: *Golden Chain* VII; Hutchinson, p. 25; Arminius: *Priv. Disp.* XXV; John Donne ed. H. Alford, *The Works of John Donne*, vols. I–VI (1839), II:276–7, IV:493–4.

7 I, 215. 8 V, 460. 9 I, 225.

here, a year later, that Andrewes resolves the conundrum of the angels being an army and a choir. Angels are called to ensure peace on earth and the worship of Christ, things which the devil constantly fights, and so to ensure they happen angels must fight and 'keep on their armour still.'¹ This means the battle is not yet over, so the Incarnation did not replace angelic battling, but seemingly gave them an irreversible advantage over Satan and his demons.

Returning now to the discussion about the rightness of praising God and His glory, and how God responds to this, Andrewes writes: 'What harm then if the Angel should wish [praising Him] or commend it to men.'² Here Andrewes sees no harm in angels commending the worship of God to men. Angels stir worship in men to praise and glorify God, and when men do it well, it is 'music for an Angel'.³ As men are stirred and worship more, this moves them closer not only to a likeness with angels, but also to the angelic realm, since if praise was sung by men, 'of very congruity, an Angel's song would be by men, when in some degree that drew something near to the Angel's estate.'⁴ The similarity between this, and the ideas seen in the works of the mediaeval English mystic Walter Hilton is striking. For Hilton, 'Angel's Song' enables the soul to behold 'spiritual things, virtues and angels, and heavenly things, which allows men to be touched and taught by God'⁵—ideas that parallel Andrewes' concept of becoming *ισάγγελοι*.

Andrewes then again links this growing likeness to angels directly to the Eucharist. He asks, when is it that men reach this level of praise and worship, to make them *ισάγγελοι*?

And when is that men on earth come so? At what time? Sure, if any men do rise above themselves and approach in any sort near to those blessed spirits; if they ever be in a state with Angels and Archangels to laud and magnify His glorious name; if in all their lives they be in peace and charity, the bond of perfection, the *bona voluntas* of which we speak . . . upon the taking of the Sacrament it is.⁶

If angels lead men to worship, and the Eucharist is the centre of worship, this indicates that angels are present at the Eucharist. The nature of being like the angels here is men living in peace and love and the bond of perfection, which is different from the ontological angle previously noted, this being more of a harmonious Godly society—the Eucharist promoting that in men which would lead to this state. Along with the mystery of the Eucharist making men more like angels, Andrewes, in a similar vein to Chrysostom, makes mention of the attraction of the mystery of the Real

1 I, 227. 2 I, 229–30. 3 I, 231. 4 Loc. cit.

5 Hilton, *On Angel's Song*: Windeatt (ed.) *English Mystics of the Middle Ages*, Cambridge (1994), pp. 131–6.

6 I, 231.



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Presence to the angels.¹ Andrewes exhorts men to be aware of the angels' presence and of their witness and actions: 'Time in music is much. And if we will keep time with the angels, [we must] do it [praise] when they do it . . . [and it is] this day [i.e. the birth of Christ] they did it.'²

The hymn is the desire of men's hearts to worship as angels do: 'And what should we wish from our hearts but that the angels may have their wish, every one may have his due as it is here set out.'³ The patristic nature of the idea of angels attending the Eucharist and joining with men in worship is striking. While it is again reminiscent of Chrysostom, as quoted by Hooker, one also senses that Andrewes' thought is much wider than this. For example, one feels that he would have also agreed with Basil that the Psalms sung by men were the work of the angels and a 'spiritual incense'.⁴

In *Of The Resurrection (John 20: 11-17)* (1620), Andrewes again builds a line of thought based on the angels at the tomb, and begins by paralleling angels with messengers of the Gospel. In relation to Mary Magdalene, his exposition of this story has developed well beyond what we saw in his 1608 sermon on Mark. He writes:

Mary Magdalene staying still by the sepulchre, first she saw a vision of angels, and after, she saw Christ Himself. Saw Him, and herself was made an Angel by him, a good Angel to carry the Evangel.⁵

Andrewes makes a direct parallel between angels announcing Christ's first birth to the shepherds, and Mary announcing his second birth to the Apostles,⁶ which is a movement away from the thought of the Prayer Book (but in line with Myles Coverdale), which removed all reference to the angelic commission to Mary. Here Mary is called an Angel, in terms of being a messenger of the Gospel for Christ. Later Andrewes looks at this with more depth, and uses an idea which looks like a model of angelic mediation of God, since men could not cope with a direct meeting with God. Though she saw not Christ at first, she sees His angels. For it so pleased Christ to come by degrees, His angels before Him.⁷

It is almost as if Andrewes sees the glory of angels as preparing Mary for the greater glory of Christ, which shows the role as preparatory and intermediary. Again, it seems that she needed to be eased into the situation, by first seeing angels, which then prepared her for seeing Christ face to face. Compared with his 1608 sermon where Andrewes cited angels as giving

1 Chrysostom, *De Sacr.* 6.4; *Adv. Anom.* 4.

2 I, 231 cf. Hooker, I:4:2: 'Of angels we are not to consider only what they are and do in regard of their own being, but that also which concerneth them as they are linked into a kind of corporation amongst themselves, and of a society or fellowship with men.' (cf. I:16:4); Bullinger (Parker Society) III:338: 'Since the holy scripture delivers us an assured doctrine [of angels] and in all points profitable, it seems that we ought not lightly regard it, but with as much faith and diligence as we can bring it to light.'

3 I, 232. 4 Cf. Basil Hom. 10:2. 5 III, 4. 6 III, 5. 7 III, 9.

Mary a non-threatening manifestation as an indication of the joint society of men and angels to come, here it is a much more developed idea of angels providing a mediated and preparatory presence of Christ.

Andrewes, again, looking at the angels themselves, sees four parts to their role—their place; their habit (clothes); their site; and their order. As for place, it was in a tomb, which is ‘a strange sight, a sight never seen before, for a grave is no place for angels.’ Angels are blessed beings and graves are not blessed places.¹ Their clothes were all white, and this was a sign of the glory of the resurrection. The crucifixion was a dark and black day, but angels in white represent Christ’s sinlessness, and that men will also walk in white, thanks to the resurrection. With the site in mind, Andrewes recognises that the angels are sitting and at rest, thus signifying that we too will be at rest in heaven, but he also points out the order, that while one sat by Christ’s head, one sat at his feet. Why there? Andrewes knows it is a mystery, but posits a few suggestions. Looking at Exodus 25:22, he says perhaps it parallels the two cherubim on either side of the Ark of the Covenant, with Christ as the true Ark. Or perhaps it refers to Mary anointing his feet. His last suggestion is that it is a definitive symbol of the servant-hood of the angels, in that angels served Christ as both God and incarnate man, in heaven and in his grave,² and in that sense men are to copy the example of the angels. There is also the sense of order and hierarchy below God which needs to be observed, so this passage provides two more indicators of what it is to be *ισάγγελοι*.³ Andrewes’ final point is another popular patristic throwback:

We shall go to our graves in white, in the comfort and colour of hope, lie between two angels there; there they guard our bodies dead, and present them alive again at the resurrection.⁴

This is an idea closely paralleled in much patristic and mediaeval thought, in which angels tend to the soul and take it into heaven, and is again an indication of how, as the years went by, he gained more and more from these sources.⁵ Andrewes concludes the sermon with the point that, even though the angels spoke to Mary to try to convince and comfort her, it was only when Christ himself appeared and revealed himself to her, that she began to grasp what had happened. Angels may be wonderful creatures and have a God-given intermediary role, but ultimately, it is only Christ who could make her understand fully.⁶

Just before his death, Andrewes demonstrates another, and perhaps his most extreme, mediaeval influence. It comes in the *Sermon on Psalm (2:7)* (1624) when Andrewes talks of the moment when Christ became incarnate in Mary’s womb. To start with he says:

1 III, 9. 2 III, 10. 3 III, 11. 4 III, 10.
5 E.g. Origen, *Hom. Num.* 5.3; Basil, *Hom.* 19.9; Chrys., *Hom. Laz.* 2.2. 6 III, 14.



The Angelology of Lancelot Andrewes

There is a very near resemblance betwixt begetting and speaking, To beget is to bring forth; so is to speak to bring forth also, to bring forth a word, and Christ you know is called the Word.¹

After a short detour describing God begetting the Word, men speaking words, and how the Holy Spirit is breathed upon people, Andrewes moves on to the Incarnation, when the angel Gabriel appeared to Mary and spoke to her. Andrewes says: 'For how soon the angel's voice sounded in the blessed Virgin's ear, instantly He was incarnate in the womb of His mother.'²

Andrewes' idea of Gabriel being a literal vehicle for the Holy Spirit to beget Christ, is a very strange throwback to a popular medieval belief that Mary was impregnated through her ear. For example:

When Gabriel greeted her, and whispered in her ear,
In blissful time Christ was born, our Saviour she bore.

Again

Through her ear she was with child; Gabriel said it to her.

And even more literally:

Blessed be, Lady, your right ear:
The Holy Ghost, he alighted in there.
Flesh and blood to take.³

This was not found in mainstream theological thought, so much as in poetry and popular literature, and so must be seen as Andrewes taking his patristic and mediaeval influences seriously, however far beyond the explicit bounds of scripture and tradition they might be.

Conclusion

This last point is a good indicator of Andrewes' own development, and that of the period in general. In direct contrast to the more static Calvinist methodology, he developed in thought, approach and the sources he used, being willing to use both patristic and mediaeval sources to interpret and expand on scripture, and from here let his angelology grow. This increased willingness to (re)engage with the Church's patristic and Catholic theological heritage, along with James' apparent interest in, and patronage of, the subject, led to further development in the 1620s in the thought of such men as John Donne and William Forbes, who perhaps provide the most extreme example of a return to not only a patristic and mediaeval, but a Roman, angelology—the angelology so thoroughly condemned by earlier Anglican thinkers.

(This article draws on Dr Macy's unpublished doctoral thesis 'Angels in the Anglican Tradition (1547–1662)' (King's College London 2003).)

1 I, 292–3. 2 I, 293.


3 Examples cited in D. Gray, *Themes and Images in the Medieval English Lyric* (1972), pp. 100–101.



Why the Venite Matters

ANDOR GOMME

A year ago, in the ever-pressing search for new and especially young members, our church, which, except for a monthly 'Family Communion' (previously *ASB* and now *Common Worship*), had been entirely Prayer-Book, gave up Matins and replaced it with a multi-pamphleted sequence of *Common Worship* packages. Acting under the misunderstanding that during an experimental period public debate was being encouraged, I wrote the following note for the parish magazine. It was held to be too subversive for publication.



No more Matins means no more of the morning canticles, collects and psalms. So no more singing, or even saying, of the Venite. Why then should it matter that we don't any longer start Morning Prayer with a psalm which has been in place there from the very earliest records of the Christian church? Why should it matter that the large catalogue of prayer dating from centuries before Christ's birth should no longer have a formal place in Christian worship? Not just because of their antiquity or their link with the Church throughout the ages, or even because they were the staple in which Christ Himself was brought up. It matters because in a uniquely powerful way the psalmody brings us face to face with our debt to God and—if we are attentive—makes us ponder both the chasm which divides us from Him and the ever-present bridge by which we must dare to cross it. The psalms remind us constantly of the unfathomable *difference* between God and ourselves, and it is of the highest importance that we should be constantly reminded of it. But also that there is a way into His courts, which we must accept with rejoicing.

How right then that we should start our worship by *heartily rejoicing in the strength of our salvation*, by approaching with thanksgiving and gladness. The Venite goes on to remind us that, as He is the Lord of creation and we are His people, so it must be our way to fall down and kneel before our maker—simply because *he is the Lord our God*. So it exhorts us first to thanksgiving, then to prayer, lastly, with a dark recall of everyone's tendency to fall away, to ensuring that our hearts stay open to His word—which in the order of Matins we are about to hear in psalms and readings of Scripture. Some of the psalms express a personal, individual plight and characteristically use the first person singular; but the Venite is inescapably a call to us all and all together: 'let us sing unto the Lord, . . . let us come before his presence . . . we are the people of his pasture . . .'



Why the Venite Matters

The Venite leads us into prayer by making us record our need and our duty. As Archdeacon Freeman once wrote, it is the matchless prelude to the worship of the day whatever its character, 'since it touches with so perfect a felicity the highest and lowest notes of the scale, that there is nothing so jubilant or so penitential as not to be within the compass of it.' What are we being offered to replace this marvellous heart-raising but also heart-searching adjuration? Of course we can, and I am sure many do, pray the psalms on our own; but they are made for communal worship, and we discard them at our peril.

P.S. I have recently been told that the Venite has been restored to morning worship, though I don't know in what version or how it is fitted in to its newly miscellaneous surroundings, nor whether it stands there alone. In Matins it is after all not just an isolated psalm; it is both the exhortation to worship and the first movement of a crescendo—repentance, praise, thanksgiving and rejoicing—through the three traditional canticles. Prayer Book Matins isn't a ragbag, still less a bran-tub to dip into for recyclable bits and pieces: it is actually a very carefully ordered progressive sequence whose separate parts all bear on one another.

(Dr A.H. Gomme is Professor Emeritus of English Literature and Architectural History in the University of Keele.)



After Trinity

PAUL GRIFFIN

Trinity Sunday seems a long time ago now. Many times I have heard (and preached) the standard sermon for that day. It explains that the theme is very hard, but that you once heard a chap put it this or that way. By the time you have finished, what seems to me the real object of the feast is often lost. This object is, I think, happily to accept the wonderful way in which God reveals himself to us, and to rejoice and give thanks for it. What we get is more of a marketing sermon, in which the preacher tries to sell the theology. Perhaps this marketing is best done by challenging people to walk in the woods on a sunny summer's day and deny God's creation; or to read the New Testament and deny the glorious fact that Jesus is the Son of God; or to listen a to a Mozart Mass and deny the existence of God's Holy Spirit. All these ways of looking at it involve the uplifting of the heart, which is surely appropriate.

The trouble is that when anyone, however theologically humble or eminent, turns his mind to religion, it is as if a car engine is being switched on so that the headlights are dimmed. One seems to be cut off from vital bits of one's own belief. Perhaps this is why so many people want to tell us not what they believe but what they do not believe. 'Of course,' they say or write in an emancipated sort of way, 'I am not a Christian,' or 'I have no particular religion.' It is a curious country in which only a minority of the population will tell us where they stand, whereas the overwhelming majority merely want to declare where they do not stand. Even some undoubtedly good eggs want to qualify their profession of faith by adding that they have never been terribly happy about the Virgin Birth, or some other portion of the Creed, or the Trinity itself. We must be patient with them, because although some are simply trying to attract attention, many have a genuine care for the complete truth. On the other hand, it is a terrible shame that doubt has become so public a part of life. If the Victorians were thrilled by writers and priests talking about their uncertainties, at least many of them knew what their idols were uncertain about. For their successors, the doubt seems to have become more important than what is doubted. I have so many friends who like to settle comfortably back in their chairs and tell me they are 'agnostics', by which I imagine they mean that they have not the first idea what the point of life is. Not, I would have thought, something to feel comfortable about.

If we devote a festival like Trinity to rational defence of the doctrine, we too commonly miss a lovely chance of enjoyment. Of course the truth



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about life must be a rational one, but as we augment our understanding of the persons of the Trinity by our walk in the woods or our reading of a Gospel or our listening to Mozart, we are able to move forward both rationally and emotionally. It would be a pity if our rapture should diminish with age and experience, as Wordsworth's early perceptiveness of the indwelling God in nature seems from his later writings to have done. One of the benefits of old age should be that past experiences intensify our enjoyment of the present. We do not love the Mass in C Minor less for having heard it before. Rather we have a chance to perceive ever fresh glories in it, not only because we already know it, but even because it makes us feel one with those who have felt the same way about it.

Which brings me, and none too soon you will say, to the Book of Common Prayer. In this we see the Holy Spirit at work, as in the Mass in C Minor, but we also have a similar experience to that of our walk in the woods, or our reading of the Gospel. Here again, we cannot seize the magnitude of the work in one hearing, or in many. We listen and respond, and grasp a little of what is going on each time, but no more than a little. To some extent this may be true of the more modern services, but they inevitably lack the historical perspective that once the Roman Catholics found in the Latin Mass. We are fortunate to be able to continue using a service with this historical perspective. Assurances that the modern services more closely resemble those of the primitive Church may appeal to our reason but commonly fail to bring us to what Sir Thomas Browne calls an 'O altitudo!'

The Trinity season should surely begin with just that, and continue with the traditional long exploration of the teachings of Jesus. In this we have the opportunity to use a sublime text which not only reminds us of the glory of Trinity Sunday, but contains and expounds the very teachings which brought us to our knees in the early summer.



A Draught of Liturgy

MARK HART

(Preached at St Marylebone on 14 July 2007 on the occasion of the Prayer Book society AGM, the text being the Gospel for the Fifth Sunday after Trinity, Luke 5: 1-11)

In 1986, after a long period of drought, the level of the Sea of Galilee had dropped so low that near the North West shore, in the region of Magdala, the remains of an ancient fishing vessel became visible. It was dated to a hundred year period which includes the time of Jesus and provides us with our best estimate of the kind of boat used by Peter and his partners. It is twenty-six feet long and provides for a tiller man and four oarsmen. This is a substantial vessel which could carry its crew of five plus cargo, or alternatively a dozen disciples and their master. It is not easily sunk. To approach anywhere near sinking would require a catch weighing something like a ton. We should picture the men knee deep in fish as they struggle to maintain an even keel on their way to shore.

And how might they react?

They could have seen through the wonder, rationalising it away as beginner's luck. The catch was statistically improbable but not impossible. Rather like winning the lottery.

They could have seen the crowd, with some embarrassment. Here are Simon Peter & Partners. They trade on their mission statement 'Working towards a sustainable Galilean environment', and they're listing to the shore after catching more than their annual quota in less than half an hour.

They could have seen denarii. They had the vessels, Jesus had the vision. It was a partnership made in heaven.

But instead all Peter sees is a pair of knees. It's an unusual expression: 'he fell down at Jesus' knees.' It suggests to me that he is down in the fish, hard up against Jesus, not daring to lift his eyes. He fears for his life, but not because they are sinking. 'Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord.'

The parallels with Isaiah's vision and call are striking. 'Woe is me! For I am undone: because I am a man of unclean lips . . . for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.' And we should remember, as John tells us, that what Isaiah saw was the glory of Jesus himself.

These are nothing less than encounters with God in his awesome, majestic holiness. And what Peter and Isaiah shrank from in fear we can blithely take for granted. It was an address by the Bishop of London which alerted me to be cautious when declaring 'The Lord is here' in our liturgy.



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The more evident God's presence really is, the less appropriate it seems to announce it like a master of ceremonies.

Not that the responses of Peter or Isaiah should be on our lips either. Many biblical phrases enrich our Prayer Book, but not these. Contrary to popular thinking, it is a myth that Anglicans have an emergency rubric along the lines: 'In case of the Spirit's fire the priest shall declare "Depart from us, O Lord".' Rather, our liturgy allows that we are brought this close to God, and it leaves us there.

What Peter didn't realise was that here on his knees before a revelation of divine glory, he was in a place where he would be called, not consumed. Here where his sin felt most burdensome was exactly the place where it could be lifted. Here where he could protect no part of himself from scrutiny his Lord declares 'Fear not.'

Peter makes an easy mistake. We are so used to thinking of evil or disease as things which contaminate and spread. We manage them by separation and barriers. The Jews especially lived by rules which understood that this is how things work both spiritually and physically.

But sound as such principles may seem for us, they do not apply to God. We should not imagine that for God holiness implies a choice between a protective distance and a consuming fire. God's holiness is not about distance at all. God's way is as he spoke through Hosea: 'I am God and not man, the Holy One in your midst, and I will not come in wrath.'

I regularly conduct school assemblies, and one of my favourites is the story of the woman who was healed through touching the garment of Jesus. I take in a bucket of very wet mud and as I tell the story I talk about how we exchange greetings by shaking hands. The children are very ready to demonstrate this with me. I then cover my right hand with the mud and again invite anyone to shake my hand. Being children, many of course are still willing, but my point is to get them to think about what will happen. They understand perfectly well that their previously clean hand will be made unclean. I then ask them to imagine what it would be like if, instead of the dirt from my hand transferring to theirs, the cleanness from their hand transfers to mine. They immediately see the wonder of it. They understand that in the natural course of things the world works a certain way: dirt spreads, entropy rises, mediocre liturgy proliferates. What I want them to see is that Jesus can turn things round. Peter was in no danger. On the contrary, Peter had never been anywhere safer or healthier in his life.

It is sometimes argued that a strong emphasis in our worship on both God's holy splendour and our unworthiness is unhealthy and pastorally damaging for people with low self-esteem. It is seen as contradicting a need for people to be valued and affirmed. That is a woeful misunderstanding of the gospel. On our knees before the cross is the one

place where we are able to lift up our heads. For while I see there the ultimate 'No' to my sin I also hear the eternal 'Yes' to me. Is there any other place where I can be so affirmed? Has anything ever been so valued that such a price should be paid? As St Paul said, 'I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me.'

We should welcome the fact that our Prayer Book brings us back here again and again. In this our liturgy is most evangelical, with a small 'e'. We are evangelised as the gospel is proclaimed to us. The Holy One in our midst making us holy. We tend to think of God's holiness as a state, but in reality we encounter it as an action. It changes us. It calls us and sends us. Peter was never the same again.

Last month I was at Swanwick for the Chester Diocesan Clergy Conference. At an evening prayer Dr Christina Baxter, who is principal of St John's College Nottingham and chairman of the House of Laity of the General Synod, preached on the encounter between Elizabeth and Mary. Her theme was the joy granted by the Holy Spirit. And to illustrate this she spoke of how much she had valued being able to use the Prayer Book for her daily office during her recent study leave. To many the connection between joy, the Holy Spirit and the Prayer Book may not seem obvious, but it is there, for example in the absolution: 'Wherefore let us beseech him to grant us true repentance and his Holy Spirit.'

Perhaps, less directly, the joy of sinners repenting is evident in the way the Prayer Book is so unapologetic about an emphasis on confession. It isn't something just to be got through. It is an approach with boldness to the 'throne of the heavenly grace'. It is 'heartily repentance'. I like that word 'heartily'. I know that in context it means true and sincere repentance. But surely it carries also the connotations of vigorous, spirited, even enthusiastic repentance? If this is the place where burdens are lifted and healing imparted, surely we should be rather keen to get there? People who think our worship is lightened and brightened by less of it are like those who complain that the wine waiter is too eager to fill their glass. I've never understood either.

It is true that the sense of joy may not always be there, and this is the real problem. It is so easy for worship which attempts to express the holiness of God to convey instead distance, coolness and austerity. Conversely, it is all too common for worship which attempts to express the love of God to convey an easy, casual, cosy familiarity.

This human tendency to polarise stems, I think, from the way we seek to apprehend complexity by breaking it down into elements we can understand. It is a very successful approach, essential to scientific enquiry, and also employed in theology. But the difficulty comes when we try to put everything back together. We think we understand love, justice,



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holiness, power and freedom in isolation, but when we combine them there is an uneasy tension and contradiction. We should never forget that all our words, thoughts and concepts are ultimately inadequate to comprehend God. For no matter how carefully we combine the parts we never express the whole, the fullness. For God is simple. He is simply God. Not in the sense of being without content, a mere point source, but in the sense that he is not a composite. He is, as the first Article declares, 'without parts'. God's holiness is never anything but infinitely loving, and his love is never anything but infinitely holy.

What matters, at the end of all our words, forms and liturgies, is that we simply encounter God himself, through Christ, in the power of the Holy Spirit. In the 16th century Archbishop Thomas Cranmer launched out into the deep, let down his nets and took a draught of liturgy of such weight that it continues to evoke wonder and amazement. And just as Peter's eyes could have remained on the fish, so we can stay fixated upon the words themselves. Let us remember instead that the only point of the Prayer Book is its extraordinary power to bring us again and again to our knees before Jesus, where we hear his call, rise up, and follow him.

(The Revd Dr Mark Hart is Rector of St Peter's, Plemstall and St John's, Guilden Sutton in the Diocese of Chester.)



All Ye Works of the Lord

DEWI HOPKINS

Le fronde onde s' infronda tutto l' orto
dell' ortolano eterno, am' io cotanto
quando da lui a lor di bene è porto.

(Paradiso XXVI, ll. 64–6)

When Dante in his vision speaks these words—‘I love the leaves with which the whole garden of the eternal gardener is leafed, in proportion with the goodness he has given them’—he is in the starry sphere of heaven, justifying himself to St John by expressing his love for the entire creation for the infinite outpouring of divine love that the Creator has bestowed on it. The heavenly bodies and all degrees of living created beings are the leaves and flowers of God’s garden: an image entirely natural and in keeping both with scripture and the art of Christendom. I imagine that though Dante is found to be ‘difficult’ these lines would readily be understood by the humblest Christian. For myself a garden—most of all my own garden—tells me just what he means.

Ridiculously small though it is I am able to walk or sit in it and experience peace and wonder. The number and variety of plants in it, and the difference of each one from all the rest never cease to amaze me; and they are by no means all of my own planting. Somehow a plum tree appeared in it, and a veronica and heathers, roses and primroses have drifted in on the breeze that bloweth where it listeth. Sometimes I have to resort to Keble Martin’s *British Flora* to identify something quite new to me, and when I open the book crammed with accurate little paintings I am reminded afresh of the inexhaustibility of creation.

Beyond the hedge at the back of the garden are the mountains of the Snowdon range, wonderful to behold in all weathers and lights. From the front I see far over Anglesey; with majestic western sunsets and, on moonlit nights, parallel lines of mist lying in valleys and on the Straits. I note the progressively varying rising and setting places and times of the sun through the year and try to identify the moon’s ‘spangled sisters bright’. Snow comes on the mountains, and then they are hidden in black rain-cloud. Storms arise and shake my hilltop house, so that I fear for its safety: one November my garden shed was lifted bodily over the hedge by the wind and hurled over my near neighbour’s garden in smithereens.

In my garden the blackbird sings morning and evening; robins, sparrows, wrens, tits, siskins, greenfinches, chaffinches, bullfinches, gold-



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finches, collared doves, rarely a jay, and on one occasion a swan (on the road)—all these and many more come here; swallows, swifts, magpies, the occasional merlin or peregrine falcon skim, glide and hover, with gulls, above. At dusk bats circle the house. A few years ago a brilliant parrot alighted on our back doorstep, escaped from an aviary a few miles away, and would not consent to be recaptured for three days. Ladybirds, said to be scarce now, are to be found here, and a good range of butterflies and moths, including the humming-bird hawk moth. Squirrels also sometimes venture into the garden. My wife and I might have been seen in it too, any time since I retired twenty years ago, and a succession of eight grandchildren.

I am never unaware of the creation; so it was something of a surprise to read in a Canadian 'Continuing' Anglican magazine¹:

The Doctrine of Creation seldom gets a look-in during the whole of the Church's Year. Genesis chapter 1 is of course read on Holy Saturday; but the listener's mind is, very properly, focused elsewhere 'on this most holy night'. One way and another we, the people of God, seldom get any teaching about creation.

Then follows a rather impressive 'teaching about Creation', but I should have thought that if a parson were using the Prayer Book (or any genuinely orthodox service book) the doctrine of the creation would have been forcing itself upon the attention of his congregation all through the year. It seems hardly necessary to point out that it underlies the Lord's Prayer and the Benediction; is spelled out in whichever of the three creeds is used; celebrated in Psalms, Epistles, Gospels and Lessons; humbly acknowledged in Collects; and hymned in the Benedicite.

Any preacher, I should have thought, is free to take for his text anything he might find appropriate in the material provided for a particular service on a particular day. It must be by his own choice—not the Church's negligence—if he feels inhibited from giving this subject the attention it deserves. In deed one is tempted to suspect that there are clergy who feel it to be beyond their capacity or perhaps even feel that the doctrine is one to which they cannot wholeheartedly subscribe.

It occurred to me, on reading that article, that some time ago *Faith and Worship* contained an interesting contribution by S.G. Hall,² who regretted the neglect of the Benedicite, which he considered 'especially convenient to use during penitential days'. The only reason he could suggest for the neglect was that 'choirs and congregations find the constant repetition of "praise him and magnify him for ever" in all fifty-two verses wearisome'—and I take it that 'wearisome' is meant to suggest that it makes the whole

¹ In an article by Father Francis Gardom in *The Rock*, 15 March, 2005. ² *Faith and Worship* No. 52.

thing too long, and that much repetition is tiresome to the modern aesthetic sensibility. Professor Hall also felt that it would be good to revive it because of concern for the environment.

Naturally I know no more than he does what the true cause might be, but that very uncertainty might allow me to venture the suggestion that one cause could be (as hinted, I think, in the article in *The Rock*) an uneasiness on the part of up-to-date clergy and laymen with the idea of creation as such: a sense that it would not go down very well in these enlightened days when the Doctrine (no longer the theory or theories) of Evolution is widely assumed to have acquired the status of fundamental dogma. However that might be, I certainly agree with Professor Hall that we still need the Benedicite. For myself the full version in the Prayer Book seems perfectly usable as it stands; but I am a crusty old 'Prayer Book fundamentalist', and if his modifications brought the Benedicite into more frequent use that would strike a blow for the doctrine of Creation. His article noted similar provision in the deposited book of 1928 and in the 1929 Scottish Prayer Book, but there is a closely similar arrangement authorised for the Church of England in the 1946 Shorter Prayer Book. The Benedicite is printed (at the end of the book: I cannot think why) in four sections with the rubric: "The words "praise him and magnify him for ever" may be omitted except after verses 1, 2, 17, 18, 26, 32."

If I may return to the personal tone with which I started this piece, my wife and I find ourselves unable to get to church because we cannot accept the ministry of a lady vicar; so week by week we use the services of the Prayer Book at home (within the limits laid down for lay use). We find it most convenient to read the Benedicite in place of the Te Deum, for the very reason that it is such a stirring celebration of God's Creation; and we do so at the spring and autumn equinoxes and the winter and summer solstices to mark the wonder of the changing seasons.

And if we lack sermons, there is inspiration to be gained from poets who have sung the creation, from the most mystically exalted, Henry Vaughan:

I saw Eternity the other night
 Like a great Ring of pure and endless light,
 All calm as it was bright;
 And round beneath it, Time, in hours, days, years,
 Driv'n by the spheres,
 Like a vast shadow mov'd, in which the world
 And all her train were hurl'd

.....



All Ye Works of the Lord

*This ring the Bridegroom did for none provide
But for his Bride*

to the most simple:

The world is so full of a number of things
I'm sure we should all be as happy as kings

(R.L. Stevenson)

and, as I joined in singing at the funeral of my favourite environmental scientist,¹

The Lord God made them all.²

¹ I mean Dr C.G. Dobbs. Readers of *Faith & Worship* may remember his contributions to Nos 15, 39 and 41. They are worth re-reading for their teaching that far from religion's depending on science, science depends upon orthodox religion.

² Which reminds me that I have neglected to mention the grasshoppers and dragonflies and other creatures that come to the garden. The thrush is rather discreet and comes for an early breakfast. We have to be up early to see it.



Good King Wenceslas

J. A. THURMER

The well-known words appeared in 1853 in *Carols for Christmastide* by John Mason Neale and Thomas Helmore, an important contribution to the Victorian rediscovery of Christmas. It was a result of Neale's acquiring a rare Scandinavian book of hymns (words and music) hitherto unknown in England, *Piae Cantiones* (1582). Amid the translations Neale wrote this ballad of his own, set to a tune in the old book. Popularised by Bramley and Stainer's *Christmas Carols Old and New* (1871) and with its simple and catchy tune, it leapt to popularity as something which every urchin could sing from door to door (I did).

Reaction set in. Its words were sneered at by high-brow pundits. Dearmer and Vaughan Williams, including it reluctantly in *The Oxford Book of Carols* (1928), called it 'rather confused'; others went further—'doggerel' and 'poor and commonplace'. The tune was originally set to a carol for spring, not Christmas, and the romantic evocation of a society of kings and peasants does not commend itself to modern egalitarians. Remember the twentieth-century fuss about Mrs Alexander's lines (1848)

The rich man in his castle
The poor man at his gate

But it is possible that we have missed the point of Neale's poem and done him less than justice. Underneath the simplistic setting of bringing Christmas cheer to the poor is another layer of meaning, an allegory. The carol evokes martyrdom. Wenceslas of Bohemia (907–29) was killed in his early twenties, a mixture of martyrdom and family feud. The charitable excursion takes place on the feast of Stephen, the first Christian martyr (Acts 7), December 26th, known in modern England as Boxing Day. And the peasant gathering winter fuel lived (for good measure) by St Agnes' fountain—Agnes being the child martyr whose festival (January 21st) often has the cruellest frost. And thither Wenceslas and the page go with food, wine and fuel. But the page's heart fails him in the dark and cold until he is told to use his master's footprints, which he does to good effect.

Neale's own short life—he died at forty-eight—is a contrast between his prolific literary and religious output and incessant difficulties. He was beset by ill-health and was too frail to be a parish priest. His modest office as warden of Sackville College, the East Grinstead Almshouse, was not a Church appointment and though he hoped to make all possible use of his



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priesthood the Bishop of Chichester, objecting to Neale's high-churchmanship, thwarted him at every turn, even invoking the law to prevent him officiating in the college chapel. At the same time Neale had difficulties with the sub-wardens of the college and suffered unpopularity, even abuse, from members of the public. So when in the carol the page complains

Sire, the night is darker now
And the wind blows stronger;
Fails my heart, I know not how;
I can go no longer

it might be Neale's own prayer and complaint to God that he, so gifted, so fruitful, should be so continually harassed.

But in addition to his learning and piety Neale had humility and a sense of humour (they often go together). Humour was rare among clergymen of his sort. Even his contemporary Lewis Carroll (the Revd Charles Dodgson), the master joker, forbade any humour which touched the Church or religion. But Neale saw the funny side of everything, and wrote humorous verses as readily as serious ones. He even teased the venerable and awe-inspiring John Keble, author of the greatly admired poems *The Christian Year*. Once, on a visit to Keble and while his host was briefly out of the room, Neale translated a poem of Keble's into Latin, and then accused him of plagiarism; subsequently admitting that it was only a joke.

So, in *Carols for Christmastide*, Neale plays a joke on us, though it is a serious one and at his own expense. He slips in this ballad of his own, only loosely related to Christmas, as an allegory of his own situation: the Lord's servant, bringing comfort to the poor—he was, after all, warden of an almshouse—and finding his heart failing him because of trouble and harassment. If we like to extend the allegory (hazardous, admittedly) we could say that as a priest he had the equal, if not greater, duty of bringing the flesh and wine of the sacrament to God's poor; in which duty he was also thwarted. But the King's words are both rebuke and encouragement. What are Neale's troubles compared with those of the martyrs whose memory he invokes, and of the Lord, whom we are bidden to follow in the way of the cross? And this truth brings comfort even here and now, as those able to bring material or spiritual blessings to others find that, following in the footsteps of Christian saints, they are blessed themselves. Neale himself must have experienced some satisfaction from his achievements. He cannot, in this life, have known how great those achievements were.



Reviews

Charles Hefling & Cynthia Shattuck (eds.), *The Oxford Guide to the Book of Common Prayer*, Oxford University Press, 2006. ISBN 0195297563 £26.99

The final essay (by Pierre T. Whalon) is called 'The Future of Common Prayer' and it begins thus: 'Reading through all the essays in this volume should already have convinced the reader that the Book of Common Prayer does indeed have a future.' My response probably doesn't qualify because I have managed less than two thirds of this indigestible dog's breakfast of a book, but my impression is that long before this what I call the Book of Common Prayer has got lost in an Amazon delta of rivulets busily concerned with the 'inculturation' of their local liturgies in the multitudinous progress 'from uniformity to family resemblance'. Lest however it should seem that in quoting him at the start I am parading Bishop Whalon's short piece as futile and (for members of the PBS) irrelevant optimism, let me say now that I found it uniquely thoughtful, considerate and unhectoring, and that I am especially grateful for his pointing me to the work of Catherine Pickstock, whose understanding of the creative force of language is, to judge from his quotations, superior to that of any of the contributors to the volume and opens a way to understanding the nature of liturgy which to me is invigorating and quite new. (Contrast the pathetic comment on the final Evensong collect, 'here is liturgical language that is also poetry'; this comes in an essay on 'The Prayer Book as Literature'—meaning what?)

Unhappily Dr Pickstock's is not the book I am reviewing. And I have by contrast to say that the Oxford 'Guide' strikes me as an ill-edited mess, which has not made up its mind whether it is an encyclopaedia or an opportunity for polemic. It is also misleadingly titled, for it is in no normal sense a guide and it strays so far from the Prayer Book into the distant suburbs of the so-called Anglican Communion that the Prayer Book itself becomes as unrecognisable as it is in most of the present 'Anglican' churches. The handful of historical essays near the start refer of course to the book that originated with Cranmer, and they are acceptably straightforward though not without factual errors (it is for example not the case that the majority of English medieval cathedrals were Benedictine, nor is the *Te Deum* biblical). Most will have little to tell that readers of *Faith and Worship* will not know already, though I'll bet that not many will know about the wee bookies and the usagers. Thereafter the canvas spreads, and if one wants to, there are things one can learn—much of it at second hand—about the composition of the American prayer book or the present state of the Episcopal church in the Philippines or the Anglican one in Korea. Well,



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most of us won't even know that there are Anglican churches in Melanesia or Japan; and no doubt we should.

Somewhere, increasingly buried, in all of these the ghost of the Book of Common Prayer still lurks: the link is cosily dubbed 'the Prayer Book Family'. Out of nowhere, so far as I am concerned, comes news of King's Chapel—not the spiky one in Cambridge (England), but a lone Unitarian meeting house in Boston (Mass.), which has held fast to a very modestly revised version of 1662 (made in 1785); or rather, as their own preface puts it: 'In an age of liturgical change and experiment, we at King's Chapel are sometimes asked why we keep to the Prayer Book. In fact, it is the Prayer Book that has kept us.' Beleaguered islanders lost in the sea of *Common Worship* will know what they mean: reading about King's Chapel was heartening. But the heavy brigade are on hand to give the book another bruising. Unsurprisingly in the van is Colin Buchanan with 'The Winds of Change'—a phrase I seem to have heard before, here reinforced with the full artillery of theological know-how. Readers will be knocked sideways to learn that the undermining had begun even in the seventeenth century: 'the Scottish and American rites had, of course [!], brought in an eastern-style *epiclesis* after the *anamnesis*, but this was a highly doubtful gain from the point of view of "western" catholics.' Indeed so: my Goodness, what on earth (or in heaven) did they think they were doing? (You will find the Greek words in the glossary, which assumes that we may not know the meaning of 'chapel' or 'Holy Communion' but expects us to understand without help why chasubles were such a hot potato in Tractarian times.) Buchanan might have done well to check before glossing *anamnesis* as 'invocation of the Spirit': he was a member of the 'editorial advisory board', and one wonders whom he thinks the book is written for. From this point inculturation takes over (not in the glossary or in any dictionary I have to hand), and, along with the jargon, a self-satisfied bullying of opponents perceived to be down. Here, specially for readers of *Faith and Worship*, is what the 'Guide' (in the person of Buchanan) has to say of the PBS:

Despite the single-issue fixation of the Prayer Book Society, and the slight nods in their direction by the authorities, their 'controversy' is a snapping at the heels of people who actually have different agendas to pursue. The conflict is asymmetrical—the all-consuming preoccupation of the complainants, the rarely noticed nuisance to the supposed defendants. These latter are in possession of the ground, and it is an unequal conflict. Synodically most Anglicans have different battles to fight, and the snapping at the heels of the Prayer Book Society is not going to divert them.

The later stages of the book, so far as I have been able to sample them, are, though less openly offensive, largely coloured by the conviction that

progress must be maintained, uniformity rethought—Indeed, let there be an end to it—that there must be continuous revision (remember when Che Guevara was preaching endless revolution? Lenin would have called it an infantile delusion). Storming on about the unstoppable advance into the future of the American Episcopal Church and its evident joy in total freedom of choice in all aspects of worship, Lesley A. Northup innocently remarks that ‘it is possible to infer that this plurality of text and praxis has contributed to the wide theological divergence that now characterises the Episcopal Church.’ No, *really*? Who would have thought it? The overriding impression that this Guide contrives to convey is of a very babel of voices all pursuing their own ways in the interests of inculturation, or just of personal whim. Finally be ye all of one mind; or in the lone voice of C.S. Lewis writing on the virtue of uniformity and quoted significantly in ‘A Glance Back’ by Donald Kraus:

Every service is a structure of acts and words through which we receive a sacrament, or repent, or supplicate, or adore. And it enables us to do these things best—if you like it ‘works’ best—when, through long familiarity, we don’t have to think about it. As long as you notice, and have to count, you are not yet dancing but only learning to dance. . . . The perfect church service would be one we were almost unaware of; our attention would have been on God.

At the end of this nightmarish jungle of a book, it was a pleasure to come on such moments of calm and to recall Kenneth Stevenson’s caution: ‘in an age that sees the production of a new liturgical text almost by the year, what we perhaps [but why ‘perhaps’?] need to discern is where the patterns of future stability are to be found, how we can use responsibly the “communion” we share.’ I regret feeling the need to be so negative about a considerable effort of many people full, I am sure, of good wishes for God’s Church. There are useful and interesting things to be found in it, but one needs to know where to look, and no guide is provided for that. The strain of working through the whole will, simply through frustration if nothing more, overwhelm the gain. Don’t buy it: if there are things in it that you must know and can’t find anywhere else, seek out an unusually well-endowed library or one that has taken the title for the deed.

P.S. The wee bookies were pamphlets printed for insertion to the 1662 book containing the Communion rite from the stillborn Scottish book of 1637, devised for the benefit of their ‘usagers’, the nonjuring clergy of both nations following the glorious revolution, who believed that in certain respects 1662 was gravely defective.

Andor Gomme



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ARTHUR MIDDLETON, *Prayer in the Workaday World*, Gracewing, 2007.
ISBN 0 852446772 £9.99

After picking up this book I had to check that it really was a recent publication. Everything on the surface seemed to suggest otherwise: the typeface, the graphic design and above all the photograph filling the front cover. It shows a busy town centre, appropriate for the 'workaday' theme, but you know immediately that it is from a different time. The ladies' fashions and the commercial signage are the main giveaways. The Rumbelows sign clinched it—they closed all their shops in 1995. It is in fact Northumberland Street, Newcastle upon Tyne, before it was fully pedestrianised.

Gracewing's purpose is the publication of 'books of traditional spirituality and teaching which current fashions in the Church and Theology might make unattractive propositions for other religious publishers'. I do wonder why books of this nature so often also look and feel unfashionable. The content may be a valuable recall to certain traditions but the image suggests a more general nostalgia.

Having said that, the photograph, which is most probably from the 1980s, fits the rather curious prominence given to the ASB. The reason for this is not, I judge, a particular attachment to the ASB in preference to what has followed. This is not the germination of an ASB Society. Rather, the book is a compilation of material prepared by the author over many years for lectures, retreats, quiet days etc. More rigorous editing would have helped.

It is advisable to approach the book as more of a collection of essays than a coherent, systematic treatise on prayer. Furthermore, there is a weight of material here which feels overwhelming in a straight-through read. I can well understand that a chapter may have been designed to be absorbed over the period of a retreat.

Having said all that, there is a very clear coherence about the overall message. This is a call to take prayer seriously. Writing from the Catholic tradition, Arthur Middleton is at pains to present a vision of everyday life infused with prayer, but insists that the discipline of the ordered, specific activity of prayer is an essential framework.

Part 1 covers many themes such as communal prayer, daily prayer, spiritual reading, intercession, meditation, silence and Scripture. Part 2 gives practical examples, but readers are left with the sense of there being a rich tradition from which to draw in working a pattern to suit themselves. In this respect the counsel is fashionable in a way which a specific call to the Prayer Book tradition would not be.

Appended are two rather more polemical pieces. The first complains that the word 'retreat' is today used to cover all manner of programmes of



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self-exploration. A retreat should properly be a period of withdrawal from other activities of life in order to devote oneself to focus wholly on God. This is a welcome and necessary correction. The word may not be recoverable but the Church certainly is.

The second appendix asks what has happened to ascetical theology. In contrast with today's self-regarding emphasis on multiple spiritualities there is just one Christian spirituality though many ways of living it out. *Ascesis* is training, 'the voluntary denial of things, even if intrinsically good, for the sake of a greater union with God'. I was left wondering at the irony that, whilst training is today so *de rigueur* in every walk of life, the Church often runs scared of telling that spiritual growth only comes at a cost.

Mark Hart





Letters

THE EASTWARD POSITION

From Dr C.D. Heath, Cannock

With reference to Canon Paternoster's article on the eastward position in *Faith & Worship* 60, the case in favour could be put even more strongly. In *Principles of Religious Ceremonial* (2nd edition, 1928, pp. 62–4, 69, 71, 74, 76–80, 210), Bishop Walter Frere shows that facing east was almost universal in early Christianity, the westward position for the Canon only being a peculiarity of the Roman basilicas, unknown elsewhere. At the time of *Ordo Romanus Primus* the pope had to stand behind the altar, the front edge being inaccessible because of steps down to a martyr's tomb. But the people could not see him, because a curtain was drawn to conceal the altar, a practice that later died out (in the west). For the Gloria and Collect the Pope faced east at his throne, with his back to the people and the altar; and again for the post-Communion, but at the altar itself. When the Roman rite spread to countries where altars were accessible from both sides, there was no need to prevent their traditional eastward position for the Canon.

Is it conceivable that the adoption of the westward position by the Roman Catholic Church in the 1960s, copied by Anglicanism, rests on nothing more than a historical mistake? The result looks like a committee meeting, where the altar becomes a psychological barrier between 'us' on one side, and 'them' (the clergy) on the other.

Nor is visibility improved, rather the opposite. I once attended an ordination where the nave altar was completely hidden by the backs of the standing congregation—as was the bishop, except for the tip of his mitre (without it he disappeared completely). Meanwhile the unused high altar, though distant, was in full view.

Over thirty years ago, a guest preacher at Evensong, a local Baptist minister, led the intercessions from the nave, facing east. As I knew he did nothing of the sort in his own church, I asked him why. 'Well,' he said, 'when you're leading people in prayer, it feels natural to be facing in the same direction.'

From Mr Neil Inkley, Walton-le-Dale

With regard to Michael Paternoster's excellent paper on the eastward (and other) positions of celebrants (*Faith & Worship* 60) there is a final irony. The greatest and final rush to the 'behind the counter' position came in post-

war years in the name of the congregation's ease of hearing the spoken words—just as public address systems were being installed in churches and, with clip-on microphone in place, it didn't really matter (for audibility) where the celebrant stood!

From the Revd J. Lee Potter, Leigh-on-Sea

With reference to Canon Paternoster's article 'People, Look East!', I refer to *Table and Minister* by the late Canon Arthur Bennet, published in 1963, as the definitive work on the North Side position of the celebrant.

I am a committed North Sider (not a North Ender, despite having a maternal grandfather born in Preston). In his *Treatise on the Pastoral Office*, published in 1864, the redoubtable J.W. Burgon, later Dean of Chichester, wrote: 'Let us not be ashamed to follow the Prayer Book faithfully and set the people an example of obedience.'

LITURGICAL LANGUAGE

From Dr Peter J. Sansom, Wilmslow

Mr D.B. Taylor's comments on the artificiality of religious language (in his letter commenting on Dr Colin Podmore's article in *Faith & Worship* 59) are quite valid. Unfortunately, however, he seems to have misunderstood the point Dr Podmore was making.

The language Dr Podmore characterised as 'synthetic' is not that of the BCP, but what *Common Worship* describes as 'traditional language'. His point was that much of the 'traditional language' material in *Common Worship* was written in 'contemporary language' and back-translated into 'traditional language'—unevenly, and apparently by someone who was not at home in the English of the BCP. He was not objecting to using a kind of English that was never 'the ordinary language of the day', but to the silliness of turning modern prayers into 'pidgin Cranmer'.

Some examples from *Holy Communion: Order One in Traditional Language* illustrate Dr Podmore's point most effectively.

The Absolution: 'Almighty God, who forgives all who truly repent . . .'

Eucharistic Prayer C: 'For he is the great high priest, who has loosed us from our sins . . .'

The Dismissal: 'The peace of God, which passes all understanding . . .'

In each of these cases, the text has not been put into the language of 1662 or of the KJV, but into 'thee-and-thou speak'. That is what Dr Podmore meant when he described such language as something 'that has never been spoken or written by any actual person'.