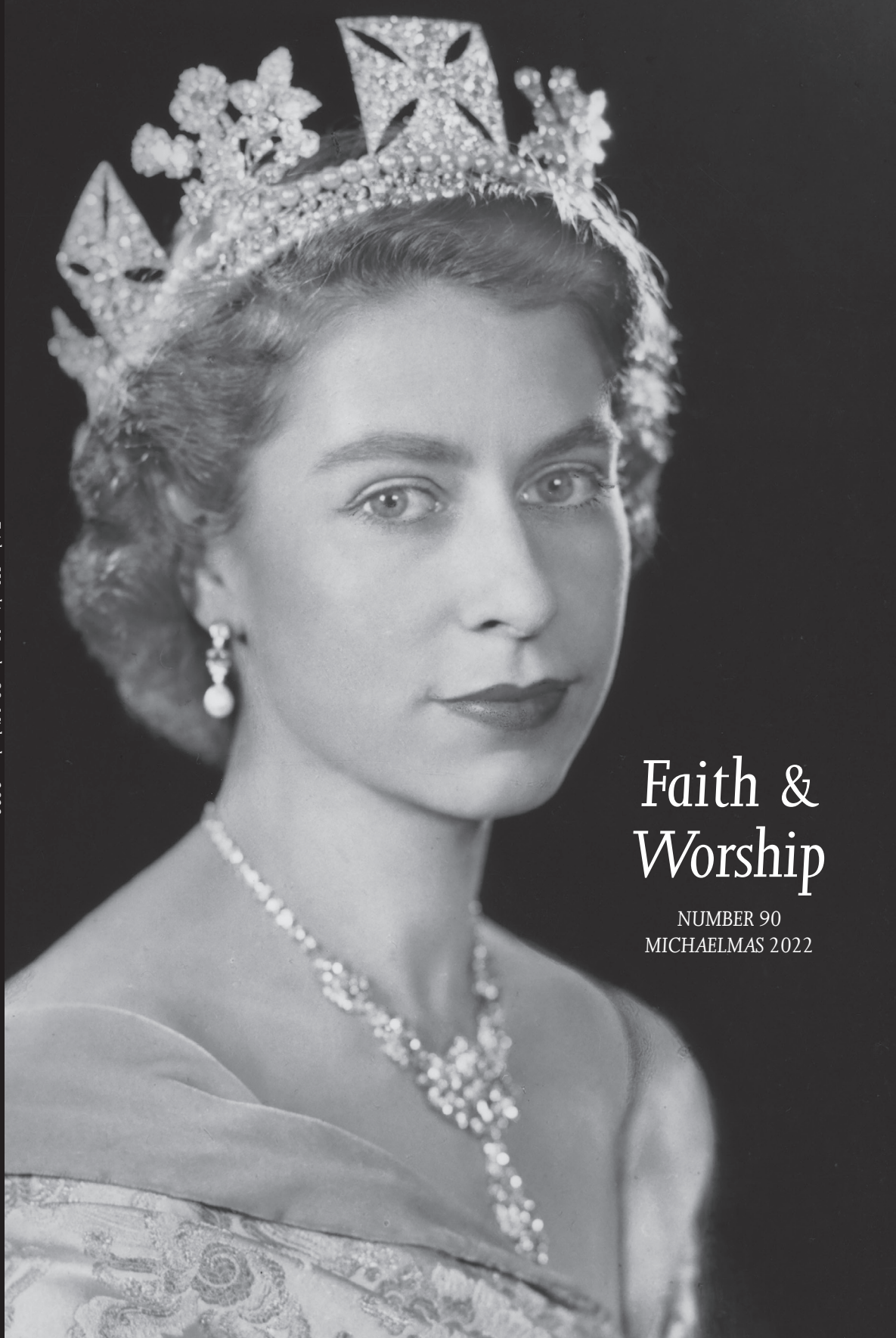

Faith & Worship

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MICHAELMAS 2022

Preface

This collection of essays was produced to celebrate the seventieth anniversary of the accession of Her Late Majesty to the throne. It is now published not only in thanksgiving for the Platinum Jubilee, but also to serve as a memorial to the blessing of Her Majesty's long reign.

The news of the death of Queen Elizabeth was received just as the Prayer Book Society conference began. It was extraordinary to think that the opening Evensong was the final time any of us would sing 'O Lord, save the Queen'. Those present swiftly annotated their Prayer Books to make sure they now prayed for a King and, by the end of our time together, we had prayed for the new King at Morning Prayer, the Litany, Evening Prayer and Holy Communion. It gave a liturgical continuity to the belief that the throne is never vacant.

The subsequent services at Westminster Hall, Westminster Abbey and St George's Chapel were probably the most watched church services in the whole of human history. They were rooted in both the Book of Common Prayer and the Authorised Version and were commended by one public commentator for 'their unique mixture of beautiful cadences and astonishing directness'. Yet the funeral service, along with the admirable address from the Archbishop, also made it clear that we were there to commend the Queen into the hands of Almighty God in the hope of the resurrection. Her Late Majesty was to Almighty God 'thy daughter Elizabeth' and, for us, 'our sister Elizabeth', as she died in the belief that our Lord Jesus Christ is 'the way, the truth and the life'.

The accession ceremonies of His Majesty King Charles III have also shown a remarkable continuity with the past; the rich language of the Proclamation was dramatic and grand enough to reflect the importance of the occasion. There has been some gentle evolution, with the arrival of the cameras to share the meeting of the Accession Council with a wider audience and the use of Welsh at Cardiff Castle, but these have only served to enhance the tradition and to share it more widely.

His Majesty has made his own solemn vow to his peoples, in which he spoke of how his own faith is rooted within the Church of England, and of his dependence upon Almighty God. As Prince of Wales, our new monarch was a great supporter of this Society. In 1989, at a ceremony to mark the 500th anniversary of Archbishop Cranmer's birth, he spoke of how, for 'solemn occasions', we need 'exceptional language', and of how Cranmer's Prayer Book had given 'comfort and hope in great crises' to innumerable people. 'The Book of Common Prayer reminds us of human frailty "among the sundry and manifold changes of the world", and at the same time of the consolation of "the means of grace and the hope of glory".'

We have commended our late sovereign into the hands of Almighty God in the hope of that glory, and now pray each day that our new monarch may be replenished with the grace of the Holy Spirit.

Michael A. Brydon

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THE COLLECT FOR THE SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

O LORD, we beseech thee, let thy continual pity cleanse and defend thy Church; and, because it cannot continue in safety without thy succour, preserve it evermore by thy help and goodness; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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O Lord, save the Queen
Who putteth her trust in thee.

Many of us will have used the Prayer Book to give thanks for the seventieth anniversary of the accession of HM the Queen to the throne and rejoiced that we are blessed in a monarch who does put her trust in the loving purposes of Almighty God. The Platinum Jubilee has offered both a great celebration of the dedication of our monarch to her peoples and an opportunity for us to give prayerful thanks for this commitment. Members of the Prayer Book Society will be especially appreciative of the Queen's continued, quiet devotion to the Book of Common Prayer through its sustained use in the Chapel Royal and in other places of royal worship. We can rejoice that the Queen's faith, which is so integral to her life of service, has been shaped through the Prayer Book. Her Majesty's faith was formed in an era when the Book of Common Prayer was indeed common and it was normal to learn Collects and be familiar with the Scriptures.

This year's Lenten lectures appropriately celebrated the links between monarchy and the Prayer Book as the Prayer Book Society's way of marking the Platinum Jubilee. We are pleased to be able to publish those talks, which their authors made available, and they all offer much to reflect upon in the relationship between the Crown and the Church. There is also an additional one on the Prayer Book calendar, which looks at some of the links between Church and state.

The Prayer Book Society, of course, marks its own Golden Jubilee. Unlike the Platinum Jubilee service, this will not be at St Paul's, but at Westminster Abbey, which was a great favourite with Elizabeth I. The earlier Elizabeth does not seem to have been fond of St Paul's, since she is only ever recorded as attending one service to celebrate the defeat of the Spanish Armada. It was unfortunate that she and Alexander Nowell, who served as Dean of St Paul's for over forty years, had a difficult relationship. Nowell may have been a talented preacher, but he was tactless in his use of an early sermon to urge Elizabeth to marry and in his criticism of

the furnishing of the Chapel Royal.[1] The Virgin Queen appreciated both good music and seemly ceremonial in the worship of God, which was what she encouraged at Westminster Abbey.

Elizabeth refounded the Abbey as a collegiate church and found a kindred spirit in Gabriel Goodman as Dean (1561–1601). Like the monarch, he was determined that Prayer Book worship should be accompanied by appropriate ceremonial and seemly liturgical furnishing. The Abbey was very unusual in preserving a large store of vestments and altar frontals and there was remarkable continuity on the musical side. Diarmaid Macculloch, the great scholar of the English Reformation, suggests that we might call this the Westminster Movement. The Abbey certainly laid a foundation for ensuring that Prayer Book worship was a vehicle for conveying the 'beauty of holiness' as a way towards God. So many of the senior clergy of the Church of England during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were products of Westminster School, which meant that they had been nurtured in the distinctive Prayer Book tradition fostered by Goodman.[2]

In the Jacobean period, the Abbey's Jerusalem Chamber was home to one of the companies entrusted with the production of what would become the King James translation of the Bible; the version used since 1662 for the Epistles and Gospels of the Prayer Book and the edition assumed to be in use for both Morning and Evening Prayer. Under the early Stuarts, the Abbey was also used to impress foreign visitors by providing a distinguished exemplar of Prayer Book worship within the Church of England. For example, during the negotiations for the marriage of Charles I to Henrietta-Maria, the French party was given appropriate translations of the Prayer Book. One of the delegation requested the opportunity to witness secretly the Christmas Day liturgy, and was much impressed by the dignity with which everything was conducted. It no doubt surprised him that wafers continued to be used, which was one of the reasons a Puritan-minded House of Commons insisted on moving to the adjacent St Margaret's, where ordinary bread was used.[3]

The Commonwealth was something of a rupture for the Abbey when it became one of the nation's foremost preaching places, but

1 M. Willes, *In the Shadow of St Paul's Cathedral: The Churchyard that Shaped London*, London: Yale University Press, 2022, pp. 81, 83, 98.

2 D. Macculloch, 'The Great Transition: 1530–1603', in D. Cannadine, *Westminster Abbey: A Church in History*, London: Yale University Press, 2020, (pp. 137–177), pp. 166–171, 173–175.

3 J. F. Merritt, 'Monarchy, Protestantism and Revolution: 1604–1714' in Cannadine, *Westminster Abbey*, (pp. 179–223), pp. 184–185.

the Prayer Book was to come back under Charles II. The triple portrait by Sir Peter Lely of three Restoration divines, including John Dolben, Dean of Westminster (1662–83), has a large Prayer Book to make the point that it was back in use and they were faithful to it.[4] The coronation of Charles II also saw the production of both new copes and plate for use at the Abbey in conjunction with the Prayer Book. Following the Glorious Revolution of 1688, an attempt was made by William of Orange to revise the Prayer Book by convening a commission within the Abbey's Jerusalem Chamber. William, who was more at ease with Dutch Calvinism, hoped for a revision that would bring the dissenters back into the Church. So intense was the opposition to this attempt at Prayer Book revision, however, that it was never put to convocation and only existed in manuscript until its Victorian publication.[5]

During the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, life at the Abbey remained lively, with glittering events such as the coronations and the instigation of the Order of the Bath with its grand installation ceremonies. A surprising number of Prayer Books survive from this period, including the forty folio copies printed by Robert Baskett, the King's Printer, in 1760. They are bound in flat boards of crimson English calf and stamped with the arms of the Order of the Bath.[6] However, if the Abbey was well integrated into the society around it and a place that was valued in the life of the nation, the standard of actual day-to-day worship was not everything it could have been. Whilst novels should be used with care, there is much truth in the account of daily service found in *The Warden* by Anthony Trollope.

> The minor canon… hurried in, somewhat late, in a surplice not in the neatest order, and was followed by a dozen choristers, who were also not as trim as they might have been: they all jostled into their places with a quick, hurried step, and the service was soon commenced. Soon commenced, and soon over.[7]

Today, we might look back with amazement to when it was normal to have two sung services on a week day, but it is also clear that all was not as it should have been, with chapels used as lumber rooms, and slovenly dress at services. The oft-quoted story of the verger who vetoed private devotions is probably apocryphal, but it is at least indicative that there

4 Ibid, pp. 208–210.
5 E. Carpenter and D. Gentleman, *Westminster Abbey*, London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1987, pp. 37–40.
6 J. Perkins, *The Ornaments of Westminster Abbey*, Guildford: SPCK, 1933, pp. 14–15.
7 A. Trollope, *The Warden*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991, pp. 219–220.

was work to be done to show that the Abbey was intended to be a house of prayer.

Rather surprisingly, Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee of 1887 was heavily responsible for the beginnings of the restoration of a more dignified form of Prayer Book worship, since the officiating clergy, which included both archbishops and the Bishop of London, all appeared in the Caroline copes, which had largely been limited to use at coronations. A photograph of the assembled clergy was circulated in the printed papers and magazines and seems to have sown the seed with faithful churchmen, previously unused to such things, that something a little more exciting than a surplice or a preaching gown might be permitted in church if such things went on at the Abbey. Jocelyn Perkins, a future sacrist, described it as 'a milestone in the progressive revival of external dignity of worship'.[8] One wonders if an accompanying row about the repainting of the ancient coronation chair, on which Victoria sat, may also have contributed to a desire to preserve the best of the past to enhance the present.[9]

By the time of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee, there clearly was a desire to find some sort of 'National Use' in church, which complemented the national spirit. Percy Dearmer's *The Parson's Handbook* was a scholarly work, which chimed with this, since it claimed to be scrupulously loyal to the rubric at the front of the Prayer Book, which stressed that 'such Ornaments of the Church, and of the Ministers thereof, at all Times of their Ministration, shall be retained, and be in use, as were in this Church of England, by the Authority of Parliament, in the Second Year of the Reign of King Edward the Sixth'. Dearmer offered a distinctive 'English use, as set forth in the Book of Common Prayer'.[10]

Amongst his most enthusiastic disciples was the already mentioned Jocelyn Perkins, who did so much to create what we may now regard as the distinctive Abbey style. In his memoirs, he wrote of his vision for the Abbey to 'display before all men a standard or norm of worship characterized by unflinching adherence to the formularies' of the Church of England. 'Provided the Abbey kept the English flag flying, scores of churches would follow in its wake. We should really be lighting

8 A. Hughes, *The Rivers of the Flood: My Personal Account of the Catholic Movement in the 20th Century*, London: The Faith Press, 1963, p. 53; J. Perkins, *Westminster Abbey: Its Worship and Ornaments, Volume III*, London: Oxford University Press, 1952, pp. 80–83.

9 W. Rodwell, *The Coronation Chair and Stone of Scone: History, Archaeology and Conservation*, Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2013, pp. 167–168, 177, 208, 241.

10 Hughes, *Rivers of the Flood*, pp. 47–50; P. Dearmer, *The Parson's Handbook*, London: Henry Frowde, 1907, pp. 1–3.

a candle which would never be put out!'[11] Perkins was undoubtedly very successful in raising the standard and it is to him we owe such things as the wonderful processional banners, lighted candles, processional crosses, beautiful altar frontals, the regular use of copes and the attractive apparelled albs worn by the servers. Much that adds dignity to royal occasions is down to Perkins' belief in the correct use of the Prayer Book.[12]

If the photograph of the coped clergy at Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee was influential, so the use of first radio, then television, spread the Abbey style to an even wider audience. The account of how the present Queen's coronation came to be filmed in 1953 has been much rehearsed during this Platinum Jubilee year, but what has not been stressed is how it broadcast what was essentially a Prayer Book Communion service with a crowning to millions of people. As Roger Job, a former contributor to this journal, commented in his 1998 article on 'The Book of Common Prayer and Music', the coronation was a high point.

> Its prayer-book eucharist on the wireless or television in every home, with the singing of the Old Hundredth and of Vaughan Williams' O taste and see (Psalm 34, Coverdale), witnessed to an extraordinary continuity. Here is the grand climax of prayer-book worship and of the music which for so long surrounded it.[13]

Much has changed since 1953 with all the liturgical revision and, whilst the Abbey has remained faithful to Prayer Book Matins and Evensong, the 'High Celebration' of the Prayer Book Eucharist, of which Jocelyn Perkins was so proud, has now given way to first the Alternative Service Book and later Common Worship. Members of the Prayer Book Society may disagree with Dean Edward Carpenter's (1974–1985) comment 'that Westminster Abbey just could not ignore what was happening in the *Ecclesia Anglicana* as a whole', but we would agree with his praise for the 'dignified, felicitous and economical use of language' in Cranmer's liturgy and his warning against constant liturgical change, since it saps confidence and makes one 'too conscious of the mechanics'.[14]

On 8th October this year, the Prayer Book Society will be privileged to mark its own Golden Jubilee with a celebration of the Prayer Book

11 J. Perkins, *Sixty Years at Westminster Abbey*, Plymouth: Latimer, Trend and Co. Ltd, 1960, pp. 19; 95–100.
12 Perkins, *Worship and Ornaments*, *Volume III*, pp. 165–192.
13 R. Job, 'The Book of Common Prayer and Music', *Faith & Worship*, Number 45, Advent 1998, (pp. 15–18), pp.17–18.
14 Carpenter and Gentleman, *Westminster Abbey*, pp. 40, 48–49.

Eucharist at the Abbey. It is very appropriate that we meet in a great church that has had such an influence on the conduct of Prayer Book worship, and gather to use an important English text in a place that means so much to the English-speaking peoples across the world. In the Abbey that knows all too well the importance of the beauty of holiness, it is also an opportunity to share the beauty of the Prayer Book, which is not only to be revered as a historic and literary text but as a means to encounter the beauty of the living God. On the occasion of the 900th anniversary of the dedication of the Abbey, the Queen prayed that 'through the years to come Westminster Abbey may serve the cause of Christian unity, inspire our national life and be a focal point for the spiritual life and the aspirations of a great multitude of people'.[15] Such a prayer equally expresses the hopes of those of us who continue to use and value the Book of Common Prayer.

Michael A. Brydon

NEW EDITORS

John Scrivener has given long and dedicated service as the editor of *Faith & Worship*. The readers of this journal will have appreciated his thoughtful editorials and careful selection of material. There will be a more fulsome appreciation of his work in a future edition of *The Prayer Book Today*. He has been replaced by two co-editors, the Revd Jonathan Beswick and the Revd Dr Michael Brydon.

15 Elizabeth R, 'The Queen's Message to Westminster Abbey' in E. Carpenter (ed.), *A House of Kings: The History of Westminster Abbey*, London: John Baker, 1966, p. vii.

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A Most Peculiar Liturgy

ANTHONY HOWE

When I arrived at Hampton Court several years ago, having been appointed Chaplain, I did what all new priests do and had a good root around in the drawers and cupboards to see what we'd got![1] To be honest, I wasn't expecting much in the way of exotic vestments and accoutrements. Nevertheless, my search did produce one or two surprises. For instance, lurking in the bottom drawer of the vestment press were two matching mitres. Goodness knows what on earth I was supposed to do with these, since at the Chapel Royal, being a Royal Peculiar (in all manners of the word), we are mercifully free of episcopal and indeed archiepiscopal jurisdiction. Was there a tradition by which chaplains of such places were able to sport this particular ecclesiastical millinery, such as some canons of continental cathedrals? I concluded this unlikely since, despite the rather spectacular setting, that is just a little too much stuff and nonsense for our part of zone six!

Clothing aside (there was a humeral veil as well), there were one or two interesting items to be found amongst the books. As you can imagine, a place such as the Chapel Royal has, over the years, accumulated a varied collection of such items. Most of these (or at least the more historic ones) are stored elsewhere, with the result that we had nothing dating back further than the eighteenth century. Nevertheless, amongst the hundreds of royal ciphered bindings was a rather fine folio copy of *The English Missal*, presented to the Chapel in 1928, and complete with royal arms emblazoned on the front cover.[2] I must confess to being slightly taken aback by this discovery. Even the High Church parish from which I had come had not been using *The English Missal* in 1928. So I was moderately surprised to find what many regarded at the time as a slightly naughty publication not only in the heart of the establishment but actually sporting the heraldic badge of George V.

In fact, what I was discovering, and indeed have continued to discover, is that strict uniformity has often been more a matter of principle than

1 This paper was first delivered as an online lecture on 8th March 2022.

2 *Missale Anglicanum The English Missal*, London, Knott, 1923; Hampton Court Chapel Archive.

practice. Even here amongst the glories of State Matins and Evensong, the tentacles of ritualism had infiltrated the establishment. A little more digging revealed that, for instance, Eucharistic vestments had been used from at least the 1920s, and the Blessed Sacrament reserved from the 1940s, of which both practices continue. The registers were even more revealing. From the 1920s until the war, there was a daily celebration of Holy Communion, including an early choral celebration on the greater festivals. But interestingly, the chaplain actually recorded these as *Mass*.[3] Even such a High Church spike as myself wouldn't quite have dared to do that!

The said chaplain at the time was Walter Kelly Firminger DD, appointed in 1926, and who sadly died in post in February 1940. Firminger was, like many of my predecessors, something of an academic, holding a doctorate of divinity from Oxford, and his papers may be found today in the collection at Pusey House. His photographic portrait hangs in the vestry at Hampton Court, resplendent in scarlet cassock, tabs, DD gown and, of course, medals! Not hanging in the vestry, but nevertheless still to be found in the archives, are other photographs of Firminger, several with the choir, he being curiously attired in what might be described as a somewhat eclectic form of Anglican choir dress, comprising of cotta, scarf, hood, and, to top it off, a biretta! Again, not what one might have expected to see in such an establishment, but wholly in keeping with Fr Firminger's furtively performed High Churchmanship.

I had, like many others, thought before coming here that, whilst things would be very proper, they would be strictly *according to the book*. After all, there are few places so closely associated with the Book of Common Prayer and especially the 1611 Authorised Version of the Bible, the latter of which was conceived as a result of the conference convened by James I and VI, here at Hampton Court in 1604. And, indeed, these two pieces of literature—if one may refer to them as such—provide the bedrock of our liturgy and worship. Nevertheless, even though the Book of Common Prayer bears the mark of monarchical establishment and approval, to suggest that its use in the Chapel Royal here, and indeed in other places, is simply due to either innate conservatism or antiquarianism, would be to entirely miss the point. Like other places, our employment of the Prayer Book is not to make a statement about what we are not—to be

3 Chapel Royal Service Registers; Hampton Court Chapel Archive.

reactionary as it were—but rather what we are. Yes, it is a royal liturgy, forged in the furnace of the royal court, both Tudor and Stuart; yes, it represents establishment, tradition, some sense of timelessness, things that many long for in increasingly uncertain times. But as you all know, the Prayer Book is, and has always been, a living liturgy, a resource for spirituality, prayer, and pastoral solace.

Historical precedent for this is well documented. It is widely known that Elizabeth I's Chapel Royal hardly conformed to the Puritan spirit of the age. The services were enriched by elaborate choral and organ music, with three sacred ministers duly attired in gorgeous vestments (copes, of course, not chasubles) performing a ritual of which Cranmer would hardly have approved and which must have embarrassed not a few of Elizabeth's bishops. There was even a crucifix placed upon the altar, which was only finally removed following intense lobbying of the Queen by Lord Cecil. Those who experienced the services were variously impressed or scandalised by such goings-on, and therefore the cast must surely have been carefully selected by the Queen, so as to be trusted to perform such sacred rites to the same high standard as the secular rituals of monarchy. Indeed, there is good reason to believe that, being her father's daughter, much of what went on in her chapels (as well as Westminster Abbey) was just as much making a statement about monarchy as it was about God. Whilst her father and brother had been supreme heads of the Church, Elizabeth, in concession to some of her more conservative subjects, had placed herself in the slightly less exalted role of governor. Nevertheless, her status as a consecrated monarch derived from no less than God Himself, with the result that sacred and regal intermingled with ease.[4]

We can see examples of this both in art as well as royal liturgical practice. The ceiling of the Hampton Court Chapel is the room's most notable feature. It is not in fact original to the building, but was installed a few years after Henry took over as proprietor, following the desperate (and unsuccessful) attempt by Wolsey to regain favour. Henry lost no time in bringing in the builders to extend what was already a vast palace into what we largely have today, give or take some later rebuilds. The Chapel had been one of the last things Wolsey constructed before his fall from grace, replacing something that had been erected in the thirteenth

4 *The Princelye comminge of her Majestie to the Holy Communion at Estre* (1593) from *The Old Cheque Book of The Chapel Royal*, Da Capo Press, 1966, p. 130ff.

century for the Knights Hospitaller, who had established their Camera here as the first Hampton Court Manor.

There is no suggestion that by 1528 the Chapel was incomplete and wanting a roof, since the stained glass by the Royal glazier, Gaylon Hone had been erected by then.[5] It is more likely that Henry wanted something just a bit better, just as he had when he rebuilt Wolsey's not-very-old Great Hall just a few feet away. What we now see was erected in 1536, just in time for the baptism of Prince Edward the following year. Under the direction of Edmund More and Henry Corrant, it was pre-fabricated at Sonning, near Reading and shipped up to Hampton Court in pieces. The ceiling is a remarkable construction all held together by a plethora of pegs, and is clearly influenced by the late Gothic vaults by William Vertue at Christ Church and the Divinity School in Oxford, although in this case, an attempt to construct in stone would have been impossible. It is purely for show, since, as with a real vault, there is considerable space between what is seen below and what keeps the rain out.[6]

The design both looks back and forwards, along with the near contemporary hammer-beam roof of the Great Hall, directly to the west. Traditional forms include the host of heaven, engaged in a performance of the heavenly symphony, amidst the decoration (albeit restored by Pugin in 1848) of gold stars. It is all very mediaeval, suggesting there was not much that had changed in the liturgical practice below, save that by now, there was only the one Use of Sarum throughout the country, as well as a significant paring down of Holy Days (and, crucially, uneconomic days off!).

But, whilst the form is Gothic, the execution and detail are very much Renaissance, which also betrays another not-very-subtle hint that things had moved on. For amongst all this heavenly imagery is repeated no fewer than thirty-four times the royal motto Henry increasingly preferred, and which has remained to this day: *Dieu et mon droit*, which basically translates as *God and my right*. Here we can see the real message of that ceiling, which is indeed a snapshot of the Henrician Reformation at that time. The ancient tradition continued but it was now governed at the will of God by a reformed authority. By placing that motto so many times in what everyone would have recognised was a representation of heaven, Henry placed himself directly next to (and thus as vice-regent

5 See Hilary Wayment, 'Wolsey and Stained Glass' in Guun and Lindley (eds) *Cardinal Wolsey, Church, State and Art*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991.

6 Gerald Heath, *The Chapel Royal at Hampton Court*, Twickenham Local History Society, 1979.

or vicar of) God. He was, as we also see depicted in his Psalter, the new King David, chosen by God to found a new dynasty which, like that of King David, had to succeed at all costs.[7] His task was to purify the Church of any unhelpful or superstitious accretions such as the papacy and its corrupt exercise of power, but in the process not totally destroy what was. The Mass was very much the Mass, and Henry (like Luther in a way) never lost sight of that. This ceiling remained remarkably intact, and has reminded subsequent monarchs and those who were subject to their rule, of their place in the divine cosmos and economy.

As with his predecessors, Henry, and Elizabeth after him, employed the worship of the church to significant effect. Whilst the monarch (at least in Henry's time) usually heard Mass in a more private setting, on Sundays and holy days they would have been present in their Chapel, seated remotely in a gallery at the west end, where they could both survey (and if preferred ignore) what went on below. As preaching became more of a thing, the monarch would have been elevated to a similar level to whoever gave the sermon, adding not a little pressure on the latter to avoid potential traps! Occasionally state and liturgy spectacularly coincided, and it is in these rituals we have, even to this day, one or two instances of the very spiritual side of monarchy. One, of course, is the coronation, which is the subject of at least another lecture, if not a series of them, and on which I won't touch today. More intimate, if you like, but no less important are the rituals that surround the celebrations of Epiphany and Maundy Thursday.

Epiphany was, in many ways, far more important at court than Christmas. Gifts tended to be given at the new year, thus looking forward to those holy gifts offered by the Magi. And it was on the Feast of the Epiphany that the King would solemnly process to Chapel, attired not in the sacred relic which was the Crown of St Edward, but in the statement of Tudor power—what is now known as the Imperial State Crown.[8] (Empire, as I am sure you will be aware, in this context refers less to having colonies than the status of the King as an equal of the Holy Roman Emperor.) A glorious motet would be sung as the King, accompanied by the grandest people in the kingdom, entered the Chapel to present the royal gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh at the altar. Here, even before

7 British Library Royal MS 2 A XVI.

8 A facsimile of this State Crown was commissioned in 2011 by Historic Royal Palaces from images of the original (chiefly depicted in a 1631 painting by Daniel Mytens) from the then Crown Jeweller Harry Collins, in silver gilt and semi-precious stones. It is displayed in the Chapel at Hampton Court.

the break with Rome, the King was the centre of attention. The ritual, rich and colourful, was just as much about reminding people of who God's anointed was, as the infant God incarnate.

Whilst that might sound a bit harsh, we must remember that in the sixteenth century, secular and sacred were inextricably intertwined. People behaved as they did just because this was a matter of serving God, or so they thought. The state of the Prince, as the Reformation emphasised, was equally if not more important than that of the Church, since it was only by godly order from the former that the latter could thrive. We can see this running through the Book of Common Prayer to the extent that, for the secularised twenty-first-century reader, it all looks rather sycophantic! But that was neither the point of Cranmer (who, admittedly, as with other courtiers constantly had to remember upon which side his bread was buttered), nor indeed of his royal masters. All glory was to be to God, who had chosen the King in the first place, which is perhaps why those sacred rites even survived the iconoclastic tendencies of the young Edward VI, and to a certain extent have survived to this day.

As such, whilst Epiphany was, like the State Opening of Parliament, an occasion of royal pomp, it also clearly brought the monarch out of the relative isolation of the privy chamber to the view of the people—or some of them at least. Therefore, the extra Prayer Book ritual that occurs at the Chapel Royal, St James's Palace (and which we repeat the Sunday afterward here at Hampton Court) is open to all who wish to attend. Whilst the Queen is now represented by someone else, the rationale is entirely the same: offering of gifts, and through that the royal self, in the sight of the people to God, for the sake of that people. It is, in fact, like so many royal rituals, deeply sacramental.

Even more so is, arguably, the ceremony of the Maundy. The practice was not restricted to monarchs—many people of status would engage in it. Nor was it always kept on Maundy Thursday. But the identification of the monarch with the King of kings was one that would not have been lost, even before any notion of royal supremacy. Again, it was and is manifested on a number of levels: incarnation, service, sacrifice, communion (in the loosest sense of the word), thanksgiving. Indeed, it is actually Eucharistic without being a Eucharist. But that is hardly a surprise given the day upon which it is celebrated. And even though the foot-washing part has fallen into abeyance, the symbolism is just as

important. Once again, it humbles the great, who kneels (metaphorically) as a servant, and who is no more worthy of their great calling than the communicant who is to come unto the Lord's table to receive the Body and Blood of Christ. It is intensely human, once again showing that monarchy is not simply about splendour, power, popularity, or brand, but rather the sacrifice of the human family. Love and service are key—for a monarch, like a parent, loves and serves their people.

This was also very poignantly celebrated in a third royal ritual, which can in fact be found in some older Books of Common Prayer, especially those printed during the reign of Queen Anne; that is the rite for *The Touching for the King's Evil*.[9] Of all the, what might be classed as, extra Prayer Book liturgies, this is perhaps both the most peculiar and moving. The rationale behind it might strike us as superstitious, if not faintly ridiculous. That is certainly what William III thought, abandoning the practice, only for it to be revived in a shorter version by Queen Anne, and then promptly dropped again by George I. But there is something also rather lovely about the notion that a monarch not only engaged with the sick but physically touched them. Once again, it is very Christ-like, who, as we recall, told the woman with the haemorrhage that her faith had healed her. Here we encounter two themes—faith and incarnation. The faith was manifested by those who made their way to be touched, and also by the monarch, who would spend a great deal of time in prayerful preparation for this act, as they were reminded of their anointed state. The incarnation is recalled through the very physical action of the monarch touching the person. This, in short, dismisses a view of monarchy whereby the king or queen is necessarily required to be remote. Indeed, and as with the other two rituals, quite the opposite is true, to such an extent that the performance of it would not have been at all pleasant. We are told that the first Elizabeth would press her fingers quite firmly into the sores of the scrofulous patient—she literally *pressed the flesh*. It must have been quite intense, if not a little painful, for the latter. She would then sign the cross over the person, recalling that action at their baptism and indeed her own coronation, although that was subsequently dropped by her successor.[10]

We could, of course, simply write this off as a bit of harmless but silly antiquarianism, but the fact it survived the Reformation and was

9 For a detailed historical discussion on the Liturgy of the Touching, see Brogan, Stephen: *The Royal Touch in Early Modern England*, Royal Historical Society, 2015.

10 L'Estrange, *The Alliance of Divine Offices of the Church of England*, London, 1659, p. 250.

subsequently included in some of our Prayer Books (I have a Georgian Latin translation of it)[11] epitomises the royal foundations of Common Prayer. We pray continuously for the monarch, not only because it is a good thing to do, but because the monarch prays for us. In that way the monarch is, if you like, the honorary parent of the nation to whom we owe thanks and loyalty. Some may or may not agree with the notion of monarchy in the twenty-first century, but it strikes me that this more often than not depends on whether one understands a national community (which the state is) to be purely functionary, or familial. Both views are valid of course, but the danger of the first is that, if unchecked, it risks leading, amongst other things, to a rather bleak and perfunctory interpretation of nationhood, which at its extreme becomes a daily slog for mere physical survival, and in the light of which there is no place for such fripperies as art, music and culture. All must be sacrificed to the far more urgent business of being alive. Of course, in a crisis (and as we have seen), the lives of the children are the first thing any parent would seek to protect, often at their own cost. However, if, like me, you believe that man cannot, as it were, live on bread alone, then all that might in the loosest sense be classed as spiritual—whether religious or indeed cultural—is equally important to survival, since it is that which brings people together as society and indeed family.

For those composing the Book of Common Prayer that first appeared in 1549, the monarch very much fulfilled that spiritual, paternal role, not as mere innovation of the Reformation Prince, but in fact continuation of a tradition that even then stretched back to time immemorial, when kings were saints, scholars and legends. The Sarum, York, and Hereford *Missals* all contained prayers for the King, notably at the most sacred moment in the canon of the Mass—this was not just a Henrician innovation—and the Tridentine *Missals* continued to do so until the end of the eighteenth century. Court chapels throughout Europe grounded their royal masters in the teaching of Christ and reminded them of their being bound to His example. They still do.

Thus, the Prayer Book, with all its royal associations, does exactly what it should do. It brings the divine into the experience of the mundane, and in urging our prayer for the monarch seeks God's blessing on her living out her vocation to do the same. Whilst she might not now literally press the flesh like her Tudor namesake, Her Majesty's people have met and

11 *Liturgia, seu Liber Precum Publicarum*, London, 1733.

continue to meet her at garden parties, walkabouts, cake-cuttings and all manner of interactions far too numerous to count. As such, the Prayer Book, however one might use it, is not an elitist liturgy in a strange language and of a time far removed from our own, but expresses the hopes and fears that are universal to time and place. How many have, over the weeks leading up to and after the Jubilee, experienced the prescience of the responses such as *Give peace in our time O Lord*, and *O Lord save the Queen?* Faith transcends difference, since it calls not for uniformity of opinion or indeed practice, but love. Over the last seventy years, Her Majesty has not only spoken of the sacrifice of that greater love, but epitomised it.

So what, then, of that *English Missal?* Fr Firminger (like his current successor) evidently took great care when using liturgical books. Its condition is such that, were it to appear on the market (which it won't, of course), it would attract considerable attention. Nevertheless, used it evidently was, and in the most telling places too. Just like so many other clergy at the time, whose churchmanship was, perhaps, just a little bit more advanced than the parishes in which they served, much of what was uttered at the altar would have been done under the guise of music or at moments of silent reflection. It still is. And here, at least, we see the continuation of a tradition going back to Dean Andrewes (if not further) who, we are told, not only added offertory prayers from the Roman Rite[12] as he prepared the gifts but repositioned the Prayer of Oblation so as to follow immediately that of Consecration. In so doing, he harkened back to an earlier liturgical practice, and one that Charles I and his Scottish bishops unsuccessfully attempted to restore in their Prayer Book of 1637. Andrewes was by no means alone in this practice, either at the time or since.[13] I, at least, suspect interpretation of the Prayer Book depended on what the interpreter thought they were doing with it. Such is to be expected. But that was what characterised the richness of Anglicanism, and indeed is still evident in the Chapel Royal, where those who love Matins can quite happily coexist with those who might prefer something a little more spicy! In that sense, it is truly inclusive, as it indeed ought to be. And that is in no small way due, quite literally, to its *most peculiar liturgy*.

There is, then, something comforting about using the ancient to express the contemporary. The words are timeless, but they're there for

12 Described by Nicholls in his monumental work, *A Commentary on The Book of Common Prayer* (second edition) London, 1712.

13 Most famously also practised by Bishop Overall.

our good. Here at Hampton Court, you will recognise them, even if, perhaps, the manner in which they are set to music and choreography might be a little different from that to which you are used. But that, too, speaks to our very humanity, for it is in our diversity that we reflect the diversity of the Trinity, who is, nevertheless, indivisible and in whose image we are. To that Trinity, then, be all honour and glory, now and forever.

Cheerful Obedience: The Accession Day Liturgy and the Vocation of Christian Monarchy

PAUL THOMAS

Beloved friends, what a privilege it is to be invited to give the Prayer Book Society's Accession Day lecture, in celebration of the accession of Her Majesty the Queen to the throne of this, and all her other realms and territories, seventy years ago this day. On this day, almighty God, by His grace and divine providence, did set her over us to reign. Long has been her reign, and glorious. God save Queen Elizabeth!

I am aware that this is in fact a year of double jubilee; and though it may not merit a nationwide celebration (with bank holidays, commemorative stamps and so forth), nevertheless the founding of the Prayer Book Society fifty years ago is worthy of celebration too. Established at a time of acute ecological crisis in the Church of England, when rapid climate change threatened the extinction of a native species, the Society was established for the Prayer Book's protection and conservation. Very great achievements have accompanied those fifty years, and I pay tribute in the year of its Golden Jubilee to the founders of the Prayer Book Society, and to all those who have led and served the PBS with such distinction and fidelity these last five decades. Your efforts have ensured that a species once endangered is now thriving in its natural habitat.

This lecture falls naturally into two parts: the first looks historically at the origins and development of what we might short-handedly call 'the Accession Service';[1] and the second seeks to draw some theological themes from that liturgical rite, which shine a light on the character and vocation of Christian monarchy as we understand it, and as we see it so powerfully exemplified in Her Majesty the Queen's life and reign.

1 This lecture was originally given to the Prayer Book Society gathering to mark Accession Day at All Saints', Northampton, on 6th February 2022 and a slightly amended version was delivered as a Lenten lecture on 14th March 2022.

Historical origins and development

The Accession Service is more properly called *Forms of Prayer with Thanksgiving to Almighty God for use in all Churches and Chapels within this Realm, every Year, upon the Anniversary of the day of the Accession of the Reigning Sovereign, or upon such other day as shall be appointed by Authority*, and it appears within the covers of the Book of Common Prayer immediately following the ordinal. This, I suggest, is not in itself an insignificant fact, as—like holy order itself (the diaconate, priesthood and episcopate)—Christian monarchy is both vocational and sacramental in character: *vocational* in that it is not a role undertaken or function performed but a calling responded to in obedience; and *sacramental* in that it incarnates and instantiates what it is in the person who exercises it. Monarchy is neither an idea nor an abstraction as if it were a theoretical principle, but is concretely embodied in a person, manifest in a life, a reign.

Though it is our second Gloriana, the seventieth anniversary of whose accession we celebrate this year, it was in the reign of the first Elizabeth that the first *Form of Prayer and Thanksgiving to Almighty God* for the accession was composed and widely used in England. It may come as a surprise to you to know just how great, in fact, was the profusion of special and occasional *Forms of Prayer* in the reign of the Virgin Queen. In his fascinating and authoritative work, *Liturgies and Occasional Forms of Prayer set forth in the Reign of Queen Elizabeth*, the Revd William Keatinge Clay (sometime curate of Paddington) reveals the extent to which the Queen's person and majesty was the subject of multiple special *Forms of Public Prayer* during her reign. In fact, records reveal that at least ten *Forms of Prayer*, liturgical rites of thanksgiving and intercession are extant from the period.

It was in 1576 that the forbear of the Accession Service was first published. Called *A Form of Prayer with Thanksgiving, to be used every year, the seventeenth of November, being the day of the Queen's Majesty's entry to her reign*, it was written, scholarship tells us, by the Revd Edmund Bunny, a priest and itinerant evangelist of decidedly Calvinistic inclinations, who travelled widely preaching the gospel, ably assisted by two mounted servants. It was for the eighteenth anniversary of Elizabeth I's accession that Bunny composed a *Form of Prayer* intended to be used at Matins. It took the shape of an office, naturally, and consisted of proper Psalms, exceedingly long lessons taken out of the historical books of the Old Testament, in which we are instructed about virtuous and truly biblical kingship; a set of Suffrages; a composite Canticle made up of various verses from the Psalms, concluding with the *Glory be…*; a specially composed

Collect for the Accession; and concluded with further Psalms, and the recommendation for a sermon. This is the Accession Day Collect that Bunny composed:

> O Lord God, most merciful Father, who as upon this day, placing thy servant our Sovereign and gracious Queen Elizabeth in the kingdom, didst deliver thy people of England from danger of war and oppression, both of bodies of tyranny, and of conscience by superstition, restoring peace and true religion, with liberty both of bodies and minds, and hast continued the same thy blessings, without all desert on our part now by the space of these eighteen years: we who are in memory of these thy great benefits assembled here together, most humbly beseech thy fatherly goodness to grant us grace, that we may in word, deed, and heart, shew ourselves thankful and obedient unto thee for the same; and that our Queen through thy grace may in all honour, goodness, and godliness, long and many years reign over us, and we obey and enjoy her, with the continuance of thy great blessings, which thou hast by her thy minister poured upon us: this we beseech thee to grant unto us, for thy dear Son Jesus Christ's sake, our Lord and Saviour. Amen.

We can see in this the early beginnings of the accession prayers we use now. I especially like the phrase 'and we obey and enjoy her'. Yes, it is long, but nowhere near as expansive as other royal Collects of the period. For example, the Collect for Elizabeth I's birthday popularly used during her reign reaches the veritable heights of ecstasy in honouring:

> 'that jewel of inestimable price, to wit, the blessed spirit and being of thine humble servant, whose sacred person according to thy word we do reverently repute and call the breath of our nostrils, the Anointed of the Lord, by whose breath we live, by whose life we breathe…'

It is a magnificent work of liturgical hyperbole.

Two years later, in 1578, further liturgical texts were published to accompany the increasingly popular accession celebrations. In addition to a metrical psalm (LXXXI), 'an anthem or prayer for the preservation of the Church, the Queen's Majesty, and the Realm' was provided, with each verse concluding with the worthy and right-minded refrain: 'Save, Lord, and bless with good increase, Thy Church, our Queen and Realm

in peace!' A further 'Song of rejoicing for the prosperous reign of our most gracious Sovereign Lady Queen Elizabeth' also appeared in the same year. The poetry may be lacking, but the sentiment is true:

Give laud unto the Lord,
And praise his holy name:
O let us all with one accord
Now magnify the same.
Due thanks unto him yield,
Who evermore hath been
So strong defence, buckler and shield,
To our most Royal Queen.

These Accession Day ceremonies and celebrations continued throughout Elizabeth's reign and grew in fervour and scale year after year. Indeed, the 17th November continued to be kept by many as 'Queene's Day', long after Gloriana's death, as it had by then taken on associations of a patriotic and decidedly Protestant feeling against foreign powers and enemies of England. Accession Day had entered deeply into the imagination of English national Protestantism.

On the accession of King James I in 1603, a *Form of Prayer and Thanksgiving* was issued for use in all churches 'upon his entry to this kingdom'. In 1625, when the royal martyr acceded to the throne, a new service was issued, which was later sanctioned by convocation in the canons of 1640, but then set aside by Parliament at the Restoration, when certain parts of it were included in the special service for 29th May. When King James II acceded to the throne in 1685, following the death of his brother Charles II, he ordered a revision of the accession liturgy, which first introduced the words 'the day on which His Majesty began his happy reign'. These words were to be included in the official title of the accession liturgy until the early twentieth century. The *Form of Prayer* fell out of use after the so-called 'Glorious Revolution', to be restored to use again during the reign of Queen Anne, and all successors to the English throne thereafter.

It is helpful at this point to recall that the Accession Service was in fact once one of a quartet of special and occasional services for use on what were commonly called 'State Holy-Days'. Previously, liturgical provision for the observance of three other Royal Days in addition to the Accession of the Reigning Monarch had been made (5th November remembered the Gunpowder Treason; 30th January, the Royal Martyr; 29th May, the

birthday of Charles II and the date of the Restoration of the Monarchy). These three *Forms of Prayer* were once authorised by an Act of Parliament, but when convocation had finished the work of revising the Book of Common Prayer in 1661, these *Forms of Prayer* (which had also undergone significant revision and amendment) were sanctioned by convocation and by the Crown, but were not sent to Parliament. Therefore, they did not have the force of law. Hence, these *Forms of Prayer* were 'annexed to' the *Book of Common Prayer* and so could be amended and revoked at the exercise of the royal authority.

Of these *Occasional Services*, only the Accession Service survived the great liturgical cull of 1859, when Queen Victoria commanded that the other *Forms of Prayer* be removed from the Prayer Book, and convocation be asked to revise the service for Accession Day. Convocation obediently went about its work, but this quickly raised a number of questions amongst the liturgical scholars to whom responsibility for revision had been given. These men argued that revising the existing *Form of Prayer* for Accession Day was near impossible—the liturgy had undergone multiple amendments and adaptations through each successive reign. It was proposed that a wholly new *Form of Prayer with Thanksgiving* for the accession be composed. In fact, it was proposed that three *Forms of Prayer* were necessary. This was eventually agreed upon, and this is what is annexed to the Book of Common Prayer today.

The first *Form* provided a new set of proper Psalms, lessons, Suffrages and prayers for use at Matins and Evensong; the second *Form* provided a proper Collect, Epistle and Gospel for the celebration of the Holy Eucharist; and the third *Form* was intended as a standalone service, not for use in Matins or Evensong, but independently, beginning with the *Te Deum Laudamus,* with Suffrages and Collects, and concluding with the blessing. It wasn't until 9th November 1901 that these three new *Forms of Prayer with Thanksgiving to Almighty God* were finally authorised in the reign of Edward VII and, save for the usual changes to the members of the royal family prayed for by name, we have used the same ever since in our annual thanksgiving to almighty God for the coming to her throne of our most gracious Sovereign Lady Queen Elizabeth II.

Character of Christian monarchy

What, then, do the prayers of the Accession Service themselves teach us about the character and vocation of Christian monarchy? What does the liturgy have to say about kingship? Let me propose four theological and spiritual themes for you to consider.

Sovereignty of God

Note just how the Collects for the accession begin: 'O God, who providest for thy people by thy power, and rulest over them in love,' says the first; 'O Lord our God, who upholdest and governest all things by the word of thy power,' says the second; 'Almighty God, who rulest over all the kingdoms of the world, and dost order them according to thy good pleasure,' begins the third. The accession prayers set forth a deeply biblical view of kingship as an institution *subordinated* to the divine sovereignty of God. God is the one who rules and reigns; He is the one who orders and upholds all things; He is the King universal, eternal, transcendent, mysterious. This same theological idea appears consistently through all the royal-related prayers found in the Prayer Book (and there are quite a number). In fact, we can say that a liturgical book such as the Book of Common Prayer, which has such a developed doctrine of monarchy, is also, at the same time, a book that marks out the boundary of monarchical power and prerogative so clearly by continually placing it under and in relation to the divine power. Take for example, the prayer for the monarch at the Holy Eucharist: 'Almighty God whose kingdom is everlasting and power infinite… so rule the heart of thy chosen servant Elizabeth our Queen'. In the state prayer at Matins and Evensong, the same theme is reinforced; there God is addressed as 'high and mighty, King of kings and Lord of lords, the only Ruler of princes…' What all these prayers are doing is establishing the biblical belief that no thing has supremacy but God, and no thing is to be taken to be God which is not God, and that the Prince is upheld in his royal dignity in the measure that he is obedient to God. The Old Testament repeatedly insists on this, describing God as reigning eternally, alone in possessing an everlasting kingdom, uniquely having dominion over all things and all peoples. He is a living and personal King; a holy and righteous King.

Servanthood

Having established this theme of the sovereignty of God in and over all things, we can then begin—as the Prayer Book liturgy does—to understand monarchy aright, in relation to the One who is its source and legitimacy. What at once flows from that principle is that all things are set in service of the divine kingship of God, none more so than the monarch. Monarchy is God's instrument, the person of the monarch God's servant—and this is the second theme. Directly related to the sovereignty of God is the theme of the essential servanthood of the

monarch. Listen again to what the Accession Service says: 'We yield thee unfeigned thanks for that thou wast pleased, as on this day, to set thy Servant our Sovereign Lady, Queen Elizabeth, upon the Throne of this Realm.' Only a Christian liturgy could understand and express *sovereignty* in terms of *servanthood*, because the King of kings and Lord of lords came in His holy incarnation 'not to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many'. At the very heart of our faith is the servanthood of the divine King; monarchy is a kind of sacrament of His servanthood. God's downward trajectory in the incarnation, ever downward into ever greater self-emptying—this, for us, is the very pattern and model of Christian kingship. Christ is its exemplar.

Now, 'sovereignty' and 'servanthood' are contrary states of being from a secular perspective. Secularity demands we see sovereignty and servanthood as being in hostile and antagonistic conflict with one another: any notion of 'master' and 'slave' must be smashed. But in the light of the incarnation, these states have become inseparable. For the Christian Church, sovereignty and servanthood are now united and perfected cruciformly, brought together and consummated upon the cross on which the God-Man reigns in suffering, the fulfilment of His divine servanthood. It is in the scandal and paradox of the cross—the cross that surmounts the royal crown—that the kingdom of God is fully revealed. Therefore, for our Queen to profess the crucified one as King, and for her to be anointed with sacred chrism at her coronation, is for her to be granted a share in both Christ's kingship and His lowly, burden-bearing servanthood.

Ordering the kingdom

In God's covenant with the Jews at Sinai, God's kingship is revealed to be personal and moral. God gives Moses and the people of Israel a body of law, a covenant, so that their common life may be ordered morally as God wishes it to be ordered, and through their liturgical life (which is also carefully set out according to divine precept), they are to orient themselves toward their Creator in praise, obedience, adoration and love. Later in the Old Testament, we see under the prophet Samuel how a settled people ask for a king to rule over them. They are given a king but only so that he might serve God's purpose in ordering His people rightly, justly, obediently, morally. Kings who do this are honoured in the Bible; kings who do not are condemned. Kingship in Israel, therefore, has a unique role in ordering Hebrew society towards God: the king is to so arrange the affairs of the kingdom that they conform ever

more closely and faithfully to the covenant with God and God's purposes for them.

This, then, is our third theme: ordering the kingdom towards God. The prayers of the Accession Service understand monarchy to have this moral, ordering purpose: 'Let thy wisdom be her guide, and let thine arm strengthen her; let truth and justice, holiness and righteousness, peace and charity, abound in her days…' The Christian monarch, like the kings of Israel, is to do no less than to use the royal power to order the affairs of the realm toward the kingdom of God; to labour in service in order that the temporal affairs accord with God's wishes for human society and its flourishing; that there is a kind of budding forth now of the kingdom that is to come. When any society abounds with *truth and justice*, *holiness and righteousness*, *peace and charity*, then it is a society ordered towards God, who is the *Summum Bonum*—the Highest Good from whom all good things do come and towards whom they are rightly aligned.

Life of the world to come

And this leads me to the final theme; an eschatological theme that finds its fulfilment beyond death, in the kingdom that is coming. The Book of Common Prayer is very coy when it comes to praying for those who have departed this life in God's faith and fear. However, when it comes to the monarch and the royal family, the Prayer Book is positively enthusiastic in praying for their eternal souls before they die: the accession rite is no exception. The first Collect asks that, having persevered 'in good works unto the end [she] may by thy guidance, come to thine everlasting kingdom'; the second Collect prays that 'after death [she] may attain everlasting life and glory…'; and the third Collect asks God to 'crown her with everlasting life'. But perhaps these petitions ought not to be overlooked; perhaps they illuminate a hidden and mystical dimension of monarchy. Of the proper lessons given in the accession liturgy, a passage from the Revelation to St John (chapter 21) is provided, in which the kings of the earth enjoy an almost priestly role in the New Jerusalem:

> And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb. By its light will the nations walk, and the kings of the earth shall bring their glory into it, and its gates will never be shut by day—and there will be no night there. They will bring into it the glory and honour of the nations.

It is the earthly kings who, in the New Jerusalem, 'bring' into the city the glory and honour of the nations. The word St John uses here can also mean 'offer'. The kings of the earth make an offering of the nations. Now redeemed, now glorified, now brought fully into the reign of God, human states and societies are made new and seen for what they truly are: an oblation, an offering made in worship to the Lamb who was slain to redeem them. Therefore, praying that the sovereign may come into God's everlasting kingdom is to affirm our belief in the eschatalogical end of things, in the fulfilling purposes of God; that He will bring in the kingdom that is coming; and that in His kingdom the monarch continues her sacred vocation, first exercised in this life but pointing ever towards the next, to order the realm and to offer it up unto God in obedience, faithfulness, virtue, and praise, world without end.

Something Old and Something New: The Lost Services of the Book of Common Prayer

PHILIP CORBETT

VICTORIA R.

OUR Will and Pleasure is, That so much of Our said Royal Warrant of the Twenty-first Day of June, One thousand eight hundred and thirty-seven, in the First Year of Our Reign, as is hereinbefore recited, be revoked, and that the Use of the said Forms of Prayer and Service made for the Fifth of November, the Thirtieth of January, the Twenty-ninth of May be henceforth discontinued in all Cathedral and Collegiate Churches and Chapels; in all Chapels of Colleges and Halls within Our Universities of Oxford, Cambridge, and Dublin, and of Our Colleges of Eton and Winchester, and in all Parish Churches and Chapels within those parts of Our United Kingdom called England and Ireland, and that the said Forms of Prayer and Service be not henceforth printed and published with or annexed to the Book of Common Prayer and Liturgy of the United Church of England and Ireland.

Given at Our Court at Saint James's, the Seventeenth Day of January, 1859, in the Twenty-second Year of Our Reign

And so, with one fell swoop, Queen Victoria removes from the Book of Common Prayer the three sets of prayers that are the topic of this article. That is the 'something old' part: the services for 5th November (the Gunpowder Treason), 30th January (the Martyrdom of King Charles I), and 29th May (the Restoration of the Monarchy). The three of them were approved on 2nd May 1662.

The observance of 5th November had been instituted by an Act of Parliament soon after the event, and a special form of service was drawn up and received royal approval in 1606. (There was another commemoration on 5th August for the Gowrie conspiracy, when John

and Alexander Gowrie attempted to kidnap King James I. But the Gowrie Conspiracy commemoration was not kept in the 1662 Prayer Book.) The Gunpowder Service was revised by Bishop Cosin in April 1662. It was later altered in 1690 to add the landing of the Prince of Orange.

The 30th January service was largely written as early as 1660 by Bishop Brian Duppa and was issued in 1661. It was revised into the version we have in 1662 and we will consider those revisions later in this article.

The form for 29th May was also composed around 1662, with need for an Act of Parliament to issue it. At the death of Charles II, some alterations were made and it was reissued by James II. The services as we have them in older versions of the Book of Common Prayer lasted from 1662 until 1859, when they were removed by an Act of Queen Victoria (you have to have a Book of Common Prayer from before 1859 in order to find them). However, recently, the Folio Society issued a Book of Common Prayer from 1853. The Foreword to that version is given by our President, Lord Cormack.

These three services were not without controversy and, in the 1820s and 1830s, there was constant debate amongst Church officials about what it might mean to continue having them included in the liturgy. They are services very much focused on the state. Writers took to the pages of newspapers to put forward their point of view. Here, writing to *The Times*, a correspondent defends the service for the Martyrdom of Charles I:

> Here we recognize a grievous blot in our National History, we desire to efface it—here is a grievous National Sin, it is a burden upon the national conscience. Revelation teaches us that the sins of the Fathers, by an Almighty Edict, shall descend on the children in their consequences; proclaim a fast, call a solemn assembly, that the nation may annually humble itself, and efface its crime by that penitence which through the merits and atonement of the eternal Mediator washeth away national not less than individual sins—here is a point in our national history where we committed a great and grievous error, we call upon you still as its anniversary returns, to proclaim the warning it conveys.

This reminds us that if we forget our history, we are doomed to repeat it. The correspondent goes on to defend the keeping of 29th May, Restoration Day: 'Here at this epoch, we recognize the restoration of civil

order, and social rights, and true religion; we desire solemnly to record our gratitude for it.' And then for 5th November, the Gunpowder Plot and the arrival of King William III: 'Here again the nation had a most merciful deliverance from most utter ruin, we would praise the God who preserved us, we would never forget his benefits.' The services in that light might be seen very simply. They were times for the nation to gather together to give thanks to God for the restoration of civil order and society, the Restoration of the Monarchy and deliverance from the Gunpowder Plot. The 30th January celebration might be said to be a day of fasting and repentance, as we as a nation needed to atone for what had been done to an anointed monarch. And these are all good Christian virtues and actions, giving thanks to God as well as asking for His forgiveness.

The services as we find them in the Book of Common Prayer are set out in very similar ways. First, the Gunpowder Treason: on this day, we have a setting for Morning Prayer, a setting for Holy Communion and a setting for Evening Prayer. The prayers are placed into our hand by an Act of Parliament. The preamble reads:

> The Minister of every Parish shall give warning to his Parishioners publickly in the Church at Morning Prayer, the Sunday before, for the due observation of the said Day. And after Morning Prayer, or Preaching, upon the said Fifth Day of November, shall read publickly, distinctly, and plainly, the Act of Parliament, made in the third Year of King James the First, for the Observation of it.

Now the preamble to the Act and the Act itself contain some things we might find difficult. The preamble to the Act sets out the political background, noting that:

> many malignant and devilish Papists, Jesuits, and Seminary Priests, much envying and fearing, conspired most horribly, when the King's most excellent Majesty, the Queen, the Prince, and the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, should have been assembled in the Upper House of Parliament upon the Fifth Day of November in the Year of our Lord One thousand six hundred and five, suddenly to have blown up the said whole House with Gunpowder: An Invention so inhuman, barbarous and cruel, as the like was never before heard of.

It further stated that, as some of the principal conspirators had confessed, the conspiracy was purposely devised to be done in the House:

> where sundry necessary and religious Laws for Preservation of the Church and State were made, which they falsely and slanderously term Cruel Laws, enacted against them and their Religion, both Places and Persons should all be destroyed and blown up at once; which would have turned to the utter Ruin of this whole Kingdom, had it not pleased Almighty God, by inspiring the King's most excellent Majesty with a Divine Spirit, to interpret some dark Phrases of a Letter showed to his Majesty, above and beyond ordinary Construction, thereby miraculously discovering this hidden Treason not many Hours before the appointed Time for the Execution thereof.

The preamble concluded by setting out the purpose of the Act:

> And to the End this unfeigned Thankfulness may never be forgotten, but be had in a perpetual Remembrance, that all Ages to come may yield Praises to his Divine Majesty for the same, and have in Memory this joyful Day of Deliverance.

So, we are to see the 5th November as a day of deliverance; a day of setting aside to give thanks to God for the preservation of the monarchy.

And the service is set out to encourage us to do this. At Morning Prayer, in place of the *Venite*, there are separate sets of sentences. These include such lines as, 'The Lord setteth up the meek and bringeth the ungodly down to the ground' and, 'Let their hands be upon the man of thy right hand and upon the son of man whom thou madest so strong for thine ownself'. These clearly set out that the Church is gathered to give thanks for deliverance from an act that is viewed as being ungodly. And indeed in the Suffrages that follow:

> O Lord save the Queen; who putteth her trust in thee.
>
> Send her help from thy holy place. And evermore mightily defend her.
>
> Let her enemies have no advantage against her. Let not the wicked approach to hurt her.

The prayers are obviously about the protection of the monarchy and of religious freedom. Collects follow for the Litany, then there are set Collects and readings for Holy Communion. At Evening Prayer, the same would be repeated.

In 1858, the Earl of Stanhope made a motion that the government should ask the Queen to abolish the liturgy, because it was politically obsolete and unfair to Catholics. The main cause for this action was a growing violent tendency for street celebrations. The Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of London, along with other peers, supported the Earl. The Duke of Marlborough, a Tory, suggested that the liturgy be rewritten. This idea did not receive support, and so it was removed in 1859.

There are clear issues in this liturgy, as we saw in the preamble to the Act. It is a liturgy that contains much anti-Catholic sentiment. In recent times, people have wondered whether parts of the service might be used following terrorist attacks, possibly being rewritten and adapted.

Here is the Collect from the service:

> O Lord, who didst this day discover the snares of death that were laid for us, and didst wonderfully deliver us from the same; Be thou still our mighty Protector, and scatter our enemies that delight in blood. Infatuate and defeat their counsels, abate their pride, assuage their malice, and confound their devices. Strengthen the hands of our gracious King Charles, and all that are put in authority under him, with Judgment and justice, to cut off all such workers of iniquity, as turn religion into rebellion, and faith into faction; that they may never prevail against us, or triumph in the ruine of thy Church among us: But that our gracious Sovereign and his Realms, being preserved in thy true Religion, and by thy merciful goodness protected in the same, we may all duly serve thee, and give thee thanks in thy holy congregation, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

And also the Collect for the 'happy Arrival of His Majesty King *William* on this Day, for the Deliverance of our Church and Nation':

> Accept also, most gracious God, of our unfeigned thanks, for filling our hearts again with joy and gladness, after the time that thou hast afflicted us, and putting a new song into our mouths, by bringing His Majesty King William upon this day, for the Deliverance of our Church and Nation from Popish Tyranny and arbitrary Power. We adore the wisdom and justice of thy Providence, which so timely interposed in our extreme danger, and disappointed all the designs of our enemies. We beseech thee, give us such a lively and lasting sense of what thou didst then, and hast since that time done for

> us, that we may not grow secure and careless in our obedience, by presuming upon thy great and undeserved goodness; but that it may lead us to repentance, and move us to be the more diligent and zealous in all the duties of our Religion, which thou hast in a marvellous manner preserved to us. Let truth and justice, brotherly kindness and charity, devotion and piety, concord and unity, with all other virtues, so flourish among us, that they may be the stability of our times, and make this Church a praise in the earth. All which we humbly beg for the sake of our blessed Lord and Saviour. Amen.

These prayers could be adapted for use today as we seek the preservation of our own monarch and an end to tyranny around the world.

Moving on then to the service for 30th January, for the Martyrdom of Charles I. It is described as being a day on which we implore the mercy of God 'that neither the Guilt of that sacred and innocent Blood, nor those other sins… may at any time hereafter be visited upon us or on our posterity'. These services, then, are to make an atonement for the sins of the past in killing the King. However, one of the objections people had to the services was that they suggested a deep belief in the divine right of kings.

So again, we can run through the way the service is set out. In the order for Morning Prayer, there are set introductory sentences, which speak about the rebellion of the people against God in killing the King. This day is about penance and repentance. Then, just as with the other services, a set of psalm verses replace the *Venite*. Many of the verses used do link in one's mind the death of Charles I with the death of Jesus Christ. They are verses often used in relation to the crucifixion. This calls to mind the idea that the death of Charles I was something for which England should be punished, because he was there as God's anointed: 'Righteous art thou, O Lord, and just are thy judgements'. The service goes on with proper Psalms, lessons and Collects.

The Collects are interesting as they are a revised version of what was there before. The original Collects were slightly more powerful in what they suggested. Here is the Collect from 1661 before the final version was brought together:

> But here, O Lord, we offer unto Thee all possible praise and thanks for all the glory of Thy grace that shined forth in Thine anointed, our late Sovereign, and that Thou wert pleased to own him (this day, especially) in the midst of his enemies and in the hour of his

> death, and to endue him with such eminent meekness, humility, charity, and other Christian virtues, according to the example of his own Son, suffering the fury of his and Thine enemies, for the preservation of Thy Church and people. And we beseech Thee to give us all grace to remember and provide for our latter end, by a careful, studious imitation of this Thy blessed Saint and Martyr, and all Thy other Saints and Martyrs that have gone before us, that we may be made worthy to receive benefit by their prayers, which they in communion with thy Church Catholick offer up to thee for that part of it here militant, and yet in flight with and danger from the flesh: that following the blessed steps of their holy lives and deaths, we may also show forth the light of a good example; for the glory of Thy Name, the conversion of our enemies, and the improvement of those generations we shall shortly leave behind us; and then, all those who have borne the heat and burthen of the day (Thy servant particularly, whose sufferings and labours we this day commemorate), receive the reward of our labours, the harvest of our hopes, even the salvation of our souls: and that for the merits and through the mediation of Thy Son, our Blessed SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST. Amen.

The prayer as it appeared in 1661, then, makes clear reference to Charles as Saint and Martyr—perhaps a little too clear for those who would revise it for the 1662 Prayer Book, which reads thus:

> O Most mighty God, terrible in Thy judgements, and wonderful in Thy doings towards the children of men, Who in Thy heavy displeasure didst suffer the life of our late gracious Sovereign to be this day taken away by wicked hands; We, Thy unworthy servants, humbly confess, that the sins of this Nation have been the cause which hath brought this heavy judgement upon us. But, O gracious God, when Thou makest inquisition for blood, lay not the guilt of this innocent blood (the shedding whereof nothing but the blood of Thy Son can expiate) lay it not to the charge of the people of this Land, nor let it ever be required of us, or our posterity. Be merciful, be merciful unto Thy People whom Thou hast redeemed; and be not angry with us forever; but pardon us for Thy mercies' sake, through the merits of Thy SON our LORD JESUS CHRIST. Amen.

It is still a powerful prayer but less laced with the ideas of sainthood and martyrdom than the original.

Those, then, are some of the Collects. There are propers for Holy Communion and then, at the Prayer for the Church Militant, there are additional prayers. At Evening Prayer, we are asked to repeat the *Venite* setting before the proper Psalms.

All in all, these prayers are set out in much more detail than they are for the other two days, perhaps because the day is supposed to be one of fasting and penance. There is much more to be said and done, and there is a strong sense of God's justice and judgement in the text: that God's judgement has come upon the nation and that, by holding this service of remembrance and following Charles I's command to 'Remember', we can atone in some way for the sins of the past and we will seek not to repeat them.

Turning then to the final of our three services, we consider the liturgy for 29th May, the Restoration of the Monarchy. The preamble for this reads:

> For having put an end to the Great Rebellion by the restitution of the King and Royal Family and the restoration of the Government after many years' interruption; which unspeakable mercies were wonderfully complete on the 29th May in year 1660 and memory thereof every year that day by Act of Parliament be appointed to be kept holy.

And so again, we have this service being brought about by Act of Parliament, with the Act to be read at the service. We don't have many Acts of Parliament read in churches these days! However, for this service, it is enjoined upon us to read out the Act setting out the reason for the celebration. There is also clear guidance about what happens if the service falls on Ascension Day or on Whit Sunday: that is that we should have Collects included at the services. This gives us a sense of the importance of the service in the life of the nation; that it should not in any way be overlooked and there has to be some mention of it.

Looking at the service in detail, there is again a special set of sentences to replace the *Venite*, but this time a much more upbeat set of texts, praising God for His mercy to the nation. There is still a sense that those who were guilty of killing the King and who had ruled during the Commonwealth would get their due punishment from God. However, there is also a real sense of seeing this day as one on which to celebrate a return of all that was right and proper in the nation and in the Church; that the right ruler, government and worship had been restored and given thanks for.

Then, there are proper Psalms, lessons and proper Suffrages, as well as proper prayers. The Collect for the Restoration is a particularly fine one:

> O Lord God of our salvation, who hath been exceedingly gracious unto this land, and by thy miraculous providence hath delivered us out of our late miserable conditions, by restoring to us our dread Sovereign Lord, thy servant, King CHARLES; We are now here before thee with all due thankfulness to acknowledge thine unspeakable goodness this day shewed unto us, and to offer up our sacrifice of praise unto thy glorious Name; humbly beseeching thee to accept this our unfeigned though unworthy oblation of our selves; vowing all holy obedience in thought, word, and work unto thy divine Majesty; and promising in thee and for thee all loyal and dutiful allegiance to thine Anointed servant, and to his heirs after him: whom we beseech thee to bless with all increase of grace, honour, and happiness in this world, and to crown with immortality and glory in the world to come; for Jesus Christ his sake, our only Lord and Saviour. Amen.

This Collect offers us a clear reminder that God has delivered the nation from oppression, and that it is through this deliverance that people will know that He is almighty and all powerful; a sense of linking nation to the Church under the power of God.

The next Collect gives us:

> O God, who by thy divine providence and goodness didst this day first bring forth into this world, and didst this day also bring back and restore unto us, and to his own just and undoubted rights our most gracious Sovereign Lord thy servant King CHARLES; Preserve his life, and establish his throne, we beseech thee. Be unto him a helmet of salvation against the force of his enemies, and a strong tower of defence in the time of trouble. Let his Reign be prosperous and his days many. Let justice, truth, and holiness; let peace, and love, and all Christian virtues flourish in his time. Let his people serve him with honour and obedience; and let him to duly serve thee on earth, that he may hereafter everlastingly reign with thee in heaven, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Again, these prayers set out the importance of the Restoration; the nation did not slip away but was returned by God's providence to the

right path. This is all placed into the hand of God, and offers us a real sense of all things coming from God.

The key message of these three services is just that: that all things are in God's hands and we need to trust Him. No matter what we do, no matter how much we might go against His will, He is with us and will return us to the right path. He restores us to the right place by His providence, which works in our lives and in all lives. God is calling us back constantly to Him in worship and praise.

I called this article, 'Something Old and Something New' and that is for the reason that, whilst these services have been removed from the Prayer Book by the Act of Queen Victoria, there are ways in which they continue to be used. In particular, the Society of King Charles the Martyr and Royal Martyr Church Union use the service for 30th January. They also celebrate the Restoration of the Monarchy in May. The more troubling one is the service for 5th November, with its anti-Catholic rhetoric. All three do need to be carefully thought about before they are used, but they can be used.

It is very clear that young people and those discovering the Prayer Book for the first time are intrigued and interested in these services. If they are understood properly and considered carefully, they do constantly point us to God. They are linked to political events, but the people who compiled these liturgies, whilst thinking about those events, also thought about what they might say about God. They speak of how the life of nation and Church are connected and how central a place faith should have in our national life. They point us constantly to God, and for this we can give thanks.

As theological guides, they might point us to two things we need today: a sense of repentance for what has gone before, and an acknowledgment that the Church and the world can get things wrong. When we have acknowledged this, we can get a sense of moving forward and being thankful to God for His mercy to us.

They that Go Down to the Sea in Ships: The Prayers of 'Her Majesty's Navy'

MICHAEL A. BRYDON

Welcome to the Diocese of Sodor and Man, which covers the Isle of Man. If you don't know where that is, please imagine a map of the British Isles, including Ireland, and stick a pin in the central point. This is roughly where the Isle of Man is to be found in the midst of the Irish Sea. From the grassy height of Snaefell, 2000 feet above sea level, it has been said that you can see seven kingdoms: Man, Scotland, Ireland, Wales, England, Neptune and Heaven. Man was an independent kingdom for quite some time and the title King of Mann survived into the early sixteenth century, when the then holder changed it to Lord of Mann.[1] When you drink the loyal toast on the Isle of Man, it is to 'The Queen, Lord of Mann'.

The Isle of Man is a good place to talk about those 'that go down to the sea in ships', since it is surrounded by the Kingdom of Neptune, the Irish Sea. Man's sea location led to Sir Montagu Butler, a former Lieutenant Governor, describing it as the Malta of the Irish Sea.[2] Malta was a vital British naval base and the Isle of Man has also made a massive contribution to the maritime history of the British Isles. Nelson normally receives the credit for the naval triumph of the Battle of Trafalgar, but if you live on Man, you know that he couldn't have done it without the help of a Manxman called John Quilliam. Lieutenant Quilliam not only kept Nelson calm before the battle by playing cribbage with him but rigged up a new steering mechanism when the French guns shot away the ship's wheel. If Quilliam hadn't managed that, HMS Victory would have been a sitting duck and the battle might have gone the other way. In which case, we could all be speaking French![3]

Our other great claim to maritime fame is that Sir William Hillary, founder of what is known today as the Royal National Lifeboat Institution,

1 Although there is only one 'n' in the normal spelling of Man, there are conventionally two when it relates to the Lord of Mann. Visitors to the Island may also need to know that 'God save the Queen' is known as the Royal Anthem and 'Land of my Birth' is referred to as the National Anthem.

2 M. Fraser, *In Praise of Manxland*, London: Methuen & Co. Ltd, 1935, p. v.

3 A. Bond, F. Cowin and A. Lambert, *Favourite of Fortune: Captain John Quilliam, Trafalgar Hero*, Barnsley: Seaforth Publishing, 2021, pp. 74–85; H. Pearson, 'Lurch, skunk and level-pegging' in *Country Life*, 16th March 2022, (pp. 134–5), p. 135.

began it on this island. The RNLI is a good reminder that the sea can be a challenging place. Not surprisingly, those coping with storms have often turned to prayer. Dr Johnson, the eighteenth-century compiler of the first dictionary, once asked a sailor if he had had a good voyage. The sailor said it had been first rate; in fact, it had been so good that 'we only had to turn to prayer twice and once it was hardly necessary'.[4]

Hopefully that sailor discovered that prayer was a good thing in times of calm too, but I wonder if he was primarily thinking of the need for formal public prayer in response to a crisis. If you were a sailor at the time of Dr Johnson, you would know that the Book of Common Prayer has a section called the *Forms of Prayer to be used at Sea*, which was designed to help with times of challenge. If you have never looked for the sea prayers, the Prayer Book places them just after the Psalms.

We think about the sea prayers this Jubilee year, because they were produced to be used in the recently re-founded Royal Navy of Charles II and are still set to be used in Her Majesty's Navy today. Back in 1952, the publication, *John Bull*, marked the launch of the Queen's reign with a patriotic cover showing an old sailor naming his boat, *Elizabeth II*. It was a good cover since not only does the Queen guide the ship of state and refer to her faith as her anchor, but she and her family continue to have close links to the Royal Navy. The monarchy has long been tied in with the Navy. Alfred the Great has sometimes been given the credit for establishing a royal fleet; if you visit Church House in Westminster, the decorations actually include a great circular lunette showing Alfred in the midst of the ships of his Navy.[5]

Romance apart, the real credit for founding the 'Navy Royal' belongs to the Tudors. Henry VIII laid the foundation, and sea power took off seriously under Elizabeth I; just think of the famous Armada portrait of the Virgin Queen with all those ships in the background. The later Stuart monarchs were very interested in the Royal Navy, and the custom of referring to His/Her Majesty's Ship stems from the reign of Charles II. William IV, from the succeeding Hanoverians, was actually known as the Sailor King on account of his long naval experience. Our present Queen's grandfather, George V, regarded his time in the Royal Navy as a happy period, and her father, George VI, served at the First World War naval battle of Jutland. The late Duke of Edinburgh served in the Royal Navy with distinction and the Queen, of course, was especially fond of the *Royal Yacht Britannia*, which was normally served by its own ship's company of officers and royal yachtsmen.

4 R. Llewelyn, *Why Pray?*, London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 2019, p. 41.

5 H. Baker, *The Church House: Its Art and Symbolism*, London: The Corporation of Church House, 1940, p. 13.

The *Royal Yacht* never had a chaplain, so the duty of taking worship fell to the yacht's captain; normally a rear admiral. On Sundays and major feasts, such as Christmas and Easter, the dining room was cleared and the ship's company was mustered there at eleven o'clock.[6] The senior officers knew their stuff and always adhered to the Prayer Book rubric that the first two sea prayers were always to be used at naval worship. They were certainly used at the decommissioning of the *Royal Yacht* in 1997.

I won't be reading all the sea prayers, but I think we ought to hear the first two, since they are the ones mandated for daily usage:

> O ETERNAL Lord God, who alone spreadest out the heavens, and rulest the raging of the sea; who hast compassed the waters with bounds until day and night come to an end; Be pleased to receive into thy Almighty and most gracious protection the persons of us thy servants, and the Fleet in which we serve. Preserve us from the dangers of the sea, and from the violence of the enemy; that we may be a safeguard unto our most gracious Sovereign Lady, Queen *ELIZABETH*, and her Dominions, and a security for such as pass on the seas upon their lawful occasions; that the inhabitants of our Island may in peace and quietness serve thee our God; and that we may return in safety to enjoy the blessings of the land, with the fruits of our labours, and with a thankful remembrance of thy mercies to praise and glorify thy holy Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Collect

> PREVENT us, O Lord, in all our doings, with thy most gracious favour, and further us with thy continual help; that in all our works begun, continued, and ended in thee, we may glorify thy holy Name, and finally by thy mercy obtain everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Collect, this second prayer, is a fine prayer for any time, and was recently used at the memorial service for the Duke of Edinburgh.[7]

6 From 1964, *Britannia* did have its own Communion Set, presented by the Chamber of Shipping of the United Kingdom. Although designed not to fall over in rough seas, it seems likely that it was only ever used privately when the ship was docked and a chaplain was available. I am grateful to David Baldwin, former Sergeant of HM Chapel Royal, for this information.

7 This Collect also appears as one of the Collects to be said in the Ante-Communion Service, but it is likely the late Duke was made familiar with it during his time in the Royal Navy.

The first one, which is usually simply called the naval prayer, is also a beautiful piece of prose; it combines a confidence in the providence of God with that heartfelt hope that 'the Fleet in which we serve' may be that force for good under Elizabeth II, so that all may be in security 'as pass on the seas upon their lawful occasions'. Neither of those sea prayers or their other companions are to be found in the Prayer Book prior to 1662, although that doesn't mean that prayers weren't being said at sea. The historian, G. M. Trevelyan, in something of a purple passage, described how the Elizabethan Prayer Book was a 'golden mean', 'a chameleon' that could satisfy both Catholics and Protestants 'on board Drake's ships'.[8] Whether this was truly the case is hard to say, but the Privy Council of Elizabeth I was certainly anxious to ensure that God was to be duly honoured, by instructing that Morning and Evening Prayers should be recited, as set out in the Prayer Book.[9]

With so much riding on religious solidarity, in England, with the war against Spain taking place, it is not surprising that the government wanted to be confident that naval services mirrored those back home. 'Certaine Articals Sett Downe by the Captaine and Master Necessarie for Any Shipp' stated that any sailor who slept at the time of divine service, after being 'sufficently caled' was to be punished. Sir Richard Hawkins, on his voyage to the South Sea, noted that anyone caught swearing at Morning or Evening Prayers was to be given three blows by the captain or master.[10] Punishment for unwarranted absence from prayers remained severe into the reign of Charles I. The 1627 Orders of the ship, *Constant Reformation*, specified twenty-four hours in the bilboes, which were the naval equivalent of the stocks.[11]

But if Common Prayer was being used, there was nothing specifically naval in flavour about it and there doesn't seem to have been great pressure to give it a distinctive maritime tone. There was one form of Common Prayer to be used whether you were on land or on sea. Ironically, in a talk which is part of a series of Lenten reflections on the Prayer Book and monarchy, the prompting for the sea prayers for the new Royal Navy of the 1660s undoubtedly owes a lot to the temporary abolition of both monarchy and Prayer Book, during the period of the Commonwealth. When the Long Parliament abolished the Prayer Book,

8 G. M. Trevelyan, *History of England*, 1942, p. 328.

9 G. Taylor, *The Sea Chaplains: A History of the Chaplains of the Royal Navy*, Oxford: The Oxford Illustrated Press, 1978, p. 36.

10 Ibid, p. 158.

11 Ibid, p. 158.

it was met with considerable objection from those at sea.[12] These protests may have been more to do with practicality than theological anxieties, since its replacement, *A Directory for the Public Worship of God throughout the Three Kingdoms*, was merely a general guide to the conduct of worship. This clearly caused a problem for many sea captains, who did not feel equipped to lead worship in the absence of a chaplain. Parliament, in response to this need for practical help, produced *A Supply of Prayer for the Ships of this kingdom that want Ministers to pray with them; agreeable to the Directory established by Parliament*. In the Preface, it is stated:

> Whereas there are thousands of ships belonging to this Kingdom which have not Ministers with them to guide them in Prayer, and therefore either use the old Form of Common Prayer, or no Prayer at all; the former whereof for many weighty reasons hath been abolished, and the latter is likely to make them rather Heathens than Christians (the Lord's day being left without any mark of Piety or Devotion). Therefore, to avoid these Inconveniences, It hath been thought fit to frame some Prayers agreeing with the Directory established by Parliament.

The *Supply of Prayer* was clearly a product of the Long Parliament, with its petition for 'the Solemn League and Covenant'. It certainly wasn't pro-monarchy, since it included the prayer that Charles I, still yet to be beheaded at that point, might be saved from 'evil counsel'. One suspects there must also have been times when it was pastorally useless, such as its deliberate decision, in line with the abolition of the funeral service on land, to make no provision for a rite to be used at sea. On the plus side, however, for the first time some official prayers, intended for regular use by those at sea, had been produced, which did recognize the challenges of maritime travel and the threats from storms.[13]

Under the Commonwealth, seafaring certainly became more dangerous, with numerous battles against the Dutch, but it is impossible to say how widely the *Supply* was used. Samuel Pepys, the great diarist and naval enthusiast, commented after the Restoration that there was no 'form of Public Prayer provided for the Sea, till since the King's return', which may suggest that the *Supply* had received scant use.[14] It might equally, of course, reflect Pepys's disparaging attitude, good royalist that he was, towards anything produced by the Long Parliament.

12 Ibid, pp. 175, 182–83.
13 Ibid, pp. 71–72.
14 J. R. Tanner (ed.), *Samuel Pepys's Naval Minutes*, 1925, N.R.S., Vol LX, p. 76.

On balance, it seems likely that the Parliamentary provision of prayers must at least have offered a precedent for the compilers of the 1662 Prayer Book to find, as its Preface puts it, that it was now 'convenient' to include a section for 'those at Sea'. It seems likely that the daily naval prayer was partly designed to remind all sailors who had served under the Commonwealth that the Royal Navy was now back and their allegiance was once again to the monarch. Robert Sanderson, the Bishop of Lincoln, who wrote the Preface to the Book of Common Prayer,[15] is also considered to be the primary author of the sea prayers. Isaac Walton, his seventeenth-century biographer, described how 'he did also, by desire of the convocation, alter and add to the forms of prayers to be used at sea—now taken into the service-book.'[16]

Percy Dearmer's, *Everyman's History of the Prayer Book* was distinctly sniffy about Sanderson's work when he wrote that these intercessions were 'rather poor additions to the ordinary offices of the Prayer Book'.[17] Samuel Pepys, the leading light of the Naval Office, was also unenthusiastic. Pepys commented that the prayers were clearly produced by land-loving bishops who had never been to sea, since there were no prayers for 'a fair wind or for any wind at all, nor a calm, nor any other of the evils existing at sea'.[18] On Sanderson's behalf, I think both Dearmer and Pepys are unfair. I think Sanderson's prose is pretty good and if he didn't supply a prayer for good weather, that could be because the Prayer Book already had one, based on the memory of Noah's ark, for fair weather. The actual sea prayers also seem to be a pretty comprehensive lot, since they cover most challenges, ranging from storms to enemy action. A ship in the midst of a storm would certainly appreciate a quick end to the distress of 'raging winds and the roaring sea' and, in a world of pirates and hostile foreign navies, a request to the Almighty to 'be a defence unto us against the face of the enemy' would have been heartfelt.

Sanderson showed additional realism in his recognition of the need to provide what he describes as 'Short prayers for single persons that cannot meet to join in Prayer with others, by reason of the Fight, or storm'. This pastoral provision also seems to be marked in the understanding that, in the midst of a frightening storm, there might be a need for everyone to

15 P. M. Criddle, 'Robert Sanderson and the Prayer Book', pp. 46–47, in *Faith & Worship*, Number 72, Easter 2013, p. 46.

16 I. Walton, *The Lives of Doctor John Donne, Sir Henry Wotton, Mr Richard Hooker, Mr George Herbert and Doctor Robert Sanderson*, London: Methuen and Co., 1895, p. 280.

17 P. Dearmer, *Everyman's History of the Prayer Book*, London: A.R. Mowbray & Co Ltd, 1912, p. 238.

18 V. V. Patarino, 'The Religious Shipboard Culture of Sixteenth and Seventeenth-Century English Sailors', pp. 141–192, in C. A. Fury (ed.), *The Social History of English Seamen 1485–1649*, Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2012, p. 183.

examine their conscience, make a collective public confession and feel the relief of a public absolution from the chaplain. Most sailors would be familiar with the idea that Jonah nearly brought disaster upon his ship because he turned away from God, so the opportunity to turn back to Him in a storm must have been welcome.

So, that is a little bit of the content and history behind the sea-going prayers and how they come to be in the Prayer Book of 1662. I love history and that is a good enough reason for me to be sharing it all with you, but there are those who view the weight of history as another limiting factor in being the dynamic Church of England we could be, if we but let go of it. We have certainly had a go at throwing overboard the sea prayers. They didn't make it into the *Alternative Service Book* and nobody has had a go at updating them for *Common Worship*.

Among my papers is a letter from a former naval Commanding Officer, expressing his amazement that one of the leading past lights of the liturgical commission, with important naval bases in his diocese, seemed oblivious to the sea prayers. When all the Prayer Books were removed and replaced by newer publications, minus the naval prayers, in the ship's chapel, he summoned the chaplains to explain themselves. After some discussion, a compromise was agreed whereby the chaplains spent a constructive period cutting and pasting the naval prayers into the back of all their new volumes.

Apart from regretting the loss of the Prayer Book, this particular CO was disappointed that the Royal Navy and all those at sea were no longer of any interest to the liturgical commission; a far cry from the days when the whole country cared passionately about the Royal Navy. The Church of England has a good track record of trying to minister to the whole nation, which is why, down the centuries and into the present day, she has tried to show an interest and a care for what concerns and challenges those around her, whether it be the farming world at Rogationtide, or those suffering from the effects of war at our annual November services of Remembrance. The sea prayers are one of the first and lasting attempts in our services to give a clear voice to caring for a particular group within the nation. I commend to you a historic novel set in the early years of the Royal Navy of Charles II, called *Gentleman Captain*, written by former naval officer, J. D. Davies, about the Stuart Navy under Charles II. The Restoration may have taken place, but it is the job of plucky gentleman captain, Matthew Quinton, to root out a possible conspiracy against the King.

I am not going to spoil the story, but there is a fascinating moment in the book when the ship's chaplain uses the new Prayer Book of 1662 for the first time. He turns to the sea prayers and reads out the recently composed naval prayer designed for daily usage. I'd love to know whether the author, Davies, bases his account of the sailors' response to the prayer on any original account, because they are clearly moved by it. The men all listen intently, some look transfixed, others have a beatific vision in their faces and their echoing 'Amen' is thunderous. I suspect that the first sailors to hear the prayer were deeply thrilled that the powers that be had bothered to remember them. How wonderful to know that those in authority thought you were worth praying for and included you in their deliberations. Isn't that what Common Prayer should be about?[19]

You can chart down the centuries how these prayers moulded and shaped the sea-faring community, who have owned them as their prayers. The sea prayers became very much part of life at sea, with many sailors owning their own Prayer Books and Bibles, as demonstrated by the frequent references in wills to them.[20] Charles Wheatley, that scholarly writer upon the Prayer Book, briefly praised them in 1710 as being 'so very well adapted to their several occasions that any one that observes them will see their suitableness without any illustration'.[21] Even pirates seem to have had a streak of piety and valued them, since, in 1721, when the pirate, Captain Bartholomew Roberts, captured a clergyman, he asked him to become his chaplain. The clergyman declined and Roberts released him, but not before he had robbed him of a corkscrew and three Prayer Books![22]

Nelson's Navy also believed in the importance of prayer. Nelson was a great leader and knew how to inspire his sailors. You can see this in Nelson's great prayer, written before the commencement of the Battle of Trafalgar, in which he manages to sound a patriotic note combined with a humble and sacrificial one. What is important is that it is not an isolated piece of piety; Nelson was very keen on naval chaplains, and his private correspondence shows that he believed the rigging of church and the conduct of regular divine service was vital to maintaining a 'regular and decent conduct'. I hope this talk has a similar effect on all of you! As part of that endeavour, Nelson always obtained Bibles and Prayer

19 J. D. Davies, *Gentleman Captain*, London: Old Street Publishing Limited, 2009, p. 98.
20 Patarino, 'Shipboard Culture', p. 178.
21 C. Wheatley, *A Rational Illustration of the Book of Common Prayer*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1810, p. 517.
22 Ibid, pp. 144–145.

Books for his ship's company, and the importance of naval chaplains increased under him.[23]

The extent to which the naval prayers had entered both popular and maritime culture is illustrated by the 1942 British patriotic naval film, *In Which We Serve*. It is set upon the fictitious *HMS Torrin*, which was based upon the real *HMS Kelly*, a ship commanded by Lord Mountbatten, the Queen's cousin, and tells the story of a ship's company and their families.[24] Its title, *In Which We Serve*, comes, of course, from the first of the official naval prayers. One might also note that Royal Naval Signals were long indebted to the Authorised Version of the Bible, with a good selection of quotations built up over the years by captains and signal officers. For example, a Royal Naval corvette signalled the Commander-in-Chief Plymouth: 'Roman Emperor in tow badly damaged please send tugs'. The reply read: 'Revelation chapter 3 verse 11' or, in translation, 'Behold I come quickly; hold that fast which thou hast, that no man may take thy crown'.[25]

But what of the rest of us? What of us land-lovers? Are the prayers any good to us? Well, according to Ian Curteis, a writer on the Collects of Common Prayer, the music of the sea laps throughout the English Prayer Book. In a striking passage, the language of Archbishop Thomas Cranmer is described as offering 'crackling English when our language was at its vigorous prime'; an English soaked in the brine of a sea-going nation as 'the North Sea wind blows through its topsails'.[26] It is a romantic thought to contemplate Cranmer listening to the lapping of the Thames and weaving the silver thread of a river that runs through the history of the English-speaking world into the prose of the Prayer Book. I suppose one might see the split verses of both Psalms and Canticles as resembling the rise and fall of the tide; texts whose sentiments may range between the loftiness of high tide to the less challenging low one.

What I can say with confidence is that the sea matters in both the Bible and the history of the Church. The Old Testament rightly recognises that the sea is a place of challenge. Psalm 107 speaks of how they 'that go down to the sea in ships' may find that they 'reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man' before they come 'unto the haven where they would

23 Taylor, *Sea Chaplains*, pp. 196–198, 204–205, 240; T. Clayton and P. Craig, *Trafalgar: The Men, the Battle, the Storm*, London: Hodder and Stoughton Ltd, 2004, pp. 137–138; C. White, *Nelson the Admiral*, Stroud: Sutton Publishing, 2005, pp. 176–177.

24 P. Ziegler, *Mountbatten*, London: Guild Publishing, 1985, pp. 122, 170–171.

25 J. Archer, *A Military Miscellany*, London: Elliot and Thompson Ltd, 2013, pp. 28–31.

26 I. Curteis (ed.), *A Prayer for All Seasons: The Collects of the Book of Common Prayer*, Cambridge: The Lutterworth Press, 1999, Introduction.

be'. Elsewhere, Job encounters challenging monsters such as Behemoth and Leviathan,[27] Noah builds his great ark to survive the Great Flood,[28] the Egyptian army is defeated by the Red Sea[29] and the fear of a storm at sea is conveyed very well by the story of Jonah and the whale. The sea is presented as a place of untamed chaos, which seeks to challenge the power of God. This is why the Revelation of St John, the last book of the Bible, sees the disappearance of the sea as being a sign of the coming power of God.[30]

The Bible certainly takes the sea seriously, which probably explains Christ's healthy regard for those who sail upon the waters. Peter Anson's book, *Christ and the Sailor*, makes the very interesting point that, if Our Lord Jesus Christ ever shows bias, it is towards those who sailed on the Sea of Galilee, since they made up the bulk of the apostles.[31] In fact, the New Testament is awash with sea-going imagery, ranging from the different types of nets used to suggestion in the Epistle of James that the tongue is like the small but powerful rudder of a ship that has profound effects on the direction of our lives.[32]

This biblical legacy has also left its legacy upon our church buildings. In untouched Georgian interiors, we have what John Betjeman, the poet, described as those amazing three-decker pulpits in full sail.[33] But, more importantly, in a traditional church building you inhabit the nave, which comes from the Latin word meaning 'ship'. Occasionally there is an overt maritime link, as in the case of 'Their Majesties Chapell', Bermuda, which was constructed from the timbers of a British boat sunk in 1609.[34] But even when there isn't any maritime link, you sit in the ship of the church, because the roof often resembles an upturned sailing vessel and being there is part of your voyage towards God. This voyage into the life of God begins with baptism, which the Prayer Book describes as being received into 'the ark of Christ's church'. It is the moment we begin a voyage towards God. A classic church baptism is at the west end of the church; the place of the setting sun. It is a reminder that in the Christian life we deal with death at the start, when baptism joins us to the life-saving power of Our Lord Jesus Christ. We then journey east towards the place of the rising sun and further life, as we are fed afresh

27 Job 40 and 41.
28 Genesis 5:11–22.
29 Exodus 14.
30 Revelation 21:1.
31 P. Anson, *Christ and the Sailor*, London: Burns and Oats, 1954, pp. xiii–xv.
32 James 3:1–5.
33 J. Betjeman, *Coming Home: An Anthology of Prose*, London: Vintage, 1997, p. 506.
34 P. Ashworth, 'Advocate, not Defender' in *The Church Times*, 27th May/3rd June 2022, p. 29.

at the Lord's Table. As one of the Exhortations puts it in the Communion Service, we receive these gifts 'in remembrance of his meritorious Cross and Passion; whereby alone we obtain remission of our sins, and we are made partakers of the Kingdom of heaven'.

I am very fond of *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*, one of C. S. Lewis's Narnia books. It can simply be read as a children's book, which recounts an exciting story about the royal voyage of King Caspian, King Edmund and Queen Lucy, but is also a wonderful way of reflecting upon our Christian voyage towards life as we journey east. It is why the book ends up with a lamb serving breakfast on an eastern shore, to remind us of the resurrection story in St John's Gospel on the shore of the Sea of Galilee.[35] The crew of the *Dawn Treader* face multiple challenges on their voyage and we too have many challenges in life.

The Prayer Book Litany rightly prays that it may please God to 'preserve all that travel by land or by water'. The Litany is thinking of earthly dangers, which is why those who maintain order and promote justice, under the Queen, are also prayed for. We ask for them to be endued with 'grace, wisdom and understanding'. After victory against our enemies, the sea prayers also offer the earthly prayer that this may be to the 'honour of our Sovereign' and 'to the good of all mankind'. But there is also the hope that when we have been sustained in a struggle, we may use it to the 'advancement of thy Gospel' and that our lives may be 'humble, holy, and obedient' to God's will.

These are all things that those of us who will never go physically to sea need to pray for just as much in our Christian voyage. As the sea prayers remind us, we need stability, under our Queen, on earth, but we also need the vision of the world as God's world, where the values of the kingdom of God also reign. We want the ship of state to be stable, but we want the ship of faith to be on course too. For the monarchy, this is actually given pictorial expression through the use of a ship, as the official seal of the Royal Almonry, which is the body responsible for organising the annual distribution of Maundy money, in fulfilment of Christ's command to love one another.[36]

When we feel the world is lacking in such love and we are assailed by all the stormy pressure of life, we can draw upon such maritime prayers as the ones set for those in 'Storms at Sea'. They show remarkable honesty about our tendency to forget God when things are easy, but a strong confidence that prayer, made in faith, can really change things.

35 C. S. Lewis, *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*, London: Fontana Lions, 1981, pp. 186–187; John 21:1–13.
36 P. A. Wright, *Royal Maundy*, London: Pitkin Pictorials Ltd, 1973, pp. 5, 16.

When we pray for God to 'stillest the rage' of the storm, it is a request made in the hope that this is what He will do. The Church badly needs more prayer like that, which is open to the transforming breath of the Holy Spirit. So let us pray, in hope, through the words of the first of the prayers for 'Storms at Sea'.

> O MOST powerful and glorious Lord God, at whose command the winds blow, and lift up the waves of the sea, and who stillest the rage thereof; We thy creatures, but miserable sinners, do in this our great distress cry unto thee for help: Save, Lord, or else we perish. We confess, when we have been safe, and seen all things quiet about us, we have forgot thee our God, and refused to hearken to the still voice of thy word, and to obey thy commandments: But now we see, how terrible thou art in all thy works of wonder; the great God to be feared above all: And therefore we adore thy Divine Majesty, acknowledging thy power, and imploring thy goodness. Help, Lord, and save us for thy mercy's sake in Jesus Christ thy Son, our Lord. Amen.

The Black-Letter Days of the Book of Common Prayer

MICHAEL A. BRYDON

During my time as an assistant curate in Bexhill-on-Sea, I was invited by a local councillor to a day on working with voluntary groups. The lead speaker began by announcing that 'the BCP should be at the heart of everything we do in the community'. Sadly, BCP on this occasion stood for Bexhill Community Partnership; not Book of Common Prayer. Nevertheless, if you flick through a Prayer Book it assumes that its worship is going to be at the heart of the nation. There are obvious things, like the prayers for the Sovereign, the Royal Family and the High Court of Parliament. There is a section of prayers to be used on a daily basis in the Royal Navy, instructions on making a will and, near the front of the book, it gives you a planner for the year; otherwise known as a calendar.

If you have never looked at the calendar before, then you'll find it fascinating, since it is full of surprises. There are, for example, mentions of the anniversaries of the reburial of the relics of saints, which are called 'translations' in the Prayer Book. Americans may celebrate independence on 4th July, but the Prayer Book marks it with the translation of the relics of St Martin, a Roman soldier saint whose image adorns the lamp posts outside the famous Church of St Martin in the Fields, London. Then there is the translation of the relics of St Edward the Martyr on 20th June, a Saxon king whose stepmother had him murdered. Edward's tragic death led both to swift, popular acclaim that he was a saint, and an elaborate shrine at Shaftesbury. Lastly, there is the commemoration of Edward the Confessor on 13th October. Edward was the devout Saxon king, whose death led to the Norman invasion of 1066, and 13th October marks the translation of his body to a sumptuous new shrine in Westminster Abbey.[1]

None of these feasts makes it into the *Common Worship* calendar, with the exception of Edward the Confessor, but any suggestion that the date is to do with the reburial of his relics has been removed.

1 In the Medieval Sarum (Rite of Salisbury) calendar, the celebration of translations makes a lot of sense when you realise that many of these saints would always be largely displaced on their actual day, because they were trumped by something more important. Edward the Confessor, for example, would always fall at Epiphany and Edward the Martyr was likely to be squeezed out by Passiontide.

It is all very curious why the Prayer Book should want to remember any of these festivals when the Reformed sixteenth-century Church was supposed to have swept them all away. The *Second Book of Homilies* was produced for Elizabethan clergy, who either couldn't preach, or the government didn't trust them to be preaching the right things. Among its offerings is the sermon against 'Peril of Idolatry', which describes how the 'worshipping of saints' tombs and pictures' is as bad as being guilty of 'gluttony and drunkenness'.[2] We might also think of the twenty-second of the Articles of Religion, which condemned the 'Romish Doctrine' of the 'Worshipping and Adoration' of 'Reliques and also invocation of Saints' as a thing 'repugnant to the Word of God'.

So, it begs the question as to what such festivals are doing in the Prayer Book calendar. What was Archbishop Cranmer playing at when he reformed the Church's services and translated them into his beautiful English prose, but left such obviously unreformed festivals in the calendar? If Cranmer were here, he could plead not guilty to this charge, since he took all the saints out of the Litany of his first Prayer Book of 1549, and threw out all the saints from the calendar not mentioned in the Bible.

This had not been Cranmer's original intention, since two draft calendars survive. The first one kept in the names of the biblical saints, kept twelve chief doctors of the Church, twelve saints from the old medieval Sarum Kalendar, then threw in one or two random surprises, such as the Patriarch Benjamin and St Babilus.[3] Later commentators have reflected favourably upon this piece of work, but have described his second draft as 'wild to the last degree'. For instance, the vacant days of January were filled up with Old Testament names in chronological order—Abel, Noe, Abraham and so on. When Cranmer ran out of Old Testament names, the New Testament ones took over.[4]

In the end, Cranmer did something completely different in 1549. Only the so-called 'red-letter' days stayed in. These all related to biblical figures and events and, as the description suggests, were listed in red to show their importance. The 1549 Prayer Book barely lasted three years before it was replaced by the much more Protestant, but even shorter-

2 'An Homily Against Peril of Idolatry, and Superfluous Decking of Churches' in *The Homilies*, Stoke-on-Trent: Tentmaker Publications, 1986, (pp. 118–184), pp. 132–133.

3 The Patriarch Benjamin is presumably the youngest son of Jacob. St Babilus was a third-century Bishop of Antioch. It is ironic, given the Reformation hostility to shrines, that Babilus is the first recorded saint to have his remains translated to a new church to bring greater sanctity to it.

4 *The Commemoration of Saints and Heroes of the Faith in the Anglican Communion: The Report of a Commission Appointed by the Archbishop of Canterbury*, London: SPCK, 1957, p. 32.

lived, Prayer Book of 1552. It has often been said that the 1552 Book was what Cranmer really wanted, but there is some evidence that he was annoyed about being pressured into making further changes. Among the points he would not budge on was keeping a calendar, which followed the ancient pattern of the Church year, keeping the seasons of Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent and Easter.[5] In 1552, he not only kept the red-letter Church seasons and the biblical saints in, but he also put back into the calendar George, Laurence, Clement and Lammas. These observances are known as 'black-letter' days, because this is the colour they were printed in to show they were not as important as red-letter days.

You can understand why St George may have gone back in, since he had become an official patron of England when Edward III founded the Order of the Garter in the fourteenth century. One might have expected St George to have been particularly subject to Reformation scorn with the story of the dragon, but his reputation actually grew in fortune in the latter half of the sixteenth century as he became an honorary Englishman. In 1552, special permission was granted to the knights of the Garter to observe his day.[6] Edward VI also favoured George, since he'd discontinued the flying of the banners of the other two traditional patron saints of England, Edward the Confessor and Edmund of East Anglia, which is largely why the flag of St George became the national flag of England.[7]

Lammas, although its origins lie in the keeping of the Feast of the Chains of St Peter, was really an agricultural celebration, whose date needed to be known for the holding of Lammas Fairs, so it could be argued to be practical. But it is very hard to see why Cranmer put Clement and Laurence back in. It has been suggested that he may have considered Clement of Rome to be the figure mentioned in Philippians 4:3, but if Clement was considered impeccably biblical, why wasn't he included with the other red-letter days and provided with a Collect and lessons? Laurence most definitely is not a biblical saint and it is hard to see Cranmer's motivation here in restoring him. Cranmer was not always totally consistent, of course, as shown by the fact that he made Mary Magdalene, an impeccably biblical figure, a red-letter saint in the 1549 Prayer Book, but for reasons no one has fathomed took her out in 1552.

Even more black-letter days came back under Elizabeth I. Archbishop

5 A. Jacobs, *The Book of Common Prayer*, Princeton and Oxford: Princeton College Press, 2013, pp. 50–52.

6 B. Cummings (ed.), *The Book of Common Prayer: The Texts of 1549, 1559, and 1662*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011, p. 754.

7 D. Keane, 'Annual Cycles of Bible Reading in the Prayer Book: Part II', *The North American Anglican*, 17th April 2020.

Parker was commissioned to review the calendar in 1561 and, as a result, 59 black-letter days came back in. Given Parker's enthusiasm for history, especially if it proved the independence of the Saxon Church from Rome, one wonders if this was partly an attempt to demonstrate some continuity in Church life. Among the Saxon saints he includes are St Chad (2nd March), Edward King of the West Saxons (18th March), Alphege (19th April), Dunstan (19th May), Swithun (15th July) and Ethedreda (17th October). He might even be harking back to the ancient Britons with the inclusion of the Invention of the Cross (3rd May). This is the story of how St Helena, the mother of Constantine, traditionally claimed as an inhabitant of Colchester and granddaughter of Old King Cole, found the true cross in Jerusalem.

Many of the Anglo-Saxon saints did not make it into the first Welsh Prayer Book calendar of 1567, which would make sense if their presence was supposed to demonstrate continuity, since they hadn't had anything to do with Wales.[8] That said, the absence of many of the black-letter days from the Welsh Prayer Book can be explained by the more pragmatic reason that they simply weren't relevant to Welsh civic life. We need to remember that Elizabeth's third Archbishop of Canterbury, John Whitgift, later defended the inclusion of black-letter days in the English Prayer Book as being solely practical. Those who were concerned, Whitgift counselled, that the Prayer Book was maintaining 'festival days observed of the papists' need not be worried, since they were there 'to express the usual times of payments, and the times of the courts and their returns'.[9] It is certainly true that it was customary for contracts and leases to use the traditional names of days rather than a calendar date as we would today. The Elizabethan Church courts, which continued to be important for both probate and testamentary matters along with moral offences, maintained their own legal calendar, which ignored the Reformation purging of saints' days. They even kept alive the memory of the celebrations for Corpus Christi and All Souls.[10]

Charles Wheatley, who produced his magnificent commentary on the Book of Common Prayer in 1710, argued that we were never expected to mark these black-letter days in church. He insisted that they were solely included for matters of convenience, since 'our Courts of Justice' make 'their returns on these days, or else upon the days before or after them'.

8 I am grateful to the Revd Dr Patrick Thomas, Chancellor and Canon Librarian of St David's Cathedral, for providing me with a list of the feast days of the 1567 Welsh Prayer Book.

9 Keane, 'Annual Cycles'.

10 D. Cressy, *Bonfires and Bells: National Memory and the Protestant Calendar in Elizabethan and Stuart England*, Stroud: Sutton Publishing, 2004, pp. 10–11.

> Others are probably kept in the calendar for the sake of such tradesmen, handicraftsmen, and others, as are wont to celebrate the memory of their tutelar Saints: as the Welshmen do of St David, the Shoemakers of St Crispin, &c. And again, Churches being in several places dedicated to some or other of these Saints, it has been the usual custom to have Wakes or Fairs kept upon these days: so that the people would not be displeased if, either in this or the former case, their favourite Saint's name should be left out of the calendar. Besides, the histories, which were writ before the Reformation do frequently speak of transactions happening upon such a holy-day, or about such a time without mentioning the month; relating one thing to be done at Lammas-tide, and another about Martinmas, &c.; so that were these names quite left out of the calendar, we might be at a loss to know when several of these transactions happened.[11]

There is a great deal of truth in what Wheatley says and, even today, black-letter commemorations discreetly guide all sorts of institutions, whose members may never give Church life, let alone the Book of Common Prayer, a moment's thought. Oxford University and the court system continues, for example, to call its spring term, the 'Hilary Term' after St Hilary, who falls on 13th January. We might also note St Valentine's Day, which was very popular in the Stuart period and continues to be today, but which has almost no connection to anything that goes on in church.

However, Wheatley's commentary is not the whole story. At the Savoy Conference, prior to the restoration of the Prayer Book of 1662, the bishops did reiterate the case for the retention of the black-letter days for practical reasons. The fact that the 1662 Prayer Book also listed fast days on 14th September and 13th December, which clashed with Holy Cross Day and St Lucy's Day respectively, suggested that there was no intention that these days should be marked as celebrations in any way. But the bishops also issued a rather more positive statement that these days 'are useful for the preservation of their memories' in remembering good Christian deeds.[12] In other words, it is good for us to know about these people; it is good for us to know a bit about the family history of the Church. This was anathema of course to Puritan elements, those who wanted a more Reformed Church, who had long protested about the

11 C. Wheatley, *A Rational Illustration of the Book of Common Prayer*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1858, p. 42.

12 Cummings, *Prayer Book*, p. 753.

existence of the calendar. Whatever the official position was, we know that local customs often maintained pre-Reformation practices, and the Puritans were anxious that no encouragement was to be given from on high. It is certainly true, as evidenced by an annotated Prayer Book in Lambeth Palace Library, that the calendar was being used to distinguish between 'lucky days' and 'dog days'; rank superstition to the Puritans![13]

In Scotland, by contrast, they had avoided this danger by the total abolition of the calendar. Its revived inclusion in the Scottish Prayer Book of 1637 was one of many things held against that publication.[14] The Scottish Prayer Book crisis was, of course, one of the incidents that led to the Civil War and the abolition of the English Prayer Book, with both its red-letter and black-letter days. The Westminster Assembly of 1645 totally abolished the Christian year.

> There is no day commanded in scripture to be kept holy under the gospel but the Lord's day, which is the Christian Sabbath. Festival days, vulgarly called Holy-days, having no warrant in the word of God are not be continued.[15]

These memories of the 'Great Rebellion' made Restoration royalists totally unsympathetic to Puritan sensitivities, and the motivation for reviving black-letter days seems to have been to put the Puritans back in their box. More positively, it made the Restoration Church even more supportive of a theology which stressed the continuity of the Church in England. This surely lies behind the inclusion of St Alban, the first British martyr, in the 1662 calendar, along with the Venerable Bede, the father of English history, who wasn't in the Sarum Kalendar and whose date of commemoration was not widely known.[16] It seems a little unfair that St Cuthbert, buried at the other end of Durham Cathedral to Bede, was left out, but it reminds us that the logic of the whole process was not always consistent.

The 1662 nod to mentioning the black-letter days for religious reasons was also given some encouragement by the inclusion of the annual 30th January commemoration of the Martyrdom of Charles I within the Prayer Book. The intention was very much to remember the

13 Ibid, p. 752.
14 Ibid, p. 753.
15 L. Mitchell, 'Sanctifying Time: The Calendar', (pp. 476–83), in C. Hefling and C. Shattuck (eds), *The Oxford Guide to the Book of Common Prayer: A Worldwide Survey*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006, p. 478.
16 F. Procter and W. H. Frere, *A New History of the Book of Common Prayer with a Rationale of its Offices*, London: MacMillan and Co. Ltd, 1932, pp. 340–41.

way Charles I had been 'enabled so cheerfully to follow the steps of his blessed Master and Saviour' and to make sure that such an outrage as the execution of God's monarch was never to be repeated. Some of the black-letter commemorations are undoubtedly there to support the cult of monarchy. Eunurchus (7th September), a fourth-century Bishop of Orleans, was suddenly elevated to fame in the 1604 calendar. Almost nothing is known about him, which is underlined by the fact that his name isn't even printed correctly. He should be styled Evurtius, something that was corrected in Victorian copies of the Prayer Book. Eunurchus only made it into the calendar as a subtle way of marking the birthday of Elizabeth I, a woman whose cult, as an emblem of England, continued to rise throughout the seventeenth century. The fact that Elizabeth and Eunurchus both begin with the same letter meant that her fame was subtly kept alive every September by the prominence of the capital E. Hugh, Bishop of Lincoln (17th November) was equally useful for marking Elizabeth I's accession day and the death of the popish Mary I.[17]

One also wonders whether Edward the Confessor was maintained to foster the cult of monarchy. His shrine, rebuilt under Mary Tudor, was largely left intact and at the Restoration, there was a great endeavour to recreate the old crown jewels, which were said to have gone back to Edward, to cloak any hint of discontinuity. Elizabeth II, herself, was crowned with the recreated St Edward's crown in 1953, which is the only time she has worn it. Edward the Confessor was said to have healed a woman with scrofula, and this also led to the tradition of 'Touching for the King's Evil', whereby the monarch, as a sign of God's approval, laid hands on the afflicted to heal them. From Elizabeth I until Queen Anne, the era in which the Prayer Book was formed, this custom carried on.[18]

The cult of monarchy declined, of course, in the eighteenth century with the coming of the Hanoverians. George I partly stopped touching for the 'King's Evil' in case it didn't work and undermined his legitimacy. Whilst there was plenty of life in the Hanoverian Church, contrary to the suggestion of some Church histories, it is true the evidence is scant that the hope of the Savoy conference bishops, that the black-letter days

17 Cummings, *The Book of Common Prayer*, pp. 755–756.

18 It is not just monarchs who may have been bolstered by the calendar. Dr Roger Elias, a leading figure of the life of St Peter's, Bexhill, has undertaken some interesting unpublished work in which he matches all the black-letter dates to historic events. It is certainly intriguing that St Valentine coincides with the day that Thomas Cranmer was declared a heretic in 1556, and St Benedict with the day of his execution. Is this a pleasing, deliberate commemoration of the primary compiler of the Prayer Book, or simply a coincidence?

of the calendar might be used to promote the memory of those named, was being honoured. Charles Wheatley's Prayer Book commentary, which was popular throughout the period and beyond, referred to many of those mentioned in the calendar as being 'oftentimes men of none of the best character', whose histories 'were frequently found to be feigned and fabulous. For which reason, I suppose, the generality of my readers would excuse my giving them or myself any further trouble upon this head'. Yet, Wheatley accepted, there are always those 'people who are particularly desirous of this sort of information', so he did offer an account of all the black-letter days, but with the warning that he was only setting down what 'the blind Romanists' superstitiously accept![19]

There is nothing like forbidden fruit, however, for attracting attention. One wonders if Wheatley's accounts of the non-biblical saints and other holy days were regularly thumbed by those who enjoyed the thrill of religious naughtiness in looking at something they knew they were not supposed to take too much interest in. Wheatley certainly tells a good 'Romish story'. His account of the popular story of how Bede acquired the title 'Venerable' serves very well as an example.

> His learning and piety gained him the surname of Venerable. Though the common story which goes about that title's being given him, is this: his scholars having a mind to fix a rhyming title upon his tombstone, as was the custom in those times, the poet wrote,
>
> HAC SUNT IN FOSSA
> BEDAE OSSA[20]
>
> placing the word OSSA at the end of the verse or the rhyme, but not able to think of any proper epithet that would stand before it. The monk being tired in this perplexity to no purpose, fell asleep; but when he awaked, he found his verse filled up by an angelic hand, standing thus in fair letters upon the tomb:
>
> HAC SUNT IN FOSSA
> BEDAE VENERABLIS OSSA.[21]

Without intending to do so, Wheatley helped provide the material for the nineteenth century to build a vision of Church life in England, which stressed continuity and the position of the Church of England

19 Wheatley, *Common Prayer*, pp. 42–43.
20 Here are in this tomb Bede's bones.
21 Here are in this tomb Bede the Venerable's bones.

as a branch of the Universal/Catholic Church. The black-letter calendar was terribly important for achieving this, since it preserved connections to the first millennium, medieval saints and to Church life beyond the shores of England. The earliest calendars were developed in Rome and, at the Synod of Cloveshoo in 747, the English Church adopted a Roman calendar, which is why the Prayer Book calendar remains full of early Roman martyrs. In January alone there are Lucian (8th), Prisca (18th), Fabian (20th), Agnes (21st) and Vincent (22nd). Throughout the nineteenth century, a great deal of energy was expended to demonstrate the perfection of the Prayer Book as rooted in the worship of the Early Church, which also promoted interest in the black-letter saints. If you wanted to discuss the origins of a text such as the *Te Deum* at Morning Prayer, it was not possible to do so without mentioning the traditional story of the black-letter, fourth-century Bishop Ambrose of Milan (4th April), who was said to have composed the hymn at the baptism of St Augustine (28th August).

There was also much more interest in the ancient dedication of churches and a desire to celebrate local holy men and women, which led to the creation of supplementary resources to enable this. Most of the clergy were still university graduates and it is notable that the mid-nineteenth-century calendars of Oxford and Cambridge start including the names of saints which were relevant to both individual colleges and the history of the universities.[22] It is also clear that devotional commentaries and sermons were increasingly being published to help congregations learn more about the black-letter days. John Mason Neale, the hymn-writer, antiquarian and railway enthusiast, was at the vanguard of this, with his publication of *Sermons for Black Letter Days or Minor Festivals of the Church of England*, which first came out in 1852. Neale in his opening address explains how they are used to observing the red-letter days, which already celebrated the 'Communion of Saints' referred to in the Apostles' Creed. But now he wanted his hearers to discover the additional black-letter days through these addresses.

> It is impossible to love those of whom we know nothing. We may believe, indeed, that they were true and faithful servants of CHRIST, and so far we may admire them, and desire to follow their example; but love them we cannot, unless we know something about them on which our love can fix.

22 *Commemoration of Saints*, p. 36.

Having come to love them, Neale hoped that his hearers would be able to journey towards the land that Christ had promised them with some understanding of the martyrs, confessors and virgins, who would be their eternal friends.[23]

In 1957, a report of the Archbishop of Canterbury on 'The Commemoration of Saints and Heroes of the Faith in the Anglican Communion' rightly commented:

> In the last hundred years, however, the deep appreciation of Church history and the spiritual power of great Christian lives has brought a new conscience towards them. The Kalendar has come alive for many right reasons. It is rightly felt that a kalendrical entry has little meaning if it can find no reflection in the public prayer or thanksgiving of the Church. The commemoration of the 'black-letter' days has become usual after more than one pattern.

In the Prayer Book of 1928, we see an attempt to provide liturgical resources to support the keeping of black-letter days through the provision of Collects, Epistles and Gospels themed along such lines as martyrs, doctors of the Church and general saints. Parliament may have refused permission for that Prayer Book, but it didn't stop parishes taking advantage of its increasingly uncontentious provision to celebrate their own patron saint. It also became mainstream to illustrate the black-letter heroes of the faith in stained glass. The thirty-four cloister windows of Chester Cathedral offer a pictorial guide to the calendar of 1928 (with a few extra Anglican worthies such as Thomas Ken, a saintly seventeenth-century Bishop of Bath and Wells), and can be enjoyed on the cathedral homepage as 'A Gallery of Saints'.[24]

Among the Chester windows is an illustration of the thirteenth-century St Richard of Chichester (3rd April), the most recent figure to be included among the black-letter commemorations of the 1662 Prayer Book. The popular prayer of St Richard is based on his dying words:

> Thanks be to Thee, my Lord Jesus Christ
> For all the benefits Thou hast given me,
> For all the pains and insults Thou hast borne for me.
> O most merciful Redeemer, friend and brother,

23 J. M. Neale, *Sermons for the Black Letter Days or Minor Festivals of the Church of England*, London: Joseph Masters, 1872, Sermon I.

24 C. Howse, 'Looking through 130 windows from home' in *The Daily Telegraph*, 20th June 2020.

May I know Thee more clearly,
Love Thee more dearly,
Follow Thee more nearly.
Amen.

This lovely prayer is often included after the third Collect at Morning and Evening Prayer by those willing to expand upon the set prayers. It certainly complements the Christ-centred piety of the Prayer Book with its hope in the saving power of the cross. We are largely in a position to use it, because the compilers of our Prayer Book, for both practical and spiritual reasons, included St Richard and all those other black-letter saints in our calendar. By doing so, they gave us a way to rediscover, in the last two hundred years, forgotten tributaries of grace-filled spiritual water to help the seed of faith to flourish. Our Lord often told stories when He wanted to teach people, and the black-letter commemorations provide narratives to inspire us in the accounts of later generations, who faithfully followed Him. Like them, we can only do what we do by the grace of God. As the wonderful Collect for All Saints' Day puts it:

> O Almighty God, who hast knit together thine elect in one communion and fellowship, in the mystical body of thy Son Christ our Lord; Grant us grace so to follow thy blessed Saints in all virtuous and godly living, that we may come to those unspeakable joys, which thou hast prepared for them that unfeignedly love thee; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Accession

JOHN KEBLE

As I was with Moses, so I will be with thee; I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.
Joshua i. 5.

THE voice that from the glory came
To tell how Moses died unseen,
And waken Joshua's spear of flame
To victory on the mountains green,
Its trumpet tones are sounding still,
When Kings or Parents pass away,
They greet us with a cheering thrill
Of power and comfort in decay.

Behind thus soft bright summer cloud
That makes such haste to melt and die,
Our wistful gaze is oft allow'd
A glimpse of the unchanging sky:
Let storm and darkness do their worst;
For the lost dream the heart may ache,
The heart may ache, but may not burst;
Heaven will not leave thee nor forsake.

One rock amid the weltering floods,
One torch in a tempestuous night,
One changeless pine in fading woods:—
Such is the thought of Love and Might,
True Might and ever-present Love,
When death is busy near the throne,
And Sorrow her keen sting would prove
On Monarchs orphan'd and alone.

In that lorn hour and desolate,
Who could endure a crown? but He,
Who singly bore the world's sad weight,
Is near, to whisper, 'Lean on Me:
Thy days of toil, thy nights of care,
Sad lonely dreams in crowded hall,
Darkness within, while pageants glare
Around—the Cross supports them all.'

Oh, Promise of undying Love!
While Monarchs seek thee for repose,
Far in the nameless mountain cove
Each pastoral heart thy bounty knows.
Ye, who in place of shepherds true
Come trembling to their awful trust,
Lo here the fountain to imbue
With strength and hope your feeble dust.

Not upon Kings or Priests alone
The power of that dear word is spent;
It chants to all in softest tone
The lowly lesson of Content:
Heaven's light is poured on high and low;
To high and low Heaven's Angel spake;
'Resign thee to thy weal or woe,
I ne'er will leave thee nor forsake.'

John Keble (1792–1866)

This poem is taken from *The Christian Year*, which was first published by John Keble in 1827. It was intended as a collection of devotional verses based on the Book of Common Prayer, with a poem for every Sunday, each festival and all the Church's official rites. When Keble wrote this poem, the Church of England still very much understood herself to be the English state in its spiritual aspect, but Keble's poems combined this 'with the new romantic sense of awe and mystery and wonder'.[1] In its day, the book was a bestseller. Many were moved by its simple

1 S. Gilley, 'Introduction' in J. Keble, *The Christian Year*, London: Church Literature Association, 1976, (pp. xi-xviii), pp. xi, xvi.

meditations on the central Christian truths and were turned back to re-examine the Book of Common Prayer, which had inspired it. Readers were also moved by the sense that the Church was in danger of losing 'the beauty and holiness which were her birth-right'.[2] On the strength of *The Christian Year*, Keble was elected Professor of Poetry at Oxford.

2 C. Loveless, *Strange Eventful History: The Story of the Saints of the Church of England*, 2012, p. 385.

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