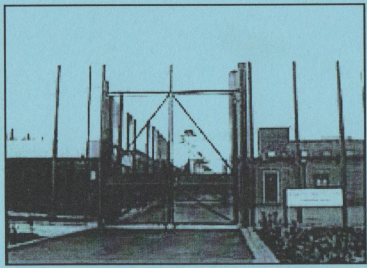


KOINONIA



*The Journal of the
Anglican & Eastern
Churches Association*

New Series No. 53, Easter 2008
ISSN No. 0012-8732

THE ANGLICAN & EASTERN
CHURCHES ASSOCIATION
Founded 1864

Orthodox Patron: The Ecumenical Patriarch
Anglican Patron: The Archbishop of Canterbury

Orthodox President: The Archbishop of Thyateira and Great Britain
Anglican President: The Bishop of London

Chairman of the Committee:

The Revd William Taylor
St John's Vicarage
25 Ladbroke Road
London W11 3PD

General Secretary:

Janet Laws
The Bishop of London's Office
The Old Deanery
Dean's Court
London EC4V 5AA
Tel. 020 7248 6233
email: janet.laws@btopenworld.com
or bishops.secretary@londin.clara.co.uk

Treasurer:

Mr David Powell
32 Westminster Palace Gardens
Artillery Row
London SW1P 1RR
Tel. 020 7222 3604
email: dp@dpcca.co.uk

Koinonia

THE JOURNAL OF THE ANGLICAN &
EASTERN CHURCHES ASSOCIATION

Editorial

WE live in the century of communication. For us in the West, it has never been easier to get hold of information. Anyone with a mobile phone can have access to the wealth of information available on the internet. News from around the world is available twenty-four hours a day. Despite, or because of, the glut of information at our disposal, it's arguable that we understand one another no better than we ever did. Modern communication gives us the illusion of being in control of all this material, but that only masks the gap of understanding that still lurks around every trans-cultural encounter.

Shortly before Christmas last year I visited Tallinn, Estonia. It is a marvellous city, a historical crossroad where German, Russian, and native Estonian cultures have clashed and now co-exist (if not always easily). Historically, the Toompea hill was the citadel where the rulers protected themselves against the townspeople, and at either end of the plateau the Lutheran Cathedral of St Mary the Virgin and the Russian Cathedral of Alexander Nevsky are all too evidently the churches of conquering foreign powers. In the lower town, however, stands the Orthodox parish church of St Nicholas the Wonderworker, built in the eighteenth century in the classical style, and much more at home in the community. Here I was privileged to attend the Liturgy for the patronal festival. I was present during the subdued transition from Vespers to the Eucharist as the sense of expectation and excitement mounted and parishioners streamed in to the church. I had only the most general understanding of what was happening in much of the liturgy, but the sense of event was palpable, that we were in a place where heaven and earth converged. Processions in and out of the sanctuary opened the veil between heaven and earth. Despite understanding only one or two words of Slavonic, I knew myself to be amongst people of

the Resurrection – of heaven but on earth. That is an experience I've had only rarely in Western worship – our words might say it, but how often do we experience it?

Is it that Western rationalism has edged out, made us apologetic about, mystical language and experience? Are we so in thrall to words, to information, to communication, that we refuse any religious experience we can't articulate or control? Christians from Eastern churches – not just Orthodox but also Egyptian Copts, Ethiopians, Syrians, Indians, and many others – are a growing presence in Britain. Will their presence encourage us to rediscover and re-appropriate our own and their mystical traditions, or will we remain caught in our web of words? After all, the Eastern churches may continue to live and worship in the light of heaven, but if they cannot articulate that reality for the West, then will we hear their voice?

This number of *Koinonia* is devoted to the topic of *Ecumenical Theological Education*. The Church of England has an honourable and long-standing commitment to dialogue with the Orthodox, and this number of the Journal explores one aspect of that educational history in the story of the Greek College in eighteenth-century Oxford. The story that it tells, with the many instances of motivations at cross-purposes and of misleading presuppositions, is uncannily familiar to those with experience of modern ecumenical dialogue, as Sebastian Brock reveals in his article on ecumenical discussions with and among the Syriac Churches. Indeed, that difficulty Christians have of hearing and understanding one another's voices is all too evident even within our respective communities. Clare Amos, of the Anglican Communion Office, reminds us that the glorious light of Christ's Transfiguration is both an invitation and a judgment: an invitation to live according to the glory of Christ's divine humanity, but a judgment when we fail to be transformed by his redemption.

Ecumenical Theological Education happily is not confined to academic institutions and discussions among specialist theologians, as Fr Seraphim's experiences at Campsfield House Immigration Removal Centre remind us. Here the Gospel is lived and shared even where there is no common language. All the theological words in the world will avail us nothing if we are unwilling to be patient and loving with one another, to pray with one another and to listen together for God's Word for us.

– PETER DOLL

Contents

A STAGING POST ON THE JOURNEY: TRANSFIGURATION AND THE ANGLICAN WAY	Clare Amos	p. 4
ANGLICAN-ORTHODOX CONTACT IN THE 17 TH CENTURY AND THE 'GREEK COLLEGE' AT OXFORD (1699-1705)	Peter Doll	p. 18
ECUMENICAL THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION: SOME REFLECTIONS FROM A SYRIAN PERSPECTIVE	Sebastian Brock	p. 29
THE WORK OF THE CENTRE OF EASTERN AND ORTHODOX CHRISTIANITY	Erica C.D. Hunter	p. 36
ASYLUM SEEKING AND IMMIGRATION: THE RIGHT TIME FOR THE ORTHODOX CHURCH	Seraphim Vânttinen-Newton	p. 40

Contributors

CLARE AMOS is Director of Theological Studies for the Anglican Communion, with particular responsibility for theological education and inter-faith concerns. Clare is a biblical scholar by background and has recently published a well received commentary on Genesis (Epworth Press).7).

SEBASTIAN BROCK is Emeritus Reader in Syriac Studies in Oxford University, and Emeritus Fellow of Wolfson College. Among his published works are *The Luminous Eye: the Spiritual World View of St Ephrem* (1992), and *The Wisdom of St Isaac the Syrian* (Fairacres, 1997).

The Revd Dr PETER DOLL is Team Vicar in the Parish of Abingdon and Editor of *KOINONIA*.

ERICA C.D. HUNTER is Teaching Fellow in Eastern Christianity and Chair, Centre of Eastern and Orthodox Christianity, Dept. of Religions, School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London. She is also Affiliated Lecturer in Aramaic and Syriac, Faculty of Middle Eastern and Asian Studies, University of Cambridge.

FR SERAPHIM VÄNTTINEN-NEWTON is a priest of the Orthodox Parish of the Annunciation, Oxford.

A Staging Post on the Journey: Transfiguration and the Anglican Way

Clare Amos

WHEN I was privileged to live in the Holy Land for five years, one of my favourite places to visit was the summit of Mount Tabor. It is a dramatic mountain which rises in an almost perfect semi-circular shape straight from the flat and fertile plain of Jezreel. St Jerome referred to Tabor as '*mirabile rotunditata*' ('wonderfully rounded'). Since the fourth century Tabor has been regarded as the site of Jesus' Transfiguration. Whether or not the Transfiguration actually happened here – and it has to be said that Mount Hermon has a fairly good counter-claim to the honour – there is something about Mount Tabor which makes it feel right to remember such a solemn and wonderful moment in Jesus' life at this particular place. From the top of Tabor you do have the sense that you can almost take a peek into heaven.

On the summit there is a church built to commemorate the event. Perhaps that was a slightly dubious thing to do – given that during the Transfiguration Jesus seems to have turned down Peter's offer to build 'three booths, one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah' (*Mark* 9.5). However, if there is to be a church on this mountain-top it is certainly a very interesting one, for it witnesses to the possibility of doing theology by architecture. The church was built by the Italian architect Antonio Barluzzi, who was also responsible for the Church of All Nations in Gethsemane, the place of Jesus' agony and betrayal. Barluzzi deliberately designed the two churches, the one on Tabor and the one in Gethsemane, to form a dramatic contrast to one another. The Gethsemane church is enveloped in darkness; the stained windows of deep purple mean that even in the height of a sunny Jerusalem day it still seems night inside. The Transfiguration church on the other hand is resonant with light and gold, reminding us that God created light and saw that it was good before he did anything else, and that this same light shone around Jesus as he stood on the mountain-top that day. Yet

the very contrast between the two churches draws them together and reminds us where the road down the mountain will eventually lead.

In these two churches Barluzzi has certainly caught something that is true to the biblical story. The writers of the synoptic gospels make it clear that there is a real connection between these two events in the life of Jesus, transfiguration on the mountain-top and agony in the Kidron Valley and Gethsemane. It is the same three disciples, Peter, James and John who accompany Jesus on both occasions – and who on both occasions behave in a slightly cack-handed and inappropriate way. There are also the words spoken to Jesus on the mountain-top and by him in Gethsemane. 'This is my son, the Beloved; listen to him' (*Mark* 9.7) proclaims the divine voice during the Transfiguration – demanding obedience to Jesus the Son from his disciples. However this instruction is curiously and ultimately answered only when Jesus himself prays to his father in Gethsemane, 'Abba, Father, for you all things are possible; remove this cup from me; yet, not what I want, but what you want.' (*Mark* 14.6) – offering himself as a model of obedience for others to emulate.

Barluzzi's 'theology in stone' helps to remind us that the Transfiguration of Jesus on the mountain may be the pivot on which the whole life and ministry of Jesus turns. In Mark's Gospel, for example, the event takes place at the very mid-point of the gospel narrative (*Mark* 9.2-8). The voice on the mountain-top echoes the heavenly words spoken at Jesus' baptism at the beginning of the Gospel, but also, as I have suggested, point us onwards towards the culmination in Jerusalem. From the vantage-point of this mountain-top, we are being encouraged to pause for a moment, look back over the hustle, challenges and apparent confusion of previous chapters of the Gospel, and, quite literally, see those events in this new and clearer light. Suddenly Jesus' disciples – and we – realise that what has been going on has not been simply an unconnected series of powerful words and deeds. Like the blind man of Bethsaida (*Mark* 8.22-26) their eyes and ours have finally been opened, and the radiant glow of light on the mountain top has enabled us to realise that we are being invited to become part of a connected story – the story of God's dealing with the world, his work of reconciliation. We also turn our gaze in the other direction – towards Jerusalem and what awaits Jesus there. As Mark himself points out, the significance of the Transfiguration cannot be fully understood, 'until

after the Son of Man had risen from the dead.' (*Mark* 8.9) One of the key features of Mark's Gospel is its presentation of the ministry of Jesus as 'the Way' (see e.g. *Mark* 1.2-3; 10.52). This mountain-top moment is the single most important staging-post on the 'Way' – at least until we reach the apparent dead-ending of the journey at the crucifixion. And the Transfiguration is in fact a pledge that the 'Way' does *not* end at Golgotha. It is a promise that there is no suffering beyond the power of God to heal, no suffering which cannot, in the ultimate purposes of God, be redeemed and transformed. The light on the mountain-top is so bright that darkness will not finally be able to overcome it.

I have long cherished *The Glory of God and the Transfiguration of Christ* by Bishop Michael Ramsey. It has been described as the most 'luminous' work of possibly the greatest Archbishop of Canterbury of the twentieth century. Bishop Michael, in fact, returns to the theme of the Transfiguration in a number of his other writings. It was particularly dear to his heart. I wonder if current Anglican theological thinking should follow Bishop Michael's example and explore more seriously the motif of the Transfiguration? Is it not a theme which can gather into a coherent whole many different strands of theological thinking? We are well aware that different Anglicans give varying amounts of 'weight' to a variety of theological threads, depending perhaps on their own geographical or theological contexts. It seems to me that, as we explore the depth and breath of meaning inherent in the Transfiguration of Christ, perhaps we may discover a vision that is wide enough to encompass all. So, for example, the Transfiguration speaks to me of both incarnation and crucifixion and tells us that they are inextricably intertwined. It reminds me of the importance of holding on to our roots and our past and yet also challenges me with the need to discover transformation and new vision for the future. It speaks about authority yet also about freedom. It blesses our Anglican cherishing of worship and prayer yet also tells us that we cannot stay on the mountain-top. For prayer to be 'valid' it also needs to wrestle with what is happening on the plain below (see *Mark* 9.14-29). The language of 'face', so central to the story, both links us to the mystical quest to 'see God's face' and the longing for God's beauty and leads us to engage with the contextual realities of the different parts of the Anglican Communion, for we have also been told that it is through the faces of our brothers and sisters in need that we will be privileged to see the face of Christ (*Matthew* 25.35-40). Fi-

nally the emphasis within the concept of transfiguration on change and growth reinforces our Anglican emphasis on mission, offering us a vision of the mission of God that is organic and not forced, which is both Christocentric and also wide-ranging enough to take account of the generous span of the 'Five Marks of Mission of the Anglican Communion'. It is a model of mission which addresses our age in which environmental concerns have rightfully been included within the purview of God's mission, for the movement of the Transfiguration is not complete until it has encompassed and renewed the whole world.

When I speak of the Transfiguration, I am of course first of all referring to the insights we can glean from the narratives of the account of Jesus' transfiguration in the three Synoptic Gospels. They are extraordinarily rich, and a full exegesis of what they have to offer to our understanding of the theme of transfiguration is well beyond the scope of this article. But I am also referring to the ways in which the motif of transfiguration has been embedded in other parts of the New Testament: of course in 2 Peter 1.16, which directly alludes to the Gospel narratives, but also in John's Gospel and in Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians. Although John's Gospel does not directly mention the moment of transfiguration, the language of 'glory' which pervades the entire Gospel seems to suggest that John believed that transfiguration – the divine shining through human flesh – is a feature of the life of Jesus as a whole, rather than restricted to a 'flash' on a mountain-top. As Bishop Michael Ramsey put it, 'There are reasons for suspecting that the Transfiguration – like the Baptism of Jesus and the Institution of the Eucharist – was omitted not because John did not know of it but because he understood its meaning so well.' As for Second Corinthians, it has always seemed to me that to write 3.12-4.17 Paul must have been aware of a tradition about the Transfiguration of Jesus Christ such as would eventually surface in the synoptic gospels. The heart of the matter comes for me in 3.18: 'All of us, with unveiled faces, seeing the glory of the Lord as though reflected in a mirror, are being transfigured into the same image from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord, the Spirit.' The Transfiguration of Christ is not, and must not be, simply a spectacle for us to behold: it is an invitation, or even a demand, that we too should be changed – be transfigured – and not only ourselves, for in turn we are called to become ministers of transfiguration for the whole world.

Signposts on the Anglican Way

In early May 2007 the 'Anglican Way' group of Theological Education for the Anglican Communion (TEAC) met for a consultation in Singapore. To this meeting a number of other people, representing key doctrinal, missiological and contextual voices from around our Communion, were also invited. We benefited greatly from the presence of Archbishop Rowan Williams during two days of our deliberations. The theme of 'Way' or journey was deeply embedded in our meeting.

Our aim for the consultation was two-fold: we wanted to offer a definition of 'The Anglican Way' with which we were completely content, and we wanted to begin to develop educational resources which would enable this understanding of The Anglican Way to be widely available throughout the Anglican Communion, both among lay people and clergy. Drawing on work that members of TEAC had done in the past, the document 'The Anglican Way: Signposts on a Common Journey' (see below) was produced to meet that first need. We also identified a number of specific and concrete means by which the key points expressed in this document could be disseminated around the Communion. We are currently working on these. Our consultation in Singapore felt an important staging post in the ongoing life of TEAC, and its work to improve theological education in the Anglican Communion. What I would like to do in the rest of this article, however, is to seek to use the theme of transfiguration to provide a brief commentary or interpretive tool for the main sectional headings of our 'Signposts' document, *Formed by Scripture; Shaped through Worship; Ordered for Communion; Directed by God's Mission*. It feels appropriate to reflect on the work of this particular staging post in the life of TEAC in the light of the Transfiguration, that staging post on the 'Way' taken by Jesus himself. I do this mainly to test out my instinct that there is treasured wisdom to be found for Anglican Christians through the theological theme of transfiguration.

Formed by Scripture

Part of the power of the story of the Transfiguration lies in the way it is rooted so richly, through both text and symbol, in Scripture as it ex-

isted in the New Testament era. There is not only a near quote of part of Psalm 2 (and possibly also of Deuteronomy), but the whole scene becomes comprehensible only by taking into account the stories of Moses and Elijah, the role of both of these figures in the history of God's people, and the importance of mountains in the Old Testament. The language of 'shelters' or 'tabernacles' is another example of the allusive use of Scripture in the narrative of the Transfiguration. It seems deliberately designed to echo the word used to describe the 'Tabernacle' in the wilderness, as well as the name of the great autumn festival, the Feast of Tabernacles, celebrated throughout Israel's history. At the heart of the meaning of both shrine and festival is the theme of God's presence with human beings. We need to be aware of this as we hear Peter's question about building booths. The resounding silence in answer seems to suggest that the claims of both Old Testament sacred time and sacred space need to be qualified by the reality which the account of the Transfiguration proclaims: namely that God's visible presence is to be found pre-eminently in the face and flesh of Jesus Christ (compare 'the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us', *John* 1.14, which uses the same idiom). So the account of the Transfiguration both encourages us to dig deeply into Scripture and also offers us a model for a hermeneutical approach that clearly reads Scripture in the light of Christ. This can also be seen in a note which appears only in Luke's account of the Transfiguration, that Jesus, Moses and Elijah, 'were talking about the departure (*exodos*) which Jesus was to accomplish in Jerusalem.' (*Luke* 9.31) Once again the conversation demands an awareness of the scriptural foundation – the conversation makes sense only through our knowledge of Old Testament Exodus traditions. Given that this 'New Exodus' would be so different from the first, it also encourages us to reflect creatively on what 'Exodus' might mean in our own time and context. To be people of transfiguration means to engage seriously and imaginatively with our sacred text. We must be prepared to wrestle with it in a dialogue in which we are willing to be changed by it because we are also prepared to read it before the face of the Lord who promises that where his Spirit is, there is freedom.

Shaped through Worship

The Transfiguration of Jesus collapses the space between intellectual appreciation and worship. It is a place of encounter, where implicitly we are invited to meet the Holy Trinity. We cannot situate ourselves as by-standers in this story. As for Peter and James and John, an appropriate response is for us to fall down in worship. Luke of course reminds us that this event in the life of Jesus happened while Jesus was himself praying. Somehow the scriptural texts, as well as the *frisson* of the word 'transfiguration', challenge us to respond to the story with heart and mind, body and spirit together. And, as I have already suggested, the Transfiguration is a reminder that worship is not a spectator activity. Both as individuals and as part of a corporate body we are (or should be) 'shaped' through it. The Transfiguration of Christ sets in train a process that needs to lead to our own transfiguration too. It is no accident there is a tradition in Eastern Orthodox Christianity that the first icon an iconographer paints should be the icon of the Transfiguration. It is the event on which the entire theology of icons could be said to depend. Before beginning the icon, the painter prays that 'the humans who gaze at the icon will be transfigured by the power of the Holy Spirit through this particular visualization of God's love.' (*Elias Chacour*)

The insight that worship should hold together Word and Sacrament reverberates in this story. We have the divine Word speaking from heaven; we have also the stunning embodiment of the incarnation – of humanity fully revealing the glory of the divine image. As John's Gospel in particular makes transparently clear, such a theology of the incarnation – the belief that through the visible, earthly and material we can appropriate the invisible, heavenly and divine – is what underpins all sacraments, supremely Baptism and the Eucharist. The incarnation is the foundation-stone, effectively the sacrament on which all others depend.

There is an obvious emphasis in the Transfiguration on seeing 'the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ'. (*2 Corinthians* 4.6) This too is a reminder that worship is formative in all that we do. In the Old Testament, for example, worship could even be defined as 'seeing the face of God' (see for example Psalm 27.8). In his final sermon in Singapore, TEAC's Vice-Chair, Robert Paterson commented: 'So what we are about

is not simply theology. Our "God talk" is a tool, a means to lead people to the fullness of God. It is more than simply the *ability* to look God and other people in the face; it is the *longing* to look him and one another in the face and thus to reveal "the full stature of Christ" in the Church, "the fullness of him who is filling the universe in all its parts."' To be people of transfiguration also means that our worship should sear us, confronting us with the radiance of God's holiness. Unless we are willing to be changed, it is a radiance too dangerous for us to behold, yet this is also the light that will enable us to view our world, and the contexts in which we serve, with new eyes – as God already sees them.

Ordered for Communion

If you compare the accounts of Jesus' baptism (*Mark* 1.9-11) and of his transfiguration (in Mark's Gospel) the words spoken from heaven are very similar in each case. There is, however, one key difference. In the story of the baptism the words are addressed to Jesus alone: *You* are my beloved Son. In the Transfiguration they are spoken to the disciples who are present: *This* is my beloved Son. Now it is three, rather than one alone, to whom the divine Voice speaks. The Transfiguration is the first stage in a movement of enlarging the circle of communion which originates in Christ and which must be focused around him. It is a circle which will eventually embrace the whole world: icons of the Transfiguration show Jesus Christ in the middle of a blue circle, making this point through the language of iconography. As part of this process the disciples and their spiritual heirs in the church of which we are part are called into the circle of communion, not simply for themselves alone, but to enable the circle to grow beyond themselves. It is expressed powerfully in *2 Corinthians* 3.18 as we have already noted. In this verse it is unclear whether the text should be translated as 'seeing the glory of the Lord', or 'reflecting the glory of the Lord'. Perhaps the ambiguity is important, so that as we see we also reflect, to enable others in turn also to 'see'. That I believe is an instinct which resonates well with Anglican understandings of ministry and mission. Surely it is no coincidence that it is *2 Corinthians*, the letter in which Paul speaks about transfiguration, which is also the letter in which he explores most deeply his theology of ministry. Paul seems to be suggesting that ministry and the process of transfiguration are intricately interwoven. This is

an important insight for those engaged in any form of ministry within the Anglican tradition, in which the 'servant' nature of ministry is rightly emphasised. It is when such a servant perspective is most cogently expressed that communion is validated and strengthened.

Earlier I mentioned the richness of the biblical imagery that enhances the transfiguration narrative. Part of the reason of its power lies in the way two biblical threads, or 'trajectories', are brought together in a deep harmony: the 'royal' trajectory, in which conservation and tradition is important, and the 'liberation' trajectory which demands change and transformation'. Both threads are present in our Bible in both the Old and New Testaments, and perhaps the Bible speaks most compellingly precisely at the points when both these trajectories engage in a creative dialectic with each other. It is, I believe, a dialectic that many Anglicans cherish, particularly as they explore what it means to be *Ordered for Communion*. Both the official organs (the 'instruments of communion') as well as the various other bodies that exist within our Anglican Communion (such as networks and mission agencies) which both relate to the 'tradition' yet also have a creative and even prophetic freedom in their life and work. The following comment catches the importance both of fidelity to the past and of openness to possibilities for the future: 'Transformation into the future surely must have some semblance of having had a tradition. Transfiguration does not do away with what is, it changes one's perception of it, heightens it, enables it to be something revered, not in a magical sense, but with true awe. This is what happened on the mountain side when the disciples had their transfiguring experience with Jesus.' (*Martin Eggleston*) Is this where we, as Anglicans, stand as people of transfiguration?

Directed by God's Mission

One of the important aspects of the 'Signposts' statement is the place it gives to God's mission as the culmination and ultimate reason for our Anglican life. The Transfiguration, with its longer term gaze to the crucifixion and beyond and its more immediate insistence that Jesus and the disciples do not stay on the mountain-top but descend to the plain to continue Jesus' work of evangelism and healing, is a biblical narrative which reinforces this missional dimension. It points us forward to a

vision of a new future, a pathway which passes through the cross of Christ and the crosses borne by many in our world today and leads us on to resurrection and reconciliation. Perhaps it can even help to bring this future about. The awful coincidence that the dropping of the first atomic bomb fell on the Feast of Transfiguration in 1945 has somehow helped to establish the biblical story of the Transfiguration as a hope and a pledge of this new creation.

I end with two quotations which express this hope:

'It is when Jesus talks about giving his life to save the world that everything about him shines. This is the secret. It is not easy to understand.' (*Susan Sayers*)

'Transfiguration is living by vision; standing foursquare in the midst of a broken, tortured, oppressed, starving, dehumanizing reality, yet seeing the invisible, calling it to come, behaving as if it on the way, sustained by elements of it that have come already, within and among us. In those moments when people are healed, transformed, freed from addictions, obsessions, destructiveness, self worship or when groups or communities or even, rarely, whole nations glimpse the light of the transcendent in their midst, there the New Creation has come upon us. The world for one brief moment is transfigured. The beyond shines in our midst – on the way to the cross.' (*Walter Wink*)

Theological Education for the Anglican Communion (TEAC)

The Anglican Way: Signposts on a Common Journey

This document has emerged as part of a four-year process in which church leaders, theologians and educators have come together from around the world to discuss the teaching of Anglican identity, life and practice. They clarified the characteristic ways in which Anglicans understand themselves and their mission in the world. These features,

described as the 'Anglican Way', were intended to form the basis for how Anglicanism is taught at all levels of learning involving laity, clergy and bishops. This document is not intended as a comprehensive definition of Anglicanism, but it does set in place signposts which guide Anglicans on their journey of self-understanding and Christian discipleship. The journey is on-going because what it means to be Anglican will be influenced by context and history. Historically a number of different forms of being Anglican have emerged, all of which can be found in the rich diversity of present-day Anglicanism. But Anglicans also have their commonalities, and it is these which hold them together in communion through 'bonds of affection'. The signposts set out below are offered in the hope that they will point the way to a clearer understanding of Anglican identity and ministry, so that all Anglicans can be effectively taught and equipped for their service to God's mission in the world.

THE Anglican Way is a particular expression of the Christian Way of being the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church of Jesus Christ. It is formed by and rooted in Scripture, shaped by its worship of the living God, ordered for communion, and directed in faithfulness to God's mission in the world. In diverse global situations Anglican life and ministry witnesses to the incarnate, crucified and risen Lord, and is empowered by the Holy Spirit. Together with all Christians, Anglicans hope, pray and work for the coming of the reign of God.

Formed by Scripture

1. As Anglicans we discern the voice of the living God in the Holy Scriptures, mediated by tradition and reason. We read the Bible together, corporately and individually, with a grateful and critical sense of the past, a vigorous engagement with the present, and with patient hope for God's future.
2. We cherish the whole of Scripture for every aspect of our lives, and we value the many ways in which it teaches us to follow Christ faithfully in a variety of contexts. We pray and sing the Scriptures

through liturgy and hymnody. Lectionaries connect us with the breadth of the Bible, and through preaching we interpret and apply the fullness of Scripture to our shared life in the world.

3. Accepting their authority, we listen to the Scriptures with open hearts and attentive minds. They have shaped our rich inheritance: for example, the ecumenical creeds of the early Church, the Book of Common Prayer, and Anglican formularies such as the Articles of Religion, catechisms and the Lambeth Quadrilateral.
4. In our proclamation and witness to the Word Incarnate we value the tradition of scholarly engagement with the Scriptures from earliest centuries to the present day. We desire to be a true learning community as we live out our faith, looking to one another for wisdom, strength and hope on our journey. We constantly discover that new situations call for fresh expressions of a scripturally informed faith and spiritual life.

Shaped through Worship

5. Our relationship with God is nurtured through our encounter with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit in word and sacrament. This experience enriches and shapes our understanding of God and our communion with one another.
6. As Anglicans we offer praise to the Triune Holy God, expressed through corporate worship, combining order with freedom. In penitence and thanksgiving we offer ourselves in service to God in the world.
7. Through our liturgies and forms of worship we seek to integrate the rich traditions of the past with the varied cultures of our diverse communities.
8. As broken and sinful persons and communities, aware of our need of God's mercy, we live by grace through faith and continually

strive to offer holy lives to God. Forgiven through Christ and strengthened by word and sacrament, we are sent out into the world in the power of the Spirit.

Ordered for Communion

9. In our episcopally led and synodically governed dioceses and provinces, we rejoice in the diverse callings of all the baptized. As outlined in the ordinals, the threefold servant ministries of bishops, priests and deacons assist in the affirmation, coordination and development of these callings as discerned and exercised by the whole people of God.

10. As worldwide Anglicans we value our relationships with one another. We look to the Archbishop of Canterbury as a focus of unity and gather in communion with the See of Canterbury. In addition we are sustained through three formal instruments of communion: The Lambeth Conference, The Anglican Consultative Council and The Primates' Meeting. The Archbishop of Canterbury and these three instruments offer cohesion to global Anglicanism, yet limit the centralisation of authority. They rely on bonds of affection for effective functioning.

11. We recognise the contribution of the mission agencies and other international bodies such as the Mothers' Union. Our common life in the Body of Christ is also strengthened by commissions, task groups, networks of fellowship, regional activities, theological institutions and companion links.

Directed by God's Mission

12. As Anglicans we are called to participate in God's mission in the world, by embracing respectful evangelism, loving service and prophetic witness. As we do so in all our varied contexts, we bear witness to and follow Jesus Christ, the crucified and risen Saviour. We celebrate God's reconciling and life-giving mission through the creative,

costly and faithful witness and ministry of men, women and children, past and present, across our Communion.

13. Nevertheless, as Anglicans we are keenly aware that our common life and engagement in God's mission are tainted with shortcomings and failure, such as negative aspects of colonial heritage, self-serving abuse of power and privilege, undervaluing of the contributions of laity and women, inequitable distribution of resources, and blindness to the experience of the poor and oppressed. As a result, we seek to follow the Lord with renewed humility so that we may freely and joyfully spread the good news of salvation in word and deed.

14. Confident in Christ, we join with all people of good will as we work for God's peace, justice and reconciling love. We recognise the immense challenges posed by secularisation, poverty, unbridled greed, violence, religious persecution, environmental degradation, and HIV/Aids. In response, we engage in prophetic critique of destructive political and religious ideologies, and we build on a heritage of care for human welfare expressed through education, health care and reconciliation.

15. In our relationships and dialogue with other faith communities we combine witness to the Lordship of Jesus Christ with a desire for peace, and mutual respect and understanding.

16. As Anglicans, baptized into Christ, we share in the mission of God with all Christians and are deeply committed to building ecumenical relationships. Our reformed catholic tradition has proved to be a gift we are able to bring to ecumenical endeavour. We invest in dialogue with other churches based on trust and a desire that the whole company of God's people may grow into the fullness of unity to which God calls us that the world may believe the gospel.

*TEAC Anglican Way Consultation
Singapore, May 2007*

Anglican-Orthodox Contact in the 17th Century and the 'Greek College' at Oxford (1699-1705)

The Revd Dr Peter Doll

The Greek College at Oxford emerged out of an 'ecumenical moment'. The fissures in the body of the Church opened by the Reformation in the West prompted the churches of the Reform to seek a common identity and purpose with one another, a process abetted not only by the normal processes of scholarly and commercial exchange but also (for Anglicans) by the Marian and Commonwealth exiles which enabled much ecumenical contact.¹ Out of a desire both for Christian unity and for political, commercial, and theological advantage, churches on both sides of the Reformation also sought out those Christians from whom they had been divided by an even older schism, that between East and West in 1054. Western Christians regarded the Orthodox as faithful witnesses to ancient tradition and therefore sought their judgement on matters of debate between Rome and the Reformers. Had Rome been faithful to ancient tradition or had it made unwarranted additions to it? Was the Reformation truly a return to the doctrine and practice of the early Church, or had it also deviated from the original?

This article is based on articles and documents found in full in Peter M. Doll, ed. *Anglicanism and Orthodoxy 300 Years after the 'Greek College' in Oxford* (Oxford: Peter Lang) 2006.

1 For an overview of the subject, see Ruth Rouse and Stephen Charles Neill, eds. *A History of the Ecumenical Movement 1517-1948*, 2nd ed. (London: S. P. C. K.) 1967. Among more focussed studies are *Anglican Initiatives in Christian Unity. Lectures Delivered in Lambeth Palace Library 1966*. (S. P. C. K., 1967); W. B. Patterson, *King James VI and I and the Reunion of Christendom* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press) 1997; Lars Österlin, *Churches of Northern Europe in Profile. A Thousand Years of Anglo-Nordic Relations* (Norwich: Canterbury Press) 1995; Norman Sykes, *William Wake, Archbishop of Canterbury* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press) 1957; Eamon Duffy, 'Correspondance Fraternelle; The SPCK, the SPG, and the Churches of Switzerland in the War of the Spanish Succession'. *Studies in Church History* Subsidia 2 (1979) 251-80.

The Church of England for its part particularly prided itself on its adherence to the standards of the 'primitive church' of the first centuries. Its theologians were students and admirers of the Greek Fathers and the Greek Liturgy. Like the Orthodox, Anglicans refused to acknowledge the supremacy of Rome and maintained the equality of all bishops and the apostolic succession. For international support of its position against Roman Catholicism, the Church of England therefore looked to the Eastern Orthodox churches (most of them under the rule of the Ottoman Empire). Anglicans saw the Orthodox both as the legitimate heirs of the early Church and as potential allies against the papal pretensions of Rome and the political and commercial ambitions of Catholic France and Spain.²

For the Orthodox, all this attention from the West was a decidedly mixed blessing. While it opened to some access to higher education not otherwise available to them under Turkish rule, it also meant that their would-be benefactors put Orthodox traditions and identity under severe pressure. The *Collegio San Atanasio* in Rome (founded 1577) insisted on acknowledgement of papal supremacy; even when they allowed the Greeks their liturgical tradition, the Romans demanded they accept the Western doctrine of transubstantiation, imposing a scholastic idiom foreign to the Greek tradition. Both the Greek College in Oxford and the *Collegium Orientale Theologicum* run by the German Pietists in Halle would likewise expose the Greeks to modes of thought that challenged Eastern church life. In all cases, the danger was that the Orthodox students might become estranged from the living tradition to which they belonged, adopting (in what George Florovsky called a *pseudomorphosis*) theological categories, terminology,

2 Vasilios N. Makrides, ed. *Alexander Helladius the Larissaeon* (Larissa: Ethnographical Historical Museum of Larissa) 2003; Judith Pinnington, *Anglicans and Orthodox: Unity and Subversion 1559-1725* (Leominster: Gracewing) 2003; V. T. Istavridis, *Orthodoxy & Anglicanism*, trans. Colin Davey (London: S. P. C. K.) 1966; A. M. Allchin, ed. *We Belong to One Another: Methodist, Anglican & Orthodox Essays* (London: Epworth) 1965; Methodios Fouyas, *Orthodoxy, Roman Catholicism and Anglicanism* (London: Oxford University Press) 1972; Nicholas Lossky, *Lancelot Andrewes the Preacher: The Origins of the Mystical Theology of the Church of England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press) 1991; Christopher Knight, ' "People so beset with saints": Anglican Attitudes to Orthodoxy 1555-1725', *Sobornost* 10 (1988) 2, 25-36.

and forms of argument alien to the Orthodox tradition.³ Some of the students who came to the West were able not only to familiarise themselves with currents in Western thought but also to be articulate defenders of the Orthodox tradition. Others would retreat behind a defensive position of Orthodox superiority.

While at first glance a college for Greeks might seem an anomaly in an eighteenth-century Oxford not noted for its international links, the college was in fact the culmination of contacts between Anglicans and Orthodox over nearly a century. The late twentieth century has itself been another 'ecumenical moment', a time that has awoken in many Christians a deep longing for unity and has inspired painful yet abundantly fruitful ecumenical dialogue among many churches. Nevertheless, the ecumenical movement seems to have left most denominations agonisingly far from unity in word and sacrament. Is it possible that the experience of the Greek College and of Anglican and Orthodox relations in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries can offer any guidance or inspiration to the relations between these two communions in the present?

The initiative that marks the genesis of the Greek College was the invitation of 1615 from King James VI and I and Archbishop George Abbot to Patriarch of Constantinople Cyril Lukaris to send Orthodox scholars to study at the English universities. In the process, official relations between the Church of England and the Greek Orthodox Church were established. Lukaris represented just the sort of churchman the Anglicans wanted to work with – deeply anti-Roman Catholic, well acquainted with and sympathetic to Calvinist theology, determined to bring the Orthodox Church out of its isolation and to help it come to terms with new theological ways of thought. The scheme brought to Oxford two scholars who made the most of the opportunity provided, Metrophanes Kritopoulos and Nathaniel Konopios. In the words of another contemporary Greek scholar, Christophoros Angelos, England proved to be a place where the Orthodox might find wise men among whom they might keep their religion and yet not lose their learning.

Kritopoulos was the most remarkable of these visiting scholars. At Balliol College he engaged in the study especially of the church Fathers and of the ancient Greek language and literature. Among contem-

³ See Florovsky in Rouse and Neill, *History of the Ecumenical Movement*, 183.

porary Orthodox theologians, he was seen as having the finest education and the widest ecclesiastical horizons. Although he engaged fully in the life of the college, he seems not to have received communion there (though this was unlikely to have been the case with Konopios, who was appointed a Canon of Christ Church by William Laud). Kritopoulos put his knowledge of Western theology to the best possible use, working continuously for a rapprochement between the Orthodox and the Reformed churches, encouraging them to accept the Orthodox respect for Tradition, including his church's full sacramental and devotional life and the Fathers as authoritative interpreters of Scripture.

The flourishing Greek community in London today had its counterpart in the seventeenth century. One of its leaders was Joseph Georgirenes, one-time Archbishop of Samos and builder of a Greek Orthodox church in London. All opponents of the papacy in this period were sure of a warm welcome in London, whose bishop, Henry Compton, was heartily – 'even fanatically' – anti-papal. While he warmly supported plans for the Greek church, he was determined (in a period seething with rumours of the popish plot) that its worship should bear no taint of anything remotely popish, hence his forbidding the use of icons and of prayers for the dead. Georgirenes had the further misfortunes of making politically inappropriate friendships and of falling foul of sharp building practice and a devious landlord so that in the end the Greeks lost their church. The archbishop tried to recoup his position by proposing in 1677 a college for Greeks in Oxford, but this too proved an idea in advance of its time. Although contemporary Anglicans proved sadly incapable of seeing Orthodox worship except through spectacles tinted by fear of popery, it is notable that although Compton forbade the use of icons and prayers for the dead, no further alteration of the Orthodox Liturgy seems to have been contemplated.

One of Georgirenes' closest Anglican contacts was Dr Thomas Smith of Magdalen College, Oxford. Because of his zeal for oriental languages, Smith was known by his contemporaries at Oxford as 'the Rabbi', and he put this linguistic facility to good use when from 1668–70 he was chaplain to the British ambassador to the Sublime Porte. As a result of his time there, he published an *Account of the Greek Church* as an introduction to Orthodoxy for western Christians. It was also an apologia for Compton's strictures on the Greek church in London. Smith sums up in his own person many of the tensions that constrained

a fuller Anglican understanding of the Orthodox position – a genuine sympathy and respect for the Greeks living under persecution; a recognition of the primitive emphases that bound Orthodox and Anglicans together; and an inability to see much of the Eastern tradition except as corrupted by some of the same faults as Romanism.

John Covel succeeded Smith as chaplain in Constantinople, and he too would eventually publish a careful account of what he saw and did there, taking a particular interest in the debate over that most controverted of doctrines, transubstantiation. Covel was familiar with the key players, both Greek and French, in the drama that led to the declaration of the Synod of Jerusalem (1672, sometimes known as the 'Synod of Bethlehem') which marked the closest approximation of Eastern Orthodoxy to Tridentine Catholicism. While Covel's *The Greek Church with Reflections on their Present Doctrine and Discipline* (1722) is written in an aggressive polemical style often unfriendly to the Orthodox, his journals reveal another side to him – full of painstaking detail and sympathetic interest in the people and religious practices he met.

Benjamin Woodroffe, the founder of the Greek College, was a Canon of Christ Church, Oxford and was briefly Dean under James II. In 1692, he was admitted as Principal of Gloucester Hall, the dilapidated remains of the Benedictine Gloucester College, and now empty of students. Interested in the Greek Church since his twenties, Woodroffe set about raising interest in and support for a Greek College as part of his plans to revive the fortunes of Gloucester Hall. He attracted the interest of Lord Paget, Ambassador to the Sublime Porte, and the support of the Levant Company. Woodroffe's prospectus, *A Model of a College to be settled in the University for the Education of some Youths of the Greek Church*, proposed that twenty youths between the ages of 14 and 20 be trained under Woodroffe to be clergy and schoolmasters in their own country.

Woodroffe fleshed out his plans in a letter in Greek to Callinicus, Patriarch of Constantinople. The proposed programme of study was ambitious: 'First the Latin, Greek and Hebrew tongues; then philosophy of all kinds; by turns medicine and mathematics; further, theology, as purely set down in the Gospel, and set forth in the ancient canons and Greek Fathers; or anything else, or in any other way, acceptable to you, we will make it our business to teach.' It was hoped that the Patriarchs of Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem would

each send five students, who would be brought to England in the Levant Company's ships. It became clear, however, that the Ottoman authorities would never countenance the Church sending Greek students abroad, and so the Levant Company had to take charge of recruitment.

The first students, a batch of five, did not arrive until 1699. Although there were no more than fifteen alumni of the college, it did achieve a measure of public recognition and success. On 2 September 1701, Archbishop Neophytus of Philippopolis (Plovdiv in present-day Bulgaria) and his official retinue of twelve were feted by the University of Oxford; Neophytus received an honorary D.D. A contemporary observer, Edward Thwaites, a fellow of the Queen's College (and no admirer of Woodroffe), reported that it was 'a mighty show and the solemnity was very decent'. Afterwards, the Archbishop made

a very excellent speech, all in plain proper hellenistick greek; and continued speaking near half an hour, all with great respect to the house, great gravity, great boldness and a very manly voice [...] hee's a man of admirable aire and makes a gracefull appearance. [...] Dr Woodrooff has exerted himself and shown us that he does understand Greek.

Neophytus received an identical welcome in Cambridge and was taken to Court in London by the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of London and introduced to William III. Such was the popular interest in the Archbishop that his portrait was engraved from life by Robert White.

An even greater day was in August 1702, when Queen Anne visited the college. Among the many addresses presented to her was an ode in Greek hexameters spoken by the senior student, Simon Homerus:

... What can We
Poor Grecian Youths bring as our Gift to Thee?
Our Poverty, Great Queen, is All's our Own,
And this the greatest Present to the Throne;
Give more who can! With this we Heaven bring,
And with't our payment leave to that Great King
Whose the Debt is, what's to his subjects done,
What to a Distrest Church, ne'er goes alone....

The ode was printed by the University Press along with two Greek Lectures given by Georgios Aptal and Georgios Maroules on *The Sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures*. In their letter of dedication to Queen Anne, the students said their countrymen 'sent us to the famous Athens of the British, so that ... we might re-light and re-kindle the lamp of truth and wisdom ... which once came from us to shine brightly upon the British and many others as well.'

Clearly the Greek students did study and learn, but for all the abundance of references to the Greek Fathers in the lectures, it is also clear that what they learned was shaped (like the attitudes of Bishop Compton, Thomas Smith, and John Covel) by Anglican fears of Popery. The students of the Greek College were encouraged to undergo a *pseudomorphosis*, adopting theological categories, terminology, and forms of argument alien to the Orthodox tradition. As Frangiskos Prossalantis, the student of the College who would angrily attack Woodroffe in *The Heretical Teacher Cross-Examined by his Orthodox Pupil* (Amsterdam, 1706), pointed out, Aptal and Maroules in their lectures on Scripture failed to uphold the Orthodox understanding of Tradition as the 'unwritten Word of God'. (Given the degree to which even modern ecumenical discussions are confused by differences of language, tradition, and culture, we should avoid being overly critical of misunderstandings arising from these earlier encounters.)

In the end, it was not theological differences that killed off the Greek College but an international conspiracy. Apparently, the Roman Catholic Church was determined the college must not be allowed to succeed. Three of the students were approached by a person belonging to the chapel of the Portuguese ambassador in London. Late in 1702 or in 1703 three of the students ran away. They were taken first to Holland, then to Brussels, where they were interviewed by the Papal Internuncio, who was apparently particularly disappointed that Homerius was not among them. They stayed at the Irish College at Louvain for five months, where an attempt was made to convert them to Roman Catholicism. They were sent to Paris and then to Rome to be presented to the Pope. On the way they lost their nerve and at Genoa sought out the English Consul to ship them back to England. Another student, Deacon Seraphim of Mitylene, translator of a Modern Greek version of the New Testament published in London in 1703, behaved even more scandalously, fleeing to Holland after being accused of hav-

ing violated a small girl in London. Two others, Matthew of Paros and Theodore Basilius of the Black Sea, were lured away to the University of Halle by the promise of Saxon Protestants of better conditions of accommodation and study.

Finally in 1705, the Greek Church forbade any other students going to Oxford. Jeremias Xantheus, Registrar of the Greek Church at Constantinople, wrote, 'The irregular life of some priests and laymen of the Greek Church living in London has greatly disturbed the Church. Therefore the Church has also prevented those who wish to go and study at Oxford.' The building that had housed the College became known as 'Woodroffe's Folly'. Woodroffe himself, who according to his own account had spent between £2000 and £3000 on educating the Greeks but had received only £400 from the Crown, ended up being incarcerated in the Fleet Prison for debt.

The failure of the Greek College marked the end of official cooperation between the Greek and English churches. With the accession of the House of Hanover to the British throne, high church concerns no longer had priority, and the internal disputes within the church that led to the suspension of Convocation in 1717 meant that the opportunity for ecumenical initiatives was more circumscribed than ever. But the Nonjurors kept alive Anglican contact with the Orthodox in the hope of receiving a lifeline from the wider church. They sought unity with not only the Greek but also the Russian Orthodox. Although the Nonjurors' correspondence with the Orthodox Patriarchs was cordial and constructive in many ways, the Orthodox insisted the Anglicans must submit on all points of disagreement; the invocation of saints, the worship of images, and transubstantiation remained intractable barriers to unity.

From the perspective of the 'ecumenical moments' of the seventeenth century and of the late twentieth century, what assessment can be made of the Greek College in Oxford? For Steven Runciman, the scheme was ill-thought-out, and an Oxford education was inappropriate for Greek priests destined to live under Turkish rule.⁴ Judith Pinnington, the most recent historian of Anglicanism and Orthodoxy, has dismissed it as an 'ill-judged and exceedingly ill-timed project for

Greek education in England',⁵ an aspect of the 'subversion' of Orthodoxy referred to in her title. This judgement arises in part out of her conviction that the Church of England was crippled by the twin traps of establishment and western epistemology, so that even the Caroline divines found it impossible to achieve a theological rapprochement with Orthodoxy or 'to break through to a spirit of liberty in the Divine Presence'.⁶ Pinnington's conviction that by the eighteenth century any Anglican 'hidden givenness of sacramental life' had been 'largely buried under massive historical detritus' has convinced her that by the time of the Greek College Anglicans and Orthodox were a universe apart.⁷ But it is possible to concur with this assessment only by steadfastly ignoring the abundant recent scholarship testifying to the continuing vitality of the high church sacramental tradition in the eighteenth century.⁸

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries progress towards unity for both Anglicans and Orthodox depended on the other church submitting in all points of disagreement. The Anglicans expected the Orthodox to worship without icons and prayers for the dead and to deny transubstantiation. The Orthodox Patriarchs expected the Non-jurors to accept all these unequivocally. If submission is the only standard of success we can apply in our ecumenical endeavours, then both the Greek College and more recent ecumenical dialogue will indeed be disappointing. Relations between Orthodox and Anglicans

5 Pinnington, *Anglicans and Orthodox*, 96.

6 *Ibid.* 40, 220.

7 *Ibid.* 223.

8 Pinnington acknowledges the existence of J. C. D. Clark's 'theories' concerning the eighteenth-century Church of England (referring primarily to his landmark study *English Society 1688–1832* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press) 1985) and she admires the work of Peter Nockles (*The Oxford Movement in Context: Anglican High Churchmanship 1760–1837* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press) 1994), but she could profitably also have consulted John Walsh, Colin Haydon, and Stephen Taylor, eds. *The Church of England c. 1689–c. 1833* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press) 1993; F. C. Mather, *High Church Prophet: Bishop Samuel Horsely (1733–1806) and the Caroline Tradition in the Later Georgian Church* (Oxford: Clarendon Press) 1992; Jeremy Gregory, *Restoration, Reformation, and Reform, 1660–1828: Archbishops of Canterbury and Their Diocese* (Oxford: Clarendon Press) 2000; W. M. Jacob, *Lay People and Religion in the Early Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press) 1996. These and other studies confirm and deepen Clark's insights.

have never been comfortable or easy. But they have been enduring because there has been an underlying sense of spiritual and theological 'resonance' – a common apprehension of the sources of our Christian identity – which continues to draw the two to one another. This resonance of theological ideas and practice is a recurring theme in a recent study of Orthodox and Wesleyan spirituality; it promises to be 'of great service to ecumenism and contemporary Christian and human understanding'.⁹ The hymns and other writings of the Wesleys are paradigmatic of the patristic mind in eighteenth-century high church Anglican spirituality, and Orthodox scholars are full of admiration for the living Spirit of the Divine Presence these works evince.

For all those who search for mutual understanding between Orthodox and Anglican, organic unity must remain a gospel imperative and ultimate goal. For some Anglicans and other western Christians, that unity is most appropriately achieved by conversion to Orthodoxy. But others will wish to continue to work for that goal from within the body of Anglican churches as they are for all their limitations. Such Anglicans perceive in themselves, as they do in the Orthodox churches, bodies of faithful Christians seeking to live out the Gospel in communities shaped by the contingency of history; they also recognise resonances of faith and practice drawing them toward the Orthodox despite those barriers of history and culture. As Anglican and Orthodox alike recognise (in the words of Richard Meux Benson, S.S.J.E.) that 'we have not to maintain the truth, but to live in the truth so that it may maintain us', so then the Spirit of truth will lead them into all truth.

Archbishop Michael Ramsey continues to be a particular inspiration for those Anglicans seeking unity with the Orthodox, so it is particularly appropriate to turn to him for a final reflection (entirely if unintentionally appropriate) on the contribution of the Greek College to Anglican–Orthodox relations. In *The Gospel and the Catholic Church* he wrote:

While the Anglican church is vindicated by its place in history, with a strikingly balanced witness to Gospel and Church and sound learning, its

9 S. T. Kimbrough, ed. *Orthodox and Wesleyan Spirituality* (Crestwood, N. Y.: St Vladimir's Seminary Press) 2002, 17.

greater vindication lies in its pointing through its own history to something of which it is a fragment. Its credentials are its incompleteness, with the tension and the travail in its soul. It is clumsy and untidy, it baffles neatness and logic. For it is sent not to commend itself as 'the best type of Christianity', but by its very brokenness to point to the universal Church wherein all have died.¹⁰

The Greek College shared in full measure that clumsiness and untidiness. But Anglicans at that time had a strong sense of their obligation to abide by the witness of the universal church, and they sought to make concrete expressions of unity with the whole Church. For all its faults the College was such a sign of Anglicans recognising their incompleteness, of reaching out to Orthodoxy to receive its primitive continuity and apostolic witness and in turn to offer such of their own gifts as they hoped might serve the needs of the Greeks. If Woodroffe's College appeared a failure in its own day, his vision was not in vain, but still strikes resonant chords despite all that divides the churches. The best hope that the scholarships of King James and the Greek College represented, of providing a place in England where Anglicans and Orthodox could meet and pray together and learn from one another has been realised in the Institute for Orthodox Christian Studies in Cambridge. Indeed the original model has been improved; it is as if the competing colleges – the *Collegio San Atanasio*, the *Collegium Orientale Theologicum*, and the Greek College – have all joined together with the Orthodox as equals. The Institute is an integral part of the Cambridge Theological Federation, representing a range of Christian traditions (Roman Catholic, Anglican, Reformed, Methodist, and now Orthodox). The Institute is pan-Orthodox and is thus ideally placed to share Orthodox insights on the common Christian inheritance.

May both Anglicans and Orthodox grow into a fuller understanding and appreciation of the tradition that unites them, so that it may yet more powerfully draw Christians today toward rediscovering that unity which is the Lord's gift to his Church.

¹⁰ Arthur Michael Ramsey, *The Gospel and the Catholic Church*, 2nd ed. (London: Longmans, Green and Co) 1956, 220.

Ecumenical Theological Education: Some Reflections from an Oriental Perspective

Sebastian Brock

THE Pro Oriente Foundation in Vienna, established in 1964 by the late Franciscus Cardinal König in order to promote ecumenical dialogue between Eastern and Western Christian traditions, commenced its activities with a series of influential 'non-official' meetings between Catholic and Oriental Orthodox theologians (1971-1988) which proved of considerable importance for subsequent dialogue at an official level.¹ More recently, in 1994, Pro Oriente opened up a completely new initiative, under the title 'Syriac Dialogue', the aim of which was to bring together theologians from all the different Syriac traditions.² Whereas the both the Catholic and the Oriental Orthodox Churches represent two different traditions of christology, one accepting the doctrinal definition set down at the Council of Chalcedon (AD 451), and the other rejecting it,³ by contrast, the Syriac Churches span *three* different christological traditions: besides the Chalcedonian Churches (Maronite, Syrian Catholic, Chaldean, Syro-Malabar and Syro-Malankara) and the Oriental Orthodox (Syrian Orthodox and Malankara Orthodox), there is also the Church of the East (Ancient and Assyrian) at the other end of the christological spectrum. This of course meant that the theological divisions were even more complicated, and on the surface the more difficult to heal in view of their mutually contradictory verbal formulations in matters of christology. It is on the basis of the experience of

¹ The main papers from these meetings were published by Pro Oriente under the title *Five Vienna Consultations. Select Papers* (Vienna, 1993).

² Information about the progress of this 'Syriac Dialogue' can be found in my 'The Syriac Churches in ecumenical dialogue on Christology', in A. O'Mahony (ed.), *Eastern Christianity. Studies in Modern History, Religion and Politics* (London, 2004), 44-65.

³ The Chalcedonian Churches (Eastern Orthodox, Catholic, and Reformed) uphold a two-nature, or 'dyophysite', christology, whereas the Oriental Orthodox Churches uphold a one-nature, or 'miophysite', christology.

having acted as an academic adviser at several of the meetings of the Syriac Dialogue that the present reflections are offered.

Fossilized stereotypes

The non-Chalcedonian Churches have traditionally been called either 'Monophysite' or 'Nestorian', and generally considered as 'heretical', or at the very best, as schismatic. The use of these terms originates in the Chalcedonian polemical literature of the fifth and sixth centuries, and their intention was derogatory. With hindsight one can say that it was also deliberately misleading. Since both the Catholic West and Orthodox East virtually lost touch with the non-Chalcedonian Churches from the time of the Arab invasions of the seventh century and onward, these polemical terms have continued in widespread use, and although today they are rightly avoided in theologically-informed literature, they are still regularly to be found in almost all academic histories of the Churches. The very first – and most elementary – step in any form of ecumenical education needs to be a strict avoidance of any such traditional polemical terminology: not only are such terms often deeply offensive but they are also highly misleading, owing to theological connotations to which they give rise.

Thus, to take these two particular terms as an example: 'Monophysite' has fairly regularly in the past been understood (and is still in some quarters) as meaning 'Eutychian', a position which holds that the incarnate Christ is consubstantial with the Father, but *not* with us. This, however, does *not* represent the position of the Oriental Orthodox Churches, and has never done so: in fact these Churches specifically reject it as heretical, just as do all the Chalcedonian Churches and the Church of the East.⁴ It is of course useful to have a descriptive adjectival term, and fortunately a much more suitable – and purely descriptive – one is now coming into use: 'Miaphysite' (that is, holding that the incarnate Christ has one nature *out of* two, as opposed to the 'Dyophysite' Chalcedonian definition that the incarnate Christ exists *in* two natures).

4 For a christological formulation which usefully unites all three christological traditions, see below.

The term 'Nestorian', traditionally applied to the Church of the East by all the other Churches, is equally misleading and pernicious.⁵ This is not just because it implies that the Church was in some way founded by Nestorius in the early fifth century, but above all because the theological connotations of the name 'Nestorius' differ radically: for the Church of the East, Nestorius was a rather dimly-known figure whom they honour in the Liturgy as one of the upholders of the 'dyophysite' christology, against the 'miaphysite' christology of Cyril of Alexandria (as understood by the Oriental Orthodox Churches). By contrast, to the Chalcedonian Churches, and above all to the Oriental Orthodox, the term 'Nestorian' implies a definitely heretical position that radically divides Christ into two separate persons, the Son of God and the son of Mary, which is not a position ever held by the Church of the East.

Polemical liturgical texts

In the case of the various Syriac Churches references can be found here and there in their liturgical texts to persons regarded as heretical. Thus, in some Syrian Orthodox liturgical texts reference will be made to 'the accursed Nestorius', whereas in liturgical texts of the Church of the East it will be Cyril (of Alexandria) or Severus of Antioch who will be anathematised. One of the most remarkable – but little known, and even less imitated – unilateral ecumenical actions undertaken by a Church in recent times was the lifting, by the Synod of the Assyrian Church of the East in 1997, of all anathemas and condemnations of theologians (notably Cyril of Alexandria and Severus of Antioch) honoured by other Churches. This admirable initiative has unfortunately not been taken up by other Churches. Although the Joint Commission for Theological Dialogue between the Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox Churches agreed, at their meeting in 1993,⁶ that mutual anathemas

5 For further detail, see my 'The "Nestorian" Church: a lamentable misnomer', in J.F. Coakley and K. Parry (eds), *The Church of the East: Life and Thought = Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library, Manchester*, 78:3 (1996), 23-35 (reprinted in *Fire from Heaven. Studies in Syriac Theology and Liturgy* (Aldershot, 2006), chapter 1).

6 See C. Chaillot and A. Belopolsky (eds), *Towards Unity. The Theological Dialogue between the Orthodox Church and the Oriental Orthodox Churches* (Geneva, 1998), 67-8.

and condemnations should simultaneously be lifted, this has not yet been put into effect.

Polemical readings of church history

Just as almost all accounts of ecclesiastical history in Western Europe in the sixteenth century will be found to be biased in one way or another, and in many cases accompanied by religious polemic, so too in those histories of the Church which deal with the Churches of the Middle East. This applies both to works written by scholars from the Western Churches, whether Orthodox, Catholic or Reformed, and to those written from the point of view of one or other of the Oriental Churches. Thus almost all histories of the Church authored by Western scholars are written from a Chalcedonian point of view, with the result that the non-Chalcedonian Churches are either marginalized or altogether ignored. Sometimes the polemical aspect may lie just beneath the surface of the narrative, or take the form of condescension, while at others the antagonism may be openly expressed. Only in extremely rare cases is there an effort on the part of an author to be even-handed, and to try to envisage the situation from the point of view of 'the other'.

What needs doing in theological education

In seminaries and theological colleges there needs to be informed and even-handed instruction concerning other Churches. In particular there should be a strict avoidance of misleading terms, such as 'Monophysite' and 'Nestorian', however deeply embedded these have become in traditional western usage. Also of the greatest importance is the imparting of a proper understanding of the doctrinal positions of the non-Chalcedonian Churches: this involves the realization that the verbally conflicting christological formulations are only on a surface level, and are due to (1) different understandings of the same technical terms (such as 'nature'), and (2) the different genuinely heretical positions that each particular Church is trying to counter. In this context, the Definition of Faith laid down at the Council of Chalcedon needs to be seen as just one of several different possible christological formulations, and *not* as exclusive of all others. It is not a case of either/or, but of both/and. In Pro Oriente's Syriac Dialogue, a useful basic formulation that is ac-

cepted by the whole range of Syriac Churches is the statement that 'the incarnate Christ is consubstantial with the Father and at the same time consubstantial with us'.

Much the same applies to the teaching of church history. This requires presenting the various divisions between different Churches in an even-handed and balanced way, using the emergence of these divisions as a means of understanding both the causes of divisions and the ways in which they might be overcome.

To back up all this, appropriate textbooks are of course required, and in many cases older textbooks will require replacing completely. This is an area where there could be fruitful cooperation and consultation between the different Churches in the course of producing new textbooks.

In Western liturgical reform emphasis has been given to the removal from liturgical texts of phraseology that can today be seen as anti-Semitic; a need for this can also be felt in some of the liturgical texts of the different Eastern Churches, but for a variety of different reasons this is harder to accomplish. What could, however, be much more easily achieved is the removal of references to anathematised persons, where the persons in question are revered in the tradition of another Church. Where passages with anathemas are felt necessary, then it should be positions, rather than persons who are specifically anathematised. This is important since the person anathematized may be another Church's saint, whereas the position will turn out to be one that is equally anathematised by that other Church. Thus, for example, in Syrian Orthodox liturgical texts, wherever Nestorius is anathematised, what is meant is the position of those who hold that there are two 'Persons' in the incarnate Christ, resulting in a radical differentiation between the 'two Sons', the Son of God and the son of Mary. This is a position rejected equally by the Church of the East, whereas 'Nestorius' is someone whose memory they revere.

As mentioned above, the Assyrian Church of the East's eminently praiseworthy lifting of all anathemas against saints of other Churches, is not a step that has yet been followed by any other Church.

A different sort of approach would be to incorporate into the liturgical calendar certain prominent saints from other Churches. Thus, for example, some Orthodox churches in Britain also commemorate

certain saints of the Celtic Church, alongside the traditional saints of the Orthodox calendar.

Wider dissemination

Beyond the specific sphere of theological education, there is also an urgent need for the wider dissemination of knowledge among the laity. This can be achieved through a number of different means. First of all, if theological colleges and seminaries provide those who attend them with a good grounding in an awareness of the teaching and history of the different Churches, then at a parish level priests trained in them will be in a position to pass on to their people a proper concern for greater ecumenical openness. Secondly, when catechetical or other educational literature is produced in a particular Church, it is important that due attention should also be paid to imparting some basic understanding of the different Church traditions.⁷ Thirdly, on a local level, in those localities where (for example) there are communities from one or more of the different oriental Churches present, opportunities for cooperation and for mutual learning experiences on either side could with advantage be sought out.

Finally, there is need for appropriate information to be made available directly for the benefit of the wider public.⁸ Here, it is of great importance that standard dictionaries and encyclopaedias dealing with Christianity should provide proper coverage of, and accurate information about, the non-Chalcedonian Churches. But above all, this is clearly an area where imaginative use ought to be made of the possibilities of the Internet. Thus, for example, it might be suggested that, alongside websites run by individual Church bodies, different Churches might collaborate in organising ecumenical websites where reliable information about the doctrinal teaching of the different Churches

⁷ A commendable example is provided by A.J. Salim's *Captivated by Your Teachings: A Resource Book for Adult Maronite Catholics* (Tucson, Arizona, 2002).

⁸ Here one might single out Christine Chaillot's informative, and at the same time very personal, introductions to the different Oriental Orthodox Churches, intended primarily for (Chalcedonian) Orthodox readers: *The Malankara Orthodox Church* (Geneva, 1996), *The Syrian Orthodox Church of Antioch and All the East* (Geneva, 1998), *The Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church Tradition* (Paris, 2002), *The Coptic Orthodox Church* (Paris, 2005). A further book, on the Armenian Orthodox Church, is in preparation.

involved might be set out, and information provided about each other's liturgical traditions and religious customs and history.

The last half century has witnessed an enormous emigration of Christians, above all from the Middle East, to countries of Western Europe, the Americas and Australia. The majority of these Christians come from Churches which are not, or are only scarcely, known to the vast majority of Western Christians. The presence of these Diaspora communities in Western countries thus makes it all the more urgent and important for the different Western Churches to become aware of the very different historical experience of these other Churches, and to incorporate knowledge about them into their programmes of theological education.

The Work of the Centre of Eastern and Orthodox Christianity

Erica C.D. Hunter

THE Centre of Eastern and Orthodox Christianity (CEOC) was formally ratified in 2007 as an officially constituted centre of the School of Oriental and African Studies in the University of London. Based in the Department for the Study of Religions, CEOC focuses on the legacy of Syriac Christianity, namely the 'Church of the East' and the 'Syrian Orthodox Church', as well as the Uniate Churches, i.e. the Chaldaean and Syrian Catholic Churches.

The principal aims of CEOC are to augment undergraduate and postgraduate teaching in Eastern and Orthodox Christianity of the B.A. programme and the Eastern Christianity trajectory in the M.A. Study of Religions. The Centre also provides a forum for Eastern and Orthodox Christian studies for staff and students within SOAS and for scholars from other institutions and organisations; and seeks to foster closer links between SOAS and other individuals and institutions with an academic interest in Eastern and Orthodox Christian Studies.

The Centre actively promotes Eastern and Orthodox Christian Studies by organising and hosting national and international conferences, workshops and seminars that are open to both scholars and the general public. It places a particular emphasis on offering support to the various Syriac communities in London and the Middle East. This year, the *Annual Lecture in Eastern and Orthodox Christianity* will be in aid of the Syrian Orthodox community's initiative to build their own church in London. Dr. Sebastian Brock (Oxford) will deliver a lecture on 'Creative Uses of the Syriac Bible in Syriac Literature' at 6.30 P.M., Thursday 26 June 26 (Brunei Gallery Lecture Theatre, SOAS). The lecture is free and open to the public.

Further events envisaged to be held under the aegis of CEOC during 2008/2009 include a series of three free public lectures on the theme of the Syriac Bible that are scheduled to take place in October 2008, December 2008 and February 2009. Details of speakers and papers will be

confirmed. These lectures will make links with various charities that assist displaced Iraqis in Jordan and Syria. It is also hoped to arrange a viewing of selected Syriac manuscripts from the renowned collection held by the University Library, Cambridge. Discussions are already taking place with the Near Eastern Librarian at the University Library and details of the event will be confirmed.

The annual *Christianity in Iraq Seminar Day*, which was inaugurated in 2004, forms the main academic event of CEOC. These days aim to explore the Christian heritage of Iraq through a series of academic papers, given by internationally acknowledged experts, that are coupled with discussions by the clergy and members of the Iraqi Christian communities. The fifth annual *Christianity in Iraq Seminar Day* was held on Saturday, 5 April 2008, and examined the 'Syriac Bible in Iraq and its legacy'. Previous years' topics have encompassed Monasticism in Iraq (2007), Muslim-Christian dialogue (2006), and Mission and Message (2005). The annual *Christianity in Iraq Seminar Day* is sponsored by the *British Institute for the Study of Iraq* and by the *Anglican and Eastern Churches Association*. The support of both of these organisations is very much valued by CEOC.

Links have been established with the *Philip Usber Memorial Fund* and, currently, discussions are underway for the sponsorship of a post-graduate student to conduct research, leading to a doctoral degree, on the impact of the Iraqi Christian refugees in Syria.

Christianity in Iraq V Seminar Day, 5 April 2008.

The Director of SOAS, Prof. Paul Webley opened the day. Dr. Ted Proferes, Head of the Department for the Study of Religions also spoke about the teaching and research profile of Eastern Christianity. Dr. Eleanor Coghill of the *British Institute for the Study of Iraq* addressed its interests in Iraq, as well as drawing attention to the programme of bringing Iraqi scholars to England for training and the current fund-raising campaign.

The morning session of papers on the Syriac Bible (the Peshitta) commenced after a maqam recital by Khyam Allami (Department of Music, SOAS). Dr. George Kiraz (Piscataway, New Jersey, USA), 'The

Syriac Bible from Ancient Codices to Electronic Verses', showed the extraordinary advances that have been made in the computer studies of the Peshitta. Prof. Bas Ter Haar Romeny (Leiden), 'The Interpretation of the Bible in the Syriac Tradition', gave an overview of the development of the different Syriac Bible texts. Turning to the international legacy of the Peshitta, Dr. Istvan Perczel (Tübingen-Budapest), 'Syriac Bible Manuscripts in India', discussed the findings of a project that is recording the collections of Syriac manuscripts in Indian repositories. The final paper of the morning, by Mr. Mark Dickens (SOAS, London), 'The Syriac Bible in Central Asia', demonstrated the extraordinary capacity of the Syriac Bible to be translated into a variety of languages, including Soghdian and Old Turkic. The morning concluded with a brief presentation by Dr. Basil As-Souffi on the current project of the Syrian Orthodox Church to build its own church in London. He also gave shocking news to the audience: the shooting of a Syrian Orthodox priest that day in Baghdad.

After an Italian buffet lunch, the afternoon session commenced after another maqam recital by Khyam Allami. The Revd Khoshaba Georges (Ancient Church of the East) spoke about 'The Peshitta Aramaic Bible' and its unique heritage. Dr. Erica Hunter read the paper by Mr. Robin beth Shamuel entitled, 'The Syriac Bible in the Private Assyrian schools in Iraq'. Mr. Beth Shamuel, formerly of Baghdad and now a doctoral student at the University of Leiden, The Netherlands, had hoped to attend the day, but could not obtain a visa in time. Another musical recital, this time of Aramaic offertory hymns, was given by Shammas Tony of the Syrian Catholic church preceding the paper by Dr. Joseph Seferta on 'The Jesuit Contribution to Christian Education in Iraq'. Mr. Ninos Warda (Assyria Council of Europe) spoke about the current plight of the Christian communities in his paper, 'Assyrians in Iraq: from Liberation to Annihilation'. The final paper, 'The Exodus of the Iraqi Christians: Biblical and Spiritual Significance', by Dr. Shafiq Abouzayd (Oxford), raised the question of martyrdom in the current climate.

The critical condition of the Christians in Iraq was reiterated by Dr. Laila al-Roomi who spoke on behalf of the Mandaean community. The assaults that the Mandaeans experience almost defy belief. Like Dr. as-Souffi, Dr. al-Roomi imparted awful news: a recent rocket attack on a house in Kut that killed 10 members, including young children, of

a Mandaean family. The current numbers of Mandaeans in Iraq are now estimated to be under 3,000.

The closing speech was given by the Revd Canon Antony Ball on behalf of the *Anglican and Eastern Churches Association*, one of the sponsors of the day. Its support, together with that of the British Institute for the Study of Iraq, makes the Christianity in Iraq Seminar Days possible, by defraying the considerable costs involved in its organisation. As in previous years, the day generated much interest and was attended by over eighty people, including many Iraqis.

Asylum Seeking and Immigration: The Right Time for the Orthodox Church

Father Seraphim Väänttinen-Newton

In 2001, Metropolitan Anthony of Sourozh asked Fr Seraphim Väänttinen-Newton, priest of the Orthodox Parish of the Annunciation in Oxford, to write an article on his experiences as Chaplain at the 'notorious' Campsfield House Immigration Removal Centre near Oxford, where one hundred and eighty-four male detainees are held. Fr Seraphim originally wrote this article for the Sourozh Magazine (February 2005) and it is re-printed here with thanks for his permission. He dedicates the article to the much undervalued staff who work there and the many detainees he has been privileged to know.

MY first visit to Campsfield House took place in the late 1990s in response to requests from a number of Romanian members of the Oxford Parish. They had been visiting for some time and saw the need for an Orthodox priest to be involved, given that there might be as many as thirty Orthodox detained there at any one time. These were predominantly Romanians, Ukrainians, Russian speakers from the Baltic states and native Russians, though almost every Orthodox country was represented there at one time or another. A single visit was enough to make it strikingly obvious that the regular presence of an Orthodox priest was required, with some short act of worship in as many languages as could be mustered. Before long I was asked to visit regularly once a week, and I enlisted the regular support of a graduate student, Elena Vasilescu, from the Romanian group. Other kindly offered their assistance too as time allowed. Soon after, the then chaplain, Canon Randell Moll of the Anglican Church, invited me to deputise for him, and in 2001 he asked me to take on his role as

¹ This epithet was used by former Home Secretary David Blunkett in his Commons announcement of the closure of Campsfield House in 2003. This was later rescinded and planning permission is now being sought to extend the existing building to accommodate two hundred and ninety detainees.

he moved to the purpose-built Immigration Centre at Yarl's Wood near Bedford (this centre was subsequently ravaged by fire after a riot).

Religious life in a Detention or Removal Centre is intense. On one occasion when he visited, the Bishop of Oxford, Dr Richard Harries, turned to his personal chaplain on entering the small chapel and remarked that he was about to witness an intensity of prayer the like of which could not be seen in the whole of the Diocese of Oxford. Almost all the major religions are represented at some time or other, as far back as Zoroastrianism, though the predominant faiths are Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, and Sikhism. Unlike the prison service of present-day post-Christian Britain, more than fifty per cent of detainees are likely to attend a service of worship. There are currently about twelve ordained assistant chaplains of different faiths who visit the Centre weekly or monthly. Protestant Christian services are conducted by the African group twice a day, Muslims keep the appointed times for *salah* (prayer) up to four times a day in the mosque and Sikhs meet twice or more every day depending on their numbers. Orthodox Prayers are conducted twice or three times a week, and there is an opportunity for communion once a week when the presanctified Gifts are brought in.

In addition, placements for ordinands are eagerly sought at Campsfield by supervisors at the three Anglican theological colleges, by the United Reformed Church (Mansfield College) and by ordinands in full-time jobs who are training on the Oxford and St Albans Ministry Course in the Church of England. Normally, there will be up to six ordinands, men and women, visiting for about two and a half hours in the afternoon during term time throughout the academic year. These placements are generally seen as valuable and realistic pastoral experience, and a useful preparation for parish life. There are no guidelines or rules except to observe the security regulations of the Centre and to serve the population – both detainees and staff – in any way possible regardless of faith. It is encouraging to see how quickly ordinands settle into the work, and how their individual talents are brought to light. In the five years I have been accepting placements only one has proved problematic, and two students have stayed on after ordination to become assistant chaplains.

A modern 'desert' experience

In every sense, detention in an Immigration Centre strips away all dependence on the many material outward supports on which we base our lives. A detainee is housed, fed, clothed and provided with essential medical care, but he has no way of knowing how long he is to be detained or what will be the outcome of detention. These are determined by his particular case and by where he is in the judicial and immigration process. The majority of detainees are unquestionably economic migrants who have often paid out huge sums of money to agents to provide them with false documents and bring them to the UK. They are from all parts of the globe, normally from the lower social and less educated classes, and are often young and extremely vulnerable. The mental and physical courage displayed by detainees never ceases to amaze me. How many of us would pack up everything we have, take our lives in our hands and travel to a distant land to build a new life, often against our will? Detainees can arrive traumatised, utterly distraught and in bad health or, conversely, angry, violent and disruptive. Religious zeal often conceals deep-seated anger and emotional volatility and/or instability. Verbal or physical attacks on staff or on other detainees are not infrequent. Attempts at suicide or unpremeditated outbursts such as throwing food or anything in sight to relieve frustration also regularly occur.

How a detainee confronts his desert experience varies dramatically. The day sometimes presents itself as an obstacle course which has to be surmounted. The psychological and emotional states experienced are many, and vary from the hopeful to the utterly despondent. Hearing confessions or simply listening to people can go on for three hours or more, with an endless series of taps on the door and a pleading, 'Father, can I see you for just a minutes, please?', followed by collapse into tears as soon as the door is closed. For some, the experience of being detained is one of the most formative and constructive in their lives – though this is not to be used as an argument in favour of detention. Nevertheless, a profound change can take place, which has life-long benefits. An angry but likeable Nigerian came to me soon after arriving. He was being deliberately 'wound up' by the more mischievous elements in the Centre who spotted his weaknesses. A long discussion took place in my small office and a form of inner illumination occurred.

He saw that he had only one real enemy in his life – his own anger. Remarkably, I have seen him pass through many emotional states during his long period of detention but anger is no longer one of them. Even more surprising is the way the immense possibilities of his inner life have opened up to him. I sit by in silent awe as the words of Christ, 'the Kingdom of God is within you' (*Luke 17.21*) become visibly real in a person before me.

Others take me to task for not delivering them freedom to remain and work in Britain as their natural right and a fundamental part of my duties as chaplain. Sometimes the denunciations are verbal, virulent and abusive, and call my vocation into question. 'You are not a man of God!' or 'If you were a man of God you would stop this' – that is, removal to another country or to another establishment. All sorts of convenient theological opinions are expounded by forceful preachers which can captivate eager listeners: for example, God's call to Abraham shows that borders are a man-made weapon designed to protect self-interest. The Christian therefore has a right to travel wherever he feels led regardless of government immigration restrictions.

A small group are simply happy to be away from the violence and brutality that has engulfed them at home and are confused and afraid at being detained. In their case, tears frequently flow in abundance as they recount the brutal murders, often of close family, they have witnessed, or of the horrible tortures they have experienced. On occasions it is clear that some people like this are mentally unfit for detention. At other times detention is the only place where they can be properly cared for.

The experience of the desert comes up frequently in conversation with detainees (religious or otherwise) as they struggle to make sense of their lives and the particular experiences which have befallen them. The theology of the 'Prosperity Gospel' is imbued in many of them, particularly if they have come from close knit but competitive societies where repatriation or removal to, say, Nigeria, without the trappings of material success, is held up to ridicule by neighbours whose offspring have 'made it' in London. Others have reasoned more searchingly and appreciated the reality of 'taking up the cross daily' and not losing hope in God, while doing everything possible to improve their situation by taking advantage of the facilities available in the Centre: education (especially languages), sports, art and craft, and computer skills. The

balance and realism of Orthodoxy, with its simple sense of the overwhelming love of God for the individual, is most valuable here and gives those who can receive it a tool for dealing with the uncertainty of detention. How marvellous it is to hear from detainees, former and current, that the time spent at Campsfield House gave a well needed opportunity for quiet reflection, reviving the inner faculties and focusing again or for the first time on God. With experiences like this there is never a dull moment, as the desert becomes reality behind the barbed wire.

Orthodoxy for the non-Orthodox

Some years ago an African detainee who had just arrived called me and asked if I would hear his confession. I heard it at length and then wondered what should follow. Ordinarily, that would be absolution and communion. I consulted Bishop Anthony who responded quickly, 'Give him it' (i.e. absolution). I did not need to give him communion, as a Catholic priest visited regularly and celebrated Mass. At this time I consulted Bishop Anthony a number of times, as nothing in the religious life of the Centre seemed to conform to the norms of Orthodoxy as lived at a parish level. Even the services I said were irregular and truncated, but they seemed to be gratefully received by all present except those of a narrow, intolerant persuasion. His repeated advice was to meet the pastoral needs where I found them and do the work of a priest. Later I found my experience paralleled in that of Paul Evdokimov in his essay 'Some Landmarks on Life's Journey'², where he describes how he found himself in a hostel in Paris and needing to organise meetings and services of worship for a group of Christians from very different traditions: 'The moment had come ... to put into practice such expressions as "After God, see God in every person."³

He also describes how he felt participating in the worship:

An equal attitude of openness, of active prayerful presence was accompanied by an astonishing insight. I sensed that my presence transcended the personal and contingent and contributed something to this Protestant service. My being there

² 'Quelques jalons sur un chemin de vie' in *Le Buisson Ardent* (Paris: Editions P. Lethielleux, 1981). Reprinted in *In the World, Of the Church* (Crestwood, NY: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2001) 37-47.

³ *Ibid.*, 40.

linked it, in a way, through my Orthodoxy, to the sacred history of the Church, beyond all division and separation.⁴

The more one found oneself in the ecumenical arena, the more one became conscious of one's own roots. Ecumenism, paradoxically, increased one's sense of and love for Orthodoxy. ... The more one is Orthodox, the more one is ecumenical, precisely because one is Orthodox.⁵

Soon people came and asked for prayers before leaving for home. The Orthodox service of Blessing a Journey is a chapter well fingered in my copy of 'Hapgood'.⁶ And I began to notice that there is an instinctive reaction amongst the Africans to the prayers of the Church in this service and to the simple act of blessing with water or offering the cross to be venerated. Often I have been asked to photocopy sections of the book or the daily prayers of the Orthodox Church, as detainees have expressed their admiration for the richness of their biblical content. Like Evdokimov, I often stand as a humble witness to something far greater than the simple words of the service which is taking place.

The Language Problem

In normal conversation in the Removal Centre the limitations of one's linguistic abilities are highlighted. Rough foundations in Russian and Romanian, passable French, smatterings of every other European language because of a classical education, kitchen Arabic and 'appalling Church Slavonic' (to quote a vocal member of the Oxford parish) were my limit. Strangely, however, language was less of a problem than one might think. One day I sat in the chapel when the Chinese pastor addressed twenty Chinese detainees for over an hour. At the end many came, lifted my cross respectfully, bowed and thanked me for arranging the meeting. Francophone Africans sit through prayers in Slavonic and Romanian and remain focussed on the worship, often more so than the Russians struggling to understand Slavonic. Again some words of Bishop Anthony about not needing to understand the words of the ser-

⁴ *Ibid.* 40.

⁵ *Ibid.* 39.

⁶ Isabel Hapgood, *Service Book of the Holy Orthodox-Catholic Apostolic Church* (New Jersey: Antiochian Orthodox Christian Diocese, 1975)

vice came back to me. The heart works at a much more direct level of understanding.

A few weeks ago some very young and disorientated Romanian boys arrived, having been picked up by the Immigration Service in a dawn swoop. They spotted me in my cassock and immediately approached for consolation, being on the verge of tears. I took them directly to the chapel, prayed in Romanian as far as I could, and continued in English. While praying, I was aware of an overwhelming peace descending behind me and an atmosphere of something like a hot pressure cooker being placed in cold water. To meet priests of the Russian Orthodox Church in Removal Centres who are not fluent speakers of Russian (for example, Fr Raphael Armour assists at the Oakington Removal Centre in Cambridge) is at first a shock for many detainees, but the compassion, sympathy and practical help that can be offered is far more important to them than language and can create very deep bonds.

Some Abiding Thoughts

It is a novel and unprecedented experience for an Orthodox priest or layman to be serving in a Removal Centre with perhaps twenty-five different nationalities at any one time. Rarely will a priest celebrate a service as in a parish church. The prayer, however, is constant. Confessions can sometimes go on for long periods. A former Roman Catholic priest in the Centre described the experience as being like pouring water down a bottomless well. But he was staggered at how much hit the side and was absorbed on the way down. A recent ordinand with a very methodical approach to matters confessed, to my deep satisfaction, that she had been looking for some linear progress in her work but realised that all one could do was be there and wait for things to happen. Life in an Immigration Removal Centre is often like working permanently in an airport lounge, particularly now that the average stay is only seven days. What can a priest do in this situation except to ask God to use him in his folly? 'Twenty Ukrainian fruit-pickers have just arrived from King's Lynn. Can you speak to them, Father?' 'A Syrian Kurd has just tried to kill himself with the hot iron in the laundrette. Can you see him in hospital?' In all of this our human weakness is highlighted, whether in the system, of which little has been said, or in the

people who in all sincerity try to assist those who are detained. However, in moments when the situation is apparently hopeless one feels very conscious of the presence of Christ Himself in the Centre and of the prayers of his most pure Mother and of all the Saints quietly urging one on with the words, 'When I am weak, then I am strong' (2 Cor. 12.10) and the assurance that 'He is not far from each one of us' (Acts 17.27).

⁷ 'The extraordinary and the miraculous do not surprise us in the atmosphere of the desert.'

⁷ Paul Evdokimov, *Ages of the Spiritual Life* (Crestwood, NY: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1998) 117.

...in moments when the situation is not so clear as it seems to be. I have often found myself in the middle of a service in a parish church, the prayer, however, is essential. Confessions can sometimes go on for long periods. A former Roman Catholic priest in the Centre described the experience as being like pouring water down a bottomless well. But he was staggered at how much hit the side and was absorbed on the way down. A recent ordinand with a very methodical approach to matters confessed, to my deep satisfaction, that she had been looking for some focus progress in her work but realised that all one could do was be there and wait for things to happen. Life in an Immigration Removal Centre is often like working perfunctorily in an airport lounge, particularly now that the average stay is only seven days. What can a priest do in this situation except to ask God to use him in his folly? Twenty Ukrainian fruit-pickers have just arrived from King's Lynn. Can you speak to them, Father? A Syrian Kurd has just tried to kill himself with the hot iron in the hand-drier. Can you see him in hospital? In all of this our human weakness is high...

Some Abiding Thoughts

It is a novel and unprecedented experience for an Orthodox priest or layman to be serving in a Removal Centre with perhaps twenty-five different nationalities at any one time. Rarely will a priest celebrate a service as in a parish church. The prayer, however, is essential. Confessions can sometimes go on for long periods. A former Roman Catholic priest in the Centre described the experience as being like pouring water down a bottomless well. But he was staggered at how much hit the side and was absorbed on the way down. A recent ordinand with a very methodical approach to matters confessed, to my deep satisfaction, that she had been looking for some focus progress in her work but realised that all one could do was be there and wait for things to happen. Life in an Immigration Removal Centre is often like working perfunctorily in an airport lounge, particularly now that the average stay is only seven days. What can a priest do in this situation except to ask God to use him in his folly? Twenty Ukrainian fruit-pickers have just arrived from King's Lynn. Can you speak to them, Father? A Syrian Kurd has just tried to kill himself with the hot iron in the hand-drier. Can you see him in hospital? In all of this our human weakness is high...

Pilgrimage Secretary:


The Revd David Bond
6 Denton Close
Maidstone
Kent ME15 8ER
Tel. 01622 202239
email: dwbond@blueyonder.co.uk

Editor of Koinonia:

The Revd Dr Peter Doll
39 The Motte
Abingdon OX14 3NZ
Tel. 01235 520297
email: peter.doll@ntlworld.com

The views expressed in Koinonia do not necessarily reflect the views of the Editor or of the Committee of the Association.

www.aeca.org.uk



Cover Illustration: Campsfield House Immigration Removal Centre