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*Treasurer:*

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32 Westminster Palace Gardens  
Artillery Row  
London SW1P 1RR  
Tel. 020 7222 3604  
email: [dp@dpcca.co.uk](mailto:dp@dpcca.co.uk)

*Koinonia*

THE JOURNAL OF THE ANGLICAN &  
EASTERN CHURCHES ASSOCIATION

Editorial

THIS new number of *Koinonia* comes with best wishes for the new year and with apologies for the gap between the last edition and this. The responsibilities of a new position have been time-consuming, but I hope now to be able to return to a more regular rate of production.

In the first contribution, Fr *Liviu Barbu*, a Romanian Orthodox priest working in England, looks at the practice of spiritual direction in the Orthodox tradition. This is a profoundly considered offering, grounded in scholarship but with a pastoral concern at its heart, one that speaks to all Christian traditions.

Bishop *Christopher Cocksworth*, a theologian from the Evangelical tradition, in the Constantinople Lecture for 2009 speaks with erudition and great breadth of sympathies of the contribution of the Church of England to the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. In a time of great tension and uncertainty in the life of the Church, he encourages us to have the generosity and courage to hold on to what Alec Vidler called the 'liberality' of the Church, that determination to allow space for differing interpretations of the common tradition to mutually inform and learn from one another.

The last article is offered from his own work as a tribute to *Donald Allchin*, recently departed and one of the great figures in the ecumenical movement in the second half of the twentieth century. His ministry and his person, his openness, sympathy and depth, embodied the highest ideals of ecumenism. This article, the text of a lecture he gave in Oxford in 2001 at a conference on the historic relationship between Anglicanism and Orthodoxy, is full of his passionate enthusiasm for the Christian tradition in its many guises



and his profound instinct for the often unexpected connections to be found between Christians widely separated in time and space. It breathes Donald's patient and irenic spirit. His gentle enthusiasm will be sorely missed. And yet, hearing of his death before Christmas, it is hard not to respond as Donald himself did to the news of the sudden death of his friend Thomas Merton: 'What joy!'

—PETER DOLL

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### Contributors

FR LIVIU BARBU has a PhD in Theology from Kings College London (2008) with a thesis on spiritual direction in the Eastern Orthodox tradition. He is currently a part-time lecturer at the Institute of Orthodox Christian Studies in Cambridge and serves as the parish priest of the Romanian Orthodox Church in Norwich. He is married to Ana-Maria and they have two daughters, Maria and Philothea.

CHRISTOPHER COCKSWORTH has been Bishop of Coventry since 2008. Prior to this he was Principal of Ridley Hall, Cambridge. His publications include *Evangelical Eucharistic Thought in the Church of England* and, most recently, *Holding Together: Gospel, Church and Spirit*.

A. MACDONALD ALLCHIN (1930–2010) was one of the leading ecumenical theologians of his generation and the author of some twenty volumes. Always a profound scholar of Orthodoxy, in recent years he had also become an expert on the theology of N.F.S. Grundtvig and on Welsh poetry and theology.

## Life and Spirit: Spiritual Fatherhood in the Eastern Orthodox Tradition

Liviu Barbu

SPIRITUAL fatherhood is the sign of holiness that breeds divine grace into the life of Eastern Orthodox Christians immersing them into the fiery living apostolic tradition of word and Spirit. To this end, spiritual guidance is a journey towards spiritual maturity and, along with the Liturgy and the sacraments of the Church, introduces the Christian into the mystical dimension of the life in and with Christ. The true spiritual father is an intimate friend of Christ able to draw his disciples into the intimacy of godliness. Whether he is called priest-confessor, *pneumatikos patēr* or *geron* (in Greek), *duhovnĕk* or *starets* (in Russian), or *abba* (in the Middle East following the ancient custom of the Egyptian Desert Fathers), the spiritual father is a central figure in the spirituality of the Orthodox tradition.

There is a common tradition of spiritual paternity consisting of common practices across Eastern Orthodoxy with some degree of local variety. In the Greek tradition, it is customary to entrust the ministry of spiritual fatherhood to the more experienced priests. An encyclical letter of the Patriarchate of Constantinople from 1887 states that the ministry of spiritual fatherhood is to be carried out only by those priests who live an exemplary life, worthy of the priestly office.<sup>1</sup> This practice seems to follow an ancient custom mentioned by Sozomen in *Historia ecclesiastica*. According to Sozomen, from the beginning, at Constantinople and also at Rome, presbyters with holy life were appointed as confessors.<sup>2</sup> In the churches of the Slav tradition, as well as in the Romanian Orthodox Church, most priests become spiritual fa-

<sup>1</sup> George D. Metallinos, *The Parish: Christ in Our Midst* (in Romanian; trans. from Greek I. Ica; Sibiu: Deisis, 2004), 69.

<sup>2</sup> Sozomen, *The Ecclesiastical History: Comprising a History of the Church from A.D. 324 to A.D. 440*, VII.16, in *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers* (Series 2, vol. 2; ed. P. Schaff and H. Wace, 1890–1900; repr. Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1994), 2:386.



thers upon ordination or sometime thereafter.<sup>3</sup> In the Greek and Slav traditions, a distinction is sometimes made between the more experienced spiritual fathers who may possess exceptional charismas, called *pneumatikoi pateres*, elders or *startsy*, and simple priest-confessors who act as the spiritual fathers in their parishes.

In the Orthodox tradition, the ministry of pastoral care is strongly linked to ordination and priesthood and through that to apostolic succession. This link can be clearly seen in the connections established between spiritual direction and the ministry of reconciliation where the spiritual father is the one who offers spiritual counselling and also the one who gives absolution (Matt. 16.19, 18.18; John 20.22-23). This is the reason for which the ministry of pastoral care is carried out by bishops and priests in virtue of their ordination to priesthood and appointment to spiritual fatherhood.

In the monastic tradition of the Eastern Church, spiritual fatherhood is regarded more as an exceptional charisma and in certain situations a non-ordained experienced monk may act as a spiritual father. This has been the case from the very beginning of monasticism: St Antony, the father of monasticism, was not a priest. Moreover, monasticism had also accommodated spiritual motherhood, and we have extraordinary examples of women who acted in that capacity (e.g., St Macrina – St Gregory of Nyssa's sister, the Desert Mothers: Amma Syncletica, Amma Theodora, Amma Sarah).<sup>4</sup>

The actual practice of spiritual guidance involves the ordained and the laity in different degrees in parishes and monasteries within the parameters of a common tradition that does not differentiate between lay and monastic spirituality and where spiritual direction bridges the parish and the monastery as no other practice of the Church. Spiritual fatherhood exercised by the spiritual father, the parish priest or the *bieromonk* (the monk priest), is the foremost pastoral outpost and support of the faithful.

<sup>3</sup> Spiritual fatherhood is bestowed by the bishop through a payer read over the priest who is to act as spiritual father by listening to the confessions of the faithful and by giving them advice pertaining to how to conduct their life according to the Christian ethos and the teaching of the Church taking into account their personal circumstances.

<sup>4</sup> See Laura Swan, *The Forgotten Desert Mothers: Sayings, Lives, and Stories of Early Christian Women* (New Jersey: Paulist, 2001).

## Spiritual Fatherhood in the Early Church

In the New Testament, *spiritual fatherhood* is referred to God the Father alone (Matt 23.9). The concept of spiritual fatherhood or paternity has however been developed in the Christian tradition in a way that did not contradict the fatherhood of God, but on the contrary, in order to reaffirm it and relegate it in the Church. It was majestically used by St Paul as the signifier of the relationship between him and the communities evangelized by him and born in faith through the preaching of the Gospel. In 1 Corinthians 4.15, St Paul lays the foundation of spiritual fatherhood: 'I have born you in Jesus Christ through the Gospel.' Subsequent developments of the practice of spiritual fatherhood cannot but build on the same foundation: Christ and his Gospel.

The images St Paul uses, both paternal and maternal, testify to the hardships of giving birth into the faith. St Paul provides the most compelling account of spiritual paternity and sonship ever recorded in the Christian tradition (1 Cor 4.14-17, 3.1-2; 2 Cor 6.13; Gal 4.19; Phil 2.22; 1 Thess 2.7, 11; Phlm 10). It is perhaps plain that the first to offer such a model of spiritual paternity, based on sacrifice and love, was Christ himself, who made God the Father's love for the world transparent in his sacrifice on the cross, embracing in that not only the immediate disciples but all humans eager to apprehend and receive God's boundless love. It is this unconditional love of God that the spiritual father in the Eastern Orthodox tradition is called to make known to the disciples in an experiential way.

There are no special treatises on the subject per se in the early Church. There are however inferred, rather than explicit, references to it. The designation, *spiritual father*, was applied to the bishop, and to the presbyter too, as recognition of their role as pastors with sacramental, prophetic and didactic responsibilities. First of all, the bishop was considered the spiritual father of the Christian community by virtue of his sacramental ministry. Spiritual fatherhood was therefore related to baptism, confirmation (which was received in the form of laying on of hands, and later took the form of anointing with oil as sign of imparting the gifts of the Holy Spirit to the newly baptised), forgiveness of sins and the receipt of the Eucharist. Since all these sacramental actions were performed by the bishop, he was considered to be the spiritual



father *par excellence*, the person through whom God himself imparts his grace in the Church.

The *Apostolic Constitutions*, a work dated no later than the fourth century, preserved as a fusion of two earlier books —the *Didascalia apostolorum* (extant in a Syriac version and dated c. A.D. 250) and the *Didache* (c. A.D. 50-120)— records the following about the ministry of the bishop:

By thy bishop, O man, God adopts thee for His child. Acknowledge, O son, that right hand which was a mother to thee. Love him who, after God, is become a father to thee, and honour him.<sup>5</sup>

[H]ow much more should the word [the commandment to honour one's natural parents] exhort you to honour your spiritual parents, and to love them as your benefactors and ambassadors with God, who have regenerated you by water, and endued you with the fullness of the Holy Spirit, who fed you with the word as with milk, who have nourished you with doctrine, who have confirmed you by their admonitions, who have imparted to you the saving body and precious blood of Christ, who have loosed you from your sins .... [T]hey have obtained from God the power of life and death, in their judging of sinners ... as also of loosing returning sinners from their sins, and of restoring them to a new life. (*Apostolic Constitutions* II.33 [ANF 7:412; SC 320, 254.8-20])

In terms of actual pastoral care, in the sense that we understand it today, the letters of St Ignatius of Antioch (written at the beginning of the second century) offer a telling image of the bishop as the father of all, who is to act as God would act. St Ignatius advises St Polycarp, the then bishop of Smyrna, to love, help, and exhort all people to gain salvation, to pray unceasingly for all, to protect the widows and to treat the slaves with humility.<sup>6</sup> The bishop should address the faithful personally, 'as is the way of God Himself, to carry their infirmities on his shoulders' as a good champion of Christ ought to do.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>5</sup> *Constitutions of the Holy Apostles*, II.32, 7:412, in vol. 7 of *The Ante-Nicene Fathers* (ed. A. Roberts and J.H. Donaldson; 1885-1887, 10 vols; repr. Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1995).

<sup>6</sup> Ignatius of Antioch, *Ad Polycarpum*, in *Early Christian Writings: The Apostolic Fathers* (trans. M. Staniforth; New York: Penguin, 1987), 109-12.

<sup>7</sup> Ign., *Polyc.* 1.3, 109 (SC 10, 170.3).

According to St Ignatius, Christians were to listen and follow the bishop, as they would listen and follow God. He considers Christians' obedience to the bishop as an imitation of Christ's obedience to the Father. 'In the same way as the Lord was wholly one with the Father, and never acted independently of Him, either in person or through the Apostles, so you yourselves must never act independently of your bishop and clergy.'<sup>8</sup>

Notwithstanding St Ignatius' high esteem for the bishop's authority, however, in his view, the bishop was also, like his congregation, on the way to perfection. 'Not that this is an order I am issuing [i.e., deference to the bishop], as though I were someone of importance. It is true that I am a prisoner for the Name's sake, but I am by no means perfect in Jesus Christ as yet; I am only a beginner in discipleship, and I am speaking to you as fellow-scholars with myself.'<sup>9</sup>

Gradually, and more prominently from the third century onwards, with the emergence of parishes, it is believed that the presbyters also became spiritual fathers in much the same way as the bishops were.<sup>10</sup>

One does not find systematic treatments of pastoral care until the fourth century when the first pastoral treatises, which deal particularly with spiritual direction, appear. St Gregory Nazianzen inaugurates this genre in the East, to be followed by St John Chrysostom, and St Gregory the Great in the West.<sup>11</sup> St Gregory Nazianzen is the first to refer to spiritual direction as 'the art of arts and science of sciences',<sup>12</sup> a no-

<sup>8</sup> Ign., *Magn.* 7.1, 72 (SC 10, 100.1).

<sup>9</sup> Ign., *Eph.* 3.1, 62 (SC 10, 70.1).

<sup>10</sup> Kallistos Ware, 'Approaching Christ the Physician: The True Meaning of Confession and Anointing', Lecture (Vézelay, 1999); online: <http://incommunion.org/articles/conferences-lectures/approaching-christ-the-physician>. On the emergence of parishes see also John Zizioulas, *Eucharist, Bishop, Church: The Unity of the Church in the Divine Eucharist and the Bishop during the First Three Centuries* (trans. E. Theokritoff; Brookline, Mass.: Holy Cross, 2001).

<sup>11</sup> Gregory Nazianzen, *Oratio* 2 (PG 35, 408-513); John Chrysostom, *De sacerdotio* (SC 272, 60-362); Gregory the Great, *Liber regule pastoralis* (SC 381-2). Cf. Ephraim the Syrian, *Sermo de sacerdotio* (ed. K.G. Phrantzoles; Thessalonica: To Perivoli tis Panagias, 1995: 70-80) and Ambrose of Milan, *De officiis ministrorum* (ed. M. Testard, i-iii; Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1984-92). For spiritual direction in the early church, East and West, see George Demacopoulos, *Five Models of Spiritual Direction in the Early Church* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame, 2007).

<sup>12</sup> Gr. Naz., *Oratio* 2, 16 (PG 35, 425a).



tion taken up by St Gregory the Great (A.D. c. 540-604) and popularized in the West.<sup>13</sup> These Church Fathers describe the high responsibility of the priestly ministry, which in their view includes of necessity that of spiritual guidance. Priesthood is equated with the ministry of spiritual fatherhood, hence the ideal priest is also a spiritual father. These prominent leaders, who themselves were renowned spiritual fathers, had tried, through their activity, to bridge the practice of spiritual fatherhood in the Church, related primarily to sacramental acts, with the wisdom tradition and ascetical experience proper to monasticism.<sup>14</sup>

### The Monastic Tradition of Spiritual Fatherhood

The fourth century marked a turning point in the history of spiritual fatherhood as practised in monastic circles. The *Abba* or *Amma* is the spiritual father or mother who gives birth, nourishes, and leads the disciple to holiness.<sup>15</sup> This ideal of spiritual direction is not different in any way from the mainstream Church ideal, yet the means of carrying it out are distinctive and will shape decisively the entire course of the tradition of spiritual direction in the Christian East.

The spiritual fathers are charismatic ascetics, not necessarily ordained. These ascetics would act as spiritual fathers for fellow monks and for laity too.<sup>16</sup> The monastic model of spiritual fatherhood did not

however displace the bishops and presbyters, who continued to be regarded by Christians as spiritual fathers.<sup>17</sup> From the fourth and fifth century onwards, the two models, the one exercised by bishops and priests, and the one exercised by the non-ordained charismatic monastics influenced one another and a synthesis between them was gradually realized. This synthesis was consolidated in Byzantium through close ties between monasticism and the Church, which led to the substantial participation of monastics in the life of the Church as well as the acquaintance of lay Christians with monastic practices of which spiritual direction was prime.

St John Cassian (c. 360-435) took the Egyptian monastic tradition of spiritual direction to the West.<sup>18</sup> St Benedict of Nursia (c. 480-543) produced a rule guided by the *Monastic Rules* of St Basil the Great.<sup>19</sup> St Gregory's the Great *Regula Pastoralis* is one of the most thorough ancient pastoral treatises in which he deals directly with the subject of spiritual direction. In the writings of St Gregory, one senses the pick of the convergence between the Eastern and Western models of spiritual direction. St Gregory's pastoral theology was shaped by St Gregory Nazianzen's treatise on the priesthood (*Apologia de fuga sua*) and by St John Cassian's *Institutions and Conferences*.<sup>20</sup> The *Book of Pastoral Rule* was to become very popular not only in the West, but also in the East.<sup>21</sup> With the end of St Gregory's legacy, spiritual direction in the West was shaped distinctively by medieval spirituality.

<sup>13</sup> Gr. Mag., *Reg. past.* 1.1. On St Gregory's the Great pastoral theology, see Demacopoulos, *Five Models*, 127-64; Conard Leyser, 'Expertise and Authority in Saint Gregory the Great: The Social Function of *Peritia*,' in *Gregory the Great: A Symposium* (Notre Dame Studies in Theology; vol. 2; ed. J.C. Cavadini; Notre Dame: Notre Dame University Press, 1995), 38-61.

<sup>14</sup> See Claudia Rapp, *Holy Bishops in Late Antiquity: The Nature of Christian Leadership in an Age of Transition* (Transformation of the Classical Heritage 37; Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005) and Andrea Sterk, *Renouncing the World yet Leading the Church: The Monk-Bishop in Late Antiquity* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2004).

<sup>15</sup> On spiritual paternity in the Eastern Christian monastic tradition, see Irénée Hausherr, *Spiritual Direction in the Early Christian East* (CS 116; trans. A.P. Gythiel; Kalamazoo: Cistercian, 1990).

<sup>16</sup> See *The Lives of the Desert Fathers* (Cistercian Studies 34; trans. Norman Russell; Kalamazoo: Cistercian, 1981), Basil of Caesarea, *Longer Rules* 54.

<sup>17</sup> See Hausherr, *Spiritual Direction*, 17-19.

<sup>18</sup> See *John Cassian: Conferences* (Ancient Christian Writers 57; trans. B. Ramsey; New York: Paulist, 1997); *John Cassian: The Institutes* (ACW 58; trans. B. Ramsey; New York: Paulist, 2000).

<sup>19</sup> *The Rule of Saint Benedict in Latin and English with Notes* (Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical, 1981).

<sup>20</sup> Demacopoulos, *Five Models*, 137.

<sup>21</sup> Demacopoulos, *Five Models*, 166. See also François Halkin, 'Le Pape S. Grégoire le Grand dans l'hagiographie Byzantine,' *Orientalia christiana periodica* 21 (1955): 109-14.



## On the Need of Spiritual Direction According to the Eastern Fathers

As William Abraham notices in *Canon and Criterion in Christian Theology: From the Fathers to Feminism*, the Christian faith has been transmitted primarily from person to person, from Christ to the apostles and from them to the people. Abraham maintains that 'the tradition as a whole is intended to be carried across space and time not by books and sacraments but, ultimately, by persons—that is, by Christian believers themselves and by those whom God has called, appointed, and equipped to be responsible for the spiritual welfare of the Church.'<sup>22</sup>

Throughout history, spiritual fatherhood or paternity has played a key role in this personal transmission of the Christian faith and experience. It has acted as a link between generations, the medium through which Christian faith was passed on and nourished at personal level, from the spiritual father to the spiritual son or daughter. The testimony of St Irenaeus is telling:

[T]he things that have been learned from childhood grew up with the soul and become one with it. So I can describe even the place where the blessed Polycarp sat and held discourse, ... his manner of life and personal appearance, the discourse which he delivered to the people, and how he reported his intercourse with John and with the others who had seen the Lord, how he recalled their words, and what he had heard from them about the Lord.... I listened eagerly to these things by the mercy of God which was granted to me, making notes on them not on papyrus but in my heart; and by God's grace I always ruminate on them truly.<sup>23</sup>

Spiritual direction is the practice of the Church par excellence directed to the formation of the Christian character in accordance with the Gospel's ethos. In the Christian East, this takes the form of Christians' inner journey from the image of God to the likeness of God

realised through spiritual direction and formation in a three-step process: purification of passionate affects, illumination (the contemplation of God mediated through the rationality and beauty of creation), and union with God. According to this ascending path, the ultimate aim of Christian discipleship is holiness and union with God. While this path may only be followed by a few, for the majority, the 'ordinary' practice of spiritual direction and formation is directed to the battle with human sinfulness and to the formation of a virtuous character.<sup>24</sup>

In the literature of spiritual direction, there is consensus that every Christian needs someone from whom to learn not only the ABC of Christianity but also how to become spiritually mature and how to progress towards perfection. The arguments for the necessity of spiritual guidance mentioned in the traditional writings on spiritual direction are concerned with learning from another person how to live as a Christian, knowing oneself,<sup>25</sup> avoiding errors and spiritual delusion (Greek *planē*, Slavonic *prelest*), training in fighting evil forces, living according to God's will rather than one's own will, and so forth.

On the general need to consult the more experienced in spiritual matters, St Barsanuphius of Gaza (d. c. 540) says: 'For there is none who does not need a counsellor, save only God who created wisdom.'<sup>26</sup> There are, in the writings of the fathers, references to Old Testament passages which spell out the need for the guidance of the wise (e.g., Deut 32.7: '... ask your father, and he will inform you; your elders, and they will tell you.'<sup>27</sup>; Prov 11.14: 'Where there is no guidance, a nation falls, but in an abundance of counsellors there is safety.'<sup>28</sup>). The Fathers applied this wisdom of the Old Testament to the relationship between disciple and spiritual father and assigned new significance to it. Abba

<sup>24</sup> Nonetheless, the process of purification–contemplation–union is still present in this type of spiritual direction.

<sup>25</sup> The ancient maxim 'know yourself' plays an important role in the ascetic father's teaching on spiritual formation.

<sup>26</sup> St Barsanuphius to Abba Euthymius (Barsanuphius and John, *Questions and Answers* [PO 31; ed. and trans. D. J. Chitty; Paris: Firmin Didot, 1966], 539).

<sup>27</sup> Antony 37, in *The Sayings of the Desert Fathers: The Alphabetical Collection* (trans. B. Ward, London: Mowbray, 1975), 7, [PG 65, 88b].

<sup>28</sup> Dorotheus of Gaza, *Discourses and Sayings* (trans. E.P. Wheeler; CS 33; Kalamazoo: Cistercian, 1977), 122.

<sup>22</sup> William Abraham, *Canon and Criterion in Christian Theology: From the Fathers to Feminism* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1998), 59.

<sup>23</sup> Eusebius, *Historia ecclesiastica* V.20. 6–7, in *The Ante-Nicene Fathers* (vol. 1; ed. A. Roberts and J. Donaldson, 1885–1887; repr. Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1994), 568.



Dorotheus of Gaza (d. c. 560) affirms the uniqueness and exclusiveness of such a relationship:

Of those who reveal their thoughts and actions and who do everything with counsel the Wise One says, 'in much counsel there is safety' (Prov 11,14). He does not say 'in the counsels of many' that is, in seeking counsel from everyone, but in seeking counsel in all things – naturally from one we trust; and not in such a way as to tell one thing and conceal another, but to reveal everything and seek counsel in all things.<sup>29</sup>

The underling point is that spiritual direction is needed because the Fall engendered human fallibility. The disobedience towards God is healed through obedience to the spiritual father, which is ultimately orientated towards God, and the impairment of human judgment is 'repaired' through obedience to God's will and the exercise of discernment. The spiritual father is needed because of his experience, spiritual maturity, and wisdom. Such a spiritual father can point to and lead the disciple on the straight path to God. St Neilos the Ascetic (d. c. 430) states that those experienced in the spiritual warfare can disclose to their disciples the tactics tried by them in advance.<sup>30</sup> The insight of the spiritual father is also needed in the struggle one engages with sinful passions. According to Orthodox spirituality, the passions hinder one's discernment. The fight against besetting passions is a life-long process. Dispassion requires a rule of life and close attention to the advice of the spiritual father. On the way to dispassion, the spiritual father assumes the role of a physician: 'for in proportion to the corruption of our wounds we need a director who is indeed an expert and a physician.'<sup>31</sup>

The spiritual father also has a role in keeping his disciples in a state of awareness (*nepsis*) by inspiring their zeal for a holy life. Speaking about the need to preserve one's spiritual alertness, Abba Dorotheus of Gaza says: 'So it is with a man who has no guide; at first he is always zealous in fasting, vigil, silence, obedience and other virtues; then his

zeal little by little cools down and having no zeal, he insensibly withers, falls and finally becomes a slave of the enemies, who do with him as they will.'<sup>32</sup>

In stating the need for spiritual direction, the Eastern fathers also emphasized that spiritual direction guards Christians against self-deception. One cannot be one's own right judge since self-love, the consequence of the Fall, is a blind guide for those who do not have a spiritual guide. Abba Poemen (4<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> c.) expresses the normative practice in the desert concerning this matter: 'Do not judge yourself, but live with someone who knows how to behave himself properly.'<sup>33</sup> Seeking advice from a spiritual father protects the disciple from false imaginations and erroneous opinions. Thus, the disciple avoids living in a spiritual utopia by scrutinizing his or her entire life through the eyes of the spiritual father. The Desert Fathers, as well as other ascetic writers, often warn against living according to one's heart and mind without consulting a spiritual father.<sup>34</sup> St Theophan the Recluse (1815–1894) summarizes the teaching of the Eastern fathers as follows: '...The general rule of all the fathers is that whoever guides himself or herself after his or her own mind lives with no spiritual gain.'<sup>35</sup>

St John Climacus (c. 525–606) learned from the monks who undertook to live in perfect obedience to their spiritual fathers that humility was one of the most important outcomes of their obedience.<sup>36</sup> Accord-

<sup>29</sup> Dor., *Disc.*, 161–2.

<sup>30</sup> Poemen 73, *Alph.*, 149 [PG 65, 340c].

<sup>31</sup> E.g., Antony 37, 38; Isidore 8, etc. Dorotheus, *Disc.*, 126: 'The enemy likes those who rely on their understanding... I know of no other way for a monk to fall then when he trusts his own heart.... [I]f you see a man fallen, know that he followed his own lead. Nothing is more dangerous, nothing more pernicious than this.' John Climacus, *scal.* 26.53, 234: 'Without a guide it is easy to wander from the road, however prudent you may be, and so he who walks the monastic way under his own direction soon perishes, even though he may have all the wisdom of the world.' For other Fathers on the same theme, see Palladius, *The Lausiac History* (ACW 34; ed. and trans. R.T. Meyer; New York: Paulist, 1965), 25; Mark the Ascetic, 'Letter to Nicolas the Solitary,' in *The Philokalia: The Complete Text* (vol. 1, ed. and trans. G.E.H. Palmer, P. Sherrard and K. Ware; London: Faber & Faber, 1979), 152.

<sup>32</sup> Sf Teofan Zavoratul, *Viata launtrica*, (in Romanian; trans. E. Dulgheru; Bucharest: Sophia, 2004), 67 (my translation into English).

<sup>33</sup> Jo. Clim., *scal.*, Step 4.

<sup>29</sup> Dor., *Disc.*, 122.

<sup>30</sup> Neilos the Ascetic, 'Ascetic Discourse,' in *The Philokalia: The Complete Text* (vol. 1; ed. and trans. G.E.H. Palmer, P. Sherrard and K. Ware; London: Faber & Faber, 1979), 217.

<sup>31</sup> John Climacus, *The Ladder of Divine Ascent* 1.7 (trans. L. Moore; London: Faber & Faber, 1959), 51.



ing to Climacus, one ought to be cautious even with what seems to be good, submitting everything to the judgment of the spiritual father: 'Obedience is distrust of oneself in everything, however good it may be, right up to the end of one's life.'<sup>37</sup> By adopting such a radical position, the disciple in fact does not make his or her reasoning the last epistemological criterion. By living in obedience to a spiritual father, the disciple cultivates a humble attitude before God, who alone has perfect knowledge.

By 'training' oneself in obedience to a spiritual father, one learns humility, the pathway to the love of God and of people. It was important for the Desert Fathers that the disciple's spiritual growth and ascent to God was free from pride, kept within, and to the benefit of the community as this anonymous *apophthegmata* tells: 'The old men used to say, "When you see a young man ascending up to heaven through his own will, seize him by the foot and pull him down, for this is good for him."<sup>38</sup> The Eastern fathers emphasized the value of consultation in opposition to individualist expressions of spiritual formation. As we have seen, spiritual direction has implications at different levels of Christian life: knowledge, wisdom and ultimately personal salvation. This cannot be reached apart from communion with the other. This communal dimension of spiritual direction is the feature most emphasized by the Eastern Christian ascetic writers.

Above all, good spiritual direction was concerned with the acquisition of the virtue of spiritual discernment or discrimination. In 'On the Holy Fathers at Sketis and on Discrimination,' St John Cassian offers an anthology of eye-witnessed spiritual dramas that happened to lifelong ascetics through their lack of discernment.<sup>39</sup> The virtue of discernment or *practical wisdom*, as it is called in the philosophical tradition,<sup>40</sup> is a divine given gift and it may take different charismatic

forms (clairvoyance, *kardiognosis* - knowing someone's heart). There is also a 'training' side of it, one's personal effort of ascetic experience (prayer, obedience, etc.) coupled with immersing oneself into the uninterrupted wisdom tradition preserved and passed on through the practice of spiritual direction from the spiritual father to the disciple. This practical wisdom is contained in Scripture and in Tradition and it is in fact the way of living the Christian faith according to the teaching of Jesus Christ as interpreted and handed down by the apostles and the saints for ever (Jude 1.3).

Finally, the majority of remarkable figures of spiritual fathers had a spiritual guide along their side on embarking on their spiritual journeys. To make this very point, St John Cassian refers to St Paul's conversion and beginning of his apostolic ministry in order to demonstrate that even those who may have direct revelations from God need to seek advice and work in communion with the Church.<sup>41</sup> One could consider St Antony the Great to have been self-taught in the mysteries of God, but St Athanasius presents him seeking advice from diverse wise men before leaving for the desert.<sup>42</sup> Obedience to an elder and ascetic renunciation had thus been essential preconditions for future spiritual leaders.

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*Context of Pastoral Care* [Philadelphia: Westminster, 1976], 68). The concept has been 'resurrected' in modern philosophy by Hans-Georg Gadamer and Paul Ricoeur in response to the post-Enlightenment supremacy of human rationality manifested as scientific and technological knowledge (see Don Browning, 'Social Theory,' in *The Blackwell Companion to Modern Theology* [ed. G. Jones; Malden, Mass.: Blackwell, 2004], 65-81, esp. 67-8). In contemporary pastoral theology, discernment is referred to as *phronēsis*, practical wisdom, practical reason, or moral reasoning. Pastoral theologians (e.g., Don Browning, *Religious Ethics and Pastoral Care* [Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983], Elaine Graham, *Transforming Practice: Pastoral Theology in an Age of Uncertainty* [London: Mowbray, 1996]) employ this concept in order to correlate theology/theory with pastoral practice. Used in the Aristotelian understanding, the concept has a rather abstract meaning (see Graham, *Transforming Practice*, 90-2; John Woodward and Stephen Pattison, eds., *The Blackwell Reader in Pastoral and Practical Theology* [Oxford: Blackwell, 2000], 105).

<sup>41</sup> Cass., *Conlat.* 2.15. Before embarking on his mission, St Paul was sent to Ananias and he also consulted the other apostles (Acts 9).

<sup>42</sup> Athanasius of Alexandria, *Vita Antonii* 3 (PG 26, 844b).

<sup>37</sup> Jo. Clim., *scal.* 4.4 [PG 88, 680c], 67. The same attitude in Cass., *Inst.* iv.39.2, 100.

<sup>38</sup> *The Wisdom of the Desert Fathers: Systematic Sayings from the Anonymous Series of the Apophthegmata Patrum*, 112 (trans. B. Ward; Oxford: SLG, 1986), 34.

<sup>39</sup> John Cassian, 'On the Holy Fathers at Sketis and on Discrimination,' in *The Philokalia: The Complete Text* (vol. 1, ed. and trans. G.E.H. Palmer, P. Sherrard and K. Ware; London: Faber & Faber, 1979), 95-108.

<sup>40</sup> Aristotle refers to it (*phronēsis*) as the process of reasoning about means leading to ends and as the moral evaluation of both means and ends (Don Browning, *The Moral*



There are nonetheless in the Eastern Christian literature a few exceptions from this otherwise general consensus. Some authors say that those who have gained knowledge of God's mysteries and a state of dispassion are no longer in need of a spiritual guide: 'He who has achieved inward self-renunciation and has subjected his flesh to the spirit no longer needs to submit himself to other men.'<sup>43</sup> According to others, if there is a lack of experienced spiritual fathers, one must turn to Christ himself, to the Scripture and the writings of the fathers:

If we do not have anyone to advise us, we should take Christ as our consolator, asking Him with humility and true pure heartfelt prayer about every thought and undertaking.... If our sole purpose is to do God's will, God himself will teach us what it is, assuring us of it directly, through the intellect, or by means of some person or of Scripture....<sup>44</sup>

This is however the exception. The standard advice is that every Christian should have a spiritual father. One has to search until an experienced spiritual father, a *mystagogue*, that is, someone who knows God and the hearts of men, is found.

### God's Love for Humankind – Model of Spiritual Paternity

In the Christian Scriptures, through the mediation of metaphorical language, God's love is presented as the love a father or a mother has for his or her children.<sup>45</sup> In his ministry, the spiritual father manifests God's fatherly love for humankind. Spiritual fatherhood entails self-giving and sacrifice after the divine paradigm. The love and care a spiritual father has for his spiritual children mirrors the love of the Father,

<sup>43</sup> Theognostos, 'On the Practice of Virtues, Contemplation, and the Priesthood,' in *The Philokalia: The Complete Text* (vol. 2, ed. and trans. G.E.H. Palmer, P. Sherrard and K. Ware. London: Faber & Faber, 1981), 361.

<sup>44</sup> Peter of Damaskos, 'Dispassion,' in *The Philokalia: The Complete Text* (vol. 2; ed. and trans. G.E.H. Palmer, P. Sherrard and K. Ware; London: Faber & Faber, 1981), 149.

<sup>45</sup> As expressed in the prayer 'Our Father' (Matt 6.9; Luke 11.2) or in the maternal image of the hen gathering her brood (Matt 23.37; Luke 13.34).

who out of love 'gave his only Son' (John 3.16), and of the Son, who gave up his life for the life of the world.

Christ, the Good Shepherd, who lays down his life for his sheep (John 10.11) and takes upon himself the sins of others (Gal 3.13; 2 Cor 5.21), is the ultimate example of a spiritual father. The image of Christ as shepherd (Matt 9.36, 10.6, 15.24; John 10.11-18) is paradigmatic in pastoral care throughout the history of the Church. The analogy of the shepherd is, as Thomas Oden notices, 'the centrepiece of ministry' that 'wells up from the heart of God's own ministry to the world.'<sup>46</sup>

Christ's *salvific* ministry is extended in the world through the ministry of the spiritual father. The spiritual father radiates God's love and goodness in the world. By taking upon himself the burdens of people, like Christ, the spiritual father 'enlarges' his heart so as to contain both the joys and sorrows of his disciples (like St Paul, for example). The climax of the love of the spiritual father for his spiritual children is reached when the spiritual father embodies Christ's example and takes upon himself the sins of his spiritual children. The *Apophthegmata Patrum* records examples in which spiritual fathers offered themselves to bear the heavy burden of sin together with their disciples.<sup>47</sup> The spiritual father is linked to his spiritual children in such a manner that he would not wish to be saved without them. Abba Barsanuphius of Gaza prayed that he might not be accepted in the kingdom of God, unless his spiritual children are also accepted: 'Master, either take me into the kingdom with my children, or else wipe me also off your book.'<sup>48</sup>

<sup>46</sup> The metaphor of the shepherd and the sheep has roots in the Old Testament where God is pictured as shepherd (Gen 48.15; Ps 23.1; 80.1; Isa 40.11). Messiah is the shepherd to come (Ezek 34.23-24, 37.24; Zech 11.7-11, 13.7).

<sup>47</sup> E.g., instances when the spiritual father would say to the disciple: 'I will carry half of your burden' (Barsanuphius and John, *Letter* 167, 88), or in the case of the more perfect the full burden (see Hausherr, *Spiritual Direction*, 141-8; Gould, *Desert Fathers*, 66; Zizioulas, *Communion and Otherness*, n. 183, 82-3).

<sup>48</sup> Barsanuphius and John, *Quaestiones et responsiones* 110, *apud* John Chrysavgis, 'From Egypt to Palestine: Discerning a Thread of Spiritual Direction,' in *Abba: The Tradition of Orthodoxy in the West: Festschrift for Bishop Kallistos Ware* (ed. A. Louth, J. Behr and D. Conomos; Crestwood, N.Y.: St Vladimir's, 2003), 314. The same attitude is found in the *Life of Saint Theodosius of Jerusalem*, whose personage lived as one who had been excommunicated, until the return of his spiritual children to the monastic community.



The disciple tastes God's goodness and love through the words and care of his or her spiritual father: 'To meet and converse with such a person is to have a genuine encounter with the love of God Himself....'<sup>49</sup> It was said of Abba Macarius the Egyptian (c. 300-90) that 'he became, as it is written, a god upon earth, because, just as God protects the world, so Abba Macarius would cover the faults that he saw as though he did not see them, and those which he heard as though he did not hear them.'<sup>50</sup> John Zizioulas, speaking about the Desert Fathers, describes them as some of 'the most sensitive beings in history, those who weep even when they see a bird dying, those who understand all forms of human sin and weakness, for whom there is no sinner that cannot be forgiven or at least loved.'<sup>51</sup>

Some of those who came in contact with Eastern Orthodoxy were attracted to it because they experienced a divine touch, God's soothing goodness and love through a 'word' of a spiritual father. Archimandrite Aemilianos of Mount Athos considers that the spiritual father's role in contemporary society is making God tangible, powerful, living, intense, and true.<sup>52</sup> This is possible when the spiritual father himself becomes the 'image and likeness' of God irradiating God's love in the world. In the power of the Holy Spirit, the spiritual father is called to make

(see Robert Barringer, 'Ecclesiastical Penance in the Church of Constantinople: A Study of the Hagiographical Evidence to A.D. 983' [Ph.D. Thesis: Oxford University, 1979], 73), in Symeon the New Theologian, *Catechesis* 19 (*The Discourses* [trans. C.J. de Catanzaro; New York: Paulist, 1980], 228). On this in the Desert Fathers, see John Zizioulas, *Communion and Otherness: Further Studies in Personhood and the Church* (ed. P. McPartlan; London: T&T Clark, 2006), 82-3 and Douglas Burton-Christie, *The Word in the Desert: Scripture and the Quest for Holiness in Early Christian Monasticism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 282-7.

<sup>49</sup> *The Living Witness of the Holy Mountain: Contemporary Voices from Mount Athos* (trans., introd. and notes A. Golitzin; South Canaan, Pa.: St Tikhon's, 1999), 164.

<sup>50</sup> Macarius, *Alpb.* 32, 113 (PG 65, 273d).

<sup>51</sup> Zizioulas, *Communion and Otherness*, 304. Siluan the Athonite (1866-1938), a monk of Mount Athos, describes his experience of prayer and suffering for the whole world, including the animal and vegetal world – see Sophrony Sakharov, *Saint Silouan the Athonite* (trans. R. Edmonds; Essex: Stavropegic Monastery of St John the Baptist, 1991), 94-6, 222-79.

<sup>52</sup> Archimandrite Aemilianos, 'The Role of the Spiritual Father in an Orthodox Monastery,' in *Living Witness*, 165.

manifest the boundless love of God in a world of suffering and in search of meaning. He is to give sense and value to people's lives, to enter dialogue with them, as God would do, to encourage and comfort them. Through the power of his ministry of compassion and love, God acts in the 'here and now' of each person.

### Concluding Remarks

From a historical point of view, there is continuity between the actual pastoral practice in the churches of the Eastern Orthodox family and early Christian pastoral practices. Spiritual direction is still an important feature in contemporary Orthodoxy, in monasticism as well as in the parishes. Bishops and priests are engaged in spiritual direction and the monastic tradition is still operational, producing outstanding spiritual fathers sought by many Christians. The thought of St Silouan the Athonite (1866-1938), made known through the writings of Fr Sophrony Sakharov, has been particularly influential among English speaking Orthodox Christians.<sup>53</sup>

The way spiritual direction is practised today in the Orthodox Church also mirrors the synthesis between mainstream and monastic elements. Traditionally, the office of the spiritual father in the Orthodox Church combines both elements: ordination to priesthood and ascetic experience, complemented at times by exceptional charismatic gifts. The practice of spiritual direction is the product of a combination of confession of sins and the monastic practice of spiritual counseling. Much like in the past, spiritual direction is envisaged as a healing therapy, and the spiritual father as a physician of souls.<sup>54</sup>

<sup>53</sup> See Sakharov, *Saint Silouan*. On Sophrony Sakharov's theology, see Nicholas Sakharov, *I Love Therefore I Am: The Theological Legacy of Archimandrite Sophrony* (Crestwood, N.Y.: St Vladimir's, 2002).

<sup>54</sup> See canon 2 of the Council of Laodicea, canon 102 of the Quinisext Council (A.D. 692). Cf. Ware, 'Approaching Christ the Physician', Hierotheus Vlachos, *The Illness and Cure of the Soul in the Orthodox Tradition* (trans. E. Mavromichali; Levadia: Birth of the Theotokos Monastery, 1993); Idem, *Orthodox Psychotherapy* (trans. E. Williams; Levadia: Birth of the Theotokos Monastery, 2000).



In short, spiritual direction is guidance into the life of communion with God, through Jesus Christ, in the Holy Spirit and in the Church. This divine-human communion, based on love and mutual obedience, revealed by the Son and made possible in the Church through the Holy Spirit, defines, from the point of view of this paper, authentic spiritual direction. Authentic spiritual direction is conditioned by the existence of a relationship between the spiritual father and the spiritual sons or daughters, of the type Christ had with the apostles, St Paul with the first Christian communities, and the Desert Fathers with their disciples. These relationships are normative models of spiritual direction and leadership, and allow for a true personal encounter with God, an encounter that bestows the freedom of God's sons and daughters grown 'to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ' (Eph 4.13).

<sup>55</sup> This *ecclesiocentric* communion model of pastoral care preserves however the unity of the Church amid personal diversity.



## The Place of the Church of England in, and its contribution to, the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church

*(The Constantinople Lecture, delivered in the Greek Orthodox  
Cathedral of the Divine Wisdom, 26 November 2009)*

*Christopher Cocksworth*

### Introduction

THE Revised Catechism of the Church of England states that 'The Church of England is the ancient Church of this land, catholic and reformed. It proclaims and holds fast the doctrine and ministry of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church'. In the first part of this lecture I will explore each of those claims to identity: that the Church in England is 'the ancient Church of this land' and that it is both 'catholic' and 'reformed'. In the second half of lecture I will go on to propose four particular contributions that that the Church of England makes to the Church Universal.

Before launching into this apologia for the Church of England drawn from its distinct history and its foundational theological self-understanding, I should like to make some simple observations. Ecclesiology soon runs into justification of status or, to put it more formally, matters of validity. Arguments and counter-arguments can run into the sand without too much difficulty and become stuck there, bogged down by competing assumptions. So it may help to frame all that follows by some evidence of Spirituality (and I mean Spirituality with a capital 'S', activities of the Holy Spirit). Or, again to put it more formally, some matters of efficacy.

The command of Jesus Christ to make disciples of all nations is obeyed in the Church of England. The saving word of God, the gospel of Christ's grace, is preached. People cry out 'Brothers what must we do to be saved'. They are being baptized and the Lord adds to our number.

Hands are being laid on them and they are being filled with the Holy Spirit. Believers meet together and their hearts exalt as they meet the Lord still made known to them in the breaking of the bread. They are bound to each other in a deep experience of fellowship and they pray daily, interceding for the world and praising God as his priestly people. The Bible is studied in homes, groups and public worship, and the Apostles' teaching is conveyed through sermon and study – and it is celebrated in the Apostles' Creed, the rule of faith. People are healed in body, mind and spirit and money is given for the common life of the Church and for the help of the poor. We do not always have the goodwill of all the people all the time, because we live in a disobedient age antagonistic to the gospel, but we try to serve our communities and bless the nation. Whether loved or despised, the risen Lord gives us every reason to be confident that he has been faithful to his promise to be with us 'always, to the end of the age'. In short, at our best we live by the last dominical words recorded in Matthew's gospel on the Day of the Ascension and we live in the grace of the earliest experience of the apostolic Church recorded in Luke on the Day of Pentecost.

### The Place of the Church of England in the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church

Having touched on some of the facts of present Church of England's existence – facts which are the data of out which a Christian ecclesiology must be framed – we move on to consider the facts of Church of England's past. These will help to explain why the Church of England is absolutely clear of its authentic belonging to the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church, and that the doctrine and ministry it upholds is that of the Church, the Body of Christ.

### *The Ancient Church of this Land*

The Church of England traces its origins to the first moves of the Holy Spirit in the evangelization of this land by the traders, merchants and, possibly, soldiers who brought their faith with them from different parts of the Roman Empire during the second and third centuries



(maybe even the first), and shared it with others. Communication in the early centuries was not as it is in the twenty-first century. Nevertheless, there was a remarkable movement of people and ideas, many from what we now call the Christian East. By the end of the third century we had our own martyr in Alban and in the early fourth century we sent three of our own Bishops to the Council of Arles. We were especially indebted to the Gallican Church, with its common Celtic affinity among the various tribes of Britain; and its influence remained as the centuries progressed.

The establishment of the faith in England is a story of ebb and flow over a number of centuries. As Roman Imperial structures declined, invaders arrived and Christianity retreated to the edges. But the flame never went out. It was fanned by Gallic support for a renewed mission in Wales with David, and then into Ireland with Patrick and on to the Picts in Scotland with Columba, finally to re-enter Northern England through the Northumbrian kingdom with Aidan. Early British Christianity did not take kindly to the pagan invasion of the Saxons into the South and Middle of England. Their strategy was more to repel than to convert them. But Pope Gregory saw that they were here to stay and needed the gospel. So he sent Augustine. Augustine's mission, beginning in the South East, gradually headed north and west, eventually clashing with the indigenous British Christianity, more Gallic and Celtic than Roman, of course. In 603 at the Oak Tree named after him, Augustine told the British Bishops in words which have hung over the Church in these lands from then until now, that 'there are many points on which your customs conflict with ours, or rather with those of the Universal Church'.<sup>1</sup>

Sixty years later a deal was done at the Synod of Whitby in 664. Oswy, king of Northumbria, was convinced by Wilfred's reasoning that Peter held sway over Columba (he did not want to be on the wrong side of Peter when he turned up at the gates of the kingdom) and the Synod

<sup>1</sup> Bede, *Ecclesiastical History of the English People* (London: Penguin Books, 1990, revised edition), Book II, Chapter 2 (p.106). Beyond Rome's desire for ecclesiastical uniformity probably lay a deeper concern over missionary strategy. Generally, the Gallic-British-Celtic Church was more accommodating to local culture than was the Roman, with the former more willing than the latter to use features of the culture for the spread of the gospel and the shape of the Church.

followed him. Nevertheless, as F. F. Bruce says in his seminal work on the conversion of England, the Gallic-British-Celtic influence on the Faith of this land went deeper than the computation of Easter, the position of the monastic tonsure and the practice of confirmation: 'It depended rather on a whole tradition and outlook and organization and way of life, which was too deeply rooted to be extirpated by such a decision as was made at Whitby.'<sup>2</sup>

### *Catholic and Reformed*

The Church of England has never understood itself to be anything less than catholic. Although the historian Bede was critical of Aidan for his Celtic practices, he knew that his ministry and mission was an outworking of the universal Body of Christ. The decision of Whitby was not a denial of the authentically Christian mission of Columba. Rather, its desire was to weave the catholic threads of Columba and Augustine into one combined, common life under Roman authority. The realities of medieval life, as well as the properly catholic instincts of the Church for local expression, allowed for the shaping of a distinctively English form of spiritual life in the *ecclesia anglicana* despite the increasing influence of Roman authority on European life, including our own.

When the decision came in the sixteenth century to remove the English Church from Papal control, there was no sense in which this was ever conceived of as a rejection of catholic identity. Nothing could have been further from the theological mind of the Church, whether viewed politically by Henry VIII or ecclesiastically by the Bishops. This was not a formation of a new Church. It was the re-formation of the Church by the Bishops who had been ordained to guard and guide the Church; and they did so with the cooperation of the monarch's parliament in continuity with the long-standing collaboration of Church and State for the spiritual good of the land.

From Thomas Cranmer's *True and Catholic Doctrine of the Sacrament*, John Jewel's argument throughout his *Apologia* that the English

<sup>2</sup> F.F. Bruce, *The Spreading Flame* (Exeter, Paternoster Press, 1958), p. 413.



Church had 'returned to the Apostles and the Old Catholic Fathers',<sup>3</sup> right through to the early John Henry Newman's mantra that one may be 'Catholic and Apostolic, yet not Roman',<sup>4</sup> the view of the Church of England was that a protestation for catholic truth and practice had been made in the sixteenth century, the reform of which required freedom from Roman and Papal control.

The reform was not of any doctrine defined by the Catholic Church (in its early Councils and ecumenical Creeds) but of accretions to theology and practice that were obscuring those doctrines. The Bishops were fulfilling their ministry, the medieval inheritance of liturgy and canons were revised to restore their scriptural purity and patristic character, the Catholic Church continued in this land, just as surely as the great cathedrals and churches remained standing.

Of course, the catholic validity of the reformation project in England was contested. The Elizabethan Archbishop Matthew Parker was aware of this more than anyone. He set about a learned, if polemical, strategy to demonstrate the catholic character of the Church of England, through the nation's historical literature. His *Testimonie of Antiquitie* trawled through ancient worthies of English Church life to prove that the reform had simply returned the Church to their earlier, purer views before the corrupting influences of late medieval papalism. My favourite among Parker's publications is his *Defence of Priests Mariages* in which he shows the propriety of the Church's decision to restore the privilege of marriage to its clergy, from which he benefitted, of course.<sup>5</sup> I have to say that I am doubly grateful for the restoration of this ancient, biblical (dare I even say *Petrine*) provision for presbyters and bishops. Not only am I glad to be have been married for thirty years but I am also conscious that the first Bishop to be enthroned in the newly established Cathedral of Coventry (after the see of Lichfield transferred to the thriving city of Coventry) in the twelfth century, was

<sup>3</sup> John Jewel, *An Apology of the Church of England: and an Epistle to Seignior Scipio concerning the Council of Trent*, 1562 (Cambridge: T. Stevenson, 1839).

<sup>4</sup> John Henry Newman, *Lectures on the Prophetic Office of the Church: viewed relatively to Romanism and popular Protestantism* (London: J. G. & F. Rivington, 1838), p. 25.

<sup>5</sup> For a very helpful analysis of Parker's work on this and other texts see, R. I. Page, *Matthew Parker and His Books*, Medieval Institute Publications (Michigan: Western Michigan University, 1993).

one of the last married bishops of the pre-Reformation Church. Furthermore, he was also a forebear of my wife. So I owe more than most to clerical marriage and its offspring. No doubt, though, Orthodox friends will say that the dangers of Episcopal marriage were exposed by the said Bishop, Robert Peche, when his son, Richard Peche, became Bishop of Coventry some years later!

### The Ancient Church of *this land*

Before leaving this theme of the *place* of the Church of England in the one, holy, catholic and apostolic church, I want to return to the first claim of the catechism – that the Church of England is the ancient Church of this land, though now I want to put the emphasis on the words: *of this land*. Here we see the interlocking of catholicity and apostolicity. The Church of England's *catholicity*, its place in the universal church, takes the form of its *apostolicity* to this land. Here, on these shores, is where we are the Church. To the peoples of this land have we been sent and here we have been placed to establish the faith of the Apostles in Jesus the Lord. By virtue of this apostolic mandate, the Church of England has not only been entwined with English culture, it has been formative of much of the identity and values of the nation.

The Lindisfarne Gospels are not just great works of religious art. Their subtle, eclectic symbolism wove together the disparate cultures and races that made up eighth-century England: their fusion of influences an embodiment of the spirit of Whitby and its significance for the creation and cohesion of a nation. Archbishop Theodore's organization of the land into dioceses and parishes overlaid the tribal areas of the separate kingdoms with a map of the upcoming nation, an exercise in cartography that remains part of the political and social landscape of the country to this day. The principles of Christian justice became the basis of national law and the details of the canon law of the Church became one with the common law of the land, as many of them remain today.

The development of the English language itself is a story intimately involving the Church of England. Sections of the liturgy, especially the marriage service, were permitted in English. Matthew Parker became known as the 'Chief Retriever of Old English' allowing



its particular richness to feed into the cadences of Elizabethan English and the shaping of modern English by the Authorized Version, Shakespeare and other writers of the time.

The missionary strategy of the English Church, whether Aidan, serving King Oswald, or Augustine, working with Bertha, consort to the Kentish throne, involved a close relationship between religious energy and royal power. This was a sophisticated dance (admittedly with some serious treading on each others' toes) that continued through the medieval centuries into the reformation period resulting in the Bishops' reforming the Church through their membership of Parliament. In this way, the place of the monarch in the life of the Reformed Church of England was viewed not only as consistent with the way the English Church had always worked, it was also seen as – in the words of the Canons of 1604 – the restoration of the monarch's 'ancient jurisdiction over the state ecclesiastical'. In other words, it was justified as a return to the authority given to Christian emperors in the early Church – the authority exercised by Constantine at Nicea and, as we have seen, by Oswy at Whitby.

### *The Contribution of the Church of England to the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church*

We now move on to consider the *contribution* of the Church of England to the universal Church, and my first point in this section relates closely to my last point in the previous one. It is that the Church of England has sought to shape and save the nation.

#### *Shaping and saving the nation according to Christian Truth and Life*

Whether in the time of Aidan and Augustine, when the Church was trying to convert the nation, or during the late-medieval, reformation and early modern period, when the Church was seen as coterminous with the nation, or today in post-Christendom when the Church is seeking to re-present Christian values for the reconstruction of society,

the Church of England's theology has been, in the words of the Archbishop of Canterbury, 'a way of thinking the nature of human sociality'.<sup>6</sup> Its practice has been to work for an expression of the gospel in the way the nation conducts its life.

Alongside the shaping of society by Christian values has been the continual process of trying to build the Church within the life of the nation. At times the soil has been hospitable as it was by the seventh century when Anglo-Saxon paganism seemed to have worn thin. At other times, such as now, it has been harder, though we are never without hope. In different cultures the Church has had to take a different shape. Monasticism was peculiarly well-suited to the tribal make up of early Britain. The parochial system was an effective infrastructure for Christendom. Today the Church of England is discerning new ways of engaging with the de-churched and non-churched. It is giving new shape to communities of faith and allowing space for pioneering missionary figures under an episcopacy, which itself is recovering its apostolic calling to lead the mission of the Church. The missionary imperative is almost unquestioned in the Church of England at present. It is an outworking of our charism to be the Church to and of this land. Indeed, it is gift that that has been given to the world through the extraordinary missionary energy of the English Church from Boniface's commitment to renew the German Church in the eighth century to the modern missionary movement in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries with its intention to develop local indigenous churches.

This, then, is one contribution of the Church of England to the Church universal: to shape and save a nation and, in so doing, to be shaped by the missionary context in which it finds itself so that it can most effectively embody and communicate the gospel to the nation.

#### *Concentrating on the Christian Gospel*

There is a simplicity to English Christianity that runs through the Church of England in its various manifestations. Aidan travelled through pagan Northumbria with one missionary question, 'Do you

<sup>6</sup> Rowan Williams, 'Logic and spirit in Hegel' in Philip Blond, *Post-secular Philosophy: Between Philosophy and Theology* (London: Routledge, 1998), p. 297.



love God?' Anselm focused the distinctiveness of Christian theology into one question, *cur Deus homo?*, and summed up the heart of Christian prayer as the desire to dwell in Christ and he in us. Mother Julian saw both questions revealed in a hazelnut in her hand. Thomas Cranmer condensed the complex medieval liturgies with their multiple books and several usages into one book that proclaimed in simplicity of language and ceremony the gospel of saving grace. When defining 'the necessary and saving Catholic Truth'<sup>7</sup> the early Newman pointed simply to the Apostles' Creed, everything else being exposition of that one rule of faith. Evangelicals of the generation before mine operated with the maxim that *the plain thing is the main thing* and were determined to keep *the plain thing the main thing*.

This then is another contribution of the Church of England to the Church universal: to say that what counts above all else is the gospel (the *Paradosis*, the Tradition) we have received 'that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures, and that he was buried, and that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures' (1 Corinthians 15.3-4). This is the apostolic faith of the Church and her apostolic practice is to proclaim it faithfully.

### *Holding Christian Truth*

As we have noted, Gallican-Celtic-British Christianity was not identical to Roman Christianity, but the Bishops at Whitby agreed to hold them together in one Church. As in the rest of Europe medieval Christianity in England was diverse. Indeed, in the latter stages of the period, this land was fertile soil for reforming movements that sought to return the religion of the land to the simplicities of the biblical gospel. Despite the tensions, the Church remained as one. As we have also noted, the pressure for reform in the sixteenth century required, in the opinion of most of the Bishops, the freedom of the English Church at that time from Roman control. Nevertheless, the vision for one Church, embracing conservative and progressive instincts, serving one nation, remained.

<sup>7</sup> *Prophetical Office of the Church*, p. 268.

Indeed, the holding together of different perspectives in one Church has become a distinctive characteristic of the Church of England since the seventeenth century. Charles Simeon in the early nineteenth century talked about truth being found neither at one extreme or in the mid-point between two extremes but in both extremes *at the same time* and in the dialectic that results. Alec Vidler in the twentieth century had another take on the same feature of the Church of England. He called it 'liberality', meaning not a diminution of Christian truth or its accommodation to prevailing intellectual trends, but a willingness to allow space for the other, and to encourage contrasting but complementary expressions of the Faith to cross-pollinate each other in one ecclesial ecology.

This form of common life has given rise to a distinctive form of the exercise of authority, as Kenneth Locke has argued in his recent study of Anglicanism. Authority is expressed less in the declaration of an inalienable hermeneutic of the gospel but more in the ordering of debate and the disagreements that may ensue. To Locke's point should be added, of course, the common liturgical life. This common life of prayer provides a frame within which each of the emphases is to be expressed, a frame that keeps each of the so-called traditions focused on the Tradition which is the source of all Christian life.

So here is another contribution that the Church of England makes to the Church universal. Specifically, at this point of history, is its capacity to be a point at which the great streams of Christian life identified by Lesslie Newbigin in his seminal work, *The Household of God*, Catholic, Evangelical and Pentecostal, coalesce within one Church. In so doing, the Church of England is a genuine meeting ground for Christians who inhabit those streams well beyond its shores. Evangelical Anglicans connect with Evangelicalism internationally with its extraordinary vitality. Charismatic Anglicans are networked into the world-wide Pentecostal-Charismatic movement, the fastest growing expression of Christianity. Catholic Anglicans have brought Eastern Orthodoxy into closer relationship with the Church of England and even caused a conservative Pope to reach out his hand in friendship to them.

<sup>8</sup> Kenneth A. Locke, *The Church in Anglican Theology* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009)



### *Renewing Christian Practice*

To be self-consciously catholic *and* reformed is to be a Church that is ready to renew, re-express, reconfigure its practice according to the deep structures of catholic truth and the underlying imperatives of the apostolic charge. It involves that which, in the seventeenth century, Jeremy Taylor called 'the liberty of prophesying': the freedom to hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches today and to be called into the eschatological future that the Spirit is preparing for the bride of Christ. But like all prophesying in the Church the gift is exercised in submission to scripture. It is not an invention of Christian practice. It is the discovery of the forms of Christian practice that were either practised in early Christianity and then forgotten, or lay hidden in the dynamics of the gospel awaiting their exposure by those with eyes to see and ears to hear.

We know here that we are moving into problematic areas. We know that in even raising these possibilities we risk Augustine's charge of following 'customs [that] conflict with ours, or rather with those of the Universal Church'. Perhaps, though, a particular contribution that the Church of England makes to the Universal Church is the readiness to be a testing ground for the renewal of Christian practice according to the scriptural dynamics of the gospel. For example, in the sixteenth century the Church of England restored the worship of the Church and the reading of scripture into the vernacular language of the people. The Roman Church thought this unwise and un-catholic. The Church of England deemed it entirely catholic because this was what the early Church did both in the scriptural age and after it. The Roman Catholic Church has since renewed its liturgical life along the same lines with its scholars acknowledging the wisdom of many of the Cranmerian reforms.

Another example, more contentious I admit, is the inclusion of the laity in the ministry and governance of the Church. As we have seen, throughout its history the Church of England has allowed, with careful safeguards, the monarch to have a form of ministry in the life of the Church and even a role in its governance. Other examples could be drawn from the history of the Religious Orders. In recent times, this principle of lay involvement has been extended into lay orders of minis-

try, such as reader and evangelist, and into the Synods of the Church (even though, of course, Bishops remain responsible for matters of doctrine, liturgy and ministry). This is a strange practice to some eyes, perhaps especially to Orthodox eyes. But may this be a contribution that the Church of England makes to the Church universal: to test and refine the ways in which the whole people of God can minister in the temple of the Lord as they did in the Church of Corinth (1 Corinthians 12-14) and to take part in the discernment of the Spirit as they did in the Church of Antioch (Acts 13.1-3)?

A further example, which relates to the above, and may be of particular value to the Churches of the Reformation, is the Church of England's counterbalancing of Episcopal authority with the powers and responsibilities of local congregations and of Synods, Diocesan and General. The Church of England, well before the Reformation, developed ways of ensuring that the Bishop was firmly set *within* the laos of the Church and not beyond it. At the same time, the Church of England is rediscovering the missionary capacities of Episcopal ministry – the apostolic calling of the Bishop to lead his diocese with its Synod and multiple congregations forward in the mission of the Church. Missionary leadership by apostolic figures who are genuinely accountable to their people will be an increasingly attractive model for Protestant Churches who find that other models are less suited to the agile but responsible leadership that missionary situations require.

A final example that cannot be avoided, of course, is the question of the ministry of women in the life of the Church. It is a painful but interesting test case of the Church of England's character. The very liberality that desires to give space within one Church to those who hold opposing views is placing that liberality under great strain. The classic tension between catholic and reformed with which the Church has learnt to live is much more complex in this case. By no means all of those who traditionally favour reform are convinced that this is a reform required, or even allowed, by scripture. Though many are. By no means all of those who traditionally favour the visible expression of catholicity with the church of the past and the present are convinced that an exclusively male ordained ministry is one of its necessary signs. Though many are.

Hence, currently the Church of England finds itself wrestling with three interconnected questions. First, is it possible to devise a credible



way in which those who differ on the propriety of the ordination of women to the episcopate can remain together in one Church? Second, how do we interpret the deep themes of the scriptural gospel and apostolic practice in relation to the ministry of women in the Church? Third, how do we discern and decide developments in the practice of the Church where the instruments for achieving catholic consent have not been in place for over one thousand years, and where for four hundred years our doctrine and ministry have not been considered to be catholic and apostolic by the Roman Church?

May it be that in what is for many - no doubt for many who are here today - a very dark hour in the history of the Church of England, and especially its relations with Orthodoxy, turns out to be one of its finest moments?

May it be that the Church of England is able to find a way of remaining as one Church with women bishops as it has done with women priests? It is a huge challenge that will require generosity and trust but we have, in the past, found that the Lord of the Church has given us sufficient of both.

May it be that this is another moment when the particular contribution that the Church of England can make to the Universal Church is the readiness to be a testing ground for the renewal of Christian practice according to the scriptural dynamics of the gospel?<sup>9</sup> By 'the scriptural dynamics of the gospel' in this case I mean the dynamics of the Lord's radical inclusion of women culminating in the revelation of his resurrection to Mary Magdalene and his sending of her to the brothers to announce the resurrection and ascension. I mean also St Paul's recognition that 'There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus' (Galatians 3.28), and his close participation in ministry with a number of women, including those of the Roman Church, including Junia, 'prominent among the apostles' (Romans 16.7). I mean the dynamics that led to Abbesses in England such as Hilda of Whitby

<sup>9</sup> Here the Church of England is producing important ecclesial data. According to the marks of the Church and the evidence of the life of the Spirit in the Church drawn from Matthew 28 and Acts 2 described at the beginning of this lecture, the ministry of Christ in the Church of England is present and active through its ministry of women deacons and priests.

and Etheldreda of Ely taking key, overseeing roles in the mission of the Church. These are the sort of dynamics which have led the Church of England to the view that the one, holy, catholic and apostolic order of the Church can be extended in scope without being damaged in nature.

If it is accepted (a) that the dynamics of the gospel are *at least open* to the ordination of women, (b) that the mechanisms of catholic consent are not (yet) in place (especially the workings of an Ecumenical Council), (c) that one contribution the Church of England makes to the Church Universal is to be a testing ground for the renewal of Christian practice according to the dynamics of the gospel, may it be that Orthodoxy will tolerate the ordination of women in the Church of England providing that we, *at the same time*, ensure clear and secure ecclesial space for those who are opposed to such a practice? May it be, that by being true to itself, the Church of England can best serve the ecumenical vision to which we are all committed because of the command of the Lord?

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## Orthodox and Anglican: An Uneasy but Enduring Relationship

† A. M. Allchin

This article falls into three parts. In the first I shall look back through the history of Christianity here in Britain to try to discern something of the roots of the enduring quality of the relationship which, I would maintain, exists between Anglicans and Eastern Orthodox Christians. In the second part I shall think of some of the unexpected ways in which in our own lifetime, the Orthodox faith has been making itself known in this country. In the third part I shall turn towards two great figures of the eighteenth century, both of whom were surprisingly much involved in Anglican-Orthodox interaction.

As I approached the subject, I had a sudden memory of Archbishop Michael Ramsay, speaking here in Oxford in March, 1962, at a day conference organised by the Fellowship of St Alban and St Sergius, on the theme 'Dialogue East and West in Christendom.' It was a conference which gathered together speakers of the calibre of Metropolitan Anthony, Bishop of Sergievo as he then was; Dr John Marsh, Principal of Mansfield College; and Father Bernard Leeming, S.J., Professor of Dogmatic Theology at Heythrop College. It was a moment when the whole ecumenical process seemed to be gathering momentum. In the autumn of the previous year there had been a Pan-Orthodox Conference at Rhodes, which seemed to suggest that more cooperation between Orthodox churches in the communist and non-communist world was about to become possible. So two months later at New Delhi, at the General Assembly of the World Council of Churches, the Russian Orthodox Church and the Orthodox churches of the other Soviet bloc countries, became for the first time members of the World Council of Churches. Only a few months off was the beginning of the first session of the Second Vatican Council, though at that moment none of us knew exactly what it might bring forth.

In such a moment in which he himself had great hopes for the resumption of an official international Anglican-Orthodox dialogue, Archbishop Michael Ramsey was moved at the end of his lecture to

stress the unexpected, the unpredictable character of the whole movement towards Christian unity.

One of the biggest changes that has come over all talk, thought and action about unity in quite recent years, has been this. It always used to be assumed that if a person was pursuing unity in one direction, he was automatically shrinking from it or doing damage in another direction. As you know, the Church of England is thought of roughly as having a centre, a right and a left, and the assumption was that if you pursued unity on the right it followed that someone on the left was being cold-shouldered or some damage was being done; or that if you pursued unity on the left it followed that something would be injured on the right. I believe that that has become totally altered. We have in ecumenical work all found ourselves to be so much wrapped up in a bundle that any genuine and sincere action in the service of Christ and Christ's unity in one direction will be helpful in other directions as well. Thus the relation between East and West is no monopoly in this country of Anglicanism, still less the monopoly of any particular party, or any particular sort of theology, because all those who are baptised into Christ are bidden by him to seek the fulfilment of the prayer that he makes unceasingly for all of them, for their growth in unity truth and holiness.<sup>1</sup>

We need to see our subject in the widest possible context, to see its many-layered, many-sided character, to avoid at all costs timid conventional ecclesiastical stereotypes which too easily limit our vision and paralyse our capacity for action. There is a specific tradition of Anglican-Orthodox encounter and exchange, and Archbishop Michael valued it highly, but it had no monopoly of East-West relations, and we need always to be aware of the possibilities of the unexpected and the unpredictable.

Under the impact of such a statement as that I find myself looking yet again at the title of this article, 'Orthodox and Anglican: An Uneasy but Enduring Relationship'. Perhaps the other two opening items of the title also need to be considered again? 'Orthodox, Eastern', surely that is clear and evident in its meaning? We have only to change the word Eastern to Oriental to have a sudden change of perspective and

<sup>1</sup> The Dialogue of East and West in Christendom. Lectures delivered at a Conference arranged by the Fellowship of St Alban and St Sergius, in Oxford, March 10<sup>th</sup>, 1962. [ed. A. M. Allchin], (London: The Faith Press) 1963, 14-15.



understanding. The Eastern Christian world is made up not of one but of two ancient families of churches. Certainly the greater part consists of the churches in communion with Constantinople, but not to be ignored are the churches which have never accepted Chalcedon and which at a canonical level have been out of communion with the rest of Christendom for fifteen hundred years, which yet at another, deeper level are still so evidently part of the one, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. Their theologians are sometimes people with whom an Anglican may feel a very deep affinity, whether one thinks of a great Armenian teacher of the twelfth century, like St Nerses Shnorhali, reflecting on the theme of Christian unity while confronted by the two great churches of Rome and Constantinople, both of which claim to be the whole; or whether one thinks of an ecumenical leader of the twentieth century, such as Metropolitan Paulos Mar Gregorios with the constantly unexpected quality of his Indian insights into questions about Christian unity.

But if the word Orthodox proves itself less clearly self-evident than one would have expected, what about the word Anglican? The word 'Anglicanism' we know is a largely nineteenth century coinage. 'Anglican' itself goes back much further. But one only has to begin to become sensitive to the different historic peoples who share our two islands, Ireland and Britain, to see how strange it is that a man like Thomas Rattray, a great and in many ways typical eighteenth-century Scotsman, should be called an *Anglican*, as strange as it is in our own century to consider a man like Archbishop Henry MacAdoo, or Archbishop Rowan Williams, as *Anglicans*, when one is so evidently Irish and the other Welsh.

Of course, in thinking of Anglican-Orthodox relations we are usually thinking primarily of Anglican-Orthodox relations in the centuries since the break between Canterbury and Rome. But insofar as one of the basic definitions of an Anglican from the time of that sixteenth-century schism till today has been that an Anglican is one who does not and will not recognise that his Church begins at the time of the schism, it is essential also to recognise that this dating of Anglicanism from the sixteenth century can never be more than highly provisional and conditional.

For what is even more significant in our particular Anglican-Orthodox context is that an Anglican not only refuses to believe that

his Church begins with the Reformation, he also refuses to believe that it began with the earlier split between Rome and Constantinople which took place in the eleventh century when the Hildebrandine Reform was making so many fundamental changes in the character of Western Christendom. This is a Church which goes back deep into the first Christian Millennium, whose greatest early leader was Theodore, a Greek of Tarsus, and whose history goes back before his day, before the fall of the Roman Empire to the church whose bishops attended the Council of Arles in 314, and whose martyrs suffered for the faith, Alban at Verulamium, Aaron and Julius at Caerleon very possibly at the beginning of the third century rather than the fourth. The churches in Roman Britain seem to have relied greatly on the larger and more developed churches in Roman Gaul. In particular the see of Lyons seems to have played a crucial role. Perhaps it was the thinking of Irenaeus, which was of vital importance to them.

When one thinks of the way in which other parts of northern Europe, Scandinavia and the Baltic countries for instance, received the gospel round about the eleventh or twelfth centuries, it is strange to reflect that in this island we have a Christian history which goes back before the Roman armies withdrew in 410, before the Anglo-Saxon invaders began to occupy and control the eastern side of our island. Living and working in Wales one cannot but be aware of living in a Church whose life goes back in unbroken continuity into this period before the Roman Legions left. Here are the roots of a deep and enduring relationship, not only with Rome, but with Constantinople, with Jerusalem and Alexandria, and perhaps above all particularly with the communities of the Egyptian desert, with whom the earliest monasteries of Wales no less than those of Ireland felt an intimate connection.

How important these very early memories are for the enduring relationship between the Churches in Britain and the Churches in the lands of the Eastern Mediterranean is a question which different people will judge differently. It seems at least important to notice how vitally significant they were for the man who was called to preside over the See of Canterbury at the moment when Mary Tudor died and her sister Elizabeth succeeded to the throne, Archbishop Matthew Parker. 1558 was a year of discontinuity indeed, and it is therefore striking to see how much care the Archbishop took at that particular moment to assure and build up the continuities which remained, through his



collection of pre-Reformation manuscripts, through his promotion of Anglo-Saxon studies and his contacts with Richard Davies, Bishop of St Davids. The explicitly dogmatic and theological appeal to the Fathers of the first five centuries initiated by Bishop John Jewel at the same time, and then worked out systematically at the end of the sixteenth century and the beginning of the seventeenth by theologians of the calibre of Richard Hooker and Lancelot Andrewes, that key element in the whole development of the classical Anglican position, was accompanied by this other appeal to less well-known saints, to less articulate voices, the saints of the first generations of the Church in these islands. There too perhaps we may find the roots of this enduring relationship.

## II

We have been looking back very briefly into the centuries of the first millennium in Britain and Ireland, to the centuries in which the Church in these two islands was an integral if remote part of the communion of Christendom, East and West, united in its cultural diversity, Celtic, Anglo-Saxon, Latin, Greek, Coptic, Syriac, Ethiopian.

I want now again briefly to look at some of the contemporary factors which have been at work in building up this enduring but uneasy relationship between Orthodox and Anglicans in the life of the older of us. It has been a time of hopes and disappointments, of unforeseen difficulties, and unforeseen gifts. If we look back to the time when the Anglican-Orthodox International Commission began its work in Oxford in 1973, we shall see on both sides hopes of an advance towards visible unity which today look somewhat unreal. It is not that the members of the Commission were excessively naive, but that they had not always taken full measure of the differences of approach and method which marked their two traditions. Scarcely anyone on the Orthodox side was aware of the kind of theological ferment which had been revealing itself in our Anglican world in the 1960s. Scarcely anyone on the Anglican side was aware of the depth and intransigence with which some at least of our Orthodox colleagues held to their conviction that the Orthodox Church alone was the one true Church of Christ, a Church which if true to itself could not recognise any of the separated Churches as genuine sister Churches at all.

Our progress at first was slow, and remembering the depths of incomprehension, existing on both sides of the divide, I think it was remarkable that by 1976 we had been able to arrive at the Moscow Agreed Statement, and by 1984 at the Dublin Agreed Statement. But by that time developments within the Churches of the Anglican Communion, particularly in the matter of the ordination of women, had brought the whole future of the Commission into question. Would the Orthodox Church ask for the conversations to be broken off altogether? Surely what is remarkable is that that did not happen. The relationship, if at times uneasy and fragile, was not broken. The work of the International Commission, even if it went on more slowly, went on. We await with interest the publication of new statements of consensus, and are the more eager to have them since we know that theologians of the calibre of Metropolitan John Zizioulas on the one side and Archbishop Rowan Williams on the other, have been taking part in their elaboration.

If the official conversations between Anglicans and Orthodox have known difficulties during these years, so too, on a much larger scale, have the official conversations between Orthodoxy and Rome. What is more, the last decade or so, the years since the fall of the Communist regimes in Eastern Europe, have revealed to Christians in the West something of the deep problems which Churches which have suffered seventy years of pressure and persecution face in learning to confront the altogether different political, social and cultural situations in which they now find themselves.

But if the past decades have revealed to us new difficulties, they have also revealed to us new opportunities. Remembering Michael Ramsey's warning not to think of Anglican-Orthodox relations in isolation, his encouragement to see them in their total context, social, cultural, intellectual and spiritual, we may well be astonished at the variety of ways in which the dialogue has progressed and developed during the late twentieth century. If official conversations have hesitated, and seemed to stop, unofficial forms of East-West dialogue in Christendom have developed beyond all expectation.

I take a number of examples almost at random. At the most basic level how little there was available and accessible in English about Orthodox theology and spirituality, history and art, half a century ago! I remember the difficulty we had in the 1950s in finding a publisher for



Vladimir Lossky's *Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church*, a book which in the years that have passed has never gone out of print, and has come to be recognised as a classic. We not only found it difficult to find a publisher, we found it difficult to find reviewers who could measure up to the book. The ineptitude and ignorance revealed by some of the first reviews remains in my mind.

It is not only in the realm of books that more is available now. Think of the way in which Rublev's icon of the Trinity has spread itself apparently spontaneously across the traditions of Western Christendom, Catholic and Protestant alike, providing us with a new icon of the mystery and majesty of God, rebuking silently our inherited problems about the 'Old Man with the beard'. Think too of the nave of Westminster Abbey, proclaiming to the thousands who enter there every day, something of the identity and meaning of that church, as a place of Christian worship, by the placing of two great newly painted icons on the westernmost pillars of the nave. Those icons are the work of a Russian iconographer but I cannot help thinking too of the members of our Anglican churches who have entered deeply into the Orthodox tradition of icon painting, and have themselves received that particular gift of articulating the mystery of Christ and the Saints which is granted to those who follow that calling. No less remarkable, and perhaps even less predictable, has been the gift of sacred music, which has come to us in this country in these last decades above all in the work of two musicians, Sir John Tavener and Arvo Pärt, two outstanding representatives of the musical aspect of the Orthodox tradition.

But the most remarkable gift of all is one which seems to have spread itself through the various families of the Christian world as if by spontaneous combustion, the gift of the Jesus Prayer. Here is a way of prayer which for fourteen or more centuries has played a central role in the life of Eastern Christendom, which in the last sixty or seventy years has made itself known throughout the Christian West. Already in 1930 *The Way of the Pilgrim* appeared in an English translation. Evelyn Underhill through her personal contact with Orthodoxy in the 'thirties, particularly in the context of the Fellowship of St Alban and St Sergius, came to look deeply into its meaning and practice. She writes in her great book *Worship*, 'If the simplicity of its form be disconcerting, the doctrine which underlies it is profound. Orthodoxy is penetrated by the conviction of the need and insufficiency of man, and the nearness and

transforming power of God. Therefore its truest act of personal worship will be a humble and ceaseless self-opening to that divine transforming power, which enters with Christ into the natural order to restore and deify the whole world.'<sup>2</sup> In this passage she has already quoted Father Sergei Bulgakov on the prayer.

It can when needful replace the Divine Office and all other prayers; for it is of universal validity. The power of this prayer does not reside in its content, which is simple and clear (it is the prayer of the publican) but in the holy Name of Jesus. The ascetics testify that in this name there resides the power of the presence of God. Not only is God invoked in it, but he is already present in this invocation. [...] Thus the name of Jesus present in the human heart communicates to it the power of that deification which the redeemer has bestowed on us.<sup>3</sup>

It is very striking that in this remarkable ecumenical study of Christian liturgy, already in the 1930s, Evelyn Underhill, in conjunction with Bulgakov, is able so clearly to convey the theological and God-given depth of this way of prayer.

It was in the 1950s and '60s that the practice of the prayer began to spread like wildfire in the West, particularly through the little book of Father Lev Gillet, *On the Invocation of the Name*, first published by the Fellowship in 1950, and for twenty or more years our one constant best seller, the publication which subsidised all our other publications. In more recent years the prayer has found strong advocates among Anglican writers, I think particularly of the writings of Bishop Simon Barrington-Ward and Brother Ramon S.S.F., and in particular of their joint study of the meaning and use of the prayer, a work on which Brother Ramon was intent in the very last weeks of his life. Here in this prayer we find the coming together not only of East and West, not only of the human family, but of all creation in 'the power of that deification which the redeemer has bestowed on us.'<sup>4</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Evelyn Underhill, *Worship* (London, 1936) 270.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Br. Ramon and Simon Barrington-Ward, *Praying the Jesus Prayer Together* (Oxford: The Bible Reading Fellowship, 2001).



### III

In this last part of the article I intend to take up two major works of eighteenth-century Anglican theology and spirituality, both directly intended to assist and strengthen the development of the Church's eucharistic life. They are both works which in very different ways, reveal how deeply the thought and devotion of the time was influenced by patristic models, though they are both works whose authors can hardly be considered altogether typical representatives of the Church of England in the mid-eighteenth century. The first is Bishop Thomas Rattray's edition of the liturgy of St James, a work first published in 1744, the year after the Bishop's death. The second is the collection of eucharistic hymns published in 1745 by the Wesley brothers together, but almost entirely the work of Charles Wesley at the height of his powers as a hymn-writer. This collection, *Hymns on the Lord's Supper*, is itself based on a seventeenth-century treatise, the work of Daniel Brevint, entitled *The Christian Sacrament and Sacrifice*.

That book is the work of a man from the Channel Islands whose theological education was partly in Oxford, partly in the Protestant Academy at Saumur, where Brevint became familiar with the most deeply sacramental elements in the teaching of Calvin. This is not the only occasion on which Charles Wesley wrote a collection of hymns on the basis of a work of theology whose contents he admired, but it is a particularly interesting one since Brevint himself was, as we shall see, a fine writer in prose, even if not in verse, and a theologian who can represent both English and continental theological traditions of his time at their most impressive.

I turn now to Thomas Rattray's book on the liturgy of St James, a remarkable volume on any showing. It is made up of two parts, the first a scholarly edition of the text of the rite, making use of all the resources of eighteenth century scholarship, the second an edition of the text evidently intended for use by congregations in Scotland, *An Office for the Sacrifice of the Holy Eucharist, being the Ancient Liturgy of the Church of Jerusalem to which proper rubrics are added for direction* .... How far the rite was ever used in eighteenth-century Scotland, particularly in the years of turmoil and persecution which followed the rising of 1745, is not known. It cannot have been used widely, and certainly not in public.

But there are indications that the text was actually used liturgically from time to time, possibly in private chapels, possibly in clandestine Episcopalian gatherings. Then for two centuries it was virtually forgotten. When Dr Jardine Grisbrooke re-edited the text in 1958 in his invaluable collection *Anglican Liturgies of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*, he commented on it, 'Of all the rites considered in this book Rattray's is probably the most satisfactory, even as it is certainly the most scholarly.'<sup>5</sup>

But Rattray was not only a careful and learned historian of early Christian worship. He was also a man who reflected deeply on the nature of God's revelation of himself in Christ, and of the way in which that revelation is conveyed to us across the centuries. In an essay published posthumously in 1748, 'Of the necessity of a Positive Revelation and that God herein deals with us in a rational way ...', we find him involved in a struggle on two fronts. On the one side he is fighting against the almost overwhelming pressures of eighteenth-century thinking towards deism, towards a generalised religion of benevolence and goodwill, which dispenses with any specific revelation of God's purposes anchored in history. But on the other hand he is also fighting against any kind of fideist position which simply appeals to a blind act of faith in the Gospel of Christ, maintaining that God in his dealings with his human creatures deals with them in a way which acknowledges their rational capacities. He does this by arguing that the revelation of God must not only be attested by a written document, but that the document itself must be understood and interpreted within a continuous and growing tradition of commentary exposition and use.

Thus Rattray sees his enquiries into the liturgical practices and beliefs of the first Christian centuries, the period immediately after that of the New Testament writers, as providing a primary way of approach to the understanding of the Bible itself and to the problem of discerning its central message and purpose. In a way which is remarkable for a man of the first half of the eighteenth century, he sees the necessary interplay between scripture and tradition, and thus seems

<sup>5</sup> W. Jardine Grisbrooke, *Anglican Liturgies of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (London, 1958) 136.



almost to anticipate attitudes and procedures which are more characteristic of our century than his.

Rattray as a liturgist is of course a man of his time. Like many of his contemporaries, he tends to overestimate the nearness to the age of the Apostles of the text of the liturgy of St James which he is establishing; he also tends seriously to underestimate the variety of liturgical forms which existed in the early Christian centuries. In this way he tends to attribute to the rite a greater authority than it can bear. Granted these limitations, however, his book remains a daring and imaginative piece of work, particularly in his proposal that this particular rite should be adapted for the use of congregations in his own day. Let us see some of the characteristics of the rite which he particularly admires and which particularly attract his attention.

First Rattray's vision of the sacrament is through and through eucharistic and doxological; it is a matter of praise and thanksgiving. Characteristically he refers to the eucharistic prayer as the 'Hymn of Thanksgiving' and in one of his sermons he explains to his congregation that the word eucharist simply means thanksgiving. 'Accordingly in all the ancient liturgies we have a long act of thanksgiving in which the more signal instances of the goodness and mercy of God in the creation and preservation of the world and especially in our redemption by Jesus Christ are enumerated.' But Rattray is vividly aware that the eucharistic action involves not only giving thanks for, but also blessing. So he employs the word eucharistize to convey this double meaning of the verb. 'As Christ's blessing or eucharistizing the loaves and fishes was by prayer, that the divine power might so multiply them as that they might be sufficient to feed several thousands; so here the blessing or eucharistizing the bread and cup imports likewise a prayer for the descent of the Holy Ghost upon them, to make them his spiritual body and blood.' Thus his vision of the eucharist is Trinitarian through and through. He stresses the action of the Holy Spirit as completing and complementing the action of Christ, in the act of consecration. As he notes in reference to a passage of Cyril of Jerusalem, 'As to the words of institution, the primitive Church always thought them necessary for the consecration of the eucharistic elements, though they did not think them sufficient

alone without the prayer of invocation of the descent of the Holy Spirit upon them.'<sup>6</sup>

If at the heart of the eucharist there is the invocation of the Holy Spirit, thus making the Trinitarian nature of the prayer explicit and clear, something which was not at all evident in the 1552 rite of Archbishop Thomas Cranmer, the context or setting of the eucharistic action is for Rattray nothing less than the whole created order, and the motifs of God's work in creation and redemption are woven together in his understanding of the rite. Commenting on the prayer itself, he points out that we praise and thank God 'As the creator and governor of the world, and the author of bread and of all other fruits of the earth, for his making such plentiful provision of good things for the use of man; and for the signal instance of his providence, towards the Jewish nation in particular ... and towards all mankind also in general, especially for their redemption by his own death.'

So at the very beginning of the hymn of thanksgiving he points out that we offer our praise and adoration to God 'the maker of all creatures, visible and invisible, the treasurer of all good things, the fountain of life and immortality, the God and governor of the universe, to whom the heaven and the heaven of heavens sing praise with all their hosts, the sun and moon and the whole choir of stars, the earth and sea and all things that are in them, the angels, archangels, thrones, dominions, principalities, authorities and tremendous powers.'<sup>7</sup>

As the eucharist is seen in this truly universal setting, so it is also seen as including the departed as well as the living. Heaven and earth, time and eternity, come together in this mystery. Here again the contrast with the silence of Thomas Cranmer's rite is particularly striking. Commenting on a passage of St Cyril of Jerusalem, on the prayers of the saints which are offered on our behalf, Rattray writes,

As for that expression in him, 'that God through their prayers and supplication would receive our petitions' he does not seem to have taken it from the liturgy but has added it only to shown one great design of this commemoration, viz, that we may reap the benefit of their prayers and supplications for us; as he immediately after says that the dead are also greatly benefited by our prayers at the altar for them; and these two, viz,

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 141.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 323.



their prayers for us and ours for them, are undoubtedly the two great branches of the communion of saints.<sup>8</sup>

In another place he speaks at some length about the closeness of union between Christ as the head of the body and all the members of the body both living and departed. And this insistence on our concorporeality with Christ leads us to discover again at a deeper level the Trinitarian nature of the Eucharist, which we have already considered. Speaking of communion in the mystery of Christ's body and blood Rattray says,

By this partaking of the sacrifice of Christ we have a title to all the benefits purchased by it ...; and by eating and drinking his body and blood we are made one body and one spirit with him (it being the Spirit of Christ, descending upon and united to the bread and wine which makes them his body and blood) and thereby our bodies, as united to and nourished by his body, have a title to a glorious resurrection, being quickened by the Holy Spirit which thus dwelleth in us. And thus we have union and communion with the Father and the Son in the Holy Spirit (as the bond of this mystical unity) and with one another also, even all our fellow members of Christ's mystical body the Holy Catholic Church.<sup>9</sup>

There is surely something truly remarkable and admirable in this careful and balanced restatement of the patristic understanding of the Eucharist in its fully Catholic dimensions, a vision which includes the whole creation as well as human kind, and which lifts us humanity into a participation in the life of the Trinity, making our human nature partaker of the divine nature.

In making such a statement Rattray was following the footsteps of his seventeenth-century predecessors, in particular of two outstanding bishop theologians and liturgists, Lancelot Andrewes and Jeremy Taylor, who were particularly aware of the Eastern understanding of the eucharistic mystery. But Rattray was making this affirmation in the midst of a century very different from theirs, in the midst of eighteenth-century Edinburgh, the city of David Hume. Here at the western end of the old Christian world, at the heart of Calvinist Scotland, we

<sup>8</sup> Thomas Rattray, *The Ancient Liturgy of the Church of Jerusalem*, (London, 1744), 51–2.

<sup>9</sup> Grisbrooke, 143.

have a bishop publishing a version of the liturgy of St James for the use of his people, justifying his work and giving it credibility by making use of the best historical scholarship available to him, and articulating its meaning from his intimate knowledge of the teaching of the Fathers of the early centuries. He is insisting in his own period on the all-inclusive Godward direction of the Eucharist, at the very moment when the newly united kingdom of Great Britain is beginning to develop its worldwide imperial pretensions and more and more turning its attention to military and commercial concerns, at a moment when the whole tendency of the life of his society, intellectual, political and cultural alike, was moving in altogether different directions.

Such is the rite prepared for us by a learned bishop of our Church two and a half centuries ago. It is a rite which perhaps in our new century we can now feel free to adopt and adapt in ways which Anglicans have not felt free to do before, recognising that at its heart there is the Church's astonished and amazed affirmation of the taking of the manhood into God, which is the very core and conclusion of the mystery of Christ's coming in the flesh.

Rattray's liturgy of St James was published in 1744. In the following year a very different work, also intended to stimulate and strengthen the eucharistic worship of the Church, was published by John and Charles Wesley, *Hymns on the Lord's Supper*. Here we find a typical and powerful expression of the great revival of popular religion which the Wesley brothers set in motion in the middle and second half of the eighteenth century. If Rattray's liturgical work was forgotten, the same cannot be said of Charles Wesley's work as a hymn-writer. On the contrary it became one of the foundations stones of the whole Methodist movement. But if that is true of Wesley's hymns as a whole it is not altogether true of the hymns for the Lord's Supper. For though the hymns were frequently republished during the Wesleys' lifetime, this did not altogether remain the case after their death. There are certainly some items in this collection of more than a hundred and fifty hymns which have become familiar sometimes in Methodist and sometimes in Anglican worship, and sometimes in both. But those who read the collection carefully may well feel that there are many hymns here whose worth has never been fully appreciated either on the Anglican or on the



Methodist side of the division which sprang up so quickly after John Wesley's death. Here too a more ecumenical assessment of the hymns, indeed a more ecumenical usage of the hymns might bring them into more frequent and general use, and thus strengthen and deepen the sacramental understanding of the churches today.

As has already been said, Charles Wesley uses as a jumping off place for his work the seventeenth-century treatise of Daniel Brevint, *The Christian Sacrament and Sacrifice*. One of the outstanding features of Brevint's work is the way in which it develops the theology of the Eucharist as our present participation in the once-for-all sacrifice of Christ, and the way in which it sees that once-for-all offering as happening 'both in the fullness of time, and in the midst of the habitable world which is properly Christ's great temple.' Not only humankind but the whole world of time and space is bought back, redeemed, by the sacrifice of the cross, the fulfilment in the New Testament of the whole history of the worship of the Temple in the Old Testament, the great redeeming and integrating moment in the history of the world, which even now brings together time and eternity, earth and heaven, human and divine, in a single offering of praise and thanksgiving.

This victim having been offered up both in the fullness of time and in the midst of the habitable world, which properly is Christ's great temple, and thence being carried up to heaven, which is his proper sanctuary, thence spreads all about us salvation, as the burnt offering did its smoke, as the golden altar did its perfumes and as the burning candlestick its lights. And thus Christ's body and blood have everywhere, but especially at the Holy Communion, a most true and *real presence*. When he offered himself upon earth, the vapour of his atonement went up and darkened the very sun; and by rending the great veil, it clearly showed he had made a way into heaven.

Now since he has gone up to heaven, thence he sends down on earth the graces that spring continually both from his everlasting sacrifice, and from the continual intercession which attends it. So that it is vain to say who will go up into heaven? Since without either ascending or descending, this sacred body of Jesus fills with atonement and blessing the remotest parts of this temple.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Quoted in Kenneth Stevenson, *The Covenant of Grace Renewed* (London, 1994) 102, a book which contains a valuable account of Brevint's work.

We see at once how such a paragraph lies behind and articulates one of the greatest and best known of Charles Wesley's hymns for the eucharist.

1. Victim divine, thy grace we claim  
While thus thy precious death we show;  
Once offered up, a spotless lamb,  
In thy great temple here below,  
Thou didst for all mankind atone,  
And standest now before the throne.

2. Thou standest in the holiest place,  
As now for guilty sinners slain;  
Thy blood of sprinkling speaks, and prays,  
All-prevalent for helpless man;  
Thy blood is still our ransom found,  
And spreads salvation all around.

5. We need not now go up to heaven,  
To bring the long-sought saviour down;  
Thou art to all already given,  
Thou dost even now thy banquet crown;  
To every faithful soul appear,  
And show thy real presence here.<sup>11</sup>

Here, though in a very different idiom and in a somewhat different perspective, the inclusive scope of the Eucharist is affirmed, the gathering in of all creation, the lifting up of human to divine, no less than it is in Rattray's rendering of St James.

To do any justice to the richness of this collection of hymns would require far more space than is available here. I choose one particular strand in Charles Wesley's fabric, his jubilant sense of our present participation in the joys of heaven, in the life of the resurrection, through our share in the eucharistic feast. Here again we seem to have an unconscious reaction to the sombre colouring, not only of Cranmer's rite for Holy Communion but of much of the eucharistic practice and devotion of the sixteenth century, a practice concentrated so unilaterally on the

<sup>11</sup> Hymn 133, *A Rapture of Praise: Hymns of John and Charles Wesley*, ed. H. A. Hodges and A. M. Allchin (London, 1966) 150-1. This selection contains twenty-two of the hymns on the Lord's Supper.



sacrament as a showing forth of Christ's death, its meaning focussed almost exclusively on the forgiveness of sins.

Brevint speaks of the sacrament as 'a pledge of heaven'. Charles Wesley expands that with ardour and daring. In our participation in Christ's sacramental body we are already anticipating the fulfilment of our life in heaven, already beginning to discover that resurrection of the body which shall be ours thereafter. Not only is the heart full of the light of life, the 'house of clay' itself is overwhelmed with the anticipation of eternity.

1. How glorious is the life above,  
Which in this ordinance we *taste*;  
That fullness of celestial love,  
That joy which shall forever last.

2. That heavenly life in Christ concealed  
These earthen vessels could not bear;  
The part which now we find revealed  
No tongue of angels can declare.

3. The light of life eternal darts  
Into our souls a dazzling ray,  
A drop of heaven o'er flows our hearts,  
And deluges the house of clay.

4. Sure pledge of ecstasies unknown  
Shall this divine communion be;  
The ray shall rise into a sun,  
The drops shall swell into a sea.<sup>12</sup>

Neither John nor Charles Wesley had of course ever taken part in a celebration of the Orthodox liturgy, and thus known that affirmation of resurrection life which is made at the heart of the that rite, not least when the choir sings after communion,

We have seen the true light,  
We have received the heavenly spirit,  
We have found the true faith,

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., Hymn 131, 148-9.

We worship the undivided trinity,  
For the same hath saved us.

But this same tone of assured rejoicing is taken up again by Charles Wesley in one of the greatest of his hymns of thanksgiving for our share in the sacrament. We can only surmise what would be the result if we let the Wesleys' expression of praise and thanksgiving come into closer contact with the celebration of the Eucharist in its Eastern Orthodox form.

1. Sons of God, triumphant rise,  
Shout the accomplished sacrifice.  
Shout your sins in Christ forgiven,  
Sons of God and heirs of heaven.

2. Ye that round our altars throng,  
Listening angels join the song:  
Sing with us, ye heavenly powers,  
Pardon, grace and glory ours.

3. Love's mysterious work is done.  
Greet we now the accepted son,  
Healed and quickened by his blood,  
Joined to Christ and one with God.

6. Grace our every thought controls,  
Heaven is opened in our souls,  
Everlasting life is won,  
Glory is on earth begun.

7. Christ in us, in him we see  
Fullness of the Deity.  
Beam of the Eternal beam;  
Life divine we taste in him.

8. Him we only taste below;  
Mightier joys ordained to know,  
Him when fully ours we prove,  
Ours the heaven of perfect love.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., Hymn 140, 155-6.



#### IV

At the beginning of this essay I quoted from Archbishop Michael Ramsey's opening lecture given at a day conference held in Oxford in March 1962 on the subject of the dialogue of East and West and Christendom, in which he insisted on the importance of seeing Anglican-Orthodox relations in the widest possible context, a context which would gather in the whole people of the baptised, indeed the whole world in which and on behalf of which they are baptised.

The last speaker on that occasion was the Methodist liturgical scholar and theologian, Marcus Ward. He told us how his own discovery of Orthodoxy had begun with a prize essay which he wrote when a graduate student, on 'the Byzantine Church', under the supervision of a noted Baptist scholar, Norman Baynes. Through this work he had begun to come into contact with the whole tradition of Eastern Orthodox spirituality, 'That great tradition unbroken from the New Testament through the Fathers and on, carried on by Ephrem the Syrian, Evagrius, Barsanuphius, Dorotheus, Theodore and especially the Hesychasts of whom we have heard too little. [...] I learned that the capacity of man made free to love and make sacrifices, is not bound.' What a wonderful Methodist expression of the Orthodox vision of theosis that is! 'The doctrine of perfection, consisting in charity and in the adoration which expresses it; the relation of liturgical piety to Christian belief and practice, liturgy as the background on which all aspects and details of Christian living and doing combine and cohere.'<sup>14</sup>

The speaker went on to tell us how later in life, when he went to teach in a theological college in South India, he had found all these things present and living in the Christians of the Syrian Mar Thoma tradition. 'I found in them and in their praying and their living and their friendship something of what I had been reading about in history. It is not something you can put into words, this spirituality, this piety, but it is there and you know it. And one thing is quite sure: at the centre there is an utterly vivid realisation of the resurrection. The whole life is pervaded by the spirit of the Easter Greeting, "Christ is risen."<sup>15</sup>

<sup>14</sup> *Dialogue*, 42-3.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 43.

Marcus Ward was a prominent member of the group which produced the first eucharistic rite for the use of the Church of South India, which itself had come together in 1947. Already in 1950 this group had drawn up a rite for use on occasions when Christians from the different traditions which had united in that Church needed to have a new, common form for celebrating the sacrament. 'We of Anglican, Congregationalist, Methodist, Presbyterian and Reformed traditions - we found our oneness, our nodal point, there in the Holy Kurbana of the ancient Indian Church, the liturgy of St James.' And Marcus Ward takes us briefly through the main moments in the rite, 'to that tremendous moment when the whole congregation rises to join in the great utterance, "Thy death O Lord we commemorate, thy resurrection we confess, thy second coming we await; glory be to thee O Christ."<sup>16</sup> As Kenneth Stevenson remarks in a study of this rite, where he places it in relation to other essays in liturgical form from this period, 'Looking back on it now it seems amazing that by 1950 a united liturgy could have been agreed upon that has a clear structure and that also brings together the *riches* of the traditions that went into the union.'<sup>17</sup>

Perhaps here we can see Orthodoxy functioning as 'the miraculous glue' which can join together the broken fragments of Western Christendom.<sup>18</sup> Unquestionably here in the presence of the Christ who has come and who comes, of the name of Jesus, present in the human heart and present in the heart of the gathering of his Church in worship, we can see, in the words of Sergei Bulgakov, taken up by Evelyn Underhill, 'the power of that deification which the redeemer has bestowed upon us', that deification for which our world was made in the beginning.

Here in the face of this awe-inspiring affirmation of the taking of the manhood into God, the human into the divine, we may see something of the deeper roots of that humble and tentative, yet enduring and assured relationship of the different elements of Orthodox East and Anglican West within the one Holy Catholic Church of Christ.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 44.

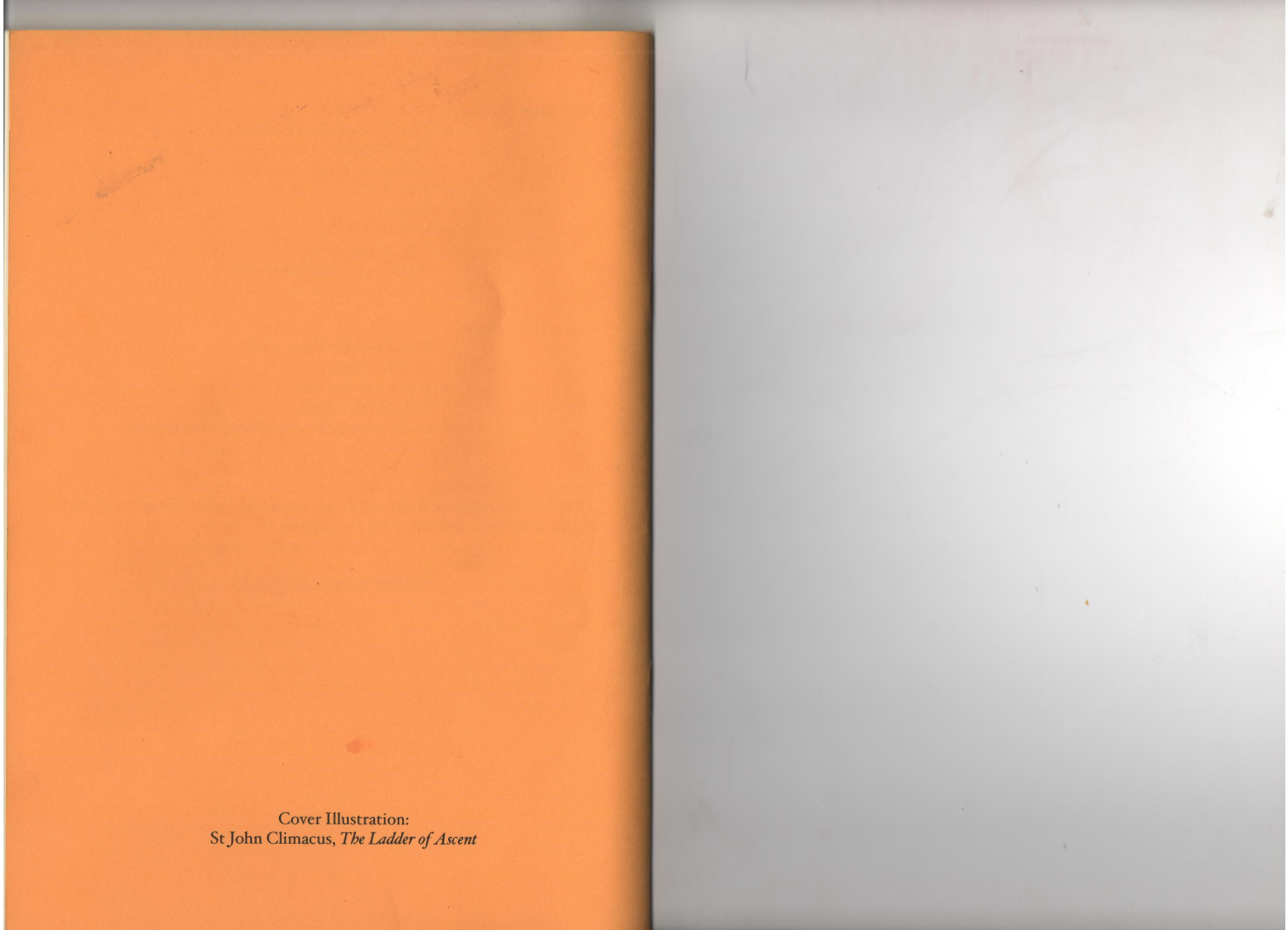
<sup>17</sup> Kenneth Stevenson, *Eucharist and Offering* (New York, 1986) 195.

<sup>18</sup> Orthodoxy as 'the miraculous glue' is an expression of D. J. Chitty, author of *The Desert a City* and Editor of Barsanuphius and John: in himself an embodiment of Anglican-Orthodox unity.









Cover Illustration:  
St John Climacus, *The Ladder of Ascent*