

EDITORIAL

10 YEARS! It would take a master of political spin indeed to write "ten glorious years." When this journal represented the Movement for the Continuing Church of England, we had many subscribers, as soon as we were true to our words, interest diminished. 10 years on, the chant beloved of football supporters comes to mind "You're not singing anymore."

Is anyone singing anymore? No one seems to have won, and this is very much what we predicted. We did not imagine that forming the traditional church was magic, that this in itself could cure all spiritual ills, it simply secured a position. We have been blessed, but it is not enough to receive blessings, we must *be* a blessing.

There is no price on this journal. The Old Believer has never demanded payment, only appealed for *solidarity*. Before all else we need your assent, prayers and, now, bums on seats. It has been a very long interval between this edition and the last, but this is not through lack of funds so much as time. Being the Continuing Church diverts resources of time and emotion. 'Diverts'? but this *is* our work, not to write elegant articles but to be the Church and, God grant, to win souls for Him. We wanted to publish (at least) once more, as a thank offering to Him, and to shew that we are still singing, even if it is "in a strange land."

We continuers seem not to have been able to convince people of the ultimate seriousness of what happened 10 years ago. This is, perhaps, because it is hard to know precisely what did happen. The most charitable and open-ended view is to suppose that the Church of England suffered a self-inflicted interdict. Not since King John's time has there been an official one (imposed, of course, by the Pope). In voting for and implementing a sacramental impossibility modernised Anglicanism has disqualified itself. It appears to have frozen up like a badly behaved computer.

State religionists may sneer at this and instance many souls who have, through them, found Christ in these ten years. Well, thank God if they have! Individuals can be instrumental in the ministry of conversion at any time, what concerns us is what lies beneath the surface, be that surface bad or good. Although there have always been contradictory schools of thought within Anglicanism, what we are now seeing are differences of both degree and kind.

The rifts within Anglicanism continue apace and many try to dismiss them as mere media hype. This tendency to be 'in denial' is even more concerning than the false ideas and practices. Novelty seekers within the church are a tradition too, but they used to be a source of shame [2.Tim.4:3]. The faithful would try to make amends. The oddest development of 'doctrine' is that shock and shame are deconstructed. (A by-product, perhaps, of soul-bearing, confessional T.V. shows.) Could anything worry mainstream church-goers today, as they hunker down into a convenient Congregationalism?

What most characterizes the Church now is not mere liberalism but a reckless dis-inhibition. It is open season for privatized pietism and public, 'kiss and tell' dissent - what's helpful, and right for me - the only things that we continue to take seriously are our idiosyncrasies.

If one *seriously* wants to examine one's faith it can be done in private with an orthodox confessor, not in the media of newspapers and T.V. We do not judge people, but their disregard for 'line management.' The Church must not abuse the souls into whose custody God has entrusted His children. A church may not teach e.g. that un-chastity is as good as chastity, or that the Eternal Word may as well be called 'daughter' as Son, nor that orders assuredly can be conferred irrespective of all breaches of moral and doctrinal trust. A priest must bring himself, and all people, to repentance without his tongue in his cheek. The priest, therefore, ought, at least, to avoid the most blatant misdemeanors. Can Episcopal ministrations be given (or received) tongue-in-cheek whilst supposedly consecrating/ordaining (in Anglican *new-speak*) to "another *'integrity'*." What exactly is being perpetuated and transmitted under such an arrangement of unease or even mutual contempt? **Accept this call to share the shame in order to retrieve God's glory.**

What have we 'continuers' achieved in ten years? Recently, I was asked at a conference: "Is not being in communion the essence of your church?" My reply was: "The essence is to limit 'permissiveness.'" We should, at least, be able to recognize ourselves as the Church and whole-heartedly believe in what we are doing. Responding with shame and reparation we conserved the Church's ordained ministry, our inheritance, and theology. What more have *any* of those who have taken decisive action *done*? By joining Orthodoxy or Papalism people attempted to give God a *true* glory, witness more explicitly to His revelation and preserve their souls. We however have answered the call to hand on our unique possession.

We have never claimed exclusive truth. Practically, "no," since the Continuing Church scene remains flexible as it tries to keep pace with established Anglicanism. Morally, "no," for, as St. Paul warns: "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall" [1Cor. 10:12]. Historically, "no," as the Church of God existed centuries before any form of Anglicanism. Socially, "no," for we receive assistance from other Christians, irrespective of their orthodoxy.

Join with us, and then pray in company with God's Angels and Saints. Help us to restore God's kingdom and uphold His honour. Our love for the Great Lover of souls must exceed our aversion to errors and evils. God's will be done, may He not exclude us from that doing.

Between the Rock and the Glasshouse?

The Rev'd. Michael Mowbray Silver

"Thou art Peter and upon this rock I will build my church" (Mt. 16:18) (1)

As a traditional Anglican I am especially interested in traditionalists from other communions. Thus, over the years, I have happily come to know some Roman Catholic traditionalists in France. Traditional Anglicans are an unknown quantity in most places, but especially there. It is always awkward trying to answer impromptu, open-ended questions such as "What is your opinion of the Pope?" The surrealism of the situation is enhanced by the consideration that - according to some interpretations of Roman canon law - these very interrogators stand excommunicated.(2) I took this enquiry to mean the office rather than the person, although it is hard to grasp the direction of questions. I hesitated, not only because there were so many possible responses, but also because should those of us from the Anglican glasshouse be throwing even grains of sand? Having made a mess of our own communion should we be so confident in setting the rest of the Church to rights? One does not wish to reinforce the stereotype that Anglicans have many opinions but few beliefs.

So my initial - characteristically Anglican-pragmatist - answer: any central figure was prone to *lobbying*. No one, for instance, could put pressure upon the Byzantine Churches to do anything, because there is no one and nothing to pressurise. In theory the Coptic Pope could be lobbied, but one doubts that anyone would dare! In the case of the Church of England's General Synod, however, we know, only too well, the power that persuasive lobbyists wielded over that bogus body. In Rome the most successful lobbyists have won other causes. In the 1950s and 60s a minority of specialists were able to lobby the Pope to concede an accelerating train of liturgical modifications. The festival of St. Mary's Assumption provides another example. Countless Roman Catholics had actually petitioned the Pope to proclaim it as a dogma of salvation.(3) To me this is the most bizarre method in ascertaining the Divine will. A body that is immune to such methods will always get my vote over one which is prone to them. Causes for canonisation, however, may be more legitimate grounds for lobbying, yet the evil of popularism is such that "St. Princess Di" or "St. Martin Luther-King" - patron saint of multiple-adulterers and plagiarists, no doubt - would be the outcome from simple unregulated majority agitation.

Less pragmatic, but more theological, is a suspicion that a monarchical papacy may detract from an understanding of the church as a vital force in itself. Certainly Vatican II seemed to think that theological reflections on the Church had somehow been neglected. Commentaries on the Council go to considerable lengths to try to restate the theological significance of the Church in itself.

Their focus of blame for the perceived neglect is not the Papacy (unsurprisingly) but what was seen as the clericalisation of the liturgy. This (I believe) entirely false diagnosis led to extraordinary consequences in liturgical practice following the Council.(4)

Most surprisingly, at least one theologian detects a parallel evolution even in the Byzantine churches. As a seminary dean, Schmemmann was scarcely an anti-establishment figure. Nevertheless authoritarian structures, realised either through a close identification of the church with the state (*symphonia*) or

with a Patriarch governing through a permanent synod, have repressed or eclipsed what Schmemmann saw as a fuller understanding of the Church:

"The Byzantine period of our history, which in many respects is still for us the golden age of Orthodoxy, saw, nevertheless, the beginning of an ecclesiological disease. The mystique of the 'symphonia' (with its only alternative being the monastic 'desert' and the individual work for 'salvation') obscured the reality of the Church as People of God, as the Church of God and the Body of Christ manifested and edified in every place. It was the triumph of universal ecclesiology in the Byzantine form." (5)

Although we Anglicans have our own version of *symphonia*, not only among those of strongly erastian sympathies, it seems to be *status* and *professionalism* that have proved the most enduring Anglican obsessions. We are not so much concerned with the principles of power and jurisdiction as mere social standing. This is precisely why the Traditionalist churches (not just the Anglican ones, incidentally) have made such minimal progress in Britain.

Even among those who actually left the Church of England over 10 years ago, some still speak with warmth and enthusiasm about how they heard an Establishment bishop "speak so well the other day" or how they recently served a service that one was conducting "with such solemnity." Upon my observation that Bishop X cannot be considered orthodox on even the loosest definition, they might concede that point, but proffer no other reproach or expression of disappointment in him whatsoever. Such externals, not even the academic attainments of such ecclesiastics, of titles and status make people feel grander themselves by association. It is the ecclesiology of Hyacinth Bucket.(6)

To return, briefly, to Schmemmann however, whilst revealing a critical approach to his communion he acknowledges Orthodoxy's freedom from lobbyists and propagandist proclamations: "In Orthodoxy there is no less apostasy, no less betrayal than in Catholicism or Protestantism, maybe even more; but none of it is made dogma, or proclaimed to be the truth." (7)

Interestingly, then, many post-Conciliar Catholics, and even a few within the Byzantine churches, have felt the need to examine this subject of the Church's life.

We Anglicans, of course, had our own rediscovery of the theological significance of the Church itself as an instrument of salvation, long before Vatican II in the Tractarian cause, at length embodied by Dr. Pusey. I have often wondered how one might summarise his voluminous teaching: perhaps in such words as "*The Church the antidote to anxiety*"? Pusey was always conspicuously and gravely concerned with everything that bore upon the issues of salvation and truth, but never actually *anxious* about them. This in itself makes him a remarkable figure. Ironically he comes close to being anxious about the Church as such, but not about the certainty of the truth and life that it conveys. Nor does he ever lose sight of the Lord of the Church, and that, if true to her Lord, it is the extension of His Incarnation as His Body, Bride and Building.

Unfamiliar Aspects of Familiar Images

Turning to that original promise(8) made to St. Peter we are confronted by many possibilities, indeed there was considerable flexibility of interpretation in antiquity. So much so that Tertullian, and St. Augustine no less, interpret "this rock" to mean Christ in one passage, but Peter in another.(9) Arguments as to its meaning will probably remain largely unresolved until the end of time, not least around the interpretation of both gates and hell. If this passage concerns the place of punishment, surely it is its flames, or its population of demons and criminals, that pose the threat, not its gates! If, more probably, it is Sheol (10) that is meant, then again the amnesia or the darkness that are associated with Sheol still seem more threatening than its gates. The New English Bible, with characteristic sleight of hand, proposes an alternative reading in a footnote: "The gates of death shall not close upon it" [the Church]. The leading idea here in Matthew may not be so much power over the Church, as power over death. What should we make of this word 'gates'? At least as long ago as 1916, one J. H. Bernard proposed that the reading should be 'floods' because of a confusion between the Aramaic for flood (ubhal) and the Greek pylai (gates).(11) Either way, the floods could conceivably be described as the gates of death/sheol, as it was widely held that water covered the underworld.(12)

If floods and gates are equivalent here, then the irony, even the humorous resonance, of the fisherman who survived storms and walked on water with his Lord is significant. He is the rock that rises above the flood. There also may be an underlying idea of 'recapitulation' and 'synergy' here in judging (fallen) angels cf. 1 Cor. 6:3. God's angelic servant fell and holds the keys of death. God's human servant has proved faithful and, as a consequence, is entrusted with the keys of the Kingdom = Church. The Church gives new life for old; this is the Church as *antidote to death*. Furthermore, although, undoubtedly, there are N.T. passages about binding and loosing sin, this is probably not one of them. The idea seems to be legislation, as in 'binding contract.' Remission of sins, of course, is not automatically excluded, for a lawmaker and interpreter may have the means to grant dispensations and pardon, but there is, nevertheless a distinction. Nor is a perpetuated, localised Petrine jurisdiction automatically excluded as a valid interpretation of this passage. Yet the above observations may shift the centre of gravity here. Rather than seeing a provision for posterity in Church regulation and government, attention is focussed upon how the Christ has "turned the tables" on the Satan. Furthermore the *truth* of St. Peter's confession is surely more significant than his powers of judgement, speech or administration. This passage is actually the charter for traditionalists, Anglican or otherwise, for it surely highlights the immovability of the true confession and the rock-like properties of the Church's essential identity. The late lamented Schmemann expresses this position as ably as any Anglican apologist:

"If universal unity is indeed unity of the Church and not merely unity of Churches, its essence is not that all churches together constitute one vast, unique organism, but that each Church - in the identity of order, faith and the gifts of the Holy Spirit - is the same Church."(13)

Some Late Byzantine Patristic Writers

Our purpose is far from mere polemic, it is to remind ourselves

that concerns over the papal claims are no Protestant invention. Protestantism's weak point is the lateness of its objections to the Papacy. What befell the sixteenth century Papacy that made it a greater problem than it was in the eleventh? Nothing, surely, as concrete as its pronouncements of the nineteenth? There is no shortage of work on this subject, although its existence is not obvious to the average reader. A particularly detailed study was undertaken comparatively recently (in English) by Papadakis Aristeides.(14) We should not underestimate how deep and how long-standing these misunderstandings / errors / sins have proved themselves to be. Even if the division between the Eastern and Latin churches could be healed miraculously in one hour from now, an indelible mark of shame would still be left on the Church, standing as a terrible, but necessary, warning for the rest of time. Modern ecumenical goodwill displays all the realism of a modern disaster movie, everyone (who is not dead) walks away smiling! In real life, however, we experience post-traumatic stress. After Christ's all-blessed resurrection the disciples did not just walk away smiling, least of all St. Peter (John 21:17). All the records of the Church need to tell their story.

Anglicanism's manifest faults, furthermore, do not automatically put others in the right. Another *practical* weak point in our history - for familiarity with this material should have saved many years of labour - was the Reformers' distance from these later Byzantine theologians. All that the Reformers need have done was just copy these arguments line upon line; although, admittedly, the Reformation represented itself as concerned with a far more remote Christian antiquity.

John Camateros & Nicholas Mesarites (early C.13)

"...We venerate the Church of Rome as the first in rank and honour... but we do not see that the Scriptures oblige us to recognize in it the mother of other churches or to venerate it as embracing other churches."(15)

Of a more outspoken and polemical turn of mind Nicholas Mesarites insists:

"... It would be Judaic and miserable to limit the grace and its divinity by lands and countries, denying to it the faculty of acting in an equal way in the whole world." (16)

Nilus Cabasilas (C.14)

"... The Church of Christ is established on the 'theology' of Peter (i.e. on his confession of Christ as God), but all those who have the true faith profess this very theology."(17)

"...It is not from Peter that the Pope got his primacy over the other bishops. The Pope has indeed two privileges: he is the Bishop of Rome... and he is the first among the bishops. From Peter he has received the Roman episcopacy; as to the primacy, he received it much later from the blessed Fathers and the pious Emperors, for it was just that ecclesiastical affairs be accomplished in order."(18)

Note that these theologians are not dealing with Papal infallibility. They had probably not even come across this terminology being used of the Church itself, let alone the Papacy, for such ideas were still in their infancy.(19) The problem is that agreement on this one point regarding Papal authority (which may be more of an issue for Anglicans than Orthodox anyway) has led Anglicans to assume that there must be deep theological agreement on nearly every point between Anglicanism and Orthodoxy. The twentieth century, if nothing else, has exploded that myth.

Some Anglican Divines

Archbishop Laud endorses the interpretation of Epiphanius (315-403):

"...The authority of St. Peter is urged here to prove the Godhead of the Holy Ghost... [Peter was] pronounced blessed by Christ because as God the Father revealed to him the Godhead of the Son, so did the Son the Godhead of the Holy Ghost."

Laud adds:

"Edifying and establishing the Church in the true faith of Christ, by the confession which St. Peter made."(20)

To some extent our considerable labours to establish, at least, what the Gospel writers themselves (and their communities) understood by such passages is partly beside the point. The Church has come to attach agreed meanings to Scripture that cannot be undone. Thus the old Anglican writers usually acknowledge, not only what the Scriptures themselves say, but what the ancient Church took them to mean. Ironically the (Anglican) Archbishop John Bramhall, whilst exiled in France, won respect from the French episcopate for his opposition to ultramontanist! Commenting on this passage, Bramhall considers the Scriptures, and their application within the Church :

"This primacy neither the ancients nor we do deny to St. Peter - of order, of place, of pre-eminence. If this "first movership" would serve his turn, this controversy were at an end for our parts... The Court of Rome ... thirst[s] after a visible monarchy upon earth, an absolute ecclesiastical sovereignty, a power to make canons, to abolish canons, to dispense with canons, to impose pensions, to dispose dignities, to decide controversies by a single authority. This was that which made the breach, not the innocent primacy of St. Peter."(21)

My sympathies are particularly with Bramhall on Rome's canons. I recall my sense of puzzlement and shock when, quite young, I was glancing at a list of holy days of obligation in a Roman missal, only to find that they varied from country to country. Since missing mass on such a day amounts to sin, I failed to see how one's residence in a particular country affects culpability. I am still none the wiser, especially as Roman Catholics ask how Anglicans can authoritatively determine what their obligations are. Rome's reputation for absolute consistency has been greatly overstated, particularly by outsiders. The truth is that it has always been a much broader Church than was generally conceded, and since Vatican II the increasing latitude can prove a shattering undeception.

Bishop John Cosin (another exile in France) also took the differences with Rome seriously yet constructively. He listed 14 agreements and 14 disagreements in a letter to the Countess of Peterborough. Enumeration of the disagreements surely would have sufficed, since, by default, all else was agreed. Perhaps Cosin felt it necessary to expand particular aspects of agreement. In agreement 5 he explicitly concedes a primacy of honour:

"In acknowledgement of the Bishop of Rome, if he would rule and be ruled by the ancient canons of the Church, to be the Patriarch of the West, by right of ecclesiastical and imperial constitution, in such places where the kings and governor of those places had received him, and found it behoveful for them to make use of his jurisdiction, without any necessary dependence upon him by divine right."(22)

The first two points of *difference*, however, set the boundaries of acceptance; these are, according to Cosin, what Rome and the Pope cannot be:

"That the Church of Rome is the Mother and Mistress of all other Churches in the world. That the Pope of Rome is the vicar-general of Christ, or that he hath an universal jurisdiction over all Christians that shall be saved."(23)

Although at first glance these are not the most conciliatory statements possible, they demonstrate that the old Anglo-Catholic theologians took relations with Rome seriously. Perhaps the most important work is Pusey's 3 volume *Eirenicon* of nearly two centuries later, whilst the most sympathetic of all the serious Anglican works is Trevor Jalland's Bampton Lectures.(24) Jalland has the privilege of side-stepping some theological judgements by hiding behind the screen of an historical method.

The Glasshouse(s) exposed?

What then should our response be to the office and claims of the Papacy? There is much to be said for the entrenched position, for faithfully preserving the formulae of Laud, Bramhall and the rest. Even for a 'D list' theologian such as myself to say that "fossilisation is fine" raises eyebrows, but I am not being satirical. Some of the most dedicated Christians are from those bodies which are dismissed as fossilised.(25) A certain restlessness of thought on my part, however, opens up questions about what lies beyond confessional boundaries. In these ecumenical days how should we - to use a hateful modern idiom - *relate* to the Papacy? The question has acquired more relevance from the intention of our present Archbishop, John Hepworth, to engage in serious discussions with Rome. So is the question now wide open? Firstly there is no substitute for reminding ourselves what the issues are. There is one ludicrous tendency within Anglicanism to be *nice* and affirm everything. If that opening question, as to one's opinion of the Pope, had been addressed to many another Anglican, they might well have said: "He's a wonderful man" or "I'm all for the Papacy!" Anglicanism has become inclusive, an entity that *can't say no* - except, that is, to explicitly traditionalist propositions. So we need to remember who and what (and why) we are. We also need to be sensitive to developments, good, bad and mixed. Suppose that, finally, most of the Latin and Byzantine churches could sink their differences and reach some accord, however compromised and questionable. We would then need an overwhelmingly strong argument to remain outside (or a least on the margins) of a largely restored Christendom.

The fact of church life is that we are neither large enough nor sufficiently intellectually endowed to take the initiative. We have to wait and watch developments, and respond as truthfully and seriously as we are able. Furthermore it has very often been pointed out - and again, most recently, in Dr. Edward Norman's book, that Anglicans have no mechanism for establishing truth and purging error, certainly not when - like viruses - errors mutate.

"To be spiritually autonomous," Dr. Norman insists, "the Church must show that, as the organic body of Christ, it has the capacity to determine truth from error; that it is possessed of a Doctrine of the Church."(26)

This, of course, was always a grave weakness in Anglicanism and that is why such great names as Manning and Robert Wilberforce (both archdeacons) abandoned the English Church. This was not just because heretical views were upheld rather than condemned, but upheld by a *secular* court imposing its will upon the Church because, as a body, the English Church had no means to determine the matter for itself.

Now, however, it could be argued that the problem is far more serious because - yes indeed - the issues and errors have

mutated very markedly. As a church we have scant resources to meet the difficulties posed by genetic engineering, 'designer babies' and 'designer bodies', and so forth. This may not mean (at least in an Anglican understanding) that Rome will always come up with the right pronouncements on such subjects, but they do have some mechanism in place to try. They are addressing the problems, what are supposedly Anglican traditionalists doing? Ten years on - God help us - *Forward in Faith* are still grumbling about women priests (whilst giving tumultuous applause to Rowan Williams for his Pilgrimage sermon at Walsingham). What is wrong with this picture? So would a restored communion with Rome resolve such contradictions? Could this provide the basis we need for definite teaching and living?

Obviously if we were in communion with Rome we would be bound to some (as yet undefined) extent to adopt their moral theology and developing discipline. This would, practically speaking, create more difficulties for some than for others. On Rome's general teaching on artificial contraception I have no theological objection to raise, not least because so many Anglican theologians (e.g. Bishop Gore) were also originally opposed to it.(27) On Rome's specific judgements on some matters of fact, however, such as the transmission of disease *through* condoms, there may be more to dispute. Rome's condemnations of Gallileo have only been withdrawn gradually during the last two centuries! Rome seems to attempt far too much in its doctrinal definitions, Anglicanism too little.

Moreover the Church also badly needs to learn when to shut up, and to rid itself of its addiction to press releases, sound-bites and spin. Whether the *Traditional Anglican churches* will ever be able to determine matters of faith and morals effectively (where Parliament - and later the former Anglican Communion - failed) remains to be seen. More practical problems may arise if our priests are required to be re-ordained, as anticipated by our Archbishop.(28) Just for the record, I might sadly submit to re-ordination, after St. Chad's precedent. I cannot speak for fellow clergy or implicate them in such delicate matters. Under existing Roman canon-law, any former Roman priests now officiating within Anglicanism might be prohibited from celebrating.(29) Nor, again for the record, would I anticipate re-ordination according to the *Novus Ordo*. Imposing non-traditional rites upon a traditionalist cause appears contradictory.

There is no self-evident blueprint for how traditionalists should proceed. We have begun the journey bravely, but we are still drawing the map; our knowledge of Church History needs some work. Old belief means not only being rock-like and "holding fast that which is good," but responding to the times by reference to that belief. We have a right instinct (indeed calling) to preserve not only Tradition with a capital T (that which is essential to the entire Church of God) but also our own particular traditions. The question is which are the non-negotiable ones. Our answer to this question will depend partly upon our interpretation of Anglicanism. What form of Anglicanism do we affirm? for we cannot affirm them all. My own view of what it represents is an approximation to Old Catholicism (of Utrecht in former times) rather than anything emerging from Reformation period compromises. Personally I can see little value for us - as fundamentally heirs of the Non-jurors, Tractarians and even of Gore's *Lux Mundi* - in paying

much attention to e.g. the 39 Articles and the Books of Homilies. They will always have a certain historical significance, but their theological significance, for our tradition of Anglicanism, is negligible. Nevertheless, whichever of these two basic models proves the most authentic or enduring, an infallible papacy with jurisdiction over the entire Church cannot really be compatible with either.

If, however, communion between the Papacy and a substantial part of the Eastern churches could be restored, without explicit absorption (mere unitarianism) this might prove a safe pathway for us as well. Theoretically this order could be reversed. A scheme forged for Anglicans could be serviceable for Eastern Christians. Yet, realistically, if Rome were ever to attempt significant shifts in its relationships with other communions, it would surely begin with its closest theological relatives, the Eastern Communions and those Old Catholics who have remained sound. Although personally unconvinced by most Papal claims, I see a possibility that disaffected communions could recognise the Pope by acclamation, if assured of the benefits.

1. Expanded from a sermon for High Mass at St. Alban & St. Henry VI Letchworth, 24th July, 2004.
2. Indeed a card bearing a fine photograph of Mgr. Lefebvre was distributed after one mass, I was delighted to be among the recipients!
3. As early as 1863 Queen Isabella II of Spain petitioned Pius IX for a definition. In the 1880s 25,000 signatures were collected in Mexico; between 1921 and 1940 6,086,000. See Bennett & Winch, "The Assumption of Our Lady and Catholic Theology" London, SPCK, 1950, p.8. "The traditional use of a definition of doctrine has been to clarify some matter which has led to a dispute within the Church. It has not been to satisfy a devotional urge or to advertise any one aspect of the Catholic faith." Ibid. p.12.
4. Most especially the acclamation and its introduction which follow upon the Institution Narrative of the Novus Ordo and the virtual abandonment of the sanctuary.
5. Alexander Schmemmann, *The Primacy of Peter*, Faith Press, Leighton Buzzard, 2nd. ed., 1973, p. 54.
6. For those unfamiliar with classic B.B.C. situation comedy she was a snobbish character from humble origins who insisted that her name was pronounced "Bouquet," and who was forever attempting to get people of supposedly superior social standing to her candle-lit dinner parties.
7. Alexander Schmemmann, *The Journals of Father Alexander Schmemmann 1972-1983*, St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, New York, 2000, p. 81.
8. Many N. T. scholars would consider the entire passage to represent the beliefs of a localised congregation within the Early Church rather than the words of our Lord. Some would even dispute that He intended to found a church at all. Whilst admitting the possibility of later constructions, a traditional theologian would not begin with a fundamentally speculative, reductionist approach nor wish to 'second guess' the N.T. Such speculations, in this case, are not supported by textual evidence.
9. For the Patristic flexibility on this point see Jalland, T., *The Church and the Papacy*, (Bampton Lectures 1942) London, S.P.C.K., 1949, pp.97-8. The many examples are most interesting.

Meanwhile, we should never fall into the faithless trap of regarding ourselves as excluded from genuine, effectual communion with Christ's Church. We are not merely in an intermediate state between the Rock of Rome and the glasshouse of the official Anglican Communion. The storms (ancient and modern) that have descended upon the Church have restricted visibility. Our visible communion with all those true churches established upon Peter's rock, not just the Latins, is indeed suspended, yet we are not alone. The prayers of SS. Peter and Paul, of all the Apostles and Saints of God, are ours if we will recognise them and join our prayers with theirs. "We [live]" - after the oft-repeated words of Bishop Thomas Ken - "in the faith as professed by the whole Church, before the division of East and West..." We need not equate the One Church, professed in the Creed, with one "obedience". Our experience is that the God-given oneness can transcend jurisdictions without thereby making a church invisible. The Church is often a source of grave concern to us, but ultimately its truth will prevail beyond the grave (when Christ relieves *all* bishops of their duties) and that is why the Church should be, and is, the antidote to all anxiety.

10. Sheol is the underworld of later Judaism, a place of death rather than torment, although, confusingly, both places are rendered in English as Hell. Sheol is probably meant because the Greek reads Hades, and because death and 'gates' are often coupled.
11. See Jalland, *Papacy*, *ibid.* pp. 55-6 (footnote): "If what our Lord actually said was 'the floods of Hades' (cf. Gen. VII: 11) it would be easier to account for the use of katicusin."
12. "Gates of death" has at least three O.T. precedents: Job 38:17, Pss. 9:13 & 107:18. "Gates of Sheol" (grave) is only found in Isaiah 38:10 but they seem to be interchangeable.
13. Schmemmann, *The Primacy of Peter*, *ibid.*, p. 40. His familiarity with Angle-Catholicism extended back to his occasional mass attendance at St. Mary's Stamford, England before World War II.
14. Aristeides, Papadakis (with John Meyendorff) "The Christian East and the Rise of the Papacy", St. Vladimir's Press, 1994. It is especially interesting in its account of the Council of Florence.
15. Paris gr. 1302, fol. 272 v. Quoted J. Meyendorff, *Primacy of Peter*, *ibid.* pp. 19-20.
16. Ed. Heisenburg, *Neue Quellen*, II, p.24. Quoted Meyendorff *ibid.* p. 21.
17. PG. CXLIX, 708 B. Quoted Meyendorff, *ibid.* p.25. He should not be confused with his close relative, the liturgical writer, Nicholas Cabasilas.
18. PG. CXLIX, 701 CD. Meyendorff, *ibid.* p. 28 .
19. The idea of infallibility became an obsession in Western Christendom, so Protestants attributed it to Scripture and to actions performed within Scripture: e.g. the bogus interpolation from the Jacobean translator of Acts in the King James Bible "... by many infallible proofs." (Acts 1:3).
20. More, Paul E. & Cross, Frank L., *Anglicanism*, London, S.P.C.K., 1935, pp. 57-8.
21. More & Cross, *ibid.* p. 66.
22. More & Cross, *ibid.* p. 55.
23. More & Cross, *ibid.* p. 53.
24. I instance this not only because it is a most important

work, but also as a form of homage, since he founded the department which awarded my theology degree.

25. Ironically we live in an age of fossilisation, despite our progressive talk. Just one instance of this is our dependence upon recorded sound. We are so wedded to our favourite recording of a particular song, or item of prose, that we display an aversion or even hostility to other interpretations.
26. Edward Norman, *Anglican Difficulties*, London, Morehouse Publishing, 2004, p. 115.
27. If married, however, I might experience considerable practical problems with this teaching. In Anglican practice the controversy over contraception has gone the same way

as that over usury. It is not a case of "reception" but default. Anglicanism's initial hostility to artificial contraception was a rapid response. It could be argued that hasty judgements lack the same force as those maintained for many decades, or centuries. When even the best and most faithful theological minds are pressurised into a decision, this may not carry the same weight as an unbroken tradition of teaching. Much could depend on how firmly Rome maintains and reinforces its ethical judgements.

28. *The Messenger*, vol. 13, no.2, Trinitytide 2004, p.2.
29. Under current rules they can be received back into lay communion, but forbidden from officiating.

To Receive the Blessed Sacrament

A Letter to the Editor by **Grace Fraser** (an isolated Old Believer ministered to from Letchworth)

The following thoughts were sparked off by an article in *"The Messenger of the Catholic League"* by Fr. Anthony Bell, a retired Anglican priest who said, in effect, that in these difficult times he saw no reason why he should not seek out an Anglican priest who believed as he (Fr. Bell) did and receive the Blessed Sacrament at such a priest's hands.

An Old Believer wants to be sure that he is receiving a valid Sacrament at the Eucharist. I have always understood the requirements to be:

first that the elements are consecrated by a properly (validly) consecrated priest licensed by a Bishop belonging to a *bona fide* church. That is a church which has the apostolic succession, adheres to the historic Creeds and teaching of the Church (i.e. uses the Gospels as a light to determine belief and behaviour instead of rewriting them in the "light" of current fashion including "current" scientific belief) and which preserves Order as well as faith. A wandering priest, licensed by no Bishop or by an *"Episcopus vagrans"* cannot consecrate and administer a valid Sacrament; *and second* that the proper elements are used. These are bread ("the best and purest wheat bread that conveniently may be gotten", whether leavened as in Eastern use or unleavened as in Western) and wine (grapes fermented in the country of origin, with, so far as possible, no artificial substances added, which is why Roman Catholic usage requires a certificate of origin for sacramental wine. "British wine" made from imported grape extracts falls below this standard; non-alcoholic products as used by many non-

comformists are *not* wine).

Before 1992, the Anglican Old Believer believed that the main *bona fide* Churches were the Orthodox, the Roman Catholic and the Anglican.

I have heard it said that the Orthodox believe Anglican priests to be valid priests belonging to an invalid church.

Of course, the Roman Catholic belief is that all Anglican orders are *"absolutely null and utterly void"*.

Nevertheless, an Anglican Old Believer would happily receive the Sacrament in the Orthodox or Roman Catholic churches if given permission to do so. Such a believer would regard all nonconformist "sacraments" with suspicion, as they lacked both the priest and the elements.

I have always understood the above requirements to be safeguards rather than restrictions, ensuring that the would-be communicant is not led into heresy or carelessness with regard to the Sacrament.

So where does this leave the "Forward in Faith" people and even some Continuers who go back to the Established Church from time to time where "the priest believes as they do"? Surely it is the faith of the church rather than that of the individual priest which matters. Otherwise even in a *bona fide* church the communicant would have to know the individual priest's beliefs before communicating.

Vestigial Validity: A reply from the Editors.

There are important practical problems here, particularly for isolated laity who cannot travel far to find proper sacramental worship.

It is a wise rule that in matters of the sacraments we follow the safer course. This cannot be pushed too far; if there is a doubt, such as arose from the papal condemnation of Anglican orders, then we must resolve that doubt. But once we have resolved it, then we are safe. We as Old Believers are sure that Church of England orders *were* valid; but circumstances have now changed.

Certainly, a valid Eucharist requires the correct **matter** (bread and wine as stated), correct **form** (a prayer expressing the right meaning - which many modern liturgies do not; modern language may be distasteful but is not of itself invalid) and the **relationship** to the Universal Church (celebrated by a Bishop

in communion with the other Bishops, or by his competent delegate, a priest under his authority). But we do not believe there were no valid Eucharists anywhere in the lengthy period when East and West excommunicated each other, so we do accept imperfections in the relationship to the Universal Church. (We assume an adequate **intention**.)

How does this apply to the modern Church of England? Most parishes use liturgies of unreliable **form**, so it is only the minority which use either the older texts or perhaps (however distasteful) the modern Roman texts which concern us. Most parishes are in unambiguous **relationship** to the diocesan bishops, who have by their common consent implemented in canon law and in practice a view of the ministry inconsistent with that of the Universal Church. These parishes again do not concern us. Because the bishops hold this view, *no* ordinations by them can be trusted (male or female, flying bishop or not),

which again means that many parishes do not concern us.

However, there is a small (and fast diminishing) group which may for a time concern us. These are the parishes where a valid priest and the congregation have substantially repudiated the diocesan bishop and his errors by passing the excluding resolutions. (Relationship with a "flying bishop" is *not* much of a "plus point" as they are not a different succession.)

Some of these parishes will also use a valid **form** of liturgy. The **priest** will have been ordained before the error (or be a convert from Rome). Such parishes are in a very odd situation. They have not left the faith; they have kept it, and been left by the majority, including the diocesan bishops. Such parishes only exist because the Church of England abandoned all principles and all consistency, but it did do so and they do exist. By intention they are in **relationship** to the Universal Church, and they have not done anything themselves inconsistent with that relationship. It is a possible and charitable conclusion, though not free from doubt, that their sacraments are valid; Old Believers differ in their practical judgement whether to receive or not in such churches.

Clearly this exception only applies to principled parishes; the Sacrament cannot safely be received in parishes which face both ways. Nor does this exception well cover a priest acting in isolation. Of course in an emergency a priest must make the Sacraments available even without episcopal connection, but

the present situation (ten years after the event) is *not* an emergency. A priest aware that the Church of England is not sufficient to make him part of the Universal Church should seek a Bishop who is part of it. In times of persecution, it may be unsafe to make this public, so there *may* be some priests who not only think as we do but also have acted on it, yet cannot openly say so. "*Thinking as we do*" may be code for something much more principled; but it may not be. We cannot find out, so the rule of safety applies.

The recent issues in the mis-called Anglican Communion relating to homosexual clergy change nothing. The ministry cannot become *more* invalid!

Nor will the appointment of female bishops change anything, for the same reason, though we should welcome it as an act of secular justice in a secular body and as reducing the excuses for confused thought - though doubtless some people will still find excuses!

Positively, we are convinced that the priests and congregations of the Traditional Anglican Church (and indeed of other continuing bodies) are fully incorporated in the Universal Church, the Body of Christ. (Compare the Prayer Book thanksgiving after Communion.) We pray that its other members will recognise this. Were it not so, we would not dare to continue.

Sheep and Goats

GD Underwood - an isolated Old Believer ministered to from Ampthill.

And before him shall be gathered all the nations, and he shall separate them one from another as the shepherd separateth the sheep from the goats. St. Matthew 25:32 (RV)

The destiny of the sheep, that is the righteous, is to "inherit the kingdom prepared for (them) from the foundation of the world"; the fate of the goats, that is the cursed, is to depart "into eternal fire".

It was at one time fairly common, in evangelical churches at least, for "damnation" sermons to be preached - not always with the full endorsement of the congregation. F.W. Farrar, in his book "Eternal Hope", records the response to one such sermon delivered by a certain Dr. Nathaniel Emmons who, whilst reminding his congregation in graphic terms of the unremitting and unquenchable fires of hell awaiting the condemned, was interrupted by a woman who rose in front of him to exclaim "Oh Dr. Emmons, Dr. Emmons, has God no mercy at all?"(1)

Although the term "hell" is still used in everyday speech to indicate a punishing experience, its theological meaning seems now to be largely lost or simply ignored - a consequence, no doubt, of the decline in the use of religious language. Indeed there are many today who do not believe in hell in the religious sense at all.

The existence of a place to which some are, after death, consigned to unending and horrific punishment for eternity which we call "hell"(2) has, in fact, been authoritatively questioned throughout the Church's history. Such a view is based on the perceived impossibility of God's all-embracing love for His creation being successfully challenged by the permanent existence of evil, as this would mean that God was confronted by a power greater than Himself. It must follow then that however long punishment for sin lasts, it may not be infinite. This view, known as universal restoration or

universalism, was propounded by one of the most famous early Christian philosophers, Origen, and supported, amongst others, by Gregory of Nyssa. Does not a belief in universal restoration, however, conflict with Our Lord's own teaching - notably the example quoted above? What, in fact, does the Bible say on the subject? In a necessarily brief treatment only a few references, taken mainly from the Gospels, can be considered, but at least the nature of the dialectic may be perceived.

The most important text arguing against the acceptance of universal restoration is found in St. Matthew 12:32 (with corresponding verses in Mark and Luke) "whosoever shall speak against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world nor in that which is to come". Mark speaks of "an eternal sin" which A.E.J. Rawlinson defines as "ascribing to Satan a work of God"(3) i.e. calling God's goodness evil.

It is of course clear from an examination of Matthew 25:32 and 12:32, and of the many texts that may be adduced in their support, notably Matthew 13:49-50 "So shall it be in the end of the world, the angels shall come forth and sever the wicked from among the righteous, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire ..." that universalism must be considered in the context of the judgement of Christ. The connection is made, for example, by the late Professor Barclay who, though without conviction, recounts the argument that the two concepts, universalism and judgement, or at least the implementation of that judgement, may be irreconcilable(4).

It is not, however, possible to address that question, let alone answer it, unless the meaning of the terms is fully appreciated.

Universal restoration is, perhaps, unambiguous. The term signifies the salvation of all mankind, the belief that evil will finally pass away and all souls finally be reconciled to God. The meaning of judgement can be misunderstood, being not infrequently equated with damnation or condemnation; and indeed the Greek word "krisis" is translated in this sense several times in the Authorised Version of the Bible. It is, though, more generally translated in the Authorised Version, as it is elsewhere, as judgement in the sense of assessment or determination. It is, moreover, a recognition of what each individual human being has chosen to do or not to do, involving self-determination rather than Calvinist pre-determination.

Although universalism has never been regarded as orthodox belief, neither has it been denounced as heresy.

The question remains to be answered, therefore, is it really compatible with traditional faith?

The Biblical texts often quoted in support of universalism "I, if I be lifted up will draw **all** men unto me (St. John 12:32) and, from the third synoptic Gospel, "**all** flesh shall see the salvation of God" (St. Luke 13:6) and others elsewhere in the New Testament which appear to support them, do not upon closer examination really help the universalist case as they are at best equivocal. The reference to Our Lord drawing all men unto Himself is actually meant to signify the manner of His death as is explicitly stated in the following verse, whilst the allusion to all flesh seeing the salvation of God, though more promising from the universalist point of view, may simply mean that the world will be made aware of the salvation God has wrought through His Son and may then accept or reject it. It is this option which would appear inimical to the universalist position. God has given man free will and the choice between accepting or rejecting God's offer of eternal life must be man's - and inevitable consequences follow the exercising of that choice; "He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved, but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned" (Mark 16:16).

This, of course, still begs the question - what will that condemnation, that judgement, be like? If it does not involve perpetual punishment, then universalism would be vindicated, for all serious universalists accept that some recompense for man's reprobation will need to be made. The very fact that man can choose to reject God, however, determines the nature of the consequence as well as, as has been noted, the inevitability of the consequence of that rejection, for life without God does not exist. It will, literally, be hell, for in God's new creation there will be no hell(5) (Revelation 20:14 AV). As Professor

Ten (further) years after

Imaginations by the Assistant Editor

I think that it is only by considering the future that we can shape the present. Where do we choose and seriously expect to be in another ten years? Then how must we prepare?

We must hope not to exist as a separate body. Not because we will have failed and died out, but because of greater unity both amongst continuers and in the sound parts of the universal church generally. Our existence whether as TTAC in this country or as TAC world-wide was never important for its own sake; merely to continue a valid form of Catholicism. If the current steps towards unity among continuers (and with Rome!) succeed, this will be a blessing indeed. Our duty is

Barclay points out in answer to J.H. Leckie's proposition that God cannot be confronted by a power greater than Himself, a situation in which unrepentant sinners remain may be met by their "annihilation and obliteration".(6)

All who wish to enter the New Jerusalem will be able to do so for "all who would might enter and no-one was denied".

There will be no need to deny them, for they will have denied themselves - denied themselves entry to Heaven and denied their own ultimate existence. The sheep - Christ's sheep which Our Risen Lord commanded His Church to nourish and to sustain, will be with Him for ever. The goats, like those other animal embodiments of evil, the Gerasene (or, in the AV, Gadarene) swine, will perish for ever.

Universalism, however, in the sense of the rehabilitation of the human race through our Lord's sacrifice on the Cross is indeed available to all - all, that is, who want it.

Notes:

- 1 Quoted by Professor William Barclay in his "The Plain Man looks at the Apostles' Creed. Collins, Glasgow 1967 p221.
- 2 The better translation of the Hebrew word Sheol is Hades - simply the place of the dead. The popular idea of hell as a place of fire and destruction owes its origin to the Valley of Hinnon (Ge Hinnon) where those who worshipped Moloch the fire-god burned their children as an offering to him. After King Josiah put an end to such worship (see 2 Kings 23:10), the area became an official rubbish dump, the public incinerator of Jerusalem, which smouldered continuously. Ge Hinnon is Gehenna.
- 3 Westminster Commentary p45, as cited by D.E. Nineham, "St. Mark" The Penguin New Testament Commentaries, Penguin Books, London, 1963 p125.
- 4 Professor William Barclay, op. cit. p236.
- 5 Whether interpreted as Hades or Gehenna.
- 6 Professor William Barclay, op. cit. p238.

Except where otherwise stated, all Scriptural references are to the Revised Version.

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Editorial note: we are committed in the Traditional Anglican Communion to the fifth Ecumenical Council, but exactly what was the doctrine then condemned? Pertinent here is Dr. Pusey's "What is of Faith as to Everlasting Punishment" Oxford 1880.

communion (one church); not intercommunion.

That said, what can be expected? Greater unity among Continuers is possible and must be our prayer and our effort, but it is a world-wide problem, not a local one. And that is only a small part of our Lord's will that they be one. At the wider level, it is a reasonable guess that in ten years there will be a different Pope; which might mean a greater fidelity to Roman traditions, with or without a greater acceptance of other orthodox bodies, or a slide into the liberalism and modernism which has ruined most of Anglicanism. It is perhaps unlikely that we will be recognised as a valid instance of the One Holy

Catholic and Apostolic Church by the next Pope, or for that matter by the Orthodox. We must expect to remain on our own. Relations with the rest of Anglicanism cannot be high in our hopes. Maybe we have seen the last Lambeth conference - maybe there will be a radical split between bible-based and liberals. If so, we must be ready to work with right believing and right practising Anglicanism, and it might well be our duty to unite with such a body if it emerged. This would probably not change the situation in this country, however. Most of the state religion has chosen the broad way which leads to destruction. We will not be expecting many converts from it, for most of its members will not even know that what they have is not classical Anglicanism (or even Christianity). Of course female bishops might stir a few consciences, and it is always possible that the Church of England system will blunder tactically so that some members of Forward in Faith join us - but these are not serious expectations.

So while we hope to be part of a much larger worldwide body, we will still be relatively small in this country, and despised by the establishment. I both expect and choose a church of small congregations with unpaid clergy and mostly without buildings. That church will be acting in a world ever more hostile and more uncomprehending. The world will not understand the possibility of morals other than its own strange mixture of license and occasional panics. The world will not understand worship (except of the currency).

How must we have developed in order to do God's work in such an environment?

We must have regularised our worship. This is a uniquely English problem, because of the sad history of the Prayer Book, as considered in previous Old Believers. I doubt that all congregations will in ten years time be using the same rite for the Holy Communion, but I hope there will be an agreed form to which congregations move at their own pace, which truly expresses our beliefs. If so, we must start working on it fairly soon. Greater unity makes this both harder and more necessary. We must have organised ourselves as a mission church. At the least, we need to put in place a catechumenate and be ready for adult baptisms and confirmations (many of those who come to us will not have been baptised, or not sure). It is in this context

Flickering Faith. *Apparently the Archbishop of Canterbury admitted that the recent atrocity in Beslan affected his faith: . . . "there is a flicker, there is a doubt". Is there a gathering trend to use "doubt" as a metaphor for "shock"? Would it be seen as uncaring to say "our faith is stronger than ever?" If his or indeed anybody's faith did "flicker" then may God give grace. A terrifying sequence of events unfolded in Beslan and, for many there, the trauma will be lifelong. Rather than blaming God, or getting bogged down in technicalities about the "problem of evil", should we not recognise that our Blessed Lord, and indeed the New Testament generally, issue some very austere promises to us? Christ's words to the Women of Jerusalem on the way to his own death were scarcely encouraging (Lk. 23:28). Such texts are not a licence for us to be grim, but they set parameters for our engagement with both our faith and the facts of life.*

most of all that we need a Bishop or Bishops in this country. Lay training, both as part of Christian initiation and subsequent to it, is something we must get right.

Congregations will have learned the requirements of survival. These are not, for the most part, raising money, but staying together, being constant in worship, learning together, and finding from amongst themselves the new Readers and Priests. We cannot expect any great supply of priests from other bodies; it must become axiomatic for each congregation that it encourages vocations from itself. Not just one occasionally; we need more than one priest to a congregation, so that worship does not stop whenever that priest needs to be away on Sundays and so that new congregations can be formed. We should not in general be ordaining men who have not got a lengthy period in one of our congregations and its full support.

Sadly, many of those who come to join us as catechumens will have gone through marriages and divorces which will be of doubtful validity in Christian terms. And our own members will not be free from worldly temptations in this matter. We cannot flounder around in the manner of the state church; we will need a clear marriage discipline and consequent procedures that all our members, personally affected or not, can trust.

We must all, both clergy and laity, have abandoned any hope of returning to "religion in his golden slippers in the sunshine, and with applause". Whatever the excellencies of past worship in splendid buildings with big congregations, large teams of servers, and the "pealing organ" blowing "to the full-voiced choir below", we cannot *generally* expect them. God calls us to fidelity even "in rags and contempt". Anything more is a mercy for which we should indeed be grateful; but we must not attempt to build God's church on nostalgia. This is, I fear, the hardest sacrifice for us.

It is small comfort, I know, that those who remain in the state religion have some of the equipment, such as the buildings. But even for them the glory is departed.

ANGLICAN DIFFICULTIES:

A New Syllabus Of Errors. Dr. Edward Norman

"Not again!" "More moaning!" "Must self-styled traditionalists always be so negative...?" Since Dr. Bennett's notorious 1987 *Crockford's Preface* we have suffered - so to speak - 'syllabus of errors overload.' The more I read, the more it seemed that I could have written it, [or that I had! cf. p.26] but not all of us are former Deans of Peterhouse Cambridge, former Reith Lecturers, nor Chancellors of York Minster. Few traditionalists ever get on the platform. In fairness. Dr. Norman examines areas beyond my range, and with a sureness of touch that few could equal.

My main dissent is with some of its implied conclusions, since Anglican errors do not vindicate Rome's truth [see my article elsewhere in this issue]. Dr. Norman's course for Rome, however, is itself not without interest, since he was always accounted a low-churchman. Much of what he identifies as erroneous applies equally to a vast swathe of current Roman practice, a point not entirely unnoticed e.g. pp. viii and 151. In several passages he contrasts Anglicanism's inability to distinguish true and false teaching with that of the non-reformed [Apostolic] Churches. Nevertheless having a teaching office, with a clearly defined duty, does not make the *faithful*, well, any more faithful. The birth-rates in Italy and Spain raise the odd Anglican eyebrow. The problem with today's Church is as much with *reception* as with teaching. This is precisely why the Church, not just Anglicanism, has retreated into politically correct clap-trap, in effect its sub-text is "We dare you to oppose motherhood and apple pie!" If serious requirements in faith and morals go un-headed, substitute some platitudes that only a curmudgeon of the deepest dye could withstand. Dr Norman ably highlights this dishonest strategy: e.g. pp.38, 54, 62...

Although, maybe, a low-churchman, the writer was never an Evangelical, and he is not afraid to call the Evangelicals' bluff: pp. 9, 28, 61. So often it is the Evangelicals who are credited or decried (in roughly equal measure) for maintaining the moral teachings of the Church, but is this so? Have they not rather been 'cherry-picking' their own morality?

"...There have been bishops in recent times who are themselves divorced. This ought to have prompted the same kind of uproar in the Church as the attempt to consecrate active homosexuals to the episcopate. But it did not. The re-marriage of divorced people by the Church was, until 2002, not allowed under canon law. In that year a permissive system was authorized by Synod... the Church has sanctioned the violation of its own teaching in a formal and constitutional manner." (pp. 60-61)

There are no half-measures in the severity of the diagnosis: "Religion is becoming a celebration of humanity, not the acknowledgement of the sovereignty of God at all." (p. 96). That chapter, on *Indifferentism*, is especially critical of multi-faith practice. Yet he is bound to concede that there is little *official* backing for this in the Church of England. The American situation may be quite different.

He revisits that old Newmanite/Donatist dilemma, which I thought had long been discredited as an argument against Anglicanism:

"in Augustine's phrase - the definition which so pulverized Newman's understanding of the Anglican claim to be the *Via Media* ... 'Wherefore, the entire world judges with security that they are not good who separate themselves from the entire world.' " (p. 104)

Just why it weighed so heavily with Newman himself I could never fathom. Maybe, quite unlike Pusey, he pictured Anglicanism as - *theoretically* - an ideal which other churches could never reach. Yet Anglicans never wished to be out of communion with any established Church (as opposed to dissenting sects in England). To judge from the bizarre response of Archbishop Wake to the correspondence between the Nonjurors and the Byzantine Churches it was widely believed that we *were* in communion with Eastern Christendom. There is certainly a tradition of inexcusable ignorance here, but not of Donatist and isolationist intent. See Bishop Cosin's agreements with Rome [elsewhere in this issue] which were certainly not for the benefit of pan-protestantism. Although isolation (for me) does not invalidate a church. Dr. Norman's point is that Anglicans felt inadequate, and thus leaped into false '*intercommunion*' arrangements, such as the Jerusalem bishopric. Curiously, total unification schemes, such as the more damaging South India project, are not discussed.

The book is occasionally disfigured by wild over-statements: e.g. pp. 98, 101, 103, but especially 121: "The participants of intercommunion agreements are all Protestant." What of the accord of 1933 between Anglicans and the Old Catholics? Arguably, since the 1960s Old Catholics have become Protestantised (though rationalized and permissive might fit better) but it is far from Protestantism as classically defined.

Dr. Norman's agenda and mine inevitably differ. His intention seems to be to demonstrate that Anglicanism was *never* the Church; mine that, only after a gradual but steady post-war decline, has this *recently* appeared to have transpired.

Traditionalists should read this book.

Anglican Difficulties, Published 2004 by Morehouse: ISBN 0-8192-8100-X

On relations with “secular society”

The Assistant Editor

We Christians live in a “secular society” (of the contradictions of this idea, more later), in which we are, and are likely to remain, a small minority. This is a new situation; Christianity began in a world full of gods, and flourished as the divine basis around which society was organised. We in the West are in a new situation: early persecution was in the name of the old gods; recent persecution (not in this country) in the name of militant atheism; modern persecution is in the name of a strange non-discrimination which forbids anybody to be serious about any faith, but traditional Christianity most of all. The tools of the recent past are unlikely to be appropriate.

Obviously we wish to convert the (alleged) members of this secular society. Have we anything to say to it *in the interim*? Probably not, except in the most extreme circumstances. The reason is simple: all our understanding is based on God’s ruling over us - the very point which no secular society can accept. Only by accident do we share any premises with some voices within it; dialogue is thus futile.

It may be useful to introduce a basic problem of moral philosophy at this stage. It is based on Hume’s attack on the Deists, who tended to argue from creation to a deity and thus to obligations. Hume’s challenge is that no set of facts, however extensive, can ever be the basis for a judgement of value (this is good) or of morals (we ought to do this). This consideration, as he said, *subverts all vulgar systems of morality*. I am not aware that this challenge has been successfully answered. If it stands, no secular society can ever know and prove what it should value or how its members ought to behave. Of course, those in power within it, whether a clique or a majority, may irrationally seek to impose values or conduct, but this is mere bullying. Nobody need respect such impositions (or rather impostures).

Christians (and Jews and Moslems, though with different content) do know what they should value or how they ought to behave. This is not because they (like the devils in James) merely think that there is a god, but because they have committed themselves to respond to His known wishes. But a secular society has not so committed itself and could not consistently do so; why then should it listen to us?

There is the theory of “natural law” associated with St. Thomas Aquinas which some would like to use as a bridge here. However, this is of little help in talking to a secular society because the theory assumes that God has made his wishes known, to an extent, through the created order. Therefore the sensitive (God-fearing) pagan can respond to those wishes. But a secular society dogmatically leaves God out of account. It cannot be persuaded in this way. Natural law is indeed a help to Christians in trying to respond to God (for the Bible does not solve every dilemma); it is not a line of argument which should convince secular society.

In practice, Christians have in the recent past in this country attempted to engage with the emerging secular society. We could look at Gore “Christ and Society” and “The Philosophy of the Good Life”; at Temple “Christianity and Social Order” and at Kirk “The Threshold of Ethics”. A weakness is the tendency to assume society is still Christian in some enfeebled sense. This may have been true then; it is not now. Generally,

the results of such engagement are pale imitations of some contemporary secular thought (hence “christian socialism”) which even a few years later seem utterly ridiculous.

CS Lewis “The Abolition of Man”, perhaps more wisely, followed another philosophical view: that moral insights were simply there (not derived or derivable by argument) so one could point to them (as preserved by wise social tradition) and even argue from them to God. This view might have some force in an earlier society (and in a context of kill or cure polemic). But in the post-modern climate every man is his own expert and such insights have no general authority.

We must beware of the liberal tendency in the church to treat secular society as a source of revelation superior to (or, in more cautious thinkers, supplementary to) Scripture and Tradition. It may indeed give us new information, and in that sense set us new questions. It cannot give us new values and duties.

Do we belong to this secular society? No, firstly because *our citizenship is in heaven* (Philippians 3.20) and only our exile here. No, secondly, because of the contradictions inherent in the notion. For (to adapt a brutally accurate insight of Margaret Thatcher) there is no longer any such thing as society, whether secular or not. There are only individuals, cohering to a greater or lesser extent with others, following their own priorities. *There is no common enterprise*. We belong, in the sense of being included (or not) in the census or paying taxes or obeying most of the laws most of the time; not in any deeper way. *Nor does anybody else, I suspect*. This is not a party political argument, but a description of “society” as I experience it.

We have duties, which God gives us, to care for other people (as may be practical and as He directs) but not for a non-existent collective. We are called indeed to individual acts of charity (where the need is obvious) and to the exercise of human decency (as God, not man, reveals it to us). How can we know how best to order a world which has decided it must order itself without God? Why should we think we know even what is practical in such a world, much less what is desirable? We can only follow the advice to *render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar’s*.

For example, we may think that “full employment” is a good and wish to commend it. The Chancellor (of any party) may accept our platitude, but will at once point out (perhaps truthfully) that what he tries to do is to make the best of a large number of conflicting goods (as he sees them - others disagree) within the economy. Do we mean that full employment must be pursued even if that means (as it probably would) infinite inflation? If we are to deserve even a hearing, we must understand how complicated his actual choices are, share enough values to be able to criticise his priorities, and possess enough technical knowledge to know how close to optimum (who’s optimum?) the economy actually is. Only so can we make a useful recommendation for change.

Of course there are some values to which some people in secular society pay respect as Christians do - for example truth, in spite of the prevalence of spin. But the issue is rarely one value in isolation, usually how to balance many values, not all shared. Curiously, there is probably more agreement about evil

than about good. There is widespread agreement that people should not be dying of hunger or cold, at least not if it is practical to remedy this. Yet even here we have to recognise conflicting values - that a too casual charity may build a culture of mere dependency. There are few simple actions in a complex world! And of course most of secular society will not recognise the evil of abortion.

Of course there are exceptions. Some individual proposal, or indeed some group of proposals, or some practice which has developed in secular society, may be so clearly evil and so extremely harmful that we (preferably as part of the church and not just as individuals) must protest. We must do so, perhaps, even though nothing will be achieved. This duty rarely arises, and it is very easy to delude ourselves. The early church never made such protests. The church of the christian centuries rarely did, and only occasionally wisely. Frequent protest debases the currency.

The following lengthy account of early Christian thought is I think accurate. If we are back in a world like theirs', what should our thinking be?

“The political vision of Christian thinkers in the last centuries of the Roman Empire had developed in a quite distinctive way. They had built up the idea of the Church as almost a nation within a nation, as an alternative kingdom with its own people and princes, but a kingdom that would survive when the world came to its soon and destined end. The glory of the secular, pagan world was the glory promised by Satan to Jesus in the wilderness, a glory founded on pride, riches, lust and tyranny, as opposed to the glory of the Christian people, marked by humility, poverty, simplicity of life, generosity to the poor, purity, self-control, brotherhood and freedom.

Having made this particular analysis of the human situation, the leaders of the Church could face the collapse of the Empire, if not without apprehension, at least with some detachment and long-term assurance. No one was more deeply wedded in his heart to the great system and culture of Rome than St Augustine; but as the Vandals drew ever nearer to North Africa, moving south through Spain, he exorcised his fears, and tried to assuage those of his flock, by writing his greatest work *The City of God*, on the theme “*Two loves have built two cities*” - and only the one built by

love for God would in the end survive.

It is often said that what destroyed the soul of Christianity was its alliance with the State after Constantine made it the official religion of the Empire. This did, it is true, bring into the Church many nominal Christians, with all the fudging of commitment and standards one might expect; and in the Eastern Mediterranean it did lead to a close identification of Church and State. But not in Western Europe. When St Augustine wrote, the Empire had been officially Christian for more than a hundred years; but that still did not lead him to equate the life of this world with the Kingdom of God. On the contrary, he gave classic and influential form to their separation.

And despite efforts to bring them together at the Reformation and since, the dominant view in Western Europe has always been that the spheres of Church and State have been essentially distinct. Men and women take care for their eternal destiny by sharing the faith, worship and personal conduct of the Church, and so, if they are wise, sit light to the world. But that world goes on by its own rules: and if it is harsh or unjust the Christian as an individual simply has to endure it.”

(J A Baker from a sermon "The Duties of the State" published in "The Whole Family of God" Mowbray 1981 ISBN 0 264 66596 1)

The following quotation from Gore “Christ and Society” George Allen and Unwin 1927 is apposite.

“So far indeed as politics and economics are special sciences, it (*the Church*) can claim no expert knowledge. But politics and economics deal with living men and women and children, and with all the human relationships. These human relationships may be organized in accordance with the principles of Christ or in flat contravention of them. Where the Church is a missionary body in a hostile or indifferent society, it may indeed appeal to the "natural law" of justice on behalf of the ill-used; but on the whole, like the Early Church, it must be content to exhibit within its own society the true principles of human life and to win its cause by the attractiveness of the spectacle.”

Gore did not think the analysis applied to England. Maybe he was wrong even at the time; it does now.

The Traditional Anglican Church

We are part of the Traditional Anglican Communion, which has some half million members worldwide (English is one of the less important languages).

You will most easily find the information about us on our official website which is located at www.thetraditionalanglicanchurch.org.uk. It is therefore only necessary to give brief details here. Please appreciate that lists of parishes soon become out of date - the more so in a growing church!

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The Old Believer

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The Traditional Anglican Church is planning to produce its own periodical, **the Anglican Message**. There is also a newspaper for the Traditional Anglican Communion, the **Messenger**. We support both these documents and have no wish to compete with them, as they serve different purposes from the Old Believer.

We welcome articles for subsequent issues from all fellow Old Believers, whether members of the Traditional Anglican Church or not.

The Old Believer is produced at private expense and circulated without a cover price. *You are free to make and distribute copies*. If you value the Old Believer, a donation to the Editor will be welcome.

Churches

The "reign of the saints" was hardly productive of saints, other than martyrs, but Thomas Traherne is perhaps an exception. However plausible it is for us, who have been robbed of our churches, to respond that *the Most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands*, there is a contrary case (as is being explored most notably at St. Agatha's, Portsmouth and St. Catherine's, Lincoln). This is one of his poems (original spelling).

Those stately Structures which on Earth I view
To GOD erected, whether Old or New;
His Sacred Temples which the World adorn,
Much more than Mines of Ore or Fields of Corn,
My Soul delight: How do they pleas mine Ey
When they are fill'd with Christian Family!

Upon the face of all the peopl'd Earth
There's no such sacred Joy or solemn Mirth,
To pleas and satisfy my Heart's Desire,
As that wherewith my Lord is in a Quire,
In holy Hymns by warbling Voices prais'd,
With Eys lift up, and joint Affections rais'd.

The Arches built (like Hev'n) wide and high
Shew his Magnificence and Majesty
Whose House it is: With so much Art and Cost
The Pile is fram'd, the curious Knobs embost,
Set off with Gold, that me it more doth pleas
Than Princes Courts or Royal Palaces;

Great Stones pil'd up by costly Labors there
Like Mountains carv'd by human Skill appear;
Where Towers, Pillars, Pinnacles, and Spires
Do all concur to match my great Desires,
Whose Joy it is to see such Structures rais'd
To th' end my God and Father should be prais'd.

Were there but one alone
Wherin we might approach his Throne,
One only where we should accepted be,
As in the Days of old
It was, when Solomon of Gold
His Temple made; we then should see
A numerous Host approaching it,
Rejoicing in the Benefit:
The Queen of Sheba com With all her glorious Train,
The Pope from Rome, The Kings beyond the Main;
The Wise men of the East from far,
As guided by a Star,
With Rev'rence would approach unto that Ground,
At that sole Altar be adoring found.

But now we Churches have
In ev'ry Coast, which Bounty gave
Most freely to us; now they sprinkled stand
With so much Care and Lov,
In this rich Vale, nigh yonder Grove
That men might com in ev'ry Land
To them with greater Eas; lo, we
Those blest Abodes neglected see:
As if our God were worse Becaus His Lov is more,
And doth disburse Its self in greater Store;
Nor can object with any face
The Distance of the place;
Ungrateful We with slower haste do com
Unto his Temple, 'caus 'tis nearer home.

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French Roman Catholic Traditionalists at le Planquay, near Lisieux, bless bread for the ancient "Pain Bénit" custom during the Offertory at High Mass

"In Christianity there can be no concerning Truth which is not antient; and whatsoever is truly new, is certainly false."

(Bishop Pearson of Chester, C17)

Bread and Wine

An appendix to Old Believer 10

The assistant editor

This is a technical note (not in the original publication) prompted by concern about an inadequate treatment of the matter of the Eucharist in "To receive the Blessed Sacrament" as published and the reply.

It is the duty of the Church to celebrate the Eucharist with the materials which the Lord instituted. These were very ordinary materials; there is no suggestion in the New Testament that either the bread or the wine were special. The New Testament does not attempt any definitions of these materials. We simply do not know whether the Lord used unleavened bread (as would have been required at Passover) or leavened bread. We do not know which flour the bread was made from. We assume wheat, but it could have been spelt, or barley (as in the feeding of the Five Thousand) or indeed some other grain. We do not know whether the wine was white or red, nor how much water was added to it (we may safely assume at least a one third dilution, far more than is allowed by current Roman Catholic rules).

The early Church did not make decisions on any of these points. We know that in the end the West used unleavened bread and the East leavened. Some tried to assert one or the other practice was right and the other wrong, but there has never been sufficient basis to establish either view.

Now the Continuing Anglican churches will naturally follow the canon law of the Church from which they variously sprang, unless it was very clearly wrong. In the 1969 canons of the Church of England, Canon B17 says: *"The bread, whether leavened or unleavened, shall be of the best and purest wheat flower that conveniently may be gotten, and the wine the fermented juice of the grape, good and wholesome."* There is nothing in this canon which is inconsistent with the New Testament or the early Church, so I am sure it should remain authoritative for us in England. There is no need to supplement this canon with canons from other jurisdictions (especially quite modern Roman rulings).

What this canon may reasonably be taken to exclude (apart from non-alcoholic "wine" falsely so called) is impurities and additives. There was a time in this country when bread readily obtainable in the shops was full of chemical additives such as calcium, in the supposed interest of public health. Such "bread" is rightly excluded because it is not pure. Some "altar wine" has in the past been a very unnatural product, largely from attempts to extend its life once the bottle was opened. If we are to adopt a high standard, the obvious view consistent with the canon is a "whole food" approach - fermented and bottled on the estate, no added chemicals, no pasteurisation, no use of yeast not carried on the grapes themselves, no "oaking" or other flavouring. This will incidentally produce a wine as near as we can get to the ancient world.

I would be reluctant to exclude from use in the Eucharist any honest bottle of wine (such as in a more favoured climate any farmer might make from his own grapes) just as I would be reluctant to exclude locally made bread (which to judge from early forms of the "bidding prayer" was axiomatic in pre-Reformation England). I think the Orthodox still take both of these for granted, rightly following the practice of the early Church in which the faithful supplied the bread and wine as

part of their offerings - and not by buying specialist supplies from some other source.

English wine (from local vineyards) may indeed be suitable, subject to the problem of additives. "British wine" is not. The process of concentrating the must, preserving it, transporting it, and then fermenting it with added yeast (and if it were adding industrial alcohol to the must, so much the worse) is a long way from the simplicity of the natural product.

I have not seen the full text of the Roman canons, but the practical results seem to me profoundly mistaken in substituting special tightly and centrally controlled elements for ordinary ones. (Incidentally, if the rule is correctly stated as "fermented in the country of origin", this would on the face of it allow shipping Californian grapes to New York for processing, which is almost the same error as "British wine".)

I do not suggest that elements conforming to Roman rules are invalid. They are not. But the Roman rules are over-restrictive and rest on a misunderstanding of the Lord's wishes. They have never been binding on either Orthodox or Anglicans and they are not binding on Continuing Anglicanism.

As one who has for many years baked his own bread and fermented his own wine, I do have some practical knowledge of the ingredients, processes and issues involved. (I have never however made elements for the Eucharist.)

I do not think the Old Believer as printed is wrong (though it may be that I accidentally corrupted Grace Fraser's text, for which I do apologise).

It would not be proper to assert the *necessity* of following Roman rules. I would be most reluctant assert even the *wisdom* of following Roman rules (though practical circumstances may make the use of Roman-validated elements convenient).