

The Liberal Catholic Church

IN THE BRITISH ISLES



NEWSLETTER No. 9

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CHURCH REGISTER

11 September 2006 — Cremation	Edna May Webster
14 September 2006 — Cremation	Joseph McLaren Muir
18 October 2006 — Cremation	Dorothy Pauline Turner
25 October 2006 — Cremation	Beatrice Dorothy Clifford
28 October 2006 — Confirmation	Hilary Howell
28 October 2006—Minor Orders, Reader	Colin Stebbing
1 November 2006—Cremation	Thomas William Flynn



A HAPPY EASTER

EASTER is one of the busiest and most inspiring times in the Churches Year. The Blessing of the Holy Oils on Maundy Thursday; the Mass of the Pre-Sanctified on Good Friday; the Lighting of the Fire and first Solemn Benediction of Easter on Easter Saturday and the Aurora Mass at dawn on Easter morning; quite apart from the usual special grand Holy Eucharist on Easter Sunday.

All this and more at will be held at Apperley. Do contact the Parkers if you are able to be with us. With all other Christian bodies are preparing to celebrate the promise of the Risen Christ.

We should not be found wanting in taking our part in the vital impetus that comes at this time to help our struggling world forward into its promised future. Right Thought. Right Action are the key words.

We are taking active steps towards the future with our Training Weekend in the summer. See comments in our Contents. But more about that in our next edition.

With regret, we have to announce that The Rev. Charles Mugleston has decided to leave us and work on his own. We will miss him and miss his enthusiasm. We wish him well in the path that he has chosen.

OUR CONTENTS

In this edition we have included a sermon by Rev. Liz Parker on Self Reflection. As part of our background training another instalment of Rev. Parker's History of the Early Church. There is a further summary of Bishop Pigott's out of print book *The Parting of the Ways* and On a lighter note we have slipped in a short piece on 'Temptation!'

Attention is particularly to drawn to the Publications that we are now reprinting (see p.4); currently on our theme of Training but there will be more general ones to follow.

Again we have added a few pictures on pages 11 and 12 which might be found of interest.

The support and contributions from everyone is greatly appreciated. There are some interesting shorter articles lined up for our next issue and, of course, write-ups of our Spring activities.

Despite the troubles and breaking up of old forms that we see around us today, we work in Christ's service for the assured future of His world.

+Allan

SPECIAL NOTICE

WE ARE PLEASED TO REPORT THAT OUR OLD FRIENDS AT THE FOLLOING ORATORIES ARE NOW IN INTERCOMMUNION WITH US:

Oratory of Our Lady Theotokos

Brookdale, Quarry Lane, Heavitree
Exeter. EX2 5JR

Holy Eucharist, & Healing Services

Clergy: The Rt. Rev. John Wheaton

Telephone: 1392 275878 for details

Oratory of Our Lady of Compassion

Flat 2, Abbeyfield Court, Station Road,
Sidmouth. EX10 8NW

Services: Regular Holy Eucharist,
Benediction & Healing

Clergy: Rev. Albertha Meyer

Telephone: 01395 577164 for details

[See Photograph on page 12](#)



ORATORIES

**Under the Episcopal Vicar General
The Rt. Rev. Allan Barns**

ORATORY OF SAINT RAPHAEL

37 Tufton Rd, Rainham, Gillingham, Kent. ME8 7LF

Holy Eucharist: Usually on third Sundays -
Please call

Other Services: Please call.

Clergy: The Rev. Robert Harbour,
Priest-in-charge

Deacon The Rev. Carol Harbour

Telephone: 01634 232673

ORATORY OF OUR LADY OF THE STARLIGHT

Jasmine Cottage, Apperley, Glos. GL19 4DE

Holy Eucharist: Please telephone for details.

Complin: Healing/Benediction: As arranged.

Clergy: The Rev. Christopher Parker,
Priest-in Charge

Deacon The Rev. Liz Parker

Telephone: 01452 780277

ORATORY OF OUR LADY OF COMPASSION

6 Tudor Court, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. TN2 5QH

Services as arranged

Clergy: The Rt. Rev. Allan Barns,
Priest-in-Charge

Telephone:- 01892 689420

CENTRE OF OUR LADY, SEAT OF WISDOM

4, Patten St., Birkenhead, Merseyside. CH41 8DN

Complin: 1st Monday in the month

Other Services: as arranged.

Telephone: 0151 201 9179 (Mr. Colin Stebbing)

EALING: Services as arranged

21 Hollingbourne Gdns. Ealing. W13 8EN

Clergy: Rev. John McGlashan,

Telephone:- 02089 979449

VISIT OUR WEB SITE

www.lccinbi.org

Or the Main Church Site

<http://TheLiberalCatholicChurch.org/English/organizations/LCC.GB/LCC.html>, for useful literature.

or our Clergy can supply leaflets, if preferred

LENT 1 SERMON SELF-EXAMINATION

By

The Rev. Elizabeth Parker, MA

Given on 25th February 2007

Lent is traditionally a time of fasting and letting go of the past, some may say of denial, a discipline in preparation for culmination of Holy Week, when the resurrection of our Lord takes place. How often do we fail? And feel a failure when we eat that food we are fasting from or have an alcoholic drink when we have promised ourselves that we have given it up! Fasting could be seen as too much of a discipline in a world where instant gratification is the key note.

Nowadays we are expecting everything and often finding nothing, so has Lent and the Church failed us by too high expectations? Perhaps it is too harsh to see things in terms of success and failure. When the Lord fasted for 40 days and nights it was in preparation for His sacrifice.

As Liberal Catholics we tend to view His birth as the great sacrifice of coming into incarnation on Earth when he could be in those heavenly realms. Lent is the preparation for the letting go of our Lord and standing on our own two feet, relying on our inner direction, to do the necessary for our peace and ultimately peace on Earth, knowing His presence is always with us at a spiritual level.

However it is not that easy and never has been. Our life on Earth is strewn with obstacles and difficulties brought on by the nature of life, of growing and learning the lessons chosen for us. No matter what our views are on this, it is our relationship with the Lord and each other that is of prime importance.

We have only to look briefly at a couple of literary examples to understand the kind of complex difficulties in life. In his poem 'Long Distance' Tony Harrison writes about the later end of his father's life and his understandings. At the start of the poem, Harrison junior is in the US talking to his father on the phone. Harrison describes it as a 'dismal' experience. His father is talking about his health problems:

Ah've always liked things sweet! But now ah push Food down mi throat! Ah'd sooner do wi'out.

And t'only reason now for beer's to flush
(so dietician said) mi kidneys out.

A sad state of familial affairs. No matter what the son says or does he knows he cannot help the father through the underlying grief of losing his wife. The second half of the poem brings home the distress of the loved ones:

Though she were two years dead
Dad kept her slippers warming by the gas.

You couldn't just drop in. you had to phone.
He'd put you off an hour to give him time
To clear away her things and look alone
As though his still raw love were such a crime.

He knew she had just popped out to get the tea.

Here we come to realise the human side of the difficulty of letting go. In the second part of the poem it is compounded by the grief of the son after his father dies, on losing both his parents marked at the end of the poem. His stark realism says:

You haven't both gone shopping; just the same,
In my new black leather phone book there's
your name And the disconnected number I still
call.

Being disconnected leaves us alone, often frightened and can drive us to actions we would never dream of when in a more peaceful state of mind. By empathy we can share and understand each other's losses and pleasures if we reach out to each other and to our Lord and let the love that is around us into our hearts and minds. As E. M. Forster wrote... Only connect ... the prose and the passion. Then we are not alone fumbling our way through our own grief, hurts and losses. We can begin to let go and at the same time appreciate that fullness of love that is there supporting and guiding us often without our conscious knowledge. A bit like Footsteps...

Passion, however, is something that John Donne the Dean of St. Paul's in the 17th Century knows much about. In his youth he was considered a ladies' man and spectacularly enticed many women into his bed with his powerful charms, writing about it in his dramatic poetry.

In his poem 'Sunne Rising' he is in bed with his lover and challenges the sun to find something more beautiful than the woman beside him in his daily journey round the earth. He declares:

Busy old fool unruly sunne why dost thou thus
Through windows and curtains call on us...

She's all states and all princes I Since thy duties be
To warm the world, that's done by warming us.

Shine here to us, and thou art everywhere;
This bed thy centre is, these walls thy sphere

Inevitably this relationship does not last. His silver tongue, romantic though it may be in the imagery he uses, and his high expectations can never be realised in physical love. It is only a relationship of desire and conquest. It is not until he falls in love and marries that he comes to understand compromise, the depth of love and friendship. His lover then is also his best friend and he takes the risk of a depth of feeling for another which sets his course towards the priesthood when his wife dies which in another poem compares his experiences of loss with the shortest, darkest and coldest day of the year.

The point of these illustrations is to draw us to the intent for the day which is self-examination. Our readings ask us to put a moral judgement into our behaviour with others. We are urged to look towards light and love rather than the dark forces of hate and in so doing, become whole. The Lord's Prayer does the same but in a different way and we may want to consider the words more deeply today when we next say them.

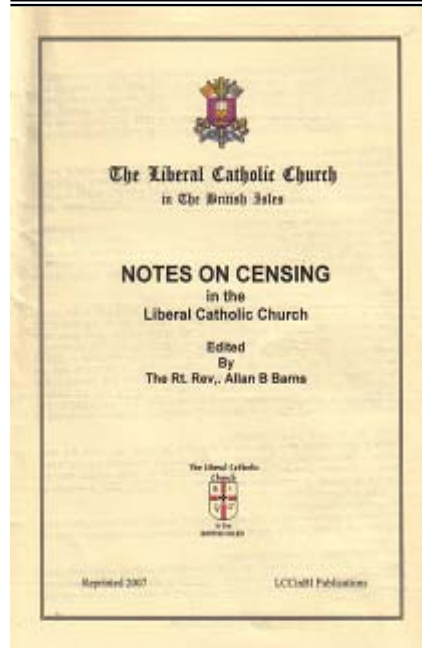
The Universal prayer also gives a strong positive direction for us and sums up the lessons of the scriptures we hear in Lent:

Grant us an understanding heart, equal vision, balanced mind. Free us from egoism, lust, greed, anger and hatred.
Fill our hearts with divine virtues.
Let behold thee in all thy names and forms.
Let us serve thee in all thy names and forms.
Let thy name be ever on our lips.
Let us abide in thee for ever and ever. Amen.

By self examination we can grow towards the light in a non-judgemental way, preparing a dwelling for the light of the world to come in. Open the gates and the king of glory will come in.

Whilst this is a valuable lesson for Lent, it is one fit for the rest of the year. It needs no especial time for practice! It should be everywhere and at any time.

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We have reprinted a number of Booklets that, it is hoped, will prove particularly useful for our CLERGY TRAINING WEEKEND in the summer.

Copies may be ordered by email at bishop.allan@lccinbi.org or by post.

1. *Notes on Censing* £1.00
The art of censing in the LC.C.
2. *Notes on Serving* £3.00
Serving in small Oratories
3. *Duties of a Crozier Bearer* £1.00
Essential information not found elsewhere
4. *Letter from a Friend* £1.00
Letters setting out the plan of Mass and the Churches Year

For more details of these and many other booklets, see our Web Site:

NOW HERE IS A THOUGHT

*Lead me not into temptation. I can
find the way myself.*

A CLERICAL JOKE. Yes, but it highlights an important message and one of the problems of the 'Lord's Prayer'.

Should we have to plead with an all-loving God (Our Father) not to lead us into trouble?

Basically temptation is a neutral word meaning 'trying' or 'proving' but we have come to think of it more as an incitement to sin. However, we should not forget that we are not alone in this testing. Think of the Temptation of Christ in the Wilderness after his Baptism. Or poor innocent Eve in the Garden of Eden tempted by the serpent of wisdom. In all these cases Satan or the Devil seems to play the central part, but according to the Bible God certainly did not dash in to help! Is this a contradiction to the beginning of St. James General Epistle—'Let no man say when he is tempted: I am tempted of God; for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth He any man.' Therein lies the Mystery and the hidden truth.

There seem to be two distinct ideas here. Firstly, the Eastern virtue of **Discrimination** rather than Temptation might give us a clue to our understanding. In this life, choices are put before us by God's ministers or our previous actions (karma) and we have to discriminate between what action will help our, and humanity's, advance or hinder and damage it. This is how we progress. Think of the friction of a car's wheel on the road. No friction. No movement forward. No temptation. No effort, and we have inertia.

Secondly, and a more controversial thought that follows on from the above, should we seek or welcome temptation? The early saints and martyrs seem to have done. Nowadays, especially with the upheavals and changes in the world today, one gets the feeling the there are people who have been put in positions of authority by the inner powers to specifically break up old forms, old groups. This seems particularly obvious in the reforming or disintegration of old established religious Societies and like-minded Groups.

Sometimes one wonders if awkward or incompetent people are unconsciously part of God's Plan to chivvy us out of the past, forward into the future!

After all, Satan, is the fallen Angel Lucifer—the Light Bringer. He who carries the lantern of illumination to light the way casts a shadow behind. Without the contrast, the temptation of darkness, would we appreciate the light?

So it is that, while we should not actually look for temptation, (we can find it easily enough for ourselves without much help!), we should welcome the opportunities for Discrimination between various courses of action, maybe between good and evil, as they are presented to us. It is thus that we slowly advance in understanding. It is thus that we are given the opportunity to train ourselves to be fit helpers of our Master.

Temptation is not such a bad thing after all!

+Allan
Lent 2002



THE DOVE OF PEACE

The front of our new blank card now available
Contact Bishop Allan

THE EARLY YEARS OF CHRISTIANITY

Part 3b

The Rev. Chris Parker

THE APOSTLES

Some of the Twelve Apostles were disciples of the Forerunner of Christ, John the Baptist. They were acquainted with the Scripture and the expectations of their master. When John the Baptist was "looking upon Jesus as he walked, he said, 'Behold the Lamb of God'" (John 1:36). Andrew, one of John's disciples, with another, "heard him speak, and they followed Jesus" (v. 37). They followed him without asking!

"Then Jesus turned, and saw them following, and said to them, what do you seek? They replied, Rabbi, (which being interpreted, Master,) where are you staying? He answered them, Come and see. They came and saw where he dwelt, and stayed with him that day" One of the two which heard John speak, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. We are not told what Jesus discussed with these first disciples, what we do know is that they came out of this sanctuary with, a definite faith in Him. He was the One they were expecting. Andrew felt the impulse to express his belief to others

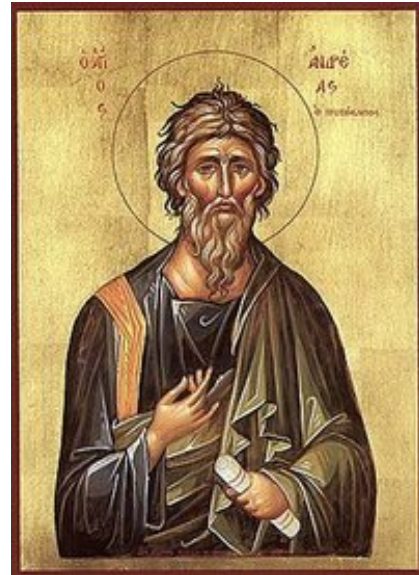
Andrew found his brother Simon, and told him that, "We have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Christ and "he brought him to Jesus" "And when Jesus saw him, he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, (Peter) which is by interpretation, A stone". (v. 42). Thus the Apostolic Church began. St. Andrew's act stands as an example for every disciple and apostle thereafter.

After Andrew and Peter and John, "one of the two", Jesus found Phillip in Galilee, and called him to His crew; Phillip not only followed Him, but stated his conviction to Nathaniel, we have found Him of whom Moses in the Law and also the prophets wrote ... come and see" (John 1:45, 46), and Nathaniel saw Him and believed in Him: "You are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel," he exclaimed in words to be

echoed by millions in the generations to come.

Andrew

Andrew was the brother of Simon Peter and a fisherman along with him (Mark 1:16–18). He was born in Bethsaida (John 1:44), a village on the shore of the Sea of Galilee.

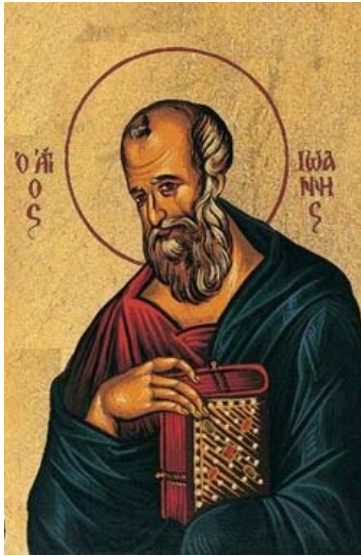


Andrew was first a disciple of John the Baptist. He was present with another disciple the day after Jesus was baptised. At His baptism the Holy Spirit descended upon Jesus in the form of a Dove and He took upon himself the mantle of Christ. John, looking upon the Christ, declared: "Behold the Lamb of God!" The two left John and became the followers of Jesus. The next day Andrew told his brother Simon Peter: "We have found the Messiah", and brought him to Jesus (John 1:35–43). Later, as they were fishing on the sea of Galilee, Jesus called them to be His disciples: "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men" (Matt. 4:18–20). Andrew preached the Gospel in **Macedonia, Greece, Scythia, Asia Minor, Russia** and other countries in **Asia**.

Acts of Andrew, a small book from the 3rd century says that he was crucified at Patras (Greece) in AD 60. He suffered on the cross for 2 days, while preaching and encouraging the people gathered around him. Before his death, as the Lord came for him, he was surrounded by heavenly light and afterwards gave out the ghost.

John

John often refers to himself as the disciple “whom Jesus loved” (John 13:23).



He was the brother of James and the son of Zebedee (Mark 1:19–20), and possibly a cousin of Jesus (Matt. 27:56; Mark 15:40; John 19:25). John and James were fishing partners with Peter and Andrew (Luke 5:10). Jesus called John and James “Boanerges, which is, The sons of thunder” (Mark 3:17).

On one occasion, because a Samaritan village refused to receive Jesus, they asked Him whether He wanted them to command fire to come down from heaven and consume the village. Jesus rebuked them: “Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them.” (Luke 9:55–56). In another instance, they came to Jesus with their mother, who asked Him to allow her sons to sit at His right and left hand in His kingdom. Jesus told them that this is not His decision “but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father.” (Matt. 20:20–28)

John, along with James and Peter, witnessed Jesus Christ's transfiguration, the raising from the dead of Jairus' daughter, and Jesus' agony in Gethsemane.

On the night Jesus was arrested, John and Peter followed Him to the palace of the high priest.

John was the only male apostle standing at the cross of Jesus, and Jesus committed His mother into John's care (John 19:26–27).

When John and Peter heard from Mary Magdalene that the stone from Jesus' tomb had been taken away and He is not within, they ran to the sepulchre to see it for themselves.

John and Peter together. They preached, healed the sick and were cast into prison together. John was a pillar among the apostles (Gal. 2:9). He wrote the *Gospel of John* around AD 90 in the city of **Ephesus** in Asia Minor. He wrote *his epistles* around the same time. Emperor Domitian had started a fierce prosecution against the Christians in the whole Roman Empire. He captured John, brought him to Rome and immersed him in boiling oil. John was not harmed by this event, so the emperor exiled him to the **Island of Patmos**. On this island did John receive from Jesus Christ a prophetic vision of the future and the Apocalypse, which he recorded in the *Book of Revelation*.

He preached the Gospel in **Palestine** and **Asia Minor**. His emblem is an eagle. After the death of Domitian, John was freed from the Island of Patmos and lived till his death in Ephesus, where Mary was buried. John was the only apostle who died a natural death in c AD 98–100, when he was about 100 years old.

James the Son of Alphaeus

Not much information about this apostle. Some suggest that he was the brother of Levi, called Matthew, because the Bible says that Matthew's father was also called Alphaeus (Mark 2:14). Others believe that “James the less”, whose mother Mary was present at Jesus' death, refers to this James (Mark 15:40).

He preached in **Persia**. There are two views concerning his death. According to the first view, he was beaten and stoned to death by the Jews at the age of ninety-four; and finally had his brains dashed out with a fuller's club. The second version says that he was crucified in Persia.

James the Son of Zebedee

James was the brother of John. They were called by Jesus Christ to be His disciples on the same day, as they were fishing with their father Zebedee. They left the ship and their father immediately, and followed Jesus (Matt, 4:21–22; Mark 1:19–20).

It is likely that the mother of James was Salome, the sister of Jesus' mother, meaning that James and Jesus were cousins (Matt. 27:56; Mark 15:40; John 19:25). Along with John and Peter, James was very close to Jesus.

They were present when Jesus raised Jairus' daughter (Mark 5:37), at His Transfiguration (Mark 9:2–9; Matt. 17:1–9; Luke 9:28–36) and at Gethsemane when Jesus went to pray before His arrest (Mark 14:32–42; Matt. 26:36–46).

James is believed to be the first Christian missionary to **Spain**. James became the first martyr among the apostles when King Herod Agrippa ordered his execution around AD 43 (Acts 12:2). According to Clement, as he was led to the place of his execution, his accuser, seeing James' extraordinary courage, repented and asked for his forgiveness. This man became a Christian and asked to be martyred together with James. They were both beheaded at the same time.

Simon Zelotes

This disciple is named Simon Zelotes in Luke 6:15 and Acts 1:13; and “Simon the Canaanite” in Matt. 10:4 and Mark 3:18. The Greek word *zelotes* means “zealous one”, and the word *Canaanite* comes from the Aramaic word *kanna'ah*, which means “zealous one” as well. He may have been a member of the fanatic sect Zealots, which opposed Roman occupation, or was a zealous supporter of the Jewish law.

He preached the Gospel in **Egypt, Mauritania, Africa, Libya and Britain**. He was crucified in Britain in AD 74. (I will pick this up again later when we look at the Celtic Church in Britain).



Bartholomew

Bartholomew means “son of Thalmi” in Aramaic and it is the surname of this apostle. His first name is probably Nathanael (John 1:45). He was born in Cana, Galilee (John 21:2).



The day after Andrew brought Peter to Jesus, Jesus called Nathanael to be His disciple, and said about him, “Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile” (John 1,47). Nathanael replied, “Rabbi, thou art the Son of God, thou art the King of Israel.” (John 1:47–49) This fact is usually overlooked, and Peter is mentioned as the first disciple to recognize Jesus as the Son of God.

Bartholomew preached the Gospel in many countries, but mostly in **India and Armenia**. He died in Albanopolis, Armenia, where he was beaten, then flayed alive, afterwards crucified and lastly beheaded.

Judas (Not Iscariot)

John refers to this apostle as “Judas, not Iscariot” (John 14:22). Matthew calls him “Lebbaeus whose surname was Thaddaeus” (Matt. 10:3). Luke refers to him as “Judas the son of James” (Luke 6:16). The KJV incorrectly translates it as “Judas the brother of James”. The Bible doesn't mention anything else concerning him.

He preached the Gospel in **Mesopotamia and Persia**. One tradition says that magicians killed him with clubs and stones in Persia; according to another one he was crucified in Edessa, Turkey, in AD 72.

Matthew

Matthew means “gift of God” in Aramaic, and it was the name given to this apostle by Jesus. He is also referred to as Levi in the Gospels of Mark and Luke (Mark 2:14; Luke 5:27–29). He was either named Levi before he began to follow Jesus, or he belonged to the priestly tribe of Levi.



He worked as a publican for the Roman government, collecting tolls on the road from travellers. The Jewish publicans who collected taxes for Rome were considered traitors to their nation. The despised tax collectors made their profit by collecting more taxes than required by the Roman law, and were regarded as sinners by the Jews.

He was called by Jesus while sitting at his tax table. Jesus simply said: “Follow me”, and Matthew left his work immediately to join Him. Matthew made a feast in his own house for Jesus and His disciples, where other publicans and sinners were also present (Matt.; 9:9–13; Mark 2:13–17; Luke 5:27–32). When the scribes and Pharisees saw this, they asked His disciples, “Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners?” Jesus replied: “They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.” (Matt. 9:12–13)

This apostle wrote the *Gospel of Matthew*. Some of Jesus Christ’s miracles and parables are only mentioned in this Gospel.

The resurrection of the saints after Jesus’ death and their appearance to many in Jerusalem is recorded solely in Matthew’s book.

The sealing of the tomb of Jesus Christ by the Pharisees and the setting of guards outside it is also told only in this Gospel.

John Foxe states in his *Book of Martyrs*, that Matthew preached in **Egypt** and **Ethiopia**. He was martyred with a spear in the city of Nadabah, Ethiopia, in AD 60.

Philip

The day after Jesus called Andrew and Simon Peter to be His disciples, He met Philip in Galilee and told him, “Follow me”. Philip recognized Him to be the Messiah and went to his friend Nathanael (Bartholomew) saying, “We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph” and they both became disciples of Jesus (John 1:43–46).

Philip was from Bethsaida of Galilee, the city of Andrew and Peter. After Jesus heard the news of John the Baptist’s death, He departed by ship to a deserted shore, followed by a great multitude. Moved with compassion towards them, Jesus taught them and healed the sick. To test his faith, He asked Philip how they could feed the hungry multitude. Philip immediately started thinking of how much money they would need to buy food, without realizing they only need to rely on God’s power. Jesus then miraculously multiplied the available five loaves and two fish to feed the 5000 men (John 6:1–13; Matthew 14:13–21).

During the Last Supper, Jesus said: “If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him.” Philip did not understand these words, for he said, “Lord show us the Father, and it sufficeth us.” Jesus response was: “he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?” (John 14:6–14)

According to tradition, he preached in **France, southern Russia** and **Asia Minor**. It is believed that he was martyred in Hierapolis, a city in today’s Turkey.

*Next time we look at the lives of:
Simon Peter, Matthias, Thomas and
Judas Iscariot .*

THE PARTING OF THE WAYS

By

The Rt. Rev. F.W.Pigott, MA

Part Seven

of a précis by
Colin Stebbing

7. Sin and its Cure

The traditionalists teach the doctrine of original sin, and say that mankind as a whole is a diseased race.

They teach that sin's cure lies in Baptism -which results in rebirth as a child of grace. Thereafter health is maintained by membership of the church.

However, this remedy was not available to those who died more than two thousand years ago, and nor is it available to huge numbers of the earth's population. And so, a very valid objection to this theory, though not the only one, is that the cure is available to only a tiny minority, and as such, can scarcely be worthy of God.

The evolutionary theory, on the other hand, suffers from no such objection. It is as follows.

Each unit of consciousness is a fragment of and descends from the one common source of life.

These units of consciousness become incarnate, and through many lifetimes gradually return to the source from which they came (a process known as evolution), having first descended deeper and deeper into matter (this process being called involution, and being the opposite of evolution.)

However, not all of a unit of consciousness becomes incarnate, and that which does, is but a part of the true self (which is the spirit).

This higher self learns from and is enlarged by the experiences of the unit's incarnations.

The deeper the level of involution, the more the incarnate part of the unit is influenced by the law of matter, i.e. the material law, and is therefore at risk of becoming more self centred.

The law which governs the evolution of matter is the law of acquisition, whereas that which governs the evolution of spirit depends upon sacrifice. This distinction creates confusion for the incarnate spirit, which may be blinded by matter and, in error, seek to evolve according to the law of matter, instead of the law of spirit: Such is sin.

However, all is by no means lost. Nothing has gone wrong with the great plan.

Gradually, the spirit within, that is to say, the real self, asserts itself over the incarnate element of the unit, which thus becomes more and more aware of the spiritual law. That law requires identification with and love for others.

The incarnate part learns that the method of growth is self sacrifice. Eventually the incarnating part of the unit will be drawn into its higher self and have no need to further reincarnate. It has then reached salvation, and can continue its evolution on a super human level. In this system, sin may be regarded as opposition to the will of God. For this purpose, the will of God is taken to be the intention that the unit should develop through the process of evolution.

On this analysis, sin may or may not be deliberate or voluntary.

In essence, it is a case of being too self orientated, too drawn by the law of matter, too much an individual and, in effect, of becoming the product of over involution.

But remember that it is only the lower part of the self which is incarnate and which is thus affected. The true self remains for ever serene in highest heaven.

In extreme cases the incarnate part may become so bad that its parent soul detaches it from itself. It thus becomes a lost soul, or rather a lost portion of soul, the remainder being quite safe.

In no sense can a soul then ever be seen as eternally punished.



At very worst, the fragment is detached and withers into inexistence as a result of being cut off from its source of spiritual life, while the higher self continues unscathed.

Any conflict which exists, is not between the spirit and God, for they are but one.

Instead, it lies between the lower self, which is incarnate and the higher self, which is not.

Over the course of ages, the soul will evolve into true correspondence with God, meanwhile suffering such pain as is exactly commensurate with the transgression of the law which it has committed.

So, sin scarcely requires forgiveness. It is something which has to be, and eventually will be outgrown. Meanwhile, its punishment is within itself.

We now look in greater detail at the cure of sin.

Traditionalists say that its cure lies in forgiveness, and that this forgiveness has been won by Christ's death and is applied through the Sacraments.

This view implies that God is angry and needs to be appeased.

The Liberal, on the other hand, will see the Sacraments as aids to evolution, and will see sin as an almost inevitable consequence of involution. God is not made angry, nor hurt, nor offended.

The plan is not failing.

There is no need to over emphasise the guilt of sin, nor to stress the need for self humiliation.

Likewise, Liberals will not see Christ's death as an atonement for sin, and nor therefore will they sympathise with the gruesome representations of it so often seen in traditional churches.

Liberals will abandon any association with the idea of blood sacrifice.

Even so, however, Liberals will see the worth of the Sacrament of Penance, as a force proceeding from the Lord Himself, which calms the disturbances of our spiritual entanglements with matter.

On this reckoning, it is equally effective when applied in a public service, without private confession, (which is generally discouraged.)

In summary: the cause of sin is involution, and its cure is evolution.

Eventually, the incarnating part of the unit will reach a turning point. That point is the point of its conversion.

FWP/CS



**The
Light of
the
World
William
Holman-
Hunt
1851- 53
The
original
hangs in
Keble
College,
Oxford**



**BISHOP ALLAN'S ORATORY IN
PURLEY, SURREY 1976**

"I fancy the times are really ripe for a rebirth of the Christian Faith.

It will not be reborn through our existing presentations of Christianity, but could be reborn if the world saw that each Church was ashamed of those of its values which were unchristian, of its spirit of exclusiveness, of its lack of breadth of vision, and of its appalling and paralysing indifference to the great Love of God."

The Impatience of a Parson
H.H.L.Shepherd (Dick)
1927

A SPECIAL PRAYER FOR TODAY

O ALMIGHTY GOD, who art our Rock of Ages, may we be so girded with **Strength** for thy holy service that, with a clear mind, we may stand as the voice of those that as yet cannot speak.

O Lord Christ, whose **Wisdom** mightily and sweetly ordereth all things, so fill our hearts with understanding that we may be the ears of those that as yet cannot hear.

O thou Holy Spirit, whose **Beauty** shines through the whole universe, may the light of thine indwelling presence so irradiate our daily lives that we may act as the eyes of those that as yet cannot see.

That speaking, hearing, seeing, naught but from thee, we may, with the Angels, in self-forgetful service, glorify thy Triune Name: through Christ Our Lord. Amen

Even if you do not wish to use this as a prayer, it can prove useful as the subject for a short meditation.

+Allan

—oOo—



Bishop John Wheaton Ordaining
Rev. Albertha Meyer at the Oratory
of Our Lady Theotokos in Exeter



Here is a test for "older" readers.
How many people can you
recognise (apart from +Pigott's
Crozier Bearer) at Bishop
Hugh Sykes Consecration at St
Mary's 15 March 1953