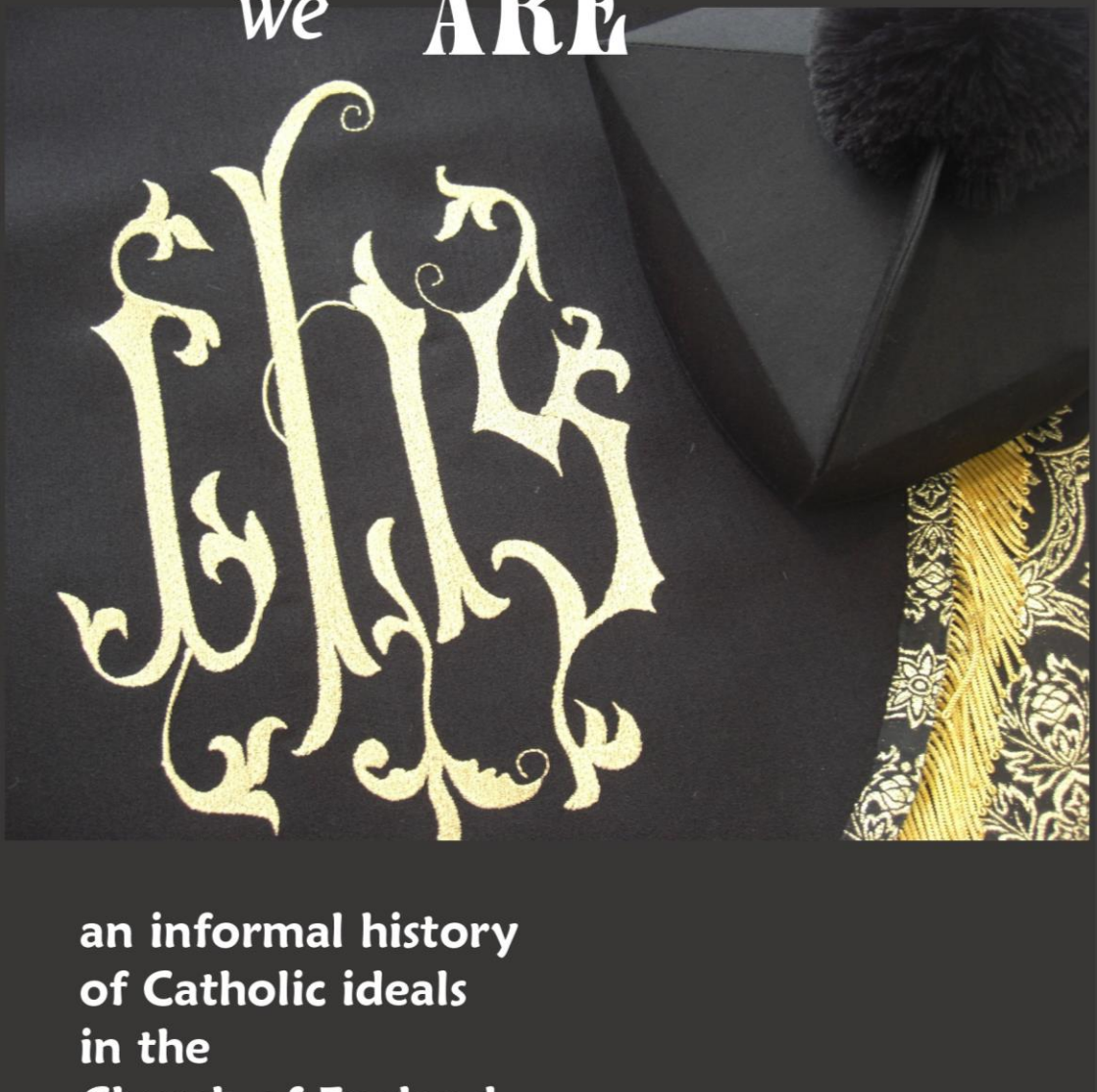
SOMETHING OTHER *than we* ARE



an informal history
of Catholic ideals
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ISBN 0-9544633-4-X

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data: A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

Printed by Delnevo Print,
4 Hillside
Ormesby
Great Yarmouth
Norfolk NR29 3PY.

Published by the Umbra Press,
87 Greenlands Road, Weybridge, Surrey. KT13 8PS

frontispiece: the memorial plaque of
Revd Spencer Buller, St James' Church, Weybridge, 1927

Contents

This book has no pretensions to being an academic work, but I hope it is, at least, intellectually respectable. I came to Christianity through its Anglo-Catholic variety, and found a tradition which seemed to know little about its past: I had to piece that together for myself. Books written around the centenary of the Oxford Movement in 1933 told a story of triumph against adversity; later ones were either sociological analyses (WSF Pickering's *Anglo-Catholicism: A study in ambiguity* or F Penhale's *Catholics in Crisis*) or focused, still, on the 19th century (Geoffrey Rowell's *The Vision Glorious*). I discovered plenty of Catholic Anglicans who knew that they were part of a distinctive, but rather beleaguered, stream within the Church, beset by trends towards modern and informal worship; yet at the same time, a reluctance to debate how triumph had turned into marginalisation. As time went on, I began to wonder whether this blindness to the past was less accidental than wilful. So I wanted, as I often do, to tell the 'whole story'.

For the earlier part of the story, Anglican Catholicism was also marginal to the Church of England's life, so it's reasonably easy to paint what happened with a pretty broad brush; and I admit I do so. The first sixty years of the Oxford Movement, too, the time of slow growth and the contentious acceptance of Catholic ritual and worship, is an oft-told tale. It is once we step past the trial of Edward King in 1890 that we enter a near-silent landscape, sensing beyond the path vast shapes and outlines which nobody (apart from Michael Yelton) seems very keen to illuminate. I have tried to illuminate them - to tell the story. I have also tried to hint at why Catholic Anglicans have bothered, have fought so hard and undergone so much. At the heart of the answer to that question is the vision of a fallen world made lovely by God's presence within it. I think we often forget that as well.

What does 'Anglican Catholicism' mean? 'Anglo-Catholic', 'Tractarian', 'High Church', 'Ritualist', and so on, are terms which, to those in the know, signify subtly differing sets of ideas, approaches to the Church, and styles of worship. With the exception of the few extremists who gib at anything to do with the 'Church of England', however, 'Anglican Catholic' covers all these terms reasonably well. 'Anglican' seems self-explanatory – the forms of worship and life associated with that branch of the Christian Church which has come to call itself 'The Church of England'; 'Catholic' perhaps needs a bit more analysis.

Most of the worldwide Christian Church across the world describes itself as 'Catholic' in some sense. 'I believe in one Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church' is part of the Nicene Creed, settled in the 4th century and which most Christian Churches use as the basic summary of their beliefs. Until the Second Vatican Council, and arguably beyond, the Roman Catholic Church regarded *itself* as the 'one church' referred to in the Creed, but most Christians today think of 'Catholicity' as something which a Christian organization can have more or less of, rather than just being located in one of them.

The majority of Catholic Christians, asked to define what the word meant, would probably answer in terms of the way their Church was organised or what it looked like. Probe a little deeper, however, and beneath the externals you find a set of attitudes and outlooks which are more basic, and which then find expression in organisation, structure and worship. I think there are five.

1. 'Ubi Caritas'
Ubi Caritas et Amor, Deus ibi est: 'where are charity and love, God is there'. These words come from the ancient order of service for Maundy Thursday, and although they're not Scripture they express a powerful element of Catholic thought, that God's grace is broad and extensive, and already active in the world even where it is not explicitly acknowledged. If, as the Book of Genesis tells, us, all human beings are 'made in God's image', then – even if that image is marred and spoiled by sin, darkened by the Fall – we should still expect to find traces of it, glinting shards of God-likeness, even where his Name is not mentioned.

The characteristic principle of Protestant ways of thinking is that God works to *separate out* his people from a world that is so radically fallen it is incapable of knowing him, and that our acts of faith begin the process of God's working. The 'Ubi Caritas' principle expresses itself in an instinct to *gather in*, to look for opportunities to bring human life into conscious and explicit submission to God through the inexplicit signs of his grace at work. This fundamental difference helps to explain a lot of the divergences in the ways churches do things, and at root it reflects differing views of exactly how 'fallen' creation is.

2. This Stuff Takes Time
Catholic thinking isn't bothered too much about the momentary. One unfortunate result of the Reformers putting the emphasis on human beings being 'justified by faith' in God's sight was the isolation of the single *moment* when that faith became active, and too much weight being put on it. The mirror image of this error is to place too much emphasis on the sacramental, in the sense of trying to pinpoint the exact moment when the magic happens, exactly *when* the baby gets regenerated in baptism, or *when* the bread and wine actually become Jesus's flesh and blood in the Eucharist. Both versions of this big mistake seem to relate to the general Western European instinct to analyse and pick apart, and the Christian life shouldn't be treated in that way.

Catholicism says in response two things, firstly that loving God takes time; and secondly, that we don't understand time as God does. God sees the whole business of our lives - from the baptismal exorcism of a baby to the final anointing of the same person moments from death - as a single extended act of in-gathering, part of the redemption of the whole world. Trying to pinpoint where belief begins, where repentance begins, where love begins, is a largely fruitless exercise, and we should waste little time on it.

3. The Redemption of All Creation
We are saved not as individuals on our own. Of course we all have our own relationship with God, and that freedom to speak on intimate terms with our Father is the wonderful treasure of the Christian faith (though in a sense even the unbaptised or unbelievers have *some* kind of 'relationship with God' - being human, you can't really avoid it). But that doesn't mean we're in it on our own, isolated individuals enjoying our own rapport with the divine. God's will is that the whole created order will be renewed, saved, brought back into proper relationship with him, and we human beings have a central role to play in that. Our bodies will be healed as well as our souls; sickness and suffering will depart; nothing will survive at the expense of anything else. It's a project that begins in each of us with our baptism, and will not end until the New Creation at the end of all things.

Look at Jesus. Wherever he walks, sickness, death, and disorder flee. He heals the sick, drives out demons, raises the dead, calms the storm. Nothing that is contrary to

his Father's will can stand in his presence. It takes human evil, human rejection of love and truth, to put a stop to that. Yet Jesus's mission is ours - the reclaiming of the fallen Earth from the devilish powers, human and supernatural, that have usurped it. We do it through the liturgy, through working for justice, through spreading peace among those we know, through self-sacrificial acts of love, and through trying to trust that God will work miracles through us. And worship and prayer train us for that work.

Protestants react suspiciously to any suggestion that the Church can add to Jesus's work. But the Church's work adds nothing to his once-for-all sacrifice on the Cross: *that* makes *possible* our work of reclamation. Otherwise why did the apostles bother to go out, preaching, healing, forgiving, and 'making disciples of all nations'?

4. The Binding of the Mind and the Breaking of the Heart

A common misunderstanding among Christians is thinking that because believing is enough to repair the broken relationship with God which we all suffer from, all the work of knowing him is achieved in that moment. Catholic forms of Christianity insist that for most of us it takes time and effort - after all, no relationship is static. The effort takes the form of praying. We have to reduce the level of spiritual 'noise' so that we can concentrate on God - not necessarily on any very clear thought about him, question or request to him, but simply learn to rest in his presence so that he can converse with our heart. The Protestant tradition commonly suggests that the Christian life is an easy matter to understand: the Bible contains God's laws and Jesus's instructions and warnings are perfectly clear. Catholic spiritual traditions stress instead the naked encounter with God in the silence of our hearts - Father to child, face to face. Nothing else will do, and without it the Christian path degenerates into various sorts of rule-following.

Then there's the breaking of the heart. As in human love-relationships, love begins in emotion, and an awful lot of us are only learning how to love. The Church helps us learn by presenting us with Jesus, the human face of God. We learn what love is through Christ's example, and we learn how to love others by loving him, and then seeing his face in the faces of those around us, because he, through whom all was created, is in all. Our dulled perceptions have to be pierced with the light of God's truth; our hearts, calloused, hardened and crusted as they are, have to be softened and broken by the hot longing of his love for us.

5. The Eucharist

Catholic Christians insist that the Eucharist - call it the Mass, call it the Communion, the Lord's Supper or whatever you please – is the point where the whole of the Christian faith is unified and made intelligible. This is where the boundaries between earth and heaven are collapsed, and God presents to us his own picture of himself and the whole of his saving work, in one tremendous and glorious act. Jesus is present - not crudely somehow *inside* the bread and the wine, though most powerfully and carnally in those things, but through the whole event. It figures Jesus and his saving sacrifice to us, and by it we take his life, death and resurrection inside ourselves, praying that it will transform us, make us whole, equip us to do God's work in our own lives. The exact meaning and significance of the Eucharist, and *how* Jesus is there in it – the doctrine which has come to be called the 'Real Presence' – is one of the areas at most dispute between Christian denominations.

Here are at least *some* of the core attitudes which give rise to a 'Catholic' approach to Christian life. They have two major consequences which we can see worked out in different ways in all 'Catholic' Christian churches.

First, there's a strong emphasis on the *Sacraments*. Those acts become something more than mere symbols, and instead something close to miracles. Catholics stress, particularly, that is isn't enough to say that the Eucharist is a 'memorial' of Jesus, a metaphor, or anything less than what Jesus himself said: 'this is my body', and 'this is my blood': there has to be a sense of Jesus's real, objective presence in the offering of bread and wine, or sooner or later the rite decays from a saving act of grace to an empty, symbolic gesture which doesn't bring the worshipper face to face with her God at all. The same applies to the washing away of sins in the dying-and-rebirth of baptism. These are real, powerful acts, with real and objective effects in the realm of the spirit. Many Christians find that a bit hard to take, and rather too encouraging of superstition.

Second, Catholics place great importance on the *Church* as an essential part of Christian life. According to St Paul, the Church is 'the Body of Christ' – which makes it the means of passing on the story of our redemption from sin and death by God's grace; and the means by which that story becomes active and effective, making us better people, releasing us to do God's work of restoring the fallen world. That makes Catholics essentially very reluctant to do anything that would disrupt relationships between Christians, and the unity of the Church assumes a high value. Protestant churches regularly split and divide over this or that doctrine or interpretation of Scripture; for them, division can be a sign of the Holy Spirit leading Christians towards truth. For Catholics, division is always a disaster even when unavoidable. The word *catholic* comes from the Greek meaning 'universal', and that's what the Catholic Church is intended to be: it's supposed, ideally, to include all those who proclaim the name of Jesus. Catholics point to Jesus's prayer that all his disciples should be one (in John's Gospel, Chapter 17) in support.

That all means, in turn, that Catholics place a lot of value on the historical continuity of the Church, its structures and traditions. This is where the idea of the 'Apostolic Succession' comes from. The early Church, trying to decide exactly what it believed about Jesus of Nazareth, appealed back to the people who actually knew him on earth, the Apostles, as their final authority. The apostles had founded various Christian communities which preserved their teaching and sometimes writings as well. As the Church became more organised and settled, they became the touchstone of orthodox Christianity; and as the Church grew, new Christian leaders, or *episkopoi* (bishops), had to be approved, first by the Apostles themselves, then by their own followers and successors. In this way, the succession of bishops became central to preserving genuine Christian teaching about Jesus, and the genuine gifts of the Holy Spirit given through the Sacraments. And, within Churches that claim to be Catholic, so it remains today.

However, Catholics themselves haven't necessarily been very good at expressing this. It's fair to say that we have often stood up for the Sacraments and the Apostolic Succession without *really* knowing *why* they're important – we just know they are. That's essentially a conservative position and it's no surprise to find that Anglican Catholics have often been allies of the political establishment. But beneath all the externals, beneath the traditional ceremonies, the bishops, and all that kind of thing, lies a determination to preserve something that really is worth fighting for, even if Catholics often failed to put it into words – the vision of the Christian Church as God's means of carrying on Jesus's redemptive work, for individual human beings and for all creation.

1. The King's Great Matter: the Reformation, 1531-1559

The series of religious changes we describe as the English Reformation was a ragged and disorganized business, a blended mixture of burning idealism, hot-headed impatience, and ruthless cynicism. It always *used* to be argued by historians that the medieval Church in England was a tottering, grand but moth-eaten façade, full of venal monks and nuns supported in their swinish pleasures by the rest of the population, ignorant priests who mumbled nonsense at the altar because they didn't know a word of Latin, and people champing at the bit to read the Bible for themselves. About twenty years ago the pendulum swung the other way, and a new generation of writers instead painted a picture of a medieval Catholicism that was popular and successful, and 'reformed' by a tiny group of ill-natured royal ministers whose efforts were vigorously resisted by most people in the country. There's enough truth about both stories to make them arguable. Either way, the trigger for the changes was a completely non-religious factor: the unfortunate circumstance that the King wanted to marry someone else.

Thomas Cranmer

By the late 1520s, as Europe was convulsed by religious controversy sparked off by the writings of the German friar, Martin Luther, the English King Henry VIII had been married for some years to Catherine of Aragon who had singularly failed to provide him with a male heir. He was in love with a young noblewoman called Anne Boleyn, but Catherine inconveniently refused to die or otherwise disappear. As Catherine had previously been betrothed to his deceased brother Arthur, Henry also had an uneasy feeling that he had done something terribly wrong by marrying her, that the then Pope should not have allowed the marriage, and that their lack of a son was God's punishment. Henry petitioned the Vatican to grant him a divorce. Unhappily, however, the Pope happened at the time to be the 'guest' – rather against his will – of the Holy Roman Emperor, Charles V, who was also Catherine's nephew. Understandably, His Holiness demurred and vacillated, and generally showed no sign of ever coming to a decision about what to do over the English King's marriage.

At the same time, a number of Henry's courtiers and advisers were rather taken with the new religious ideas which had appeared on the Continent in the previous decade and would have liked to introduce them into the English Church. They looked across the Channel at a great wave of religious fervour as the Bible was translated from Latin into vernacular languages, and people were encouraged to aim at a direct relationship with God in Jesus rather than praying to him through the saints. They envisaged an end to relics and pilgrimages and miracles and all the superstitious stuff which, they thought, the Church encouraged just to make money out of people. Here was the chance to make Christianity real again. Someone suggested to Henry that *he* should be head of the Church in England instead of the Pope, and then he could dissolve his own marriage rather than having to appeal to the far-away papal lawyers in Rome. After all, he was the prince, and God had put *him* in power to make laws, not the priests. They should stick to religious matters.

Between 1531 and 1534 a series of Acts were passed by the English Parliament, under extreme pressure from the King and his ministers, to restrict the rights of the Pope to hear legal appeals or raise taxes, and to stop the Convocations of the Provinces of Canterbury and York from passing any Church law without the King's agreement first. The process culminated in 1534 in the Act of Supremacy, making Henry 'Supreme Head of the Church of England': all clergy had to swear oaths to this effect. No problem for the new Archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Cranmer, an enthusiastic reformer, but Bishop Fisher of Rochester and the former Chancellor, Sir Thomas More, refused to swear the oaths, and were burned in 1535 for their loyalty to the Pope.

Henry's marriage to Anne Boleyn failed to bring him his male heir, of course, but from that point the pace accelerated. Royal commissioners toured the country taking down details of Church property and revenues. In 1536, monasteries and nunneries with an income of less than £200 per year were closed, and from late 1537 the larger religious houses were persuaded to dissolve themselves. Two years later Parliament closed them all. The last to surrender was Waltham Abbey in Essex, whose brothers left in March 1540. There was little trouble in the monasteries themselves; the Abbots of Glastonbury, Reading and Colchester were hanged in 1539, but that was for denying the Royal Supremacy rather than defending their convents. In the north a violent reaction brewed up, possibly encouraged by some local lords for their own purposes – the Pilgrimage of Grace, it became called, in which parishioners marched behind banners of the Five Wounds of Christ to save their local monasteries and shrines; its defeat only hastened the changes. Some of the monastic revenues went to found schools,

Frontispiece of the Great Bible, issued on the orders of Henry VIII in 1539. At the top, the king hands Bibles in English to be distributed; at the bottom, his joyful subjects cry 'Vivat Rex' – 'Long live the King'

colleges, almshouses, and a few new bishoprics, but the vast majority passed into the hands of the Crown and those laypeople it chose to reward for their special support. Shrines were destroyed, the Church calendar purged of saints' days, and chantries where masses were said for the dead abolished. In terms of doctrine Henry remained a Catholic, and had the Six Acts passed in 1539 to punish anyone who denied key beliefs of the medieval Church. But once he had gone, leaving a 9-year-old successor in the form of his son Edward, there was nothing standing in the way of far more radical reform.

Within seven months of the old king's death, instructions went out for the destruction of images in churches – instructions that were imperfectly followed, but where they were, the violence that was wrought on statues and pictures of saints is rather shocking – hands hacked off, faces scratched out with knives. Archbishop Cranmer brought out a new Prayer Book in English in 1549, followed three years later by a second version. This was much more 'Protestant' than the first, though it still retained ritual details which the radicals found offensive, such as the giving of rings in marriage, marking babies with the cross in baptism, and kneeling to take Communion. Cranmer was a conservative, scholarly man, and despite his Reforming convictions produced a liturgy which still had something of the atmosphere of the medieval Church about it. The words toned down the old idea of the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist, but were still ambiguous enough to bear different interpretations.

St Margaret, from the painted chancel screen in Ranworth church, Norfolk. Her face has been scratched out as part of the Reforming attack on images

King Edward died in 1553 and the throne passed to Henry VIII's daughter by Catherine of Aragon, Mary. Mary was a Roman Catholic, a convinced and devout one. There followed five years of reaction, of the Latin mass, of Protestants (including Archbishop Cranmer) being burned or fleeing the country, and of churchwardens bringing out all the 'kit', the chalices and vestments and statues and mass-books, that they had hidden in the previous few years in the hope that things would change. Five years of this; and then Mary died in turn, and her half-sister Elizabeth succeeded, determined to put an end to religious see-sawing, and instead unite the State, as far as she could, around herself.

Elizabeth assembled a new bench of bishops (of whom more later); restored the generally Protestant order; reissued the 1552 Book of Common Prayer. The religion of England froze, rather than settled. Her own personal taste was for her father's brand of faith, but the violence of Mary's reign had made that sort of 'Catholicism-without-the-Pope' impossible. Elizabeth claimed that she only disagreed with three or four things in the Mass, and in the Chapel Royal little seemed to have changed from the old days. But out in the country, she had no choice but to enforce 'the Prayer Book hallowed by fire', even if that Prayer Book contained some confusing compromises and was only completely satisfactory to those who were desperate for a rest.

The frontispiece of William Dugdale's History of the Reformation, *1681. Elizabeth sits at the top, Bible in one hand and Horn of Plenty in the other; below, a scene of 'godly' Protestant worship juxtaposed with Queen Mary (together with a wicked monk) overseeing the burning of Cranmer and bishops Latimer and Ridley*

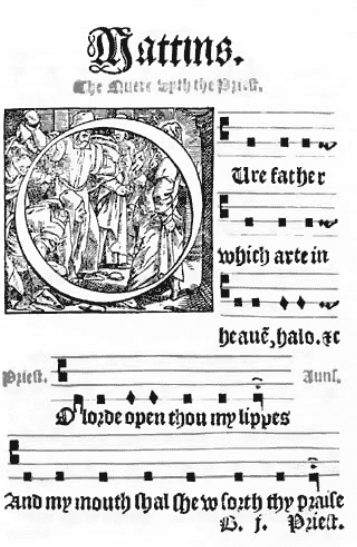
Among the many results of the English Reformation was to create a Church which accommodated – at first by accident, as a blessed relief from violence and strife, and then by principle – a range of theological beliefs, beliefs which led their adherents to take equally diverse positions on how their Church should be governed and its worship directed; and over centuries that spectrum grew wider and wider. It made it *possible* for Anglicans to think of themselves as Catholic or Protestant, in the hope that the Church as a whole might be persuaded to move in this or that direction. It generated a new range of conflicting referents which claimed the loyalties of England's Christians.

For the moment, though, all Anglicans were 'Protestants': the debate was how far the English Reformation should go. There was a difference between arguing that the way things were was fine provided it didn't go against the Bible, as moderates did, and on the other hand saying with the radicals that everything the Church did had to have explicit justification in Scripture. Many thinking Anglicans were Calvinists, in agreement with the great French-born Reformer John Calvin's views on theology and church government. They would have preferred to change the liturgy still further, removing more symbols, cutting back formal prayers, paring the Eucharist down to its

bare bones; they would have liked to abolish bishops, and have the Church governed by elected local committees of elders. Even Calvinist *bishops* were hardly committed to the institution they represented: for them episcopacy was a matter of practicality, not principle. Government by bishops worked until something better might be devised.

The consecration of Queen Elizabeth's first Archbishop of Canterbury, Matthew Parker, in 1559, illustrated this situation beautifully. Elizabeth would have been happy for the Catholic bishops appointed under Mary to carry on in office, but all the diocesans refused, and left the country. So to consecrate Parker she had to scrape around to find a suitable number of men who *had been* bishops at one time or another. She settled on: Edward Barlow, who'd been Bishop of Bath & Wells under Henry VIII; John Scory, a former Dominican friar who was Bishop of Chichester under Edward VI; Suffragan Bishop John Hodgkin of Bedford whose opinions had been flexible enough to allow him to carry on in office undisturbed since 1536; and Miles Coverdale, the Puritan translator of the Bible who had been Edward VI's Bishop of Exeter. Old Bishop Barlow wore a cope for the service, which was the legally proper vestment. Hodgkin and Scory scrupled at a cope, and wore surplices instead. Coverdale scrupled at a surplice, and wore just a plain black preaching gown like a Calvinist minister. In such a way, and with such symbolic divisions, was the Apostolic Succession within the Church of England just about preserved.

As they have a habit of doing, goalposts shifted. Anglican conservatives – the 'Catholic'-minded – struggled to preserve the settlement they had; and loyalty to the Book of Common Prayer, with its lingering hints of the medieval Church which had been expunged from everything else, its remaining rituals and ambiguous language, became a touchstone of that conservatism. In fact, almost as the new ways of worshipping came into being, there were those who were working to make them *sound* as much like the old ones as possible. John Merbecke, organist of St George's Chapel, Windsor, had been condemned for heresy in 1544 for writing the first English concordance to the Bible, but was pardoned, and in 1550 he published *The Book of Common Prayer Noted*, fitting medieval plainchant to Cranmer's liturgy. Merbecke's numinous music has survived nearly five centuries, continually re-adapted to every new form of service. Thomas Tallis had been organist at Waltham Abbey in the old days; he taught William Byrd, who joined him at the Chapel Royal and, together with his tutor, exercised a profound influence on English church music. Luckily, the Queen loved traditional choral music: she protected and favoured both Tallis and Byrd, even though the latter remained loyal to the Pope, and was scorned by the Puritan clergy of Lincoln Cathedral where he became organist in 1570.



The start of Mattins, from Merbecke's Book of Common Prayer Noted

Perhaps the survival of Catholic Anglicanism was due less to the bishops making it through the English Reformation, than the cathedrals and collegiate churches, the institutions that employed men like Merbecke and Byrd and performed their liturgical

music. Nowhere else in Reformed Europe had anything similar. Pre-eminent among them, and right in the geographical centre of the power nexus of Tudor England, was Westminster Abbey. The Abbey's music and liturgy was a strange and gorgeous island in a Puritan sea, and its successive Deans – Gabriel Goodman, Lancelot Andrewes, and Richard Neile – worked to keep it that way. What St Paul's Cathedral became to 19th-century ritualism, Westminster was to the 16th.

Gradually, as churchmen began to read more deeply into the works of the Apostolic Fathers of the early Church, they discovered that their writings supported the Puritan cause of reform rather less than they had expected. Instead, they realized, the Fathers had been very concerned about bishops, order, and the sacraments. The first Anglican to voice those ideas was Richard Hooker.

2. The Anglican Counter-Reformation, 1559-1689

Hooker became Master of the Temple Church in London in 1584. He found himself saddled with a Calvinist curate who he hadn't appointed and for whose style and principles he had nothing but repugnance. Hooker and his curate hotly preached against each other, but preaching wasn't Hooker's strong point. He peered short-sightedly through eyeglasses to read learned but hardly inspiring sermons full of allusions and quotations from the Fathers. He retired from London to a country parish, and there conceived the idea of a comprehensive book to justify the Church of England against its Calvinist critics. This work, *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*, began to appear in 1593, and the last part only came out in print in 1662, long after its author was dead. Hooker's claim was that the liturgy and order of the Anglican Church was not just true to the Bible, as the radicals wanted it to be; it was the fruit of centuries of development and change – and prayer. The Bible wasn't the sole source of authority, anyway: the Church had developed over the centuries by 'divine instinct', so not everything it did needed to have *explicit* justification in Scripture. The bishops were the central element of the community of believers within which Scripture was weighed, sifted and interpreted. The Church of England, Hooker claimed, was the Church *in* England, fully in continuity with the Middle Ages – there had just been a bit of pruning here and there, a little needful correction, not the wholesale junking of the past and the generation of something novel. As for the Roman Catholics, he wrote 'we gladly acknowledge them to be of the family of Jesus Christ' – which not many other Protestant churchmen would have done.

Richard Hooker

Had it not been for the ideas Hooker articulated, Anglican Catholicism would not have existed at all. His book was a counterblast against the radical Reforming spirit that demanded the Bible and only the Bible as the vehicle of God's voice to humankind. He denied the possibility, or desirability, of trying to pinpoint who on earth was saved and who was damned, leaving judgement to God. Most of all, his claim for continuity between the Church of England and what had gone before it became the central theme of all Catholic Anglican thought – including its stranger and more extreme expressions. Hooker became a hero to the Anglicans of the Restoration period who had lived through the chaos of the Civil War; and Izaak Walton, the famous angler-parson, wrote his biography.

Other Anglican thinkers were moving in a similar direction. As the century turned, High Church Anglicans who argued for bishops and sacraments and beauty in worship became more vocal and prominent; the Caroline Divines, as they became known, though not restricted to the reigns of Charles I and II, as the name might imply.

Born in 1555, Lancelot Andrewes had no memory of any other than the Reformed Church of England; and perhaps had less fear of Catholicism as a result. Languages were his speciality. He became Master of Pembroke Hall, Cambridge, in 1589, as well as Vicar of St Giles Cripplegate in the City; he was chosen Dean of Westminster Abbey in 1601, and a bishop under James I. He was one of the leading translators of the Bible that produced the great 'King James Version' in 1611, a text which dominated the imaginative life of the English-speaking world for 300 years; the Pentateuch and

historical books were mainly his work. In 1617 he accompanied the king journeying north of the Border to try and persuade the Presbyterian Church of Scotland to accept bishops. Preaching to the congregation of Cripplegate, in St Paul's Cathedral, or at the Royal court, he urged personal holiness and the devout reception of the sacraments, and continually stressed Jesus's presence in the Communion bread and wine. In his private chapel he used candles on the altar and burned incense, and mixed water with wine in the communion chalice, following ancient practice. He composed prayers for his own use drawing deep from the ancient liturgies of Greece and the East, including a 'prayer of oblation' for use at Communion taken from the Liturgy of St Basil which made the sacrificial nature of the rite perfectly clear. Andrewes influenced people by his sermons, by the atmosphere and fittings of his chapel – which was like nothing else in the Church of England at that time – and simply by being a holy man.

In some ways, the Catholic Anglicans who came after him were his disciples. Many had heard his lectures at Cambridge and his sermons in London; many had visited his chapel. They saw to it that his *Preces Privatae*, private prayers, were in circulation after his death in 1626, and three years later 96 of his sermons were published by the Bishop of London, William Laud.

But we will come to Laud soon: there were other personalities. John Donne fought for years against the suggestion that he take holy orders, and no surprise – he was brought up as a Roman Catholic at a time when that was dangerous: his brother Henry died while in prison for harbouring a Roman priest. Eventually Donne accepted the claims of the Church of England, but held out for a secular career until 1615 when he finally allowed the King to persuade him to be ordained. Within six years he was Dean of St Paul's Cathedral, from whose pulpit he made himself one of the best known preachers in the land. In his younger years, Donne had lived a dissolute life, studying but also penning passionate odes and sonnets to society ladies; later his poetry became more entirely religious, but remained passionate and even violent:

> *Batter my heart, three-person'd God; for, you*
> *As yet but knocke, breathe, shine, and seek to mend;*
> *That I may rise, and stand, o'erthrow mee, and bend*
> *Your force, to breake, blowe, burn, and make me new.*
>
> ('Holy Sonnets', xiv)

Donne's sermons at St Paul's were filled the same yearning, burning desire for God; a love of the Church as Christ's Body; an emphasis on the sacraments as the divine element of a necessarily fleshly human life; and the everpresent reality of death. When he knew, in 1631, that his own death was approaching, he had made a statue of himself in his shroud, but shifting his feet forward, as if to meet the resurrected Christ at the Judgement; and kept it in his bedroom to meditate upon. On his final day, he lay on the floor, folded his hands in prayer, and died.

By the time Donne succeeded to St Paul's, the Catholic reaction in the Church of England was gathering pace and power. It had begun in Cambridge in the 1590s and 1600s, as college after college acquired anti-Puritan Masters and Chaplains, men who preached against the doctrine of Predestination and wore a surplice to take services. But William Laud was an *Oxford* don, made President of St John's College, Oxford's centre of anti-Puritanism, in 1611. Laud's hero was less the scholarly Lancelot Andrewes than the forceful Richard Bancroft, Archbishop of Canterbury 1604-10, and it showed: he was a loyal Church of England man (he rejected the Vatican's offer to make him a Cardinal if he converted, saying 'something dwelt within me that would

St Mary's Church, Ingestre (Staffordshire) was built in the 1670s, but with its Classical detailing, railed-in altar and 'Laudian' altar frontal it looks very much like Archbishop Laud's model of what an English church should be. Only the 18th-century memorials and Victorian stained glass intrude on the effect

not suffer that, till Rome were other than it is'), but there was no secure place in his Anglican Church for Puritans. He did his best to annoy them, and more when he got the chance. As Dean of Gloucester in 1616 he moved the Communion table to the east end of the cathedral, earning the rage of his bishop; as a bishop himself, as Chancellor of Oxford University, and finally as Archbishop of Canterbury from 1633, he did everything he could to restore the beauty and order of worship, but also repressed Puritan and Calvinist ideas with every means at his disposal. He insisted that altars in the churches of his diocese be surrounded by rails – to keep the dogs out, perhaps, but also to make sure people knelt down to receive Communion rather than sitting round the Holy Table like European Calvinists did. Such ritual decorum was offensive enough to some, but to help matters along Laud made sure Puritan pamphleteers had their ears cropped, or were clapped in prison. Worse still, he and the clergy he favoured and promoted tended to have a very high view of the powers of the King, which was fine for them, as the King in question was Charles I who shared their religious opinions, but not so convenient for everyone else. Laud drew up a paper (though he never published it) which denied that Parliament had any place in the English constitution and even denounced Magna Carta, which most educated people thought of as the cornerstone of English freedoms. He never really understood how his opponents could feel the way they did, nor the limits of his ability to make them do what he wanted. His attempt to enforce a more Catholic Prayer Book on Scotland in 1637 led to riots, and when in 1640 he tried to promote new canon laws supporting the 'Divine Right of Kings' and oaths 'never to consent to alter the government of this Church', King Charles was forced to suspend him: he was impeached by Parliament, imprisoned in the Tower of London, tried, and executed in 1645, four years before his King.

Happily, Laud promoted two men who shared his beliefs about the Church, but had nothing to do with his political activities, and their dedicated lives speak better for him. Nicholas Ferrar, a brilliant Cambridge scholar and then MP, left public life in 1625 and retired to a family estate at Little Gidding, Huntingdonshire, where he established a community of relatives and friends which read the Prayer Book services of Morning and Evening Prayer each day, and shared work and other duties. Ferrar was ordained deacon by Laud in 1626, and the piety and common life of the household of about 30 people became famous. Ferrar died in 1637, but Little Gidding itself survived another nine years when a squadron of Puritan soldiers, regarding it as a 'papist' experiment, arrived and dispersed the inhabitants. George Herbert was one of Ferrar's friends, another notable Cambridge scholar, and followed him into the ministry. He was ordained priest in 1630, and Laud presented him to a church near Salisbury, where he spent his last three years as a humble and devoted parish priest. His book of advice to the parish clergy, *The Countrey Parson*, *or, A Priest to the Temple,* is as tough-minded in its advocacy of virtue, temperance, prayer and work, as his poetry is gentle and devout. 'Love' is possibly Herbert's best-known poem:

Love bade me welcome: yet my soul drew back,
Guiltie of dust and sinne.
But quick-ey'd Love, observing me grow slack
From my first entrance in,
Drew nearer to me …

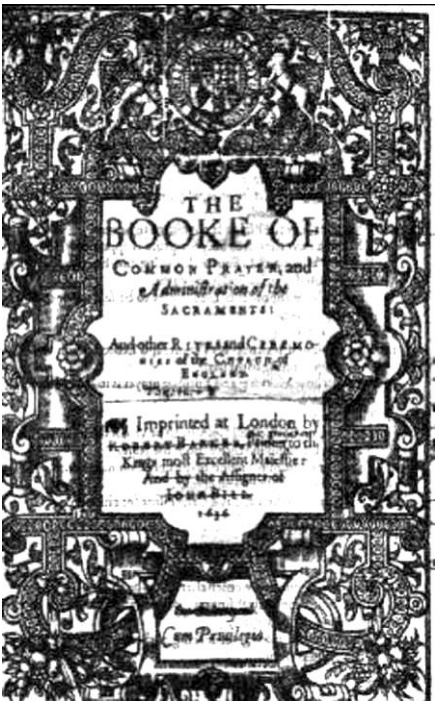
Although their programme ended in ruins, the Church of Laud and Charles I remains a touchstone for some. As he languished in prison, Charles wrote (or had written for him) a set of devotional reflections which were published on the day of his death as *Eikon Basilike*, 'the image of royalty'; and when the Church of England was restored in 1660 he became its great martyr-figure. From 1662 to 1859 a special service for the day of his death, 30th January, was set in the Book of Common Prayer, and five churches were dedicated to him as though he was a medieval saint. You can still find churches where the altar is dressed in a 'Laudian' way with a single, large rich cloth covering the whole table and sweeping down to the floor on either side, and the Society of King Charles the Martyr, founded in 1894 (four years after the feast of 'Saint Charles' was revived by Fr James Fish at St Margaret Pattens Church, London) still holds an anniversary Solemn High Mass at the Banqueting Hall each year. The Society has always wanted to endow and look after its 'own' parish but has never managed it. One story involves St Mary's Church, Headington, Oxford, which the Society had its eyes on. As the church was being built in the 1950s the Society approached the vicar offering a very considerable amount of money if he'd allow it to become 'their' church. As he was friendly with the minister of the new United Reformed Church being built across the road, the vicar happened to mention this in conversation with him. 'You dedicate your church to King Charles the Martyr,' said the minister, 'And I'll dedicate mine to Oliver Cromwell.' So it never happened, but St Mary's still has in its Lady Chapel one of the most extraordinary bits of religious art in any Anglican church: a stained glass window showing Archbishop Laud and King Charles kneeling either side of the Virgin Mary with their hands upraised in adoration. Not something either of them would have done very often in life, whatever they may be up to in heaven – provided that's where they are.

During the Civil War and the Commonwealth the Church of England disappeared. Its Prayer Book was outlawed, its bishops fled abroad, its clergy only carried on in their parishes if they could accept the new radical framework within which they had to operate; even the great festivals were abolished, because they were not in the Bible.

The famous frontispiece of the Eikon Basilike – *'Saint' Charles kneels in rapturous prayer*

On Christmas Day 1657 the diarist John Evelyn attended a private service of Holy Communion in London. As the Sacrament was being administered, soldiers broke in and arrested all present. The Prayer Book, they shouted, was 'but the Masse in English'. It was no surprise that when order was restored in 1660 and the Prayer Book reissued two years later, those responsible had Laud's Church before them as their ideal. But the Laudian programme could ever be enforced entirely. After all, the attempt to enforce it was one of the factors which had provoked the Civil War in the first place. Much better to have a time of peace and quiet.

One of the great figures of these years, however, John Cosin, who connected the pre-war period with the post-Restoration one, was not a quiet sort. He had been one of Archbishop Laud's more hot-headed lieutenants in the old days, and regarded Lancelot Andrewes as his 'Gemaliel'. In 1627 he published a *Collection of Private Devotions* for the Queen's maids – in imitation of her own Roman Catholic books. While a Canon of Durham Cathedral he took it upon himself – with Bishop Neile's protection – to outdo the local Papists for grandeur of worship. The altar blazed with sixty candles at Candlemas, while the canons moved to and fro in gorgeous vestments to the accompaniment of organ, sackbuts, cornets and choir. When, as Master of Peterhouse, Cosin had finished re-ordering the college chapel, it was positively baroque, covered in marble, gilding, stained glass and silk, the air perfumed by swinging censers. Under his protection, Fellows and Chaplains of Peterhouse preached on the necessity of confession and adoration of the Virgin Mary. Such Popish experimentation had to stop under the Commonwealth, of course, and even when



The frontispiece of a late-17th century edition of the Book of Common Prayer. *The 1662 Book became the touchstone of Anglican liturgy for three hundred years, though honoured more in the breach than the observance. It was the hallowed and unchanging core of the Church of England's identity – and not only within England itself.*

he returned after his time as a royal chaplain in Paris, Cosin was never allowed so free a hand again. Still, he entered his new post as Bishop of Durham in 1660 in typical style, reviving the medieval custom of splashing into his new diocese across the ford over the river Tees, to grasp the sword which had killed the Sockburn Dragon and which symbolized the Prince-Bishop's authority. We remember Cosin today for his beautiful rendering of the ancient hymn, 'Veni Creator': *Come Holy Ghost, our souls inspire.* A startling and uneasy man; at least in the far North he could do little damage to the new religious settlement.

Such as that settlement was. Charles I had sincerely believed in his programme of High-Church Anglicanism and High Royalism; his son wasn't bothered by the former, and turned to anyone who would help him pursue the latter, whether they were the Scots Presbyterians, or the Roman Catholics. The great Book of Common Prayer, so triumphantly restored in 1662 and defended rigidly against Puritan attempts to amend or edit it, stood for a constitutional and religious settlement which the Supreme Governor of the Church of England, the King, no longer regarded as essential. Charles II had remained officially an Anglican until on his deathbed, but his brother James, who succeeded in 1685, was, inconveniently for the Church he headed, a convinced and open Roman Catholic. He proclaimed toleration for Roman Catholics, and promoted them to important positions; and, to add to the sense that the history of the previous fifty years was repeating itself, only in a more extreme form, did it all without consulting his Parliament, which never even met while he was on the throne. It was all viewed as yet more 'despotism' from the Stuart family, threatening the liberty of Protestant England. Finally, in June 1688, seven Protestant lords invited Prince William of Orange, James's Dutch son-in-law, to invade England and 8 months later a newly-summoned Parliament declared James deposed and his daughter Mary joint monarch with her husband, William. It was this that provoked the greatest and most enduring schism the Church of England has yet suffered.

Charles II had sat easy to the Anglican Settlement, while James openly if inexplicitly repudiated it. But William Sancroft, the Archbishop of Canterbury, still believed in it. He had been Dr Cosin's chaplain at Durham, and still accepted the old Laudian doctrine of the King's 'divine right' to rule; behind that, the Reformation principle of the prince's right to be involved in the government of his Church, and behind *that* the lingering shreds of the priestly kingship of the Middle Ages. He and six other bishops

had petitioned James desperately trying to persuade him not to grant toleration to Roman Catholics, and had been imprisoned for it; now, along with four of his colleagues from that episode and joined by four more, Sancroft spoke out for the king who'd locked him up, and refused to take the oath to William and Mary ordered by Parliament. He had no problem with them ruling, but argued that an oath before God to the King was a sacred bond, even if the King proved unfit *actually* to govern. To break it severed the holy compact which was God's will: no Parliament had the authority to dissolve a bond sealed in Heaven. Sancroft and the other eight bishops – called 'non-jurors', from the Latin *iurare*, to swear an oath – and about four hundred parish clergy were deprived of their livings and replaced by Parliament's nominees.

Sancroft was a holy and retiring man, and in his later years people came to him for spiritual advice from far and wide. He was not the only saintly figure among the Nonjurors: Thomas Ken, Bishop of Bath & Wells, an ascetic and lifelong celibate, had refused to allow his house to be used by Nell Gwyn, Charles II's mistress – an act the King rather admired him for – and had a wide spiritual influence. His will began

> *I die in the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Faith, professed by the whole Church, before the disunion of East and West: more particularly I die in the communion of the Church of England, as it stands distinguished from all Papal and Puritan Innovations.*

There could hardly be a more concise statement of the way 17th-century Catholic Anglicans thought about themselves.

Bishop Ken would have preferred the Nonjuring schism to have ended with the death of the first generation, but this was not to be. In 1701 everyone holding any sort of public office was obliged to swear an oath renouncing the Stuart dynasty, which only hardened the Nonjurors' position. When George I of Hanover succeeded Queen Anne in 1715, a new generation refused to swear allegiance to the incoming German king. William Law, for one, had to leave his Fellowship at Cambridge; he wrote *A Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life*, which became a spiritual classic, and various mystical works. The Nonjurors argued over whether the Church of England was a legitimate Church or not, especially after Convocation was abolished in 1717; over altering the Prayer Book; and over support for the Stuarts. They quarreled and split and got back together again. They gradually, slowly, declined, and their last legitimate bishop died in 1779 (another who *claimed* he was a Nonjuring bishop lived until 1805).

The Nonjurors had stood for the idea of the Church as a spiritual society which owed allegiance to more than simply the laws of the State; for the idea of a supernatural element to human life and relationships, which bound them to their lawful monarch and his successors. As the violent and dramatic 17th century turned into the pragmatic, materialistic 18th, fewer and fewer Anglicans really wanted to listen to such outlandish notions.

Obverse and reverse of a medal commemorating the 'Seven Bishops' of 1688. Confusingly, counting Archbishop Sancroft, there are eight! The artist has included Bishop Compton of London who was not arrested for opposing James II but did suffer the removal of some of his posts and offices. Sancroft and four of these seven went on to become Nonjurors – a Catholic Anglican protest significantly not *celebrated in song and souvenir as this anti-Roman one was.*

3. The Babylonian Captivity – the Church in the 18th century, 1689-1833

One observation sums up the 18th-century Church of England: the disappearance of the surplice. The Canons of 1604 had enjoined all Anglican clergy to wear the surplice for services, and it was a major bone of contention between the Puritans, who hated it as a 'popish' affectation, and everybody else. From the late 1600s it became worn less and less until to do so was the mark of an advanced High Churchman. Why? Not from doctrinal or ritual objections. The surplice fell out of fashion because it was too much bother for clergy to take their wigs off in order to get it on. At first button-up surplices were made (and you can still find them used occasionally) but when ministers failed to wear them and nobody kicked up much of a fuss, they were quietly abandoned.

After the disruptions and violence of the 1600s, it was no surprise that England looked for a period of stability and peace in religious matters. The settlement reached by Parliament in 1689 was part of that. The Nonconformists had helped to drive out James II, last of the dreadful Stuarts, so they had to be admitted into the fold to a certain extent, and were allowed to worship freely. As time went on, even though technically only Anglicans were supposed to hold public office, various legal fictions were devised to allowed Nonconformists to take part in public life. Roman Catholics, of course, were still beyond the pale.

Catholic Anglicans were in a bad position. Many of their views and beliefs were fatally associated with the fallen Stuarts and those who continued to support them, the Jacobites. Many of their best and holiest leaders, as Nonjurors, were separated from the Church. The Scottish Episcopal Church, disestablished in 1689, was thoroughly Catholic, but also pretty thoroughly Jacobite too, and therefore fell under the suspicion of treason. Being 'High Church' came to mean less defending the Church's supernatural nature, or the Real Presence, or beauty in worship; and, rather, standing up for the political and social interests of the Anglican Church and its Monarch. Henry Sacheverell, the Vicar of St Saviour's, Southwark, was a fine example. Sacheverell did not worry overmuch about prayer, teaching his people, absolving their sins, or anything like that. Instead he was mainly concerned that his people did their duty to support the Church of England, the function of which was apparently to keep his dinner table and wine cellar properly stocked. His inflammatory preaching against Nonconformists and the enemies of the Church of England caused such a furore that he was impeached by the House of Lords, and the General Election of 1710 turned into a national referendum on his trial. The Government had made sure most of the Bishops were Low Churchmen, while most of the ordinary clergy were High Church Tories. The Church's Parliament, Convocation, eventually became so stormy that, in 1717, rather than face it voting to condemn a book by Bishop Hoadly of Bangor, the Government dissolved it, and until 1852 whenever Convocation met – which wasn't often – no business was ever discussed. Effectively, the Church of England had no self-government at all, which at least achieved the Whig Government's intention that religious controversy should quieten down.

At the heart of the situation was politics. The politicians who had come to power in 1689 and remained for fifty years – with one hiatus between the 'Sacheverell' election of 1710 and George I's arrival five years later – were there because they were the only alternative to civil war or Popish invasion. Beyond that, their purpose in wielding power was to make as much money as humanly possible. Every office of state,

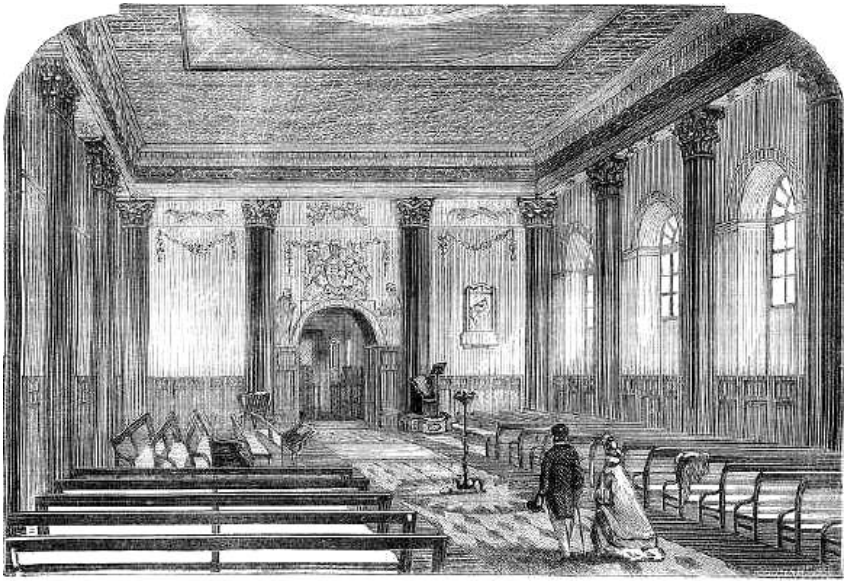
Dr Sacheverell the High Church rebel and Dr Hoadly the Low Church conformist – not so far apart after all

every appointment, every public job from Paymaster General to the lowliest clerkship, especially if it involved no actual work, was there to be milked. And into this morass the Church, whose highest offices were indeed 'plums' to be plucked from the pudding, was sucked. The bishops went under first; then the universities which were supposed to train clergy; and finally many of the parishes, where, thanks to agricultural improvement, some rectors found themselves sitting on vast incomes from which they could happily afford to pay a pittance to a curate and then spend the rest of their own lives hunting and dining. The Rector of Doddington in Cambridgeshire, for instance, enjoyed by 1830 an income of £7306 per annum – more than 20 of the bishops. Meanwhile other livings were so poor that a clergyman had to hold two or three, or more, together to get by, and serve them as best he could. Of course, this horrible system was inhabited by good people who did their best – Anthony Trollope's novels show us some of them – but the overall spectacle presented a Church which was shockingly far from what it was supposed to be about. When someone, like John Wesley, came along who took it all rather too seriously, they would find that there was little place in the Church of England for anyone who actually wanted to make some proper effort at following Jesus Christ.

For a hundred years and more, not rocking the boat, socially, politically or religiously, became the guiding principle of the Anglican Church. This was partly because so many of its clergy found that their worldly interests were served by not doing so; and partly because most of its leaders now believed in a God who didn't rock the boat, either. Dr Benjamin Hoadly, whose writings had caused the castration of Convocation, was a convinced 'Deist', holding that God, like a watchmaker, had created the universe, set it running in good and perfect order, and had very little to do with it thereafter. Communion, he argued, was just a helpful way of remembering Christ's exemplary earthly life: nothing at all supernatural happened at the Lord's Table. Hoadly was Chaplain to King George I, and then bishop of Bangor, Hereford, Salisbury, and Winchester in turn. He was rarely sighted in his dioceses (at least he had the excuse of disability), instead spending most of his time going to splendid dinners in London, and arguing against firm belief in anything – except in not rocking the boat. (If only the High Church Tories and Low Church Whigs had stuck to debating the merits of port rather than the rights of Dissenters, they would have found much more in common).

Nor was it only a matter of the clergy. The Lord of the Manor of West Wycombe, Buckinghamshire, was the Deist Sir Francis Dashwood. Dashwood ascended to high rank in the service of the State, and of his family's fortunes, ending up Chancellor of

the Exchequer and Postmaster-General at different times. He'd been orphaned at the age of 16, and spent most of his time and cash enjoying himself. He went, as young 18th-century gentlemen did, on the Grand Tour round Europe, and acquired there an utter contempt for Roman Catholicism in particular and religion in general; on returning, he founded the 'Society of St Francis' – better known to posterity as the Hellfire Club – to mock and burlesque genuine monks, and to dedicate its members to 'convivial gaiety, unrestrained hilarity, and social felicity'. Dashwood's philosophical allegiance was to 'Nature and Reason', just as the Marquis de Sade's would be a few years later. He rewrote the Prayer Book to render it more 'rational', and shorten the services. He rebuilt his parish church of St Lawrence, which acquired the appearance of a lavishly appointed ballroom: the walls had concealed cupboards for wine bottles, the font resembled a finger bowl, and the décor included nothing very obviously Christian. Topping the tower, Dashwood constructed an enormous golden ball where he and his friends could ascend and play cards while the servants and tenants were preached at. Into the hands of such people the Reformation had entrusted the English Church.[1]



Inside West Wycombe church, as reconstructed by Sir Francis Dashwood - a print from the 1820s

And so the process of 'settling' continued. Across most of the country, sacramental life in churches withered. Communion was celebrated less and less frequently, and with less and less reverence. Churches became neglected and run-down. Pews and benches sprouted weeds; surplices went rotten with mould; new building work usually meant some enormous monument to the fine qualities of a departed local dignitary. Vigorous Christian life was maintained only here and there, and almost always by Evangelical clergy who had some contact with the Nonconformists and Methodists, like John Newton of Olney, John Berridge of Potton, William Grimshaw of Haworth, the great preacher George Whitefield, or Henry Venn of Huddersfield, rather than by High Churchpeople.

Francis Kilvert was a young Victorian clergyman – he died aged only 39 in 1879 – who kept a detailed and famous diary. He recorded a conversation with a clerical friend near his own parish in the Welsh borders who told Kilvert that, when he had arrived in his church in about 1830, there had been no celebration of Holy Communion for *forty years*. Henry Moule, Vicar of Fordington in Dorset, described to the diarist the manner of administration of Communion there before he arrived; the vicar, the sexton and the parish clerk would sit at the altar with a flagon of wine and a loaf of bread while the vicar read the Prayer Book service as hurriedly as possible. When the moment for the consumption of Christ's Body and Blood came, the sexton raised the flagon and toasted the vicar, 'To your very good health, Sir'. The clerk, rather more religiously literate than the sexton, took the flagon for his turn, and said solemnly, 'to the very good health of our Lord Jesus Christ'. One cleric gave up arranging for the font to be filled with water for baptisms, and, when called upon to administer that sacrament, commonly spat into his hand and wiped the child with that. What the Puritans had failed to achieve with zeal and fury, the Church of England had managed for itself through complacency and neglect.

William Hogarth's famous print 'The Sleepy Congregation' satirizes the dreary length of 18th-century Anglican services – as well as the unspiritual concerns of the parish clerk ogling the girl on the right

Of course, these were the few most dreadful and sacrilegious instances of decay; and historians have lately (as they tend to do) emphasised the other side of the story, the places where worship continued to be seemly and clergy were devoted. But they have to spin gold from straw to make much of a case. None of it was what Cranmer and the Reformers had intended; in fact, they would have been horrified to see the Anglican Church becoming, in the name of Protestantism, increasingly non-sacramental. More frequent and more devout reception of Communion had been their aim, but over time it seemed that to remove the Mass's supernatural power was to rob it of its point: the one was inseparable from the other.

High Churchmen active in the Church's cause could be found, but High Churchmen active in the cause of the Kingdom were rare birds. William Jones, 'Jones of Nayland' was one: he diligently cared for his country parishes, lastly Nayland in Suffolk, and in 1756 published *The Catholic Doctrine of the Holy Trinity* in an effort to defend Christian thought from its foes. The writer Samuel Johnson, the great dictionary-

compiler, listened for the voice of his Lord throughout his life: outwardly an irascible, curmudgeonly Tory who railed against Methodists and enemies of the Church, in private he filled his diary with deeply-felt prayers and anguished deprecations for his sins, sometimes spent months preparing to take Communion and then didn't go through with it out of some feeling of unworthiness, and exasperated his friends with his generosity towards all manner of spongers, wastrels and fools.

People in Anglo-Catholic churches used to be taught that the Church of England languished entirely in this dreadful state until the Tractarians arrived in the 1830s and shook it all up. Of course, in history nothing ever arrives completely out of the blue. The rise of Methodism, despite all the contempt, hostility and occasionally mob violence which most of the Anglican clergy tried to throw at it (though not all – Dr Horne, the High Church Bishop of Norwich, was happy for Wesley to preach in his diocese), showed that the Church of England had to change if it was not going to collapse completely. Not only this, but the French Revolution in the early 1790s demonstrated the terrible consequences that might follow if a Church and State became too remote from the people they governed. Bishops began to realise that action had to be taken, churches tidied up, standards of clerical education raised, and new ways found of reaching out to people who were simply untouched by what the Church had to say.

St John's Church, Hackney, in 1830

And not only bishops. Around the church of St John, Hackney, a group began to form which had a profound influence. Part of the great strength of the Evangelical movement, driven by contact with the Methodists, was its ability to organise, to found societies and structures to argue for and carry out its principles; now a High Church equivalent came into being. The Rector of St John's for over forty years, John Watson, had a brother Joshua, a man of Catholic Anglican principles and huge energy. The group that formed around him and his activities – including, as well as the Watson brothers, HH Norris (curate and then Rector of South Hackney); Edward Churton (schoolmaster in Hackney and John Watson's curate), and others - became known as the Hackney Phalanx, in imitation of its Evangelical equivalent, the Clapham Sect. In 1811 Watson set up the 'National Society for the Education of the Poor in the Principles of the Established Church', later the biggest school organisation in the country, and three years later retired from business to devote himself entirely to Church work. He never missed a meeting of the National Society; nor of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, nor the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, in both of which he held senior positions. In 1817 he set up the Incorporated Church Building Society, and persuaded the Prime Minister to sponsor the Church Building Act a year later, equipped with £1 ½ million for new churches. 1828 saw him helping to found King's College, London. In 1834, as alarm grew that the Church of England might be disestablished, Watson drew up and circulated a petition to the Archbishop of Canterbury against any such idea, which

eventually numbered 230,000 signatures. The Additional Curates Society, to help fund more clergy, was set up in 1837, and in the 1840s Watson helped establish, and run, St Augustine's College, Canterbury, the first Anglican missionary college. The poet William Wordsworth suggested that the one of the prayers in the Litany should be altered to read 'For all Bishops, Priests, Deacons, and Joshua Watson'!

Throughout Joshua Watson's time of great activity, the Church was gradually reforming itself, even where the bishops were slowcoaches in the matter. Bishop Bathurst of Norwich was no zealous reformer, but in two of his remote Norfolk deaneries, Waxham and Repps, there were stirrings of better things as the 18th century turned into the 19th. In 1794 only one church held two services on a Sunday, 47 had one, and 24 were shut on at least some Sundays completely; by 1834 these figures had changed to 9, 60 and 2 respectively. In 1794 only five churches had over 15 communicants; but by 1834 twenty had over thirty at a time, and seven welcomed more than fifty souls to the Holy Table.

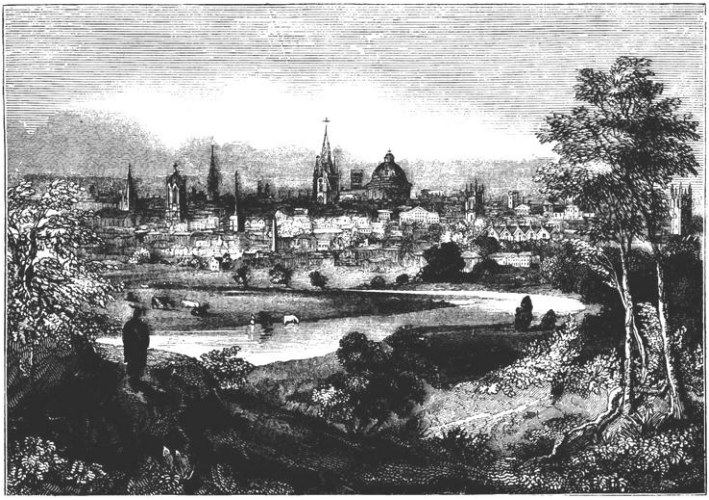
But the Church's efforts at reform were a slow business in an impatient age. The really decisive step was taken with the establishment of the Ecclesiastical Commission in 1836, including the active if inconsistent High Churchman Bishop Blomfield of London ('Until Blomfield arrives', remarked the Archbishop of Canterbury, 'We all sit and mend our pens and talk about the weather'), and which tackled such thorny problems as tithes, clerical incomes, and cathedral establishments. But the mood in the late 1820s and early 1830s was still black for the Church of England: to radicals, the old settlement, the compact between the State and the Church, looked irrational, prejudiced, self-serving, and inefficient, and had to go. The Test and Corporation Acts, which barred Nonconformists from public office, were abolished in 1828; the following year, Roman Catholics were freed from civil disadvantages too. The French monarchy fell in 1830, and was replaced by a government with a very secular, reforming tone about it. An anonymous *Extraordinary Black Book* was published in 1831 listing the supposed (and exaggerated) fantastic wealth enjoyed by the bishops and clergy – when the Bishop of Bristol's palace was burned down during the national agitation for the Great Reform Bill, for most ordinary people the scent of ash was decidedly satisfactory. The General Election which followed the passage of the Bill reinforced the Whig government, and it seemed the Tories would be out of power forever (in fact they were back in three years). Nobody knew what would happen next. As William Van Mildert, the last Prince-Bishop of Durham and the successor of Dr

Buildings in Bristol, including the Bishop's Palace, burn during the 1831 Reform Bill Riots

Cosin, an associate of the Hackney Phalanx, sat in the House of Lords in 1832 listening disdainfully to the deist Lord Brougham speaking as Lord Chancellor, he began doodling. He discovered that, by listing the names of the members of the new Cabinet and taking one letter from each, he could make up the word REVOLUTION. He wasn't alone in having such thoughts: they were being thought in Oxford, too.

The Church had to be defended. But *why?* What really set Anglican Christianity apart from the Methodists, the Baptists, or anybody else, more than the fact that it happened to be in charge? On what principles, exactly, did the Church of England rest?

4. Revolution by Reaction: the Oxford Movement, 1833-1845



Oxford from the Abingdon road, 1845

14th July 1833: the University of Oxford gathers in St Mary's, the University Church, to hear the Professor of Poetry, John Keble, curate of Fairford, preach the annual Assize Sermon. The text is 1 Samuel 12.23, *Moreover as for me, God forbid that I should sin against the Lord by ceasing to pray for you: but I will teach you the good and the right way.* Somehow from that Keble arrives at an open assault on the Whig Government's policy towards the Anglican Church of Ireland, and by the time he descends from the pulpit of St Mary's, a spark has been well and truly struck.

Top-heavy with bishops whose sees were inherited from the Middle Ages, yet attracting the support of only a tiny minority of the Irish population, to the eyes of rationalist reformers the Irish Church was crying out for reorganisation, and the Government proposed amalgamating many of the small old bishoprics together to form larger units – four archbishoprics down to two, and eighteen sees down to twelve. It made administrative, economical sense. But it was reform carried out in the teeth of opposition from the Church itself. The Irish Church had no say in what the Government proposed to do to it; and this came only four years after Roman Catholicism had been officially liberated from its covert existence. Mr Prynne, MP for Cambridge, stated that the clergy were 'public functionaries, as much as the judge or the Minister of State'. To old-fashioned High Churchmen, as Keble thought himself, it was the act of an infidel Government which did not scruple, not only to abandon its bounden duty to support the Anglican Church, but even to dismiss its bishops, the successors of the Apostles chosen by Jesus Christ. In September, at the instigation of JH Newman, the Vicar of St Mary's, the first of the *Tracts for the Times* appeared, beginning an intelligent defence of the doctrine of the Apostolic Succession which had gone round and round in High Church circles for decades, moving no further.

This was no different from the arguments High Churchpeople had got themselves into since the days of Dr Sacheverell: the battle-cry was for the defence of the Church of England against its enemies, the defence of its privileges and rights, defence of the

Establishment. But the Oxford agitators came to believe that more was needed. The Church as it stood was not all right: it needed to be *transformed* as well as *defended*. And what would transform it was *holiness*. Newman called for it from the pulpit of St Mary's. Edward Pusey, Regius Professor of Hebrew and Canon of Christ Church, wrote a *Tract* on the virtue of fasting, which had hardly been on the agenda of 18th-century Anglican Catholics, and preached at St Mary's too. Keble supported them from his rural parish. If the Church was to be transformed by holiness, argued these 'Tractarians', that holiness could only come from a deep and vivid awareness of Jesus Christ's presence and power in his Church and its sacraments. More than the Tracts themselves, more than pamphlets and publicity, more even than their great learning, it was Newman and Pusey's preaching, with their emphasis on the spiritual power of emotion and the visible sacramental worship of the Church, that both set them apart from the High Church tradition of the previous 150 years, and influenced thousands in Oxford and beyond.

But this was going to mean trouble. It was all very well for the 'Oxford malignants', as Thomas Arnold, the great liberal churchman and Master of Rugby called them, to argue for the Apostolic Succession and the primacy of Anglicanism over other ways of being a Christian. But to stress again and again Jesus's active, powerful presence in the rites and ceremonies of the Church sounded suspiciously like the teachings of Roman Catholicism, the Roman Catholicism that had been hated and vilified in England for three centuries. It sounded like superstition, medievalism, priestcraft. Bishops like Blomfield who were inclined to think well of the Tractarians began to defend them a little nervously, and scour their publications for hints of forbidden ideas. And if their friends were doing that, so surely were their enemies.

Richard Hurrell Froude, like Newman a Fellow of Oriel College, was part of the original Tractarian circle, and a close friend of the Vicar of the University Church. In 1836 he died of consumption and, as a memorial to their friend, the other Tractarians decided to publish edited extracts from his private journal. Two years after Froude's death, these presented to the reading public – part of which was avidly waiting for the Tractarians to reveal themselves as crypto-Papists – an Anglican who fasted dramatically, wore hair shirts, slept on bare boards on occasion, and praised devotion to the Virgin Mary and celibacy for the clergy. His strictures against Rome and support for 'the ancient Church of England [by which] one means Charles I and the Non-jurors' were ignored beside such statements as 'really I hate the Reformers more and more' and a friend's description of him as a 'Protestant' being 'a base calumny'. This assault upon all the shibboleths which the Protestant section of the Church had been brought up to regard as sacred aroused horror and condemnation, and the number of Establishment figures prepared to stand up for the Oxford crowd diminished accordingly. In the House of Lords, no less, Lord Morpeth denounced

> *A sect of damnable and detestable heretics of late sprung up in Oxford, a sect which evidently affects Popery, and merits the heartiest condemnation of all true Christians.*

And it began to seem as though he had a point. At the height of his influence, Newman began to worry about the legitimacy and authority of the Church of England. He had young associates like Frederick Oakeley and William Ward of Balliol College, pushing him on the matter. The trouble was, Rome had sheer *size* on its side. If the Holy Spirit truly guided the true Church, how had Rome ended up so powerful and Canterbury so puny in comparison? The question fretted Newman and gave him stomach-aches. In 1841 he penned the last *Tract for the Times*, Tract 90, which examined the foundational doctrinal statement of the Church of England, the 39

Articles of Religion, and declared them, in a fatal phrase lifted from Roman Catholic apologetics, 'patient of a Catholic interpretation', and in general agreement with the 16th-century Counter-reformation Council of Trent. There was a storm of protest. Hebdomadal Council, the University's governing body, condemned the Tract, and the Bishop of Oxford ordered Newman to silence.

There was now a sense that events were moving towards a conclusion. The Tractarians continued their work of preaching and publication, and their popularity among Oxford undergraduates was undimmed. The *Library of the Fathers*, a set of English translations of early Christian classics, was making a great contribution to Anglican scholarship under Pusey and Keble's supervision. But in May 1843 Pusey preached at Christ Church a sermon later published as *The Holy Eucharist a Comfort to the Penitent*, whose doctrine of the Real Presence was open and pronounced enough for the University to condemn him and suspend him from preaching for two years, even though Pusey endlessly argued that he was saying nothing that he had not been taught from the Prayer Book as a child. In September Newman preached his last sermon at his chapel in Littlemore 'On the Parting of the Ways', took off his academic hood, and lay it on the altar rails; the following month he resigned as Vicar of St Mary's Church. The *coup de grâce* came as a result of William Ward's book, *The Ideal of a Christian Church*. As far as its author was concerned, the Church of Rome was clearly the 'ideal' and the Anglicanism which he served as a priest a sorry substitute. Enraged and egged on by Establishment opinion, the University summoned Convocation, its highest court, proposing to condemn the book, strip Ward of his degrees, and, as an additional nasty slap, to condemn Tract 90 even though its author no longer held any University position. On a wintry day in February 1845 Convocation gathered in the Sheldonian Theatre. Ward was condemned, but the two Proctors, the University's disciplinary officials, vetoed the savaging of Tract 90, while Ward himself was carried through the snow back to Balliol by cheering undergraduates. It took another eight months before Newman felt able to take his own final step. A month after Ward and a little before Oakeley, he was received into 'what I believe to be' (he wrote to his sister) 'the One Fold of the Redeemer', the Church of Rome.

So a little Oxford drama reached its end. But if the enemies of the Catholic movement in Anglicanism were tempted to look with satisfaction on the way events had turned out, it mattered little. Too many people had heard Newman's sermons, read the Tracts or the other publications, and had their imaginations fired by them, for the story to come even to a temporary halt there. Greater forces were astir than had been seen in English religion since John Wesley rode his pony round the lanes, perhaps since the Revolution – perhaps, even, since an English King decided he wanted a divorce. The Tractarians had announced the news that Jesus lived in his Church and its sacraments. That news was too astounding, too transforming, to sink quickly back into oblivion.

The generation who had heard Newman and Pusey preach were now in a position to begin taking on responsibility for churches of their own. Among the earliest were Bryan King, who became rector of St George's-in-the-East, Wapping, in 1842; and WJE Bennett, who arrived at the new church of St Paul's, Knightsbridge, in 1843. George Prynne was incumbent at St Peter's, Plymouth, another new church, from 1845 although the building itself was not consecrated until five years later. That same year, Walter Hook, the old-fashioned High Church Vicar of Leeds, and Dr Pusey, organised the construction of a mission church, St Saviour, to serve part of the gigantic parish of Leeds which thronged with people yet had no Anglican church provision at all. The Bishop refused point-blank to allow it to be dedicated to the Holy Cross (a favourite Anglican Catholic title in the early days), and objected to several of Pusey's plans for its ornamentation – even though a less fussy and frivolous person than the stern

Regius Professor could hardly be imagined. Still, St Saviour's was to set the tone for the battles that would bedevil the Anglican Catholic movement for the next half-century.



The Tractarian triumvirate. Pusey (in a sketch by his daughter), Newman, and Keble

5. The Means of Holiness: 1839-1865

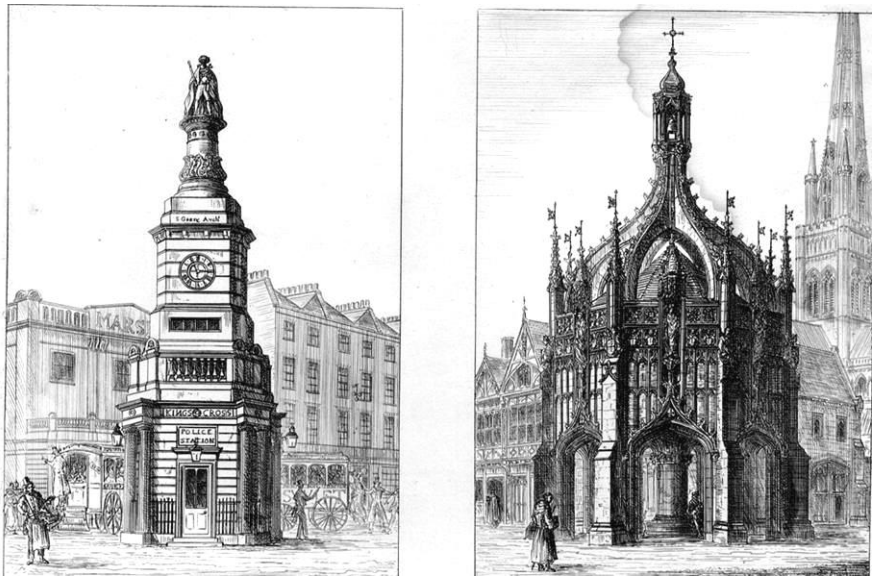
The Tractarians had brought down the wrath of the Protestant party within the Church of England for teaching what they thought were no more than the doctrines clearly written into the Book of Common Prayer, but the implications of those teachings for what actually went on in church buildings, or what they looked like, was not their concern at all. 'We have too much to do to keep sound doctrine to go into the question of dresses', sniffed Dr Pusey, well aware that there were certain clergy in the Tractarian circle who were keen to do just that.

The trouble was that the supernatural doctrine of the Church and the Sacraments that the Tractarians were encouraging did have its logical reflection in the posture and dress of the priest and the decoration of the church, to mark the holy events as extraordinary, near-miraculous works of grace. Evangelical observers made a point of criticising Newman in Oxford for his 'unprescribed bowings, approachings, and retirings, very much after the Romish manner': it was as though he was unconsciously adopting a certain way of performing services, quite without trying, as a result of what he sincerely believed was happening in them.

The origin of what came to be called 'Ritualism' lies not with the Tractarians, nor even with its Cambridge enthusiasts who we will discuss soon, but with a Roman Catholic jobbing architect's son called Augustus Pugin. Pugin, a greatly enthusiastic and not a little eccentric man, became convinced as he began his architectural career that styles of building had moral implications, and actually affected the way people thought. In 1836 he published a book called *Contrasts*, which took a variety of institutions – schools, hospitals, churches, even a public water-pump – and juxtaposed a modern, Classical-style example of each with its medieval Gothic equivalent. Each illustration built up Pugin's argument that an age of Christian faith and charity had been succeeded by a rationalist epoch of public efficiency and harsh treatment of the poor, each connected to its own artistic style. Thus, the arched medieval water-conduit was topped with a Christian cross and open to all to use; the modern pump was locked, fenced, and guarded by a parish constable beating off children with a truncheon. Gothic, declared Pugin, was the only properly Christian style of art and architecture – at least in England. It was a highly romantic view of the Middle Ages, but one which chimed in rather well with the Oxford Movement's ideas.

Having gone into near-complete eclipse, Gothic was already enjoying a modest revival among serious architects. Many of the churches constructed under the 1818 Church Building Act were Gothic in style, so people were increasingly familiar with and accepting of it. Gothic had a comforting, old-fashioned, 'English' feel to it that conjured up all sorts of romantic and appealing associations. Pugin, however, made it into an evangelical system: architecture as an instrument of saving souls and changing society. Nor did he confine his interest to buildings. As the first of the great omnicompetent artist-designers, when Pugin went out to construct a church, he commonly supplied not just a plan of the building, but its fittings, decoration, plate, and even vestments. Every detail had to conform to his ideal of Gothic Christianity, or the mission would fail. 'Sir', he once upbraided a Roman Catholic bishop dressed in shabby vestments, 'How can you stand and pray for the conversion of England wearing a cope like that?'

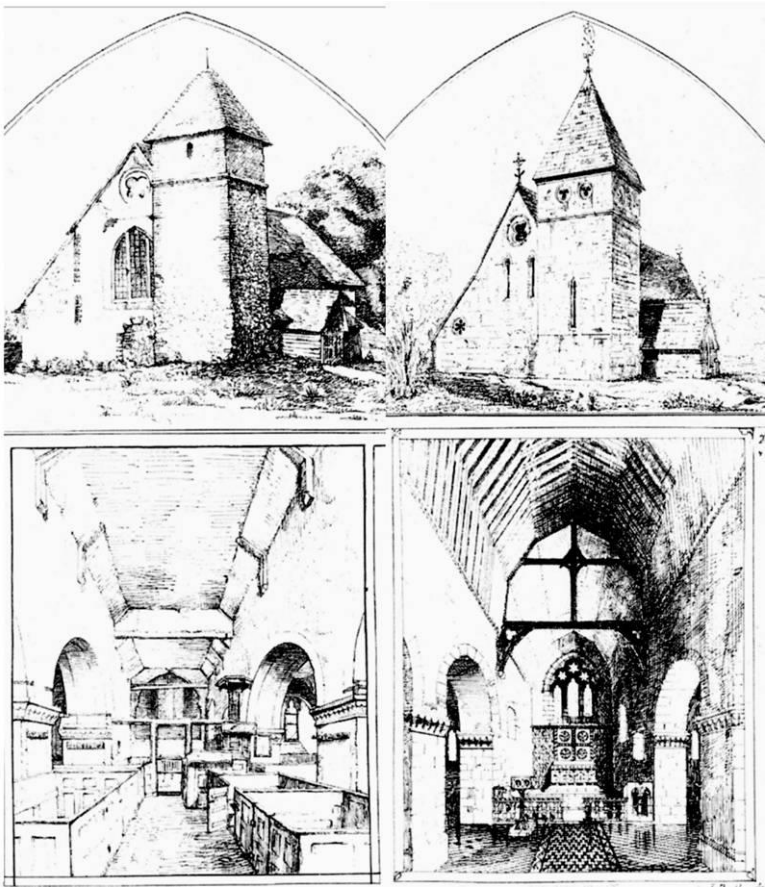
'It is clear to me', wrote John Mason Neale to his student friend Benjamin Webb, 'that the Tractarian writers missed one great principle – namely, the influence of



'Contrasted crosses' from Pugin's Contrasts. *This is architecture as an attack on the culture and religion of a whole society. The modern 'cross' – King's Cross in Soho, in fact – houses a police station and is topped by a statue of the monarch. The imagined medieval cross is a physical declaration of the supremacy of God; the real, modern one is a monument to earthly power and authority*

aesthetics'. Neale, a young don at Downing College, Cambridge, and like Newman the son of a strong Evangelical household, observed the Oxford Movement from a distance, entirely approved of it, and conceived a startling idea. If what the Church of England needed to restore it to holiness was a greater awareness of its continuity with the Catholic past, then, as well as the internal matters of doctrine and teaching, the *externals* of buildings and ceremonies should reflect that too. The two, the intellectual and the sensual, would reinforce each other. This was Puginism in an Anglican context. In fact, when Neale founded the Cambridge Camden Society together with Webb and Alexander Beresford-Hope in 1839, Pugin designed its seal. The name recalled the 16th-century antiquarian writer William Camden, and the society, unlike the doctrinal antics of the Oxford campaigners, secured a good deal of Establishment support because it could be presented in the relatively harmless light of rescuing churches from dereliction and neglect: it was only later when it was clear what Neale's business really was that he became unacceptably offensive. Within four years, the Camden Society had 700 members, and as its patrons two archbishops, sixteen bishops, numerous cathedral deans, thirty-one members of the House of Lords, and ten leading architects. Its journal, *The Ecclesiologist*, packed with learned articles about churches, what they looked like and what they *should* look like, first appeared in 1841 and swiftly became very influential. The journal didn't shy away from the magic word 'Catholic' – but when praising a new church for conforming to its principles, it usually described it as 'perfectly *Catholick'*, that final 'k' creating a lovely romantic antiquarian impression that disguised the radical nature of what the 'Ecclesiologists' were trying to achieve. Nevertheless, not everyone was fooled; when

Neale attempted to obtain a curacy at St Nicolas, Guildford, Bishop Sumner of Winchester refused to license him.



The 'restoration' of St James's Church, Bicknor, Kent, in 1858. This restoration is nothing to do with saving a ruinous or derelict building, and all to do with refashioning it to conform to a preconceived idea of what it ought to look like. Outside, it means heightening the roofs and inserting quatrefoil and lancet windows; inside, it means removing the ceiling, all 18th-century fittings, raising the chancel, and covering everything in tiles!

The Ecclesiologists built new churches, and campaigned to restore old ones. There was a lot of imagination involved in both activities. In 1877 the magazine *Fun* printed a delightful cartoon of a pompous Ecclesiological architect inspecting together with a clergyman the ruined stump of a pillar. 'Not enough to restore from?' he scoffs. 'Bless you, I've restored a whole cathedral from a chip of pavement'. This was a fantasy of the Gothic Middle Ages, a 'merrie England' of faith and community, which was being constructed in stone and glass just as more and more of the *real* England was being chewed up by the dirty, uncontrolled development of the Industrial Revolution. The wave of 'restoration' swept across the country in the middle decades of the 19th

century, and it was a remote area indeed that remained unaffected, though local factors such as the availability of money and the opinions of the clergyman came into play. The Camden Society's branches, or local diocesan architectural societies, gave architects, patrons and clergy the chance to meet and exchange ideas. The movement became so successful that it spread far beyond Anglicans of a Catholic turn of mind; plenty of Evangelical vicars also rebuilt their churches, and even the Methodists and other Nonconformists began building Gothic chapels too. By the latter years of the century, except among some radical architects, Gothic had become the default style for any Christian building. At first, because of Pugin's insistence that all decoration had to follow function alone, and a suspicion of late-medieval Gothic which was much too redolent, for Anglican taste, of Masses for the Dead, cults of saints, and Papal power, that meant specifically fourteenth-century, 'Decorated' Gothic. Only late in the century did church builders shake free of that straitjacket.[2]

So much for buildings. But the Ecclesiological campaign went further, though most of those swept along by it would not swallow the whole programme. That was based on a mysterious and much contested instruction buried away in the Book of Common Prayer before the Order for Morning Prayer. It became known as the Ornaments Rubric:

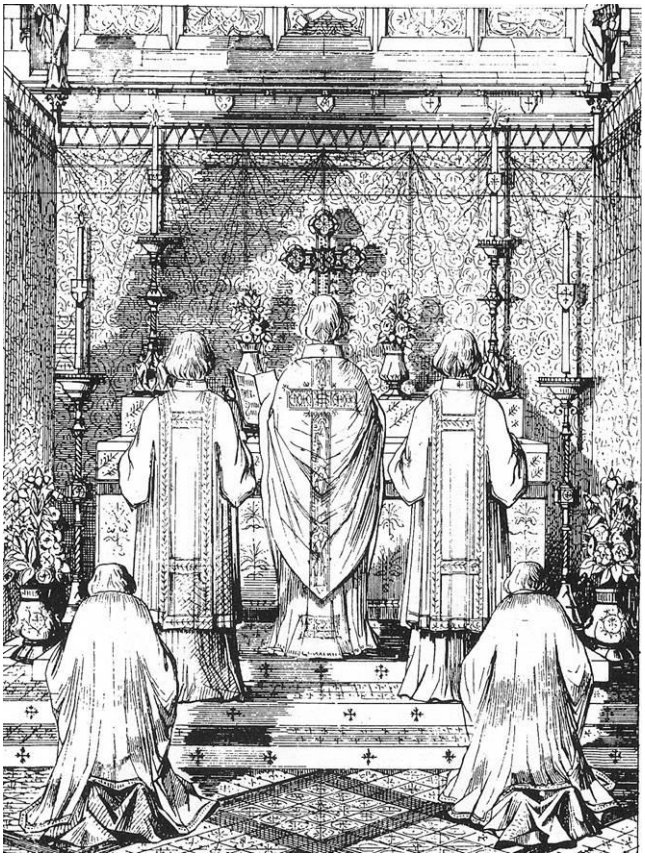
> *Such Ornaments of the Church, and of the Ministers thereof at all times of their Ministration, shall be retained, and be in use, as were in this Church of England by the Authority of Parliament, in the Second Year of the Reign of King Edward the Sixth.*

Taken literally, that meant that vestments, candles, incense, and many other 'Catholic' trappings, were not only *legal* in the Anglican Church, but actually *required by law*. Of course, not everyone agreed that the Rubric should be taken literally. But it was the cornerstone of the case of the early Ritualists, who believed that the law was on their side as they re-introduced into English churches things not seen in three hundred years – even to the point of defying their bishops to do so.

The slow re-awakening of the Anglican Church to its own liturgy had begun in the days even before Keble preached the Assize Sermon. Charles Lloyd, Professor of Divinity at Oxford from 1827, had been Preacher at Lincoln's Inn, and experiencing Roman Catholic worship at the Sardinian Embassy Chapel nearby had made him interested in liturgical study. At Oxford he lectured on the medieval origins of the Prayer Book – lectures attended by Pusey, Froude, Oakeley, and JR Bloxam, who was to become Newman's curate at Littlemore. Imaginations were captured, especially Bloxam's, and he proudly boasted that he was the first priest in Oxford to wear a coloured stole and put candles on the altar. William Palmer published some of Lloyd's researches (and his own) as *Origines Liturgicae, or, Antiquities of the English Ritual*, in 1832, and Bloxam's work of collecting liturgical bits and pieces emerged ten years later as *A Book of Fragments*. In the meantime, Bloxam's Roman Catholic acquaintance Daniel Rock had produced *Hierurgia: or the Sacrifice of the Mass* (1833), which reflected two years of research in the libraries and catacombs of Rome on the practices of the early Church as well as of the Middle Ages. Later to be the Bishop of Exeter's chaplain, William Maskell published *Ancient Liturgy of the Church of England,* the first scholarly account of the medieval rites of the English Church, in 1844, and in 1848 the Ecclesiologists finished their own *Hierurgia Anglicana*, which demonstrated the continuity of many medieval church customs through and beyond the chaos of the 16th century.

> *Let us* [wrote the authors] *endeavour to restore everywhere amongst us the Daily Prayers, and (at the least) weekly Communion; the proper Eucharistic vestments, lighted and vested altars, the ancient tones of Prayer and Praise, frequent Offertories, and the meet celebration of Fasts and Festivals.*

The process culminated in 1858 with the *Directorium Anglicanum*, a triumphant statement of restored medieval Christianity based on the supposed orders of the Ornaments Rubric. It was written by John Purchas, who as Vicar of St James's, Brighton, would be expelled from his parish for ritual crimes, and it laid down instructions for Anglican ceremonial, the dress of priests and servers, and the arrangement of churches, with a precision the Vatican could envy. It named, described, and even illustrated, an Anglican Solemn High Mass, complete with priest, deacon, subdeacon and acolytes. This was far further than many Anglican Catholics were prepared to go, or thought it was prudent to go: but it was the farthest point that the Ritualists could take the Prayer Book in the direction of the Gothic Middle Ages.



'The Holy Communion', from the Directorium Anglicanum. *The 1662 Prayer Book rite given the 'restoration' treatment, and Gothicized out of all recognition*

In 1849 the opportunity arose for the Ecclesiologists to champion their own flagship church, one which could embody all their principles. There had been a Tractarian congregation worshipping at a chapel in Margaret Street, London, for some years (Frederick Oakeley looked after it while still an Anglican), and they agreed the Ecclesiologists could use the site for their model church. Alexander Beresford-Hope employed the devout William Butterfield – whose own studio was 'a secular monastery' – as architect, and onto the cramped 100 foot-square plot he crammed a towering church, parish rooms, and a four-storey vicarage. Building took ten years and cost £70,000, roughly ten times the usual figure for constructing a church at the time. The new All Saints Church was not only built in the approved High Decorated Gothic style, but was smothered in coloured tiles, elaborate fittings, marble and brass. It was designed for, and became the centre of, *Directorium Anglicanum* worship, and developed a most unusual congregation (as it still has): GE Street, another Anglo-Catholic architect, was a churchwarden, and GF Bodley worshipped there too.

Gothic had a certain sort of ritual logic encoded within it. Accept that the medieval Church was the model of Christian society, and that the basic function of a church building was not to keep people dry while they listened to a sermon, but to contain and stage the Eucharist, you were then likely, for instance, to prefer a church with a nice long chancel to emphasise the mystery and grandeur of the sacrament. But that meant the minister was removed far away from the congregation. Dr Hook solved that problem in 1841 by introducing a robed choir to sit in the chancel of his Leeds church, giving people something to look at as well as enhancing the beauty and dignity of the service. Soon Tractarian clergy across the country were struggling to get rid of the ramshackle parish bands who accompanied the service in the west gallery of the church, and replace them with an organ and a good disciplined choir. Eventually such choirs would be singing, in the main, hymns and service music printed in *Hymns Ancient & Modern*. That book came out of a conversation in a railway carriage in 1858 between the Rev William Denton, who had composed *The Church Hymnal* in 1853, and Francis Murray, Vicar of Chislehurst. Murray's former curate George Cosby White, who was now at St Barnabas, Pimlico, was brought in, and Henry Baker, Vicar of Monkland, became overall editor. Neale provided a significant proportion of the hymns and translations of ancient sequences and chants. Despite being so obviously a Tractarian book, *Hymns A&M* soon supplanted most of the other hymnbooks available, and by the 1890s seven Anglican churches in every ten were using it.

Robed choirs were one visible sign that the Church had a separate and special identity and divine mission. Another was the special colleges for training the clergy, rather than relying on the ancient Universities to turn young chaps into 'gentlemen' and expecting nothing more than that. The oldest were St Bees College, founded in 1816, and St David's College, Lampeter, which dates from 1822. By 1865 (counting the Scottish, Welsh and missionary colleges) there were 15; by the end of the century there were 38. Several of the early ones had a Tractarian tinge, including Chichester (1839) and Cuddesdon (1854); and St Augustine's College, Canterbury (1848), was founded in a splendidly Ecclesiological way by Beresford-Hope, who bought the ruins of St Augustine's Abbey in the city and employed Butterfield to restore some of the buildings as a missionary college: the aged Joshua Watson helped to raise some of the money. This all reflected an attempt to shake the Church free from secular power and impress upon it an awareness of its own identity as Christ's Body. The campaign against rented pews was part of the same movement: taking cash for pew space kept the poor out of church, and emasculated clergy in their mission of preaching justice and charity. 'Erastianism', fulminated the Tractarians. Neale's first act on taking over the curacy of Crawley in Sussex was to 'restore' the pews in his church - with an axe.

This intense activity to restore beauty and holiness to the Church was all very well; but Ritualists were convinced ritual was not only *right*, but that it would *work* too, in the sense of being able to communicate the truths of Christianity to those the Church had never managed to reach in a way that the standard dry, unemotional Anglican services were incapable of. And the missionary experience helped to drive Catholic development forward. For example, St Saviour's, Leeds, and St Peter's, Plymouth, independently of one another, both began a daily Eucharist, and 'reserving' the sacrament to communicate the sick, during the cholera epidemics of 1849-50. The liturgy at St Saviour's, which could be quite bizarre and experimental, was driven by a determination to adorn the bare ceremonies of the Prayer Book with colour, drama, and excitement, at a time when there were no instructions as to how to do it 'properly'. The church spearheaded the first parish mission in the Church of England in 1854. One of St Saviour's curates, Richard Twigg, moved to St James, Wednesbury, in 1856, and was censured by the Bishop of Lichfield not only for putting a cross and candles on the altar of his church, but also for holding prayer groups in the homes of working families in the parish. His own curates carried the message to churches round about, such as Willenhall and Tividale, and Twigg gained the soubriquet of 'Apostle of the Black Country'. George Howard Wilkinson, later Bishop of Truro, held missions and huge preaching meetings at St Peter's, Eaton Square, which stood fair comparison with any of John Wesley's efforts. Fr Stallard of Brixham in Devon took to a 'boat church' to bring the Word to his parishioners at work on the trawlers!

New churches like St Peter's London Docks did not have to compromise with the past, but had a sense of drama and grandeur built-in from the start

But the model for Anglican Catholic mission came not from Leeds, nor from Wednesbury, but from London. St Barnabas, Pimlico, was a daughter church of St Paul Knightsbridge, where the Tractarian WJE Bennett was Vicar. It was situated in the poor southern half of Knightsbridge parish, and within months of its consecration in 1850 was the centre of conflict over decoration and ritual as a result of which Bennett was eventually forced to leave. St Barnabas had a rather more advanced liturgical style

than the parish church, and the team of curates who staffed it were adamant in its defence – not only because they liked that kind of thing themselves, but because the inhabitants of that rough district apparently did too. They turned up in many hundreds to services, made confessions, and took Communion. Once, when the senior curate, James Skinner, in obedience to Bishop Blomfield, said the service rather than sang it, the congregation insisted on singing the responses back. The church not only set up lots of services, so that the locals who led such disrupted lives could attend worship at *some* time, but also a plethora of charitable institutions using money wrung out of the wealthier districts further north. The clergy lived and prayed together. Charles Lowder, who had worked in rural Somerset and Gloucestershire, joined the team at St Barnabas in 1851. When he left five years later to run two similar mission churches, dependent on St George's-in-the-East in the same way that St Barnabas was dependent on St Paul's, he transplanted the entire system, ritual, clergy house, charities and all. But he added something of his own.

A view of Fr Lowder as friend of the poor, in a window by Margaret Rope at St Peter's London Docks, 1940s

It began with a silly indiscretion on Lowder's part. The great opponent of the clergy at St Paul's, the ardent Protestant Mr Westerton, who was constantly besieging Blomfield with complaints about the worship in his parish church, was standing as churchwarden in 1853 and employed a sandwich-board man to walk the streets of the parish. Lowder gave his own 11-year-old cousin sixpence to buy some rotten eggs and pelt the unfortunate placard-bearer (though some accounts maintain this was to stop young Lowder using stones). He was arraigned before Westminster Magistrates' Court for assault, and the bishop suspended him for 6 weeks! Lowder used the time, in the spring of 1854, to go to France, where he stayed in a Roman Catholic boys' school in Yvetôt and happened to read Louis Abelly's *Life of St Vincent de Paul*. St Vincent's 17th-century France, with its ignorant people and negligent clergy, was not so very different from 19th-century England, reflected Lowder. What worked then could work now. Lowder returned from his enforced holiday determined to found an Anglican parallel to St Vincent's 'Priests of the Congregation of Mission', and early in 1855, together with 5 like-minded London curates, did so. They called themselves the Society of the Holy Cross, the 'Societas Sanctae Crucis', or SSC, and devoted themselves to the three aims of helping priests to live more holy lives, establishing missions, and defending Catholic practice. SSC clergy were supposed to meet, pray for each other, and observe a rule of life governing private prayer, self-examination and conduct. Those who took the 'White Rule' – as Lowder did – also embraced celibacy, daily Communion, fasting, and meditation. Over the following decades the SSC would become the hard-core of the Anglican Catholic movement. It championed not only ritual but also mission, confession, retreats, and very many other practices the Church of England now takes for granted as normal, and provided a vital support network for Catholic clergy. Another element in the programme thus slotted into place, as well as more provocative external signals: Lowder was the first Anglican priest to be referred to habitually as 'Father', and to take up wearing that party badge, the biretta.

Although Pimlico and London Docks grabbed the attention of the Protestant party, it was in Neale's establishment at East Grinstead that 'the full sacramental system' was revived – albeit for a limited time. He became Warden of the run-down local almshouses, Sackville College, in 1846, and set about sorting the institution out. That inevitably included sorting out the chapel, which was soon fitted with open benches instead of pews, a rood screen, cross and candles on the altar, and a coloured altar frontal. Bishop Gilbert of Chichester was outraged at Neale's 'debasing the minds of the poor people with his spiritual haberdashery', and took him to the Court of Arches to ban him from celebrating Communion – a strange action, to save the people by denying them the sacraments. In 1851 the College residents petitioned the bishop begging him to reverse the decision, but Gilbert remained adamant. Neale could at least preach, and his *Sermons Delivered at Sackville College* eventually filled three volumes.

Neale plunged himself into work – a history of the Orthodox Church (which many Anglicans barely knew existed), children's books, writing hymns – and founding an order of Sisters. The first two members of the Sisterhood of St Margaret, intended to care for the sick and dying and to look after girls' education, took vows in 1854, and in 1856 the community took over a house near Sackville College. In their chapel, Neale could do what he liked regardless of the Bishop of Chichester, and that meant wearing the full Eucharistic vestments, reservation of the Blessed Sacrament, and finally, in 1858, a service of Benediction – ceremonial blessing with the reserved Host. It was not until fifty years later that the few most advanced Anglican Catholic churches began to hold Benediction, and not until nearly a century had gone by would it be allowed to pass without comment. It was also a service which owed its form, at least, to 17th-century Roman Catholic practice – there was nothing to justify it in the Prayer Book, and much in Anglican theology to condemn it. Here, far earlier than anywhere else, the Catholic revolution had already advanced as far as it could go; even if it was covert, secret, hidden away in the chapel of a small order of nuns.

The Sisterhood of St Margaret was far from the first religious order in the Anglican Church. Froude advocated forming them, Newman reported a movement in their favour, and in 1841 Pusey recommended to him 'a young lady … purposing to take a vow of holy celibacy … You will know her by her being dressed in white with an ivory cross'. This was Marian Hughes, later to lead the Society of the Holy Trinity. An unnamed society of Sisters of Mercy was dedicated in 1845. The forceful Vicar of St Thomas, Oxford, Thomas Chamberlain, began the Community of St Thomas the Martyr in 1847; thereafter new Orders appeared annually, that of St Mary the Virgin at Wantage, of the Holy Trinity at Plymouth, the Holy Trinity in Oxford, of All Saints at Margaret Street, and of St John the Baptist at Clewer. Some of these sisterhoods arose at the instigation of the local priest (Chamberlain in Oxford, Butler at Wantage, Carter at Clewer), while others owed their existence to a determined woman (Lydia Sellon in Plymouth), but in all cases the main focus was on doing needful work in the parish. At Clewer Thomas Carter founded a 'house of mercy' for prostitutes, and the sisters became 'the only practicable instrument' to run it. The dreadful lack of basic services and, in many places, the

Monastic pioneers: Harriett Monsell, first Mother Superior of the Clewer Sisters

collapse of old-fashioned organised charity, meant there was plenty to do, and the sisterhoods provided an avenue for active women to do more than devote themselves to needlework. By the end of the century there were 90 orders of Anglican nuns, and 10,000 women were, or had been, under vows. All the most advanced Anglo-Catholic parishes had them; in 1857, for instance, Lowder invited Neale's sister Elizabeth and two other women to Wapping to set up the Community of the Holy Cross.

Men's orders were slower to be organised. There was an abortive Brotherhood of St James at Tamworth in 1855, led by Edward Steere who later became Bishop of Zanzibar. Then in 1862 the strange Joseph Lyne, an SSC member who had served as a curate with Prynne and Lowder, took vows with two companions under the rule of St Benedict at Claydon in Suffolk. He also took the religious name Ignatius of Jesus. His little Benedictine community later ended up near Llanthony in Wales, symbolically reviving that ancient monastery. But Ignatius was a better preacher than an organiser of monastic life – he popularised the religious ideal through his speaking tours and mission work, but his community never really got off the ground; its leader was both too trusting and too ill-tempered, and the brothers constantly broke up and regathered.

Far more abiding was an experiment in Oxford; and it is here that we find the final element of the Anglican Catholic programme put in place. In 1850 Richard Meux Benson became Vicar of Cowley, a rural parish east of the city. He had thoughts of mission work overseas, but Bishop Wilberforce of Oxford persuaded him that the growth of the new suburbs into his parish should be his own mission field. Deeply austere, reserved, and quiet, Benson conceived the notion of an order of mission priests who would devote themselves to preaching and educational work; and on St John's Day 1865 he and two friends took vows in what became the Society of St John the Evangelist – the 'Cowley Fathers'. Benson was not a man short of funds, and was able to construct a Mission House on Marston Street, a mission church of St John, schools and homes, and lastly the Church of SS Mary & John along the Cowley Road. Eventually the SSJE, though it never numbered much more than 50 or so brothers, became a powerful spiritual force in the Church of England at home and abroad. It reflected the devout but stern spirit of its founder. The story went that on Easter Sunday morning, as a festal treat, the brothers would gather in the Chapter House at Cowley, and the Superior-General would present each one with a wine gum!

Monastic pioneers: Fr Benson as Vicar of Cowley, pre-SSJE

By 1865, then, within the supposedly-Protestant Church of England could be found Gothic church buildings, medieval decoration, a manual telling priests how to celebrate Solemn High Mass according to the rite of 1662, monks, nuns, confession, increasing ritual, retreats, the invocation of saints, societies dedicated to promoting all these things, and, however covertly, the most Catholic observance of all, Benediction with the Blessed Sacrament. The whole system, as Neale described it, was in place. But the whole system was yet to be accepted. The whole system, in fact, was quite capable of arousing a visceral repulsion that edged into rage, hysteria, frenzy, and, at times, violence.

6. The Mass in Masquerade: the battle for acceptance, 1845-1929

In 1850, Fanny, wife of Francis Murray the Vicar of Chislehurst, died after giving birth to the couple's second son, and the following year Francis – later a member of the SSC and leading figure in the early days of the Catholic Revival – put up a stone cross above Fanny's grave. It stood alone among the headstones and table-tombs in St Nicholas's churchyard, and is one of earliest graveyard crosses in England, if not the earliest. Very soon after its erection it was broken down, Francis sadly recorded, 'in the mistaken anti-zeal of some one person'. He left it for a while before repairing it, 'and broken it told for more good even than when it was whole'.

It's difficult at this distance for most people outside Liverpool, Belfast and Glasgow to appreciate the power and depth of anti-Catholicism among the English people of the mid-19th century. But understand it we must if we are to tell the story of Anglican Catholicism properly. Because the Catholic party in the Church of England eventually won most of its case, that story is usually presented as the gradual victory of Catholic ideas and practices won against unreasoning bigotry and hatred. Yet the opposition didn't arise from nowhere, and it had a coherent ideology of its own.

The execution of Archbishop Cranmer, from Foxe's Booke of Martyrs

By the mid-1800s, English people had undergone nearly three centuries of religious conditioning, learning to associate Roman Catholicism with everything un-English and objectionable. The English Church had emerged from the flames of the Reformation: John Foxe's book *Acts and Monuments*, 'Foxe's Book of Martyrs' as it was known, had never gone out of print since its publication in 1563: *its* story was the triumph of English Protestantism over the fanaticism and violence of the Roman oppressors. So much of subsequent history seemed to confirm that initial experience of Protestant England effectively standing alone against the power of Rome, yet at every turn threatened by treachery within: the Gunpowder Plot, the antics of Laud and Charles I, the would-be tyranny of James II. The official Prayer Book observance of November 5th annually offered thanks to God for England's deliverance from Catholicism and tyranny, and encouraged English Protestants to stay on the look-out for future backsliding by monarchs and bishops. Catholicism, from this distant viewpoint, was a

united religious and political system. Its clerical representatives kept their people in thrall by discouraging them from reading the Scriptures in their own languages, by prying into their lives through confession, by generating a religious machine which interposed itself between them and their God, by mystical superstition and idolatry dressed up in Christian language; and that rendered people unable to challenge their absolutist Catholic rulers. Through the providence of God, England had been saved that. England had won its freedom from religious superstition and absolute monarchy by blood and fire.

Catholicism was a religion of the cowed and beaten, a religion for weaklings and cowards, not freeborn Englishmen. There was something indescribably horrible about its drama and emotionalism, its intimacy and histrionics. The English are usually accused of being an anti-intellectual race, but part of English disgust at Catholicism was that it emphasised its worshippers' dependency and childlikeness at the expense of the rational will and intellect. True heirs of the great 4th-century British heretic Pelagius, English Christians, by and large, did not want to be reminded that they were dependent on God. They wanted to imagine themselves as upright, capable, manly, *making a decision* to be righteous and good, rather than needing morbid and effeminate mechanisms like confession. Even the Methodists confined emotionalism to the moment of conversion, and then celebrating it. Bishop Gilbert said it all in his angry letter to JM Neale inhibiting him from his priestly functions. He prayed that God would open Neale's eyes to

> *the dishonour done to Him by supposing that His spiritual service can be promoted by presenting to the eyes and thoughts of worshippers the frippery with which you have transformed the simplicity of the chapel of Sackville College into an imitation of the degrading superstitions of an erroneous Church.*

In 1866 *The Times* printed a coruscating editorial against the liturgy of St Alban's, Holborn, in even more extreme terms:

> *These gorgeous and flaunting dresses and candles, and odours, and gesticulations, have in them something almost revolting to an English stomach … They are a relic of less civilised times … To introduce these gilded adornments would in any other profession be despicable childishness; around the solemn realities of religion it is simply revolting to a reverent mind.*

One of the more high-minded expressions of anti-Catholicism came not from an Anglican, but from the great Baptist preacher, CH Spurgeon, who preached against 'Puseyite idolatry' in 1866:

> *The noblest part of our nature is still the least exercised. Humbly to tremble before God, to confess sin before him, to believe him, to love him - this is spiritual worship! Because this is so hard, men say, 'No, no, let me crawl on my knees around a shrine! Let me kneel down before a pyx…' That is quite easy but the hard part of religion is spiritual worship.*

He could respond perfectly well to the sensual appeal of Ritualist services, said Spurgeon on another occasion, but in the end they were just 'pretty spectacles for silly young ladies and sillier men to gaze upon … There is nothing for me here, there is no more nourishment for the spirit in all this than there is food.' The *use* of the senses to

envision God was beyond his understanding; in a way, it seemed like cheating, like avoiding the *hard* work which could only be done with the intellect and the reason.[3]

After the Reformation, most English people could go through their lives never meeting a Roman Catholic. Roman Catholicism shrank into the reserves of a few noble houses whose families had never relinquished the old religion – like Pugin's patrons, the Talbot Earls of Shrewsbury – and their tenantry; scatterings of peasants in Wales or the Highlands of Scotland; knots of itinerant Irish labourers; the handful of chapels of foreign embassies in London. Newman himself described the impressions of his own upbringing:

> [There might be] *An old-fashioned house of gloomy appearance, closed in with high walls, with an iron gate and yews, and the report attaching to it that 'Roman Catholics' lived there; but who they were, or what they did, or what was meant by calling them 'Roman Catholics', no one could tell – though it had an unpleasant sound, and told of form and superstition.*

In so far as people had any information about Catholics and what they did, it came from a mixture of Foxe, the Gunpowder Plot, and Gothic novels like *The Monk* or *The Italian* in which wicked priests moved through the dark shadows of Italian or Spanish monasteries about evil deeds, and held mysterious power over (especially women) penitents by means of the confessional. As late as 1892 Charlotte Mew published 'A White Night', a story in which tourists observe a horrible ritual taking place at a secretive Spanish abbey.

Resulting prejudice could be quite amusing in its way. Pugin was once travelling in a railway carriage with a quiet lady and began silently saying his morning prayers. At the conclusion of his office he crossed himself, whereupon his horrified fellow-traveller shouted that he was a Roman Catholic and demanded to be moved to another carriage. Less funny were the riots and disturbances that regularly cost life in the cause of defending Protestant England. The Gordon Riots of 1780, raised by Lord George Gordon and his Protestant Association to force the repeal of the Catholic Relief Act of 1778, were the worst disturbance. Parliament was stormed, Newgate and the Fleet prisons largely destroyed, Catholic churches and homes attacked, and the Government fully lost control of London for five days; order was only restored by the Army with the loss of 285 lives. The worst : but not the last. 'No Popery' remained a cry which could rouse passions and cause deaths.

In fact, anti-Catholicism had reasons to intensify as the 19th century wore on. In 1814 that sinister byword for Roman secrecy and skulduggery, the Jesuit order, which had been suppressed in most Catholic countries, was restored. In 1850 Pope Pius IX restored the Catholic hierarchy in England, sending English Catholics their own bishops for the first time in three hundred years; in the process he brutally but characteristically described the Church of England as 'the Anglican schism'. In 1871 the First Vatican Council declared the Pope infallible under certain circumstances. Over the whole period the face of Catholicism in England was transformed by the arrival of tens of thousands of Irish immigrants; and English people in general regarded the Irish as something less than human.

None of this made life any easier for those Anglicans attempting to restore a sense of Catholic order and dignity to their own Church. They had constantly to be on the defensive, endlessly justifying their ideas and practices, and perpetually apologising for defections to the *Other Side*. They were portrayed as traitors to their Church and

Fr Arthur Tooth, one of the priests prosecuted under the Public Worship Regulation Act, arraigned at the door of his church by Archbishop Tait. In this cartoon Tooth is dressed exactly like a Roman Catholic priest, and has a rosary and set of Papal cross-keys dangling from his belt

national identity, as Jesuits in disguise, secretly leading the free, Protestant Church of England and its unwitting folk into oppression and slavery. Dr Close, the Vicar of Cheltenham, even preached, as the Cambridge Camden Society's campaign gathered pace in the late 1830s, that 'the restoration of churches means the restoration of Popery'. Such fears look ludicrous now. But they help to explain the convulsive horror and disgust the Anglican Catholic revival aroused in so many people, and why someone might consider that to go out at dead of night and smash down a cross in a Chislehurst graveyard was to strike a blow in defence of Protestant England.

There were two aspects to the Anglican Catholic campaign; doctrine (the Church and the Sacraments) and the style of worship that expressed it. Typically, more attention was directed against the latter than the former: it's always easier to galvanise oneself to oppose symbols rather than ideas which require argument instead of visceral reaction. The attempts to trammel the thought of the Church of England were utterly ineffective; the attempts to control its ritual actually backfired. Each notorious case of repression or prosecution, rather than cowing the Catholics, instead exposed the compromised nature of the Anglican Establishment which they wanted to change, and provoked wider and wider support for them. At the same time, the whole notion of Britain as a 'confessional state' dedicated to the support of one form of Christianity, or of any religious system at all, was fast eroding, and by the end of the 1920s its inner contradictions were unsustainable. The triumph of Anglican Catholicism entailed, often to the surprise of the Catholics themselves, the hollowing-out of the Anglican Establishment until all that was left was a gorgeously-apparelled shell.

But this is to run ahead. At first, the liturgical developments of the Movement were very moderate, and amounted to wearing the surplice, setting up choirs and robing them, and other such mild innovation. The more sympathetic bishops were much in favour of this because it would make worship more 'seemly' and orderly: but there was an ominous response to their own efforts. Bishop Phillpotts of Exeter ordered his clergy to wear the surplice when preaching, and there were riots in the city; two years later, in 1842, Bishop Blomfield attempted the same in London, and a good number of Evangelical clergy refused point-blank. Even George Prynne's new alms-bags in his

Plymouth church were denounced as 'Judas bags' by the *Plymouth Herald*. It didn't take much to rouse the cry of 'no-Popery'.

The earliest thoroughgoing Ritualist church was Pusey and Hook's foundation of St Saviour's, Leeds. Soon even Hook was describing it as 'a semi-popish colony … an affliction and a curse' within his parish. There was little Protestant agitation against it, but it had an ominously unlucky start which did nothing to allay anyone's fears. Three of St Saviour's curates seceded to Rome in 1847, the Vicar resigned and the last curate was dismissed. The new Vicar, AP Forbes, lasted only four months before being made Bishop of Brechin. Four years later, all the clergy with the exception of one curate 'Poped' after the Gorham Judgement. At St Saviour's, the choir and clergy assembled in the chancel, vested in surplices, and when it came to sing the Litany moved to the nave and knelt around a faldstool for this penitential rite. Easter 1848 brought red hangings in the church and a white altar frontal. That year, too, St Saviour's printed its own hymnbook and began a Midnight Communion at Christmas. For baptisms, which usually took place at Evensong, the choir processed to the font while boy servers carried a silver-gilt shell and candles, and sang the Nunc Dimittis after the rite, to moving effect. Worshippers had never seen anything like this in an Anglican church – not surprisingly, because the clergy were perforce making it all up, designing as impressive a liturgy as they could manage within the confines of the Prayer Book. The church already had Mass vestments, but refrained from using them for 12 years.

Gradually, church after church began experimenting and pushing the envelope of the Ornaments Rubric, beginning with such modest arrangements as St Saviour's tried; and church after church experienced problems as a result. How unpopular the Ritualists really were, however, is to this day unclear. The protestors who forced Bennett from Knightsbridge were, the Movement's apologists always believed, rent-a-mobs who themselves cared nothing for the issues involved, rounded up from the local pubs by Protestant agitators. Certainly Bryan King claimed that the rioters who forced the closure of St George's-in-the-East in 1860 and drove him out were paid roughs, and had told him as much. The chief opposition to Lowder's mission in London Docks – at least at first – were not Protestants at all but the Irish who saw it as pseudo-Catholic and a threat to their own religion. The Church Association, founded in 1863 to oppose Ritualism and Catholic teaching in the Church of England, was a genuinely popular organisation, but often found it remarkably difficult to oppose Ritualist priests, through lack of support on the ground. In Cheltenham, for instance, the Association was very active, but when it came to prosecute John Edwards of St Mary's, Prestbury, for wearing vestments, the only complainant they could find was one Mr Combe; and as he was not resident in the parish of Prestbury, but was in fact renting a pew in one of Cheltenham's Nonconformist chapels, the Court of Arches dropped the case in 1875.

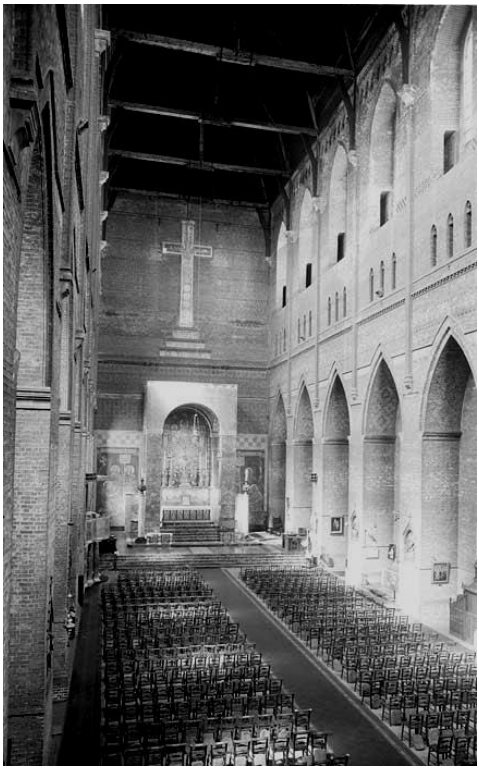
Occasionally Catholic congregations could give as good as they got. Fr John Going of St Paul's Lorrimore Square had by 1869 already replaced Mattins as the main Sunday service with 'High Mass'. When he had to resign, worn out, in 1880, his congregation petitioned Bishop Thorold of Rochester, the patron, to appoint another Ritualist. The bishop was having none of it, and came to the church to announce the name of the new vicar and to warn the congregation that 'whatever is illegal in the ritual of this church will have to be discontinued'. His sermon was interrupted with groans and catcalls, but he refused to take the hint and had to be hustled to the vicarage after the service finished. Finally, the bishop was driven away in his carriage amid a hail of stones from enraged parishioners.

In fact, it seems that most churches that ended up with Ritualist worship were getting what they wanted. The great pioneering Anglo-Catholic churches were often missions set up in areas that had no older church (as were St Saviour's Leeds, St Peter's Plymouth, St Peter's London Docks, St Barnabas' Pimlico, St John's Cowley, and so on); or, alternatively, churches founded by clergy or groups of laypeople who were convinced by the Tractarian case and wanted a church to safeguard Catholic teaching. In such places there was no established lay presence to make a fuss about what the vicar was up to, or else the laypeople were in favour of it from the first. Where a Ritualist took over an old church, like Francis Murray at Chislehurst, or John Edwards at Prestbury, he tended to proceed very cautiously, not introducing new ceremonies or observances before preparing the ground very carefully with sermons and teaching, sometimes for years beforehand. Thomas Chamberlain brought in vestments at St Thomas the Martyr, Oxford, in 1852, and incense in 1855 – the first Anglican church to use it – and nobody batted an eyelid there: the thing that most agitated his parishioners was the disturbance to their pew rights when Chamberlain re-ordered the church.

This meant, very often, that Anglican Catholic churches were not the great missionary centres that later mythology painted them. They were founded as party establishments, to serve a particular interest; and many Victorian churches owe their origins to this process, which the Evangelicals pursued as enthusiastically as the Catholics did. In Chislehurst, for instance, Francis Murray's chief lay opponent, the vociferous Lord Sydney, got fed up with fruitless complaints to the bishop about the Rector's Popish teaching, and set up his own church, Christ Church, in a growing area of the parish, in 1872 - Lady Sydney laid the foundation stone. Two years earlier, Murray had opened 'the Church of the Annunciation to the Blessed Virgin Mary' – the very title was a red rag to the Low Church bull – at the *other* end of the parish and in 1875, to protect Catholic teaching there, had it made a parish in its own right, with the patronage vested in Keble College, Oxford, quite a common way of keeping a new Catholic church 'sound'.

Looking at the history of Anglo-Catholic churches we find a mixture of clergy and lay initiative. Examples of the former include St Benedict's Ardwick, St Barnabas' Beckenham, St Hilda's Leeds (Pusey paid for that church), St Stephen's Lewisham, St Agnes' Kennington, St Silas' Pentonville, St Mary's Swanley, and St Barnabas' Tunbridge Wells. St Augustine's South Kensington owed its origins to Richard Chope who, ironically enough considering later history, was curate at Holy Trinity, Brompton, and established a Ritualist congregation in a shed in his back garden in 1865. Some of his flock appealed to the Church Commissioners for their own church, and demanded Chope as the first incumbent. Bishop Tait remarked that there were plenty of churches in the area already, and refused: it was not until he went to Canterbury in 1869 that St Augustine's got going. That was a Keble College church, too.

The most famous clerical church-founder was the prolific Arthur Wagner of Brighton. His own father was Vicar of Brighton for 46 years. The family was not without a penny or two, and Wagner senior paid for the new parish church of St Peter which opened in 1824, and for St Paul's, which he intended his son to serve. Under Wagner Junior St Paul's became 'perhaps the most fashionable and well-filled church on the South Coast' – and also one of the most controversial, especially after the Constance Kent affair (for which see below). By the 1880s Wagner's empire of churches, all largely or wholly paid for by him, included SS Mary & Mary Magdalene's, Bread Street; the Resurrection; the Annunciation; St Martin's, Lewes Road (a memorial to his father); St Mary's, Buxted (built for his Sisterhood of St Mary); and most grandly of all, the colossal St Bartholomew's, Ann Street, which cost £18,000 to build.



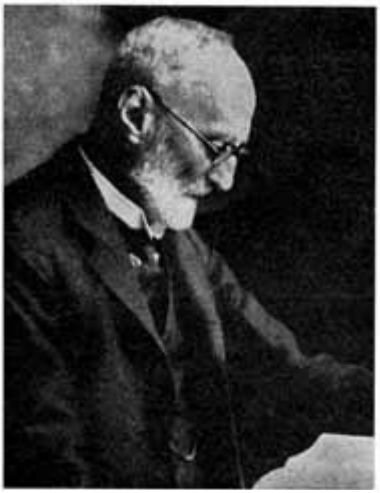
The tremendous basilicate interior of St Bartholomew's, Brighton, the grandest of Fr Wagner's churches and a sort of theatre for the drama of Catholic Anglican worship

Churches founded as a result of lay efforts included St Peter's Streatham; St Saviour's, Shanklin; St Dunstan's, Cranford Park; St Bartholomew's, Ipswich; St Michael's, Exeter; St Mary Magdalene's, Enfield; and St Michael's, Croydon. At St Luke's, Kingston, the donors in 1889 included Lady Wolverton and the Duchess of Teck, while at the other end of the social scale a mission congregation itself raised the funds that led to the building of St Mary Magdalene's, Sunderland, in 1908. St Barnabas', Jericho in Oxford can stand for them all. Here the organising genius was Thomas Combe, proprietor of the University Press, and his wife Martha, both zealous Tractarians. They were both patrons and supporters of Pre-Raphaelite artists – which could be seen as a natural bringing-together of ecclesiastical and artistic sorts of Romanticism. Combe enlisted Arthur Blomfield as architect and William Ward, though firmly within the Roman Catholic fold, gave the land. The extraordinary Venetian basilica consecrated in 1869 was as much the Combes's baby as it was Blomfield's.

Holy Trinity, Bath, had a particularly odd but very revealing story. It had been founded as a chapel in Walcot parish in 1822, and from the first had 2,100 free sittings, very unusual at the time; it continued as a very active church with a strong mission among the city's poor, becoming a parish in 1840. In 1864 a group of local residents under the leadership of one John Rainey formed a syndicate to buy the advowson of the church[4] to provide a secure home for Catholic teaching in Bath. Shocked, the local Evangelicals clubbed together and bought the advowson of the nearby St Saviour's. The Rector of Bath then persuaded the Vicar of Holy Trinity to have part of his parish

carved out for an Evangelical church, and so St Paul's was opened in 1874. Thus things remained until 1942, when Holy Trinity was destroyed by bombing; its congregation were finally allowed to use, and then took over – St Paul's, which is where they remain today.

And so the two great camps within the Church of England faced each other, each founding their own churches, their own groups and papers and societies, throughout the second half of the 19th century. The Evangelical Church Association was matched by the English Church Union, formed in 1859 (as the Church Protection Society) to defend Catholic clergy under attack for ritual or teaching. At the head of the Protestant camp stood the redoubtable Lord Shaftesbury, a devout and philanthropic man to whom Victorian England owed some of its most humanitarian legislation, but not a man who could easily appreciate anyone else's point of view. Facing Shaftesbury was Charles Wood, Lord Halifax, an aristocrat of such devotion that he contemplated joining the Cowley Fathers until Fr Benson talked him out of it. 'It is the Blessed Sacrament to which I owe everything', he wrote, 'I cannot imagine my life without it.' The chaplain at the family seat of Hickleton in Yorkshire found him in prayer before the Sacrament no matter how early the priest arrived, and sometimes he stayed for hours after Mass was over, wrapped in his cloak and in silent devotion. In Hickleton, Goldthorpe, and a string of other churches his family controlled, Halifax installed and championed the full Anglican Catholic system. He became Chairman of the ECU in 1869 and remained for five decades; there was barely an organisation or controversy concerning the Movement he played no part in. When Fr Tooth went to prison, Halifax resigned as Groom of the Bedchamber to the Prince of Wales, because he could no longer accept the law of the land. He lived until 1934, at 95 the seemingly-eternal embodiment of the Anglo-Catholic layman.



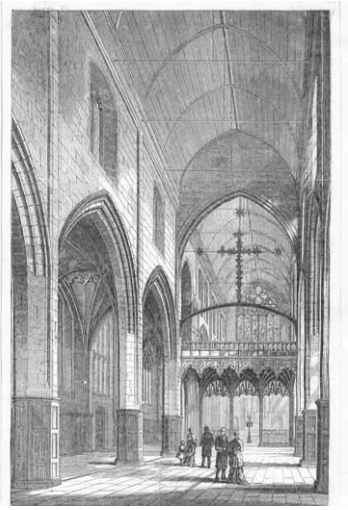
Viscount Halifax

Viscount Halifax

Despite the support of people like Halifax, Catholic Anglicans found it difficult to penetrate far into the Establishment. The defection of Newman, and of another generation of Tractarian leaders after the Gorham Judgement, tarnished the Movement badly, and earned the obloquy of bishops up and down the land. When in 1877 the Evangelical paper *The Rock* printed the membership list of the SSC, it was a matter of some importance because only three bishops would licence SSC priests to any of their churches. Apart from old Henry Phillpotts at Exeter, the only clearly Tractarian bishop was Walter Kerr Hamilton of Salisbury, who promoted retreats in his diocese, founded the Salisbury Theological College, and publicly defended the Real Presence and confession. Both bishops died in 1869. Prime Minister Gladstone, in the strange position of being a Catholic Anglican at the head of the largely Nonconformist Liberal Party, did make some more sympathetic appointments to the episcopal bench. Perhaps more important than those, he sent RW Church to St Paul's Cathedral as Dean in 1871 – Church had been one of the Proctors of Oxford University who had vetoed the condemnation of Tract 90 in 1845 – and gave him HP Liddon and Robert Gregory

as canons. In fact, the whole Chapter had helpfully died over the course of three years; the new one remodelled the worship of St Paul's on Tractarian lines, brought in John Stainer as Organist in 1872, and just as importantly could use the Dean & Chapter's powers of patronage to embed the Catholic movement in the London diocese, much to the discomfiture of its bishops. Gregory succeeded Church as Dean in 1890, and the work carried on. Other than those toeholds, it was a hard and lonely struggle.

After the dreadful scenes at St Paul's Lorrimore Square, Fr Going wrote to his former congregation asking them not to make trouble there, but to worship instead at St Agnes', Kennington, the church he had founded to ensure that his work was not completely lost; and so when the new Vicar of St Paul's took his first service, there were only five souls there to meet him. Lord Halifax had laid the first stone of St Agnes', and was one of its trustees along with HP Liddon, Edward (later Bishop) King, and Canon Brooke of St John the Divine, Kennington, another Ritualist church. Later, the vicarage foundation stone was laid by Canon Gregory of St Paul's Cathedral. *There* was a 'party' church if ever there was one; yet that was, in its founders' eyes, completely necessary.



St Agnes', Kennington, from The Builder *magazine, 1877 – a true Tractarian party church*

The Dean and Canons at St Paul's were part of a growing, though still small, Anglican Catholic establishment. Other elements included the two great memorials to the Movement's first leaders, Keble College (1870) and Pusey House, Oxford (1883). Keble was founded the year Oxford University ceased to demand that its undergraduates subscribe to Anglican formularies of belief; it stood out against such tendencies, which started out as non-denominational and ended up as secularist. Pusey House, in its Library and archives, was intended as the great powerhouse of Anglican Catholic thought, though it ended up showing all the tensions and ambiguities of the Movement at large. Out beyond Oxford, there were new devotional societies promoting key Catholic ideas and ways of doing things: the Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament (1862); the Guild of All Souls (1873); and the Guild of the Servants of the Sanctuary (1897). A whole separate Catholic culture was being generated.

Identity is forged in battle, and the Victorian Anglo-Catholic and Evangelical parties were no exception. The chain of disputes became part of the Movement's self-mythology, its list of martyrs, of unjust defeats and glorious victories. The Gorham affair came first. Bishop Phillpotts of Exeter was suspicious of CG Gorham, presented to the living of Brampford Speke, and after an interview declared he was 'unsound' on the doctrine of baptismal regeneration – the real forgiveness of 'original sin' through being baptised – and refused to licence him. The case went to the courts, and finally, in 1851, the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, having scrutinised the Prayer Book, decided that Gorham's near-Calvinist beliefs could be accommodated by the official doctrine of the Church of England. There were two reactions from the Catholic party. Most, like Dr Pusey, shrugged, decided that no secular court could determine what was or was not Anglican belief, and ignored the ruling; Phillpotts still refused to licence Gorham, and in the end Bishop Sumner of Winchester had to do it. A minority concluded instead that the Court had every right to take the view it had and that the Anglican Church was therefore irredeemably compromised; that group crossed the Tiber. It included two archdeacons, Robert Wilberforce of the East Riding – son of the anti-slavery campaigner William, and the Bishop of Oxford's brother – and Henry Manning of Chichester, who, like Newman, would end his days as a Roman Catholic cardinal.

Then Robert Liddell, Bennett's successor at St Paul's Knightsbridge, was taken to court for the church's stone altar with candles, the cross behind it, the frontals on it, the chancel screen in front of it, the credence table beside it, and other ritual matters. This time the Privy Council decided that all that was fully covered by the Ornaments Rubric. The Protestants fulminated, and the bishops felt distinctly awkward at telling Ritualists off for some years after that decision in 1857. Things went quiet for a while, helped by the fact that the Protestant and Catholic parties found something they could agree about – condemning the book *Essays and Reviews* in 1860. Its authors, mainly the newer sort of university don, had doubts about traditional interpretations of Scripture which neither party could stomach, and orthodox Anglicanism was convulsed into condemnatory fury. Lord Shaftesbury himself wrote to Pusey, 'Time, space and divergent opinions have separated us for many years … We will fight about these another day'.

But that other day came within a few years, by which time Ritualism had gone far beyond Mr Liddell's experiments at Knightsbridge. The Church Association began its long series of prosecutions against AH Mackonochie of St Alban's, Holborn in 1868, took WJE Bennett, now at Frome, before his Bishop for teaching the Real Presence that year, and in 1870 prosecuted John Purchas of St James', Brighton. The Privy Council found against Mackonochie and Purchas and in favour of Bennett.

The Purchas Judgement, delivered in 1871, caused outrage across the Catholic Movement as it seemed to state that the Ornaments Rubric did not mean what it said, that the ornaments of the churches and ministers should in fact *not* be what they very clearly had been in 1548-9. Liddon and Gregory wrote to the Bishop of London stating quite categorically that they would not be toeing the line – especially on facing east to consecrate the bread and wine – even in his own cathedral, and Dr Pusey, who had sniffed and snorted at Ritualism for years, began *adopting* the eastward position in protest at the Court's decision. The Church Union declared that all Catholic Anglican churches should be demanding *as a minimum* the 'Six Points' supposedly authorised by the Prayer Book – the eastward position, vestments, incense, unleavened bread, mixing wine and water, and candles on the altar. 'The court has forced us into being a party', declared Pusey.

David Tenniel's cartoon from Punch *showing the Bishop of Chichester trying to 'extinguish' Fr Purchas shows what much of the public thought about the Ritualists – Purchas is an 'insolent, rebellious boy' motivated by petulance and troublemaking*

From this point on, the bishops stopped criticising Ritualists for over-strict adherence to the law; instead their crime became not observing it strictly enough. Yet the entire business of charging Ritualists with 'lawlessness' in stepping beyond the provisions of the Prayer Book had a bogus element. The Prayer Book makes no provision for singing at its services, except an Anthem 'in Choirs and places where they sing', which certainly does not cover hymns sung by the congregation. In that sense, virtually every service held in every Anglican church by the middle of the century, except the very barest, stiffest, driest, most conservative rendering of Mattins or Evensong, was 'illegal' according to the supposedly-revered order of 1662. Nobody ever mentioned that. Instead, the Establishment acted to accommodate the Low Church clergy disobeying the letter of the Prayer Book by separating ante-communion as a legal service in its own right in 1872. It was true that, at their ordination, all Anglican clergy undertook to celebrate services only according to the law, but just as true that barely any of them were.

So in fact the Purchas Judgement only intensified the demand for ritual it was intended to suppress; and it intensified the opposition too. One morning in 1873 Archbishop Tait found the Church Association on his doorstep at Lambeth Palace with a 60,000-name petition, 'thirsting for the blood of the Ritualists'. At the same time the Queen was verbally boxing his ears with similar denunciations and demands that he do something. That something was to introduce into the House of Lords 'An Act for the Better Administration of the Laws respecting the Regulation of Public Worship'. There would be a special tribunal to judge ritual cases, the primate said, and that would speed the whole process up and show these recalcitrant Ritualists that they

Ritual advance in one church, St Edmund's Downham Market. The restoration of the 1870s installed a new altar and reordered chancel. Just before World War One the chancel screen and rood went in, a pattern common in a great many churches

simply couldn't thumb their noses at their bishops when they were told off. Only Bishop Wordsworth of Lincoln predicted that the whole thing would backfire. Lord Shaftesbury intervened and thanks to him the tribunal would not be led by the bishops but by a secular judge. The new Prime Minister, Disraeli, who cared not a whit for the issues involved, rose in the Commons to say that what he objected to was not Roman doctrines, but 'the Mass in masquerade'. And so, passed by Commons and Lords to great enthusiasm and bluster, the Public Worship Regulation Act came into being.

Here the Catholic Movement found its true martyrs. Mackonochie was prosecuted again in 1874, not deprived of his living until 1883, and finally died in the snows of Argyllshire on an ill-advised walk for his health's sake. He was immortalised in a typically awful ballad from William McGonagall. Frs Ridsdale of St Peter's, Folkestone, Tooth of St James', Hatcham, Dale of St Vedast's, Foster Lane, Enraght of Holy Trinity, Bordesley, Green of Miles Platting, and finally Cox of St Margaret's, Liverpool, all went to prison under the Act's provisions. 'Mr Tooth's sick face in that cage quite haunts me', confided Canon Liddon to his diary after a visit to the imprisoned clergyman. None of the prosecuted priests appeared before the court, refusing to recognise its authority in spiritual matters.

It was, all considered, the greatest boost the Ritualist movement could have wished for. The judges on Lord Penzance's tribunal could not agree what the Ornaments Rubric allowed and what it prohibited. Sometimes they upheld a practice, sometimes imposed conditions, sometimes rejected it. The whole approach was obviously and hopelessly compromised. And, in the end, what really counted was the ridiculous and shameful sight of hard-working priests going to prison for putting candles on altars.

There was one final prosecution. The Church Association dug out two churchwardens from Lincolnshire to bring an accusation against their Bishop, the saintly Edward King. In 1890, Archbishop Benson decided that, in fact, all the things the bishop was accused of doing, celebrating in the eastward position, ceremonially mixing water and

wine, and so on, were in fact allowed by the Ornaments Rubric, and, with stunning inconsistency, the Privy Council upheld him. The Church Association's campaign lay in tatters, and Ritualism had finally reached the bench of bishops itself.

Even the touchiest of all issues, confession, had lost its ability to enrage. In 1865, Fr Wagner of Brighton had got into water so hot over confession that he was beaten up in the street. Five years before, a young girl called Constance Kent had murdered her stepbrother, but was never charged because the crime could not confidently be pinned on anyone in her household. She eventually came into contact with Fr Wagner's parish Sisters, converted, and confessed her crime to him. She gave herself up to the police; but her admission of guilt alone was not enough to convict her, and Wagner refused to break the seal of the confessional by giving evidence himself. Brighton exploded – not just the priest was assaulted, but the nuns as well. Questions were asked in Parliament about the religious system in place at St Paul's church. The bishop was drawn into the controversy – but refused to discipline Wagner because, in his judgement, the Vicar of Brighton had done nothing contrary to the provisions of the Prayer Book. Confession nearly caused the destruction of the SSC in 1877 when a huge row blew up over a work called *The Priest in Absolution,* intended as a guide to confessors; naturally, a number of indelicate matters were mentioned as possible blights on the consciences of penitents. The press waved before Protestant England the spectacle of supposedly Anglican clergy sat salivating in confessional boxes worming lurid confessions out of (particularly) impressionable young women. In vain the SSC pleaded that the book was a means of avoiding precisely those abuses that the objectors were afraid of. The bishops called priests in to account for themselves, the Church Association raged, there was a mass of resignations from the SSC – including Francis Murray, who had been there almost from the beginning.

Yet by 1890 the opposition, while neither silenced nor convinced, had lost its heart for the battle. Against confession, against the doctrine of the Real Presence, against prayers for the dead, against all these Catholic beliefs and practices, voices could still be raised and pamphlets still penned, but the horrible experience of the PWR Act had drawn the sting from the anti-Catholic campaign. By 1890 Anglican churches had had fifty years of the Catholic revival, forty years of incense and vestments; there were nuns and monks and confessional boxes and Eucharistic hymns in English parishes, and yet Protestant England had not been brought bodily into the bondage of Rome. Those crude old fears had not been realised. Instead, in parish after parish, many of them – though not quite as many as the Catholics liked to think – some of the bitterest and most difficult in the land, thousands of souls who the older forms of Anglicanism had left untouched and unmoved had been brought to the Christian faith, shown God's love, made their confession, been baptised or confirmed, and had the Body and Blood of Christ at the centre of a renewed and transformed life.

Conflict had not been the model everywhere. In Eastbourne, for instance, the Evangelical Vicar, Thomas Pitman, overlooked the Puseyite tendencies of the Church of St Saviour founded by the Whelpton family to serve part of his parish – and those of his curate, Henry Whelpton, who looked after the church after it opened in 1865. In fact Pitman supported its charitable outreach work, though the ritual there stayed restrained until he died in 1890. In 1902 Whelpton was succeeded at St Saviour's by his son, also Henry, distinguished from his father only by beard, Benediction and biretta.

Robert Dolling came to the mission church of St Agatha's, Landport, in Portsmouth, in 1885, and stayed for eleven years. Fears about the problems his 'Catholic

Fr Henry Whelpton (the younger) of Eastbourne; and the great missioner Robert Dolling of Portsmouth

Evangelicalism' would cause in 'this very Protestant town' subsided in the face of his tremendous ability to draw the roughest and most disordered people into his flock, to say to them, as he put it, 'here is this Jesus', the God who loved them and wanted them to love him. Bishop Thorold, now at Winchester and Dolling's diocesan, was the same Bishop Thorold who had behaved so high-handedly to the congregation of St Paul's, Lorrimore Square. A dozen years after that débâcle, he wrote to Dolling

> *Your practice of habitual confession, prayers for the dead, vestments, are as alien as possible from my own ways and likings. But I pass this over, as if they did not exist, for your work's sake.*

What a humble admission from an Evangelical bishop – and what a sign of all that had happened in the interim. Bishop Thorold, and plenty of other Evangelicals, had grown to see that the style of worship and the decoration of churches didn't really matter that much. Far more important that people were brought to Christ, and so they were being, in places very obviously and very powerfully. Argument did not die off completely. In 1890 a London bookseller called John Kensit started the Protestant Truth Society to combat the errors of Catholicism in its Anglican or Roman varieties, with particular ire reserved for the former since, from Kensit's point of view, it was sailing under hypocritically false colours. Kensit, and after his death in 1902, his son, also John, caused a good deal of trouble for individual Anglo-Catholic churches, first in London and later around the country. Where they could find a local with a grudge, as in St Hilary, Cornwall, in the 1930s, the PTS could harry a priest into ill-health and resignation. But that was about all. Unpleasant as the 'Kensitites' could be, they were as a pinprick against an advancing elephant. Nowadays they stand around the lock-up in Walsingham village shouting slogans as the statue of the Virgin Mary is carried past on pilgrimage day, as much part of the fun and colour of the event as the procession itself.

* * * * *

New disagreements *among* Catholics were a sure sign that they had won their case. As far as many were concerned, by the time the Privy Council acquitted Bishop King, the battle for Anglican Catholicism was complete: the full programme of the *Directorium Anglicanum* could now be enacted in a church without much challenge. Such Anglicans were content with their 'Prayer Book Catholicism'. It was lawful, it was hallowed by romantic connections to the distant pious past, it was, above all, *English*. Others, like Robert Dolling or that great missioner Fr Stanton at St Alban's, Holborn, sat easy to the Prayer Book for evangelistic reasons, and raided contemporary Roman Catholic practice as well as copying the Methodists if those methods looked likely to win a few more souls. But they were not Romanisers by principle. Still others, however, were having doubts which would undermine their Anglican self-confidence and drive the programme further.

If the Reformation had, as Hurrell Froude had thought, been such a disaster, what would the Church in England have looked like had VIII never needed his divorce? If the forces of Protestant Reform had never, in fact, triumphed in England, would its clergy in the late 1800s *really* be wearing Gothic vestments and reciting the words of Archbishop Cranmer? Would they not, instead, look just like their contemporary Roman brethren? And at that moment those Roman brethren were becoming more 'continental' than ever before. The very *English* Roman Catholicism of Pugin, traditional, Gothic, and aristocratic, was fast being eclipsed by an aggressive, centralising, ultramontane ideology which wanted to erode all such local peculiarities and make them conform to everything Papal, monarchical, and southern European.

Anglo-Catholics who felt like that had an increasing sense of discomfort within the Church of England. The battles of the last forty or fifty years had been too bruising, too worrying. Yes, the Eucharist was celebrated more frequently in English churches, there was a growing self-awareness of what the Church really was, more Catholic externals appeared at every turn. But it all seemed so fragile. The bishops were not on-side, and they were in any case appointed by the Prime Minister who could be any stripe of Christian, or none at all. How to be sure? How to be certain that it would not all unravel, or that it was not just whistling in the dark of a ruined cathedral from which the Holy Spirit had long since fled?

These thoughts grew in the shadows for some while; then in 1896 there came the hammer-blow of *Apostolicae Curae*. For some years, Lord Halifax had been holding discussions with Roman Catholic dignitaries with the aim of nudging out of the Vatican some acceptance of the legitimacy of the Anglican Church. When the liberal-minded Pope Leo XIII finally published his encyclical letter, it was an utter rejection of those conversations. Anglican orders were null and void, the Pope declared. Under the influence of the most ultramontane party in the English Roman Catholic community, Leo accepted a whole set of stories and arguments designed to discredit the continuity of the English Church, such as the notorious Nag's Head yarn, which alleged that Anglican episcopacy had only survived because John Scory had met a group of prospective bishops in the Cheapside tavern of that name when Elizabeth came to the throne, had them kneel in front of him and touched them on the head with the Bible, commissioning them as bishops. Leo argued that because Anglican clergy did not receive a chalice when they were priested, they were not 'intending what the Church intends' when it ordains priests, and therefore were not priests at all, just men in funny clothes following forms of words. And so the matter was decided; at least as far as Rome was concerned. For some in the Anglican Catholic movement, *Apostolicae Curae* opened the door to a vague and ambiguous landscape which could not be closed again.

But for the moment, such troubling issues could be suppressed beneath the ceremonial differences which were uppermost in Catholic minds, as they often were. The victorious Catholic interpretation of the Book of Common Prayer used it as the basis for a sort of radical medievalism which now acquired more detail and depth. Central to this process was Walter Frere, a monk of the Community of the Resurrection at Mirfield and later Bishop of Truro. Frere was a dedicated liturgical scholar, and added to the literature on the medieval rites of the English Church a monumental study, *The Use of Sarum*, in 1898-1901. In 1902, together with HB Briggs, he published *A Manual of Plainsong* which adapted the 1662 offices and psalms to medieval chant tones. He was closely associated with the Alcuin Club, founded in 1897 to promote liturgical study 'in accordance with the rubrics of the Book of Common Prayer, strict observance to which is the guiding principle of the Club'.

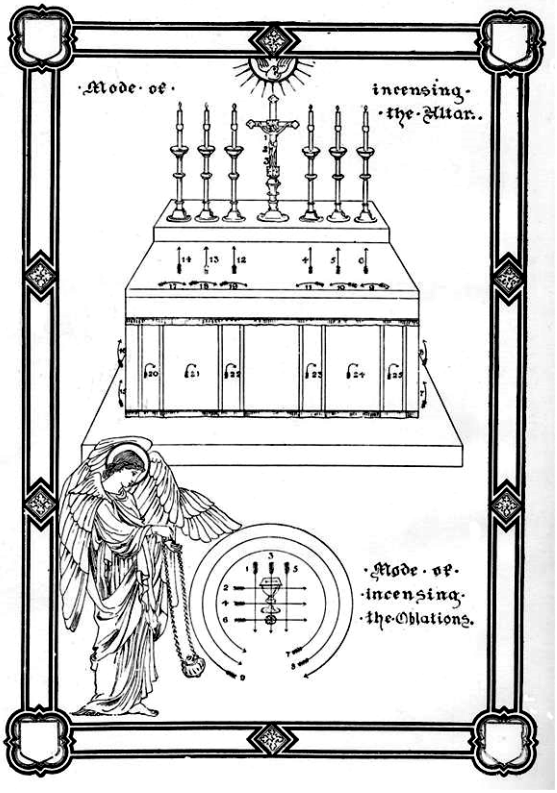
And so the full 'English Use' came into being: the Prayer Book dressed in medieval costume, sung to plainchant and John Merbecke's 16th-century settings, solemn celebrants in Gothic vestments, servers wearing medieval albs with embroidered apparel at neck and hem. In practice the rite was not always pure 1662, but augmented by bits from the Sarum Missal in the right places, such as the 'Benedictus' and 'Agnus Dei' which Cranmer had omitted, or perhaps rearranging the Prayer Book service so that it conformed a bit more closely to Catholic practice – by moving the Gloria away from its Cranmerian position at the end, for instance.

Percy Dearmer sporting the headgear whose revival he championed, the 'Canterbury Cap', a sort of soft version of the biretta. It caught on less than his other ideas

While Frere would rise to episcopal office, that was never in prospect for Percy Dearmer. Influenced by the Arts-and-Crafts Movement's belief that good design and popular art would develop the spiritual life of ordinary people, Dearmer made it his aim to raise the standards of worship. The wit he employed in doing so could both charm and irritate. He was a strange mixture of the practical and the hopelessly aesthetic: the advice in his *Parson's Handbook* of 1899 ranged from exactly how an altar should look, to keeping hymnbooks out of the hands of choirboys who would inevitably reduce them to scraps, to pastoral problems a priest might be expected to meet when sick-visiting. In 1906 Dearmer headed the team that produced the *English Hymnal*, which contained all the music a clergyman would need to celebrate the Mass according to the Sarum model, and in 1912 he helped to set up the Warham Guild to promote the styles of church furnishings and decoration he favoured. For under his general heading of combating 'the lamentable confusion, lawlessness and vulgarity which are conspicuous in the Church at the present time', Dearmer had a firm intent to promulgate the English Use as *the* lawful and proper rite of the Anglican Church, aghast at 'the advancing hordes

of the Rococo', the more Roman-inclined clergy. That was what he put into practice at the only church he ever looked after, St Mary's Primrose Hill, and that was what spread rapidly as a result of his work.[5]

The alternative to the 'English Use' was the 'Western Use'. For some while advanced Anglo-Catholic clergy had been following what they called the 'interpolated' rite, adding to the Prayer Book service bits and pieces raided from the Roman mass, and, in increasing numbers, bringing Baroque fittings over from Europe to add to the Roman atmosphere. They did this beautifully at places like St Mary's, Bourne Street, where a casual observer would *hear* pure 1662 but *see* a Roman service, punctuated by gaps where the priest was reciting some part of the Roman canon silently. This used to annoy Lord Halifax, a churchwarden at St Mary's, until he became too deaf to work out what was being spoken silently or out loud. In 1894 the Movement's house publisher, Mowbray's, brought out *Ritual Notes*, which was just as exhaustively detailed as anything Dearmer or the Alcuin Club produced – it included a lovely diagram showing how to cense an altar properly, which twirls to use when and in what direction – but took as its starting point not medieval Salisbury but nineteenth-century Rome. There was still an obligatory nod in the direction of the Prayer Book, 'to which English Catholics owe their first obedience', but after that the book's preface stated

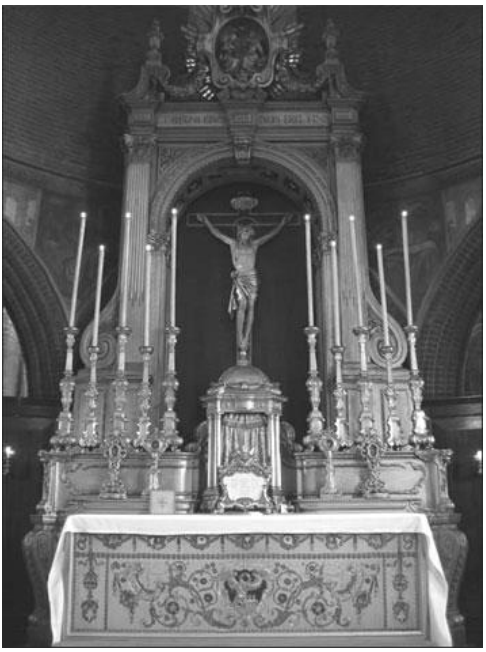


It is unnecessary … to enter upon any discussion as to the propriety of supplementing the somewhat meagre ritual directions of the Book of Common Prayer. Such an addition is recognised as an essential necessity by all who are desirous that the Services of the Church should be rendered with reverence and dignity, and that the yearly round of the Church's Seasons should be duly marked and observed.

The frontispiece of Ritual Notes, *anticipating Dearmer's* Parson's Handbook *by five years and to an extent provoking it. Possibly no liturgical manual has ever been so exhaustive, so proscriptive, and given clergy so much to do to learn it all. Note, not so much the picturesque angel, but the correctly Roman 'big six' candles on the altar. Dearmer insisted on only two*

But fully adopting the Sarum rite meant adopting its sequence of liturgical colours – blue in Lent and Advent, and red through most of the year – rather than those in use in most Roman Catholic churches. And what was true for colours was true for everything else. That, complained the authors, would be 'gratifying our insular prejudice' rather than using 'a living rite, which is the common form of worship enjoyed by more than one hundred and fifty millions of our fellow Catholics … and which is the result not merely of the studies of a few liturgical scholars, but of the combined experience of many thousands'. 'It seems', they went on, 'little less than an absurdity to prefer a dead and buried Use … which would put us out of harmony with the rest of the Western Church'.

Ritual Notes was concerned to celebrate the Prayer Book rites in a Roman manner; but as time went on that proved not to be enough. In 1923 *The English Missal* emerged from St Augustine's, South Kensington, and reversed the balance, laying out what was essentially the Roman Mass in English but with some familiar Cranmerian prayers and wording dropped in. A few churches could be found where the Roman Rite itself was used – very occasionally, and very covertly, in Latin. Adrian Fortescue's *Ceremonies of the Roman Rite* (1912) helped in those circumstances.



The High Altar of St Mary's, Bourne Street, as it appears today: Baroque fittings, Roman style, Cranmerian words

From the remarks in *Ritual Notes* it was clear how the two parties viewed one another. 'British Museum religion', the Westerners sneered at Percy Dearmer and his ilk. 'Mere congregationalism, and not Catholicism at all', reposted the Alcuin Club (in EGP Wyatt's *English or Roman Use?*, 1913). This may all seem very recondite, looking back. But beneath the quarrel over liturgical form was something very important which went to the heart of the Catholic movement.

The early Ritualists, and the proponents of the English Use, were convinced that the Book of Common Prayer had preserved the doctrines of the Eucharist they believed in, and that by reviving vestments, altar lights, and all the rest, they were doing no more than following its clear instructions which had been neglected for three hundred years. The trouble was that - as Gregory Dix pointed out later - like Dr Cosin and the radical Laudians, they were using the Prayer Book rite to express a view of the Sacraments which was entirely at odds with the one it was designed to express; and, just like the Laudians, they were inevitably drawn by the logic of that view beyond the narrow confines of Cranmer's liturgy to other, more exotic, and more dramatic forms.

This sketch of a procession at All Saints, North Street, York, shows what was going on in English Use churches in the first few years of the 20th century. Medieval-style buildings – whether genuinely old or modern interpretations – now had services to go in them which also bore all the trappings of the Middle Ages

The majority in the Church ignored the *letter* of the Prayer Book (the Ornaments Rubric) because they understood its *intent*; the Catholic party had followed the letter while leaving the intent utterly subverted. That was abundantly clear to Anglican Protestants; the Western Use party recognized it without wanting to articulate it; the English Use party seemed to be completely blind to it.

The truth was that the English Use party were relying on a fantasy of what had actually happened at the Reformation. They believed that Archbishop Cranmer had been a 'reformed Catholic', that the 1549 Prayer Book really expressed his settled views, and that its subsequent revisions were the result of him being dragged forward against his will by Protestant radicals. They took the survival in the Prayer Book of wording which could 'bear a Catholic interpretation' as representing Cranmer's deliberate intent; this vision of the Tudor prelate became part of the ideology. They were wrong. The Prayer Book was not simply the Sarum Rite in English; it was a Reformed liturgy, and, in the end, would not do what they wanted it to do.

But there was another irony, which only came to light, again, with one of Dix's most penetrating insights: that the Reformed liturgies were not only *reactions* to the late medieval Low Mass, where the people merely attended worship performed for them by a priest and used it as the occasion of their own private devotions, but were actually *logical developments of it*. In 1548 the worshipper came to Low Mass not to play any part in the liturgy itself, but to meditate on what Jesus had done for him on the Cross. In 1552 he did exactly the same, except that now the minister told him in lengthy

prayers, texts and exhortations what he should be meditating *about*. If the Low Mass was a deformed version of the primitive Eucharist, so was the Prayer Book Communion which derived from it. Both the Church of England *and* the Church of Rome had enshrined in their liturgy versions of the Mass which did not really represent a fully Catholic understanding of it. But all this would take a while to dawn on people.

So, an ecclesiastical tourist, on an ordinary Sunday on the eve of World War One, might find a great variety of ceremonial practice even between self-proclaimed Anglo-Catholic churches. Here there might be an English Use church: its altar would be long, low, with only two candles, and surrounded by curtains supported on riddel-posts. The clergy would be vested in red Gothic vestments, though if it was Evensong the priest might wear a soft black 'Canterbury cap' together with surplice, scarf and hood. The servers at Mass would wear flowing white linen albs over cassocks and amices, embroidered at neck and hem. The church itself was Gothic, and all its fixtures and fittings were based on medieval originals. But at the Western Use church along the way, things appeared very different. The clergy processed in sporting birettas, the celebrant had a short, apron-like Roman chasuble rather than the flowing Gothic version, and vestments would be Roman green instead of Sarum red. The acolytes here would wear short white cottas rather than long albs. Some cottas could be seen beautified with an abundance of lace. There might, if the incumbent was daring enough, be a statue of the Virgin Mary visible, and the altar would be short, high, adorned with six tall candlesticks – or more – and everything as elaborate and Baroque as possible. The words the two churches used would sound pretty much the same, but at the Western Use church they would come in a rather confusing order, while some unfamiliar prayers would appear and other familiar ones be left out. Lists of saints might crop up in unexpected places.

Change was also apparent in the Anglican religious orders. The early sisterhoods were mainly founded, as we have seen, to do practical work; but with voluntary societies and the State taking on much more responsibility for dealing with society's problems, there was less and less call for monks and nuns to do it. The Sisters of the Holy Comforter had been based at Edmonton in a leaky and uncomfortable house since 1892, working hard to run a school and dispensary. Then in 1905 St Mary's Church, which supported them, was inhibited by the Bishop of London for encouraging prayer before the Sacrament, and lost its diocesan funding. The nuns moved to Baltonsborough, Somerset, and reconstituted themselves as a Benedictine order, enclosed, contemplative, and dedicated to prayer rather than work, a sign of the times. The year after that, the Sisters of the Love of God were founded in Oxford, the first Anglican order to be contemplative from its inception.

The new men's orders, too, were of a different style from the Cowley Fathers. The Society of the Sacred Mission (1891) and the Community of the Resurrection (1892) both came to concentrate on training ordinands. Doing time at a theological college was still not compulsory for prospective clergy, and a term or two at one might suffice; it didn't go far to eroding most people's impression of the Anglican clergyman as a gentlemanly buffoon who was in the Church only because he came from a good family and had no obvious talent for anything else. The CR's college at Mirfield and the SSM's at Kelham set out to change that. Kelham had a deliberate policy of training non-graduates, while study at Mirfield was free – though its graduates couldn't get married until they'd repay the fees! Kelham's 'training' meant up to 8 years of gruelling community life, physical work, theological study, and monastic worship. By 1920 it was larger than all the other colleges, producing clergy who, so the intention was, could cope with anything the Church of England had to offer. It was a long way

from finicking over ritual styles, and in fact the SSM was to show that it had remarkably little time for some of the Movement's treasured shibboleths.

By the early 1900s violent hostility to Anglo-Catholics had died down, but they were still unpopular in some quarters. This cartoon from the Sheffield Weekly News *in 1905 contrasts Fr Ommanney (of St Matthew's, Carver Street)'s lack of missionary success with the admirable 'catch' of his bewhiskered Low Church rival*

Anglican Catholicism's tensions and triumphs were all evident in the Anglo-Catholic Congresses which played so important a role in the '20s and '30s. The idea of a great meeting to encourage Catholics and to present their ideas came out of a clergy meeting at Hoxton in 1919. Fr Atlay of St Matthew's, Westminster, and his curate HA Wilson (later Vicar of Haggerston) did the organising, and found that so many laypeople wanted to come they had to hire the Albert Hall. A series of Congresses were then planned, not only in London, but a variety of towns and cities, 'to extend the knowledge of Catholic faith and practice … and by these means to bring men and women to a true realisation of the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour'. Over the next ten years there were many such gatherings, some of thousands, some of hundreds. The tensions were there right enough: in 1923 Bishop Weston of Zanzibar famously warned the London Congress 'you cannot claim to worship Jesus in the tabernacle if you do not pity Jesus in the slum', which was stronger stuff than many might have expected; and three years later he organised a congratulatory address to the newly-elected Pope Benedict XV, the last thing Anglo-Catholics who'd found their way to the English episcopate, like Gore and Frere, wanted to hear from a Catholic gathering in the full glare of media attention. But the triumphal side of the Congresses

was more obvious. They helped isolated, battling Anglican Catholics realise they were normal, acceptable, and even God's instruments for great works; and they helped the other traditions in the Church of England come to the same conclusion. Catholic parishes became more Catholic, more mission-minded, and more stimulated to work for social as well as liturgical change.

* * * * *

The Lincoln Judgement of 1890 had left one issue unresolved. It was an ambiguous business, because the reservation of the Blessed Sacrament and the service of Benediction were observances which had arisen since the Prayer Book was compiled; so what could anyone say about them? The Ritualists argued that what wasn't mentioned by the law couldn't be outlawed; the Protestants (and more conservative Catholics too) regarded the 39 Articles' ban on the Sacrament being 'gazed upon, or carried about' as law enough. But in the safety of the religious houses the practice had spread - monks and nuns discovered their devotional life was helped by silence and concentration on Jesus's sacramental presence in the Host – and as the century neared its end it began to move outside them. As Robert Dolling found, the presence of Jesus in the sacrament could be a powerful aid to conversion, and increasing the devotion of the faithful, and men like him were not going to be put off by mere 'illegality', if illegal it was.

Arthur Winnington-Ingram arrived as Bishop of London in 1901, aware that his new diocese was a den of highly contentious liturgical practice and teaching. He would have liked to have brought the whole area to heel, but had two weaknesses. First, he was fairly Catholic himself and had great sympathy with a lot of the clergy he was called on to discipline ('I *am* the 108th Catholic bishop of London!' he stormed at one meeting). Secondly, he was too good-natured to be an effective authoritarian. He always thought the best of people, including those who didn't deserve such generosity, tried to be accommodating, and, having threatened to take action, did nothing. The embedding of Anglo-Catholicism in London, including its most *outré* varieties, was partly down to the policies of the man even his rebellious clergy called 'Uncle Arthur'.

Shortly after arriving as Bishop, Winnington-Ingram inhibited a number of churches where the Sacrament was reserved not in an inaccessible chapel for the communion of the sick, but in the body of the church where people could use it as the focus for their devotions. And that was as far as it had gone, until relations between St Saviour's, Hoxton, and its bishop began to go awry. In 1907 Winnington-Ingram had stepped in to veto the appointment of an ultra-Protestant as St Saviour's vicar, which would have challenged its whole identity, but as World War One drew closer the church began to advance into dangerous territory. A statue of the Virgin Mary appeared, along with a tabernacle for the Sacrament in the Lady Chapel; the Sunday service was renamed 'Mass' from 'Eucharist'; and in 1914 the Vicar, Fr Kilburn, revived the traditional Holy Week observances of Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday and Good Friday.

As situations of pastoral strain are wont to do, the War generated a sudden advance in devotional practice in many Anglican churches. 'War Shrines', complete with crucifix and flowers, appeared inside and sometimes outside churches, and the Protestant Truth Society attacked them where they dared. Certainly St Saviour's had one. More radically, many churches found that people wanted to pray for their loved ones at the Front and the Sacrament helped many to feel that Jesus was present to hear them. In 1916 St Saviour's began holding 'Evening Prayer' on Sunday evenings followed by 'Devotions [prayers before the Sacrament] and Sermon', and a year later Devotions

changed to Benediction. In 1915 the tabernacle was moved to the High Altar; in 1916 there was a procession of the Host on Corpus Christi. All of this Winnington-Ingram was prepared to ignore because of the 'wonderful spiritual work being done'; but in 1917 the Host was actually carried out of the church and around the neighbouring streets, complete with all the elaborate ceremony that might be expected at a similar event in Italy or Spain. The indefatigable John Kensit junior enjoyed working himself up into paroxysms of shock and outrage. The bishop sighed, and placed St Saviour's under ban – no grants, no confirmations, no pay for curates.

As ever the action's only achievements were the opposite of those intended. Fr HP Denison, whose uncle George had been prosecuted for teaching the doctrine of the Real Presence, preached at that fateful St Saviour's service and as a result introduced Benediction at his own church (a case of old dogs being taught new tricks – Denison was 69). A conference on Benediction was organised at St Saviour's. At Thaxted Conrad Noel, one of Percy Dearmer's former curates, took the Host on procession on Corpus Christi in 1919 – though he talked of it all in his quaint socialist manner as 'the Divine Outlaw meeting his Poor in the Red Mass' and that sort of thing. Noel dismissed his diocesan, the Bishop of Chelmsford, as a heretic, and said someone who couldn't understand the doctrine of the Real Presence had no right to regulate the devotion arising from it.

Under the bishop's ban, St Saviour's went over the top in the most extraordinary way. Fr Kilburn seemed to take the opportunity of episcopal discipline to sever any tie with the 'Anglo' part of the phrase 'Anglo-Catholic'. By 1919, services at the church, including not just the Mass but the Offices as well, were in Latin, the Roman *Westminster Hymnal* was the preferred hymnbook, and the noticeboard was amended to read 'The Catholic Church of St Saviour's'. Of course Winnington-Ingram would come nowhere near the place, but later that year the church was visited by a number of colonial Anglican bishops in town for the Lambeth Conference, and Frank Weston of Zanzibar was prevailed upon to say Mass and confirm St Saviour's confirmation candidates. The Bishop of London was naturally put out and bad-temperedly told Kilburn that he should consider emigrating to Zanzibar where he would clearly feel more at home: but Bishop Weston wasn't overly happy either. The story goes that the clergy refused to allow him to say the Mass in English which was far too Anglican for them; Weston refused to say it in Latin which he thought was absurd; so as a compromise he said it, according to the rite of his own diocese, in Swahili. It was not until 1927 that a new vicar dropped the Latin and the church returned to a more mainstream, though still very Roman, way of doing things.

Bishop Barnes of Birmingham was soon getting into quarrels with his clergy over Benediction, too. The diocese had got used to two fairly Catholic bishops, and it was a rude shock to have them succeeded by the modernist liberal Barnes who hated anything that he could term superstition or supernaturalism. In 1947 he published a book which denied the Virgin Birth and the Resurrection, and Archbishop Fisher told him that, had he still been in office, he would have had to resign. Barnes issued directives against reservation and Benediction as soon as he arrived in his diocese. Twelve to fifteen priests refused to comply; Barnes inhibited their churches and would not even meet with them. When Fr Barlee of St Aidan's, Small Heath, resigned from ill-health, Barnes refused to license a successor and had to be forced to do so in the courts. The Birmingham clergy would have got better treatment from Uncle Arthur.

All this contributed to a fevered atmosphere as the bishops began to consider revising the hallowed Prayer Book of 1662. The proposed Prayer Book, submitted to the Convocations in 1927, bore the marks of the moderate English Use school under the

leadership of Bishop Frere. Alongside the 1662 rite, which would continue in use, was one which more closely followed the Sarum order and allowed the Sacrament to be reserved, with permission – but no more. The Book made its way through the Church's bodies but was rejected by the House of Commons. It survived, promoted by the bishops, but ended up being little used. Most of the English Use school could just have been accommodated by its proposals; the Western Use party never could, and opposed the reform bitterly. The last thing they wanted was a legally-enforceable liturgy which granted them less than they had already wrung out of the sacred ambiguities of 1662.

Liturgically, the Church of England was left in chaos. The Prayer Book rite now seemed to suit only conservative Evangelicals, who clung to it on much the same grounds as the Catholics of the late 1500s had – fear of getting something worse. In the end, the gap was filled by the 'Interim Rite' drawn up by the former Bishop of Bloemfontein in 1931, which used the prayers of 1662 in the order of 1549, a compromise that became fairly popular.

Bishop Winnington-Ingram blamed himself for the rejection of the proposed Prayer Book: he felt he had failed to control the diocese of London and had therefore allowed Parliament to believe the Church of England was full of naughty neo-Roman clergy who wouldn't do as they were told. Late in 1928 he wrote to the 170 churches in the diocese where the Sacrament was reserved ordering all services of devotion connected with it to cease. Twenty-one priests, representing a mixed bag of churches from East End slum strongholds of the Catholic faith to fashionable Kensington shrines, refused – though more simply ignored the order as they'd become accustomed to ignoring anything from their bishop's office. Winnington-Ingram eventually stated that he would take no action against the 21, but that their replacements would have to toe the line. Of course, time intervened and nothing of the sort took place.

Although some bishops, most notably Barnes of Birmingham, were still battling with advanced Anglo-Catholics, the affair of 'The Twenty-One' marks the real end of any attempt by the Church of England to enforce a universal liturgy which would suit all its churches, or to repress any aspect of the Catholic programme. From now on, bishops would in the main let Anglo-Catholics and Evangelicals get on with their work unimpeded, and future liturgical revisions when they came – the Alternative Services Measure in 1960, the Alternative Service Book in 1980, and Common Worship in 2000 – would all be permissive rather than proscriptive. The Anglo-Catholics' own ambiguous and tense relationship with religious authority had changed the whole internal government of the Anglican Church, essentially by dissolving it. As the 1920s moved into the 1930s, an Anglican bishop now commonly wore a splendid mitre, a gold and embroidered cope, and carried a gilded crozier. He looked more and more like his medieval predecessors. He was described to confirmands from Anglo-Catholic congregations as the successor to the Apostles, the guarantor of the Holy Spirit's power flowing through His Church. But, in practice, he knew better than to try and tell the clergy who taught them that what to do.

An episcopal visit to St Saviour's, Poplar. The parish priest, seated on the bishop's right, is Philip Bartlett, one of those extremely wealthy Anglo-Catholic clergy serving a slum parish, and one of the 'Twenty-One'. Fr Dolling served here as Vicar for the last few years of his life

7. Ascendancy, Hegemony, and Triumph, 1929-1961

This chapter begins and ends with the consecration of an Archbishop of Canterbury: Cosmo Lang in 1929, and Michael Ramsey in 1961. Both could be described as Anglo-Catholics, though Ramsey was much more firmly and comfortably so than Lang; Lang, after all, was happy to wave incense around, but not to bless it – 'there are things I don't do' – and Ramsey didn't look quite as out of place among monks and nuns. Both were men of the Anglican Establishment, though Lang, notwithstanding his work in hard parishes early in his career, was always the patrician: there was no edge between him and the smooth world of aristocracy and politics as there was with Ramsey, the sense that in him was something that world could never quite accommodate or absorb. Lang was eminently absorbable, an archbishop who would not make power feel ill-at-ease with itself. Ramsey's consecration, on the other hand, would mark a further advance for the Tractarians' sense of the Church as a separate and sacred society. Between the two enthronements, Anglo-Catholicism moved to a position of intellectual, liturgical, and spiritual dominance in the Church of England. Yet with maturity came inevitably a loss of that very cutting-edge which kept the Movement going forward.

When Lang moved from York to Canterbury, Percy Dearmer was drafted in to advise on the technical details of his enthronement. That showed how Anglo-Catholicism – certainly the English Use version of it – had now come close to the heart of the Anglican Church. The ideology of English Use Anglo-Catholicism, incoherent though it was in some ways, was very satisfying. It stressed the unbroken continuity of the Church of England before and after the Reformation, and the survival of valid orders and sacraments within it as a result of the survival of episcopacy and the Catholic bits of the Prayer Book. It assumed that the Church of England had always remained Catholic; and that Catholicism in England was vested uniquely in the Anglican Church. This of course left English Roman Catholics in the position of schismatics, and implied – if anyone cared to follow the implication through, which no one did – that Anglicans *outside* England should really join other Churches. But it was awfully romantic, and bolstered Anglican self-identification as Catholics – the only *true* Catholics in England. That was the view the SSC championed early on, and when Fr Dale of Hythe wrote a history of the town he called his chapter on the Reformation 'The Schism of the Romanists'! Given that the Bishop of Salisbury had traditionally been Master of Ceremonies to the Pope, it was even possible to argue that had the Reformation not intervened the Sarum Use *might* have become the common rite of Western Christendom.

To convert a little medieval church to some form of the English Use was no very difficult business; of course, Sarum ritual would have been what it was designed for. And so, many, many churches went down that road, acquiring their Gothic vestments, riddel posts, apparelled albs, and so on. Sarum fitted in best with the grand churches, the abbeys and cathedrals, the Tewkesburies, Wymondhams and Worksops, which became powerhouses of liturgical correctness affecting the Church at large.[6]

The romance of the Middle Ages triumphed to such an extent at All Saints, North Street, York, that the church housed *hermits* in a back room – first a Sister Adeline, then a Brother William who ended up appearing on TV in the 1960s. Fr Luget of Middleton, Essex, had a vision of the Virgin Mary in 1932, and established a shrine; and in the summer of 1938, a blind toymaker knelt at the altar of St Martin's, Salisbury, after a dream impelled him to go to the church, and his sight was restored. Signs and wonders indeed.

Enid Chadwick's 1948 guide for children, *My Book of the Church's Year*, expresses this world beautifully. It is a magical world in which heroic saints do exciting deeds for the Faith and angels are around every corner. The rites of the Church – the Church of England – are numinous and grand, shot through with divine power. Under December 29th knights menace St Thomas of Canterbury who stands unafraid, arm outstretched, while a monk raises a cross in defence; on January 30th a serene and unhistorically tall Charles I ('the White King – he died to save the English Church', the caption informs us) awaits his death. St Valentine draws together two bashful 18th-century lovers on the 14th of February. On Candlemas Day, a procession winds across the page, beginning with a knight and a medieval king, moving through a Tudor lady and her lace-collared children, a Georgian gentleman in wig and buckles, ending with a smart 1940s girl in neat court shoes, the lot carrying candles to honour the Holy Family. It's mad, of course, a heroic defiance of history, and yet it expresses a beautiful and deep vision of humanity – English humanity, at any rate – united across time in worship of its Lord that has a beguiling power.

In 1935, the Poet Laureate, John Masefield, published *The Box of Delights*, a fantasy novel which became a children's classic. Catholic Anglicanism weaves in and out of the story, part of the warp and woof of what it means to be English. In the finale, the fate of the world hangs on whether the demons raised by the wicked Abner Brown can prevent the 1000th midnight celebration taking place at Tatchester Cathedral on Christmas Eve. The rescued Bishop of Tatchester, his Dean, Virgers and choirboys, are whisked in flying sleighs to the cathedral by the old gods of pagan England, the Lady of the Oak and Herne the Hunter, and monks shovel the demonic snow from the cathedral doors to admit the clergy.

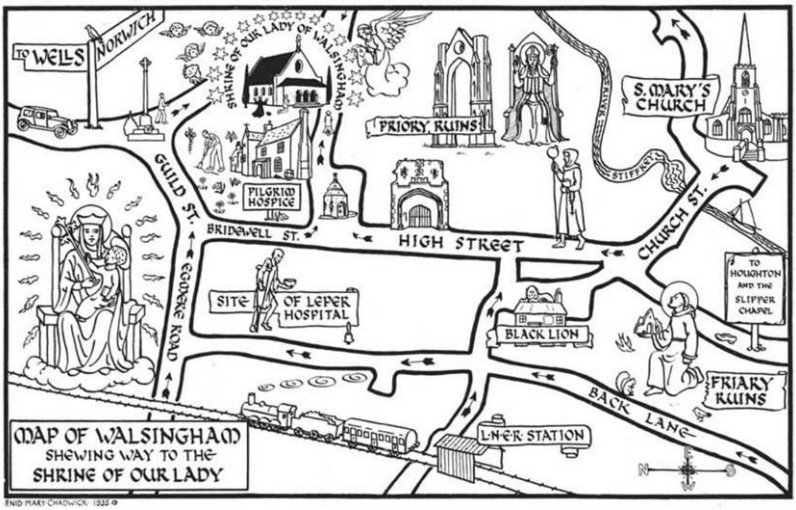
The Western Use party could be forgiven for feeling they had lost out. Their way of going about things was rather more upfront, in general, and less easily accommodated, less comfortably English.[7] Gradually much of this branch of the Catholic movement had developed ideas which could be described as Anglo-*Papalist* rather than Anglo-*Catholic*. The English Use party believed, with differing degrees of enthusiasm, that the Reformation had been a timely exercise in pruning off some

abuses of medieval devotion, while preserving Catholic doctrine and order within the Church of England. The Papalists came round to the view – equally fantastic in its way – that the changes of the 1500s had been forced on an unwilling country by a wicked and rapacious King and his ministers, and had never been properly endorsed by the Church which, as the Tractarians had taught them, was a sacred society free to obey its own laws. That meant that the Pope, as 'Patriarch of the West', was *still* the legitimate supreme head of the English Church. Spencer Jones, the Vicar of Moreton-in-Marsh, first articulated the idea in *England and the Holy See* (1902), which even Lord Halifax found sympathy with. Anglo-Papalists differed in how closely they actually followed this ideology through, but it gave some of their less flexible characters every confidence in ignoring the realities of the Church of England as they found it. Sandys Wason of Cury in Cornwall and John Watson of St Alban's, Fulham, for instance, arrived in their churches, introduced the full Roman system of worship and discipline overnight, and successfully managed to empty them nearly as fast.

There were gradations in this position, of course. You could hope and pray for the Anglican Church to reunite with the Roman Catholics while still believing that it had the right, *de jure* or *de facto*, to make its own arrangements in the meantime. You could honour the Papacy while not accepting, in Fr Patten's words, that the Church of England amounted only to 'two potty little provinces of no importance'. You could feel keenly enough the disunity of Western Christendom and yet not yearn, with Ronald Knox in his book *The Church in Bondage*, 'we cannot set our feet upon the rock of Peter, but only watch the shadow of Peter passing by, and hope that it may fall upon us and heal us'. Effusions like that made it no surprise that Anglo-Papalists never got very far, and had to try and change the Church of England parish by parish. That 'conversion from below', they hoped, would create a Church which would win the respect of the Romans and convince them that the Anglicans wanted to come home at last.

As Anglo-Catholicism in the wider sense had, Anglo-Papalism now developed its own journals, organisations, and societies to promote its ideas. There was the Catholic League (1913), and the Confraternity of Unity, founded in New York in 1926. The Society of SS Peter & Paul wasn't as ultramontane as some groups, but promoted Baroque and continental styles in worship and fittings; and devotional societies like the League of Mary were strongly Papalist, though not dedicated to being so. Conflict could arise as their ideas spread. In 1932, the Sisterhood of St Peter at Horbury split over the issue of which liturgy to follow, and the Romanist minority set up their own nunnery at Laleham.

There were two key personalities in Papalist Anglo-Catholicism. Fr Alfred Hope Patten arrived as Vicar of Walsingham in Norfolk in 1921, and set about moving his parish from traditional, moderate Tractarianism to full-scale Baroque Roman style; his devotion to his parishioners and personal charm made it work. In 1922 a statue of the Virgin Mary was brought into the church and prayers were recited before it, and thus began an attempt to revive the medieval pilgrimage to Walsingham which had been so important to the English Church until its suppression at the Reformation. The first modern pilgrimage was not spectacular - Patten watched the London train pull in and only 'a very large priest and two very small ladies' disembark – but he simply roped in the villagers instead. Thanks to his extraordinary single-mindedness and the power of his vision, the whole thing took off. 'I just had a statue of Our Lady carved', he said later, 'God did the rest.' By 1931 there was a chapel covering the 'Holy House', a replica of the one which had once sheltered the medieval statue of Our Lady; and by 1938 a full-scale church, which gradually grew in elaboration and grandeur.



Another work by Enid Chadwick – her map of Walsingham, 1935

Walsingham, eventually taking over much of the village with hostels, knick-knack shops and tea rooms – all the paraphernalia of a tourist spot, but of a very peculiar kind! – was one place, one entire *landscape*, which Anglo-Catholics, especially of the Papalist shade, could consider uniquely theirs, even down to the characteristic mingling of deep spirituality and apparent bad taste which exasperated those outside.

Two Walsingham views taken during the translation of the statue of Our Lady from the parish church to the newly-built Shrine in 1931. Above, Bishop O'Rorke with deacons (Fr Patten is on the right of the picture) and assistant priest; right, Sir William Milner, the main benefactor of the shrine, leads the procession

Fr Henry Fynes-Clinton was Anglo-Papalism's outstanding organiser and networker, though as people often pointed out his organisations tended to sprout with great frequency and disappear just as quickly. His aristocratic background also let him maintain more links than many fellow-Papalists with an Anglican establishment still snobbish enough for that to make a difference. On taking over as incumbent of St Magnus the Martyr, London Bridge, Fynes-Clinton set about inserting a Roman church into Sir Christopher Wren's Classical shell. The artist he commissioned to produce many of the fittings was Martin Travers, whose name would become intimately associated with the Baroque fashion. The refit of St Magnus in the mid-1920s transformed the building into the epitome of what the Papalists were aiming to do – to erase the impression that the Reformation had ever happened. There Fynes-Clinton remained until his death in 1959, insisting throughout that the Pope was the rightful head of the English Church, and, with greater consistency than some, behaving as though that was true.

Inside St Magnus the Martyr, which still resembles pretty exactly the church Fr Fynes-Clinton tried to create – as though the Reformation was something that happened elsewhere. There's a genuine 17th-century reredos buried in there somewhere

With the great age of church-building over, Papalists had few opportunities to start from scratch. One of them was St Francis', Bournemouth, which provided an Italianate contrast to the much more 'Anglo' Catholicism of the town's older churches, St Stephen's and St Peter's – where Gladstone had made his last Communion. A member of the congregation of St Stephen's, Helen Ricketts, offered (anonymously) to pay for a new church provided the 'full Catholic Faith' was taught there and the patronage passed to the CR at her death. The church was duly consecrated on St Francis' Day, 1930, the Kensitites duly turned up to protest, and a curate from St Stephen's duly became the new church's first incumbent. The church is beautiful – but nothing about it is remotely English. It looks like a monastery somewhere in the Veneto, and to see it drenched with rain on a dreary Dorset afternoon seems extremely odd. It was the same story later in the '30s at SS Mary & George, High Wycombe, largely paid for by Sir Francis Dashwood, the Lord of the Manor, and defiantly un-English – a great domed basilica sitting, when it was built, as a whitewashed block gazing down at the growing suburbs of the town. A lot of this was down to the Anglo-Catholic Congresses which had encouraged such a strong sense of identity, especially among the more Papalist party: but although this movement is often described as 'Back to Baroque' most of the

churches built under its inspiration were not at all ornate. They were usually monolithically simple with the occasional gorgeous fitting (especially a Comper or Travers altar).[8]

St Francis', Bournemouth. In 1930s Anglican Catholic churches there was a movement towards simplicity and away from Gothic or Baroque extravagance

How strong was Anglo-Papalism? It's not easy to tell, because plenty of Anglo-Catholics, including devotees of the Western Use, wanted reunion with Rome without believing that the Church of England didn't really exist anyway. There were far fewer protests against 'Popish' innovations, though the Protestant Truth Society secured its most notorious and, as usual, Pyrrhic victory in the '30s against Fr Bernard Walke of St Hilary, Cornwall, taking action against him in the name of one disgruntled parishioner. Walke was held prisoner in the church with the reserved Sacrament in his hands, and forced to watch while the Kensitites dismantled the altars and statues. One index of Papalist support is the popularity of the Octave of Unity, eight days of prayer for the reunion of Canterbury and Rome begun in 1908. It soon became widespread in the Roman Church itself after the Order of the Atonement, based in New York, went over to Rome and took the idea with them. By 1959 about 1500 priests were said to be supporting the Octave – a small minority of Anglican clergy, but not a negligible one.

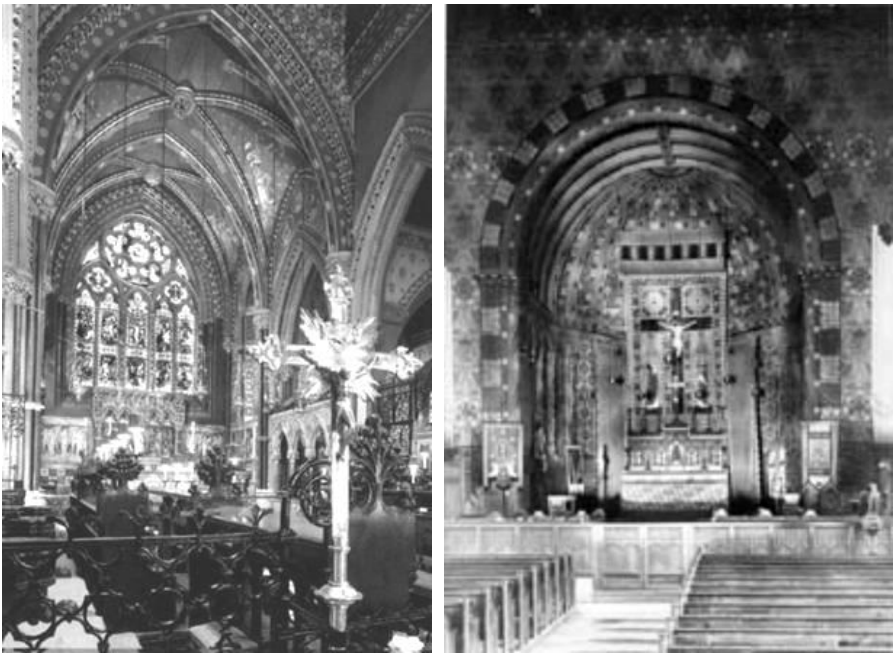
If anyone could span the suspicious and mutually-scornful division between the Sarum and Roman parties, it was a pair of figures from the Movement's past: first, Lord Halifax; and second, Ninian Comper. Comper's father was ordained by the Tractarian Bishop Forbes of Brechin, and Ninian was nursed on Anglo-Catholicism – nobody else was likely to say, as he did, 'the church is a lantern, and the altar the flame within it'. He decided to become an architect, and was articled first to CF Kempe and later to Bodley. Over his seventy-year career Comper produced furnishings and fittings for Anglo-Catholic churches all across the British Empire and was responsible for giving the Movement's ideas physical form. The first post-Reformation hanging pyx he designed for St Matthew's, Westminster, in 1892; the first modern Gothic altar with curtains and riddel-posts he installed at St Wilfrid's, Cantley, the year after. St Cyprian's, Clarence Gate was his Gothic masterpiece in 1903; but gradually he broadened his repertoire from Gothic and by the time his last great church, St Mary's, Wellingborough, was finished in 1931, it was a riotous, gold-plated palimpsest of styles all devoted with complete freedom to the Eucharistic worship the Church of England had rediscovered. 'Only to its contemporaries', smiled its architect, 'does it owe nothing'. Its eclecticism was as mad in its way as Enid Chadwick's vision of the inner Catholicism of the English Church opening across the centuries, but then Comper lost no sleep over the schism between Rome and Canterbury, maintaining they were already united – even if they didn't know it. For him, nothing was too

glorious or too grand to adorn a church. When he came to design a new extension for the Cowley Fathers' chapel in Oxford, he pleaded for a little gold to be added to the white baldacchino over the altar. 'Mr Comper', replied the Superior, 'You aren't capable of adding a *little* gold'. It was to him that Fr Patten turned to rebuild the Holy House in Walsingham in the 1950s, rather than to Martin Travers, who believed nothing very much. Comper died at 96 nursed by Neale's Sisters of St Margaret, who his father had invited to his Scottish parish nearly a century before – a fitting symmetry.

Not many churches could afford their own Choir School like this one at All Saints', Margaret Street, photographed in the 1930s

Scotland had long provided an outlet for Anglican Catholic ideals; in fact, as we've seen, they flourished wherever there was a vacuum in established Anglican power and tradition, marginal areas, new suburbs and dire slums, and outside England itself. The Scottish Episcopal Church had a long High-Church tradition and adapted to Tractarianism easily. As time went on the patterns emerging in Britain were repeated in the rest of the Empire, and in the US too. St Clement's, Philadelphia, saw the same sort of battles over ritual and doctrine in the 1870s as churches in England did, with some positively hysterical comments emerging from the Bishop of Pennsylvania about the evils of confession and lighting candles: by the time the Cowley Fathers took over the parish in the 1880s all that had died down, and St Clement's soon went very Roman indeed. In contrast, the wealthy and long-established church of St Thomas, New York, is still perhaps the grandest English Use church anywhere – including in England. Nashotah House in Wisconsin, founded in 1842, became a Tractarian seminary for the States. African Anglicanism took on the theological outlook of the missionary society that evangelised each particular region; thus in Southern and Central Africa, Anglo-Catholic attitudes dominated. There are wonderful photographs of Fr Trevor Huddleston in cope, biretta and cotta leading processions with banners and acolytes through the streets of South African shanty townships which, but for the dust and the black faces of everyone around him, could have been taken in Margate.

The Diocese in Europe also turned predominantly Catholic; it must have helped that it came under the supervision of the Bishop of London, and a distant supervision at that. However It wasn't always plain sailing even there. Charles Tooth, Anglican Chaplain in Florence at Holy Trinity Church, was the brother of the persecuted Arthur, and in the year his brother was arrested (1877) established a Catholic congregation in a house where the eucharist was celebrated five times a week. There was little his former church could do to stop the establishment of the church of St Mark, which grew out of this gathering, in 1881. Since 1965 it has been the only Anglican church in the city.



Catholic Anglicanism at home and abroad – St Peter's, Bournemouth, built in the 1890s, represents the summit of Gothic Revival Catholicism, with every surface covered in brass, mosaic, and coloured tiles. St Clement's, Philadelphia, in 1883, was just as sumptuous, but far more upfront with its crucifix, altar and fittings. No Anglican church in Britain would have dared to go so far at that time

Anglican Catholics were certainly better able to penetrate the Church hierarchy abroad, and this meant there was an alternative source of support for their beleaguered comrades back home. The diocese of Zanzibar, for instance, had a close relationship with St Stephen's House and its bishop Frank Weston became a great figure in the Congress period. GH Bown, the Principal of St Stephen's forced by Bishop Gore to resign over his Roman tendencies, was chosen as Bishop of Nassau in the West Indies before he died, the only Catholic League member ever to get anywhere near the Anglican episcopate (and the strange Fr Lowndes, who turned up at St Saviour's Hoxton in its time of 'ban', regarded the Prayer Book as the work of the Devil, and would never say anything but a Latin Mass, had been rector of St Mary's, Nassau). The founder of the monastery of Caldey Island, Aelred Carlyle, could find no English bishop who would ordain him, so eventually got Bishop Grafton of Fond du Lac in Canada to do so; and when Fr Butler of Kettlebaston wanted his new High Altar consecrated in 1956 it was the visiting Bishop of Madagascar who obliged, there being little point in Butler asking his diocesan.[9]

The ascendancy of the Catholic party in the Church of England was due not only to gathering support across the parishes, but also to the lack of any obvious alternative. Teaching was at the core of the movement's strength: as it grew into secure maturity a wealth of devotional and teaching books and literature helped to generate Catholic

parishes' view of themselves as bastions of the True Faith as much as persecution by the bishops had. Fr HA Wilson of St Augustine's Haggerston produced the *Haggerston Catechism*, a series of short books on Christian life which became a classic in Anglo-Catholic circles. Little delights such as *St Swithun's Prayer Book* combined for laypeople the historic text of 1662 with hints on self-examination and preparation for Communion, private prayers before the Sacrament, and all the seasonal and special material the Anglo-Catholics had adopted from Roman formularies. That book emerged in the mid-1920s and went into more than thirty editions over the next 30 years.

Fr Wilson of Haggerston – 'a man of adamantine and ruthless character', said GK Chesterton, though he clearly got on with Angus the Scottie

It was more than that, though. The '20s had, overall, been tough for the Church. Its enthusiastic support of the Great War had helped to harden the disregard of many working people into contempt and atheism, and fashionable thinkers were still busy reacting against the pieties of their Victorian fathers: it was an age of infidelity. It would take a second War to bring people back to church in great numbers, but intellectuals and artists were progressively shaken as the secular left-wing confidences of the previous decades seemed unable to answer the problems of Depression and international strife, and ill-represented by the dubious efficiency of Stalin's Soviet Union. Such disillusioned radicals often turned, as a result, to the otherworldly authority of Christianity. Converts were not strongly directed to one Church or another, but the fact was that the motor of 1930s and '40s Christianity was the resurgent confidence of the Catholic movement, and people seeking Christ thus tended to encounter him in its context and through its ministrations. TS Eliot, Dorothy L Sayers, WH Auden, and others, would be captivated, and filter Catholic Anglicanism's imagery and assumptions into art. Even CS Lewis – the most influential convert of all – made a confession regularly from the early 1940s onwards, despite his Ulster Protestant background. It was, almost, a given thing.

Devotional societies providing togetherness and strengthening prayer life were a vital element in Anglo-Catholic churches. Here Fr Maurice Childs presides over his Livery of St Dunstan, based at St Dunstan's, Cranford Park, and consisting of the altar servers

The Movement had now gathered some theological power, too. In the first phase its intellect had been devoted to uncovering and arguing for the relevance of the past; it had a proud rigidity, Dr Pusey its guiding light. The reaction – or development – in the 'liberal' direction of Charles Gore and Henry Scott-Holland now seemed far away: either a blind alley or a necessary attempt to absorb the scientific realignments of the mid-century, according to taste, but little survived its time apart from the occasional telling phrase and stirring hymn. Now, there were thinkers and writers entering the Anglican establishment who combined Catholic orthodoxy and experience of sacramental worship with an engagement with modern stresses and difficulties. Figures such as Michael Ramsey, Eric Mascall, Eric Milner-White, and Austin Farrer had a deep firmness of faith yet a humanity and broad understanding that arose out of confidence, not the rebellious hard-edge of the old-fashioned Movement that had had to struggle and fight to be heard and accepted; now, theirs was the only voice being raised. They were beginning to come to notice in the '30s, and would reach an apogee of creativity and influence after the War. The religious orders, too, were now very important, not only providing preachers and writers, but as spiritual directors, helping the figures who actually did the ruling and administration. The Mirfield, Cowley, and Kelham Fathers, the Sisters of the Love of God, and laypeople with a similar gift, like Frances Underhill, were in some ways the lifeblood of the Church of England on the eve of World War Two.

Really quite strange – the massive Comper altar and baldacchino inserted into the galleried early 19th-century fabric of St John's, Workington

The geography of Catholic Anglicanism was now well-established. The powerhouse of the movement, in a sense, was the band of tough Papalist parishes on the north and east of the City of London. It was here that the *English Missal* had been drawn up, the *Haggerston Catechism* devised, the battle for Benediction won. Here, Socialist priests like Fr Groser of Christ Church, Stepney, or later on Gresham Kirkby at St Paul's, Bow, pricked the Church's conscience in a leftward direction. Close at hand – though a

world away in atmosphere - were the great shrine churches of the West End. Oxford was important, and through most of the major cities and towns there were networks of Anglo-Catholic churches of different sorts and brands. The movement had been slower to get going in the north, notwithstanding the pioneer work of St Saviour's, Leeds. When Fr Ommanney had arrived at St Matthew's Carver Street, Sheffield, in 1882, his church was a lonely outpost of Catholic faith and practice in the city; but not far away was the 'biretta belt' of South Yorkshire churches under Lord Halifax's influence, and during the reigns of Cosmo Lang and Cyril Garbett as Archbishops of York, English Use Catholicism spread rapidly throughout the northern dioceses. The seaside towns of the South, the Margates, Brightons and Bournemouths, were heavily Anglo-Catholic too. Gradually churches here and there would be taken on by Catholic incumbents who set about changing things. All Saints Notting Hill had its first Catholic vicar in the 1930s, as did St Stephen's, Wolverhampton. St John's, Workington, went Catholic in the 1930s, and in 1931 acquired a great gilded Comper altar which still sits very oddly in its Classical surroundings. Yet these churches were largely to be found in isolation, and as transport made it easier for people to get about on a Sunday morning they were increasingly sought out by churchgoers who liked that sort of thing. Only in London and South Yorkshire were there enough in an area to build up a common culture – which was why Walsingham and the Congresses were so important in showing people that the Catholic Movement was wider than their own parish.

The Congresses themselves reached a symbolic climax in 1933 with the centenary celebrations of Keble's Assize Sermon and the beginning of the Oxford Movement. To their astonishment, some local Congress planning committees found that the *dioceses* were already intending to hold celebrations of their own: that alone showed how the Movement, which had given rise to so much contention, angst, rage and pain, was now the common property of the whole Church of England. The national Congress concluded with High Mass celebrated in the stadium at White City, attended by a congregation of 50,000 – still perhaps the largest single gathering for an Anglican act of worship in this country. The intention was to meet again in 1940, but other events put paid to that and in fact the next Congress was not held until 1948. It was still an invigorating affair, but as with the Movement as a whole, so much that had been campaigned and fought for was now simply the common experience of half the nation's parishes, that such special events were beginning to seem a little otiose.

Lang had been succeeded at Canterbury by William Temple, not a strongly partisan archbishop but certainly prepared to smile benignly down at the triumphant Catholics. Temple, however, was followed in 1945 by Geoffrey Fisher, who had at times rather too much of the narrow Low Church ('Evangelical' would be far too exciting a description) provincial headmaster about him – exactly what he had been much of the time. The last Archbishop to clatter about Westminster and Lambeth in an apron and gaiters, the head of a pin would have been too much room for Fisher's sympathy with Anglo-Catholicism.[10] He could hardly restrain the Movement now, though. His accession, towards the end of the War, marked instead a shift: Catholicism's edges and fringes were now broadening and spreading like a maturing river, rather than proceeding in waterfalls and cascades like the sparkling brook it once had been.

One sign of that 'broadening' was what was happening to the *Church Times*. The paper had been founded in 1863 as a Tractarian paper and so it had remained, campaigning, pugnacious, and rude. As one editor remarked, 'Evangelicals were denounced editorially, but were lucky to get a mention elsewhere'. That identity was very deliberately weakened from the mid-'50s onwards, the rudeness toned down, the sarcasm and bluster blunted a little, and later a lot. Circulation went up, a gratifying response.

Outdoor Benediction as the climax of a children's mission at SS Mary & George's, Sands, in 1946, complete with visiting priests and nuns – devotion on a council housing estate

The War itself had two effects. The first was on, and through, a monk from Nashdom called Gregory Dix. Born George, a former Fellow of Keble and mover in various Papalist circles, Dix had joined the Anglican Benedictines at Nashdom in 1926 though he didn't take vows until 1940, a hesitancy which seems to have been related to his doubts over the Catholicity of the Anglican Church, of which he eventually managed to cure himself. During the war years he compiled a work whose influence would go far and wide: *The Shape of the Liturgy*, published in 1945. Dix's witty and often acerbic pen helped to make this abstruse subject – piecing-together the history of the Eucharist from the earliest references to modern Anglican attempts at reform, about which matter he was not reticent – both accessible and surprisingly popular. He wrote of the first recorded Anglican to protest at the ceremonial use of incense *because it made his head ache*, a certain Dr Green, Canon of Ely,

> *The devastating effects of incense on the physical system of many modern English protestants are well known. Curiously enough there are no complaints of them from the seventeenth century English puritans and they were totally unknown to the jews and pagans of antiquity, or to the christians of the first 1,500 years. Dr Thomas Green appears to be the first recorded sufferer, and deserves to be sympathetically commemorated as such.*

As well as the startling insights, already noted, into what exactly had happened at the Reformation, and his pungent suggestions as to what the Anglican bishops might like

to do next, Dix's central thesis that the Eucharist had a basic 'fourfold shape' which was repeated everywhere and at all times was a revelation. Beneath the developments and un-developments of the centuries, he claimed, was an abiding pattern of taking bread and wine, offering thanks over them, breaking the bread, and distributing them. It might seem obvious, but what proclaiming this basic shape did was to create a fundamental ritual unity that bound the most Protestant Lord's Supper together with the crustiest Tridentine Mass. It allowed Christians across different denominations to see themselves as doing basically the same thing, notwithstanding the niceties of theological debate. Dix might be a Papalist by inclination, and his ideas may have been qualified rather heavily by scholars since, but his achievement – a colossal one - was to create Catholic, sacramental grounds for ecumenical advance.

In a sense Dix's poetry has been more enduring than his scholarship. One shattering passage from *The Shape of the Liturgy* has passed into the Anglican spiritual lexicon, an absurdly romantic but beautifully true account of the Eucharist celebrated over time. 'Was ever another command so obeyed?' asks the monk, and answers:

> *For century after century, spreading slowly to every continent and country and among every race on earth, this action has been done, in every conceivable human circumstance, for every conceivable human need … Men have found no better thing than this to do for kings at their crowning and for criminals going to the scaffold … one could fill many hundreds of pages with the reasons why men have done this, and not tell a hundredth part of them. And best of all, week by week and month by month, on a hundred thousand successive Sundays, faithfully, unfailingly, across all the parishes of Christendom, the pastors have done this just to* make *the* plebs sancta Dei – *the holy common people of God.*

Here is the beating heart of the Catholic vision, here as in Enid Chadwick's Candlemas procession, and Comper's crazy Wellingborough masterpiece: the whole creation, united in its Saviour's love, throbbing and alight with his glory; and human beings at its centre bearing uniquely their Maker's stamp and mark.

In another way Anglo-Catholics had less to thank the War for. It helped to destroy, in a quite physical and concrete way, much of the culture that they had built up. Great and famous churches such as All Saints, Clifton, or St John's, Newbury, even St Alban's, Holborn itself, were reduced by German bombs to rubble and debris. Those were rebuilt (St Alban's was virtually *copied*); not all were so lucky. London, of course, suffered particularly, and that great belt of Papalist churches on the north and east of the City which had done so much, time and again, to power the Catholic Movement forward, was shattered. Stories are told of evacuees

St Alban's, Copnor, Portsmouth, bombed during the War and later rebuilt – one of the lucky churches

returning home and going round a corner to find their beloved church – and the street where it once stood – simply no longer existed. By the time the Church found the energy to begin rebuilding, much of the population that these churches had served had been moved away to the new suburbs. In Poplar, five out of nine churches disappeared; only one was ever rebuilt, and then in a different location. St Saviour's, Hoxton, went, along with a swathe of its neighbours. Thus began a process which, accelerating through planning disaster, economic decline, and ethnic change, would almost completely remove the constituency which those great names in the history of Catholic Anglicanism had once looked after.

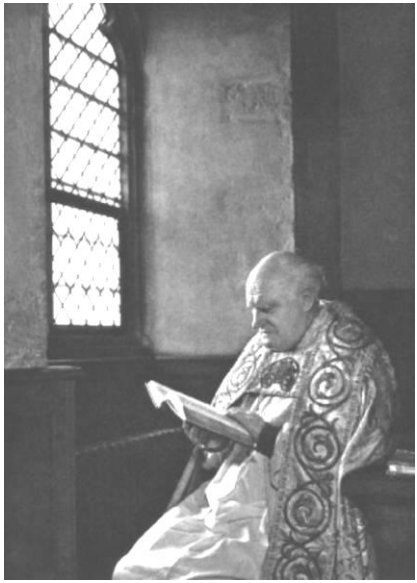
At the time, the Anglo-Catholics had their eyes entirely elsewhere, directed keenly towards events in India. There was a plan to unite the Anglican, Methodist, and United Reformed Churches in one Church of South India; it was to be an episcopal body, but the Nonconformist ministers would not have to be re-ordained to serve in it. To most it looked like an admirable ecumenical venture bringing to an end some of the One True Church's divisions; you could well argue that it was pretty generous on the Nonconformists' part since they were effectively submerging themselves within an Anglican structure, to be led by Anglican bishops. That wasn't how many Anglo-Catholics viewed it at all. They saw the CSI as a stalking-horse for a pan-Protestant reunion which would wreck any chance of the Church of England going home to Rome, and would instead pour into it great streams of 'invalid' clergy and sacraments, poisoning the whole body. TS Eliot wrote a furious pamphlet in opposition; the protests were led by the religious orders, with the significant exception of the Kelham Fathers. In the end, Archbishop Fisher promised that the CSI would not be in communion with the CofE until it became clear how things were working out. Communion was established in 1955 and, although some sillier Anglo-Catholic priests put notices on their church doors saying members of the CSI could not receive the sacraments there (being effectively Dissenters), and a tiny handful 'poped' over the issue, by then most had forgotten what the fuss had been about.

The 1950s were a confident decade for the Church of England, with baptisms and confirmations rising and a general air of quiet comfort and satisfaction prevailing. The Catholic movement rode the crest of the wave. There were more Catholics on the bench of bishops than ever – though numbers coming through the Catholic theological colleges were not quite keeping up, and beneath the surface Evangelicalism was starting to regroup itself after being in the doldrums for decades, as Billy Graham came to Britain to wage his Crusades, and Evangelical groups in the universities blossomed and flourished.

Anglican Catholics now seemed to be marking time. Churches continued to 'go up the candle' rather than down: St Mark's, Burnley, introduced Sung Mass as its main service in 1956, St Faith's Great Crosby brought in incense in the '60s. Catholic theologians largely prevailed. Fr Arthur

Couratin, flamboyant Principal of St Stephen's House and trainer of generations of ordinands thoroughly-drilled and immaculately turned-out, sat on the Church of England's Liturgical Committee, set up in 1954 to develop new forms of service. Walsingham was going from strength to strength, even after Fr Patten died in 1958. But where was it all moving? The Papalists argued that reunion with Rome was the logical outcome of the Oxford Movement, but reunion seemed too remote to be contemplated with any realism. And everything else on the Movement's agenda had been pretty much won. Would the future be simply a matter of slowly winning over one parish after another, and deepening the devotion of the faithful – which, the Church could complacently assume, included everyone in the country, though they might know it not?

Archbishop Fisher relinquished office in 1961 with the typical remark that he left the Church in good heart. Michael Ramsey, Archbishop of York and before that bishop of Durham, Principal of Cuddesdon, and professor of divinity at Durham and Cambridge, succeeded him. Ramsey's first book, in 1936, had been *The Gospel and the Catholic Church*. He was in touch not only with old-fashioned Tractarian Anglo-Catholicism, but with currents of thought in the Roman Catholic and Nonconformist worlds. He habitually wore a purple cassock rather than the wonderfully Trollopian frock, apron and gaiters of his predecessor. Princess Margaret thought he was mad. He moderated the silence of one retreat he was leading by introducing silent croquet. Perhaps he *was* daft, but if so it was the daftness of the saint. And as the new Primate looked over his Church, a Church which had apparently rediscovered its Catholicism and was expressing it more heartily than ever, he did not remark on its good heart, but rather that it might be God's will that its heart be broken.



8. Turning Point: 1962-68

Part of the appeal of Rome was that Rome never changed. Part of the *ideology* of Rome was that Rome never changed. The imperturbable barque of Peter sailed across the waters of the chaotic modern world, heedless of storm and tempest. Such changes as Rome had introduced, or countenanced, had been cleverly disguised to look like continuity. So what would happen when Rome *did* change? What would happen when the unthinkable took place?

Blame it all, to a degree, on Papa Pacelli, Pope Pius XII. He it was who set up the first Roman Catholic Liturgical Commission in 1948, under the very men – Frs Antonelli and Bugnini – who would eventually devise so much of the new liturgies of the '60s. For now, the reforms were, from the outside, slight enough, amounting to moving the Easter Vigil service from the morning of Easter Saturday to the night, restoring it to its ancient position and where the Orthodox kept it (1950); a simplification of the calendar rules and also the Mass rubrics, including abolishing the reading of the Last Gospel, using red vestments on Good Friday instead of black, and so on (1955); and allowing some reading in the Mass by laypeople in the vernacular language (1958).

The way things were: Solemn High Mass at SS Mary & George's, Sands, late 1950s

The most radical change came in 1953 with the relaxation of the fasting rules; radical, because out of the fasting regulations was generated much of the Roman (and therefore Anglo-Catholic) system of worship. Roman Catholics were supposed to receive communion fasting from the previous midnight. The Tractarians had adopted this practice, because it increased respect for the act of communion and connected it to mortification, penitence and awe. Anglo-Catholic churches, therefore, developed a pretty standard pattern of Sunday worship. People were encouraged to come to Low Mass at 8am, or thereabouts, and make their communion. There followed High Mass at about 11am, a feast of colour, spectacle, and grandeur, but at which only the priest and one server (to fulfil the rubrics) communicated. That was effectively a dressed-up

Low Mass, liturgy performed as the backdrop for people's own individual prayers. Sunday concluded with Evensong and Benediction at about 6pm, again a performance by priest, servers and choir at which the people attended devoutly, but passively.

Reducing the required fast to three hours (it went down to an hour in 1964) removed the entire rationale for this pattern. Instantly – if you were going to take the Vatican's instructions seriously – the objection to lunchtime or evening communion was done away with, and it opened the way for more people to receive the sacrament at the mid-morning High Mass. Many Anglo-Catholic clergy simply blinked and refused to recognise what had happened. In fact, it was mostly acknowledged by the hardline Papalists who, if they were to claim any kind of consistency, had to follow Rome's lead and alter what they had been teaching their people. One of these was Fr Fynes-Clinton, who introduced lunchtime weekday Masses at St Magnus the Martyr, setting the precedent for services to attract office workers during the week.

But Papa Pacelli in time gave way to Papa Roncalli; and the rotund bishop from the Veneto, who had throughout his life never given a sign of being anything other than the perfect clerical conservative and was only elected Pope to keep the seat warm until Cardinal Montini was ready for it, was about to smile, pick up the unchanging Church of Rome, and give it a really good hard shake.

Unlikely revolutionaries: Popes Pius XII (left) and John XXIII (right)

Elected in 1958, Pope John XXIII was kindly, avuncular, a pleasant change from the chilly dignity of Pius XII. That was really why Archbishop Fisher had called in to see him on his 1960 visit to Rome, the first incumbent of St Augustine's throne to meet the holder of St Peter's in six centuries. Papa Roncalli read a statement looking forward to the time when 'our separated brethren should return to the Mother Church'; Fisher shook his head and said it was not a matter of *returning*, because there could be no turning back, only two Churches travelling *forward* on parallel lines until God chose they should converge. The Pope thought, and answered, 'You are right'.

Perhaps that was it: perhaps it was *because* Pope John was kindly and avuncular that he could see and think things that others couldn't. In any case, what came out of the General Council he summoned, and which sat in four sessions between 1962 and 1965, was a revolution of stupefying breadth and speed. It was a revolution, first, in liturgy. Repudiated, almost overnight, was the extraordinarily stylised and obscurantist splendour of the Tridentine Mass, its long, repetitious medieval prayers, its frozen reactionary denial of any role to the people lest the whole thing blow apart

in Protestant frenzy, even, most spectacularly, its Latin. It was not yet gone, though a few more years would see it very largely swept into the bin. A vernacular Mass was promulgated in 1968; a new *Missa Normativa*, increasingly celebrated with the priest facing west, facing the people, rather than standing before the altar facing east, followed in 1970.

Beneath these obvious liturgical shifts was a far, far deeper realignment. In its documents, the Council explicitly acknowledged that the Holy Spirit was at work in other Churches, that people *could* be saved outside the boundaries of the Church of Rome, even if their organisations were faulty and inadequate in all sorts of ways. This was astonishing. It undercut much of the Roman Church's rhetoric over the centuries, dissolved the iron boundaries between it and other denominations, at a stroke removed much of what made Catholicism and Catholics so isolated, self-enclosed, and partisan.

The conservatives howled. Cardinal Alfredo Ottaviani, Prefect of the Holy Office (the Inquisition, to everyone outside it), aged and nearly blind yet who had come within a whisker of being elected Pope ahead of John in 1958, composed a brilliant analysis of the liturgical changes, the 'Ottaviani Intervention', which absolutely nailed the thinking behind them, and rejected it in disgust as a betrayal of four centuries of Catholic history, life, and thought. He recognised that this was something far more significant than ritual tinkering. There is a world of difference between an eastward-facing Latin High Mass in which hardly anyone receives communion and parts of the service are deliberately inaudible, and a westward-facing vernacular Eucharist in which everyone communicates, hymns are sung, and prayers recited communally, and 'modern' vestments worn: it is a shift from a physical act of prayer carried out on behalf of a congregation which merely spectates at it, to a corporate celebration of the Christian community's own identity. It is also a move away from an almost exclusively sacrificial symbolism towards that of the communal meal. Ottaviani saw this, and hated it. The Roman Church's claims to exclusiveness rested on the sacrificial nature of the Mass and the idea that priests, properly so called, existed to offer the sacrifice for the people. Weaken that, and you weakened everything. Vatican II, and its new Mass, to Catholics of Ottaviani's stamp, was nothing short of surrender to the Protestants.

(The argument has never ceased. No matter that Rome has shrunk from the full implications of the Council, which it cannot actually go back on, no matter that the Church of Rome has become increasingly centralised and anxious rather than less; what has been said and done cannot be unsaid and undone. There are those Roman Catholics who are estranged from what has happened and regard the Council as heretical: they are the Society of St Pius X. There are those who regard the SSPX as unacceptably friendly to the Vatican and have broken away from it to form the Society of St Pius *V*. There are those who regard Vatican II as such a monstrosity that, in reality, the Throne of St Peter has been vacant ever since 1958 – or 1963, opinion differs – and that those who have visibly occupied it have all been heretics, antipopes. Some allege that Cardinal Siri, the arch-conservative, was secretly Pope Gregory XVII all along; an obscure priest from Spain, directed by angelic visions, claimed until his death in 2005 that *he* was in fact Gregory XVII. The speed with which these dissident groups have fallen out with one another and split is most impressive, and really quite Protestant.)

To resume: the effect of the changes in Rome on Anglo-Catholics was near-complete disorientation and bewilderment. The Vatican had leapfrogged them all and landed on their Protestant side. Of course, it wasn't a *complete* bolt from the blue. The so-called

'Dialogue Mass', which let the congregation make some of the responses themselves, rather than have an acolyte do it all on their behalf, had been permitted as long ago as 1922. The 'Liturgical Movement', encouraging greater lay participation in the Mass, had been cautiously encouraged by several popes, allowing experimental Masses to take place in the sheltered and controllable environments of monasteries in Belgium and France.

Similar thoughts were voiced in Anglican Catholic circles too – by Gregory Dix, of course, and by Fr Gabriel Hebert of the SSM, whose book *The Parish Communion* (1937) affected the way many people thought about the liturgies they inherited. Hebert argued that the post-Reformation rites of *all* the Churches were inadequate, failing to express the full, deep implications of Catholic Christianity as those of the early and undivided Church had done. He referred to the non-communicating High Mass common at most Anglo-Catholic churches as a 'mutilated rite' – the same adjective Isaac Williams had used of the Prayer Book in *Tract 86*, back in the Movement's early days. New church buildings, including – in fact, *especially* – Anglo-Catholic churches built as the 1950s wore on were a far cry from traditional baroque adventure-playgrounds smothered in gold and Italianate statues looking as though they were about to burst into miraculous tears. The new St Giles', Aintree, rebuilt after a fire in 1956; St Francis' Mackworth, Derby; The Ascension, Plymouth; St Mark's, Burnley, replacing a little mission hall; all these and more were spare, modernist, and restrained; emotionally, they communicated not hierarchy and mystery, but community and joy, continuing a pre-War trend towards simplicity. Where older churches were dark, candlelit, speckled with the glint of gold, the new ones were full of light. And the Mass celebrated in all of them was westward-facing. Fr Couratin reconstructed the chapel at St Stephen's House to allow westward-facing celebrations in 1962. Even the Cowley Fathers had got used to saying westward-facing Masses at a nave altar in the otherwise forbidding surroundings of St John's, Oxford, as a way of educating local schoolchildren in what it was all about.

St Francis', Mackworth, Derby: an Anglo-Catholic church in keeping with the times, and in fact anticipating them: it was built in 1954

But reactions to the Roman revolution showed that few people beyond academic liturgists thought anything would actually *happen*. The English Use Catholics (those who hadn't already converted to the new Anglican forms of 1960) were left with a liturgy which now looked not romantic and numinous, but dreadfully insular and fuddy-duddy compared to the new Roman one, with its congregational participation and modern language. The Western Use party were in an even worse position. They had been gaining ground over the previous decade or so: at St Hilda's, Leeds, for instance, a new vicar changed the rite from Sarum to Roman in 1948, and even at All Saints, North Street, in York, where Percy Dearmer's former curate Patrick Shaw had carried the English Use, Tridentine accoutrements began to creep in during the 1950s as the aging Shaw was drawn more in that direction. Now, the Westerners were facing a Rome, to whose lead, if not jurisdiction, they had always deferred, which was abandoning with dizzying speed nearly everything they had argued and fought for, from lace and birettas to the sacrificial theology of the Mass. Some churches drew in their breath and went for it – at SS Mary & Giles, Stony Stratford, they moved the altar forward as early as 1964, before the Council was even over.

The religious orders, among whom the Liturgical Movement's ideas had been circulating for a long while, were especially enthusiastic, as their fellows on the Continent were proving themselves too. In 1966 the Benedictine nuns at West Malling, ostensibly one of the most traditionalist orders, occupying, as they did, the remains of the medieval nunnery there, abandoned their neo-Gothic chapel, and Latin, in favour of an English liturgy and an austere modernist church with a free-standing concrete altar and barely a shred of decoration. It was something entirely new, a new vision of what worship – and therefore the Church itself – could be, something that many could embrace with relief and zeal. Relief was often linked to abandoning other old-fashioned ways, such as restrictive dress, unbearably strict ideals of 'enclosure', and austerities including eating on one's knees in Lent (which the Sisters of the Love of God certainly went in for). The westward-facing Mass expressed an ideal of Christian community to which the orders themselves were supposed to bear witness, so it made especial sense to them.

The sisters at West Malling celebrate Mass in their new chapel, 1967

Most took rather longer to swallow it all, if they ever would. By and large, advanced Anglo-Catholics were *enthusiasts for liturgy*, rather than liturgical thinkers. They had never liked what they heard of the Liturgical Movement and had denounced it roundly: in 1939 the SSC synod discussed the matter and decried concentrating on 'the communion of the people' when they were trying to teach 'the sacrifice of the Mass'. The last issue of the Papalist journal *Reunion,* in 1965, declared 'The seeds of the liturgical revolution now progressing were sown by the clever propaganda of a handful of zealots whose eventual success … was assured by the supine neglect, for generations, to instruct the faithful in the use of the Missal'. So where did that leave them, now that Rome itself had adopted precisely those hateful ideas?[11]

As always, ritual change was such a battleground because it was the surface expression of deeper matters. What the Roman revolution did was begin to expose profound ambiguities in Anglo-Catholicism which Anglo-Catholics were not ready to grapple with. But exposed they were, and, as time proved, in a catastrophically destructive way.

The ambiguous relationship to authority had been there from the beginning, much discussed, but never resolved and never, really, recognised for what it was. The Tractarians had believed in the authority of the bishops, derived from Jesus's Apostles, an authority to teach and defend true doctrine. That was the core of their vision of the Church as the sacred society of God, charged with changing and saving the world. The bishops' authority and apostolicity they thought was embedded in Cranmer's liturgy and the Church of England's formularies. They eventually had to face the fact that the bishops in practice held a rather different view of the matter, and so appealed over their heads to the unimpeachable legality of the Prayer Book, the Caroline Divines, and a battery of quotations and passages from the undivided Church of the first five centuries of Christian history.

Slowly their view carried the day. At first it was permitted, then encouraged, and finally, as Anglo-Catholics found their way into the hierarchy of the Church of England, became the official ideology. The triumph of the English Use was also a victory for the view of history it embodied. But it was won, as we've seen, at the cost of hollowing out any real meaning from the things it claimed to value: the bishops were the authoritative successors of the Apostles, but only as long as they refrained from trying to exercise any real power, and the Prayer Book was the revered cornerstone of English Catholicism only as long as its real theology was ignored, true history defied, and rubrics stretched to breaking point. And now that new and more congenially Catholic liturgies were being devised, even that effort was unnecessary. In fact, very little was left of the original position that the Tractarians had fought and suffered for.

The more Roman-inclined party had thought they'd seen through all that. As Spencer Jones admitted very candidly in *England and the Holy See:*

> *We have said to the Civil courts – we will not obey you; and on certain specific questions we have said also to the bishops – we will not obey you. The bishops in their turn now ask us … whom, then, will you obey? And to this we return the answer – we will obey the Holy Church throughout all the world.*

Yet in practice this was a pretty empty statement. The Anglo-Papalists might declare themselves loyal to Rome, but it was a loyalty Rome did not deign to acknowledge. As far as it was concerned, they had no authentic ecclesial existence; they were no closer to it than any other group of Protestants, no matter how much lace or gold they filled

their churches with, because they had no true priesthood. They were to Rome no more than an embarrassingly obsessive admirer to an indifferent girl. So, disdaining their own bishops, yet unacknowledged by the only authority they *wanted* to submit to, the Papalists were left to follow their own consciences in pretty much everything, as revealed by their different reactions to Vatican II. 'In the end,' as one historian of the Movement has concluded, 'Imitation of Rome means just doing your own thing'. The whole position had a taint of intellectual and moral doublethink.

This is what led to the obsession with sacramental validity in some Anglican Catholic circles, especially after *Apostolicae Curae* declared that Anglican orders were *in*valid. If all the other sources of authority meant nothing, a priest had to be sure that what he was doing was legitimate, that the Masses he celebrated and the baptisms he carried out and the weddings he conducted were actually acknowledged in Heaven, rather than being empty rites and forms of words. And for that he had to be sure about his own ordination.

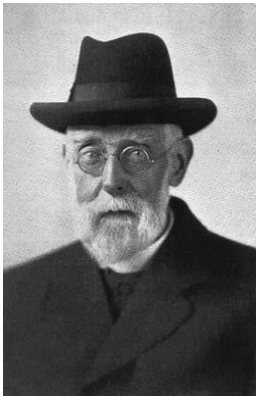
Catholic theologians had argued that for a sacrament ('the sign of a sacred thing inasmuch as it sanctifies a man', as St Thomas Aquinas put it) to be 'valid', the 'matter' (the stuff used, including people), the 'form' (the way it was used), and the 'intention' (of the ministers using it) had to be right. If these three things were in line, it became a genuine channel of the Holy Spirit's grace. It didn't mean that it necessarily had an effect; that depended on the person who received it. But it did mean that it should, all other things being equal. Whether it's appropriate to analyse in such a mechanical way the acts of the Church the New Testament calls 'mysteries' is debatable. It was not a theory laid down at the beginning of the Church, but one deduced from examining what it was actually doing some twelve hundred years later, when there was no other model around to compare with. Notwithstanding the brilliance of the medieval thinkers who devised it, the theory inevitably leads to attempts to identify the exact 'magic moments' in Christian ritual when grace is conferred, and encourages the sort of liturgical fussing in which people are all too prone to indulge anyway. It also meant that the Church of Rome inevitably concluded that the ecclesial structures which separated from it in the 1500s were completely empty of divine grace. This is important, because it had and still has effects on the way Anglo-Catholics think and behave. That the idea of 'validity' can be another source of ambiguity is clear in the joke that did the rounds at St Stephen's House in 2005:

> *'It was lucky Jesus had his maniple with him at the Last Supper, or it wouldn't have been a valid Mass'*

As always, jokes reveal what people are uneasy about, and help to distance them from the very things they profess to value. Camp, over-the-top statements about validity disguise the joker's own doubts about where the principle leads. Is the Holy Spirit really active in the Church I belong to? Is he really operating in my priestly ministry, and in the sacraments I administer? How can I be sure? (Is this whole concept a realistic picture of how the Holy Spirit works? is an equally pertinent question which seems to get asked rather less often.)

The Anglican Church responded, you can be sure he is. Rome replied, you can be sure he's not. Into the gap moved the *episcopi vagantes*, 'wandering bishops', whose own orders were derived from 'valid' sources (the Old Catholics of the Netherlands, various of the Eastern Churches, and other more shadowy routes) but whose consecrations were irregular, whose Churches had disowned them and whose followings were miniscule. Men like AH Mathew, consecrated Bishop in England in 1908 by the Old

Catholic Archbishop of Utrecht and subsequently completely cut off by his own Church as a fraud, came smiling and offering valid orders which would resolve all the doubts and pave the way for reunion of Christendom. A nice idea. No one can be sure – despite the Anglican hierarchy's frantic attempts to find out what was going on – but it seems likely that some hundreds of Anglican priests were re-ordained by Mathew or his followers. Through the 1920s and '30s St Gabriel's, Poplar, had no fewer than four priests on its staff who were clandestine bishops. Of course, they had to keep it pretty quiet, and the whole re-ordination question became another aspect of the doublethink that afflicted the Catholic Movement.



Bishop Gore never really stopped looking as though Fr Ignatius was after him

The second, though connected, area of ambiguity concerned truth. When Dr Pusey had gone to his grave in 1882, it was timely; the rigid professor of old-style Catholicism, who had deliberately turned away from German Biblical scholarship lest it tempt that great intellect in directions his will would not have it go, would have shuddered at what was to come so soon after, and so close to home. Seven short years later, and Charles Gore, first Principal of Pusey House which had been founded in the old hero's memory, was to head the team that produced *Lux Mundi*, a collection of essays intended, as Gore put it, 'so to interpret the Catholic faith, as not to lay an intolerable strain upon the fair action of the intellect', which meant, in practical terms, accepting the theory of evolution and some assumptions of modern Bible scholars, for instance, that Moses had not written the whole of the first five books of the Old Testament. The remaining older Tractarians, Liddon and Denison, were horrified. Fr Ignatius took to following Gore around denouncing him as a heretic. Even in the 1940s, so the story went, Raymond Raynes, Gore's ultramontane successor as Superior of the CR, burned boxes of his papers at Mirfield in horror at the heterodox opinions therein expressed.

The trouble was, in fact, not that Gore and his friends accepted this or that finding of modern science or research, but his overall approach to truth: he idolised truth, and argued for the right to follow it wherever it went. Archbishop Frederick Temple once complained of Newman that instead of deciding for himself what the truth was and then following the Church that taught it, he picked out the Church he thought was the true one, and then followed whatever it taught. Newman might have retorted that that was the very difference between a Catholic and a Protestant approach to truth. For Catholics, truth is settled by the Holy Spirit operating on the whole Church together, not left to each person to work out for themselves. Erode that, and it becomes difficult to see where truth resides. Any development or change that turns up *may* be the will of the Holy Spirit, and if individual Churches – or individuals, for that matter – have the right to settle things according to their own account of the truth without referring to the Church as a whole, what's left of the ideal of the Church as the Body of Christ, struggling together to do his will and proclaim his Gospel to the world?

In making the Incarnation the key Catholic doctrine, *Lux Mundi* also endorsed a 'kenotic' account of Jesus's nature and identity. Arising from St Paul's words in Philippians 2.6-11, the idea of *kenosis* describes the eternal Son's divesting himself of divine powers and knowledge in order to become fully human, fully incarnated in Jesus of Nazareth. Stated like that, it's a perfectly orthodox doctrine; but it depends

how far you take it. How thorough, how radical was the *kenosis*? Did it mean that Jesus was wholly a human of his time, with the attitudes and prejudices one might expect of a first-century male Jew? Would that not mean that his revelation of who God was and what he wanted of human beings was partial, incomplete, conditioned? That Jesus's words, or his life, were not the unmediated revelation of God, but a culturally-determined version which might have to be adapted or even superseded as time went by? The *Lux Mundi* writers certainly did not articulate any such thing, but that was where their theology tended.

What shall we say about Stewart Headlam? This founder of the Guild of St Matthew was an ardent Christian Socialist, but that wasn't the problem with his ideals. Political radicalism and Catholic doctrine were not incompatible, though the existence of plenty of very Tory Catholics suggested they might not be inseparable as Headlam liked to think. But Headlam's view that the sacraments were the revolutionary acts of a revolutionary society left no room for anything else. He claimed that traditional Catholic doctrines were necessary to underpin social action, but what about their own underpinning? He had little to say about that. In practice, existing authorities, bishops or the like, were there to be defied: 'Question everything, take nothing for granted, prove, sift, test every opinion, however venerable, however cherished'. But question it by what standard? Even the sacraments themselves had no saving power for individuals as such: they revealed the presence of God in a creation that was already sacred. The absolute truths of God tended to disappear in Headlam's proclamation of rebellion. Here was another approach which would attract wider support later on. It allowed essentially secular aspirations to be given a Christian gloss. It opened up the possibility of sacramental worship without traditional Catholic doctrine behind it.

Anglican Catholics aimed at creating new communities organised around the Church, and so their church buildings ideally dominated their surroundings physically as well as religiously. Here, St Silas', Kentish Town, sits above the terraced artisans' cottages around it like a mother hen

One final area of fracture and ambiguity was the disparity between what the Anglo-Catholics thought they were doing and what was really going on in parishes, which would be revealed less by the Roman revolution than by general changes in the Church's relationship with British society in the 1960s. What the Anglo-Catholic mission priests (and their less evangelistic successors) had wanted to create were Anglican versions of the Roman Catholic communities they saw operating, in particular, among the Irish population, where society and leisure were organised around the church and its sacramental life, orbited by religious orders, and held together by the paternalistic relationship between priest and people.

But this model had never been very realistic. Roman Catholic priests were often 'poor men among the poor' – they came from the community they served, which was hardly ever true of the Anglo-Catholics. Instead, figures such as Frs Stanton, Tooth, Wagner and Benson were extremely wealthy: they had to be to produce the gorgeous ecclesiastical settings their principles required. Social commentators, such as Charles Booth, who were suspicious of Ritualism, declared that people were more likely to respect a hard-working and committed clergyman than be attracted by Catholic ideas as such, and obviously while this *could* sustain a Roman-style parish community while he was there, it ran the risk of collapse once he left.

For Anglo-Catholicism to 'bed down' socially needed more than just the beauty of holiness, personal or ecclesiastical. The Romans had the bedrock support of Irish immigration. The Anglo-Catholics found that extra factor only in two areas, the South Yorkshire coalfield, where Lord Halifax was the catalyst in bolting Anglo-Catholic ideals onto a pre-existing working-class industrial culture; and in the East End of London, an incredible patchwork of what were essentially urban villages where paternalist priests could make a difference precisely because they were the only authority figures who actually lived with the people they worked among.

Elsewhere, the movement colonised the seaside and the suburbs, the priests of its provincial and largely middle-class congregations proudly telling themselves the old, old story of Lowder and Stanton and Tooth.[12] John Betjeman described

St Aidan's with the prickly nobs
And iron spikes and coloured tiles –
Where Auntie Maud devoutly bobs
In those enriched vermilion aisles:

In most places, then, Anglo-Catholic priests were in a strangely ambiguous position. The materials for building the organic parish society they dreamed of were simply not available, and instead Anglo-Catholic identity had to be constructed on sectarian lines. A strong sense of ideological distinctiveness was built up in Catholic Anglican churches, dramatised by the accounts of persecution against the early pioneers of the movement. Yet this sectarian reality, and other versions of it practised by other sorts of Anglican Catholics, sat uncomfortably with the phantom parochial ideal, expressed movingly by Arthur Stanton as he noticed people coming to the Watch Night service at Holborn in the early 1900s:

> *These are my friends. They have come, I fear, many of them come straight from the public house. It is the only time they think of coming to church. But these dear people are our real parishioners, the people for whom the church was built.*

Anglican Catholics were the strongest defenders of Stanton's pastoral, parochial vision, which meant they were obliged to provide the sacraments to all comers. They might attempt to teach the significance of baptism, confirmation, matrimony and the Mass, but only a small minority of their flocks ever accepted the need for confession which was the key to generating the sense of personal conversion and commitment. That meant Catholic clergy yearned for organic communities, but ended up with sectarian ones, and had to work within inclusive ones inherited from the Anglican establishment. As in so much else, they were self-deceived about what was really going on. As social change made it less and less possible to maintain churches by pastoral work, sectarian teaching became more vital. But the Roman revolution meant Anglo-Catholics no longer really knew what to teach; and their own history meant they were probably going to be blind to the fact.

There were four ways to respond to the crisis: two were thoroughly enthusiastic, one was cheerful but half-hearted, and one unreal but comforting.

You could go for it. You simply could not do mystery, hierarchy and ecstatic reverie with the new Mass: but you could do democracy and radicalism. It was enough to captivate many of the ordinands emerging from theological colleges, and resonated superbly with radical 1960s politics; seen cynically, it was a way to talk revolution without being putting yourself at risk. Young clergy spent the next twenty years arriving at traditionalist Anglo-Catholic churches, bringing the altar forward, putting up Christian Aid and CND posters, and quoting from Archbishop Helder Camara. They could sit pretty light – sometimes *very* light – to old-fashioned theology, scripture, sin and repentance, and often rather agreed with rationalist criticisms of them, that they were all authoritarian strategems designed to keep people cowed and fearful. The danger here was that the Catholicism was incidental, just as the politics was often superficial; and the apparent supernatural object of the sacraments became swallowed up in their social significance.

You could go for it, but in a different way – rather than your Church life becoming less supernatural, it could become more. The revolution could open up the possibility of the Holy Spirit working in unexpected ways. A curate called John Gunstone felt the disorientating effect of Vatican II: 'the compasses of Anglo-Catholics suddenly went crazy', he recalled. As the Council broke down the old mechanistic conception of how the Holy Spirit operated, Gunstone was drawn towards the Charismatic revival, leaking into the Anglican Church via All Souls, Langham Place, and other churches. In Charismatic congregations, life-giving grace could be seen very clearly at work. The sacraments of the Church were supposed to heal, to restore, to express forgiveness: yet here those things were happening without sacramental context. Gunstone wanted to bring the two together, and became a well-known writer on healing ministry and charismatic gifts. 'Catholic Charismatic' churches, such as St Michael's, Tividale, and its daughter church Holy Cross, or St Bartholomew's, Ipswich, could work quite well. But the whole approach blew the idea of exclusive sacramental validity out of the water. It also, yet again, weakened the distinctiveness of the Catholic tradition.

As did the third option, a modernised Parish Communion-style Catholicism, which turned out to be the path most trodden. Most of the old English Use parishes were tempted in this direction. Just as it had been easy to adapt an ancient church for Sarum services, so it was just as easy to adapt Sarum ceremonial to the new Anglican liturgy of Series One, and for it gradually to dilute and dwindle. There is a hierarchy of conservatism in church arrangements. Liturgical words can be changed fairly easily, and people quickly forget that they were any different. Ceremonial takes a bit more shifting; and fixtures and fittings can often survive long after the ritual that justified

them has come and gone. If the ideology that underpinned the liturgy has gone first, that makes it all the easier. So today you can visit many churches, especially in the countryside, that the English Use washed over in a tide that has long retreated, first moving away from the Sarum liturgy, then from the details like incense and plainsong that Sarum made sense of, leaving behind it, like wave-worn seashells on the shore, a curtained altar there, a hanging pyx here, perhaps even a statue of Our Lady left on a side windowsill without candles or flowers, let alone prayers.

As a result, there was increasing convergence between a weakening Catholic movement and a strengthening Evangelical one. New-style Evangelicalism, Evangelicalism led by John Stott and Max Warren, was a far friendlier, more positive beast, with more open boundaries, than the older version had been. At the Keele conference in 1967, Anglican Evangelicals freed themselves from their adherence to the 1662 rite as the standard of liturgy (everyone else had, after all), and announced that they would aim for a weekly celebration of the Eucharist as the central service of Christ's Church. 'Protestant' was a word hardly mentioned: it had ceased to resonate now that England wasn't observably 'Protestant' in any sense, and the Church of Rome's own edges were blurring. The Eucharist now provided a meeting-ground for all brands of Anglican, and increasingly for Christians across denominational boundaries too. A triumph for the Anglo-Catholics? Well, to a point; but now they were losing all distinctiveness, and weakening as they did so.

The final approach was retreat, nostalgia, refusing to acknowledge any change. Many Anglo-Catholic churches maintained the old ways, unable to find a way of proceeding, of re-ordering their thought and teaching as well as their chancels, gradually changing when a new incumbent arrived, or attracting enough support from scattered worshippers, bereft of the old rites through which God spoke to their hearts, to keep going without alteration. John Betjeman wrote the poem 'Anglo-Catholic Congresses' around this time, recalling 'We who remember the Faith, the grey-headed ones,/Of those Anglo-Catholic Congresses swinging along …

Yet, under the Travers baroque, in a limewashed whiteness,
The fiddle-back vestments a-glitter with morning rays,
Our Lady's image, in multiple-candled brightness,
The bells and banners – those were the waking days
When Faith was taught and fanned to a golden blaze.

It was lovely, romantic, moving. And all it required was to wall your religious life around from all those spectres that Vatican II had raised, and not think about them.

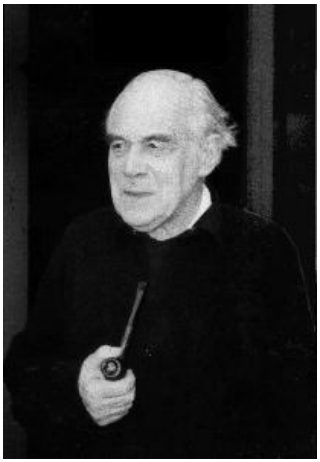
Ivan Clutterbuck had been born and raised in the great Anglo-Catholic church of St George's, Beckenham, brought up on the ideology of advanced Catholicism, the stories of the Movement's martyrs, the assumption that somewhere, if not in Beckenham itself, were fervent Ritualist parishes where congregations of cloth-capped workers still revered the names of Frs Lowder and Mackonochie. By 1968 he was Chairman of the Church Union, and responsible for organising the decennial Congress. But what rite should the Congress adopt for its triumphal final Mass? There was argument and strain. Eventually, after much thought, the committee decided to follow the new pattern, and Mass was concelebrated by a semicircle of Anglo-Catholic bishops, wearing modern vestments and standing behind a westward-facing altar. Clutterbuck was converted to this 'communitarian' rite as opposed to the old 'sacrificial' one: his idea of Catholicism reorganised itself around it. That was the signal for many Catholic parishes to follow suit. But it was not the end of the story. The pain and decline had only begun.

9. Tattered Banners, 1968-92

The Vatican Council had shattered long-standing assumptions of the Catholic Movement. Anglo-Catholics were, not surprisingly, not well fitted to respond to the crisis the Church itself faced as the 1960s wore on. After some years when Anglicans, at least, had seemed to be doing well in attracting and retaining support, from the mid-'60s there was a sudden and dramatic collapse. Every indicator – baptisms, confirmations, marriages in church, ordinations – dropped away startlingly. It was a crisis Anglicans shared with their fellow Christians, though it took a few years longer for the Roman Catholics to feel the same chilly wind.

As is usual in such cases, conservatives blamed the fact that the Church had changed at all; radicals, that it hadn't changed enough. But decline was felt even in ultra-traditionalist Protestant denominations whose ideas hadn't shifted an inch for decades, in fact, was felt there most deeply. Perhaps the Christian story was now simply implausible to most people, not so much because of science or evolution or anything like that directly, but at a very basic level: the pattern of fall and redemption was meaningless to people who didn't think of themselves as 'fallen', and who inhabited a world that didn't look as though it was 'fallen' either. Even if it *was* a bad and unhappy world (and for increasingly wealthy and optimistic Westerners it didn't seem to be), there were more convincing secular explanations and secular solutions to try. In the early '60s, with the Council and all that, it looked as though the Church might fall in line behind the worldly mood of optimism and advance. It looked as though there could be (to paraphrase one writer) Catholicism without rigidity, socialism without tyranny, capitalism without callousness, religion without sin, and sex without worry. Of course there couldn't; but by the time that became clear, the whole ideological underpinning of the old order, that made people put up with so much for such meagre earthly reward, had melted away astonishingly rapidly. There was no going back. No longer would even lip-service be paid to those hollow old ideals and institutions. From now on, when someone converted to Christian orthodoxy it would commonly be down to some individual crisis which made them see themselves and their world differently, and more darkly: which made God seem a reasonable solution.

The Anglo-Catholics had no real response to make. Ironically, considering how the Tractarian revolution had produced such a sense of missionary zeal, they had for too long been comfortable and secure, and had no vocabulary to engage when things were not comfortable and secure, when the Church no longer had an assured role. The Papalists were quite used to feeling left out in the cold; but Papalist clergy were mainly of such an authoritarian frame of mind that they seemed to have no model to follow beyond arriving in a parish and imposing what they wanted to do on it; their imagination could only work one way. And what they wanted to do was now very out-of-step with the times. The Evangelicals and Charismatics could at least talk in personal terms about a relationship with God, a language which would eventually become hackneyed and glib but which was *some* response to make to a culture in which the individual, the subjective and personal, were now supreme. Conservative Anglo-Catholics had spent their energies teaching their people an exclusively sacrificial doctrine of the Mass, which had now been jettisoned, and the names of vestments. Ivan Clutterbuck alleged that Anglo-Catholicism wasn't really fazed at all by the 1960s revolution, but that may have been because he came to terms with it himself. Far more churches were now staffed by tired priests with fewer curates to help or enthuse them, and a heritage from the past requiring more effort to reconcile with the present than they could muster. They could think of nothing to say.



Fr Gresham Kirkby

The Catholic radicals, on the other hand, had quite a lot to say, but not much of it was very helpful. These were, note, not the tough Catholic Socialists of old, priests of the stamp of Gresham Kirkby, the Anarcho-Communist vicar of St Paul's, Bow Common, who in 1960 rebuilt his church in the new, inclusive, westward-facing fashion, and when challenged over its lack of Roman spirit chuckled 'Rome will catch up', which it did. These were not the new Catholic Socialists, either, resurrected by Kenneth Leech in the form of the Jubilee Group in 1974, theologically orthodox as well as politically left-wing. On the contrary, the radicals' Jesus was not much different from Dennis Potter's portrayal in his BBC play of 1969, *Son of Man*: a friend of the poor and outcast, a peaceful revolutionary, but not a divine Saviour. The Fall they envisaged was not a rebellion of human sin and pride which had poisoned the whole Creation, but a failure to be just to people, which could be corrected by effort and reform in which the Church had a part to play as 'a prophetic voice'. This vision invigorated and enthused some churches, certainly. But it didn't seem to add anything to the debate secular politics was quite capable of having for itself.

As well as the Church's relationship with English society and culture shifting, its internal arrangements were being revolutionised in ways which also did no favours to Anglican Catholics. The Paul Report on the deployment and payment of clergy (1964) pointed to great imbalances between urban and rural provision of churches – despite the frantic building of the Victorians – and in clerical incomes from parish to parish. There were no centrally-paid clergy pensions: the fact that a retiring incumbent could take one-third of his parish's income with him as a pension meant that often he didn't retire at all, because with a couple of former incumbents still alive there might not be enough left. All cathedrals saw their statutes renegotiated in 1963; theological colleges closed down; synodical government was established in 1970, granting the Church the freedom and self-government the Tractarians had dreamed of – though, it has to be said, only because the politicians were no longer very interested in what it got up to. Numbers of diocesan staff blossomed as more and more people were needed to manage all this change, whereas in the old days the whole thing had largely run itself. (As time went on, it would come to seem that a Church which had embraced such massive change had lost the ability to stop.)

Most dramatically for the Anglo-Catholics, livings were amalgamated, first one or two together, then accelerating until by the century's end country vicars could be trying to juggle a dozen churches or more. Very rarely were these all of one liturgical tradition, and one priest could hardly be expected to engage creatively or prayerfully with a whole set of different traditions, still less conscientiously to teach the various doctrines that underpinned them all. So country churches tended to get levelled up or down to the consensus rite of the Parish Communion, which could look moderately Catholic enough on the surface but which actually said very little about the theological opinions of the priest performing it or the tradition of the church concerned. That is, if it managed to retain any provision of worship at all.

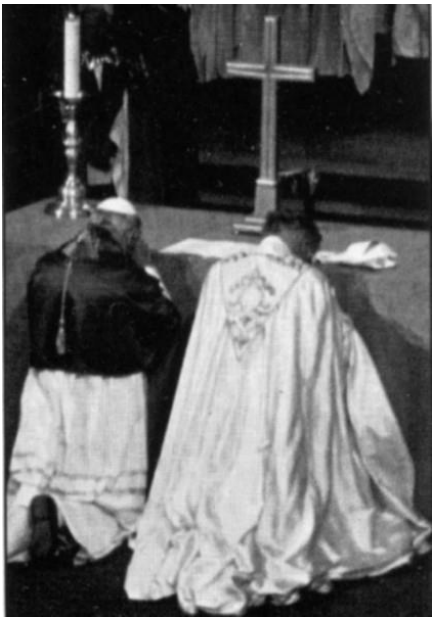
The shrines, altar and screen of St Mary's, Kettlebaston. Not many churches looked after by Papalist clergy were as thoroughly Gothic in their decoration

St Mary's, Kettlebaston, was one such church. This remote Suffolk village parish already had a Catholic tradition, but after the Papalist Fr HC Butler arrived in 1930 it scaled unprecedented heights. The simple dedication to St Mary, which had sufficed throughout the Middle Ages, was elaborated into 'The Coronation of Our Lady'. Shrines appeared (to Mary and the Sacred Heart of Jesus); an eccentric but rather splendid painted rood screen was installed; the new high altar, as we've seen, required a colonial bishop to consecrate it, not surprisingly as by then Butler had had nothing to do with any English ecclesiastical authority for years. His plan for a local order of nuns never came to much. By 1963 his congregation had dwindled virtually to nil, and he had to rely on the family of a priest who had retired nearby to celebrate the Easter Week services; it was highly unusual for so rural a church to be observing the full Easter Triduum rites anyway. Butler retired, dispirited and ill, in 1964, and died five years later. Immediately he left, his parish was amalgamated with a group of others, and his type of churchmanship, isolated, defiantly ploughing one furrow in one rural church no matter how many or how few people turned up to take part, became impossible. In 2000, in the church where Butler had struggled to keep the full ritual of Easter going despite such discouraging circumstances, there were no services between Morning Prayer on Palm Sunday (April 16th) and May 7th. Yet, following Rattue's Law of the Conservation of Church Fittings (see above, p.91), all his decorations and changes to the church have survived, even if nobody much uses them.[13]

The inner weakness of Anglo-Catholicism was obscured for a while by its inherited strength of numbers and by the convergence of Canterbury and Rome. The former allowed the Catholic party in the Church Assembly, and after it the General Synod, to frustrate moves to bring the Methodists back into the Anglican fold; they were helped by a group of old-fashioned Evangelicals suspicious of any ecumenical venture on

principle. That was in 1972.[14] The victory was followed by similar votes against the ordination of women (1978), allowing women priests from other Anglican provinces to minister in England (1979), and the 'ecumenical covenanting' scheme (1982). In each case the Anglo-Catholics were able to gather a big enough minority to block the measure. But what a negative, carping signal it sent: all the Catholics were able to say to the modern Church was 'no'. And it was clear that time was against them, because their strength in Synod could only diminish.

Relations with Rome, on the other hand, made it look as though things were still moving forward. Archbishop Ramsey visited Pope Paul VI, and won a careful declaration of respect for 'our sister the Church of England', as the Pope put it. The Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission did tough theological work hammering out joint statements on Eucharistic theology, orders, and authority. When Robert Runcie was enthroned as Archbishop of Canterbury in 1980, it was, says Adrian Hastings, 'an expression of Western Catholic Christianity almost fully-re-established': cardinals and Old Catholic bishops attended, a Marian hymn was sung (it was the Feast of the Annunciation), and Cardinal Hume read a lesson. Two months later Runcie became the first Anglican archbishop to lead the pilgrimage to Walsingham; he followed the statue of Our Lady flanked by the two leading Anglo-Catholic bishops, Kemp of Chichester and Leonard of Truro. Finally, in 1982 Pope John Paul II, on the first ever Papal visit to Britain, attended Mass in Canterbury Cathedral and, surrounded by the Anglican and Roman Catholic bishops of England, gave Runcie the kiss of peace.



Four centuries of enmity put aside: Pope John Paul II and Archbishop Runcie pray at the altar of Canterbury Cathedral, 1982

That climactic moment represented a peak, rather like the Council time of twenty years before. A Muslim fanatic made an attempt on John Paul's life, and the mood in Rome darkened and turned more fearful; after that no advance seemed to be very likely in bringing home the sundered provinces of the English Church. But more significant, perhaps, was the behaviour of the Roman Catholic laity. When Pope Paul came out with his encyclical on birth control, *Humanae Vitae*, in 1968, he shattered old-style Papal authority in the very act of trying to preserve it. He had banned the Council from discussing the matter, set up a panel of experts instead, and then rejected their advice that the Church should accept artificial forms of family planning, very clearly because not disagreeing with a previous pope (until they had been safely dead at least three centuries) was the higher of the two principles. The younger generation of Catholics spotted this very easily, and from that moment, no matter how honoured and respected the Pope was, his laypeople decided for themselves which of his pronouncements they would pay any attention to. Increasingly they saw no clear difference between themselves and the Anglicans, and happily turned up to worship in

Anglican churches, and even to receive communion, without a demur. That was ecumenism in a most brutally practical form.

But away from Walsingham, away from Lambeth Palace and the committee rooms of ARCIC, away from the Synod meetings, Anglo-Catholics had nothing to celebrate, as the fallout of the 1960s continued to filter through and they continued failing to have any coherent response. To illustrate that story, we turn to two churches, a religious order, and an individual.

St James', Weybridge, is a typical small-town church of the sort 'Catholicised' in large numbers in the 18- and 1900s. In 1848 the comfy little medieval church was demolished by the Rector, William Giffard, a well-connected High Churchman and member of the Ecclesiological Society, who had spent two years gathering a little band

This (sadly damaged) picture shows Rector Buckley celebrating the Eucharist in St James', Weybridge, about 1973. A grand English Use church is being adapted to new ways of doing things, but in piecemeal fashion – typical of many moderate Catholic churches. The hanging lamps are down to one, incense has gone, but the servers still wear their apparelled albs, and Mr Buckley still sports a maniple

of like-minded locals. Seven of them provided the bulk of the rebuilding costs. JL Pearson – then starting his Gothic Revival career – was drafted in to design the new fabric. Ostensibly the church was reconstructed because the old one was too small and its sittings too tied up by pew-rents, but it was very clear that the new building was designed for Tractarian-style worship. Not only was there nostalgia for the old church, but many people found the change ideologically repugnant too, and, so the story goes, stayed away from the new church in droves. The nail in the coffin of the Anglican Catholic Revival in Weybridge came when the exiled French King Louis Philippe, resident at Claremont House nearby but unable to worship there, began attending the little Roman Catholic chapel of St Charles Borromeo up the hill and made it suddenly fashionable for Papists from miles around; anti-Catholic hatred killed off any effort by St James' to move in that direction. Giffard's successor, the emollient Edward Rose, made his churchmanship abundantly clear on his gravestone in 1883 – carved on the rear of the cross at its foot, and kept discreetly inoffensive, is a chalice with an ascending host – but under him the ceremonial never got beyond monthly Communion and a robed choir. As a memorial to Rose there was a fresh outpouring of lavish expenditure on a new chancel, for which Pearson reappeared and covered every surface in marble, mosaic, and gold leaf; but still the worship itself remained moderate. Spencer Buller, a former Vicar of St Peter's, Bushey Heath (which was far more advanced than Weybridge) did establish weekly Communion as the principal Sunday service after World War I, and set up a branch of the Guild of All Souls. However, when Ernest Tritton, former curate at Margaret Street, arrived as Rector in 1924, he introduced Weybridge to the glories of the English Use, finally bringing to the building the worship it was designed for. For the next twenty years, St James' had hanging sanctuary lamps, High Mass vestments, advertised times for confession, and incense. But Fr Tritton died suddenly in 1942 and, as elsewhere, the observances gradually dropped away until all that was left were vestments and candles. In the early 1970s Rector Michael Buckley brought in a nave altar – an unprepossessing Jacobean table which had served the purpose in a cemetery chapel – and the Eucharist was celebrated at it within feet of the front pews and on the same level (it was some years more before a dais was put in so that people could actually see what was happening). The English Use gave way to Series One, the Alternative Service Book, and Common Worship.

SS Mary & George's, Sands, in High Wycombe, was in contrast a Western Use church from the start. The building, as completed in 1938, was fairly modest in size with seats for about 200 worshippers, but its massive construction and Byzantine style made it a dramatic and splendid structure. The altar, which could never be used for anything other than an eastward-facing mass, and the tabernacle for the reserved sacrament, were built, with the same eye on eternity, from concrete. Like other '30s churches, the keynote was dramatic, monolithic simplicity rather than Ritualist fuss.

The Anglo-Catholic parochial model did to some extent work at Sands, since the furniture industry, which made High Wycombe seem like a Northern manufacturing town accidentally islanded in leafy Buckinghamshire, provided a bedrock of community identity. Certainly the church did its best to link into that pre-existing local culture. Perhaps the most striking instance of active outreach came with a parish newspaper, sold round the houses and pubs of the parish by teams of church members, which at its height reached several thousand people. It contained a good deal of community news as well as sound Catholic teaching on both doctrine and morals. The church conducted house blessings, carried out public processions, and blessed the local allotment gardens at Rogationtide. Although Sands was a daughter church of the ancient parish of West Wycombe, it was left to do its own thing and certainly none of the neighbouring churches were providing a daily Mass along with

the standard Anglo-Catholic Sunday pattern of early Communion, non-communicating High Mass at 11am, and Evensong with Benediction to finish off.

The first sign of change came in the late 1960s when the newspaper was expanded to include the whole of the parish of West Wycombe. Sands people were very proud of being asked to take this on, but it meant a loss of identity as news from the wider parish had to be included. More importantly, the churches Sands was linked with were not of quite the same churchmanship and there was an inevitable sense of dilution. Then, in January 1969, from one week to the next, the number of communicants at the 8am Sunday Communion fell off dramatically while those at the main service shot up from 2 or 3 to 50 or 60. The name was also tinkered with – for a while it became 'People's Mass' or 'Parish Mass'. These changes obviously followed directly on from the pattern set by the 1968 Church Union Congress. Within a couple of years, a sense of confidence had turned into crisis as Mass attendance dropped, giving declined, and change became faster. There was talk of amalgamating the church with a neighbour, and the congregation took a vote on it.

In 1977 Fr John Hadley arrived as Vicar, a Mirfield graduate but whose approach to the Catholic heritage was very different from what Sands was used to. He believed passionately in Christianity's call to social justice, and was involved in a number of local organisations and campaigns. Fr Hadley introduced into the church a nave altar, modern vestments, and many new Christians; his charismatic personality stamped itself on the church for ten years. Unfortunately the next few were less happy. After Fr Hadley left, a curate continued in charge for 18 months, and the succeeding Vicars suffered from long bouts of illness and stress. Isolated from an Anglican Catholic movement itself in severe decline, ideologically confused by change, suffering from years of limited clerical oversight, and surrounded by a changing community it was ill-equipped to deal with, the church fell prey to personality conflicts and irregularities. It became notorious in the wider area and increasingly cut off from the world around it.

Next, the Kelham Fathers. The Society of the Sacred Mission regularly failed to sign up to the Movement's *causes célèbres*, remaining silent about the Church of South India, and fostering the Parish Communion movement. It had grown out of its founder, Herbert Kelly, trying ways of preparing priests to serve in mission fields, especially Korea. Eventually he decided on a tough, practical community life as the best preparation:

> *Cooking takes too much time ... but at least we should scrub our own floors and doorsteps, wash up our own meals, and sweep our own passages. If we come to serve and not to be served, we might as well face it.*

Kelly's faith was a humble, yet vigorous one. For him, 'authority' was 'a guide to thinking, not a substitute for it. Faith ... is a faith in God, not in doctrines. In the end, you will have to find what the doctrines mean to you.' Anglo-Catholics might tend to fall in line too easily with the classifying, doctrinalist side of religion, but that was a trend Kelly had nothing to do with. The chapel at Kelham, a mighty square domed space so spare and austere that visitors compared it to Stonehenge, was a place of simplicity and profound depth. Yet though Kelly may have been no Anglo-Catholic automaton, his early experience at Sandhurst seems to have filtered a military flavour into the order: in the '30s young ordinands were told to think of themselves as 'Stormtroopers of God'! By about 1960 there were 80 brothers in the Society and a similar number of ordinands in training, two priories and a seminary in Australia, and others in Japan and Africa. Yet within a few years, numbers had collapsed, and the theological college was closed in 1973.

One brother, Fr Clement Mullenger, returning from India in the 1970s, alleged that the Order had, in important respects, maintained a façade for years. Its egalitarian ethos obscured a rigid hierarchy of 'top brass', the rest of the brethren, novices, and ordinands, a structure enforced by authoritarian sermons, dictatorial notices on boards, and competitive austerity. How long did that novice spend on his knees after Compline? How little is that brother managing to eat? How rigidly can we regulate our encounters with females, or with the whole world outside? Fr Mullenger put this down to the need, regardless of what Herbert Kelly might have thought, to present an acceptably medieval-looking front to the Anglo-Catholic parishes who supported the Society and fed people into it, and alleged that 'we have moved away from an image of "following Christ" [to] something triumphalist, secure, rigidly structured, world fleeing, pietistic, absolutist. Adjectives could be multiplied but these must suffice.' No wonder it all fell apart so quickly.

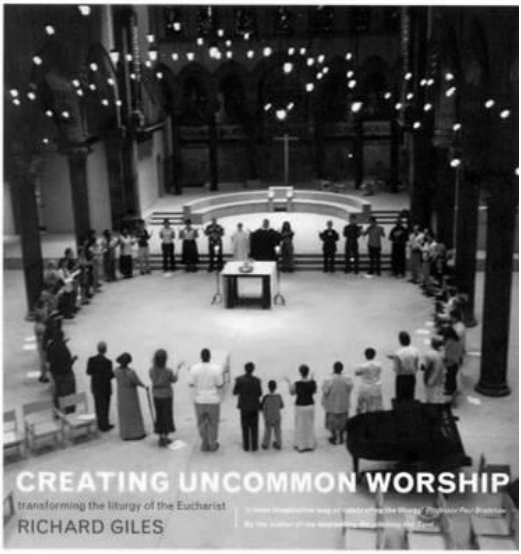
After Kelham shut, a group of the brothers moved to Willen in Buckinghamshire, and looked after the parish church until the growth of Milton Keynes called a new structure into being. An even smaller priory was established in 1997, and now works alongside an 'intentional community' called 'The Well at Willen', another, less formal experiment in Christian communal living. The same year, a different group of SSM members set up St Antony's Priory in Durham, a 'centre for ecumenical spirituality'. The SSM now accepts women members, and its website features the writings of ultra-liberal clerics like Bishop Richard Holloway of Edinburgh, or Anthony Freeman, a Sussex priest famously sacked by Bishop Eric Kemp for not believing in God. Is the Society still Catholic? It does show how radical Catholicism can set off from someone like Fr Kelly and arrive in very unfamiliar places indeed.

Finally, an individual. The SSM took Catholicism in a seeking, liberal direction; but there is a different sort of 'liberal Catholicism' which is much firmer, even authoritarian in its own way, depending who it affects. In 1965 an ordinand at Cuddesdon, Richard Giles, visited a number of monasteries in France and found their 'restored' liturgy a life-transforming experience. At the Abbey of En Calcat he felt he was 'witnessing a reformation in progress … Here was "the Spirit speaking to the churches", and one's knees shook'. Giles took that amazing vision, a vision of the liturgy establishing a new, God-centred community, forward into his whole ministry:

> *If we can imagine a* whole liturgy *– not just a homily – that disrupts as much as it consoles, that offers us alternative images, that reshapes the way we imagine, that enables us to react violently against the forces, internal and external, that enslave us, then we shall be on the way to a new state of seeing and being.*

His reordering of St Thomas's, Huddersfield, was a triumphant expression of that vision and was written up in *Re-Pitching the Tent* (1996), a book which swiftly became the set text for vicars lumbered with hopeless and inappropriate old buildings. On becoming Dean of Philadelphia, Giles had an entire cathedral in which to pursue his ideas, again published in *Creating Uncommon Worship* (2005).

Now, Gilesian liturgy was ostensibly Catholic. It employed vestments, incense, the whole panoply of sensual devices to communicate religious truth, as the Ritualists had always advocated. But what truth *was* being communicated? In *Creating Uncommon Worship* Giles stated that the Eucharistic assembly 'stand as Christ' around the altar, that it was the assembled people that sanctified the ritual 'stuff', and thus the sacrament became a way of making people's own innate holiness visible, rather than *making them holy*. This is a long, long way from traditional Catholic concerns with



sacraments, tradition, and unity, and in fact at Philadelphia God seems to disappear into the Christian community itself, ceasing to exist apart from his people. Couple that with Giles's clear authoritarian bent and you arrive at a sort of 'liberal Catholicism' which, once it's decided in favour of modern liturgy, gay rights, women priests, and so on, isn't going to regard opposition as anything to be respected or even debated with, just, in so far as it can be, ignored.

There were more problematic things going on under the surface, which Anglo-Catholics wanted to talk about even less. A subdued homosexual element in the Movement had always been half-hinted at. When M Trench came to write Fr Lowder's biography in 1882, he felt compelled to stress that his hero was not a Ritualist 'after the gushing, effeminate, sentimental manner of young shop-boys', thus implying that such effeminate shop-boys existed. In fact, we now know from his diaries that Archbishop Laud himself was a celibate gay: it went back that far. This matter has always been controversial, though it would be as silly to regard Anglo-Catholicism as a gay movement as it would be to deny the gay undercurrent. But homosexuality itself isn't really the problem: laypeople like WH Auden and clergy like Jeffrey John have proved able to reconcile their sexual identity with reasonably orthodox Christian faith. The real corrosive trouble is with camp. Camp is a sort of humour which relies on inversion and exaggeration to distance someone from the things they are supposed to be taking seriously, and disguises doubts, ambiguities, and conflicts. Eventually the irony can take over; perhaps gays are particularly prone to this (and certainly following a homosexual lifestyle generates a conflict with traditional Catholic morals), but they aren't alone in it. If irony does triumph, no serious engagement with religion or its problems can be talked about or taught; and it leaves the Catholic movement with what the Jubilee Group denounced as 'gin, lace, and backbiting'.

So we turn to St Stephen's House. 'Staggers' was important because with the closure of so many other theological colleges it and Mirfield became the remaining standard-bearers for old-fashioned Anglo-Catholicism. But Mirfield had been penetrated by liberal theology, and St Stephen's could best be described as decadent. After Fr Couratin retired in 1962 and the gentler Derek Allen – Nora, as he was affectionately known – took over as Principal, the place seemed to explode. The most serious

problem seems to have been the unquestioning acceptance of an ironic gap between what its inmates actually did and the orthodox words coming out of their mouths, which expressed itself, camply, in an exaggerated regard for liturgical detail. By the early 1970s, the students were turning out to greet the lorry which delivered the termly consignment of gin in full acolytes' gear with a crucifer marching before them, and censing the crates as they were brought in. The writer AN Wilson spent a term at the House, and in 1978 produced a novel, *Unguarded Hours*, based on his time there, painting a picture of 'a Firbankian madhouse' of sex, drink, and general mucking about. By that time, David Hope ('Ena the Cruel') had arrived to clear the House up and, so gossips said, might have preferred to have stories circulating about gay ordinands rather than rumours that students had been playing around with the occult. Eventually the whole college moved out to occupy the Cowley monastery which the SSJE vacated in 1980, and matters settled down. Wilson later admitted that many of his fellow 'Staggers Bags' had turned out as some of the Church's most dedicated priests: 'if I were as brave or unselfish as they are, I should be proud of myself', he wrote in the *Telegraph*. But nobody could say that the House of those days had helped them much.

The chapel at St Stephen's House in the 1970s. William Oddie, later Librarian of Pusey House and convert to the Roman Catholics, is on the right of the picture. The House was 'certainly more discreet than the overt queening about of the pre-Hope regime', he wrote in 1996, 'But the underlying culture of the place was still overwhelmingly homoerotic'

In a way, the last great hurrah of the Anglican Catholic movement was the installation of Graham Leonard as Bishop of London in 1981. Translated there from Truro, a deeply traditionalist and largely rural diocese, Leonard's assumption of the great see of London, where Anglo-Catholicism was most strongly entrenched, was a moment of great hope and rejoicing. It was also a moment of great scorn and mockery, which emerged particularly from a widely-distributed spoof newssheet entitled *Not the Church Times*. Riddled with *double-entendres* and innuendo, it poked merciless fun at the tattered Catholic Movement and its peccadilloes. 'Londoners danced in the streets and grown men wept openly for joy down Ludgate Hill as the bells rang out,' ran the report of Bishop Leonard's ascension. It went on to mention crowds 'camping in the open' and Archbishop Runcie remarking that 'this is the stuff of which fairy-tales are made'. An obituary appeared for Catholic Renewal ('died of gin, lace, backbiting and indifference'). Finally, there was an item seeking sponsorship for ordinands at Cuddesdon (under a photograph of Quentin Crisp), promising '£10 names a bottle of gin in memory of a loved one'; so at least it wasn't only St Stephen's enjoying that reputation.

In 1983-5, AN Wilson, together with two journalist colleagues Charles Moore and Gavin Stamp, toured Anglican churches up and down the land to see what they could find. As a result they produced *The Church in Crisis*, a pretty conservative, nostalgic

plea for the Church of England to realise the value of what it had left in terms of buildings and liturgy rather than chucking it all away in trendiness and modernism. In the course of that investigation they found some Catholic-inclined churches in very good heart. One of these was St Paul's, Salford, an isolated Victorian barn on one of the worst estates in one of the most socially-deprived towns in Britain. It had been saved from demolition by a public petition, shaming the Diocese of Manchester into keeping it rather than running away from its surroundings. David Wyatt agreed to serve there, and gradually built up, in the least promising of circumstances, and only by the sort of relentless, tough work which Fr Lowder would have been proud of, a living congregation. Here, amid the social and environmental desolation and squalor, the church was left open all day, Mass drew 150 communicants on a Sunday, there were 40 weddings a year and 80 baptisms. No preciousness or fuss for Canon Wyatt – he wasn't even 'Father', but just plain 'Mr Wyatt', never mind the incense and vestments. Another thriving church was St Paul's, Deptford, a Georgian fabric in a changing area of southeast London, splendid but run-down until Fr David Diamond arrived and, again through personal charisma and hard work, made the church a real presence in its local community, notwithstanding its devotion to the English Use.

A wedding and, given the chalices on the altar, probably a Nuptial Mass as well, at St Paul's, Salford. 'It's the only real thing around here', one resident remarked to the authors of The Church in Crisis

But most churches had no Canon Wyatt or Fr Diamond. The journalists also visited Papalist shrines like St Anne's, Hoxton, with its weary vicar who would soon defect to Rome. St Stephen's Sculcoats, Hull, struggled to maintain a sung High Mass on Sunday for a congregation of 16, 'three quarters [of them] women over the age of 50'. All Souls', Blackman Lane, Leeds, under its clergy whose conduct turned out to have

been, frankly, criminal, was ‘camp and ludicrous … a scandal’. The story of tiny congregations, tired clergy going through the motions, or alternatively gangs of servers camping it up with incense and lace in front of an elderly lady or two who were not likely to notice, was wearisome. Such churches could not last much longer – at least, not without some radical change.[15]

The sectarian identity, and parochial separateness – each parish in some ways a Church in miniature – which had been Anglo-Catholics’ saving strength in so many ways had now reached the point of consuming them completely. The Church of England’s slow-moving machinery allowed that to happen without too much interference, but it would soon become impossible to maintain. The debate on the ordination of women would see to that.

10. Forward? 1992 to present

On Armistice Day, oddly enough, 1992, the Church of England's General Synod voted to ordain women to the priesthood. It was a development long argued over – long-desired by some, long-castigated by others. It had the power to rip asunder the Catholic movement as nothing had before.

There were many arguments that could be raised in support of ordaining women to the priesthood. The easiest to make were the secular ones, that it was self-evidently fair and just, and a matter of the Church catching up with the status of women in the society around it. For many Catholics, especially 'liberal' ones whose Catholicism focused on sacraments and spirituality rather than order and tradition, that was probably enough. It was perhaps a surprise that among the first bishops to ordain women was Michael Ball of Truro, a monk; but not a huge one, as the religious orders had developed a strong liberal streak. Some worried about the consequences and implications for Church order, but felt it was not a matter of basic faith or doctrine. Others thought that, for Anglicans to make such a fundamental change in the priestly ministry without referring to the rest of the Universal Church, and with such a reckless lack of concern over relations with the Roman Catholics and the Orthodox, was the final proof they needed that the Church of England was not really Catholic, or had ever been, and they left. Still others wanted to wait and see how the 'antis' would be accommodated, or hoped against hope that women would never be consecrated bishops - their own point of no return. The arguments are far too involved to engage with here, but these were the main lines of severance and disagreement.

The Law of the Conservation of Church Fittings illustrated yet again at St John's, Newbury. 'Rome says we have to face west at Mass, but we're not giving up our Big Six even if we can't see past them'

The crisis fell on an Anglo-Catholic movement already desperately depleted and disorientated. You might have thought that a Church headed, briefly, at York by David Hope, former Principal of St Stephen's House, and at Canterbury by Rowan Williams, who as a curate introduced Benediction into his training church while his incumbent was away, would be a pretty strongly Catholic organisation. But, as a better illustration, look at the twenty-one churches engaged in the famous 'Battle over Benediction' in London in 1928. The four West End churches (St Augustine's, Queen's

Gate; St John's, Holland Road, St Stephen's, Gloucester Road, and St Mary's, Bourne Street) are all still there, just, and all still Catholic. SS Peter & Paul's, Teddington, St Peter's, Acton Green, and St Matthew's, Westminster, still exist but are now of a much more liberal tradition. All the rest, a great swathe stretching from Shepherd's Bush through Stepney, Limehouse, Poplar and down into Millwall, are gone, through wartime bombing, depopulation, and decline – with the one solitary exception of St Peter's, London Docks. St Michael's, Shoreditch (not one of the '21', but a church which sprouted a host of Anglo-Catholic daughter establishments) now houses an architectural reclamation business. That devastation is the backdrop to present-day Anglican Catholicism.

Cost of Conscience, an association of priests opposed to the ordination of women, had already existed for some time by 1992, and developed into Forward in Faith, which had a wider membership. F-in-F turned out to be extremely efficient and well-organised, and managed to punch above its weight quite often; it also managed to displace the older Catholic societies such as the Church Union, trying to make opposition to women's ordination the rallying-cry for Anglican Catholics. The Team Rector of Wood Green, London, John Broadhurst, became its leading figure as others dropped into the background, and when he was made Bishop of Fulham in 1996 took on the role virtually of F-in-F's corporate prelate. The organisation has, almost deliberately, included a small number of fundamentalist Evangelical churches, but their presence is ambiguous not only because their worship is so different from the huge majority of F-in-F churches, but because their opposition to women being priests comes from a completely different rationale.

F-in-F succeeded in concentrating Anglican Catholics around an anti-women priests 'ticket' only at the cost of forcing those who disagreed out of the older societies and into their own. Affirming Catholicism (Aff-Cath for short) shadows F-in-F as an overall organisation; the Society of Catholic Priests is a pro-women equivalent to the SSC, founded by a priest who left the SSC over its stance. The old devotional societies, and the religious orders, mainly get along by not discussing the issue, and (as far as the societies are concerned) hoping that ordained women will not want to have much to do with them anyway. St Stephen's House has accepted women ordinands since the first vote in Synod, though its Principals have always been antis; Mirfield toed the line in 2004. Certainly at St Stephen's there was a period of bitter division and anger, though by the early 2000s this had settled down and a *modus vivendi* reached in which everyone accepted they were being trained for the diaconate, and ignored what might happen beyond that.

But the tendency has been towards a sad and increasing sense of separation between the two wings of the Catholic movement, deepening as bitter experiences are retold and relayed around the world – especially from Canada and the US, where the bishops are more progressive, less cautious and accommodating, and more litigious than the English hierarchy – and discussions are held over the possibility of women bishops. There's a natural, if not very Christian, tendency to react negatively to negative positions, and the pro- and anti-women camps of Catholics have both done so. Respectful co-existence between the two looks unlikely, let alone reconciliation.

F-in-F initially made approaches to the Roman hierarchy in England and Wales to see whether any move could be made to admit their parishes as a body to the Roman Church, while allowing them to keep elements of the Anglican rite. Cardinal Hume at first seemed sympathetic, but turned out to be virtually alone: the other bishops scorned the suggestion either as coming from a group of essentially 'fake' Catholics, or conversely from a set of incorrigible traditionalists that they really didn't want to let

in. Yet again, the Papalist party was spurned by the very authority it looked to, and F-in-F was left to work out its future on its own.

Essentially, what F-in-F is trying to achieve is to solve the Catholic movement's ambiguities over authority by creating one organisation within which there is tidiness and order, regardless of what may be going on elsewhere in the Church of England. But this attempt to come up with convincing answers to the problem means retreating into an unreality which grows worse as the consecration of women Anglican bishops approaches. It's as though, within the confines of F-in-F, Vatican II never happened. The mission of the Christian community is still to offer the continuing sacrifice of the Mass, the purpose of priests is to enable them to do it, and Church structures exist in order to provide validly-ordained priests to offer valid sacrifices. Now, this is a view of what the Church is for that Vatican II moderated considerably to say the least, and it seems that the only parts of Western Christendom which haven't come to terms with it are the SSPX and F-in-F. The argument goes further: if the Anglican hierarchy can no longer be relied on to do what this 'validist' viewpoint says it should be doing, and if various Anglican bishops are sacramentally tainted by ordaining women or supporting ordaining women, then parishes are entitled to shop around to find a bishop with whom they can be 'in communion', and through them wired into the Apostolic authority of the Church. Never mind if that bishop is on the other side of the world and the parish doesn't *actually* have any meaningful relationship with him; what matters is the validity of his own orders and therefore of the priests he ordains. Not so much *episcopi vagantes,* then, as *parochiae vagantae*. A 'traditionalist' province within the Church of England (under Archbishop Broadhurst?) would secure these aims, tie up all the loose ends which put such strain on the Catholic conscience for a century and a half, and perhaps pave the way for a 'uniate' relationship with Rome. It's a topsy-turvy account of the Church, and ignores Rome's view of Anglican orders; but it seems to be F-in-F's officially-sponsored position.[16] Newman, the man who decided which was the true Church and then followed what it taught, would have pointed out that here, once again, we have self-proclaimed Catholics behaving like Congregationalists – ever the Catholic movement's problem.

Aff-Cath, in contrast, declares firmly that the Church of England is still Catholic (as much as ever it was), and commits itself to orthodoxy and tradition, preferring to carry on struggling within the ambiguities F-in-F wants to dispense with. Its problem is that it has little means of defending its left flank against complete alignment with secular liberal ideas, too little awareness of the fallenness of things, of God as separate and transcendent. 'Affirming' Catholicism sometimes seems to imply that Catholic clergy are supposed to affirm *everything* about the modern world apart from token gestures against consumerism and environmental damage, and too often its adoption of progressive causes is glib. 'Agnostic Catholicism', sneer its critics.[17]

Ironically, many of the women ordained priest since 1992 would consider themselves Catholics of different sorts, some of them very traditionalist ones in everything except their gender. Yet, with boundaries being closed and fences built between the 'two integrities', the churches they can find themselves serving are uncomfortably more middle-of-the-road than Anglo-Catholic. SS Mary & George, Sands, found itself facing an 18-month interregnum in 2001 and – as part of a larger parish and therefore unable to exercise any of the three Resolutions allowed under the Act of Synod which would restrict ministry by women priests – ended by appointing a female vicar, a graduate of St Stephen's House, to secure its tradition of worship, virtually the only woman incumbent of a traditionalist Anglo-Catholic church. There will eventually be others, but it will be a slow process, and is unlikely to move very far.

Affirming Catholic churches are beginning to form their own bloc, like the F-in-F ones. Fr Paul Butler (with the ponytail) was inducted at St Paul's, Deptford, in 2006, having been Vicar of St Dunstan's, Bellingham

Now that the Church of England has abandoned any attempt to control closely what happens in churches week by week, worshippers can find an enormous variety of ritual practice up and down the country. The old English Use has more or less disappeared, though, as might be expected, you can still see traces of it in fittings and furnishings. Even at St Paul's, Deptford, where Fr Diamond achieved so much with that apparently unpromising pattern of worship, the Dearmer liturgy has given way to a westward-facing, Common Worship style Mass. An internet trawl of 213 Anglo-Catholic churches in 2006[18] revealed 12 which, to judge by their own descriptions and the appearance of the church, still celebrate recognisably Sarum rites, and a smattering of English Missal parishes still exist. A surprising number (77) – and not all of them in London, either – celebrate eastward-facing, though churches like St Mary's, Bathwick, and St Michael's, Croydon, have westward-facing Family Masses occasionally. The great majority, though, have been reordered: St James', Norton Canes, in 1973; St Michael's, Eccles, in the 1980s; St Peter's, Streatham, in 1987; St Saviour's, Eastbourne, in 1993 as a memorial to Derek Allen; St John the Divine, Kennington, in 2002; St James', Sussex Gardens in 2004; and so on. Traffic in the other direction is nearly unknown, though the nave altar at Sands was removed about 1990, rather sensibly, as the church worked very badly with a westward orientation. In general, the liturgical style in which Anglo-Catholic churches expressed the old, sacrificial Eucharistic teaching has been heavily modified along with that teaching.

And in its wake confusion has sometimes come in. In 2000, one of the website ship-of-fools.com's 'Mystery Worshippers' visited St Michael's, Maidstone. Now, the Mystery Worshippers often catch churches on off-days and naturally only record their subjective impression of what's going on; but then so do ordinary churchgoers. On this occasion, 'Sarum Sleuth' found St Michael's using 'a Church Union Eucharistic booklet which bore very little relation to the rite used', and the service itself

> *Barking mad! Basically Vatican II Roman, but with large chunks of Orthodox liturgy chucked in, and even a few stray bits of Sarum ceremonial. As an example, the MC was draped in what looked like a pair of oven gloves with a fetching tassel down the back: these were used to handle the gospel book and other bits, a practice I have never seen anywhere else.*

The preacher (a Reader) was 'quite effective, if only because she was so frightening!'. This is a F-in-F church; though it's not as though confused liturgy is confined to the declining end of the Anglo-Catholic spectrum, especially in rural benefices where churches increasingly consider themselves lucky to have any worship provision at all. In the summer of 2005 we attended a number of mid-Oxfordshire village churches, mostly ones which at one time would have adopted the English Use in one form or another. At one, the Sunday Mass was taken by a Methodist minister who solemnly celebrated the Common Worship rite in black preaching gown and bands, facing east at the altar (it was impossible to do anything else) and raising the loaf-style host on a paten high above his head at the consecration. At another, an Anglican priest led a 1662 Prayer Book service, wearing a stiff gold Roman chasuble, from the *south* end of the altar, a position which seemed to owe nothing to the practice of Anglo-Catholics, old-fashioned Evangelicals, or in fact any easily identifiable rite at all. Both of these, it has to be said, were actually very agreeable services with friendly congregations!

What is 'Catholic' and what isn't is, not surprisingly, difficult to gauge. F-in-F would like to restrict the definition to itself and its supporters, which is why is has its lists of churches where worshippers can feel 'safe' from being confronted with a woman at the altar. Churches with, or accepting of, female clergy such as St Giles', Camberwell, St Paul's, Deptford, All Saints', Wellingborough, All Saints', Southend, or St Dunstan's, Bellingham, call their (male) incumbents 'Father' and their services 'Mass', use incense and advertise confession and give all the other signals usually associated with Catholic Anglican churches. But they accept women priests, which is enough to damn them in traditionalists' eyes, no matter about all the rest.

Mass at St Peter's, Vauxhall – how Catholic is it really?

What about somewhere like St Peter's, Vauxhall? This is a Pearson church with a longstanding Catholic tradition that now not only has a woman incumbent but whose services combine the usual Catholic signifiers of vestments and incense with 'innovative'

worship events ('Vaux'), and belongs to the gay-friendly Inclusive Church network. Does that count as Catholic in any meaningful sense any more?

Or take St Andrew's, Holborn. This ancient London Guild church, which Dr Sacheverell served as Rector – or it served him, depending how you view things – is now under the aegis of Holy Trinity, Brompton, the great Evangelical hothouse where the Alpha Course originated. Its Associate Vicar serves part-time as a tutor at HTB's St Paul's Institute, and has done time at HTB itself, as Director of Training at St James', Piccadilly (a big centrist-liberal church) – and also as a tutor at St Stephen's House, as well as acting as a chaplain to Roman Catholic pilgrims to Walsingham! The church's liturgical style is certainly Catholic; but, as only four people actually live in its parish, most of its worship happens on Wednesday evenings, making Holy Week quite interesting ('we're keeping Maundy Wednesday and Good Wednesday this year'). Not exactly trad, then.

An apparently growing interest in Catholic spirituality doesn't help keep the boundaries as clear as the hardliners would like. The Charismatic movement had something to do with this: just as it helped Anglo-Catholics recognise the activity of the Holy Spirit outside their own particular box, so it helped traditional Evangelicals alter their view of Catholics. Now ordinands often emerge from Evangelical colleges (well, from Wycliffe Hall, anyway) with a good deal of fascination about Catholic forms and ceremonies; what's lacking is the Catholic teaching behind them, but there is certainly no longer any sense that Evangelicals are implacably against it. The old opposition to anything 'Catholic' because of its very Catholic-ness has died completely. Instead, there is an openness to natural ritual forms which easily develops into something more structured. Take the 'prayer paths' at the Evangelical conference centre at Lee Abbey, Devon, for instance, following the events of Good Friday through different points in the landscape surrounding the Abbey – that's not so far from Stations of the Cross. Or the hand-washing used in confessional rites at St Aldate's, Oxford – notwithstanding the strenuous denials of any sacramental significance to the water, or to the confession, basically the same thing is happening. Even outside the Church of England itself, Methodist churches keep All Souls, and United Reformed congregations observe saints' days.

The second aspect of this 're-Catholicisation' is a turning back to the tradition in Catholic churches themselves. In 1996 a group of Roman Catholic liturgists met in Oxford, quite aware of the echoes and resonances of doing so, and from the gathering and its 'Oxford Declaration' emerged, with Vatican approval, a 'New Liturgical Movement'. Its aim was to recover some of the beauty and majesty of RC worship which had undoubtedly been lost when the fossilised old rites were jettisoned: 'Reform the Reform' was its slogan. Key to this new way of thinking was Monsignor Peter Elliott, an Australian priest who trained as an Anglican at Staggers. In 2002 he authored *Ceremonies of the Liturgical Year.* Although there is no sense in this manual that the reforms of Vatican II are being rejected, many of the more picturesque and popular customs associated with the old-style liturgy are allowed again, and their function and proper celebration explained. Pope Benedict XVI has blessed this shift with his 2007 *motu proprio*, affirming the celebration of the Latin rites and the use of Gregorian chant. A cautious return to old traditions can be seen in Anglican churches, and not just those on the trad Anglo-Catholic wing.

Some final examples show how Catholic forms and styles can work in mission contexts. St Michael's, Camden Town, was a near-derelict building with a tiny congregation; thanks to a mixture of imaginative marketing, social commitment, simple expedients such as re-opening the main doors, and making it a welcoming

island of spiritual peace for the thousands of people who pass by it every day, the congregation has grown tenfold in as many years and the church has become a force for spiritual good in its community. St Michael's has a more traditional style than its parish church, Old St Pancras, but it shows that can work. A F-in-F church, St Mary at the Elms, Norwich, has also transformed itself into a thriving town-centre shrine by exploiting the sense of depth and spiritual power given by its long past. St Martin's, Ruislip, an ancient English Use-style parish church, engaged in the process in two stages, firstly by the congregation re-evaluating the church and its life, and then by a 'Fan the Flame' mission week, together forming a new emphasis on prayer, on waiting on the Holy Spirit in silence, on re-encountering the basic ideas of Catholic Christianity and, more importantly, on learning to see God again in what the church did together.

Could the Catholic movement as a whole – rather than just individual Catholic churches – rediscover this vibrant sense of purpose? Fr Scott Anderson of St Andrew's, Willesden Green, spent two months in 2003 touring a variety of Anglo-Catholic churches and came to the conclusion that renewal involved returning to an emphasis on a 'three-fold cord' of the Eucharist, Scripture and the Holy Spirit. Each element is crucial to 'reclaiming the story', encouraging people to engage with their faith in a way which allows them to talk about it in their own words and from their own experience.

Encouragingly, Fr Anderson's report was published in the F-in-F journal *New Directions*, but as this was the only vaguely new direction which has ever appeared in its pages, it must be one of the most ill-named publications on record. Instead, it gives the impression that Anglo-Catholics are either fixated on resisting what they see as 'liberalism', or are engaged in various sorts of self-deceit. An article on liturgical change entitled 'Cranmer, Dix and the State of the Liturgy' amazingly managed to avoid any reference to Vatican II. Decline in church attendance almost seemed to be celebrated, so that the Movement's own marginalisation and retreat could be blamed on the 'liberal establishment', rather than engaging with the real reasons. The saddest, yet most revealing statement of all was made in an article on ecclesial authority by Fr William Davage, Librarian of Pusey House, in 1999. The paper was witty, learned, and saw through much faff and nonsense. Yet Davage's final chilling question displayed how the Anglo-Catholic conscience now had deep misgivings about any missionary effort at all: 'we have to ask ourselves how we can justify calling people to Christ and to participate in the sacraments of salvation within an ecclesial community in which there is sacramental disunity, impaired communion and sacramental dubiety'. Calling people to Christ should never need justification, precisely because it is *to Christ* that the Church *does* call people, not to itself. It is sobering indeed to think Anglo-Catholics could prefer to allow people to remain unconverted rather than draw them into a faulty organisation. If that *is* the case, then Anglican Catholicism will die, and it will deserve to.

Of course it is not the case, not entirely: there are plenty of priests, even on the anti-women side of the divide, who are not fixated on the campaign for a Third Province and don't swallow the account of sacramental validity which bedevils the whole argument, but have as their first priority introducing people to Jesus, their friend and Saviour. That's where the hope lies.

* * * * *

Looking back, what can we say has been the real achievement of Anglican Catholicism? Superficially, of course, there's the fact that the Church of England *looks* so much more Catholic, and *does* so many more Catholic things, and *believes* in such

a more Catholic way than it did before John Keble ascended the pulpit of St Mary the Virgin, Oxford, in 1833. But underneath that, there's a wider and more powerful achievement, though at first sight a paradoxical one. It's the dissolution of the Church of England's tightly bounded sense of self, as a national, Protestant Church, as part of the anti-Roman Catholic alliance created at the Reformation. That dissolution, I think, helped with the Roman Catholics' own self-redefinition during Vatican II – or at least, it placed Canterbury in a position to walk alongside Rome through the process. As yet, the fruit of unity has not come to bud; but we are all still living in the shadow of the 1960s, and what will emerge is not yet clear. Forty years is not that long.

I believe God has a mission for the Anglican Church, in addition to its general Christian one, of unifying and bridging, of helping the Spirit bring together sundered parts of Christ's Body in readiness for the End. Anglican Catholics have played a crucial role in preparing it for that work, and have more to do. We must be more articulate, not about the details of ritual and ceremony and that sort of thing, but about the deep instincts and patterns of thought which Catholics bring with them – the very things we have spoken about least, and least well. I've tried to talk a bit about them in this book. Can we manage that? I have hope we can.

I'd like to finish with a similar statement of hope from the Anglo-Catholic historian John Orens, visiting professor in history at George Mason University, Virginia. It seems to me as splendid an expression of the task we face as any.

> *This is why God has preserved our little Anglo-Catholic family through tempest and storm. In the secret places of their hearts, modern men and women are seeking themselves. They sense, although they cannot believe it, that they have enduring value, that there is more to themselves than their employers, their accountants, their government, or even their families can possibly know. What the world craves is the assurance that there is "a splendour burning in the heart of things." Naked dogma cannot supply this need, nor can empty ritual. Only the Catholic vision will suffice. But if the world is to find that vision it must be found in us, clothed in living thought and embodied in holy lives.*

The vision is God's abiding love, love made flesh in the Jesus of Palestine, and the Jesus of the Sacrament. That, and that alone, can open our eyes to the transcendent glory of God's beautiful creation, the truth of a creation gathered up in Jesus, transfigured, crucified, raised, ascended. That's the vision the One True Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church treasures. May we find the grace to make it known. Amen. Amen.

NOTES

1. The architect of St Lawrence's Church, Nicholas Revett, also rebuilt another St Lawrence's at Ayot St Lawrence, Hertfordshire, for the Lord of the Manor, Sir Lionel Lyde, in the 1770s. Having decided where he wanted the new church to go, Lyde began pulling down the old one, which was blocking the view from the manor house: the Bishop stopped him while some of it was still standing, but enough was already gone to reveal the Classical portico of the new St Lawrence's which seems to have been the chief point of the exercise. The new church was actually built the wrong way round, with the sanctuary (with which Sir Lionel had no obvious concern) at the *west* end, so the portico could be seen from the house, presumably as a nice garden feature. At least when the Victorians vandalised churches it was for vaguely religious reasons.

2. Perhaps the grandest, and almost certainly the most lengthy, restoration was that of Worksop Priory. Here the building actually had no roof and was in a ruinous state when repair work began in the mid-1800s. The work was not completed until 1974 when a legacy enabled the rebuilding of the chancel and tower. Elsewhere medieval abbeys were spruced up, beautified, tidied and restored; in Worksop, one was actually *reconstructed*.

3. For a less hysterical, but still hostile, reaction to Ritualism in full flight, try Francis Kilvert's account of attending Festal Evensong at St Barnabas, Jericho, on Ascension Day 1876. The *pointlessness* of the ceremonial seems to be his stumbling block. The censing during the Magnificat struck him as 'pure Mariolatry', the procession with banners being steered clear of the gaslights as 'a weird strange ghostly march', and the celebrant, Fr Shuttleworth, as 'the hideous figure of the emaciated ghost in the black biretta and golden chasuble' (whatever it was, it wouldn't have been a chasuble). As for the sermon by the great Fr Stanton (which was why Kilvert and his friend Mayhew had gone in the first place), 'the matter was not original or interesting, and the manner was theatrical and overdone. I should think every eye in that great congregation was quite dry'. 'As we came out of Church Mayhew said to me, '*Well*, did you ever see such a function as that?' No, I never did and I don't care if I never do again … The poor humble Roman Church hard by is quite plain, simple and Low Church in its ritual compared to St Barnabas'.

4. The *advowson* is the right to present a candidate to the living of a church.

5. Strictly speaking, what Dearmer, Frere and their colleagues were promoting was not the Sarum Use; nor, despite Dearmer's lengthy explanations, was it the distinctive English variant of universal Catholic ceremonial, codified and settled by the Prayer Book. It was a work of imagination based on augmenting the Prayer Book's words with what was known, or could be deduced, of how things were done in medieval England, and in some churches after the Reformation, so long as that fitted Anglo-Catholic preconceptions. Dearmer talked about Anglicans being loyal to the 'Prayer Book', but he referred freely to its mutually-conflicting editions of 1549, 1552 and 1662, as well as the legislation passed in between them, as though they constituted a single, coherent policy: what he *meant* by 'the Prayer Book' was his own assemblage. Compare that with JM Neale, who wrote, for

instance, of reviving the use of vestments 'on such Anglican grounds as we have' – the Ornaments Rubric, that is – but never imagined that matters could or should rest there. He was not dealing in fantasies, as Dearmer to a degree was. Nevertheless, we will not nit-pick and draw so clear a distinction between 'Sarum' and 'English' schools that examples of neither can be found in reality.

6. It should be recognised that most writers about Anglo-Catholicism assign far less prominence to the so-called English Use and give it a more marginal importance than I do. I accept that very few churches indeed consciously adopted the Dearmer programme, certainly not in all its details. But I do think it took over, as an overarching ideology, approach and 'look', precisely because it was so easily conformable to the Prayer Book and to real Anglican churches as clergy found them. The English Use was simply the 'mental environment' of Anglicanism from the '20s onwards – it didn't need much conscious adoption.

   I regularly discover churches which very clearly once held to the English Use, to judge by clues like curtained altars, servers with apparelled albs, or references in decoration and documents. The latest have been All Saints', Fulham, and St Oswald's, Oswestry, both old and large parish churches which now describe themselves as 'liberal catholic'. The wide extent of such motifs indicates the one-time prevalence of this brand of Catholic worship. Another word from John Betjeman is apposite:

   O, I wad gang tae Harrogate
   Tae a kirk by Temple Moore,
   Wi' a tall choir and a lang nave
   And rush mats on the floor;
   And Percy Dearmer chasubles
   And nae pews but chairs,
   And there we'll sing the Sarum Rite
   Tae *English Hymnal* airs. ('Perp. Revival i' the North')

   The church Betjeman described is St Wilfrid's, Harrogate, which still maintains a Catholic tradition ('aligned neither to Affirming Catholicism nor Forward in Faith') but the rite is now usually derived from Common Worship.

7. The battle-lines were not drawn as severely as the polemicists on both sides liked to think. The Cowley Fathers' archive includes several photographs of the consecration of St John's Church, Cowley Road, where clergy in a surprising variety of dress can be spotted in the procession. 1896 that may have been, but as late as 1935, when the foundation stone of SS Mary & George's, Sands, was laid, the clergy dress code not only seems to be biretta and *surplice* (which most Papalists would have scorned as part of 'the robes of Babylon'), but in the photos of that event two clerics can be seen in biretta, surplice, and *black preaching scarf*. Horrors!

8. The churches designed in the 1930s by Sir Edward Maufe are good examples, including St George's, Goodrington, and All Saints, Weston Green: they share the same decorative elements and monumental simplicity. His masterpiece, Guildford Cathedral, obviously had to be a bit more moderate than those, but is still visibly part of the same architectural (and liturgical) family.

9. Furthermore, when a colonial bishop retired he often came back to Britain and provided a handy parallel source of authority to the diocesan bishop. Bishop MS O'Rorke, one of Fr Patten's first Guardians of the shrine at Walsingham and pictured on p.68, was one such – he had been Bishop of Accra until 1924 and in 1931 was acting Rector of Blakeney near Walsingham itself. 'Alternative Episcopal Oversight' is in principle nothing very new.

10. Even Fisher, though, stated quite clearly of the Church he led, 'We have no doctrine of our own. We only possess the Catholic doctrine of the Catholic Church, enshrined within the Catholic Creeds – and those Creeds we hold without addition or diminution. We stand firm on that rock.'

11. It always seems a bit unfair to me that nostalgic commentators on Anglo-Catholic history so often describe the Parish Communion movement as 'diluted' Catholicism, when the whole point of Dix, Hebert and the Liturgical Movement was that it represented Catholic ideals and theology far better than the old Solemn High Mass did. The problem was that it coincided with a collapse in Anglo-Catholic self-confidence and teaching which, combined with other pressures within the Anglican Church, often made 'reformed' Catholic liturgy into a veil thinly disguising very un-Catholic beliefs.

12. The story of the Church in Bournemouth illustrates some of the contradictions and ambiguities. Middle-class the town may have been, but the living established in 1843 was so poorly endowed that it had to wait two years for the wealthy Alexander Morden Bennett to agree to serve as Vicar (and to build his own vicarage). Bennett proved a model Tractarian: he rebuilt the church of St Peter and, like Wagner in Brighton, founded a swathe of daughter churches; set up schools, and invited an order of nuns to Boscombe; provoked an Evangelical schism and was burned in effigy for 'Papism'; had problems with his bishop; defied parish boundaries to evangelise the potters of Canford in open-air prayer and preaching meetings; and died in 1880 as a hero of early Bournemouth. His tombstone is strikingly similar to that of Edward Rose at Weybridge, who died three years after him.

13. The Shrine at Kettlebaston has recently reopened. The Guild of All Souls, new joint patrons of the living, oversaw the dedication of the restored shrine on 27th August 2006. The rood screen, incidentally, was painted by Enid Chadwick.

14. Not all the Anglo-Catholic hierarchy was opposed to the measure. Eric Kemp supported it strongly, to such an extent that Archbishop Ramsey was accused of levering him into the Deanery of Worcester only because the two saw eye-to-eye on the matter.

15. All these three churches have in fact survived, though in very different shape from the mid-1980s. St Anne's, Hoxton, currently (2007) has a woman incumbent. All Souls', Blackman Lane, is now the Anglican student church in Leeds and is very Aff-Cath and Inclusive Church network. Sculcoats has gone way down the candle.

16. It also ignores other realities about F-in-F and the clergy who form its constituency. The ambiguity of an organisation such a proportion of whose members are gay, and which nevertheless promotes itself as a defender of traditional Catholic doctrine, order, and morality, is not lost on those outside

it. Even those inside should surely recognise that the moral and disciplinary laxity which they currently enjoy in the Anglican dispensation wouldn't be tolerated five minutes in the Roman one.

Another of history's little ironies is that when Graham Leonard took the Pope's shilling in 1994, he benefited from the more open approach to 'validity' in the Church of Rome which F-in-F would like to ignore, and was reordained a Roman Catholic priest under a form of prayer (drafted by Cardinal Ratzinger – now Pope Benedict XVI) which offered thanks for his 45 years of faithful ministry in the Anglican Church. Cardinal Hume even told him that his bishop's orders were a matter Rome had not expressed an opinion about; and for Cardinal Ratzinger, however hardline he may now be playing his Papacy, the ordination of non-RCs was 'not nothing' – a world away from the 'absolutely null and void' of *Apostolicae Curae.*

One famous church has already passed into schism: in 1997 Fr Dolling's mission church, St Agatha's, Portsmouth, was purchased by the Traditional Anglican Communion grouping and left the Church of England. At least someone worships there once more: it had been empty since 1954.

17. With, sadly, some justification. The independent 'Mind of Anglicans' survey in 2002 revealed a significant correlation between clergy who are members of Aff-Cath and those who expressed doubt or disbelief in traditional Christian credal doctrines; as well as demonstrating that women clergy are less likely to subscribe to those traditional doctrines than male ones.

18. This was carried out through following links provided to parish websites on the Forward In Faith website, and other churches known to me, which provided further links. It tends to under-represent Anglo-Catholic churches in the North – for instance, there's nothing at all from the South Yorkshire 'biretta belt' apart from St Matthew's, Carver Street, partly because the southern churches probably find it easier to set up websites, and partly because some diocesan bishops have better relations with their Anglo-Catholic churches than others, sometimes allowing a suffragan to consecrate all the women clergy, or to look after the F-in-F congregations.

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ISBN 0-9544633-3-1