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In This Issue

Reflections FROM THE Editor's Desk

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I am comforted by that well-used Chestertonian adage: "if a thing is worth doing, it is worth doing badly," whenever I sit down to compile a new issue. As tasks go, the task of keeping alive the memory of Reformation Anglicanism is better done than not done. But it is not my work, rather it is the work of others that fulfills that end. The articles in these pages are the work of people who have generously given of their time and learning for the sake of defending and explaining the Anglican tradition—its intellectual content, the beauty of its worship, and its Biblical foundations. So with Chesterton I will say this, if it is a thing worth doing, it must be done, and posterity will, for better or worse, be the judge.

The President of the Prayer Book Society, the Reverend Gavin Dunbar, has remarked that the difference between the 1979 Book of Common Prayer and the classical 1928 Book of Common Prayer is that while the former has its merits as a resource book, the classical prayer book offers a coherent presentation of reformed and catholic Anglicanism. In other words, the Book of Common Prayer teaches creedal Christianity, or right belief. It does not need to be updated, whatever that might mean.

As Cate McDermott points out in her article in this issue, the Creeds are the unchanging truth of the faith because they express the reality of God. They need not be re-written to suit contemporary sensibilities. The same can be said of the historic prayer books. When the standing liturgical committee of the Episcopal Church said that the Book of Common Prayer needed to be "translated" to accommodate contemporary culture, and then produced a book where the services of worship substantially changed the presentation of the faith; indeed when they offered in the 1979 BCP a choice of Eucharistic services which are theologically inconsistent with each other, then it is clear that their intent was not to "translate" the Cranmerian Book of Common Prayer into a contemporary idiom but to introduce something new.

Cranmer's Book of Common Prayer has the character of a great book. A classical curriculum requires students to study 'the greats' as they were once called, the most influential and important works of literature and philosophy in Western and/or world civilization. In reading 'the greats' students learn about the intellectual forces that shape the world in which they live, they discourse with the greatest minds of history. But although much has changed in Western thinking, the conversation of one great mind with another in the same era or over centuries, leads to new ideas, the exercise of reading and studying great books nonetheless teaches the student that some things are true

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Cover: Master of the Dresden Prayer Book or workshop, illuminator (Flemish, active about 1480–1515) *The Adoration of the Magi,* about 1480–1485, Tempera colors and gold on parchment leaf: 20.5 x 14.8 cm (8 1/16 x 5 13/16 in.) The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles, Ms. 23, fol. 96v

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and unchanging. Great books are great because they are evergreen; they express truths about God and man that speak to each generation in a new way. It is in this manner that the Book of Common Prayer is a great book.Not only did the Book of Common Prayer influence the literature and speech of the English language, but it also presents the received, true and unchanging teachings of the Christian faith, it can return each generation to the foundational teachings of Christianity. It is a great book, to lose it would be to lose something of what is true and unchanging in the way the faith has been present to Christians generation after generation.

In his official portrait by the artist Gerlach Flicke, Cranmer is painted with a copy of Augustine's treatise *De fide et operibus* on his lap (A. Null, Thomas Cranmer's Doctrine of Repentance). The symbolism is clear. Not only did Cranmer appreciate the necessity of reading great books, but what he was about was continuing that legacy. His legacy is Anglican theology, which is dependent on Pauline teaching, as filtered through Augustinianism, within the history of the Church. Cranmer's project was therefore quite unlike that of the liturgical committee of the Episcopal Church which put together the 1979 BCP. There incoherence is prized for the sake of maximizing choice.

The theological coherence of reformed and catholic Anglicanism expressed in the Book of Common Prayer and formularies still could unify the Anglican Church. Neither high church nor low church, yet broadly able to accommodate itself to both high church and low church worship, the classical Anglicanism of Cranmer pre-dates those particular divisions. That is why it is best to say that the Cranmerian prayer books represent classical Anglicanism, rather than modern Anglo-Catholicism or modern evangelical Anglicanism, both of which emerged in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

A friendly priest said to me one day that he had thought that the Prayer Book Society was predominantly low church in its membership, but had revised his opinion upon hearing that I had once been a member of a Vestry in an Anglo-Catholic parish. I admitted as much. He said: "I thought the Board of the Prayer Book Society were all low church, but now I know that you are high church I will renew my membership." I am happy to play the role of reconciler.

Some on the other side might wonder why someone attached to the historic BCP might attend a missal parish. But at that time, the Anglican Missal was used in such a way that it was theologically consistent with the 1928 Book of Common Prayer. The intensely penitential nature of the Anglican Missal additions to the 1928 BCP service were its most welcome part, and in keeping with the Pauline doctrine of fallen man present in reformed theology.

The point is that some developments or revivals might be understood, broadly speaking, to be broadly commensurate with what classical Anglicanism intends, and some are not. The question is whether repentance for sin, faith, and charity are present in the course of worship. It would seem that if, as in Rite II of the 1979 prayer book, confession before communion is made optional, one of those central moments necessary to the reception of the sacrament is missing.

If someone remarks that they love the 'Anglican way of prayer and worship' but love Jesus Christ more, to my mind they are confused. If I thought the Anglican way were different from the way of Christ, I would abandon it entirely! Every service of worship has an order, even if it is composed of extemporaneous prayer, a Bible reading, a sermon and hymns. But the order of the Book of Common Prayer depends upon the received teaching of the Church over and against the private judgment of individuals. It exhorts the worshipper to repentance; it teaches the atoning grace of Christ; its lectionary guides one through the whole Bible in the course of the liturgical year, and its worship incorporates the meaning of the Creeds and sacraments. I wonder what aspect of the Gospel of Christ critics think is absent from the historical Book of Common Prayer? I suspect that, in truth, there is at root a deep disagreement about the Gospel, in which case one is not arguing about liturgical usage, but the fullness of Gospel teaching. One of the great advantages of classical Anglican worship is its dependence upon the received teaching of the Church over and against the arbitrary private judgment of individuals.

An article on Confirmation (AW Vol. 36, No.2) has sparked discussion, and Fr. Jonathan Mitchican, who blogs at conciliaranglican.org, takes issue with the Reformed teaching that communing only the confirmed can be reconciled with biblical and patristic theology. In a forthcoming issue, Fr. Dunbar will respond. Richard Frost, emeritus professor at Colgate University, addresses the importance of the Anglican tradition of sacred music. Cate McDermott, a recent graduate in theology from Wycliffe College at University of Toronto, shows what it is to embrace the Creeds as true. Canon Alistair Macdonald-Radcliffe, who represented the Prayer Book Society of the United States at the meeting of GAFCON II in Nairobi, Kenya, has contributed his thoughts about the outcome of that gathering. Finally, I have included a sermon by Fr. William Martin on the forgotten virtue of humility.

I owe an apology to the Reverend Edward Rix and the Reverend David Curry. In the last issue, I mistakenly listed Fr. Rix as the VP of the Prayer Book Society of Canada rather than the USA. Fr. Curry, an esteemed colleague, is the VP of the Prayer Book Society of Canada.

The Tuning of All Existence

A Sermon for the Feast of the Conversion of Saint Paul

The Rev'd Canon Robert D. Crouse

By the Rev'd Canon Robert D. Crouse

"I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me."
Galatians 2:20

The Festival we keep today is not a very ancient one. The early Church observed a day in honour of the martyrdom in Rome of the chief apostles, St. Peter and St. Paul, and we still keep that festival at the end of June. But this festival of St. Paul's conversion belongs to the Western Church alone, and began to be generally observed only in the twelfth century. Thus is it one of the many medieval accretions which so splendidly adorn our liturgy. It was introduced in the twelfth century—just at the point at which European Christians began to become deeply conscious of the historical dimensions of the Church's life.

And what more dramatic moment could the historian fix upon than the conversion of the Apostle to the Gentiles? One can think, of course, of other spectacular conversions of vast historical consequence, the conversion of the Emperor Constantine at the Milvian Bridge, the conversion of St. Augustine in the garden near Milan, and so on. But all of these others hinge upon and depend so much upon the conversion on the Damascus Road. St. Paul was in some sense the father of the Gentile Church, and, in that same sense, the day of his conversion was its birthday. It was he above all others, "in labour more abundant than they all" who was the preacher of the Gospel to the world of Greece and Rome.

St. Paul has, of course, been blamed for much which certain critics have found offensive in the historical development of the Church. Those, for instance, who deplored the "Hellenization" of the Gospel, traced the responsibility for it back to St. Paul, who in his speech on Mars Hill had told the Athenians that he declared to them a God whom already, though ignorantly, they worshipped. Other critics, offended by what they regarded as excesses of Reformation theology, discovered the inspiration of it in what they considered extravagant Pauline language about "salvation by faith alone". In general, he has been blamed for corrupting with a mystical theology the original simple Gospel of the Jewish ethical preacher from Nazareth. He has been blamed for both Protestantism and Catholicism and perhaps we Anglicans can blame him for a combination of the two. But the fact remains that the letters of St. Paul are our earliest recorded witness to the Gospel, and I'm afraid that efforts to discover a more primitive "simpler" form of faith behind the Pauline complications have not shown much promise of success.

But it is the conversion of St. Paul that must concern us now, and what are we to make of that? The blinding light on the Damascus road, and the voice that cried, for the hearing of Saul alone, "Saul, Saul why persecutest thou me?" –and Saul of Tarsus, persecutor of the infant Church, became the Apostle Paul. No doubt, such a bare description of the incident leaves us dissatisfied; we'd like to probe the matter and say, in other terms, what really happened. But I think that Pieter Bruegel gets it right, in his great painting of this subject. Perhaps you remember Bruegel's peculiar habit of placing the real subject of his painting, not in the foreground or the centre, but in some remote corner of his canvas, to which the eye of the viewer is eventually and inevitably drawn. In his painting of St. Paul's conversion, there is at the back of the picture a mountain pass, at which a procession of men and horses has been halted in disarray. Some astonishing accident has taken place, but we can't see exactly what it is. That seems to me just right. The conversion of St. Paul was fundamentally an inner thing, an event which can't be seen in itself, but only in its effects; it was the conversion of a soul.

St. Paul himself regarded it as a meeting with the Risen Christ, who appeared, he says, "to me also, as to one born out of due time", and thus he saw his vocation and apostleship; that is to say, as witness to the Resurrection, as witness to the living Christ. "I live," he says, "yet not I, but Christ in me". And we can hardly improve upon that as a description of conversion, because conversion is not fundamentally a matter of blinding lights and secret voices, but a matter of a new integration of personality around a new centre, a new focus of insight and energies. "I live, yet not I, but Christ in me". It is death to an old life and resurrection to the new.

Much can be said and is said—endlessly, *ad nauseam*, about the 'experience' of conversion, as though conversion were some sort of emotional orgasm. But high emotional temperature is no clear symptom of conversion. Conversion is, of course, experienced and it does inevitably involve revision of one's feelings, sometimes a revision long drawn out and painful, as one sees with St. Augustine. But that is not the fundamental point. What is fundamental is that one's whole understanding and will be united in one principle understood and willed as altogether true and good. "I live, yet not I, but Christ in me." It is not a feeling; it is insight and vocation, "casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself

The Conversion of Saint Paul by Pieter Bruegel the Elder

against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ" [2 Cor. 16.5].

What we celebrate today is the conversion of a soul, to find its life, its truth and its good in its living Lord; and as we do so, let us be mindful, with St. Paul himself, of the broad dimensions of that conversion; it means not just the conversion of the soul itself but the vocation of conversion—the conversion of the Gentiles, the conversion of our social life to find the principle of that life in charity of God; and indeed, the conversion of the whole creation which "groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now", awaiting its redemption.

Conversion means the tuning and the forming of all existence towards its centre, source and end in God. And the best of all acts and symbols of conversion is this very sacrament we celebrate, this sacrament of death and resurrection; this sacrament wherein Christ offers death and resurrection. We offer earthly life in bread and wine, and here by the word of God, they are converted—they are transformed—to be to us the life of God himself, that we may dwell in him and he in us. "I live, yet not I, but Christ in me."

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The Curious Case of Confirmation

By the Rev'd Jonathan Mitchican

In a recent issue of the *Anglican Way*, Fr. Dunbar tackled the topic of Confirmation and the way in which this rite is handled in the Anglican formularies. After laying out the history of Confirmation in the western Church, he concluded that it was a mistake for the architects of the 1979 Book of Common Prayer to return to the practice of the early Church in which Holy Baptism was a full and complete form of Christian initiation. "From Faustus to Thomas to Calvin and Cranmer," he says, "there is a recognition that the Spirit gives himself according to the development of moral discernment within the individual, and at the age of discretion a child attains to a new level of spiritual maturity." While this line of reasoning may have the backing of some significant historical figures in the Church, it lacks a Scriptural basis. Confirmation is an invention of the western Church, and as such we ought to be quite careful in how we make use of it.

As Fr. Dunbar points out, in the centuries immediately following the Resurrection of Our Lord, Holy Baptism was the full rite of initiation into the Christian Church. It was only over time that Confirmation

The Rev'd Jonathan Mitchican

developed as a separate rite, not reaching its apex as a kind of completion of Baptism until the early Middle Ages. While there are passages of Scripture that allude to the laying on of hands by apostles (Acts 8:14-17, for example), there is no developed doctrine of anything like Confirmation to be found in the New Testament and certainly no clear picture of how such a rite might relate to Baptism. There is, however, a clear teaching on Holy Baptism that spells out both its gifts and its purpose. Baptism is the "washing of regeneration" which gives to us "renewal in the Holy Spirit" (Titus 3:4-7). It makes us one with Christ, nailing the sinner in us to the cross and preparing us to be raised with Him on the last day (Romans 6). It places the holy name of the triune God upon us and makes us disciples of Jesus (Matthew 28:16-20). Just as the waters of the flood rid the world of sin in the days of Noah, the waters of Baptism now rid the world of sin by remaking our consciences (1 Peter 3:17-22). Unlike Confirmation, Baptism is something the Lord commands His Church to do (See the Matthew passage above, plus Mark 16:14-16 and John 3:1-21). Therefore, it is not surprising that the earliest Christians admitted all the newly baptized, even infants, to the Lord's Supper.

Fr. Dunbar believes that Confirmation developed as a separate rite because as the Church grew, infant Baptism became more and more the norm, meaning that crucial instruction in the Christian faith which once came before Baptism would now have to come much later. This is a hypothesis, however, and not an historical fact. The spreading of the Church across a large geographic area, the development of the monoepiscopate, and even the persecution of Christians may all have contributed to the creation of Confirmation. The fact that a comparative Confirmation tradition never developed in the Christian east, where there were just as many babies being baptized in later generations, suggests that there is nothing inherent in the promises of Baptism that makes them inactive unless and until a person matures in his or her understanding of the faith. The promises of Baptism are just that, promises. The grace of Baptism is the grace of Jesus Christ, won for us on the cross, given to us freely for no other reason than that Our Lord has decided that we should have it.

This is not to say that Reformation practices regarding Confirmation are all bad. In fact, much of what the Reformers did is highly commendable. In the usage of Luther and Calvin, Confirmation became a tool for instruction in the faith, allowing those who were baptized as infants to lay claim to the promises made for them by their parents and godparents. This continues in Cranmer's baptismal rite and in the prayer book Catechism which stresses both law and grace for the building up of a mature faith in Christ. The prayer book rite of Confirmation also preserves the medieval understanding of Confirmation as a strengthening by the Holy Ghost. All of this is admirable and entirely consonant with Scripture. The same passage which tells us to "baptize all nations" also tells us to teach them. Confirmation in the Anglican tradition provides a useful tool to that end, giving us a rite of passage through which young people can begin to take responsibility for their faith and take on roles of greater responsibility in the life of the Church. To that end, it is appropriate to make Confirmation a criterion for other kinds of service in the Church such as serving on a vestry or acting as a lector.

But to call Confirmation a completion of Baptism and to make it a prerequisite for receiving Holy Communion, as it still is in much of the Anglican Communion today, is to elevate a salutary practice into a divine law. This approach to Confirmation cheapens Baptism and encourages semi-Pelagianism by teaching that we must bear the mantle of our Baptismal responsibilities before we shall be allowed to partake of the promises of the Gospel. Moreover, it makes an idol out of the rational mind, giving at least the appearance of teaching that it is impossible for infants or those with less mental capacity to have a saving faith in Jesus because they do not possess an adequate Christian education.

The greatest problem, however, is that in tying up the practice of entry to Holy Communion with Confirmation instead of Holy Baptism, the Anglican Church has unwittingly undermined its own first principle, that of fidelity to Scripture and the Fathers. One of the best things about Anglicanism in contradistinction to other Reformation traditions is our adherence to the Catholic principle best expressed in the Canon of Saint Vincent: We hold as essential only that which has been believed everywhere, always, and by all. As the Irish bishop John Jebb described the Anglican position in 1815, Anglicanism's "grand foundation derives all obligatory matter of faith that is to use her own expression all that is to be believed for necessity of salvation from the scripture alone and herein she differs from the Church of Rome. But she systematically resorts to the concurrent sense of the Church Catholic both for assistance in the interpretation of the sacred text and for guidance in those matters of religion which the text has left at large and herein she differs from every other reformed communion." This is the true *via media* of Anglicanism, assent to the unquestionable authority of Scripture as interpreted historically and consistently by the Church.

The correctives of the Anglican Reformation in both doctrine and practice were invariably meant to return us to the faith of the primitive Church. This does not mean that the Church can never do anything different than what has been done before, but it does mean that we should always err on the side of upholding the unanimous witness of the early Church unless there is an extremely compelling reason to do otherwise. The practice of only communing the confirmed is a tradition within Anglicanism, but it is not one that has biblical or patristic roots. In adhering to it, we run the risk of denying a fundamental principle and withholding God's gift of grace from our children for the sake of a lesser good.

Sacred Music in Traditional Episcopal Worship

By Richard H. Frost

Dr. Frost has sung in Episcopal Church choirs in Brooklyn and Hamilton, NY; Swarthmore, PA; Albuquerque and Santa Fe, NM; and Berkeley, CA, for 51 of the past 72 years. The observations in this article are his own. His home is in Santa Fe.

Sacred music has been part of Anglican worship since the Church of England began. The role of music in worship was tradition then as it is now. It complements the spoken word. But the changes in worship of the past fifty years have called into question the proper role of music. Many kinds are used in contemporary Episcopal services, and the question we face is how to know what is appropriate for traditional Anglican worship.

The issue is important. Musicians have always known that music breathes a life of its own. With or without words, sacred music is a form of worship. It supports and fulfills liturgical worship in empathy and understanding from its own perspective. Its importance varies from communicant to communicant according to their musical sensitivities. The clergy differ similarly: those who are knowledgeable and musically committed often have had musical training. All Episcopalians know that there are church services without music, but many church members value service music highly, and are offended by its diminishment or removal. A small number of communicants, especially dedicated choristers, experience liturgical music as a parallel form of worship, at times superior to the spoken word, because music is a disciplined offering free of linguistic difficulties. To some communicants no sermon is more powerful than the Sanctus of Bach's B-minor Mass, or more compelling in empathy with Christ crucified than Bach's final motet in his passion according to St. John.

Church music is like church architecture. They contribute to worship and they complement each other—church towers with church bells, chancel settings with organ pipes, choir lofts with choirs singing. Just as traditional Anglican architecture conveys the sense of orthodox Anglican services, so does traditional Anglican music. And much as Anglican architecture has been analyzed in terms of worship, so may Anglican music, though far less attention has been given to this than to the architecture.

An obvious place to begin selection of appropriate music is with the rich store house of traditional Anglican music-chants, hymns, preludes, and anthems that were used in the Episcopal Church prior to the changes in liturgy initiated in the 1960s. Composers such as Palestrina and Buxtehude, Bach and Mozart, T. Tertius Noble and Ralph Vaughn Williams all have a proper place in traditional Anglican worship because their musical genius was recognized and offered as worthy.

However, the rubric of tradition has its limits. One is that Episcopal tastes in sacred music had changed over time. By the early twentieth century anthems of romantic composers like Mendelssohn and Theodore Dubois were popular, but starting in the 1950s there was a shift of interest to Renaissance and Baroque choral compositions, with an implicit interest in disciplined rather than sentimental worship. Boys' choirs, with their cherubic looks and voices, gave way to mixed choirs of trained adults. Along with the boys went the Victorian conceit that the pure sounds they produced were the closest thing we had to heavenly voices.

Contemporary compositions of sacred music should not be excluded from consideration. Composers such as John Rutter have published sacred choral music fully compatible with traditional Anglican worship. In general, however, new music creates a problem. What standards do we have for judging its suitability in traditional Anglican worship? Without vigorous standards the services of indulgent or exploratory Episcopal parishes are inundated with guitars, folk music, jazz, operatic arias, and other genre irrelevant to orthodox liturgies.

One basic question to ask is whether the new pieces were composed with worship in mind. Music written for entertainment, for staging or drama, is usually unsuitable. Having a sacred text is important. However, it is not sufficient. A sacred text may cover fireworks in sheep's clothing. For example, the "Cantate Domino" or the "Nunc Dimitis," set to music by the contemporary English composer Antony de Fleming, are meant for concert performance, with clashing cymbals, explosive tympani, and resolute dissonances that defy Anglican worship. Exceptions to the rule about intent do exist; J.S. Bach probably did not intend his B-minor Mass for a service, but portions of it have served magnificently in Anglican worship.

In line with strictures against drama, the manner of rendition matters. Soloists should stand to sing but should not face the nave or walk to the chancel steps. Choirs should face across the chancel except when facing the altar. Choral directors should not conduct from the middle of the chancel. The congregation is not an audience, and should not express musical appreciation by clapping during a service. Traditional

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worship does have its choreography, but it is not the choreography of a theater.

Whether folk music and folk music arrangements are suitable for traditional service music is largely a matter of sensibility. A piece like the traditional Shaker song, "Deal Gently with Thy Servants," is pensive, *sustenuto* in text and performance, and fully compatible with liturgical worship. Country music and shaped-note singing, which are nasal, "off-the-neck" presentations, are inappropriate. Part of the question is where a folk song is to be used in the service: offertory anthems provide the greatest freedom of choice, since they represent a break in the liturgy, whereas a folk song for a sequence hymn, such as Hymn 439 in the 1982 Hymnal, is part of the liturgy and should be chosen with that in mind. A joyous, celebratory folk song may be appropriate for an offertory but not for singing during communion. In sum, the question is not whether folk music is right or wrong for traditional Anglican worship, but whether the text and performance style are suitable for specific purposes. If in doubt, leave the selection out: liturgy comes first.

The instruments used in traditional Anglican music are not haphazard or idiosyncratic. They include voices of song, bells, pipe organs, and to a limited extent pianos and orchestral instruments such as the trumpet. Horns and pipes have been part of Christian worship since the beginning. Pipe organs have existed since medieval times. The piano is a gift of the eighteenth century, fine for parish houses and church schoolrooms but lacking the breadth and gravitas of a pipe organ or a high-quality electronic organ.

The question of which orchestral or personal instruments are appropriate for traditional Episcopal worship is answered with reference both to cultural association and to intrinsic timbre. Different aspects of worship call for different musical sounds, as every church organist knows; but there are limits. A bassoon is not likely to fit any of those modes, nor is a piccolo, tuba, or a bass drum. In contrast, the flute and violin are welcome. However, this is where cultural association enters: the violin played in classical fashion is appropriate, but if played as a fiddle, it disseminates country-music sounds that are not suitable for traditional Anglican worship. Similarly, the cultural association of guitars is with folk music, pop music, and rock-and-roll, none of them compatible with traditional worship. However, the guitar's predecessor, the lute, permeates Renaissance music, and being softer than the guitar in tone, is compatible with many aspects of the liturgy.

There is one special form of traditional sacred music that needs attention here. Chanting is an ancient form of Christian worship. It was well established by the time of Pope Gregory the Great in the seventh century. Gregorian chants involve melodies of modest sorts, without large intervals, harmonies, modes, measures, or predetermined duration. The Anglican plainchant that succeeded Gregorian chant included four-part harmonies, but retained note values that depended upon vowel length and emphasis in the texts as though they were spoken rather than sung. Plainchant therefore retained characteristics of sacred singing prior to the music revolution of the late middle ages known as *ars nova* while utilizing *ars nova* innovations that we take for granted, including key, mode, measure, clef, and sophisticated harmonies. Like Gregorian chant, Anglican plainchant combined sacred music with sacred text in balance. The text did not dominate the music, the way it does when we sing the Great Litany; nor does the music dominate the text, as it does in oratorios, anthems, and frequently in hymns. Because of its unique balance, chanting may be taken as the finest type of prayer set to music. Its use continues to the present time in the singing of psalms and canticles. Its endurance is a sign of its strength and value in worship.

Unfortunately, at least in my own experience, Episcopalians no longer know how to chant properly. Official church negligence is responsible for this. The 1940 Hymnal declared that "the rhythms of natural speech are as essential in the singing of Psalms and Canticles as in the saying of them without music. The notes of a chant tune have no value of their own apart from the rhythm of the syllables to which they are sung." The 1982 Hymnal ignores all of this. In the Service Music section for Daily Office and Holy Eucharist, the latter hymnal provides chant tunes in rhythmic forms, with measures and fixed rhythms or in some cases black notes without staffs but with no acknowledgement that these represent a withdrawal of fixed time value. In any event, we now chant notes of fixed time value, which conveys witlessness or indifference to the words we are singing. When "the" gets as much emphasis as "Lord," when "to the" lasts as long as "Father," something has been lost, and traditional Anglican worship is poorer for it. Episcopalians today chant like second graders. "Glo-ry-be-to-the-Father." "As-it-was-in-the-be-gin-ning." Nothing but quarter notes and half notes. Why has this happened? Modern choristers are not mentally regressive. The habits of *ars nova* are so powerful that they have overtaken chanting and rendered it mechanical.

The best way to assure appropriate choices of music for a traditional service is to begin with that as a question, and put the burden of evidence on each piece of music, rather than on the service. That way we remember that the service comes before the music. The music is the servant of worship, not the other way around.

Good music for traditional Episcopal worship is music that conveys the spiritual values of the liturgies it enrichens: reflection, penitence, forgiveness, celebration, and thanksgiving. It is not music for entertainment, showmanship, physical therapy, or self-satisfaction. At the most, these qualities appear before in postludes or after a service is over. The music in a service supports the meaning of the service, or it does not belong there. Fortunately, there is a host of composers who fill the bill. Their compositions over five centuries are vast and varied. We embrace them as our heritage with gratitude.

Bishop, Book, and Church

GAFCON and the Quest for Anglican Catholicity

By Canon Alistair Macdonald-Radcliffe

Canon Alistair Macdonald-Radcliffe

Prelacy, Episcopacy, and Conciliarity are manifestly foundational to the project that is GAFCON. The latest manifestation of this powerful movement in the contemporary Anglican Communion, held in Nairobi in October, made this quite clear in its actions if perhaps less immediately in its words—but then everyone knows which of these speak louder.

The Nairobi gathering was commonly referred to as GAFCON II, and although there was a meeting last year in London, this was but the second truly major gathering of the movement since the first held in Jerusalem in 2008. If there is an echo of a Hollywood "blockbuster" in this terminology it is not entirely out of place, for the organizers were at pains to show that GAFCON is *big,* in much the same way that the Vatican likes to demonstrate that St Peter's is *big*. This clearly reflects a view that big is good and tells us something. Not, of course, that they would in GAFCON want to take the Roman line of thinking in quite the Vatican direction . . . for here they meant big *relatively,* and they meant big within the Anglican Communion, which is the primary horizon of their concern. Thus it was much emphasized that those Provinces represented at the conference contain by far the majority of the world's Anglicans, even if the number of individual Provinces represented at the level of their Primus, was about seven out of the global Anglican Communion's thirty eight.

But the challenge posed by GAFCON was clear: why should the present international structures of the Communion place the multitudinous Anglicans of Nigeria, or Kenya, (each just one Province) on merely the same level as say, the continuing-but-few Anglicans to be found in the Provinces of Wales, or even New Zealand, when it comes to determining the affairs of the Communion?

One is reminded of the contest between two political figures in the nineteenth century of whom it was said that, "Pitt is to Addington as London is to Paddington," for GAFCON reflects a parallel of reasoning which feels that it is time for the Communion's global structures to reflect better the numerical distribution of Anglicans world-wide. (Though thankfully no one has gone so far yet as to jest that GAFCON is to Anglican as London is to Paddington.) But there is, actually, something deeper at work here than any mere "numbers game," for there is a substantive resentment of what is seen as ultimately an imperialist legacy.

Thus it is asked why the more revisionary few, world-wide—mostly from the more prosperous "global north"—should set the theological agenda for those committed to the orthodox faith, as it has hitherto been received by the Anglicans who comprise the majority of Anglicans overall, people who happen moreover to live predominantly in the "global south".[1] The comments made by Archbishop Welby resonated well with some of these frustrations when, in his Sermon in Nairobi Cathedral on the Sunday immediately before the GAFCON conference opened, he stated that, "I have thought and said for a long time that there is a need for new structures in the Anglican Communion." He then went on to say that, "The issues that divide us are at one level simple, but they are also at another level very complicated. Among many things, they tell us that we need a new way of being together as the Communion. A way that reflects the twenty-first century and not the old colonial pattern."

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As we look back across all the hullabaloo and dramas that have so sadly beset the Communion since the consecration of Gene Robinson in the United States in November 2003 and the subsequent visible split in the US Episcopal church, and then the fracture in global unity reflected in Lambeth 2008 when

1. There is another Global South movement within the Anglican Communion which is much more broadly-based in terms of the participation of Provinces than GAFCON. It has included around twenty-two provinces. As a result of its size it has been less able to hold to a tight agenda and is hampered, ironically, by the fact that it is less well funded than GAFCON and so lacks GAFCON's much higher profile.

several hundred bishops declined to attend, not to mention the current inability of all the Primates of the Anglican Communion even to meet and celebrate the Eucharist together, it is the question of what comprises the most authentically Anglican path for the Communion that lies at the heart of the GAFCON movement; this is the question with which it must wrestle.

Inevitably, as a movement that is profoundly Anglican, it has to address the ecclesiological challenge that lies before it. This is so even though it tends to express itself in language that speaks naturally, first and foremost about truth and biblical fidelity to the personal salvation made uniquely available in Jesus Christ as the Son of God, rather than about the Church as such.

The frankly curious acronym of GAFCON, when unfolded, is important here—for it makes clear that at present GAFCON does not view itself as an ecclesial body—it is simply the Continuing Global Anglican Future *Conference* which convenes itself from time to time, although it is exploring some formal ecclesial functions. In other words, whatever the sharply issue-driven energy that led to its creation, it lives within the peculiarly Anglican tension of seeking to convene and support a global constituency of the faithful on the one hand, and having to grapple with how to do this within the specifically Anglican heritage of organizational structures on the other. These structures range from the traditional orders of the Ministry, through to elements of Erastianism in England, to the Lambeth conferences, the primates meetings, and perhaps most exotic of all, the Anglican Consultative Council.

It is precisely its search for the core of this heritage which leads it back to Episcopacy and Primacy as key organizational foci, just as much as the Bible and the divine person of Christ incarnate are central to its theology. In doing this GAFCON is surely drawing too lightly upon the specifically Anglican formularies of the Prayer Book and Ordinal. And it is because it makes such scant use of these historic and defining Anglican theological resources, that it is ultimately so driven to an implicitly *Catholic* polity built on bishops.

Bishops at the 2013 GAFCON in Nairobi, Kenya
Photo by Raymond Dague

The Nairobi conference was in fact not really one conference at all. It was a musically rumbustious prayer and praise event with lectures and sub-groups for most of the 1500 or so participants. It raised morale and spirits most effectively and demonstrated the desired "bigness" (as has been mentioned by virtue of its global make up), but the largest group did not actually decide things, even though it was invited to endorse them. Decision making was a matter for a much smaller group led by Primates (along with drafting and policy committees) while the several hundred bishops again met as a further group on the side.

Accordingly, despite the apparent emphasis on words, with all GAFCON's various statements and declarations, the documents produced were *not* the organizational focus for GAFCON. This is helpful to realize when looking at the *Jerusalem Statement* or the more humbly titled *Nairobi Communiqué and Commitment*. Some observers have been perplexed and asked if the authors—however they happened to have been selected and convened—somehow understood themselves to be completing the work of the early Church Councils, and to be filling in such lacunae as Cranmer, the Books of Common Prayer and even the very Creeds had overlooked! Such an absurdity of presumption was however never intended, happily, for the commitment of all those in GAFCON is, as they keep stressing, Biblical truth and personal salvation in Christ, as mediated through GAFCON's interpreting Anglican community, convened and grounded by its bishops and primates.

Perhaps the *Report from the Bishops Gathering* held during the wider meeting in Nairobi is the most helpful document here, opening as it does with resonant words from Hebrews 10.7: "Remember your leaders who spoke to you the Word of God. Consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith." (sic. Actually 10.13, though the words of verse 7 are not unhelpful: "Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to do thy will, O God." But perhaps the bishops in Nairobi should really have used the Douay-Rheims translation for an even clearer effect: "Remember your prelates who have spoken the word of God to you: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation. . . ."

It is no accident that care was taken to use the word Catholic with intent and emphasis in the *Nairobi Communiqué* in speaking of "the renewed Anglican orthodoxy to which we, in all our different traditions—Evangelicals, Anglo-Catholics and Charismatics—are committed." The economy of reference must not be allowed to conceal the import for the term "Catholic Church" goes back to St. Ignatius of Antioch (c. 100 A.D.) when, in his letter to the faithful at Smyrna, he wrote: "Where Jesus Christ is, there is the catholic Church" (*Smyrn*. 8:2). This surely captures well the GAFCON ethos.

Historically this term, from Ignatius onwards, was used to define the Church and was used in the creeds

themselves—including the most definitive formula of the ecumenical councils of Nicea and Constantinople. This was in spite of the fact that the word "catholic" is not found in Scripture itself. In this regard, it is like the Holy Trinity which, again, is not explicitly referred to in the Scriptures, even though it is alone adequate to the truths set out therein. But more than this, the concept of the Trinity offers the ultimate eschatological instantiation of the catholicity to which the Church in this world is called—namely to be an image or, in the language of the East, an icon, as we profess and believe in One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church of which the Anglican Communion partakes.

In its original Greek sense, the word catholic means first and foremost the inner wholeness and integrity of the Church's life, which is not phenomenal and empirical in the simple sense that is suggested by its sometime synonym "universal". True universality applies to the *truth* the Church upholds, rather than to its geographic spread. In addition it has the fullness of saving power which can overcome every sin and evil through having the fullness of holiness and grace. Understood thus in its full historic sense the word catholic has a richness that is lacking from the merely universal.

All of which is highly relevant when next thinking about the sense of prelacy and primacy so evidently important for GAFCON for it is much more than an administrative expedient.

The sense of primacy hidden therein can best be thought of as a charism. It is not so far a governmental concept referring to universal jurisdiction and juridical power over the Churches of Christ (a perspective to which the Orthodox and Anglicans have historically both felt Rome to be too tempted). Rather, it echoes something once said of the Papacy by the late Demetrios I, patriarch of Constantinople—primacy was said to be a "service, an office of charity, resting on God's grace." In paraphrase, one might adapt Demetrios' further comment and say that, "*bishop* explains *primate,* and *primate* expresses *bishop* with greater force." Essentially thus no bishop is different in his apostolic authority from another. The primate, therefore, cannot wield a power independent of the episcopal college, nor is he a "father" of other bishops, but a brother even if his office gives him "a greater force" through which to proclaim the truth.

By this reasoning, to ask if leadership in the Communion should always be located in Canterbury is to ask a defective question. What is meant is better expressed by the question, "Must the Archbishop of Canterbury always be elected from the Church of England?"

All of which indicates that what may be nascent in GAFCON, in its practice whatever this may lack by way of an expressed ecclesial theology, is a fresh expression of an ancient model rooted in patristic times, whereby Anglicanism in the ordering of its ecclesial life seeks to interiorize both primacy *and* conciliarity in service of God's truth.

Gathering at the 2013 GAFCON in Nairobi, Kenya
Photo by Raymond Dague

A perhaps unexpected quotation in this context comes to mind:

> "Who do you think that the ancient lady was from whom you received the little book?" . . . "Who is she, then?" I said. "The Church," he said. . . ."She was created the first of all things. For this reason is she old; and for her sake was the world established."
>
> [The ancient lady] said to me:
>
> "Behold, do you not see before you a great tower being built on the water with shining square stones? . . . The tower which you see being built is myself, the Church . . . . [T]he building of the tower shall be completed, and all shall rejoice together around the tower, and shall glorify God because the building of the tower has been completed." *The Shepherd of Hermas,* Vis. II,iv,1; Vis. III,ii,4; Vis. III,iii,3; Vis. III,iv,2; written circa A.D. 150

The Church is imagined here in two ways, first as an ancient woman (who grows younger in *The Shepherd*), the "first of all things," for whom "the world was established." Then, secondly, the Church is pictured as an uncompleted tower which is thus something ever new and not capable of being comprehended in this world by time-bound human thought. In a related fashion, existentially in the Church it is possible for it to combine tradition and living experience, the past and the present, all the while with a self-understanding of participating in as yet an uncompleted task.

Such an image allows us perhaps to see GAFCON II as a positive phenomenon affording hope for the future of the Church in its Anglican form, as part of Anglicanism's struggle as a whole to wrestle with an ecclesial doctrine of the Church that is still in process of development. But then this is, as it always was and ever shall be in this life, a challenge for the people of God: "Come, let us go to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; that He may teach us his ways and that we may walk in His paths. (Is. 2:2)

"Lost in the Translation"

An Essay on the Christian Creed

Cate McDermott

By Cate McDermott

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The Apostles' and Nicene Creeds have "served, and I believe continue to serve, as tokens or badges of Christian identity"[1] for the past seventeen hundred years. Without the Creeds, "the church can preserve neither its unity in Christ *nor its identity as Christian*."[2] Christianity is an essentially "creedal religion," dedicated to "a sense of right belief . . . from which deviation means heresy."[3] Accordingly, the creedal doctrines are indispensable for the Christian faith, and indivisible from Christian truth. The ability of the Church to communicate the truths contained in the Creeds is an important part of its evangelical mission. Is it also necessary, therefore, that the Church "translate" the Creeds so that they may be better understood by Western society today, so far removed from the circumstances and cultural worldview of the early centuries of the church?

I will waive the question as to whether our culture of today is actually any further removed from the fourth century than were the equally unique cultures of the ninth, sixteenth, or eighteenth centuries, when no difficulty was perceived in retaining the Creeds in their original forms. Instead, I will focus on the issue raised by the very notion of "translation". The idea that creedal Christian doctrines require "translation" for the sake of our worldview today appears to be based on an inaccurate definition of the concept of translation itself.

Translation is the act of stating something spoken or written in one language into the words of another. The meaning of the words and ideas translated is not changed, only the form of their expression. If this is all that is meant by "translation," the Creeds have already been translated multiple times. In the Anglican Church of North America, we read them in an English translation, and as English is still spoken in North America, no further translation is necessary in the concrete sense of the term.

However, this is not what people really mean when they insist that the Creeds must be "translated" in order to be put into use in the Church today, filled as it is with twenty-first century Western Christians. Rather, it appears that they desire that the meaning of the words as well as their linguistic form be changed to conform to modern understandings of how the world operates. As Geoffrey Studdert-Kennedy was already arguing nearly a century ago, the conceptions—not merely the wording—contained in the Creeds have "become unreal."[4] What he means is that moderns do not view the workings of the world and Divine Providence in the same manner as did their fourth-century forebears. The Creedal doctrines of Creation, Incarnation, Atonement, Sin, Eternity, and all the rest, cannot fit with "the great idea"[5] that humanity has invented for itself in modernity. In an entirely different sort of world, a scientific, democratic, progressive, increasingly educated world, doctrines that blazon forth a message of the miraculous power of a Sovereign, Unchanging, Mysterious God no longer have a place. "It has around it always the atmosphere of a fairy tale", he remarked.[6]

A fairy tale? Perhaps, if Christianity is unreal. However, saying that the intrinsic message of the Creeds reads like a fairy tale says nothing for or against its reality. Reality can be only one of two things. It can either be an absolute, external fact that cannot be changed no matter what it said about it; or, reality can be, as the twentieth-century logical positivists posited, merely a construct of language itself. In either case, the Creeds, as they stand in their historically-understood conceptual terminology, are about reality, indeed, are real.

If the Truth of God is something that *is*, a substantial reality-in-itself, then there can be only one way to

1. Philip Turner, "Introduction," in *Nicene Christianity: The Future for a New Ecumenism*, ed. Christopher R. Seitz (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, a division of Baker Book House Co., 2001), 11

2. Ibid., 10, emphasis mine.

3. Frances Young, *The Making of the Creeds* (London: SCM Press, 1991), 1–2.

4. Geoffrey Studdert-Kennedy, *I Believe: Sermons on the Apostles' Creed* (New York: George H. Doran Company, 1928), 214.

5. Ibid., 37.

6. Ibid., 214.

talk about it, the way that it actually *is*. In that case, the fairy-tale sounding elements of Nicene Christianity are simply "in accordance with the way the world is,"[7] and to change and update them would be a falsification of reality. If the way God actually created and governs the world is congruent with what we now call a fairy tale, then so be it. God's reality is what it is, regardless of what we think it should be.

On the other hand, if reality is a linguistic and cultural concept, there is nothing to make the twenty-first century's construction of reality any more or less authentic than that of the Creed. Changing the terms of the Creed to accommodate the cultural norms of the secular modern world would simply be exchanging one idea of Christian reality for another reality—or supposed reality. For the Church to replace the language and culture that has shaped its identity from its earliest establishment with another conceptual language linked to another identity because it is more real is frankly an incoherent proposition.

But, it may be argued, although the Creed is a sign or symbol of the Christian faith, and although the reality of the faith should not be changed at whim, the Creed is not really identical with that faith itself. It was produced by a combination of Scriptural and historical factors to respond to a specific situation. Couldn't the creedal language—and the doctrinal understanding and church culture that it has produced—be understood as only one way of expressing the Gospel truth, "merely one not-very-good attempt at pinning down a God we cannot really know"?[8]

If the Creedal language is imperfect and metaphorical at times, this is not an inherent problem. C.S. Lewis has pointed out that all language is metaphorical:

> The truth is that if we are going to talk at all about things which are not perceived by the senses, we are forced to use language metaphorically . . . there is no other way of talking . . . all speech about supersensibles is, and must be, metaphorical in the highest degree . . . . [S]ome people say, "In that case, would it not be better to get rid of the mental pictures, and of the language which suggests them, altogether?" But this is impossible. The people who recommend it have not noticed that . . . they merely succeed in substituting images of some different kind . . . vague images which, if inspected, would turn out to be even more absurd . . . every attempt to improve the ancient language will have the same result . . . We can make our speech duller, we cannot make it more literal."[9]

They have merely replaced one not-very-good attempt at pinning down God with another. The Creeds, in their historical role as a symbol or confession of Christian faith, have "the authority of a norm that is itself normed; they have real yet conditional, limited, and subordinate authority to bind the church . . . subordinate, first and foremost, to the fact that the God of the gospel is free . . . Second, creeds . . . are subordinate . . . to Holy Scripture, for it is Scripture . . . that is appointed by God as the instrument of His self-communication."[10] Any attempt to "translate" the Creed that does not take into account the historical shaping of Church doctrine, developed courageously in opposition to the world and with the goal of imitating Christ as the only true norm for the Church's life could in fact suffer from another danger. As Dorothy Sayers wrote: "heresy is, as I have tried to show, largely the expression of opinion of the untutored average man, trying to grapple with the problems of the universe at the point where they begin to interfere with his daily life and thought."[11] And again, "Bishop Cotton, you will note, stated that the tendencies of the human mind against which the Athanasian Creed was directed, are 'common everywhere.'"[12] The precise language of doctrine is not the language of ordinary untutored persons.

When it is asked that the Creed be "translated" in conformity with modern ideas of progress and superiority to former ages, the danger lies in separating the unchangeable truth of the Gospel message. The Creed "safeguards . . . the free self-presence of the Church's Lord and His testimony to Himself in Scripture . . . it binds by saying 'Scripture says.'"[13] Therefore, the meaning of the Creed must be the same as that of Holy Scripture, and thus cannot be "translated" with regard to the concepts and doctrines expressed.

In conclusion, I agree with Richard Hooker: "if we think that the Church at this day needeth not those ancient preservatives which ages before us were so glad to use, we deceive ourselves greatly."[14] If the Church changes its Creedal confessions to match with the particular worldview of any era, something—the most significant Something of all, the Gospel message of Christ Himself—will be lost in the translation.

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7. John Webster, "Confession and Confessions," in *Nicene Christianity*, 128.

8. Ibid., 129.

9. C.S. Lewis, *Miracles* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, a division of HarperCollins *Publishers*, 1947), 115, 117–118, and 126.

10. Webster, "Confession and Confessions," in *Nicene Christianity*, 129.

11. Dorothy Sayers, *Creed or Chaos: Why Christians Must Choose Either Dogma or Disaster (Or, Why It Really Does Matter What You Believe)* (Manchester, NH: Sophia Institute Press), 55.

12. C.A. Swainson, *The Athanasian Creed and its Usage in the English Church: An Investigation As to the Original Object of the Creed and the Growth of Prevailing Misconceptions Regarding It* (London, Oxford, and Cambridge: 1870), 81.

13. Webster, "Confession and Confessions," in *Nicene Christianity*, 130.

14. Richard Hooker, *Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*, facsimile version (Amsterdam: Theatrum Orbis Terrarum Ltd. and New York: Da Capo Press, 1971), Book Five, 187.

Humility

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Friend, go up higher: then shalt thou have worship in the presence of them that sit at meat with thee. For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.
(St. Luke xiv. 11)

It is hard for us to imagine the experience of these words, spoken by Jesus at the end of our Gospel lesson for today. We make our way through the entire lection, and we even seem to understand it. Jesus, as usual, uses a parable to illustrate a point. And the point is this: pray for humility. St. Thomas Aquinas tells us that humility is a virtue which is needed first to temper and restrain the mind, lest it tend to high things immoderately . . . and second to strengthen the mind against despair, and urge it on to the pursuit of great things according to right reason; and this is magnanimity. (S.T. II, ii, 161, i) So St. Thomas tells us that humility must inspire and compel the soul to seek high things, but only with due measure, as self-knowledge opens the soul to what can be obtained only through the Grace of God. Humility is not, then, cowardly, sheepish, self-pitying, or morose. The humble man is not afraid of the world, the flesh, or the devil. Nor is he dangerously teetering on the verge of despair. The humble man knows himself, and in knowing himself he confesses what he can and cannot do. He knows that he can and does, on most days, make a mess of what God has made and created. He knows too that God alone can cure and heal him of this tendency, and so he bows himself down before the awesome and mighty hand of God. Again, with St. Thomas, humility is, as it were, a disposition to man's untrammeled access to spiritual and divine goods. (Idem) Humility alone opens the door to spiritual sanctification and welfare, to redemption and then salvation.

And as far as the definition goes, you might say, I am all for it; but how do I get it? It seems like a priceless painting, an incomparably beautiful sculpture, or a sublime musical composition—something to be admired, even enjoyed, and yet not something that I am capable of creating, making, or possessing for very long. We cannot make or create our own humility. It is a gift that comes from God alone. And it is a gift that begins to be conceived in the heart of man only if and when we look at its opposites—pride and deceit—and then God's response to them.

Pride is intellectual and spiritual arrogance or *hubris,* and is found in the man who claims a power, wisdom, or love that is not properly his own. The proud man uses these virtues to promote his own advancement, promotion, and acceptance in the world. Since the protection and cultivation of his ego is paramount, he remains untouched by their true source and origin in God. He refuses *to relinquish all rights to himself* because he fears that their loss will demand his ruin. And so he plays the role of a god—as a god to himself and a lord over others. Through the power he possesses, he uses his wisdom and understanding to pursue self-will at the expense and cost of other men's happiness and well-being.

St. Anthony Abbott, the Founder of Monasticism, says that because of pride of heart, "the heavens were bowed down, the foundations of the earth were shaken . . . angels were cast down from glory, and became demons because of their pride of heart. . . . Because of this the Almighty was angered, and caused fire to come forth from the abyss . . . made Hell, and its torments . . . Because of pride of heart all things are troubled and thrown into disorder, and men war against each other." (*On Humility and Deceit*, Anthony Abbott) Pride, it seems, is a spiritual and intellectual vice that finds its origin in Heaven with the first rebellion of Lucifer and his angelic friends against God. It then becomes a spiritual reality that first tempts, and then possesses and defines man in the primordial Fall of Adam. Its end is Hell, or everlasting separation from the love of God. It is not hard to come by, since Scripture teaches us that it mysteriously conditions our lives from conception to death. "I was shapen in iniquitiy, and in sin hath my mother conceived me," (Ps. li. 1) says the Psalmist. The higher pride soars in a man, the deeper he will fall.

At first, Pride is deceived and then deceives itself. It is deceived by the devil into thinking that it is something when it is nothing. What Pride finds so attractive are its accomplishments, successes, and victories. The proud man may be rich in earthly treasure, power, prestige, influence, or intellectual acumen and talent. The proud man may think himself good because of what he gives, how much, to whom, and with what frequency. The proud man may count himself blessed because of his good works. And all the while he is not only deceived, but deceives himself into thinking that the continuance of the same will earn and merit his salvation. But as St. Anthony says, "The deceitful man deceives only his own soul"; for [as the Psalmist says]: "His sorrow shall be turned on his own head: and his iniquity shall come down upon his crown." (Ps. vii. 17; Idem) The proud man

is left quite alone with his own lies and falsehoods about himself and his neighbor. For, though it is true that he has power, wisdom, and love, he has forgotten that they are gifts to be used selflessly in the service of God and man.

This brings us to God's response to man's prideful and deceitful misuse of himself and the world around him. God responds to man's pride with a humility all His own, and that humility is nothing short of God's love made flesh. Over and against the pride and deceit of angel and man, God humbles himself in His Son, and sends Him, made of a woman, made under the Law, to redeem them that were under the Law. (Gal. iv. 4,5) This Son is God's everlastingly-begotten Word, the expression of His eternal truth, His desire for all men's salvation. This Word was made flesh and did not think equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form He humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross. (Phil. ii. 7,8)

The humility of Christ is found in his absolute dependence upon God the Father's will and desire. First, *He empties Himself*, or, perhaps more accurately, tempers and adjusts His Divine Nature as he subjects Himself to the laws of human life. Second, He comes to serve, minister, and impart God's truth to the world of man. Third, He becomes obedient unto death, subjecting Himself to man's rejection of the Father's will and desire, so that the same man might be saved. In all three ways, then, He is the perfect expression of the virtue of humility in time and space. Humility then ensures that He is that love or charity that "suffereth long, and is kind . . . envieth not . . . vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things." (1 Cor. xiii. 4-7) Christ's humility enables Him to empty Himself of Himself that He might serve all men through obedience to the Father. Humbly then—as the *Son of God as flesh,* He dies the death which no other man could die. In the pure humility of His death, He reveals that sin, death, and Satan have no power over Him nor need have any ultimate authority over anyone who would follow Him.

Christ's humility is the lowest seat that any man has ever taken. But we must remember that Christ is always God. In Christ, God's Word as Flesh takes the lowest seat imaginable in order from that place to be asked up higher. *I go up into Heaven and Thou art there; I go down into hell and Thou art there also. (Ps. cxxxix. 8)* The Father says to Christ, Friend, go up higher: then shalt thou have worship in the presence of them that sit at meat with thee. (St. Luke xiv. 11) Because Christ made himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant (Phil. ii. 7), and laid down His life for the sheep (St. John x. 11), all men through Him can be asked up higher also. Being asked up higher is an invitation into redemption and salvation. But not before we, in Christ—the *Son as flesh,* take the lowest seat.

Taking the lowest seat is essential for all of us if we hope for salvation. St. Paul, in this morning's Epistle, provides us with a picture of what it looks like to take the lowest seat. He is always exhorting his flocks to take the lowest seat by renewing their membership in the Body of Christ through humility. This means that we, like him, must become "prisoners of the Lord . . . with all lowliness, meekness, with long suffering." (Eph. iv. 1) Being a prisoner of the Lord means that we are called to be held captive to the death and resurrection of Christ. For "the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again." (2 Cor. v. 14, 15) Humility in Christ demands a daily dying to self so that His indwelling Grace can strengthen the mind against despair, and urge it on to the pursuit of great things . . . and [God's] magnanimity. (St. Thomas, Idem)

Taking the lowest seat is essential for all of us if we hope for salvation.

So humility involves a double operation. First, there is the acknowledgement of powerlessness. Therefore is my spirit vexed within me, and my heart within me is desolate. (Ps. cxliii. 4) Second, there is the admission that in Christ's humility God can heal and transform us. So we turn to the Lord with hope for deliverance. "Yet do I remember the time past; I muse upon all thy works; yea, I exercise myself in the works of thy hands." (Ibid, 5) God's work is the humility of Jesus Christ that stoops down to lift us up out of our own spiritual deaths into the life of His Resurrection. Humble self-emptying means that I leave myself behind in order to let Jesus Christ live in and through me. St. Augustine reminds us that, "Because God made us for Himself, our hearts are restless until they rest in Him." (Confessions i. 1) Because of the humility of Jesus Christ, man, in the end, can pursue great things, even the exaltation, and return to rest in our Heavenly Father. Dear friends, let us enter into His humility today. Let us shed tears of sadness for the lives we have lived, our pride and deceit; let us leave ourselves behind, and then allow our Blessed Master to wipe away those tears, lift us up from the lowest seat to hear those sweet and loving words, Friend, with Me, in Me, come up higher. Amen.

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