

News of Liturgy

Editor: Colin Buchanan Issue no. 184 April 1990

Editorial

PROMISE OF HIS GLORY

Promise of His Glory was duly published on 5 April. It is another massive job (over 380 pages) by our highly productive Liturgical Commission (and is published by Church House Publishing in a 'desk-top' style with a code of 'GS 907' at £9.50).

Promise is sub-titled *Services and Prayers for the Season from All Saints to Candlemas*, and its follows the precedent of *Lent Holy Week Easter*, though, because a new philosophy has been dawning in this last quinquennium, it rather follows *Patterns* in its range and choice of materials. It is also less tradition-conscious than *Lent Holy Week Easter*, as here the seasonal field is not so deeply grooved into only one path with the passing centuries as has been the case with the paschal season.

Perhaps a lover of the ASB (though one who expects it soon to be superseded) can issue a very mild protest that the Commission does not even view itself as evolving from an ASB base. At intervals it simply dismisses it! Thus there is no patience with a 'nine Sundays before Christmas' scheme – just a bare nodding to it with a sequence which begins with 'Last Sunday of October'! This Sunday is dismissed as being useless for any purpose, because of school half-terms . . . (page 82). There is also little patience with the ASB Lectionary (a 'contrived thematic approach' (page 4) – not thus did the previous Commission write when comparing merits of Lectionaries). Oh yes, and 'Presentation' has vanished from all references to 2 February. 'Candlemas' is in. They are an iconoclastic lot, this Commission.

The separate parts of the 'season' are bound together by an outline 'Service of Light', which is adaptable for many occasions. Then comes the piece-meal approach. In each case a range of 'proper' material is supplied in the structure of a eucharist. We have:

- All Saints-tide: there is a discussion of its relationship to All Souls (some corner-cutting here) and to Remembrance Sunday (a good point). There is provision of what is, I think, an All Souls eucharist (dubbed 'Commemoration of the Faithful Departed').
- Advent (with a nod to November's 'Sundays of the Kingdom'): an element of the penitential is provided; light is highlighted: and a 'Jesse Tree' (!) gets an innings (page 125).
- Christmas is a riot of fun, but with a consciousness of an English tradition also. The kiddies are kept sympathetically in view, and there are Christingle, Crib, and Christmas Morning Family services. Carols, candles, and cribs are followed by material for the 'Twelve Days' of Christmas, including New Year.
- Epiphany – which the Commission wants to promote. The magi, the baptism, the marriage at Cana, these are all in the batting order, with some winning responsive material as that which catches the eye.

- 'Candlemas' has scope for a procession with candles, prayers with and around candles, and even final provision for extinguishing candles (so overlooked in baptisms and at Easter!).
- Resources constitute three major further chapters – canticles and responsaries, collects and prayers, and alternative lectionaries. An appendix deals with the origins of dating the festivals.

We understand that Synod will have a preliminary debate in July, that the final form will then be settled by the Commission, (that Grove Books will publish a commentary), and that someone somewhere will decide whether any or all of it must go down the synodical pipeline.

Our notice of it here is only an initial canter. We will take a microscope to different parts in coming months, and invite correspondence on any part.
Colin Buchanan

IN MEMORIAM – RONALD JASPER

Ronald Jasper died on 11 April, and his friends on the worldwide liturgical scene will feel his going. In the space available it is impossible to lay out a view of his whole life and creative work. He was Dean of York for nine years, ending but a few days after the famous fire in the South transept, and he had retired to Ripon. But I try to reduce his vast contribution to the liturgical scene to size, and so pick on the following high points:

Firstly, we all owe our greatest debt to him for the Alternative Service Book. He was a member of the Commission from its outset in 1955, and became chairman in 1964, and saw the whole task through, from Series 2 to Series 3 to the ASB, before leaving the Commission after its Silver Jubilee party in 1980. He worked on the group which prepared the ASB, and took his place in Synod and served also on the liturgical Revision Committees (until he became both bored with their processes and often antipathetic to their finished work). Whilst sheer drafting of texts frequently came his way, in general his style was to hand out work to the various beavers on the Commission, and then gently to referee the handling of that work when it came back before the Commission. He was ready to work into the night, or to beard lions in their dens, when it was necessary – but equally he usually gave the Commission members a long and fairly loose rein. His own account of the Commission's workings and the putting together of the ASB is to be found in his recent *The Development of the Anglican Liturgy 1662-1980*, the second half of which is autobiographical. Indeed no tribute here could lay bare his work for the ASB in the way his own chapters have done, and readers are referred to it for that full-orbed treatment. (Of course, there are one or two Jasperisms which are *not* recorded there, including the occasion when he announced to the Synod that if a certain amendment were accepted *the whole Commission would resign on the spot* – I was sitting with one or two others, and we had not been consulted, and we gazed at each other in wild surmise, but marvellously, the crunch did not come and the bluff was not exposed).

But the liturgical world owes much more to Ronald. He served on the Council of Societas Liturgica. He founded the Joint Liturgical Group (again, by an element of bluff!), and became its secretary. He became official observer in Rome, seeing through all the post-Vatican II reforms. And he then became founding co-chairman with Harold Winstone of the International Consultation on English Texts.

We also owe much to his books. He wrote non-liturgical books, including the definitive biographies of A. C. Headlam and George Bell, but his early work on the nineteenth century and on Frere was in due course followed up by ASB-related work – starting with a symposium he edited *The Eucharist Today: Studies in Holy Communion, Series 3* (SPCK, 1974), continued in editing the Commission's (unattributed) *A Commentary on the Alternative Service Book* (CIO, 1980), and then coming to a climax in his post-retirement labours of the last five and a half years: (jointly with Paul Bradshaw) *A Companion to the Alternative Service Book* (1986), the *Development* book mentioned above (SPCK, 1989), and finally, the third of his trilogy, edited jointly with his son David, *Language and the Worship of the Church* (MacMillan, 1990) – hot off the press, and yet to be reviewed. It completed the work he envisaged, and perhaps he sung his 'Nunc' when he saw it.

We for our part honour his memory. A generation of liturgists has gone in the last two years with Geoffrey Cuming, Charles Whitaker, Arthur Couratin, and now Ronald. Commission members of their years must count themselves privileged to have worked with them, and thank God accordingly. And those who worship with their texts benefit also, often without realizing it, not having known them personally.

IN SECLUSIONEM – ROBERT RUNCIE

We just noted last month that the Archbishop of Canterbury had announced his retirement, to fall eight months earlier than actually necessitated by age. Since the announcement:

- It has dawned on the great Christian public that Mrs. Thatcher (or possibly her successor!) will have the last word – and already, under the existing convention, she has appointed her chairman of the Crown Appointments Commission, Lord Caldecote.
- Ladbroke and others have started to shout the odds. Punters are directed to the stable-boys or the horses' mouths. The form-book can give odd readings, however.
- NOL* can only repeat its unliturgical conviction that all links of church and state which leaves the latter making senior appointments to the former is wholly incredible, theologically unsupported, not entitled to our confidence, and mete for swift re-organization.

Meanwhile we salute Dr. Runcie. He made various attempts to knock out the *Filloque*, but was absent when Rite A came to its Revision Stage in Synod, and Donald Coggan's conservatism led to the amendment never being put. Dr. Runcie deliberately included the Nicene Creed in his enthronement service at Canterbury in 1980, in order equally deliberately to be able to omit *Filloque* . . . The matter had a slightly forced air to it!

He adopted the new ordination rites from the start (though sitting to ordain!), and in general took his place among the moderns (whilst still indicating on the side how happy he is with the ancient). Some of the air of 1662 perhaps clings to him to this day. In his first presidential address to General Synod in July 1980 he gave away 'end of term' plaudits, as the ASB was now coming into production. Grove Books got a bountiful mention too, and has been a duly suborned uncritical supporter of the Archbishop ever since. We wish him and Mrs. Runcie much happiness in their retirement.

Book Reviews

Martin Dudley and Geoffrey Rowell (eds.) *Confession and Absolution* (SPCK, 1990, xii/212 pp., £9.95).

The back cover of this book claims that it fills 'an important gap' and I think that that is true, and that the book ought to be welcomed for that reason. The editors claim that the motivation for the book was *not* the synodical frustrations in relation to *ego absolvo te* from 1981-83 – but they also acknowledge that they were well aware of those events (events, we might add, charted in an obviously biased way in *NOL* . . .). So now we have a solid book. What do we learn?

Jeffery John, on the New Testament, goes to the (contested) *shaliach* concept of apostleship, to the power of the keys (Matt. 16 and 18), and of course to the 'if you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven . . .' of John 20. On the last passage he cavalierly dismisses any notion that it might refer to preaching the gospel effectively – no, it must refer to those *inside* the church. This is very near to special pleading.

John Halliburton (who is not on the Doctrine Commission, *pace* p.vi) reviews the early church. This is an instructive account of how anything like the 'sacrament of penance' ever evolved, for it was admittedly not there at the start. The case is subtly compounded by the author saying that 'even Cranmer' recommended the 'sacrament of penance' for those uneasy in conscience. A glance at the 1552 warning exhortation will show how far this is a loaded gloss on what Cranmer did recommend.

Martin Dudley gives us a learned, though necessarily excerptive, look at a thousand years of Catholic history. The process by which private sacramental penance emerged as a procedure complete in itself, involving contrition, confession, imposition of penance, and absolution, took about six hundred years. It was complete by the end of the first Christian millennium . . .' (p.59). This proved to be just in time for incorporation into the systematized accounts of sacramental grace which begin in the twelfth century with Abelard, Hugh, Lombard and Aquinas. The indicative '*ego absolvo te*' dates from this century, at least as the official formula. Of course, a critical observer is still left wondering what the 'outward and visible' *sign* – the 'matter' – of this 'sacrament' might be. The nearest we get is what Martin Dudley calls the 'quasi-matter' of 'the penitent's own acts, contrition, confession, and satisfaction' (p.72). It is hard to see how these can be the matter instituted by God as *the* given and unchanging distinctive sacramental sign which *makes* the rite a sacrament. As well as make the confession of faith (or the renunciation?) the 'matter' of baptism! On the sixteenth century, the reformers are well represented (though Tetzel and his ilk do not get a mention as trigger of the Reformation). And the Council of Trent emerges as more gospel-orientated than non-Romans have ever thought. Martin Dudley concludes with a *tour de force* in charting our way through modern Roman Catholic writing and practice.

Geoffrey Rowell tackles Anglicanism from the Reformation to the nineteenth century. It is a fairly told history, though obviously put together in the interests of a certain conclusion. He misses the change in the rubric prior to the absolution in the 'Visitation of the Sick in 1662,' but that is a peccadillo. He establishes more of a continuous, if tenuous, story than some would have expected.

Christine Hall opens various windows onto the Orthodox tradition, including varieties of forms of absolution.

There is then a second part of the book, shorter and more speculative, which looks at the use of penance to-day. Chapter headings are 'What has been lost?', 'Not as Judge but as Pastor', and 'The Role of the Confessional Process in Psychotherapy'. Finally, a third part is on 'The Liturgies of Penance', and here there is a wealth of rich and interesting material from to-day's church.

It must be remembered that those who defeated the Commission's rites in General Synod in 1983 were contending for two – and only two – principles: (1) that '*ego absolvo te*' actually paid more than its disingenuous apologists allowed, and (2) that it could nevertheless be perfectly well used without having to go through the whole process of General Synod authorization as an official 'alternative' service. In virtually every other respect the proposed material and their rationale were uncontroversial. Furthermore the second principle was conceded by the 'platform' *once the rites had been defeated* (which did appear therefore as though the opponents were up against a legal ruling made in the interests of policy not of objective law . . .). An unauthorized form of absolution was 'commended' by the House of Bishops, in defiance of all their earlier procedural principles, in *Lent Holy Week Easter*. This means but one principle of contention remains, and, whilst this book will not change minds overnight on that point, it does provide very hopeful data in chapter after chapter.

So we are largely beyond the point of doctrinal controversy. Perhaps a bigger issue is whether there is mileage in parochial practice, or, to be kinder, whether the kinds of group support, spiritual directors, soul friends, and personal appraisal now to be found growing in the Church of England are in any visible continuity with the 'Confession and Absolution' so carefully traced out in this book. The issue is wide open.

COB

Hugh Wybrew, *The Orthodox Liturgy, The Development of the Eucharistic Liturgy in the Byzantine Rite*, (SPCK, 1989, pp189, £8.95).

This book is a most helpful introduction to the Byzantine Liturgy, and is to be warmly recommended. Perhaps the most beneficial aspect of the book is its method. The development of the liturgical text is set alongside changes in architecture, and in the understanding of the Liturgy as expressed in liturgical commentaries. The picture given therefore is not just the history of the development of a rite, but of the growth of a tradition.

The book begins with the apostles and ends in the fourteenth century with Cabasiles. In between there are chapters on, the fourth century, the times of John Chrysostom and Maximus the Confessor, and the eleventh century. Particular attention is given to the importance of icons and disputes concerning their role in worship, which have had such an important and long lasting impact on the Byzantine tradition.

My only reservation is in the title. This is a book on the Byzantine rite. It is easy to forget that the term Orthodox can include a number of different traditions. Similar books on the Syrian, Coptic, Monroite or Ethiopian traditions would be of great value. Nevertheless this is an excellent work, a must for all those who are interested in the Liturgy.

Phillip Tovey

Standing Liturgical Commission of ECUSA, *Supplemental Liturgical Texts: Prayer Book Studies 30* (Church Hymnal Corporation, N.Y., 1989, 130pp. – obtainable from Grove Books at £3.75 postfree).

This American Episcopal Report has 130 pages, and is largely an exercise in adding flexibility to the 1979 Book, and deleting the last vestiges of non-inclusive language from its rites. The Preface says that the texts ‘are provided as part of an ongoing dialogue in the Church . . . about language and liturgy.’ They can be used under the authority of the diocesan bishop. There are three parts – daily office re-touching; the eucharist; and a musical supplement with chants and pointing for existing and supplemental texts. Standard texts are from the latest ELLC Versions (reviewed here last month). Language of ‘fatherhood’ etc. has been retained, but thinned somewhat, and feminine imagery has been introduced (especially in the gynomorphized ‘Wisdom’ of the Apocryphal books). ‘He’ and ‘his’, with reference to God, are avoided much more than in the past.

The most noticeable differences in the offices is the provision of more canticles. In the eucharist there are two new eucharistic prayers (‘He yearned to draw all the world to himself, as a hen gathers her young under her wings, yet we would not,’ (p.27)). Similarly, there are supplemental forms of the Prayers of the People.

It is fairly unexciting, yet, equally clearly, represents a well-planned move taking the American Book in a consistent way into the 1990s. The presentation itself is not so ‘supplemental’ that this book cannot be used without the full 1979 Book. On the contrary, all sorts of contexts would be well served by this as the basic book.

COB

This month’s booklet . . .
is *Worship Series* no. 112, *Children in Communion*, by Colin Buchanan. It deliberately fills the gap left by the going out of print of no. 85, *Welcoming Children to Communion*, by Dan Young (which was written in 1983). Seven years ago, it looked as though the doctrinal point in Anglicanism was nearly conceded, and only practical difficulties remained. Now we cannot be so sanguine, so this booklet goes back over the doctrinal ground, notes the procrastination of the House of Bishops in dealing with the Knaresborough Report, *Communion before Confirmation?*, and argues also for practical ways of implementing the principle. How long are the children to wait in England?

. . . and next month’s
is *Spirituality Series* no. 33, *‘Who am I?’* by the Walkington Group.

. . . and a reprint
is *Ministry and Worship* no. 44, *Exorcism, Deliverance and Healing: Some Pastoral and Liturgical Guidelines*, by John Richards. This is the third edition of a booklet first published in 1976, touching a subject of ever greater urgency.

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SCOTTISH EPISCOPAL LITURGY

The Scottish Episcopal Church has produced a loose-leaf, deep, ring-binder liturgy book called *Scottish Liturgy Eucharist* (published by the SEC General Synod Office, 21 Grosvenor Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 5EE, at £6). Thumb-tags on the loose-leaf pages provide five sections: ‘The Liturgy 1970’, ‘Scottish Liturgy 1982’, ‘Propers: Sundays and Holy Days’, ‘Propers: Saints Days’, and ‘Communion of the Sick’.

There is new material for the 1982 Liturgy, not only in the Propers, but also in the provision of four new eucharistic prayers. The new ones tend to be similar to no. 1 in the narrative and post-narrative parts, but to be quite bold earlier. Thus we have:

No. II (labelled ‘anticipation’).

Sample words: ‘Dawn and evening celebrate your glory
till time shall be no more.’

No. III (labelled ‘returning to God’).

Sample words: ‘In Christ your Son
enemies are reconciled,
debts forgiven
and strangers made welcome.’

No. IV (labelled ‘new life, the Lord, the Spirit’).

Sample words: ‘From the Garden the truth shone clear
that he whom they had loved and lost
was with them now in every place
for ever.’

No. V (not labelled).

Sample words: ‘One day we will be with you in heaven
but already we laugh with the saints and angels
and sing their song.’

In the Communion of the Sick, the distribution by extension involves no reference back to the main celebration (which is unlike the eighteenth century pioneers in this field), whilst the eucharistic prayer for when there is a main celebration is an adapted form (without response) of what is now no. 1 in the Scottish Liturgy.

The book is a handy page size, it offers scope for leaders to add their own pages also, it allows pages to be shuffled for a clear route through any particular rite, and it was clearly the fruit of a good idea. But the ring-binders are so deep that they would take about seven times as much material as is provided, and they thus look like a problem rather than a solution. Perhaps it is intended that confirmation, marriage, etc. should also take their place within the eucharistic frame. But that is not explicit.

COB

FROM THE JOURNALS

by Bryan Spinks

Delving around the shelves of the UL I discovered a pile of *St. Vladimir’s Theological Quarterly* journals, and vol. 33/1 1989 was devoted to liturgy. It includes articles on Confirmation by Aidan Kavanagh, the Russian Liturgy by Paul Meyendorff, and Kenneth Wesche wrote on Christological Doctrine and Liturgical Interpretation in Pseudo-Dionysius. This discovery is a reminder that sometimes good liturgical articles appear in more general

theological journals, and can be easily missed. Furthermore, as I said in the first ‘From the Journals’, Cambridge UL does not have all the journals (it still doesn’t have *Questions liturgiques*). If readers are aware of articles not mentioned, please let me know.

Theology Jan/Feb 1990 has an article by Alister McGrath, ‘The Eucharist: Reassessing Zwingli’, prompted by the widespread adoption of the eucharist as the main Sunday service, and the words of administration, ‘the body of Christ’. He places Zwingli’s doctrine in the social context of the Swiss Confederacy, and suggests that he presents a narrative theology of the eucharist, which has neatness and conceptual economy. He suggests that Zwingli might be of help to the growing number of evangelicals who are increasingly coming to value sacramental worship, yet have difficulty in understanding it. He does admit that Zwingli might be treated simply as a starting point, and hints at the Zurich Reformer’s defective Christology. In the same number Gordon Jeanes – the newly appointed Cuming Fellow in Liturgy at St. Chad’s College, Durham – writes on Keeping the Easter Vigil, asking whether the provisions in *Lent Holy Week Easter* work, concluding that we should be able to act more creatively than simply patching old skins. Use of the old material needs careful interpretation.

In *SJT* 42/4 Kenneth Stevenson has an article on Eucharistic Sacrifice which pleads for a wider perspective on this issue when it comes to its articulation in eucharistic prayers. *Ecclesis Orans* 6/3 has articles on liturgy and theology, the cult of saints at Rome from the seventh to the ninth centuries, on the Liturgical Movement, Liturgical Reform, and Renewal, and English, Dominic Serra writes on the blessing of Baptismal Water at the Paschal Vigil in the Gelasianum Vetus. *La Maison Dieu* 179 is on inculturation, containing papers given at the Societas Liturgica York Congress. *OCP* 55/2 includes an article by M. Arranz on the consecration of the myron; and Sebastian Brock identifies a piece of prose in the East Syrian Hudna for the Resurrection as being from Jacob of Serugh’s Tur-gama for the resurrection – a West Syrian writer who belongs to a time subsequent to the schism between the two churches. *EL* 103/6 carries my article on the sources and theology of the East Syrian anaphora of Theodore. There is also another article on marriage, and a note on ‘The Lord be with you’ and ‘Peace be to you’. *Liturgy* 14/2 continues the theme of funerals, looking at cremation, music for funerals, and ministry to the bereaved. 14/3 looks at RCIA one year on.

Worship 63/6 contains amongst other things a paper by Martin Stringer on Liturgy and Anthropology, and Dumm asks, why Apocalyptic Gospels in Advent? Vol. 64/1 has Kenneth Stevenson on Prayer over light – looking at the Easter Vigil and Candlemas; Paul Bradshaw asks ‘Whatever happened to Daily Prayer?’; Gordon Lathrop writes on Justin, Eucharist and Sacrifice – a case of metaphor; and Mark Miller writes on the sacramental theology of Hans Urs Von Balthasar. The *Record* 22 Spring 1990 has an article on ‘Pentecost Sacramentalism’ by A. Halfpenny, ‘the Place of Liturgy in the Church’ by Charles Robertson, and Alan Duwie contributes a note on calculating the date of Easter. Finally, for Hyper-Thomists concerned with the Form of the Sacrament and the words of consecration, *JTS* carries an article by Maurice Casey on the Aramaic behind Jesus’ words over the cup in St. Mark’s Gospel!

DIOCESE TO DIOCESE

Editors: Martin Dudley and John Corbyn

The Oxford Parish Resources Department has again organized a liturgical event. But this was not a bit like the now celebrated bread-roll workshop. Annette Nixon, who is just leaving the job of Youth Adviser to concentrate on parish work and on a new diocesan network for spiritual development, led a day devoted to young people and worship. Parishes were invited to send three representatives: a cleric, a youth leader and a young person. And so I went with two others from Owlsmoor. I should just say that before I went I did get a warning shot from the Bishop of Reading, as Chairman of the Department, who referred to my previous experience on a diocesan workshop and hoped that there wouldn’t be a repeat. It wasn’t quite censorship, but . . . In fact no one needed to worry. It was a superb day.

Well mixed up by Annette, participants were soon chatting happily together, and were then surprised to be broken up into groups according to the category to which they belonged. Each group considered how it felt when faced with the prospect of arranging worship appropriate to young people. In reporting back, we began with the young people themselves. Their experience was frequently that of powerlessness. They were not appreciated, the attitude of adults towards them was frequently patronizing, and they usually got the ‘bad jobs’. One group did make the point, affirmed by others, that total change isn’t necessary, though some change is needed. Not everything new is good, said another group (which, to my relief, had Pauline from my parish in it), and value could properly be placed on the traditional.

The youth leaders wanted to say first and foremost that they found involvement with young people in worship was a privilege. They pointed to the need for balance between old and new, and found an unexpected traditionalism among young people. It needs to be remembered that conservative pressure often comes from choirs whose members, of whatever age, value a traditional repertoire. The principal problem for leaders was the peer-group pressure that was opposed to belonging to the church community. The leaders also felt pretty powerless, but said they had good support from clergy.

The clergy looked grey and long-faced as they pondered the question, sitting in a circle on the floor. ‘Panic’ ‘Despair’ ‘Desperation’ were some of the words that came out, but it was not all gloom. The clergy clearly felt that they had a hard job satisfying diverse tastes in worship, especially on others do what they were not terribly good at, but there was a shortage of competent leaders. Good worship required ample resources and plenty of time for preparation, and many of the clergy found it tiring and anxiety-making. They did not want the parish to break into groups according to liturgical taste and looked for integration in worship. They also felt powerless, and it was noticed that only the clergy used words like ‘authority’ and ‘legality’. Kindly commentators thought that the language reflected different concerns. The clergy were under obedience and could not idly ignore legal and authorized forms and do their own thing. All in all, the groups listened to one another and much was gained in that process of listening. Annette guided us gently and never pressed her own views on us.

Peter Ward, a youth worker and musician involved in leading the day, knows what he is talking about when he deals with theology, liturgy or young people. He called for liturgy from below, not that which is imposed from above, and spoke of energy from below interacting with tradition. It is possible to introduce chant, Latin, icons, incense, candles, silence and much more if you do so at the right moment. One might want to say to a young people’s group, icons were used in this way or that and they might be the right thing for you now. Inculturation seeks to build an indigenous church by cross-cultural mission, and Peter sees the need to do the same thing.

In the afternoon workshops he guided the music-making group, with guitars and drums. Other groups worked on painting, collage, recorded music, and drama. The aim was an act of worship, based on the following day’s lessons, to complete the day. Three members – your correspondent included – brought the act together. Beginning in the open air, we entered the building in procession, stopping to reflect on the collages on the way. The stage curtains at one end of the hall held a series of paintings grouped around a crucifixion scene. Each group added its contribution. Echoing traditional forms in various places, it was new and, I must honestly say, exciting. We offered up, as parish representatives, a written statement of what we intended to do back in the parish. In our case, that included looking at new music, deepening understanding and experience of traditional things, and providing for an occasional youth-directed (in both senses) evening service. The possibly curious thing is that for our worship we needed a rectangular building with a central aisle, a large dish to put the offerings in, and, above all, candles.

I wondered, you will recall, after the bread-roll workshop whether liberals and traditionalists in liturgy even spoke the same language. Sadly, I decided that they didn’t. In this workshop I felt quite differently. The approach was modern but not liberal; perhaps these were a type of post-liberal liturgists. These were people with whom I could do business. But it took a whole day to produce an acceptable one-off service. It consumed time, energy and ideas. We all have experience, I hope, of doing similar things, particularly when a group can be taken away for a day or a few days, and of doing it well. The challenge is to go on doing it. The attraction of monastic worship is that it is celebrated by a constant group, daily united in prayer and praise, responding to God and to each other. A weekly gathering just isn’t sufficient for worship, especially when the one or two precious hours get overloaded with other pressures, for teaching, healing, baptizing, etc. I would welcome the opportunity to work with Peter Ward on his approach to liturgy from below, and I would be glad to hear from readers, not just Diocesan Committees, of their experience.

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