

## EDITORIAL FOOTNOTE to the Parish Communion anniversary

I was delighted to read of Newcastle diocese's plans to celebrate this anniversary, and it provokes a reflection about history which I have aired before, but not, I think, in these columns. December 1927 is famous not only for the beginning of the Parish Communion movement on Tyneside, but also, within a matter of days only of that event, for the defeat of the 1927 Prayer Book on Thameside. It is the latter which has gained the interest of historians rather than the former (though the focussed history of the rise and fall of the 'Deposited Book' has yet to be written). The Commons' defeat of the Book certainly led in time to new Canons, the concept of 'Alternative Services', and, basically the liturgical regime under which we live—but the Parish Communion has swept the country. To me, a good part of the interest is to consider the two events in juxtaposition to each other.

COB

## AND A DIARY DATE FROM NEWCASTLE

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9.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. Details from The Revd. J. M. Chamberlin (as above).

John Chamberlin for Newcastle Liturgy Group

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# News of Liturgy

Editor: Colin Buchanan

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June 2002

## EDITORIAL

I flew to Pittsburgh for the weekend and bank holidays of the Golden Jubilee, and on the way by sheer accident I encountered a rare airline ritual which has made me think, and has thus precipitated this editorial. What rare ritual? Well, here goes.

We were told before takeoff that this was the captain's last flight—he was just about to reach retiring age, and had perforce to cease. During the flight he came through the cabins and talked to various people; and then his deputy paid tribute to him over the loudspeaker and, in effect, invited us to applaud him, which we did. All that was but the warm-up. As we approached Pittsburgh the deputy came on the loudspeaker again and told us (lest we be misinformed, or even alarmed) about the landing ceremony which would await us. As the plane was to taxi in, we would find two great fire-floats, facing each other one each side of the plane, poised to fire off a great arch of water towards each other, a ceremonial arch under which the plane would pass to honour our retiring pilot. I have since come to think of this as a terminal service. . . . At any rate, so it happened—and the water duly passed over us but also ran down the outside of our windows—and I suppose the uninformed might have thought we were on fire and were being doused for that reason. It was Pittsburgh International Airport's equivalent of a tickertape procession—but it did need explaining.

My reason for citing this may by now be half-visible, but, lo and behold, on staying at my hosts I found the journal, *Episcopal Life*, with a page devoted to the letters giving answers to a clearly puzzling question of a previous issue 'Why are church doors painted red?' I had not realized that they are—this was begging a question with a vengeance—but I allowed myself the question 'If they are, why are they?'; and my hosts assured me in many churches it is the case.

The answers were interestingly varied—the doors at Witternberg on which Luther posted his 95 theses were red, and that is a symbol of the Reformation; the doors are red until the mortgage is paid off (till then, you are 'in the red', perhaps?); red is the colour of a holy place; etc etc.

By now you can see where my unromantic and linear-thinking mind is taking me. There has been a middle-of-the-road notion around in the Church of England in the last two decades or so that has been saying that we need more ceremonial, ceremonial which is in principle multivalent, but which is not laboriously explained all the time, and indeed has no official explanation, but is left free to raise what misunderstandings it happens to precipitate in different people's minds. As I write this, I have a suspicion it is a very typical modern Anglican way of thinking. But I am not convinced it is sheer gain.

Years ago, I heard Michael Perham voicing an opinion of this sort. I put it to him that in my younger years there was a classic bit of unexplained ceremonial, which certainly laid itself open to various understandings, but in fact none of the possible range of understandings was worth having. To what could I have been referring? Why, to turning East for the creed. It used to be *de rigueur* in about 90% of Anglican places of worship—and enquiry of choirboys and others caught in the practice suggested that no-one knew on the basis of any objective authority why they did it, though they invented their own reasons, usually arising from their certainty that it was a necessary part of worship. Was this the unexplained multivalent?—or was it simply a trap into which people read quite unhelpful, and even heretical, meanings?

Well, I reviewed here the last book on liturgy by the same Michael Perham seventeen months ago, and in my third paragraph I wrote as follows:

‘Yet at the risk of losing sight of the wood, I would like to look at a particular tree, as I think it epitomizes the author. He has “bought” as properly Anglican the rightness of “reverencing the altar” as people enter and leave a church building. Within the existence of that practice, he seeks a rationale, and, having found it, he seeks a reform of practice. He wants us on each occasion to acknowledge the one holy table where the eucharist is to be celebrated on that occasion. He specifically excludes reverencing some other (?high) altar, which he finds people doing. I think by implication he excludes genuflecting towards aumbries or other places of reservation. I suspect he has little patience with stopping to bow to the altar every time one passes across the centre line of a church. And I actually asked him what one does in Southwark cathedral when, on entering for an ordination, there is no sign of a eucharistic table at all on the nave platform (it gets put in place during the Peace), and he thought that in that case no acknowledgment of what is not there would be appropriate. The implications for choir-boys at cathedral evensongs are also far-reaching. But I want to ask whether any true principle here is worth salvaging?’

Well, I rashly here look further at this bowing business. It is rarely discussed; it is almost a trade secret, like why we used to turn East, in which each generation picks up the importance of the ceremonial from the previous generation without knowing why. I, who am naturally (unromantically?) suspicious of unexplained gestures, would like to enlarge the questions I asked in passing in that book review. In doing so, I am not here questioning at the outset the propriety of such bowing—I am only trying to discover a consistent rationale for it (but if I cannot discover one, well, then I might have another question). I am aware of coaching advice I have heard for Anglican bishops in unfamiliar liturgical contexts—‘If in doubt in any liturgical event, stop and bow to the nearest piece of sacred furniture, and you’ll get yourself off the hook very creditably.’ I do not know whether this always ‘works’, as I am rarely engaging in supererogated bowing, but I can see it imports a certain deliberateness, a certain assurance that leaders of worship know what they are doing, as well as gaining a little needed time to think.

## NEWCASTLE, WHO REPORTED EARLIER THIS YEAR, HAVE A CELEBRATION TO COME

### THE PARISH COMMUNION MOVEMENT—A CELEBRATION

In 1927, on the Second Sunday of Advent, Fr. Noel Hudson changed the pattern of services at St. John the Baptist, Newcastle upon Tyne. The 8.00 a.m. and 10.00 a.m. services were replaced by a eucharist at 9.15 a.m. This was largely at the instigation of the senior curate, Fr. Henry de Candole. The hour of 9.15 a.m. was chosen because it was not too late for the congregation to be still fasting. The service was followed by breakfast. Although other places may make the claim, this can probably be said to be the beginning of the Parish Communion movement. The year 2002 is the 75th anniversary of this.

Henry de Candole, when he later became Bishop of Knaresborough, was a leading light in the Parish and People movement, which was involved in the popularization of the Parish Communion. The slogan was ‘The Lord’s service for the Lord’s people on the Lord’s day’. The concept was that of a return to the spirituality of older days when the sacrament of the eucharist was central to Christian spirituality. We are commanded to ‘Take, eat . . .’, not just to hear and watch. Who goes to the heavenly banquet just to look? Communion then was for the ‘holy huddle’ at 8.00 a.m.! The movement spread and now the eucharist, with the congregation receiving communion, is the principal service in many of churches across the whole spectrum of churchmanship.

To mark St. John’s role in the popularization of the Parish Communion the parish is celebrating the 75th anniversary. On St Andrew’s Day, Saturday 30 November, there will be a eucharist of thanksgiving for the Parish Communion movement at 11.30 a.m.. The president and preacher will be the Archbishop of York, the Most. Revd. Dr. David Hope. There will be a lunch (by ticket) and in the afternoon there will be a seminar on the Parish Communion movement. We hope that a wide range of interested people will come from far and wide.

Canon Donald Gray, Canon Emeritus of Westminster, will speak on the history of the movement, particularly in the years from 1945 (when his book, *Earth and Altar*, ended). Mrs. Angela Ashwin will talk about the spirituality of the Parish Communion; Angela Ashwin is a writer of many books on spirituality and frequently leads retreats. Her latest book is *The Wine Danced*.

Further details may be obtained from:

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and so be united to one another  
in the fellowship of your Spirit;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Each treasure was then brought forward by a senior representative of the church or institution concerned, and presented to the Dean with the words

Mr. Dean,  
I present to you the head of St. Cuthbert Mayne,  
a treasure of the Catholic Church in Cornwall.

The Dean received each treasure with the words

We receive this treasure into our temporary care with humility and joy.  
It will be our treasure too.

and then the Dean placed the treasure on the altar. A member of the Cathedral Chapter then read an appropriate Scriptural passage and the Bishop concluded the section with a Common Worship collect (in the case of St. Cuthbert Mayne that appointed for the Saints and Martyrs of the English Reformation—a collect which could have written with this occasion in mind!). The whole process was then repeated for the remaining two treasures, using the collects for John and Charles Wesley (adapted) and for the common of a martyr (for the martyrs of Japan). The service concluded with the Lord's Prayer and a commitment to Christian unity from *Promise* (based on the Lund Declaration). This was introduced by the Bishop in the following words

As we have shared our treasures,  
let us also now reaffirm our resolve  
to share more closely day by day  
in common work, worship and service  
for the sake of Christ and his Church.  
God our Father,  
in the name of Christ . . . (*The Promise of his Glory* p.253)

And for a blessing, it seemed appropriate to use this adaptation of a Franciscan blessing (*Celebrating Common Prayer* p.269)

To the prayers of the whole company of heaven we commend you;  
may blessed Mary, mother of our Lord, pray for you;  
may St. Cuthbert Mayne, blessed John Wesley,  
and the holy martyrs of Japan pray for you;  
may all the saints of God pray for you;  
may the angels of God befriend you  
and watch around you to protect you;  
and the blessing . . .

Perran Gay  
Canon Precentor, Truro Cathedral  
Diocesan Liturgy Adviser

(copies available electronically from [perran@trurocathedral.org.uk](mailto:perran@trurocathedral.org.uk))

I encounter four kinds of bowing (sometimes genuflecting) *towards* items in the various parishes I visit and other Anglican events I attend. It is the 'towards' instances I am scrutinizing, and bowing at the name of Jesus (for instance) I am not considering here. Bowing towards other people, while sometimes inexplicable or overdone, is also not my theme here. It is bowing towards objects I want to put under review. No such bowing has much rubrical or canonical authority, so practices are hard to trace back to source, and none is explained at a point near to its actual exercise. At any rate, here is my list:

- (a) There is a bow at initial entry into the worship chamber. Sometimes it is done by people individually or in pairs as a procession reaches a platform or chancel steps, or some branching-off point, and stops to bow. Often it is conceived as bowing to an altar. Sometimes choirboys etc reach their allocated place, and, facing East, then all do their bow in that direction.
- (b) There is bowing (quite genuinely) to consecrated elements—whether during the narrative of institution (but are they consecrated by then?), or, as assistants sometimes do after communicating the congregation, on leaving remains to be consumed by others when returning to their own place.
- (c) There is a variant on this which is bowing towards an aumbry (or tabernacle) where there are remains reserved.
- (d) There is the practice of some (not least servers and outriders and visitors out of service-time) of bowing each time one passes across an invisible line leading from East to West from the central point of the table or altar towards and then down a central aisle, almost (dare I say?) as though an eye were squinting down that line to see if one bowed on crossing it. Sometimes this bow becomes very perfunctory, but, clearly, once the principle of it has been taken aboard, it has to be observed every time. (Interestingly, it is not so clear that people bow towards the West when passing *behind* a free-standing table . . . But would that not be more consistent?)

So here are my questions in search of a rationale.

- (a) Is there any principle about 'bowing down before' symbols of the faith? Or are we basically free to invent practices according to new rationales or none?
- (b) Is there any 'out towards the East' factor which is loading the answer to the first question?
- (c) Do consecrated elements (on the table, or on the credence table, or in the aumbry) have any claim on this outward reverence over and above the claims of the East end—or the nave altar?
- (d) Where is authoritative guidance to be found?

Final note—I organized the corporate worship of the last Lambeth Conference, but it was held (of course) not in a cathedral but a multi-purpose sports hall. The table used (perfectly reverently) was, if I remember aright, also used for ordinary business of the Conference. Arguably we had no dedicated table, no unique direction to look, no special locus for our bowing—certainly no aumbry or reservation. When the bishops of a province processed in, they mounted the platform and took up position

behind the table with virtually no bowing (let alone kissing). But the rites were rich in their worshipping character. Was this because it is different in an unconsecrated place? And, if not, should one bow before a table in the bedroom of someone who is sick?

I am also still intrigued by those places where in procession you come from backstage and enter a chancel halfway down its length, and turn *West* to process to the nave altar, or to clergy seats accompanying it. On the Perham principles you would bow to the West—on the existing patterns you might well go centre stage and turn East to bow to the (unused) ‘high altar’. So what are the principles?

Colin Buchanan

PS: My forecast that Beckham’s foot might outdo royal events for fascinated publicity this year is coming true as I write. But the real well-spring of health for that foot was the request of *The Sun* to its three million-odd readers to put a hand on their printed picture of the foot and pray for its healing. Icons, sacramental actions, euchology, and fervent faith (even if they lacked some obvious elements in the knowledge of God) came together in a triumphant deliverance. World Cup results will have to wait till next month, by which time you may know them. But, as one critic observed, if only *The Sun* could portray Third World debt on its front page for similar concentrated petition for deliverance, how much better off the world would be. As it is, I returned from the USA to see the famous, and now restored, foot score a famous penalty against Argentina, and half the world went mad. Readers of NOL will know the upshot of the next game by the time they read this - and Beckham’s fame may have grown or diminished. But so far the foot has made a sort of niche for itself in history. Is this perhaps the cue to all of us to pray to the Father through *The Sun*?

### GOLDEN JUBILEE

The Golden Jubilee celebration at St Paul’s cathedral caught London in festive mood, and as notable for its processions and fun in the Mall as for its liturgy. The liturgy itself evoked memories, drew out the musical resources of St Paul’s (including three trebles in the Whispering Gallery), gave scope to the Archbishop of Canterbury’s eulogy (a fitting sermon), and sent everyone on their way uplifted (and probably more convincingly monarchist).

### ADDENDUM

I’m not sure I reached the end of my editorial last month. In with one or two typos was a cut-off last paragraph which bore some resemblance to the ending of Mark’s Gospel. However, in this case (unlike the Gospel) I can tell you how it should have ended. The last sentence should have read ‘But then which way would you go about getting a whole congregation to wrestle with the whole Bible in the course of one year?’

### RECEIVING RELICS

It isn’t every day that a Cathedral Precentor is asked to create a liturgy for the reception of a relic, and for those who think that we do that kind of thing all the time in the Diocese of Truro, I can assure you that it has never happened before even to us!

As part of the 125th anniversary celebrations of the Diocese this year, a series of exhibitions is being held in the retroquire of the Cathedral, under the general title ‘Treasures of the See’. The most recent of these exhibitions contained a trio of very special treasures.

The first was a relic (part of the head) of the Roman Catholic martyr St. Cuthbert Mayne, who died in Cornwall during the English Reformation; the second was a much loved bust of John Wesley, who through his preaching and teaching had a profound effect on the Christian life of Cornwall; the third was a stamping stone belonging to the Community of the Epiphany, used as a test for persecuted Christians in Japan during the nineteenth century: if they would not stamp on the image of Christ, they faced instant martyrdom.

Quite clearly these were not standard exhibition items, but objects of great devotional value, and symbols of an ecumenical spirit of generosity. This was true of all these items but particularly so of the relic of St. Cuthbert Mayne. Not many years ago the skull of this Catholic saint, martyred for his faith by the Protestants of his time, was for many people within the Catholic community a clear symbol of their separate identity and even a focus for anti-Protestant polemic. For the Roman Catholic bishop, Bishop Christopher Budd, to have been prepared to lend it to the Anglican diocese in this way was a development of great significance and a cause for great joy. So the Bishop and the Cathedral Chapter wished to mark the arrival of the relic (and the other devotional pieces) with a short liturgical act.

*The Promise of His Glory* was an obvious quarry for material, both the Epiphany provision with its themes of the presentation of treasures, and its material on the theme of Christian Unity. In addition, each of the treasures was celebrated by the use of a short reading and a collect chosen from the provision for saints days within Common Worship. ‘Treasure’ proved to be a good word to use in this context, as even those for whom the veneration of relics would be problematic could respond to the sense of value placed by the various traditions upon their respective treasures.

After an opening invocation and liturgical greeting, the Bishop called the people to silent prayer, and then said this Gelasian collect adapted from *Promise* (p.355)

Almighty and everlasting God,  
you have revealed the incarnation of your Son  
by the bright shining of a star,  
which led the wise men to offer costly gifts in adoration.  
Let the star of your generous grace ever shine in our hearts  
that we may give and receive the treasures of your love  
with humility and joy,

While much of Kenneth Stevenson's writing is urbane, mainstream, and uncontroversial, at intervals his own love of some one feature of the rites, or his own distaste for other people's unwarranted prejudices, strikes through his urbanity. But what he is really doing is enjoying himself in a field which he knows extremely well. If an author on the eucharist gives himself just two pages on the sermon, who else would manage to get in references to Egeria in the fourth century and to a Danish pulpit of the seventeenth? He wants to be instructive - and he is - but it is also KWS enjoying himself in his expansive (and genuinely devotional and helpful) mental playground. I particularly relished his description of his parish practice of getting people with leading roles together half an hour before the service, and much of his notably straightforward commentary on our eight eucharistic prayers.

COB

#### **This month's publications . . .**

. . . are Worship Series no 170, *Liturgy and Mission*, by Mark Earey and Carolyn Headley, a title which reflects a 'mission' thrust to be sustained in the Worship Series over the coming year or more, both authors being well known to their public . . .

. . . and Joint Liturgical Study no 52, *Church and Worship in Fifth Century Rome: The Letter of Innocent I to Decentius, Bishop of Gubbio*, edited by Martin Connell, of Collegeville, USA. The letter comes from the fifth century (did we say 'fourth' last month?) and is therefore very significant for studies of early Roman liturgical history—and is frequently quoted. Here the series provides the full text with translation and notes.

#### **ALL ROADS LEAD TO DURHAM . . . ?**

. . . but not all persons got a mention last month. The GROW cluster in Durham includes Anna de Lange (joint author of the very successful April Worship booklet, which is apparently selling in bulk orders to parishes), and we apologize to her for omitting her.

#### **DIOCESAN REPORT (WITH A DIFFERENCE)—15 TRURO**

Please find attached something from Truro for NOL. We have not been doing much diocesan-wide for the last year or so, apart from continuing to monitor the introduction of Common Worship, which might make rather dull reading. So I thought I would share something rather more esoteric and one-off that happened recently at the Cathedral, to give the background and demonstrate the liturgical principles operating in its design. It's a little longer than you have asked for, but difficult to shorten. So make what you will of it!

Perran Gay  
Truro cathedral

(Incidentally, we have had enquiries about it - and the provenance is St John the Evangelist, Blackheath, and the lay author concerned is Richard Godden, 4 Eliot Vale, London SE3 0UU.)

#### **GENERAL SYNOD JULY 2002**

General Synod meets at York from Friday 5 July to Tuesday 9 July. It will, among other things, be saying farewell to Archbishop George (and possibly reflecting on the outcome of the Prime Minister's discretion in relation to the next occupant of the throne of St Augustine . . .). The Synod will also come to a decision on the Southwark motion to get the Prime Minister out of the process.

But these are not strictly liturgical events, and NOL returns to its last. The Synod is likely to be giving final approval to the extension of the current midweek lectionary (the one that isn't printed in Common Worship Daily Prayer) from 2004 to 2007. It will also debate a Southwell diocesan motion on vesture:

'That this Synod ask that a Canon amending Canon B.8 be introduced to give ministers discretion by agreement with Church Councils to dispense with the provisions relating to the vesture of the ordained and authorized ministers during the time of divine service.'

That should really bring them out of their corners (and one wonders how it did not get killed in Southwell diocesan synod . . .).

Praxis are holding a lunch-time 'fringe' consultation about standing orders and other ways of handling the introduction of liturgical texts in Synod. We hope to report this in due course.

Paul Roberts, the chair of Praxis, writes in the blurb about the consultation: 'Can centrally-authorized liturgy, where it can take a text about three years to be approved, stand a chance of captivating the hearts and minds of the Church of England in its present and future diversity? We are, after all, the "Church of England". But how do we remain one Church, whilst reflecting the full range of ages, cultures and contexts in our worship? Will "built-in" flexibility (such as *A Service of the Word*) be sufficient? Or is the whole system due for a cultural and legal re-vamp? And what is at stake if we do?'

Well, Paul may have overlooked the Worship and Doctrine Measure - or he may know how to supersede it. I doubt if I can get to the consultation myself - but I look forward to publishing the outcome here.

#### **SOCIETY FOR LITURGICAL STUDY**

SLS holds its biennial conference at the Plater College of the Resurrection, Mirfield, from Tuesday 27 August to Thursday 29 August this year. Its overall theme is 'Liturgical Space' and there are major papers by Christopher Irvine, Graham Woolfenden and Robin Gibbons, followed by the 'Patriarchal Paper' by Edward Yarnold on 'Loyola, Jerusalem and Rome'. People are asked to book places by the end of June, though later bookings will be accepted.

Details from Carol Wilkinson, 52 Lowick Drive, Poulton le Fylde, Lancs FY6 8HB (01253-622324) - E-mail: cwilkinson@swilkinson.ndirect.co.uk

## ANOTHER SERVICE OF THANKS AND BLESSING OF ANIMALS

In the rush of enthusiastic correspondence generated by the plea about services for blessing pets the rite outlined below was submitted by St Faith's, Kelshall, where it was used in 2000.

### *Welcome and introduction*

*Hymn* 'For the beauty of the earth' with a special verse 5

5. For the company of pets,  
those that share a human home,  
for the wild beasts and birds,  
in the fields and woods that roam:

*Reading: Genesis 1.20-2.3*

*Hymn* 'Let us with a joyful mind' with vv 5-8 to delight St Francis himself

5. God has formed the field and wood,  
Grass, trees, flowers, and made them good:
6. God created bird and beast,  
from the greatest to the least:
7. Then God formed us, human race,  
Called to share his love and grace:
8. Show your thanks by love and care  
For all creatures made so fair:

### *Address*

### *Prayers*

God our maker and keeper,  
thank you that you created all things in a wonderful pattern and purpose,  
a harmony of order and freedom,  
the pattern of your love.  
Help us to discern your patterns for our lives and our world,  
the patterns revealed above all in Jesus.  
Teach us to accept your disciplines, the disciplines of love,  
even when they are not easy for us at first.  
So help us to find our true selves, and the good of our fellow creatures,  
for Jesus' sake. **Amen.**

God our maker,  
Thank you that you created the world and its creatures good.  
Thank you that you call us to take time to appreciate it and your goodness.  
Teach us to look after the world and its creatures,  
to preserve, restore and increase its goodness and beauty,  
so that it will continue to support the creatures which depend on it. **Amen.**

God of love,  
thank you for our pets  
and for all the joy and comfort that they bring us.  
We thank you for their different beauties,  
and all we learn about them and through them.  
We thank you for the affection, loyalty, appreciation and love that they show.  
Help us to learn those things from them,  
and to exercise them in our human way to other people and to you.  
So help us to become the best people we can be,  
to be sharers of your own love as your children,  
and to share those things with other people.  
Help us to look after our pets well,  
to give them the best life we can.  
Bless them, we pray.  
We ask for Jesus' sake,  
who reminded us of your care for all creatures,  
and showed us the way of kindness. **Amen.**

### **Our Father, who art in heaven . . .**

#### *Hymn*

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1. We thank you, God, that on this earth<br>We do not live alone:<br>That other creatures live and feel,<br>and share our heart and home. | 3. The birds and beasts, both tame and wild,<br>Are made and loved by you,<br>And you call humankind to care,<br>And to support them too.  |
| 2. We thank you for the animals<br>That in our lives have share,<br>For which, our helpers and our pets,<br>We feel a love and care.      | 4. So help us treat the creatures well,<br>For you have made them good,<br>And guide our caring for your earth<br>To tend it as we should. |

*Blessing of pets.*

*Blessing.*

### **BOOK REVIEW**

Kenneth Stevenson, *Do This: The Shape, Style and Meaning of the Eucharist* (Canterbury Press, 2002, xi/195 pp A5 pb, £12.99)

This is Kenneth Stevenson's standing-a-little-way-back commentary on the eucharist in Common Worship. It is an untechnical, possibly even a 'popular', work, with reflections on most features of the rite—usually starting well back with principles, often rooted in early church practice, and then moving forwards into the Church of England's latest rite. The book is split into chapters on the 'features' of the eucharist (shape, presence, etc.) and chapters on 'ingredients' of it (word, creed, intercessions, eucharistic prayer, etc).