

Fr Hoyal Writes

MIND AND MATTER

I was pleased to get a little reading in during our post-Christmas break the other week.

One book I bought before Christmas – Keith Ward’s recent “*More Than Matter? What Humans Really Are*” (Lion 2010). Ward, a distinguished university professor, is a well-known writer on philosophy and religion, and his books are always readable. The other book I was lent by one of the residents at Carlton Mansions – Melvyn Bragg’s “*12 Books That Changed the World*” (Hodder & Stoughton 2006).

I’m glad to say that Lord Bragg includes the King James Bible (the Authorised Version as we more often used to call it – 400 years old this year), though he directs his attention mainly to the KJB’s literary merit and the praise of William Tyndale, whose seminal translation underlies so much of it.

But it was no surprise that Bragg’s collection also includes Charles Darwin’s “*On the Origin of Species*” (1859). His theory of evolution, based on what he called natural selection, proved phenomenally influential. Organisms vary naturally from one generation to another, he noted, and on average only those variations survive long-term which make a species incorporating them better adapted, better suited for its environment.

Despite popular belief, it is a fact that many thinking church-people embraced this theory without difficulty (the Revd Charles Kingsley, for example, author of *The Water-Babies*). For many others, there was work to be done reevaluating the status and purpose of the Genesis accounts of creation. Had Darwin made God the Creator redundant by demolishing humanity’s long-held belief in the essential fixity of species, all created instantly by direct fiat of the Almighty?

Of course, Darwin’s work profound affected all branches of science. So much so that many present-day cosmologists, for example, accept as brute fact that our universe just came to be by pure chance at the Big Bang.

They insist that all subsequent development over 13 billion years, from an intensely compacted initial state of amazing energy concentration, through the formation of elementary particles, galaxies, habitable planets, living creatures, to the emergence of the human brain and beyond, has been the result of pure blind chance operating within the framework of universal physical laws that just are, laws entirely devoid of spiritual or moral significance.

Anything with the whiff of biblical creationism is anathema, of course. So is so-called intelligent design, which accepts evolution as a process but maintains that features of the universe and of living things are best explained by an intelligent cause, not an undirected process such as natural selection.

However, currently prevailing scientific orthodoxy strenuously rejects any suggestion that somehow a divine hand has ‘invisibly’ guided the course of the universe’s development, let alone it may have actively intervened at various points. The emergence, with the evolution of the brain, of conscious life, the sense of personal identity and the powers of reason is interpreted as a purely chance by-product of natural physical processes.

The magnificent enterprise of human scientific discovery is inevitably a remarkable tribute to the potential brilliance of the human mind. Yet, paradoxically, many scientists too easily assume that our mental life, the life of the mind, is secondary and subordinate to the literally mind-less realities of matter and energy and physical laws. Mind is regarded as an intangible, essentially sub-real “epiphenomenon” of the physical brain.

It is into this arena that Professor Ward strides in his new book, and it is a pleasure to walk behind him as he lights up the whole gamut of philosophical views, from the most rampant materialism - denying any significant reality to consciousness and reason, to the purest philosophical “idealism”, as it is called - entirely dismissing the reality of the physical universe.

You will have to read the book, if you are interested. If you do so, you will draw your own conclusions, perhaps noting on the way that, for all the author's fluency and acumen, the book is at times uneven. But the importance of his subject cannot be overestimated at this stage in our history.

The evangelical new atheism, associated in this country with people such as Richard Dawkins and Christopher Hitchens, relies in part upon readings of science and philosophy that demote the status of the mind in relation to the brain. So do the secularist assumptions of many non-scientific social activists. At heart, if not more self-consciously, both camps feel that entirely neutral, totally non-guided processes of natural selection are the law of a universe which has no need of the divine. In these circumstances, religious believers find themselves engaged, almost literally, in a battle for minds and hearts – because mind and heart are realities worth fighting for.

In his introduction, Ward quotes Francis Crick, who with James Watson established the structure of DNA: “You, your joys and sorrows, your memories and your ambitions, your sense of personal identity and free will, are in fact no more than the behaviour of a vast assembly of nerve-cells and their associated molecules.”

It is the reductionist “no more than” that sound the philosopher's alarm bell. It is not so different from saying that *The Merchant of Venice* is “no more than” ink patterns on paper. It is hardly a defensible statement.

Taking us on an enlightening philosophical journey, Ward argues cogently for taking mental and spiritual reality much more seriously, and indeed for seeing its emergence in association with the physical universe as something ultimately purposed. And for myself, too, I dare to believe that the mental and the spiritual are a higher, richer reality than the purely physical, vastly impressive as the physical universe is to us.

I can wholeheartedly accept the workings of natural selection in wide areas, and I certainly see the weaknesses of American-style creationism and intelligent-design theories that use *ad hoc* divine interventions to account for directions and leaps of evolution we cannot yet fully explain by natural selection.

But because I have confidence in the essential reality of the mental and the spiritual, I don't find it difficult to believe that the universe is ultimately an expression of supreme mental/spiritual reality – the divine. I believe Darwinism still has to come to terms with this. The best theology has already come to terms with the best of Darwinism.

Let me end by giving a taste of Ward's style from a typically stimulating passage:

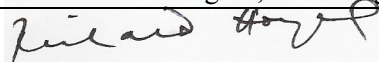
“Whereas an older generation of scientists and philosophers thought the universe was rather like a watch, many now regard the universe as more like a large organism. It grows and develops, and its first stages can only be properly understood when its completely developed state is perceived. A human embryo does not unexpectedly and accidentally become an adult person, and can only be properly understood as a potential adult. So we might think that the primitive elements – be they quarks or strings or something as yet undiscovered of the universe – do not unexpectedly clump into atoms, which surprisingly form molecules, which accidentally create proteins, which unforeseeably build organisms, which by pure chance produce brains and societies of organic beings, so that the whole present universe is a totally unexpected accident. On the organic view, this trajectory of development, of increasingly integrated complexity, producing new sorts of properties, and eventually the ability to comprehend and shape the future of the universe, is implicit in the universe at the moment of the Big Bang or in whatever gives rise to that primordial explosion.”

CHRISTIANS IN SCIENCE BRISTOL

Please note the forthcoming meeting:

“Self-assembly and evolution: models, metaphors and meaning?”

Dr Ard Louis, Reader in Theoretical Physics, Oxford University, and Associate of the Faraday Institute for Science and Religion, Cambridge. 8 pm **Friday 4 February** in our Parish Room.



Fr Hoyal Writes - OMISSION RECTIFIED

The following passage was inadvertently omitted from the copy submitted for last month's magazine:

Here we must particularly mention our church wardens Roger Hopkins and Philippa Drewett. We owe our wardens an immense debt of gratitude for their unstinting and invaluable service on our behalf. Their responsibilities involve them, among other things, in seeing to a wide range of fabric matters, liaising with contractors, supervision of services, monitoring of our premises and their use, overseeing church and parish-room heating, arranging lettings and concerts – as well as serving on the PCC and other committees and groups, and a good deal of paperwork!. We benefit greatly from their commitment and conscientiousness, and this is an opportunity to record our appreciation of all they do on our behalf.

Westminster Cathedral 15 January 2011 Ordination to the Priesthood

There it was, on the BBC News, so this is an informal snapshot report rather than the BBC roving camera.

The Rev John Broadhurst, the Rev Andrew Burnham and the Rev Keith Newton were received into the Roman Catholic Church on 1 January, ordained to the Roman Catholic diaconate on Thursday 13 January and today ordained to the Priesthood. It was a remarkable occasion.

The Cathedral was full. Standing and kneeling room in the aisles by the time the procession entered. Over half an hour before that I picked up the next to last order of service and found a seat about a third of the way back with fellow All Saints visitors, Frs John and Paul. Not just a remarkable occasion, but very important to many Catholics.

The processional hymn, 'Thy hand O God has guided' began as the Cross went past my row. The end of the procession went past my row towards the end of verse four: Servers, Choir, Ordinands in albs and deacons' stoles, countless priests, half a dozen Bishops and an Archbishop: the Principal Celebrant, the Most Reverend Vincent Nichols. It was impressive, but at no time was it pompous or overdone. No tat, no birettas. This is Vatican II Rome. The music, therefore, was in Latin and Greek, a contrast to the English glories provided by +Andrew for his farewell Mass at New Hinksey. The Mass setting was Victoria, Missa O Magnum Mysterium, the congregational parts were plain chant and it was lovely. No women in the procession, but a young lady read the first reading – possibly a daughter?

The Archbishop welcomed us, and asked us to sit down for a particular greeting. This was from Cardinal Levada, Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. He had a long standing engagement in India, but sent personal greetings, emphasizing his belief in the importance of the occasion and formally announcing the Personal Ordinariate of Our Lady of Walsingham under its first Ordinary, Keith Newton. The Holy Father sent his blessing to everyone participating. I got one for my birthday, but one cannot have too many.

See [HYPERLINK "http://www.friendsoftheordinariate.com/docs/decree.html"](http://www.friendsoftheordinariate.com/docs/decree.html)

<http://www.friendsoftheordinariate.com/docs/decree.html>

After the penitential rite, the first reading was from Ephesians 4. Just as the opening hymn bore witness to 'One Church, One Faith, One Lord', this reading spoke of the unity of the Spirit and 'one Lord, one faith, one baptism'. The Gospel was John 20, 'Receive the Holy Spirit'. After it we all sat down; I glanced up at the

pulpit, to find it thronged with journalists. Interesting how liturgy can develop.

The candidates, John Broadhurst, Andrew Burnham and Keith Newton, no titles, were now presented by the Rt Rev Alan Hopes. The printed text ran 'After enquiry among the people of Christ and upon recommendation of those concerned with their training, I testify that they have been found worthy'; it may have been a misprint, but the spoken text interpolated after 'training', 'and with the permission of the Holy See'. I think this may reflect the not merely unusual but surely unprecedented journey from Anglican Bishop to Roman priest in fifteen days. The Holy See is possibly going so far as to express its pleasure at welcoming them.

The Ordinands then sat in a neat row facing the Archbishop for his homily. He spoke of making history, of the importance of their Ministry as Anglican. He thanked Archbishop Rowan. He then spoke at great length of Blessed John Henry Newman, who followed the path of conscience and obedience to the truth opening up to him, and of the sacrifices entailed. Then he spoke of Pope Benedict and his belief that the Ordinariate was 'a prophetic gesture of a wider unity' and his hopes for full ecclesial community and the quest for visible unity. In this he believes the papal role is crucial. Finally he spoke directly of the Gospel, and the priestly mission of reconciliation which comes from the wounds of Christ, a wounded world, a wounded Church, ministered to by wounded priests. Mary was the first to see the wounds, and to be touched by her Son's blood, and Mary, Our Lady of Walsingham, looks on her priests now.

<http://www.friendsoftheordinariate.com/docs/2010-01-15-homily.html>

Then to business. The candidates were examined and promised obedience to their Ordinary. We said the Litany of the Saints - including Blessed J H Newman and with a special ordination section added that the chosen men be made holy. The Archbishop offered them for ordination and laid his hands on them. Then the attendant bishops and priests laid their hands on the candidates. About ten minutes. We stood patiently. Then at last the prayer of ordination and immediately it's Fr John, Fr Andrew and Fr Keith being vested with stole and chasuble; suddenly they are themselves again. It is the liturgy of the Eucharist and they concelebrate with the Archbishop. We stand for the Lord's Prayer. The kneelers crash back into place like bubble wrap popping, and the sound of metallic butterfly wings turns out to be multi camera shutters.

It is a continuing sadness of course that only Roman Catholics can receive, but in the present climate anything could happen. Let's hope it does. There are Catholics who cannot receive, and the hierarchy seems to be realizing that this needs to be talked about.

We sang 'O Bread of Heaven'; we were blessed; we were invited to congratulate the new priests and did do with enthusiasm. The recessional hymn was 'Praise to the Holiest'; the Procession set off with Frs John, Andrew and Keith now with their fellow priests. As the hymn ended renewed and spontaneous congratulations broke out, decorous, yes, but definitely noisy. The Archbishop gave his blessing as he processed out and I went and lit a candle at the side chapel dedicated to St Andrew. There wasn't much room left but I found a little space. Looked for Manning's tomb but couldn't find it, and anyway it was Newman's day.

This was an historic occasion. Several important people said so. From the pews it felt better than historic. After 500 years, it felt as if several hundred English Catholics had set their candles to the barricades erected between us and were demonstrating their great happiness at a new way of expressing togetherness; as the Holy Father put it, a prophetic gesture of a wider unity. I remember the impact of the Second Vatican Council, far greater of course than today, but that was Rome dealing with Rome's domestic economy. This is Rome publicly and formally looking outside herself. Cor ad cor loquitur.

Anne Bradley
15 January 2011

PS I did try to find a spare copy or so of the order of service. Not one, so I shall have some spares printed off, and if anyone would like one, do ask. Or you could try eBay.

All Saints Parish Retreat 2011

Our Parish Retreat is the weekend of 18-20 February 2011 at Abbey House, Glastonbury.

Those of you who have been on our retreats before will be able to extol the virtues of Abbey House to others and encourage them to join us in February. Abbey House is a large, elegant early 19th century house set in beautiful gardens overlooking the Abbey ruins. It is peaceful, comfortable, warm, and the food is excellent and there is a bar – all to ensure 48 hours of spirituality and 'winding down' from the stresses of our everyday life. The delights of Glastonbury with its interesting High Street and the beauties of the countryside are an additional attraction. Many of us take advantage of a weekend in the country to intersperse our spiritual activities with fresh air – and there is always the Tor to climb.

Our Retreat Conductor this year is Fr Thomas Seville CR, who some may remember as Revd Christopher Seville when he was curate at Holy Nativity, Knowle in early 1990s.

The cost of the Retreat will depend on the number of retreatants. There have been changes at the Retreat House and the Trustees have put the cost up, but as a Church Group we still get a good discount. *Ideally, we will fill all 20 places and the cost will be around £120 each. Unfortunately, if we are a smaller number we still have to pay for the empty places and this will inevitably increase the cost for those taking part. **Please think hard about this opportunity*** and sign up in the porch. You will not regret it. Where else would you find 48 hours full board in such glorious surroundings for such a low cost? Perhaps you could bring a friend along as well.

We will have to ask for a non-returnable deposit of £30 to book a place, the remainder to be paid on arrival at Abbey House. Please make cheques out to All Saints with St John.

Please sign list in porch. *There are still places for this retreat.*

For further details please contact Liz Badman at All Saints, Clifton on 0117-9741355 or allsaintsclifton@tiscali.co.uk

*Liz Badman
Parish Administrator*

Oxford Oratory 16 January 2011 'First Mass' of the Rev Andrew Burnham

(The quotation marks are not mine, they are from the Order of Service, though all things considered I should probably have inserted them.)

The venue was very different from Westminster Cathedral. As an undergraduate in the late 1960s I had two favourite spiritual homes. The Catholic Chaplaincy wholeheartedly embraced communion in both kinds and the vernacular and under Crispian Hollis as Chaplain was a friendly and welcoming place. St Aloysius (now the Oxford Oratory) was next door to my College; the Jesuits there used the Vatican II Latin rite with lay participation and the readings in English but with the Mass setting, the Canon/Liturgy of the Eucharist and the Lord's Prayer in Latin. It was a far cry from the Tridentine rite and I grew to love it. I am therefore, so to speak, declaring an interest.

I remembered the pews, very comfortable for kneeling but leaving nowhere comfortably to arrange one's feet. The high altar has been moved forward, so that the celebrant can face the congregation. There were two Big Six sets, one on the altar and one behind the altar either side of the tabernacle. The second set was very reluctant to light and gradually extinguished itself. The Oratorians like their lace at the 12 - 15 inch level; they also favour the Old Rite, otherwise known as the Extraordinary Rite and carefully not known as the Tridentine Rite which is what it is. It is now of course legal, but support is patchy; the Oratory does it at 8 am on Sundays. The Solemn Mass which preceded the 'First Mass' had clearly been in Latin as the faithful were returning their Latin Mass books, but may have been Vatican II.

The clergy party, which included a couple of monks and a Knight of Malta in a sweeping black cloak with a white star, entered to 'Hail to the Lord's Anointed'. The celebrant wore what I thought might be an Anglican chasuble, short and square like a tabard, rather than the longer, flowing chasubles used at Westminster Cathedral or the high collared tents sometimes used by All Saints clergy, but I gather it is an Old Rite chasuble. We were in green, which reminded me that Saturday was all white. Byrd provided the Kyrie and Gloria, putting English music back where it belonged. Three of the nine clergy wore birettas; local information suggests this was the Home Team rather than Anglican Patrimony. The birettas were solemnly removed and replaced at each reference to Our Lord. Again, no women in the altar party, and the readings read by a clergyman from the congregation.

Fr Aidan Nichols OP (Dominican) preached an intelligent, intellectual and informed homily, which I am checking for on the web.

Got it: HYPERLINK "http://frjeffreysteel.blogspot.com/2011/01/homily-for-fr-andrew-burnahms-first.html" <http://frjeffreysteel.blogspot.com/2011/01/homily-for-fr-andrew-burnahms-first.html>

We are on the cusp. In the first place because we are moving from white to green, from the Theophany to ordinary time, with the Lord's Baptism foreshadowing the sacrifice of the Lamb. We join in the sacrifice of the Eucharist. What of Bishop

Andrew? He offers his former Ministry, and this is the second meaning of the reference to the cusp, that he will bring what he has done and what he has been, and take his Anglican ministry on to Petrine orthodoxy. He is taking up Newman's task and it will be hard work. He is specifically to work on the Liturgy (so Rome must have read *Heaven and Earth in Little Space*). Finally, Fr Aidan referred to the hermeneutics of continuity, one of Pope Benedict's favourite phrases with regard to the implementation of Vatican II, and we moved seamlessly into exactly that. The Creed was the Creed of my childhood, in Latin, with a really powerful tune (Mode V). Fr Andrew clearly knew it very well, perhaps even better than I do, and led us with gusto. The Canon Missae was the Vatican II Latin Rite, which I had learned in that Church in the 1960s. The words of consecration ('Hoc est enim Corpus' and 'Hic est Calix Sanguinis mei' were pronounced clearly for all to hear; the preceding section was spoken aloud but covered by the Sanctus and the following section by the Benedictus. The Pater Noster, again, was led accurately at least as to the music. Some of the quantities are challenging. Numbers at Westminster Cathedral meant that communion was taken standing, mostly in the hand, at various different stations and under one kind. At the Oratory, we knelt at the rail and a server preceded the celebrant with a paten or similar vessel which he held in place lest a host or a crumb be dropped. This made it pretty difficult not to receive by mouth. In recent decades I have only met this practice in the Republic of Ireland. Communion was in one kind. The accompanying Motet asked St Andrew the Apostle to pray for us.

Before the Blessing, Fr Andrew said a few words. He thanked his son ('a bit unusual for a Catholic priest to thank his son') for the music; he apologised for the fact that he could not give us all lunch as he would have wished - he was giving lunch to the clergy in the hope of reaping where he sowed; he said how strange it was at Communion, to bless those to whom he used to give Communion and to give Communion to those whom he used to bless. The procession then left to 'Mary Immaculate, Star of the Morning', a lovely hymn, and Fr Andrew returned to give anyone who felt they needed further blessing the traditional blessing of a new priest, the blessing, hand on one's head, both his hands to kiss.

It was, for me, a wonderful service, but I was as conscious as Fr Andrew of the *Through the Looking Glass* overtones. This had been my Roman Catholic parish church, and my Anglican Bishop, now a Catholic priest, had just said Mass in the rite I learned over forty years ago. Fr Aidan referred unblushingly to the new priest saying his first Mass as 'Bishop'. It reminded me that Fr Paul had produced a conundrum while we waited for the Ordination to start, there are historical doubts as to the validity of Fr Andrew's Anglican orders, but he strongly suspected that Fr Andrew was actually still a Bishop.

The Church was pretty full, but the usual suspects whom I had seen on Saturday, All Saints and Ebbsfleet friends and colleagues, were absent; I recognised very few of the people there. It may be that some of the locals took advantage of the later Mass, or that some of that congregation will become Fr Andrew's Ordinariate flock. In just over 24 hours, the world had changed. The Anglican Patrimony was not *particularly* evident in the Liturgy, not but what the many documents, letters, greetings and blogs currently appearing show that Anglican Patrimony is being taken very seriously, and in many forms, notably I think in the field of pastoral

care, but the two weekend services reminded me of one or two practical aspects of Anglican church practice that Rome could profitably adopt. Put someone in charge of handing out Orders of Service so that people don't snaffle multiple copies; have people go up for Communion as directed rather than in a spiritual scrimmage; take Gift Aid seriously – put an envelope in each order of service. The Ordinariate has to find its own income, why not do it tax effectively?

Well, there you are. History made before one's very eyes. Now all we have to do is pray that it all works out, and we eventually achieve the unity which has to be the only aim, 'Ut unum sint ...'

Anne Bradley
17 January 2011.

FOURTEENTH CENTURY ENGLISH MYSTICS RICHARD ROLLE

On 20 January the Church commemorated Richard Rolle, a 14thC English mystic. I find him an interesting character, although as a feminist I find his attitude towards women a little sad sometimes, but he was a man of his times and I love his meditations.

He was a hermit, a spiritual writer and a biblical scholar/translator. He was born around 1300 into a farming family near Pickering in north Yorkshire. He studied at Oxford University where he learnt Latin and studied the scriptures. At 18, afraid, as he put it, of 'giving into temptation' he became a hermit and had a cell first in Pickering, then in the parish of Ainderby.

Richard Rolle was often misunderstood by others, and so had to change accommodation frequently. Bishops and monks found him difficult, the laity were cautious of him and he had difficulty approaching women. Though he did have a woman friend, his disciple Margaret of Kirkby who later became a recluse.

After two years of being a hermit he had his first mystical experience and said of it:

'I felt within me a merry and unknown heat I was expert it was not from a creature but from my maker, as it grew hotter and more glad.'

Richard Rolle was the earliest of the 14thC English mystics and we still possess a number of his manuscripts, which leads us to believe that he was probably the most prolific and popular spiritual writer of his time. He is sometimes known as the father of English mysticism. Amongst his writings is the Latin *Incendium Amori*, which was later translated into English as *The Fire of Love*.

In his introduction to *The Fire of Love* he says:

I offer this book for the attention not of the philosophers and sages of this world, not of theologians bogged down in their interminable questionings, but of the simple and unlearned, who are seeking rather to love God than to amass knowledge.

In all his writings his main theme is the loving contemplation of God, which is linked to a passionate devotion to Christ and to the holy name of Jesus, on which one should ponder day and night.

His writings are full of erotic imagery in his love for Christ:

O honeyed flame, sweeter than all sweet, delightful beyond all creation!

My God, my love, surge over me, pierce me by your love, wound me with your beauty.

Surge over me, I say, who am longing for your comfort.

Reveal your healing medicine to your poor lover.

*See, my one desire is for you; it is you my heart is seeking.
My heart pants for you: my whole being is athirst for you.....
.....Come into me, beloved!*

This highest rapture of God – this love scorns all pleasures of the flesh. His mysticism is firmly rooted in the humanity of Christ and he writes of the power of his own mystical experiences. His description of these are of heat or fire, song or sweetness. He praises the love of God to the exclusion of all else:

*I ask you, Lord Jesus,
To develop in me, your lover,
An immeasurable urge towards you,
An affection that is unbounded,
A longing that is unrestrained,
A fervour that throws discretion to the wind!*

He speaks of an incident when he was meditating in a chapel and he suddenly had an intensive experience of heat and burning that he said was so real ‘as if it were being done by physical fire as when a finger is placed in the fire’.

He describes three stages of love and union:

The first stage is of heat and burning, the stage of fire.

The second stage is of great joy in spirit brought about by heavenly song and intoxication.

And the third stage is of great sweetness which he compares to divine drunkenness.

These are the three stages of rapture and ecstasy. This rapture is not only out of the senses, but it is ‘rapture of the mind into God when the human spirit is lifted up into God in contemplation and sees the door of heaven swing back to reveal the face of the Beloved’.

He longs for Jesus, his Beloved, it is a solitary progress apart from human friendship and he writes a long meditation on the orderly progress of coming to the fire of love:

*Jesus, when I am in you and on fire with joy,
And when the heat of love is surging in,
I want to embrace you, the most loving, with my whole being.....
....My love, my honey, my harp,
My psalter and song the whole day long...You the root of my heart,
When are you coming to receive my spirit,
Which is always looking for you?*

He does talk of human friendships, and he is clumsy about women in his writings, reminding me a little of some of the writings of Tertullian and Jerome on women. However, he says that we need friendships:

I can except no one from true friendship however holy he may be, because he needs it ... unless there perhaps is one to whom angels minister and not men:

He says that

If we are true loves of our Lord Jesus Christ we can certainly think of him while, for example, we are travelling, and retain our song of love when we are in company: we can keep him in mind at meals even when we are enjoying food and drink.

Some people are uncomfortable with the erotic imagery of many mystics. However, we should remember that we all sexual beings and it is natural to respond sexually to deep emotions. Those of us who are privileged to be married or in other long-term, loving, stable relationships will understand the language of the mystic’s deep relationship with God, perhaps we feel this way about our beloved partners as we express our love for them physically. The mystics were celibate, so this imagery is an expression of their deepest feelings, we do not know what effect it had on them physically, nor should we.

Well, not many people are able to be in the position to take their meditation to the lengths that Richard Rolle did. We have jobs to do, homes to run, families to look after. But if we take time out as often as possible and meditate on Jesus and his life, we can be filled with the fire of the Holy Spirit to go out into the world and to work towards Justice and Peace.

Jesus receive my heart, and bring me to thy love: all my desire thou art, and thy coming I covet... Thou art he whom I have sought, when shall I see thy face? (Richard Rolle).

Liz Badman

Richard Rolle *The Fire of Love Chap 2*

Ibid chap 17

Ibid chap 35

Ibid chap 39

Ibid chap 39

PASTORAL LETTER

The following statement comes via the Bishop of Beverley, the Rt Revd Martyn Jarrett, who is the Provincial Episcopal Visitor for the Northern Province (and well known in Bristol, his home city). It will be of interest to those wishing to know more about the The Society of Saint Wilfrid and Saint Hilda formed for the benefit of Church of England traditionalists.

We write as bishops within the Church of England, who seek both to maintain and promote its Catholic heritage, believing that this demands maintaining the ministry of bishops, priests and deacons in a manner consistent with the tradition of the Church, East and West. We address all those, ordained and lay, who look to us at this time for pastoral guidance.

In July 2010 the General Synod of the Church of England took yet another decisive step in the direction of enacting legislation that would make it possible for women to be admitted to the episcopate. At the same time General Synod declined to make any appropriate provision that would satisfy the consciences of those of us who cannot accept that such ordinations would be a legitimate development in the life of the Church. Some have already decided that they can no longer remain within the Church of England. We genuinely wish them Godspeed as, heeding the call of conscience, they embark on a new episode in their Christian discipleship. We, too, in similar obedience to conscience, seek, if at all possible, to remain faithful members of the Church of England and undertake to support all who seek to do likewise.

Even at this late hour we are seeking a way forward that would enable us with integrity to retain such membership. We are passionate in our commitment to the mission of the Church of England and urgently seek a settlement through which we would be free to play our part to the fullest measure. We believe this could be done by the formation of a society within the Church of England, overseen by bishops committed to our viewpoint. Such bishops would need, of course, the necessary ordinary jurisdiction that would enable them to be the true pastors of their people and to be guarantors of the sacramental assurance on which we all depend for our authentic sharing within the Body of Christ. Given that our parishes are also constituent parts of local dioceses we also understand that some way would have to be identified for sharing jurisdiction with the diocesan bishop. We understand it to be something of this nature that our archbishops were trying to achieve in their ill-fated amendment at the July meeting of the General Synod. That amendment, though narrowly defeated in the House of Clergy, was widely supported elsewhere in the Synod and, indeed, a majority of members supported it. It might well be that a revisiting of the

archbishops' proposals, with some further development of them, could still help our Church to find a way forward that enabled us all to remain faithful members of it.

To this end we have set about forming 'The Society'. It is under the patronage of Saint Wilfrid and Saint Hilda. Two of our number, the Bishops of Blackburn and of Gibraltar in Europe, have agreed to serve as episcopal protectors of The Society. The Bishop of Beverley will be the co-ordinating bishop. We are still in the process of giving more substance to its constitution. It may well be that the latter cannot be finally resolved until we know whether or not the House of Bishops and then the General Synod will be prepared to build further on our initiative. You can find more details as to our thinking by visiting The Society's website. Many have already enrolled as prospective members of The Society and we now encourage all who support us to do so. We need to discover whether such a way forward commands the support of those who look to us for guidance. If that were to be so then it would be good to demonstrate to the wider Church just how many of its members need such provision in order to remain faithful members of it.

We do not want to build up false hopes. Every attempt we have made so far to persuade the Church of England to make the kind of provision that would enable us in good conscience to remain within its fellowship has been thwarted. We feel, nevertheless, duty bound, once again to seek a way out of the impasse that otherwise would make it impossible for many of us to remain faithful members of our Church. We recognise the huge change of heart that would need to happen for us to succeed. We ask you to pray fervently that such a change of heart might take place and encourage you to support us by enrolling in The Society.

*+Nicholas Blackburn +John Cicestr +Geoffrey Gibraltar +Martyn Beverley +John Burnley +Peter Edmonton
+Mark Horsham +John Plymouth +Anthony Pontefract +Martin Whitby +Lindsay Urwin +Robert Ladds*

25 January 2011

(The Society's website is www.sswsh.com)

Do your bit and knit!

A grand total of 245 squares, 6 hats and 2 jumpers have been sent to the Knit a Square project by the congregation of All Saints.

245 squares will make:

20 baby blankets, or 10 toddler blankets, or 7 blankets for older children and teenagers.

A massive thank you to everyone who has knitted, crocheted, donated wool or passed on their skills.

I will be sending the final parcel (for the time being) at the end of February so

if you have any half finished squares get knitting!!

If you would like to carry on supporting this project, the address and postal instructions are as follows:

Knit-a-square, Soweto Comfort Club, Private Bag X900, Bryanston 2021, South Africa.

Please mark the envelope clearly: No Commercial Value and For Charity Only.

Thanks again,

Charlotte Hopkins

DEVOTION TO OUR LADY IN 2011

The faithful at All Saints and All Hallows will be well aware of the annual parish pilgrimage to Walsingham, and will wish to be reminded of three other opportunities to express their devotion to the Blessed Virgin during the coming year.

On **Saturday 20 August** the Bristol Catholic Societies **Assumptiontide Festival** takes place, following the pattern established by Canon Clover in 2000. Solemn Mass, preceded by the Procession of the image of Our Lady of Glastonbury, will be concelebrated in Bristol Cathedral at noon; the Principal Celebrant and Preacher will be (subject to confirmation) the Rt Revd Dr Geoffrey Rowell, Bishop of Gibraltar in Europe. After Mass, the Cathedral Refectory will be open, or there is ample picnic space in the Cathedral garden or on College Green.

The Blessed Sacrament will be exposed for private prayer and devotion in the Lord Mayor's Chapel from 3.00pm, followed by Solemn Benediction in the Chapel at 3.30pm

There will be appropriate music at both services.

This event has attracted considerable support over the past 10 years; please help to maintain that support into the second decade of this century.

On **Saturday 3 September**, in our sister parish of All Hallows Easton, the **Nativity of Our Lady** will be celebrated. Sung Mass at noon will be followed by lunch, and at 3.00pm there will be Evensong, Procession and Benediction. Further details will be announced nearer the date.

It is to be hoped that All Saints and All Hallows, sister parishes, will join together in support of these festivals. In addition, those of a more adventurous spirit may wish,

on **Saturday 14 May**, to brave the journey to Tylorstown in the Rhondda Fach for the pilgrimage to the shrine of **Our Lady of Penrhys**. After Mass at the Sports Centre, when the Preacher will be the Rt Revd Lindsay Urwin, there will be Prayers and the Liturgy of Healing at the Shrine in the rolling hills of South Wales.

Tylorstown is in the Rhondda Fach, one of the valleys stretching northwards from Cardiff into the former South Wales coalfield.

People from Christchurch City, and indeed from any other parish, will be very welcome to join us.

Ave Maria!

Chris Verity

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WALSINGHAM 2011



Our parish pilgrimage this year to this lovely Shrine village is from Monday 3 to Friday 7 October, and we are once again sharing a coach with St Gregory's Horfield.

The beauty and holiness of Walsingham, and the wonderful spiritual fellowship on always meets there, make the pilgrimage a very special

experience. Do ask Garfield Griffiths or Fr Hoyal if you would like to know more.

It is already time to book – please contact Garfield, either at church or at 0117 9441035 or Garfield.Griffiths@uwe.ac.uk .

CONCERT MATINEES

4 pm Saturday 5 February

Organ recital by Matthew Redman, formerly director of music at Colston's Girls' School.

A colourful and attractive programme entitled *Travel Broadens the Mind*, including works by Eric Coates, Stanford, Charles Ives, Holst and Vierne.

4 pm Saturday 5 March

Dorian String Quartet. One of Bristol's oldest established and distinguished ensembles makes a return visit to perform Schubert's *A minor String Quartet* preceded by Purcell's *Chacony in G minor*.

Admission free with retiring collection and tea and cake after each performance.

FAITH HEALER Bristol Old Vic 27 January - 5 March



Please note this production of Brian Friel's **Faith Healer**. This is a set of monologues that take as their theme the power of love and faith to change our lives. Alongside it the Bristol Old Vic will be running a series of discussions around the issue of faith. These will be FREE and the theatre is keen for them to bring together people from as many different perspectives on the subject as possible – details to come. See posters and flyers in church.

LOOKING AHEAD...

Churches Together in Clifton, Cotham and Redland

Lent Lectures 2011

“The Big Society and Christian Engagement”

March 16th **The “Big Society” and the New Austerity**
Anna Coote of the New Economics Foundation
Cotham Parish Church 7.00pm for 7.30pm

March 23rd **Affordable Housing: To Build or not to build?**
Mike Day, Knighstone Housing Association
The Revd Nick Williams on the 21st Century Almhouse
The Friends' Meeting House, Hampton Road,

March 30th **The Big Society and the Gospel of Small Things**

The Revd Jon Doble,
The Churches Council for Industry and Social Responsibility.
Clifton Cathedral, Pembroke Road,

April 13th **The Big Society and Volunteering**
With panel from the Volunteer Bureau, the National Trust and Victim Support.

All 7.00pm for 7.30pm Admission Free To All Lectures

***THANK YOU!** We are most grateful to generous parishioners who kindly made special Christmas donations to All Saints in response to our Advent appeal. In all £4000 was given, thanks to which we have unexpectedly ended the year in the black. This is a splendid result, and people's kindness is warmly appreciated.*

SOUND OPPORTUNITY

The church microphones have recently been retuned to new frequencies because some frequency bands have been withdrawn from general use by the public. The characteristics of the system are a little different now, and this provides us with a natural opportunity to get all clergy, lay ministers, readers and prayer leaders together so that we can ensure that everyone is able to make the most of the newly adjusted system. We hope to offer a date shortly, perhaps after 11 am Sunday Mass.

