

# Transformative

Mission Teaching Eucharist



Lent Course Notes - 2010



***For the last year or so I have encouraged a group of priests and theologians in the diocese to pursue their vision for what has come to be called Transformative. It is about how the people of God learn and live the Gospel of Jesus Christ through the Eucharist. It celebrates our Diocesan life in London as one body in the one bread. It aims to fire up our zeal for growth and the transformation of hopes and lives.***

The Rt Revd and Rt Hon Richard Chartres, Bishop of London, introducing *Transformative*.

***All of us, with unveiled faces, seeing the glory of the Lord as though reflected in a mirror, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord, the Spirit.***

*II Corinthians 3.18*

***O God our Father, we thank thee for this sacrament. For all who down the centuries at this table have found the light that never fades, the joy that no-one takes from them, the forgiveness of their sins, the love which is thy love, the presence of their Lord: we thank thee.***

*William Barclay (1907-78)*

## INTRODUCTION

*The Eucharist divorced from life loses reality; life devoid of worship loses direction and power. It is the worshipping life that can transform the world.*

William Temple (1881-1944), from 'Citizen and Churchman', 1941

These Lent Course Notes are offered to the parishes of the Diocese of London as part of the *Transformative* project - a sequence of activities in which the eucharistic life of the Church is explored and celebrated in all its richness. As the subtitle suggests, this is as much about mission and teaching as it is about the liturgy of the sacrament. In its true fullness the Eucharist holds all these things together.

The seedbed for these Notes was a series of five Study Sessions held in Autumn 2009. At these sessions a pleasingly wide variety of people (lay and ordained) came together to hear speakers and to converse with them. The subjects of the Study Sessions were all profoundly eucharistic, but carefully chosen to come at it somewhat tangentially. As Professor Ben Quash, who devised the course, put it at the opening session:

*'We'll explore through the idea of 'transformation' a range of themes that are Pauline in general shape - Paul himself in his own life having undergone the most extraordinary personal transformation, and also having written eloquently about the transformations of the material order, and of the elements of bread and wine in the Eucharist, and of human communities in relation to the churches to whom he wrote; and so communicating the kind of ferment of transformation that is set in motion by the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ of which he is a witness and apostle.*

*'We're seeking to push beyond the narrowly churchy and to think about how that transformation is going on in the wider world; and that's why we haven't only got theologians coming to talk, but also voices from the arts and a range of other backgrounds'.*

These Notes are presented, we hope, so as to meet the very varied needs of parishes. They include ideas and quotations from some of the Study Session speakers; visual and musical references; related biblical texts; as well as passages from other writers on some of the themes.

Leaders will want to choose from among these resources, to provide material for reflection and conversation in their groups. There are also suggested questions for discussion, which include both ideas-based and more experiential questions. Some of these questions are first mooted in the opening paragraph for each week, printed here in red. Leaders should feel fully at liberty to add questions of their own, of course.

The choice of material, and the amount of it you use, will depend on how your group is designed to work. You may wish to give out material in advance, so that most of the session is devoted to discussion. Or you may prefer to choose material

that can be presented in the session, followed by discussion: this will work well with quotations, biblical texts and examples of music, poetry or art. They can be read/shown informally, or presented in a more structured, 'performed' way.

These materials should be of use in ecumenical groups, groups that meet in small house gatherings, bigger meetings that break out into discussion cells and so on. They are being made available online as a simple word document so that group leaders can customise the material to their own needs.

You will see that our approach is deliberately and unambiguously prayerful, and includes liturgical material - particularly the Common Worship provision for Night Prayer (Compline), as a way of bringing each session to an end. We also strongly recommend beginning each session with prayer and singing (Col 3.15-17). Our experience is that this greatly enhances the power and effectiveness of a Lent Course, as does allowing periods of silence, of contemplation. This goes as much for evangelical groups as for those for whom the catholic traditions of prayer and worship are familiar. There is scope for free spontaneous prayer as well as composed texts, for worship songs and chants as well as hymns. The Holy Spirit will be at work whatever we do, of course; but to open our hearts in prayer and patient attention in these sessions will help us be more on *receive* than *transmit*! - more open to the transforming love and truth of God.

## CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
Introduction	3
Contents	4
Week One - the Word transforming	5
- Night Prayer	12
Week Two - the Church transforming	15
- Night Prayer	20
Week Three - Bread and Wine transforming	24
- Night Prayer	30
Week Four - People, Communities and Ethics transforming	33
- Night Prayer	39
Week Five - time transforming	42
- Night Prayer	47
Appendix: Biblical resources	
- (1) The Eucharist	51
- (2) The Conversion of Paul	52
- (3) Transformation in Paul	53

## Week One - the Word transforming

This sacrament of transformation in which bread, wine and people are changed and put to new purposes has also inspired artists of all kinds. In particular, the words of the eucharistic rite have been transformed into a variety of musical forms. They have also inspired poetry and prayer.

What changes when the words are 'translated' into a new medium? How do contemporary poets and composers find inspiration in the Eucharist? And does this indicate that there is something about artistic creativity itself that has analogies with the Eucharist: the processes by which ordinary things become graced; by which the divine depth or excess in material creation is opened up for our new appreciation?

### Scripture

*O sing to the Lord a new song;  
sing to the Lord, all the earth.  
Sing to the Lord, bless his name;  
tell of his salvation from day to day.  
Declare his glory among the nations,  
his marvellous works among all the peoples.  
For great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised;  
he is to be revered above all gods.  
For all the gods of the peoples are idols,  
but the Lord made the heavens.  
Honour and majesty are before him;  
strength and beauty are in his sanctuary.*

*Ascribe to the Lord, O families of the peoples,  
ascribe to the Lord glory and strength.  
Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name;  
bring an offering, and come into his courts.  
Worship the Lord in holy splendour;  
tremble before him, all the earth.*

Psalm 96.1-9

### The Composer - James MacMillan



James MacMillan CBE is one of today's most successful living composers and is also internationally active as a conductor. His musical language is profoundly shaped by his Christian faith, his social conscience and his Scottish heritage, and blends Celtic, Far Eastern, Scandinavian and Eastern European music with a classical Western tradition running from Victoria through Bach to Wagner and Messiaen.

He has written several Mass settings, including one for children which is used in churches all over the world every week.

*'I deal with sounds, and the transformation of those sounds into something that reflects our common humanity, our common experience of being human together on this earth ...*

*'As a practising Catholic I've grown up experiencing the Eucharist, and gradually the implications of that celebration began to exert themselves in my own work, sometimes directly and sometimes indirectly as well.*

*'Growing up with a childhood reflection on the transformation of elements is something that in many ways is beautiful... this stayed with me. As I grew older I began to be confronted with the texts...'*

MacMillan has composed settings of the Eucharist for both choral and congregational use, and he is writing a new one for Durham Cathedral. He also now writes regularly for his local Dominican parish, one of the poorest parishes in Glasgow - *'for the prayerful nourishment of the community'*.

**Example** - *Sanctus* from the Westminster Cathedral / Millennium Mass setting. It was highly unusual to set the whole Eucharistic Prayer, including the words of consecration - but, as he says, *'the words are so interwoven, it seemed a shame not to connect them'*. The *Sanctus* comes in the midst of this continuous sequence, of course, and is a perfect example of his style in this genre - a setting for a professional choir.

[MacMillan 'Mass' Hyperion Records 2001 CD A67219; track 6. Please contact Andrew Hammond at [succentor@stpaulscathedral.org.uk](mailto:succentor@stpaulscathedral.org.uk) if you need help accessing this.]

## **The Poet - Michael Symmons Roberts**



Michael Symmons Roberts is an award-winning poet, novelist, librettist and dramatist. His works include the recent collection of poetry *Corpus*, and the

BBC1 film *Miracle on the Estate*, screened on Good Friday 2008, which won the Premier Prize for Television at the Sandford St Martin Awards in June this year. He has collaborated on a number of occasions with James MacMillan.

Michael Symmons Roberts talked about how poetic language works on more levels than just the descriptive. He quoted Marianne Moore, the American poet, who spoke of *'imaginary gardens with real toads in them'*. A poem *enacts*, it *performs*. Something happens.

Symmons Roberts also referred to Ted Hughes, and his famous poem 'The Thought-Fox'. It is a powerful, short poem which turns out to be about the coming to the page of a poem. But the description of the fox itself, especially given the meaning it turns out to have, is *'capturing an animal'*. Commenting on it himself later in a radio broadcast, Hughes said that whenever his listeners read the poem *'a fox will get up somewhere out of the darkness and come walking towards them'*. And this fox is better than a real fox *'because he made it'*, and was able to *'find the living words'*.

For Michael Symmons Roberts this is quite close to what liturgy does. It has a performative aspect: not just that it is said in a formal context, but the words themselves enact something - especially, sometimes, *transformation*. Or, to use a term common in poetry criticism these days, *epiphany*. This is particularly said of lyric poetry. Seamus Heaney talks about *'moments from childhood'*; memories which are transformed in a poem, in a performative way.

But... words are slippery. Transformations are not always exact, the words can slip away, meanings change. This certainly affects metaphors. Metaphors matter more in liturgy than poetry, Symmons Roberts said: changes in language can orphan some terminology. Even in the 1950s the artist David Jones lamented the fact that the words 'wood' and 'water' in poems could no longer be assumed to carry connotations of cross and baptism that they would have done fifty years before. We are left to find new, less subtle metaphors.

So we have to find ways to 'make it new' in poetry and liturgy. The recent retranslation of the Roman Catholic English texts for the mass caused much debate on this topic. One US bishop complained of 'slavishly literal' translation which would lead to 'pastoral disaster'. He was thinking of words like 'ineffable' and 'vanquished' (out of a long list!). As the poet Robert Lowell argued, about translation of poems from their original language, if the performative character is to be retained (if the poem is *'to carry a real toad in it'*, as Symmons Roberts said), then not just words but whole phrases, metaphors have to be changed to work in the new language.

### **Example - *Jairus***

This poem by Michael Symmons Roberts describes a transformative event, as well as being transformative itself. This is conveyed by a powerful image of the girl's immediate physical need.

*So, God takes your child by the hand  
and pulls her from her deathbed.  
He says: 'Feed her, she is ravenous.'*

*You give her fruits with thick hides  
- pomegranate, cantaloupe -  
food with weight, to keep her here.*

*You hope that if she eats enough  
the light and dust and love  
which weave the matrix of her body*

*will not fray, nor wear so thin  
that morning sun breaks through her,  
shadowless, complete.*

*Somehow this reanimation  
has cut sharp the fear of death,  
the shock of presence. Feed her*

*roast lamb, egg, unleavened bread:  
forget the herbs, she has an aching  
fast to break. Sit by her side,*

*split skins for her so she can gorge,  
and notice how the dawn  
draws colour to her just-kissed face.*

From *Corpus* (Cape Poetry 2004 © )

For a sound file of Michael Symmons Roberts reading *Jairus*,  
go to [www.poetryarchive.org/poetryarchive/singlePoem.do?poemId=3486](http://www.poetryarchive.org/poetryarchive/singlePoem.do?poemId=3486)

[And cp Mark 5.21-24, 35-43; Luke 8.40-42, 49-56]

## Themes and questions for discussion

### Going back to basics

If the meaning of words and language is nowadays becoming feebler, less rich, how do we address this? Do we have to do a kind of ‘stripping of the altars’, as is done on Maundy Thursday, often to bleak music? Or should there be more of a dialogue, so that liturgy converses with non-religious language?

This applies to music too. The Twentieth Century was characterised by an urge to get rid of everything. MacMillan, on the other hand, said that we can allow past ways of doing things to be ‘reignited’. *‘The deep past is not fatally tainted... there are deep luscious roots which can be made to live again in our time’.*

Michael Symmons Roberts shared Rowan Williams’ belief that society has lost a shared understanding of religious language. Maybe this can be both a challenge and an opportunity. But does it mean just going ‘street’?! Or does that underestimate people’s capacity to understand poetic language. Can images in liturgy be preserved and renewed? Symmons Roberts talked of *‘taking the fragments and fractures’* and working with and through them.

What is your experience of liturgical language? Have the changes of the last 40 years produced good results?

### **The power of music**

Does music have a unique power to touch us? - and not just emotionally, but spiritually too? Of all the art-forms it seems to be the one most commonly described (by music lovers at least) in (quasi-)spiritual language. Music seems to have effects in people's lives.

Do you remember especially powerful music experiences in church? Was this a good experience? And can music be a help in private prayer?

What types of music work well in church?

### **Performance**

Sometimes we can talk so much about the words and music heard in church that we forget to think about *how* these are performed or, to use a simpler word, *done*. Is it true to say this - that sometimes the most beautiful words can be deadened by the way they are delivered, whereas the most ordinary, even banal, words can be lifted by committed, authentic delivery?

And where is the movement of the Holy Spirit in all this?!

### **Singing the words**

Some poets don't want their poetry set to music. What difference does singing texts make? Can it obscure meaning? - or can it determine an emotional response?

MacMillan believes that the communication of meaning can be heightened with music. He gave the example of the Serenity Prayer, central to Alcoholics Anonymous. He set it to music for his parish, which is in a place where quite a number of people attend AA. Setting the prayer to music had great power in this context.

What experiences have you had of words set to music? Good and bad...

### **Comprehensibility**

Poetry and music can't be fully or finally comprehensible, if they have any lasting and serious quality - unlike, say, a newspaper article. Where does liturgy fit in this sense? Do we believe that liturgical language will/should always elude total capture? Do we see the role of *mystery* as fundamental here?

Is there so much 'white noise' of words and sounds and music nowadays that we can't see the meaning in poetic and liturgical language? Do we need to find a way of making a 'frame round it' to be able to discern the meanings? What might that frame be in practice? Silence? Stylistic/stylised presentation? Imaginative use of space and music?

Some words lose their definiteness by spilling into other contexts. Take 'spirituality'! - do you agree with Michael Symmons Roberts, that the word 'needs to be put away for 10 year or so!'

### **Moral consequences**

Transformations can happen which are not morally neutral. Sometimes people can respond badly to good music, or even poetry, whipped up emotionally in a wrong direction. Think of the effect of Beethoven's Choral Symphony on the main character in 'A Clockwork Orange'.

Music can also be horribly misused, such as when musicians were forced to play beautiful music as people were driven into the Nazi gas chambers. Auschwitz survivor and musician Anita Wallfisch has devoted the rest of her life to reclaiming beautiful music from such an appalling misuse of it.

What does this tell us about the power of music and poetry? - and our responsibilities when working with it?

### **Prayer-Poem**

*Rejoice in God, O ye Tongues;  
give the glory to the Lord, and the Lamb.  
Nations, and languages, and every Creature,  
in which is the breath of Life.  
Let man and beast appear before him,  
and magnify his name together.*

*For H is a spirit and therefore he is God.  
For K is king and therefore he is God.  
For L is love and therefore he is God.  
For M is music and therefore he is God.*

*For the trumpet of God is a blessed intelligence  
and so are all the instruments in heaven.  
For God the Father almighty plays upon the harp  
of stupendous magnitude and melody.  
For at that time malignity ceases  
and the devils themselves are at peace.  
For this time is perceptible to man  
by a remarkable stillness and serenity of soul.*

Christopher Smart (1722-71)

### **Prayer**

*God who wrestled with chaos to create matter, and overcame  
death to bring us to eternal life, give to writers, musicians and  
artists a share in the work and joy of creation, that, like you, they  
may draw forth beauty out of nothingness, and reveal to us some*

*glimpses of your eternity, where you are enthroned, Life-giver,  
Pain-bearer, Love-maker, alive for ever and ever.*

Michael Counsell (1935-)

## Night Prayer (Compline)

The Lord almighty grant us a quiet night and a perfect end.

**Amen**

Our help is in the name of the Lord  
who made heaven and earth.

Most merciful God,  
we confess to you,  
before the whole company of heaven and one another,  
that we have sinned in thought, word and deed  
and in what we have failed to do.  
Forgive us our sins,  
heal us by your Spirit  
and raise us to new life in Christ. Amen.

O God, make speed to save us.  
O Lord, make haste to help us.

Glory to the Father and to the Son  
and to the Holy Spirit;  
as it was in the beginning is now  
and shall be for ever. Amen.  
Alleluia.

*A hymn, song or chant is sung*

*The following psalm is said, in alternating verses.*

### *Psalm 4*

1 Answer me when I call, O God of my righteousness; •  
you set me at liberty when I was in trouble;  
have mercy on me and hear my prayer.

2 How long will you nobles dishonour my glory; •  
how long will you love vain things and seek after falsehood?

3 But know that the Lord has shown me his marvellous kindness; •  
when I call upon the Lord, he will hear me.

4 Stand in awe, and sin not; •  
commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still.

5 Offer the sacrifices of righteousness •  
and put your trust in the Lord.

**6** There are many that say, 'Who will show us any good?' •  
Lord, lift up the light of your countenance upon us.

**7** You have put gladness in my heart, •  
more than when their corn and wine and oil increase.

**8** In peace I will lie down and sleep, •  
for it is you Lord, only, who make me dwell in safety.

**Glory to the Father and to the Son  
and to the Holy Spirit;  
as it was in the beginning is now  
and shall be for ever. Amen.**

*The following short lesson or another suitable passage is read*

You, O Lord, are in the midst of us and we are called by your name; leave us not, O  
Lord our God.

*Jeremiah 14.9*

*The following responsory is said*

Into your hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit.  
**Into your hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit.**  
For you have redeemed me, Lord God of truth.  
**I commend my spirit.**  
Glory to the Father and to the Son  
and to the Holy Spirit.  
**Into your hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit.**

Keep me as the apple of your eye.  
**Hide me under the shadow of your wings.**

*The Nunc Dimittis (The Song of Simeon) is said*

**Christ died for us,  
so that, whether we wake or sleep,  
we might live with him.**

**1** Now, Lord, you let your servant go in peace:  
your word has been fulfilled.

**2** My own eyes have seen the salvation  
which you have prepared in the sight of every people;

**3** A light to reveal you to the nations  
and the glory of your people Israel.

Glory to the Father and to the Son  
and to the Holy Spirit;  
as it was in the beginning is now  
and shall be for ever. Amen.

Christ died for us,  
so that, whether we wake or sleep,  
we might live with him.

*Intercessions and thanksgivings.*

*The Collect*

Heavenly Father,  
your Son battled with the powers of darkness,  
and grew closer to you in the desert:  
help us to use these days to grow in wisdom and prayer  
that we may witness to your saving love  
in Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen**

*Silence may be kept.*

Visit this place, O Lord, we pray,  
and drive far from it the snares of the enemy;  
may your holy angels dwell with us and guard us in peace,  
and may your blessing be always upon us;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

*The Lord's Prayer is said.*

In peace we will lie down and sleep;  
for you alone, Lord, make us dwell in safety.

Abide with us, Lord Jesus,  
for the night is at hand and the day is now past.

As the night watch looks for the morning,  
so do we look for you, O Christ.

May God bless us,  
that in us may be found love and humility,  
obedience and thanksgiving,  
discipline, gentleness and peace.

**Amen.**

## Week Two - the Church transforming

The Church is not only the agent of transformation of things in the world around it. It does not simply make differences through the Word it preaches and the sacraments it administers, while itself remaining unaltered. The Church is also itself being transformed, all the time, by God's grace in the actions it performs and shares with the world.

How do we, the whole Church, participate in Christ? How do we understand the Church as the true body of Christ ('this is my Body'), as a community made radically new?

### Scripture (1)

*And he has put all things under his feet and has made him the head over all things for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all..*

*... In him the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are built together spiritually into a dwelling-place for God.*

Ephesians 1.22-23, 2.21-22

### This is my body - or, the Eucharist makes the Church

At the second Study Session two theologians presented their thoughts on how we might think of the Church specifically and deliberately in terms of the Eucharist. Much of this was based on the *ressourcement* approach developed in French Roman Catholic circles in the mid-twentieth century, especially in the work of Henri de Lubac.

The fundamental *ressourcement* idea was to go *back to the ancient sources*. This would ground a reinvigorated way of talking about the Church ('ecclesiology'), and in terms of the Eucharist. If the Church is the Body of Christ, and at the same time the sacramental bread is where we encounter the Body of Christ uniquely, deeply and really ('this is my Body... do this'), then *the Eucharist makes the Church*.

This French movement was influential in the Second Vatican Council. There radical thoughts were entertained about how to approach what was a very changed present, let alone the future. Could the tradition of the Church be re-imagined, revitalised, in a way which did not compromise itself, but would enable the gospel to be preached afresh in new circumstances?

## The contributors:

**Dr Gemma Simmonds** is a sister of the Congregation of Jesus and Lecturer in Systematic Theology and Spirituality at Heythrop College. She has worked in spiritual direction as a teacher and retreat-giver after training in the Jesuit Centre for Spiritual Growth, Wernersville, PA, and has been involved in religious and priestly formation since 1993. Her work as a conference facilitator and simultaneous translator has also led her into translating theological works in French, Spanish and Portuguese. Most notable of these is her recently published translation of Henri de Lubac's *Corpus Mysticum*.

**James Walters** is Assistant Curate of St John-at-Hampstead, a Church of England parish. He obtained a doctorate in systematic theology and ecclesiology at the University of Cambridge and has a forthcoming book on the theological implications of the work of the French philosopher Jean Baudrillard. He is an Honorary Associate of St Mellitus College.

## An Anglican take on *ressourcement*: the Church in the world

James Walters considered how the Church does its theological talking, including talking about the Eucharist. He saw a risk in wanting concrete 'fixities' in a way which doesn't capture the full, rich experience of God's dynamic engagement with us. He quoted the fine Anglican theologian Dan Hardy:

*'Christian truth [is] somewhat different from what we usually expect. It is not something fixed, like a star which is near or far away, which serves as a simple point by which we can check everything else. Rather it is an active truth, active everywhere, working to bring all things, including our understanding and actions, into its movement. The inner pattern of this truth is Trinitarian, active and lifting and livening.'*

D. W. Hardy, 'God's Ways with the World'

This doesn't mean some kind of shapeless, liquid flux, where we all get lost, rather:

*In order for conceptual doctrines to be transformative of the Church such that it may be a transformative agent in the world, they need to be recognised as snapshots of the ongoing transformative dynamic of God's engagement with the world. God's truth needs to be imaginatively, creatively and prayerfully re-received in current circumstances.*

De Lubac's talk of the Eucharist 'building the Church' has resonances in developments in the Church of England in the last century, such that we can now say

*... the Eucharist contains the primary symbolism of a community gathered to hear afresh the Word of God and make sense of it*

*within their culture, leading to a physical act of communion in the sharing of natural elements made holy.*

Ideally this involves always interacting both with the historical heritage of our liturgy and ideas, and with the state of the world as it daily is. Quoting Rowan Williams:

*'Unless we grasp that the characteristic form of God's dealing with us is the formation of a community that manifests the possibility of human healing and justice, and directs the world to the praise of its maker, we shall not see why there is a Eucharistic community there at all.'*

R. Williams, 'Imagining the Kingdom in 'The Identity of Anglican Worship'

Walters concludes:

*Transformation arises out of the dynamic encounter with God's truth. The Eucharist constitutes the conditions to realise this encounter for particular people in their contexts. It is the Church that enacts this dynamic encounter and is itself, as a people, shaped and transformed by it. But the Church is only, as Bonhoeffer wrote, "the world turned to God" and so it is only within the forms and structures of the world around us, cultural and natural, that this transformation is worked out.*

## Themes and questions for discussion

### The Church 'made by the Eucharist'

How does this compare to your understanding of the Church and the Eucharist?

Is the Eucharist this central?

What other forms of liturgy are important to you?

### Transformation and Grace

Sr Gemma pointed out that the sacraments are needed because we can't transform ourselves. Contrast the irony of 'spirituality' books in shops being in the Self Help section. *'We can't help ourselves, that's why the Incarnation happened..'* she said.

She also suggested that transformation in the sacraments and in the life of the spirit is about *becoming*; it's about them drawing out what we really truly are, what we are created to be. A wonderful word in this context is *translucence* - as in one of the Roman Catholic eucharistic prayers, which talks of 'the power of Christ shining through our human weakness'.

What is your experience of the transforming power of the Eucharist? - both in your individual life, and in the life of your church community?

How important do you think the action of the Holy Spirit is in this? Do we need to do anything other than 'making ourselves available', being *receptive*?

### **Hearing the story together**

Central to the Eucharist is telling the story over and over again. In doing so, in the repetition, it becomes more real, not in any way tedious.

What effect does this repeated hearing of the story of Christ, especially of his bringing salvation, have? At the time, and later?

### **'Eating to damnation'**

Paul (in I Cor 11) is uncompromising in what he says about eating the eucharistic bread unworthily. In that original context Paul was talking about community, about the wrongness of importing social distinctions which have no place in a church community properly lived out.

In a modern context, in 'Torture and Eucharist' (by William T Cavanaugh), we are brought up short by the very public piety of Pinochet and his henchmen in Chile attending the Eucharist faithfully; but then overseeing a terrifying regime of disappearances and torture. What does this say about the effect and effectiveness of the Eucharist?

Sr Gemma argued that all the things which are rightly said about grace and giftedness, and about the sacraments as what God does, not what we do, do not take away from the other side of things: Jesus said *we know a tree by its fruits*. We must always remember that Jesus said 'do this in memory of me', instituting the Eucharist, having *just washed the disciples' feet*. There is a great risk of forgetting this and hiding behind spiritualising language. The seriousness with which we take the injunction to wash others' feet is 'a measure of the authenticity of our belonging to the Body of Christ'.

How do you understand this? Is the Eucharist only truly effective when we actually go on to try to live better lives? What does that say about the relationship between grace and our own effort?

What impact do examples like Pinochet have on the public perception of the Church and the Christian faith? - and on our evangelistic endeavours?

Sr Gemma suggested that the Church needs to retrieve a balance between a sense of its (our) sinfulness, and a sense of the Church's vital necessity to the world, especially in the face of external hostility. The recent amazing reaction to the National Gallery's 'Sacred made Real' exhibition shows how the message *can* be read. Do you agree?

### **Dissonance and communion**

So much of our talk of Eucharist is about harmoniousness, whereas the reality is often more about disharmony - historically and today. This is very visibly the case in eucharistic hospitality or the withdrawal of it. Could it be a positive thing to explore the differences between the Anglican and Roman Catholic positions? (ie 'all in good standing with their own communion may receive' and 'to receive is the conclusion and crown of growth together').

Might even a full understanding of the rich mystery of the Church want to include both possibilities? Daring to allow a 'theology of the absurd' (see eg I Cor 1.18-31)?

Sr Gemma spoke from her experience as a spiritual director, that strongly negative reactions can be evidence of energy, of something happening. It can be like a heat-finder in earthquake rescues. So we shouldn't necessarily always be afraid of argument, contradiction.

If the Eucharist is about communion, what is happening when it does the opposite of bringing us together?

Does it help to remember that the crucifixion is at the heart of it, which expresses both the contradiction at the heart of humanity, but also its reconciliation. '*Eucharist is not just a band-aid: it can be about our brokenness.*' What do you make of this?

## Scripture (2)

*Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be answerable for the body and blood of the Lord. Examine yourselves, and only then eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For all who eat and drink without discerning the body, eat and drink judgement against themselves. For this reason many of you are weak and ill, and some have died. But if we judged ourselves, we would not be judged. But when we are judged by the Lord, we are disciplined so that we may not be condemned along with the world.*

I Cor 11.27-32

## A meditation

### *M for 'Mass'*

*Alfio is the old gardener who has spent all his long life in this part of the Umbrian valley.. When on Monday I teasingly asked him why I had not seen him at Mass on Sunday (for he is always there), he told me that he had gone instead to Collelungo because it was the patronal feast of the church there. He said, with a thrill that made his body shudder and shine, 'C'era una messa infinita, maestosa'. It was an infinite, majestic Mass.*

*I tell this because, by my telling, the reader now knows a truth that was true before the reader knew it; namely that Alfio belongs to the world and that the world is full of such beautiful souls. Each soul a singular secret. Each last as long as someone lasts to tell of them, then passes. We last awhile, as long as someone bothers to tell. But we are there, beautiful in any case, even if unknown.*

Jeremy Driscoll OSB 'A Monk's Alphabet'

## Night Prayer (Compline)

The Lord almighty grant us a quiet night and a perfect end.  
**Amen**

Our help is in the name of the Lord  
who made heaven and earth.

Most merciful God,  
we confess to you,  
before the whole company of heaven and one another,  
that we have sinned in thought, word and deed  
and in what we have failed to do.  
Forgive us our sins,  
heal us by your Spirit  
and raise us to new life in Christ. Amen.

O God, make speed to save us.  
O Lord, make haste to help us.

Glory to the Father and to the Son  
and to the Holy Spirit;  
as it was in the beginning is now  
and shall be for ever. Amen.  
Alleluia.

*A hymn is sung*

*The following psalm is said, in alternating verses.*

### *Psalm 91*

1 Whoever dwells in the shelter of the Most High •  
and abides under the shadow of the Almighty,

2 Shall say to the Lord, 'My refuge and my stronghold, •  
my God, in whom I put my trust.'

3 For he shall deliver you from the snare of the fowler •  
and from the deadly pestilence.

4 He shall cover you with his wings  
and you shall be safe under his feathers; •  
his faithfulness shall be your shield and buckler.

5 You shall not be afraid of any terror by night, •  
nor of the arrow that flies by day;

**6 Of the pestilence that stalks in darkness, •  
nor of the sickness that destroys at noonday.**

7 Though a thousand fall at your side  
and ten thousand at your right hand, •  
yet it shall not come near you.

**8 Your eyes have only to behold •  
to see the reward of the wicked.**

9 Because you have made the Lord your refuge •  
and the Most High your stronghold,

**10 There shall no evil happen to you, •  
neither shall any plague come near your tent.**

11 For he shall give his angels charge over you, •  
to keep you in all your ways.

**12 They shall bear you in their hands, •  
lest you dash your foot against a stone.**

13 You shall tread upon the lion and adder; •  
the young lion and the serpent you shall trample underfoot.

**14 Because they have set their love upon me,  
therefore will I deliver them; •  
I will lift them up, because they know my name.**

15 They will call upon me and I will answer them; •  
I am with them in trouble,  
I will deliver them and bring them to honour.

**16 With long life will I satisfy them •  
and show them my salvation.**

**Glory to the Father and to the Son  
and to the Holy Spirit;  
as it was in the beginning is now  
and shall be for ever. Amen.**

*The following short lesson or another suitable passage is read*

Be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary the devil is prowling round like a roaring lion, seeking for someone to devour. Resist him, strong in the faith. *1 Peter 5.8,9*

*The following responsory is said*

Into your hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit.  
**Into your hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit.**  
For you have redeemed me, Lord God of truth.  
**I commend my spirit.**  
Glory to the Father and to the Son  
and to the Holy Spirit.  
**Into your hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit.**

Keep me as the apple of your eye.  
**Hide me under the shadow of your wings.**

*The Nunc Dimittis (The Song of Simeon) is said*

**Christ died for us,  
so that, whether we wake or sleep,  
we might live with him.**

1 Now, Lord, you let your servant go in peace:  
your word has been fulfilled.

**2 My own eyes have seen the salvation  
which you have prepared in the sight of every people;**

3 A light to reveal you to the nations  
and the glory of your people Israel.

**Glory to the Father and to the Son  
and to the Holy Spirit;  
as it was in the beginning is now  
and shall be for ever. Amen.**

**Christ died for us,  
so that, whether we wake or sleep,  
we might live with him.**

*Intercessions and thanksgivings.*

*The Collect*

Almighty God,  
by the prayer and discipline of Lent  
may we enter into the mystery of Christ's sufferings,  
and by following in his Way  
come to share in his glory;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen**

*Silence may be kept.*

Visit this place, O Lord, we pray,  
and drive far from it the snares of the enemy;  
may your holy angels dwell with us and guard us in peace,  
and may your blessing be always upon us;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

*The Lord's Prayer is said.*

In peace we will lie down and sleep;  
**for you alone, Lord, make us dwell in safety.**

Abide with us, Lord Jesus,  
**for the night is at hand and the day is now past.**

As the night watch looks for the morning,  
**so do we look for you, O Christ.**

May God bless us,  
that in us may be found love and humility,  
obedience and thanksgiving,  
discipline, gentleness and peace.

**Amen.**

## Week Three - Bread and Wine transforming

The matter, the stuff, of the created world is essential to the eucharistic event and to the ministry and mission of the Church. In the incarnation, God assumes and redeems matter, while at the same time transforming it. In the Eucharist, bread and wine - fruit of the earth and of human hands - are shown to have a second, or deeper, origin than simply the soil in which they grew.

Our usual ways of thinking about this have been challenged in a radical way by the artist John Newling in his use of hydroponic (soil-less) techniques for growing grapes for eucharistic use. Such a wine has 'no earthly origin': it therefore must stimulate meditation on how the Eucharist can cross territorial boundaries - and, indeed, open up ethical questions about our use of land and water.

Are we guests amongst the vines?

### Scripture

*While they were eating, Jesus took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he broke it, gave it to the disciples, and said, 'Take, eat; this is my body.' Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, saying, 'Drink from it, all of you; for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. I tell you, I will never again drink of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.'*

Matt 26.26-29

The third Study Session brought together two fascinating figures from the art world: the installation artist John Newling, and the art historian Andrew Spira.

### The contributors:

**John Newling** has an international reputation and has installed works across Europe and the USA. He was awarded the first Fulbright Fellowship in Visual Art in 1985. He lives in Nottingham where he is currently Professor of Installation Sculpture at The Nottingham Trent University, and his recent projects include the award-winning Chatham Vines, and projects for the Inland Revenue, Worcester Cathedral and the Post Office. [www.john-newling.com/about](http://www.john-newling.com/about)

**Andrew Spira** is Course Director in Fine and Decorative Arts at Christie's Education, London. He holds degrees from the Courtauld Institute of Art and City University, London. He was a curator at the Victoria and Albert Museum where he published on ceremonial silver, ecclesiastical pewter and sacred

metal work. He is an expert on the history of Russian icons and has published catalogues on Early Christian and Byzantine and Russian sacred art. His latest book is on the modern Russian icon: 'The Avant-Garde Icon, Russian Avant-Garde Art and the Icon Painting Tradition'.

## Chatham Vines

This was an installation made in response to an invitation from Chatham Council. John Newling wanted to do something which reflected his sense that *'we are guests on this planet'*. The disused church St John's was identified, and seemed doubly suitable for this as it was not only abandoned but also physically isolated by a reorganised road system. Newling's idea was to grow a 30m pinot noir vineyard down the nave of the church, hydroponically - ie, in water. This had never been attempted before.



The project lasted a little over a year. It was indoor growing, with everything that would be needed in the natural environment artificially controlled - this used technology developed by NASA in the 50s. It was observed through internet cameras. The atmosphere was enriched by the fact that the church building itself seemed abandoned, as though occupants had left a room without tidying up. There was *'a palpable ontology of loss'*.

The project proceeded at speed. *'We were awestruck - the vines grew approximately 3.5m in the first two weeks'*. And the 'mechanism' of the growing was fascinating, as was the actual sound of the vines growing, which you could capture.

A big decision was made in the November: to leapfrog winter and go straight to spring conditions. You could do this by controlling the hours of light. New growth happened, and then Newling felt very bad: and so they restored winter (12/12 light), *'to let them have the winter they should have had'*. This was *'a transforming moment'*, he said. They were no longer just admiring the mechanical operation, but felt awe and respect, feeling like *'guests of the vines'*.

During the life of the project the vines were blessed, and two services were held in the church, seen by thousands on the internet cameras. This was all part of the intention of making wine for the Easter Day Eucharist at Rochester Cathedral.

In March they moved up to Spring conditions, and the response was *'amazing'* - and all this was remarkable, as grapes had never been grown this way before. Flowers came. They weren't allowed to bring bees in, so had to do the pollination by hand - thousands of flowers, very painstaking. When the first grapes came, it was *'a sublime moment'*.

Then one summer weekend came, the hottest on record. It was also the only weekend they had all taken a rest and didn't check the vines. All the grapes went to raisins. They hoped that *'plant-shock'* would work - ie when a plant rescues itself after a shock. They took off all the grapes and the scorched leaves (which can't do photosynthesis). Within two weeks growth had happened, through to the production of grapes. *'A miracle'*, *'unfathomable'* - so said the particularly agnostic member of the team!

So it was that wine was made for Easter Morning service at Rochester Cathedral, the Easter Vigil. This was a remarkable, transforming event for John Newling himself, who had never experienced it before (and who wasn't a Christian believer in the traditional sense). He received communion for the first time; *'not because it was Chatham Vines, but because I'd learned so much from Chatham Vines'*. This wine was unique because it had no provenance in the normal sense. This was transformation which had no origin in the earth's usual eco-system.

John Newling agreed with a comment by Andrew Spira that the vines were like a congregation themselves, which went on to become the wine - so the images of the project suggest. Visually they interacted with what was in the church (odd robes left lying around etc), and had an independence of their own. The visitors and the vines themselves all underwent transforming experiences.

## Icons

Andrew Spira gave a brief account of how we might understand icons. They are *'sacred objects that have a visual dimension'*, indeed have a sacramental character. Importantly we shouldn't read what we now say about Art back into the past. It is anachronistic to call icons works of art. One way to think of the creation of an icon is *'not so much one thing changing into another, as the same thing changing in form'*. We can't conceive of matter separate from its manifestation in some form or other. So for icons, they are like *'an endless sequence of forms of the same sanctity'*.

There were great arguments about icons and iconoclasm in the Byzantine church in the 7<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> centuries. Eventually the decision was reached that icons were theologically legitimate expressions of the divine. They refuted accusations of idolatry.

The Iconophiles prevailed, then, and had to develop a formal theology of icons. Because God the Father chose to incarnate himself as God the Son, this was the precedent for the '*materialisation of divinity*': an elaboration of, or extension of, the Incarnation itself. And so an icon is sacramental: it does not conform to western ideas of a work of art being, say, commemorative or narrative.

Many icon images have traditional origins, authorising and sanctifying the image - eg Luke painting the Virgin from life, and her blessing it: this allowed the image to recur in icons of it ever since.

Important to this is that icon painters were perpetuating a tradition, not inventing. As in the Eucharist, they were celebrating a fact that is already accomplished. This was therefore about 'technical agency', facilitating a tradition, in which the sacredness resides.

Unlike artists from the 16<sup>th</sup> century west, for example, icon painters were not expressing themselves. This, and ideas of 'originality' and 'innovation' are wholly alien - indeed heretical in the Eastern tradition. Hence the very limited range of icon images. This was the opposite of illumination traditions in the west. There are only about twenty images of the biblical narratives, for example, in iconography.

[Leaders will want to bring illustrated examples of icons if they are to be the subject of your discussion.]

## Themes and questions for discussion

### **Alienation**

We receive the elements in the Eucharist in forms which seem a long way from their growing origins (wafers/wheat, wine/grapes). Paradoxically, with such non-traditional growing, the connection was powerfully re-established by Chatham Vines, at least for some. (Incidentally, the St John's vines were all taken away and planted successfully in people's gardens.)

How do you react to this? What do you make of the evident passion which was inspired by the project in its creators, when the growing process was so unusual?

What implications does this have for our understanding of bread and wine? Does it matter that they *are* bread and wine?

Does their eucharistic use make us think differently of the processes of growth and manufacture?

### **Relating**

There was clearly an intense involvement, a *relating*, in the Chatham Vines project. There was, to quote a participant in the Study Session, '*solicitude, care, unintended neglect, the possibility of redemption (the regrowth), consummation (in the Eucharist at the Easter Vigil).. and then leaving to go onto another thing*'. This was not just about material transformations, but also strongly about the relationships of those involved with the material and each other. Something comparable happens with icons, in the enabling of a relationship with the saint in the icon. This is all very different from observing red wax being shot across the Royal Academy...

Do you share this view? Apart from Chatham Vines being a fascinating project in itself, do you find these various aspects *theologically* interesting?

### **Transformation of a building**

Chatham Vines seemed to effect a transformation on the building itself. It had been sad and abandoned, and the project itself changed this - people visited, especially those who had been married there; or those who were interested in the technology of the growing. Ultimately the Council decided not to convert it into council offices, as previously planned, but into artists' and recording studios.

What is your experience of sacred place? How does what happens in a place change it? Can a 'sacred space' retain its sacredness for a long time, even when abandoned?

### **Ritual**

In the Eucharist the change in the bread and wine (however we describe that) is achieved by ritual, in a deliberate and non-accidental way. How important do you think that is?

For John Newling, ritual is key to human balance in every sphere. In the Eucharist, he said, the ritual seems to have a powerful sense of the transformation which goes all the way from soil to 'blood' (ie it has begun before the Eucharist itself). And ritual has its origins in the generative patterns of nature, which go on and on.

Do you agree?

Andrew Spira suggested that ritual, as in icon painting is more about '*sustaining a state of communion*' than '*transmitting a unit of information*'. It is like a piece of music: you want to hear it again - why? It has its own '*communicative dynamic*'.

Do you share this sense of the importance of ritual?

How is church ritual fundamentally different from others (such as the order we do things in, or warm ups before sports and all the rest)?

### **Art**

How important is art in your faith? - and in your experience of church worship?

Do you worry about idolatry?

Do you pray with icons? If so, can you describe the experience?

## Prayer

*As the grain from which the bread we break was made  
were once scattered over the fields,  
and then gathered together and made one,  
so may your Church be gathered from all over the earth  
into your kingdom.*

The Didache (1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> century)

## Night Prayer (Compline)

The Lord almighty grant us a quiet night and a perfect end.  
**Amen**

Our help is in the name of the Lord  
who made heaven and earth.

Most merciful God,  
we confess to you,  
before the whole company of heaven and one another,  
that we have sinned in thought, word and deed  
and in what we have failed to do.  
Forgive us our sins,  
heal us by your Spirit  
and raise us to new life in Christ. Amen.

O God, make speed to save us.  
O Lord, make haste to help us.

Glory to the Father and to the Son  
and to the Holy Spirit;  
as it was in the beginning is now  
and shall be for ever. Amen.  
Alleluia.

*A hymn is sung*

*The following psalm is said, in alternating verses.*

*Psalm 134*

1 Come, bless the Lord, all you servants of the Lord, •  
you that by night stand in the house of the Lord.

2 Lift up your hands towards the sanctuary •  
and bless the Lord.

3 The Lord who made heaven and earth •  
give you blessing out of Zion.

Glory to the Father and to the Son  
and to the Holy Spirit;  
as it was in the beginning is now  
and shall be for ever. Amen.

*The following short lesson or another suitable passage is read*

The servants of the Lamb shall see the face of God, whose name will be on their foreheads. There will be no more night: they will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for God will be their light, and they will reign for ever and ever.  
*Revelation 22.4,5*

*The following responsory is said*

Into your hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit.  
**Into your hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit.**  
For you have redeemed me, Lord God of truth.  
**I commend my spirit.**  
Glory to the Father and to the Son  
and to the Holy Spirit.  
**Into your hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit.**

Keep me as the apple of your eye.  
**Hide me under the shadow of your wings.**

*The Nunc Dimittis (The Song of Simeon) is said*

**Christ died for us,  
so that, whether we wake or sleep,  
we might live with him.**

1 Now, Lord, you let your servant go in peace:  
your word has been fulfilled.

**2 My own eyes have seen the salvation  
which you have prepared in the sight of every people;**

3 A light to reveal you to the nations  
and the glory of your people Israel.

**Glory to the Father and to the Son  
and to the Holy Spirit;  
as it was in the beginning is now  
and shall be for ever. Amen.**

**Christ died for us,  
so that, whether we wake or sleep,  
we might live with him.**

*Intercessions and thanksgivings.*

*The Collect*

Eternal God,  
give us insight  
to discern your will for us,

to give up what harms us,  
and to seek the perfection we are promised  
in Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen**

*Silence may be kept.*

Visit this place, O Lord, we pray,  
and drive far from it the snares of the enemy;  
may your holy angels dwell with us and guard us in peace,  
and may your blessing be always upon us;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

*The Lord's Prayer is said.*

In peace we will lie down and sleep;  
for you alone, Lord, make us dwell in safety.

Abide with us, Lord Jesus,  
for the night is at hand and the day is now past.

As the night watch looks for the morning,  
so do we look for you, O Christ.

May God bless us,  
that in us may be found love and humility,  
obedience and thanksgiving,  
discipline, gentleness and peace.

**Amen.**

## Week Four - People, Communities and Ethics transforming

Christian worship takes place in remembrance of the sacrifice of Christ and in the power of the resurrection of Christ. These are transforming events of cosmic proportions, which make possible hitherto unimaginable possibilities for living - living without fear of death, in radical forms of generosity and self-giving.

How does Christ's example, and the new ways of living that he gives to the Church, challenge the 'common-sense' assumptions of individuals, communities and states? What do they mean for our moral life, for the ethics of our life in common?

### Scripture

*The bread that we break, is it not a sharing in the body of Christ?  
Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we  
all partake of one bread.* 1 Cor 10.16

In the fourth Study Session two young Church of England priests led a discussion about the ethical implications of the Eucharist.

### The contributors:

**Julie Gittoes** is Vicar of All Saints, Hampton, in the Kensington Area of the Diocese of London. She read theology at Durham University before training for ordination at Westcott House and Selwyn College, Cambridge. Her doctoral research focused on the theological understanding of the Eucharist within the Anglican tradition. 'Anamnesis and the Eucharist: Contemporary Anglican Approaches' was published by Ashgate in 2008. She is actively involved in The Society for the Study of Theology.

**Matt Bullimore** was born and brought up in Dewsbury, West Yorkshire. He read theology as a first degree and, after postgraduate study at Harvard, Manchester and Cambridge, he prepared for ordination at Westcott House in Cambridge. He was Assistant Curate in the parishes of Roberttown and Hartshead back in his home diocese of Wakefield. He is now Domestic Chaplain to the Bishop of Wakefield.

### Between giving and thanksgiving: the eucharistic life

Here is an extract from Matthew Bullimore's paper 'People, Communities and Ethics transforming':

*Church is not a place. The Church is a gift. It is something handed on to us, something we receive. If the Church 'is' anywhere, it is to be found where the Eucharist is celebrated. In the Eucharist, the giver (Christ) is in the gift (the gift of his body and blood) and it is given to us so that we can become the body of Christ. The recipients become the giver by way of the gift. We receive Christ's life and we seek to live out his life in the world. The Eucharist transforms us into a Christ-like community who enact again his life in the world.*

*The life of the Church, then, is about receiving an event - the event of Christ. The life of the Church is then about re-performing that event. This life is a series of events - a series of acts of charity through time. If you wanted to describe the Church fully - an infinite task - then you wouldn't just start mentioning canon law, establishment, the Archbishop of Canterbury and the General Synod. You would actually have to start telling millions of interweaving stories of acts of love and service which together make up the event of the Church.*

*This reception of the event of Christ is ritually performed - as St Paul reminds us. If you cannot celebrate the Lord's supper well - if you cannot perform it in your actual real-life dealings with one another - then you obscure it (1 Cor 11). If we are unworthy in the way we perform this action - if we divide ourselves up and start to let worldly political distinctions like status and rank and race become important - then we have failed to be Eucharistic people. Paul is unnervingly realist about us being the body of Christ and all that means:*

*The bread that we break, is it not a sharing in the body of Christ? Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of one bread. (1 Cor 10.16f)*

*This makes us partners with and in Christ. That is why partnering ourselves with demons - whether real or imagined - or giving our members over to unloving relationships - replaces partnership with Christ. If we fail to perform his life well by being one with, and in, him then we are not rearticulating his earthly life - we are not being Christ in the world. It is letting the Flesh rather than the Spirit be our guide.*

*Paul's collection for the poor in Jerusalem is one excellent example of what it means to be Eucharistic people. Paul's concern to help the Jerusalem poor builds up the church by encouraging acts of charity and bringing diverse communities into contact. Paul's crucial point is this:*

*For you know the generous act of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich. (2 Cor 8.9)*

*Paul wants the Corinthians to give because they have experienced in their lives the generosity of God in Jesus Christ. He became poor through dereliction, by suffering and dying, so that disobedient humanity might become God's new people. Paul is saying that we give because this makes us Christ-like. This is the kind of performance which recapitulates Christ's life. Christ transforms us into what he is by becoming what we are.*

*To give is to join in his life of self-giving. Yet, it's more interestingly complex still. Paul explains that giving leads to thanksgiving to God. If you bless others with your gift then they will praise God because of what you have done. Giving leads to praise and so to Eucharistic life - to thanksgiving. The recipients of your gift will repay you by praying for you and by giving thanks for you.*

*Those who were far off become friends and neighbours. What happens is that the body of Christ is built up. We are built up more and more into a unity. Thus the more we give, the more the church is built up as a grace-filled solidarity. So, for Paul, the Collection for Jerusalem - comprising giving and mutual service - is a very mundane way of participating in the grace of God because it helped the givers to become more like Christ.*

## **Themes and questions for discussion**

### **Belonging and eucharistic hospitality**

As in the second session, the question of eucharistic hospitality arose.

Julie Gittoes wondered whether it might help to think not only of the community participating together but also of how receiving communion places an obligation on you in terms of mission.

Might this reflect back on how we view eucharistic hospitality? - that the obligation created by receiving communion makes it a good idea to have a sense of being ready/prepared to receive?

Can we also derive some wisdom from Wesley's description of the Eucharist as a 'converting ordinance'?

Someone new to church could initially receive at the altar, and then if (s)he is exploring deeper commitment, communion is withheld while (s)he is prepared, say, for confirmation. In this we see a movement: from the converting ordinance, to a place for church order, then on to full communion. Does this strike you as a good approach?

There is surely a vital part to be played by teaching, catechesis: can the desire to receive communion help energise the teaching of faith and discipleship?

Then there is the Eastern Orthodox/ancient practice of actual exclusion ('the doors, the doors!'): a very different way of thinking about eucharistic hospitality. How would this work today? Could it be done in such a way that

people were deeply and genuinely curious about what was going on while they were excluded? Or, in the absence of a cultural appreciation of the importance of communion, would this be disastrous?

The newly-minted eucharistic prayers for when children are present (in significant numbers) make us think about this too. Maybe children want to receive because they enjoy the drama of what happens? - rather than from getting every nuance of the text.

What does our attitude to children receiving communion say about our eucharistic life? - about our shared moral values?

Does eucharistic hospitality also depend on circumstances? - eg in a community which meets weekly, or at a special event, or at a special time of the year, or in a situation of pastoral significance (such as a confirmation service in a prison chapel)?

What if John Newling had been refused communion on Easter morning?!

### **The Peace**

Does this help build a community of loving service? In other words, is it more than just a nice moment?

For Julie Gittoes, Christ participates in this, we encounter him in a specific way. In the Peace he empowers us to go and be loving servants. This is more substantial than just an exhortation to certain ways of behaving, in the course of the service. Do you agree with this?

### **Specific demands on us**

Does the Eucharist demand some specific things of us? For instance, physical well-being and health (our own and others'); or when it comes to bread as food - we can't eat and then leave the starving at our doorsteps; or meeting other people's needs; or artistic needs - in the art of the liturgy, encountering glory suggests we should promote and/or create beauty in the rest of life.

### **Ethical issues in the world at large**

St Paul is clear that within the church (in the eucharistic community) there is no difference between slave and master. But he doesn't conclude that this meant slavery was wrong in the world at large. It took the Church a long time to decide this. Why was this?

How is our belief in what the Eucharist can bring about in terms of the moral life challenged by the fact that the Quakers, who have no priests or Eucharist, were among the first to challenge, for example, slavery?

### **Prayer-poem**

*Love bade me welcome, yet my soul drew back,  
Guilty of dust and sin.*

*But quick-ey'd Love, observing me grow slack  
From my first entrance in,  
Drew nearer to me, sweetly questioning  
If I lack'd anything.*

*"A guest," I answer'd, "worthy to be here";  
Love said, "You shall be he."  
"I, the unkind, the ungrateful? ah my dear,  
I cannot look on thee."  
Love took my hand and smiling did reply,  
"Who made the eyes but I?"*

*"Truth, Lord, but I have marr'd them; let my shame  
Go where it doth deserve."  
"And know you not," says Love, "who bore the blame?"  
"My dear, then I will serve."  
"You must sit down," says Love, "and taste my meat."  
So I did sit and eat.*

George Herbert (1593-1633)

## **Transforming Lives: ALMA's Children**

### **The ALMA Lent Appeal**

This is a concrete opportunity for all of us in the Diocese of London to live eucharistically: giving arising out of thanksgiving.

The Diocese of London 2010 Lent Appeal will replenish the ALMA's Children fund which supports projects targeted at helping the young. These projects are identified by our partners in Angola and Mozambique and have transformed the lives of children like the young boy watering the cabbages in his school garden. Prior to 2007 there was no school. Neither was there water. Daily life, before the ALMA's children Chihunzuine project, involved a long trek to fetch water. Now a solar powered pump draws water from the 100 metre borehole into storage tanks and the new school flourishes - like the children and the vegetables.

### **Lent Appeal Prayer**

*Lord God in this season of Lent we offer our lives to you:  
plough the hard ground of our souls and bodies.  
Plant a new spirit in us, so we better love and serve your world,  
so we truly become one body sharing one bread.  
May the friendships between Angola, London and Mozambique  
transform us all and bring your kingdom on earth  
a little closer to your kingdom in heaven;  
especially for the sake of the little children so precious to Jesus.*

**The Bishop of London writes:**

*Dear Friends,*

*During Lent 2010 as we explore the Transformative nature of the Gospel here in London, may I encourage you to use your Lenten journey to be agents of transformation in our partner dioceses of Angola and Mozambique. Since 1999 ALMA's Children has been enabling this to happen, and in 2010 we hope to raise £70,000 to enable our partners to scale up this vital work. Unlike the UK where the average age is 40, it is overwhelmingly young in Mozambique (17) and Angola (18). Furthermore one in three of these young people do not receive a primary education. The call on our partners to guide and mentor their young, and be Jesus to them is a real and present challenge.*

*Our challenge in London this Lent, as we seek to live the Gospel of Jesus Christ as one body in the one bread alongside a Eucharistic understanding of the fruits of creation, is to live in a transformed and transforming way - a way that gives life to others and to our planet.*

*I'm hoping this Lent that you will join me as congregations, individuals, families, schools and workplaces so that together we*

- Make one permanent change to reduce our carbon footprint*
- Give up a small luxury for the duration of Lent*
- Donate the savings we make*
- Donate one Lenten Sunday collection to this Lent Appeal*

*May all our Lenten journeys be truly transformative.*

More information: [www.london.anglican.org](http://www.london.anglican.org) and [www.almalink.org](http://www.almalink.org)  
ALMA: linking Anglican churches in Angola, London and Mozambique

ALMA, London Diocesan House, 36 Causton St, London SW1P 4AU

## Night Prayer (Compline)

The Lord almighty grant us a quiet night and a perfect end.

Amen

Our help is in the name of the Lord  
who made heaven and earth.

Most merciful God,  
we confess to you,  
before the whole company of heaven and one another,  
that we have sinned in thought, word and deed  
and in what we have failed to do.  
Forgive us our sins,  
heal us by your Spirit  
and raise us to new life in Christ. Amen.

O God, make speed to save us.  
O Lord, make haste to help us.

Glory to the Father and to the Son  
and to the Holy Spirit;  
as it was in the beginning is now  
and shall be for ever. Amen.  
Alleluia.

*A hymn is sung*

*The following psalm is said, in alternating verses.*

*Psalm 4*

1 Answer me when I call, O God of my righteousness; •  
you set me at liberty when I was in trouble;  
have mercy on me and hear my prayer.

2 How long will you nobles dishonour my glory; •  
how long will you love vain things and seek after falsehood?

3 But know that the Lord has shown me his marvellous kindness; •  
when I call upon the Lord, he will hear me.

4 Stand in awe, and sin not; •  
commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still.

5 Offer the sacrifices of righteousness •  
and put your trust in the Lord.

**6** There are many that say, 'Who will show us any good?' •  
Lord, lift up the light of your countenance upon us.

**7** You have put gladness in my heart, •  
more than when their corn and wine and oil increase.

**8** In peace I will lie down and sleep, •  
for it is you Lord, only, who make me dwell in safety.

**Glory to the Father and to the Son  
and to the Holy Spirit;  
as it was in the beginning is now  
and shall be for ever. Amen.**

*The following short lesson or another suitable passage is read*

Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover them, and not to hide yourself from your own kin? *Isaiah 58. 6,7*

*The following responsory is said*

Into your hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit.  
**Into your hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit.**  
For you have redeemed me, Lord God of truth.  
**I commend my spirit.**  
Glory to the Father and to the Son  
and to the Holy Spirit.  
**Into your hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit.**

Keep me as the apple of your eye.  
**Hide me under the shadow of your wings.**

*The Nunc Dimittis (The Song of Simeon) is said*

**Christ died for us,  
so that, whether we wake or sleep,  
we might live with him.**

**1** Now, Lord, you let your servant go in peace:  
your word has been fulfilled.

**2** My own eyes have seen the salvation  
which you have prepared in the sight of every people;

**3** A light to reveal you to the nations  
and the glory of your people Israel.

Glory to the Father and to the Son  
and to the Holy Spirit;  
as it was in the beginning is now  
and shall be for ever. Amen.

Christ died for us,  
so that, whether we wake or sleep,  
we might live with him.

*Intercessions and thanksgivings.*

*The Collect*

Merciful Lord,  
you know our struggle to serve you:  
when sin spoils our lives  
and overshadows our hearts,  
come to our aid  
and turn us back to you again;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen**

*Silence may be kept.*

Visit this place, O Lord, we pray,  
and drive far from it the snares of the enemy;  
may your holy angels dwell with us and guard us in peace,  
and may your blessing be always upon us;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

*The Lord's Prayer is said.*

In peace we will lie down and sleep;  
for you alone, Lord, make us dwell in safety.

Abide with us, Lord Jesus,  
for the night is at hand and the day is now past.

As the night watch looks for the morning,  
so do we look for you, O Christ.

May God bless us,  
that in us may be found love and humility,  
obedience and thanksgiving,  
discipline, gentleness and peace.

**Amen.**

## Week Five - Time transforming

All creatures live in time. Human beings in particular must structure their lives in relation to time, through memory and expectation. In this way, they seek to give unity and sense to the 'spread-out-ness' of their lives, and to understand their place in larger movements of history that reach backwards and forwards over generations.

The presence of God in history, through the activity of the Holy Spirit and especially through the Spirit-inspired practices of the Church, gives Christians a transformed relation to time. They can understand their place in it in wholly new ways. Their activity of memory can become specifically an attitude of praise for past mercies; their activity of expectation can become specifically an attitude of hope.

How might *music* give us insights into this new and transformed sense of time?

### Scripture

*With all wisdom and insight he has made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure that he set forth in Christ, as a plan for the fullness of time, to gather up all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. In Christ we have also obtained an inheritance, having been destined according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to his counsel and will, so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ, might live for the praise of his glory.*

Ephesians 1.8b-12

In the final Study Session, Jeremy Begbie - priest, theologian and musician - introduced his ideas about how we might think about time and liturgy by analogy with how music works. These are ideas which have been extremely well-received. He delivers them in characteristic energetic style, which is impossible to reproduce in

a summary here. We hope you get the basic thrust, however.



**Jeremy Begbie** is Thomas A. Langford Research Professor of Theology at Duke Divinity School in the USA, specializing in the interface between theology and the arts. Previously Associate Principal of Ridley Hall, Cambridge, he has also been Honorary Professor at the University of St Andrew's. A trained musician, he has performed extensively as a pianist, oboist and conductor. He is an ordained minister of the Church of England. His books include 'Voicing

Creation's Praise: Towards a Theology of the Arts'; 'Theology, Music and Time', and most recently, 'Resounding Truth: Christian Wisdom in the World of Music', which won the Christianity Today 2008 Book Award in the Theology/Ethics Category.

Jeremy Begbie suggested a fascinating way of thinking about the Eucharist by comparing it to the way we experience music. For the purposes of the argument he was talking about western European music. At its heart this is about the way in which music enables us to relate to time: it does this in a rich, perhaps unique way, which in turn helps us understand the way our eucharistic celebrations work in time.

### **Music's time (1): 'music pulls you forward and pulls you in'**

Music has a dynamic life. It goes from *equilibrium*, through *tension*, to *resolution*. We hear this most obviously in classical music in a common pattern: where one subject is introduced, then another, then their 'clash' is resolved. We can also hear it in specific chords (three or four notes played together), some of which have the quality of leaving you dangling, and need to be 'resolved'. A theological analogy of this is the movement from Eden (equilibrium) through Fall (tension) to Redemption in Christ (resolution).

Music also has emotionally determining power: compare two tunes for the same hymn, which can give very different undertow to the text. Eg 'What a friend we have in Jesus' - there is the traditional tune (Erie), but how about singing it to 'Ebenezer'?

### **Music's time (2): 'music invites you to live on many levels'**

You can imagine a great overarching wave (as on a graph), representing the whole sweep from beginning to end; but also lots of different sets of repeating waves underneath, especially in terms of *metre*, the subdivision of music into units (usually 'bars') which have an emphasised first beat. These can be changed or even sharply interrupted to great effect, creating tension which then needs to be resolved.

### **In and through the Eucharist:**

#### **'We are drawn into a movement of time-transformation'**

Music *takes* time: ie it happens in time. It is not just that it has duration or rhythm, but it relates to rhythm patterns in our body or in the world. Think of a lullaby, rocking and slow.

Music *shapes* time: it takes something like the rocking motion associated with a lullaby and 'cleans it up', makes it more formal.

Music *takes us* into time: with its own metre and harmony it draws us in, and we get caught up in it.

#### **Thus in terms of the Eucharist**

We see a parallel in the Incarnation, for which we give thanks, where God comes to live *in time*.

Sin can be seen as a *fracturing* of past, present and future: in these terms, salvation is a *reintegration*. The Cross, the Passion, lie at the heart of the Eucharist. It is there that we become as one, and with reference to the past and with a foretaste of the future.

In the Eucharist then we are drawn into the drama of God's real-time engagement in the and with the world; and this is helpfully understood in musical terms. Music helps us *live in time*: and as Christians, with our coming from a past and hope for the future, we cannot be living in timelessness.

**And so**

**'We are drawn into a movement of enriching repetition'**

This means that we have a particular kind of memory and anticipation, which is richer than a simple linear idea of time might suggest.

The linear model of time means that we think only things 'in my present' can be said 'to exist'. Realness and relevance can only be about the now, on this way of thinking. The past gets further and further away.

The way we sense time in music, where what has gone by and what is coming are caught up together, is a good way of thinking of our place in time as experienced (meant) in the Eucharist.

This means, in Begbie's phraseology, we don't need either the 'catholic tendency' - prolonging the past by 're-presenting the Sacrifice'; or the 'protestant tendency' - simply recalling the events of the past.

**Instead....**

**'Music conveys an intense experience of time in which past, present and future interweave'**

We relate to the past and to the future from the present we are in at any moment; and in a way where the whole sweep from past to future is held together and connected as it is when we are listening to a piece of music.

And this is like what happens in the Eucharist, properly understood.

As in music, what has passed (in music, previous 'beats') is needed to make sense of a particular point we happen to be at. Past events do not become 'ever more distant'. 'We remember as if we were there'.

Compare the Jewish understanding of Passover: for them it is not just a repeating or a prolonging of those seminal events, but a kind of 'we were there'.

And future events 'can be sensed now'. As with the dynamic progression of music, we are 'pulled forward' - especially in anticipation of resolution, a sense which can be very strong in music. Tasting the future in the Eucharist is a gift of the Holy Spirit.

**‘We are drawn into a movement of enriching repetition’.**

It is enriching and rich because it happens in a multi-layered way. In many pieces of music there are layers of repeated phrases (eg in the opening of Beethoven’s Pastoral Symphony). They enrich rather than bore us!

BUT! - we have to be careful in the Eucharist not to go stale or flat: a sense of improvisation is a good thing, as in music - what the poet Peter Riley calls ‘the exploration of occasion’.

**‘God comes to us in the Eucharist and ‘re-times’ us, so that we can go into the world with hope’.**

## **Themes and questions for discussion**

If you haven’t encountered this way of thinking about time, especially in relation to the Eucharist, you will probably want to discuss the ideas as they progress in the summary above. That could certainly take up a whole discussion session!

Here are some suggested topics/questions:

Does this make sense to you, this way of thinking about music? Does it match your sense of how time is experienced when listening to music? How do the ‘beats’ in music, which help anchor you, match what we experience, especially in the Eucharist. Is there such a ‘pulse’?

How do you imagine the beginning and end points in Begbie’s image of the overarching, single wave going from equilibrium to resolution, via tension? In music, we can think of the equilibrium as the state before the music starts - which is silence! - and resolution as the point it reaches. But is that also silence, or a kind of extension of the resolved state we have arrived at in the music? And in what ways is the state we’ve arrived at different from the original equilibrium? - compare then the theological analogy, from Eden to redemption!

What have been your experiences of tension and resolution? - in music, but also in other contexts? What does time *feel like* in those contexts?

Are there particular hymns and hymn tunes which affect you? And how do you feel about hymns which are regularly sung to alternative tunes? Examples might be ‘At the name of Jesus’ and ‘O Jesus I have promised’.

Do you agree with Begbie’s characterisation of the ‘catholic’ and ‘protestant’ tendencies? Or do you think there is more to how we relate to the past, to the saving acts of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist?

How do you understand the role of memory in the Eucharist, the remembering of Christ’s saving work? Can you think of other contexts where a story is retold (maybe very often, like family stories) - do they have a ‘feel’

which is more than just recollection? Do they have emotional or spiritual content?

## Note for course leaders

This is the session which might need the most preparation by a course leader. It will help a great deal if you can have musical examples, by working with one of your own musicians, ideally a keyboard player.

A musician will be able to give illustrations of what Jeremy Begbie is talking about - such as tension and resolution; the relationship between different elements of structure, especially metre and rhythm; and the way different tunes can evoke very different atmospheres for the same words, in hymns. An organist will know some good examples of this, in addition to those mentioned above.

## Prayer

*Dear God, here on earth you are constantly seeking to change us. At times we wish to flee into the wilderness to avoid you. But let us learn to love the lasting things of heaven, rather than the dying things of earth. We must accept that time always brings change; and we pray that by your grace the change within our souls will make us worthy of your heavenly kingdom, where all time will cease.*

Alcuin of York (c735-804)

## Night Prayer (Compline)

The Lord almighty grant us a quiet night and a perfect end.  
Amen

Our help is in the name of the Lord  
who made heaven and earth.

Most merciful God,  
we confess to you,  
before the whole company of heaven and one another,  
that we have sinned in thought, word and deed  
and in what we have failed to do.  
Forgive us our sins,  
heal us by your Spirit  
and raise us to new life in Christ. Amen.

O God, make speed to save us.  
O Lord, make haste to help us.

Glory to the Father and to the Son  
and to the Holy Spirit;  
as it was in the beginning is now  
and shall be for ever. Amen.  
Alleluia.

*A hymn is sung*

*The following psalm is said, in alternating verses.*

*Psalm 91*

1 Whoever dwells in the shelter of the Most High •  
and abides under the shadow of the Almighty,

2 Shall say to the Lord, 'My refuge and my stronghold, •  
my God, in whom I put my trust.'

3 For he shall deliver you from the snare of the fowler •  
and from the deadly pestilence.

4 He shall cover you with his wings  
and you shall be safe under his feathers; •  
his faithfulness shall be your shield and buckler.

5 You shall not be afraid of any terror by night, •  
nor of the arrow that flies by day;

**6 Of the pestilence that stalks in darkness, •  
nor of the sickness that destroys at noonday.**

7 Though a thousand fall at your side  
and ten thousand at your right hand, •  
yet it shall not come near you.

**8 Your eyes have only to behold •  
to see the reward of the wicked.**

9 Because you have made the Lord your refuge •  
and the Most High your stronghold,

**10 There shall no evil happen to you, •  
neither shall any plague come near your tent.**

11 For he shall give his angels charge over you, •  
to keep you in all your ways.

**12 They shall bear you in their hands, •  
lest you dash your foot against a stone.**

13 You shall tread upon the lion and adder; •  
the young lion and the serpent you shall trample underfoot.

**14 Because they have set their love upon me,  
therefore will I deliver them; •  
I will lift them up, because they know my name.**

15 They will call upon me and I will answer them; •  
I am with them in trouble,  
I will deliver them and bring them to honour.

**16 With long life will I satisfy them •  
and show them my salvation.**

**Glory to the Father and to the Son  
and to the Holy Spirit;  
as it was in the beginning is now  
and shall be for ever. Amen.**

*The following short lesson or another suitable passage is read*

Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover them, and not to hide yourself from your own kin?

*Isaiah 58. 6,7*

*The following responsory is said*

Into your hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit.  
**Into your hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit.**  
For you have redeemed me, Lord God of truth.  
**I commend my spirit.**  
Glory to the Father and to the Son  
and to the Holy Spirit.  
**Into your hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit.**

Keep me as the apple of your eye.  
**Hide me under the shadow of your wings.**

*The Nunc Dimittis (The Song of Simeon) is said*

Christ died for us,  
so that, whether we wake or sleep,  
we might live with him.

1 Now, Lord, you let your servant go in peace:  
your word has been fulfilled.

**2 My own eyes have seen the salvation  
which you have prepared in the sight of every people;**

3 A light to reveal you to the nations  
and the glory of your people Israel.

**Glory to the Father and to the Son  
and to the Holy Spirit;  
as it was in the beginning is now  
and shall be for ever. Amen.**

Christ died for us,  
so that, whether we wake or sleep,  
we might live with him.

*Intercessions and thanksgivings.*

*The Collect*

Gracious Father,  
you gave up your Son  
out of love for the world:  
lead us to ponder the mysteries of his passion,  
that we may know eternal peace  
through the shedding of our Saviour's blood,  
Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen**

*Silence may be kept.*

Visit this place, O Lord, we pray,  
and drive far from it the snares of the enemy;  
may your holy angels dwell with us and guard us in peace,  
and may your blessing be always upon us;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

*The Lord's Prayer is said.*

In peace we will lie down and sleep;  
**for you alone, Lord, make us dwell in safety.**

Abide with us, Lord Jesus,  
**for the night is at hand and the day is now past.**

As the night watch looks for the morning,  
**so do we look for you, O Christ.**

May God bless us,  
that in us may be found love and humility,  
obedience and thanksgiving,  
discipline, gentleness and peace.

**Amen.**

## APPENDIX: BIBLICAL RESOURCES

### (1) - the Eucharist

Matt 26.26-29

While they were eating, Jesus took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he broke it, gave it to the disciples, and said, 'Take, eat; this is my body.' Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, saying, 'Drink from it, all of you; for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. I tell you, I will never again drink of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.'

Mark 14.22-25

While they were eating, he took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he broke it, gave it to them, and said, 'Take; this is my body.' Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, and all of them drank from it. He said to them, 'This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many. Truly I tell you, I will never again drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God.'

Luke 22.14-20

When the hour came, he took his place at the table, and the apostles with him. He said to them, 'I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; for I tell you, I will not eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.' Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he said, 'Take this and divide it among yourselves; for I tell you that from now on I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.' Then he took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, 'This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.' And he did the same with the cup after supper, saying, 'This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood.'

I Cor 10.16-17 One bread, one body

The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a sharing in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a sharing in the body of Christ? Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread.

I Cor 11.17-33 The importance of the Eucharist

Now in the following instructions I do not commend you, because when you come together it is not for the better but for the worse. For, to begin with, when you come together as a church, I hear that there are divisions among you; and to some extent I believe it. Indeed, there have to be factions among you, for only so will it become clear who among you are genuine. When you come together, it is not really to eat the Lord's supper. For when the time comes to eat, each of you goes ahead with your own supper, and one goes hungry and another becomes drunk. What! Do you not have homes to eat and drink in? Or do you show contempt for the church of God and humiliate those who have nothing? What should I say to you? Should I commend you? In this matter I do not commend you!

For I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, 'This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.' In the same way he took the cup also, after supper, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.' For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be answerable for the body and blood of the Lord. Examine yourselves, and only then eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For all who eat and drink without discerning the body, eat and drink judgement against themselves. For this reason many of you are weak and ill, and some have died. But if we judged ourselves, we would not be judged. But when we are judged by the Lord, we are disciplined so that we may not be condemned along with the world.

See also

John 6.48-58 Eating the Bread of Life

I am the bread of life. Your ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die. I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats of this bread will live for ever; and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh.'

The Jews then disputed among themselves, saying, 'How can this man give us his flesh to eat?' So Jesus said to them, 'Very truly, I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood have eternal life, and I will raise them up on the last day; for my flesh is true food and my blood is true drink. Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me, and I in them. Just as the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever eats me will live because of me. This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like that which your ancestors ate, and they died. But the one who eats this bread will live for ever.'

Luke 24.30-35 The Emmaus Eucharist

When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him; and he vanished from their sight. They said to each other, 'Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?' That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem; and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together. They were saying, 'The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!' Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

and

Acts 2.46, 20.7,11, 27.35

## **(2) - The Conversion of Paul**

Acts 9.1-22

Meanwhile Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest and asked him for letters to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any who belonged to the Way, men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. Now as he was going along and approaching Damascus, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. He fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, 'Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?' He asked, 'Who are you, Lord?' The reply came, 'I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. But get up and enter the city, and you will be told what you are to do.' The men who were travelling with him stood speechless because they heard the voice but saw no one. Saul got up from the ground, and though his eyes were open, he could see nothing; so they led him by the

hand and brought him into Damascus. For three days he was without sight, and neither ate nor drank.

Now there was a disciple in Damascus named Ananias. The Lord said to him in a vision, 'Ananias.' He answered, 'Here I am, Lord.' The Lord said to him, 'Get up and go to the street called Straight, and at the house of Judas look for a man of Tarsus named Saul. At this moment he is praying, and he has seen in a vision a man named Ananias come in and lay his hands on him so that he might regain his sight.' But Ananias answered, 'Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much evil he has done to your saints in Jerusalem; and here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who invoke your name.' But the Lord said to him, 'Go, for he is an instrument whom I have chosen to bring my name before Gentiles and kings and before the people of Israel; I myself will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name.' So Ananias went and entered the house. He laid his hands on Saul and said, 'Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on your way here, has sent me so that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit.' And immediately something like scales fell from his eyes, and his sight was restored. Then he got up and was baptized, and after taking some food, he regained his strength.

For several days he was with the disciples in Damascus, and immediately he began to proclaim Jesus in the synagogues, saying, 'He is the Son of God.' All who heard him were amazed and said, 'Is not this the man who made havoc in Jerusalem among those who invoked this name? And has he not come here for the purpose of bringing them bound before the chief priests?' Saul became increasingly more powerful and confounded the Jews who lived in Damascus by proving that Jesus was the Messiah.

See also Acts 22 and 26; I Cor 15.8, Gal 1.15-16, Eph 3.2,7

### **(3) - Transformation in Paul**

#### **Romans**

*By chapter 8, after all the discussion of the Law and Grace, there is a strong sense of the 'now' and the 'not yet' (cp 8.15 and 8.23, on adoption)*

#### **12.1-2 Be transformed!**

I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect.

- cp Ps 51.10; II Cor 4.16; Eph 4.23; Titus 3.5

#### **I Corinthians**

#### **6.11 Washed**

And this is what some of you used to be. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God.

#### **12.4-11 Gifts of the Spirit**

Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, to

another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the discernment of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. All these are activated by one and the same Spirit, who allots to each one individually just as the Spirit chooses.

#### 14.12b **Response to Grace**

... since you are eager for spiritual gifts, strive to excel in them for building up the church.

#### 14.22-25 **An evangelistic imperative**

Tongues, then, are a sign not for believers but for unbelievers, while prophecy is not for unbelievers but for believers. If, therefore, the whole church comes together and all speak in tongues, and outsiders or unbelievers enter, will they not say that you are out of your mind? But if all prophesy, an unbeliever or outsider who enters is reproved by all and called to account by all. After the secrets of the unbeliever's heart are disclosed, that person will bow down before God and worship him, declaring, 'God is really among you.'

#### 15.8-10 **Response to Grace**

Last of all, as to someone untimely born, he appeared also to me. For I am the least of the apostles, unfit to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace towards me has not been in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them—though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me.

#### 15.42-58 **We shall all be changed: the final transformation**

So it is with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable, what is raised is imperishable. It is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. It is sown a physical body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a physical body, there is also a spiritual body. Thus it is written, 'The first man, Adam, became a living being'; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit. But it is not the spiritual that is first, but the physical, and then the spiritual. The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven. As was the man of dust, so are those who are of the dust; and as is the man of heaven, so are those who are of heaven. Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we will also bear the image of the man of heaven.

What I am saying, brothers and sisters, is this: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. Listen, I will tell you a mystery! We will not all die, but we will all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. For this perishable body must put on imperishability, and this mortal body must put on immortality. When this perishable body puts on imperishability, and this mortal body puts on immortality, then the saying that is written will be fulfilled:

'Death has been swallowed up in victory.'

'Where, O death, is your victory?

Where, O death, is your sting?'

The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved, be steadfast, immovable, always excelling in the work of the Lord, because you know that in the Lord your labour is not in vain.

## **II Corinthians**

#### 1.21-22 **Sealed with the Spirit**

But it is God who establishes us with you in Christ and has anointed us, by putting his seal on us and giving us his Spirit in our hearts as a first instalment.

### **3.12-18 From glory to glory**

Since, then, we have such a hope, we act with great boldness, not like Moses, who put a veil over his face to keep the people of Israel from gazing at the end of the glory that was being set aside. But their minds were hardened. Indeed, to this very day, when they hear the reading of the old covenant, that same veil is still there, since only in Christ is it set aside. Indeed, to this very day whenever Moses is read, a veil lies over their minds; but when one turns to the Lord, the veil is removed. Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And all of us, with unveiled faces, seeing the glory of the Lord as though reflected in a mirror, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord, the Spirit.

### **5.17-21 Our newness, and the ministry of reconciliation**

So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us. So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

## **Galatians**

### **4.4-6 Adoption**

But when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children. And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, 'Abba! Father!'

### **4.19 Formation**

My little children, for whom I am again in the pain of childbirth until Christ is formed in you...

## **Ephesians**

### **1.3-14 Adopted, lavished with grace**

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love. He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and insight he has made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure that he set forth in Christ, as a plan for the fullness of time, to gather up all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. In Christ we have also obtained an inheritance, having been destined according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to his counsel and will, so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ, might live for the praise of his glory. In him you also, when you had heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and had believed in him, were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit; this is the pledge of our inheritance towards redemption as God's own people, to the praise of his glory.

### **1.22-23, 2.21-22 Corporate transformation**

And he has put all things under his feet and has made him the head over all things for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all..  
... In him the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are built together spiritually into a dwelling-place for God.

#### **2.4-5, 10 Made alive with Christ**

But God, who is rich in mercy, out of the great love with which he loved us even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved... For we are what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life.

#### **4.22-24 Your new self**

You were taught to put away your former way of life, your old self, corrupt and deluded by its lusts, and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to clothe yourselves with the new self, created according to the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.

### **Philippians**

#### **2.12b-13 Enabled to will and work**

... work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

#### **4.18 A fragrant offering**

I am fully satisfied, now that I have received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent, a fragrant offering, a sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God.

- *cp Eph 5.1 (same phrase for Christ's own sacrifice); and Rom 12.1 ('present your bodies as a living sacrifice').*

### **Colossians**

#### **1.21-23 Don't abandon the reconciliation**

And you who were once estranged and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, he has now reconciled in his fleshly body through death, so as to present you holy and blameless and irreproachable before him— provided that you continue securely established and steadfast in the faith, without shifting from the hope promised by the gospel that you heard, which has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven...

#### **2.19 The body of the Church nourished**

... holding fast to the head, from whom the whole body, nourished and held together by its ligaments and sinews, grows with a growth that is from God.

- *and by each other as well as by God!*

#### **3.9-10 Clothed in newness**

... you have stripped off the old self with its practices and have clothed yourselves with the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge according to the image of its creator.

- *relates to religious practices, moral life and beliefs*

#### **3.15-17 The eucharistic life**

And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

- *spot the elements of the eucharistic rite itself!*

## II Thessalonians

### 2.13-14 **Sanctified and believing**

But we must always give thanks to God for you, brothers and sisters beloved by the Lord, because God chose you as the first fruits for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and through belief in the truth. For this purpose he called you through our proclamation of the good news, so that you may obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

## II Timothy

### 1.6-7 **Rekindling the gift**

For this reason I remind you to rekindle the gift of God that is within you through the laying on of my hands; for God did not give us a spirit of cowardice, but rather a spirit of power and of love and of self-discipline.

- *transformation through ritual/sacramental act (here 'ordination')*

## Titus

### 3.5-7 **Reborn and renewed in water and the Spirit**

... he saved us, not because of any works of righteousness that we had done, but according to his mercy, through the water of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit. This Spirit he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Saviour, so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

*A crucial theme - the relationship between grace and response, faith and effort. Paul is richly paradoxical on this (eg Gal 5.6 'the only thing that counts is faith working through love'). This matters in the eucharistic context in two ways at least:*

- *Christ said 'do this' at the Last Supper: we are required to do something, ie liturgically!*
- *the Eucharist is incomplete and not worthily partaken if we are not moved (made able) to do better.*

*Note the 'Pauline passives'*

- *justification, sanctification, redemption, adoption, election/call, predestination, revelation, renewal, rebirth, judgment....*

*Now being to praise Him with the Angels' hymn [the Gloria], it behoves us to be in or as near the state of Angels as we can, ... when they and we to make but one choir. And when are we so? If at any time, at that time when we have newly taken the holy Sacrament of His blessed Body and most precious Blood - when we come fresh from it... For then sure of all other times are we on earth most near to Angelic perfection, then meetest to give glory unto God, then at peace with the whole earth, then a goodwill and purpose in us if ever.*

*Lancelot Andrewes: Christmas Sermon, 1618*



*Photograph by Nick Duff Davies ©*