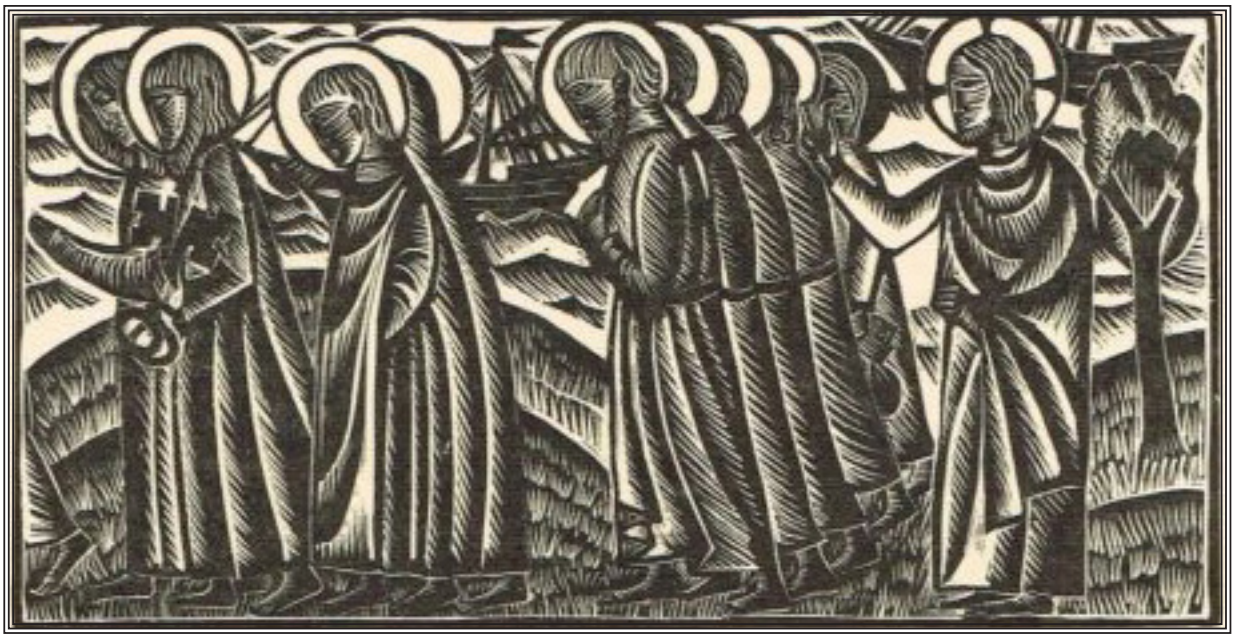
The Quarterly of
the Anglican Church in Athens

THE SACRAMENTALIST

"For in my nature I quested for beauty, but God,
God hath sent me to sea for pearls"



Christ sending forth His apostles, David Jones (1895-1974), wood engraving

Editorial Greetings

Why *the Sacramentalist*? A good man, we once read, is earnestly "willing to spiritualize everything", to discover the universal in each and every particular: "to see a World in a grain of sand and a heaven in a wild flower" as the poet had it. Since the tendency of the epoch - an epoch whose prevailing world-order holds the values of the artist and of the religious to be aberrant, subversive, and, finally, inimical to its dark purposes - is to *despiritualize* everything, it becomes an act of defiance to labour to disclose the sacred to all who Seek. We are, as J. H. Shorthouse had it in the Anglican novel *par excellence*, *John Inglesant*: "true sacramentalists, that is, the seekers for the hidden and the Divine truth. It is for this reason that [we] take the Sacrament in the English Church." Yet, "every man is not a proper Champion for Truth, nor fit to take up the Gauntlet in the cause of Verity" and *we* are surely poor instruments and unfitted for this magnitudinous task: *sutor ne ultra crepidam* or, better, "the cook that doth to painting fall / I ween he shall prove a fool." Could we contribute, even to an infinitesimal degree, to the chivvying out and routing of the money-changers, and all their attendant tawdriness, from the tabernacles of men's minds? It is doubtable. Nathless, we shall hunt the hare with our tabour, world without end.

There has been some difficulty in obtaining contributions for this edition - summer not being the least hindrance - and the consequence is that there is less matter pertaining to *our chaplaincy* than we would have hoped and, by way of remedy, our demesne shall henceforth be a lengthier *quarterly,* rather than a *bimonthly*

magazine. This will allow more time for our contributors to write for us, and afford us another month to produce something worthy of our Cause. This is something of an 'other men's flowers' edition of the magazine but, the blossoms being Divine, *we*, at least, are untroubled. We thank Ms. Carole Papoutsis, Dr. Judy Triantafillou, and Mr. Cees van Beek for their local contributions, which are evulgated hereby.

We would also ask our readership as to whether or not a subscribed printing of this magazine would prove popular. We cannot, as yet, give particulars but if any soul has something to remark, suggest, or propose concerning this notion may they please write to us.

The Sacramental Principle

It is true that at bottom worship is a spiritual activity; but we are not pure spirits, and therefore we cannot expect to do it in purely spiritual ways. That is the lesson of the Incarnation. Thus liturgies, music, symbols, sacraments, devotional attitudes and acts have their rightful part to play in the worshipping life; and it is both shallow and arrogant to reject them *en masse* and assume that there is something particularly religious in leaving out the senses when we turn to God. Through such use of the senses man can perceive powerful religious suggestions and by their help can impregnate an ever wider area of his life and consciousness with the spirit of adoration. If music is something that may awaken the awed awareness of the Holy, if pictures can tell us secrets that are beyond speech, if food and water, fragrance and lights, all bear with them a memory of sacred use - then the ordinary deeds of secular life will become more and more woven into the seamless robe that veils the Glory of God. But this will not happen unless the sacramental principle - the principle of spiritual significance of visible deeds and things - has a definite expression in our organised religious life.

Evelyn Underhill (1875-1941)

Interior of a Church during Holy Communion [detail], J. M. W. Turner (1775-1851), from the Wilson Sketchbook, gouache, watercolour, and graphite

Collect

Saint Michael and All Angels

EVERLASTYNG God, which haste ordayned and constituted the services of all Angels and men in a wonderfull ordre: mercifully graunt, that they whiche alwaye doe thee service in heaven, may by thy appoyntment succour and defende us in earth: through Jesus Christe our Lorde, &c.

The Book of Common Prayer (1549)

On Prayer

More things are wrought by prayer
than this world dreams of

The graph of the Christian prayer conforms very closely to the central action of the Eucharist. First the Sanctus, the type of all adoring worship 'with angels and archangels glorifying the Holy Name' and lifting heart and mind to the contemplation of Reality. Then the bread and wine, the ordinary stuff of life raised to the plane of sacrifice and freely offered that it may be blessed and transformed by the action of the Holy, made the food and salvation of the soul. And now we stand at the central point on which all this is poised: where the heavenly prayer and the earthly prayer meet. Our Father, which art in heaven... Thy Will be done on earth as it is in heaven. The Will: that mysterious attribute of the Living Godhead of which a little crumb is given to men, in order that it may be united in love to the Whole from which it came. Once again the priority of the Holy, the overruling interests of the Transcendent are re-affirmed as the very substance of the creature's adoring prayer.

Evelyn Underhill (1875-1941)

A Testimony of Faith

When Nelly asked me a few weeks ago if I would like to share my journey of faith in lieu of a regular sermon, I have to admit my initial reaction wasn't immediately positive. Not only because it's a vulnerable and rather scary thing to do, standing here on the pulpit in front of the congregation, sharing your innermost thoughts and experiences: it was also a sort of imposter syndrome that held me back. Did I actually have a journey? Isn't it more of a messy ride, with a good amount of wrong turns and detours as well? And what about that other, even more pretentious word, 'faith'? Surely, I try to go to church every Sunday, I love the Anglican liturgical and musical traditions, and I was raised by very devout parents. But what about my own faith? Don't I have too many questions and doubts for it to even be inspiring to others? But then I read the story of Jonah that we just heard. If ever there was a strange journey of faith! To sum up: a disobedient prophet rejects his divine commission, is cast overboard in a storm and swallowed by a great fish, rescued in a marvellous manner, but then complains to God when He doesn't carry out the destruction He had threatened. My journey will be slightly less spectacular I can reveal, but I do feel a bit more comfortable now to share mine. So buckle up and bear with me.

In the family I grew up in, faith – or at least religion – was omnipresent. Me, my six siblings and my parents went to a strict Dutch reformed church twice a Sunday. We would attend Sunday school afterwards, and stay home the rest of the day reading, making music or playing board games. Playing with the neighbours' kids, going for a bike ride or doing anything else frivolous was not allowed on Sunday, the Day of the Lord!

During the week, we would go to an equally strict reformed secondary school, for which we had to bike forty minutes one way, come rain or shine. Girls were not allowed to wear trousers, and skirts had to have a decent length (if not, they would be provided with a very unfashionable, but very decent skirt by the concierge).

After each meal, my father or mother would read a Bible passage, and especially my mother often stressed that you can't really call yourself a Christian if you didn't model your life after Christ's example. I will never forget the weeks where an Afghan refugee family would sleep on the floor in our living room because their asylum application had been denied and they had nowhere else to stay.

Someone who deserves special mention is my maternal grandfather, after whom I'm named. His was a deep faith, a true kindness, a mischievous sense of humour, and an unconditional love for his children and grandchildren. He and my dear grandmother prayed daily for us. What a blessing that was. He was to me a real holy man, in the true sense of the word. To quote C.S. Lewis in his letter to Mary Shelburne in 1953, "How little people know who think that holiness is dull. When one meets the real thing... it is irresistible. If even ten per cent of the world's population had it, would not the whole world be converted and happy before a year's end?".

Not everything was smooth sailing though. The narrow-mindedness of the Calvinist church I grew up in became increasingly suffocating. The very negative views that my church held about homosexuality didn't help either. I increasingly felt drawn to more inclusive churches in which the Gospel message of salvation wasn't filtered through a rigid dogmatic system, but was preached fully and abundantly. In 2007, I found a lovely and welcoming church community in Rotterdam: St Mary's Anglican and Episcopal Church. That's how I became Anglican, and that's why I'm standing here today.

What has this journey taught me over the years? Let me share with you three insights that are important to me.

The comfort of baptism

When we enter this church, the first thing we encounter is the baptismal font and that's for a reason. We need to be constantly reminded of our baptism as the outward and visible sign of God's grace. To me, that's profoundly comforting. God's grace towards us doesn't start with us, our efforts, our righteousness, our (often failing) attempts at living a life of integrity and holiness. No, God takes the initiative. He is there first and choses us, not the other way around. The French Reformer John Calvin said it beautifully in 1536: "There is no doubt that all pious folk throughout life, whenever they are troubled by a consciousness of their faults, may venture to remind themselves of their baptism, that from it they may be confirmed in assurance of that sole and perpetual cleansing which we have in Christ's blood." That abundance and generosity of God's grace is something that the workers in the Vineyard in the Parable from the Gospel read-

[continued overleaf]

ing today still had to learn. We can hear it when they grumble about equality as they remind the landowner of the burden they bore. We all love God's grace – until it doesn't line up with our expectations of fairness. Jonah wanted to see Nineveh's downfall to satisfy his own sense of justice. But God's ways are not our own, and our sense of what is fair is not necessarily what is fair in God's Kingdom.

The value of inclusion

Inclusion is a word that is thrown around a lot these days. Often times, when we say that a church community is or should be 'inclusive', what we actually mean is 'divers'. Diversity is about the factual makeup of our community – demographics such as gender, ethnicity, age or sexual orientation to name just a few. Inclusion on the other hand is the practice of making sure that people feel 'included', embraced, valued, and safe. Diversity is the 'what', inclusion is the 'how'. The Church of England has fortunately made great progress in this regard. For me personally, that means a great deal.

To quote the pastoral letter of the Bishops of the Church of England from January this year:

"We are united in our desire for a church where everyone is welcome, accepted and affirmed in Christ. With joy we cherish and value the LGBTQI+ members of our churches and celebrate the gifts that each brings as a fellow Christian. We are united in our condemnation of homophobia. We commit ourselves – and urge the churches in our care – to welcome same-sex couples unreservedly and joyfully."

Not everybody in our church community here in Athens might fully agree with that, and I understand. But what I do hope, is that we can find common ground in a firm determination to fight prejudice and stigma on any ground. And that we will treat each other with empathy and respect, recognising that we are all God's children, regardless of who we are or whom we love.

The beauty of holiness

The third lesson is something that I would call the 'beauty of holiness', and that Oliver so eloquently described a few weeks ago. Liturgy, music, tradition. They can lift us up when we are down, they can provide us with the words when we can't find any. When our heart is full, or maybe empty, the old hymns, with their profound wisdom and poetry, are the wings that can make our souls fly.

"There's a wideness in God's mercy,
Like the wideness of the sea;
There's a kindness in His justice,
Which is more than liberty."

A kindness and mercy that Jonah needed to be reminded of, that the workers in the vineyard needed to be reminded, and that we all need to be reminded of. Or another favourite of mine that we will sing as today's Offertory:

"Jerusalem the golden,
With milk and honey blest,
Beneath thy contemplation
Sink heart and voice oppressed.
I know not, O I know not,
What joys await us there,
What radiancy of glory,
What bliss beyond compare."

In conclusion, I recently came across an interesting survey that was conducted worldwide about which sentences we humans like to hear the most. The top three were:

» I love you.
» I forgive you.
» Supper is ready.

That is exactly what church is about. That is what God – through Christ – is about. He loves us. He forgives us. And he shares Himself in Holy Communion. However messy or inconsistent our own journeys of faith may be, may He be our daily compass.

Cees van Beek (delivered at St. Paul's Church on Sunday the twenty-fourth of September) and printed here with our especial gratitude.

Poetry

Of a rose, a lovely rose,
Of a rose is all mine song

Lesteneth, lordinges, both elde and yinge,
How this rosé began to springe;
Swich a rosé to mine likinge
In all this world ne knowe I none.

The aungil cam fro hevené tour,
To grete Mary with gret honour,
And seidé sche schuld bere the flour,
That schuldé breke the fendés bond.

The flour sprong in heye Bedlem,
That is bothé bright and schene.
The rose is Mary, hevené quene;
Out of her bosum the blosomé sprong.

The fersté braunche is full of might,
That sprong on Cirstemessé night;
The sterre schon over Bedlem bright,
That is bothé brod and long.

The secunde braunché sprong to hell,
The fendés power down to felle;
Therein might none sowlé dwelle.
Blessed be the time the rosé sprong!

The threddé braunche is good and swote,
It sprang to hevené crop and rote,
Therein to dwellen and ben our bote;
Every day it scheweth in prestés hond.

Prey we to her with gret honour,
Sche that bare the blesséd flour,
Sche be our helpe and our socour
And schild us fro the fendés bond!

Anonymous (fourteenth or early fifteenth century)

schene (sheen): fair (modern German schön); bote: profit (as in 'to boot')

October (the Labours of the Months), roundel, ca. 1480, Norwich

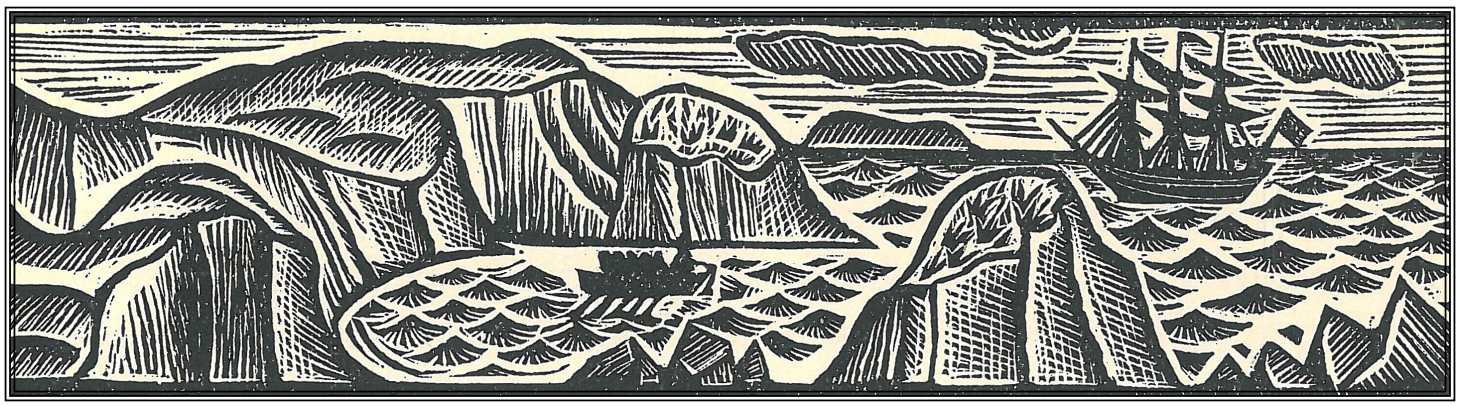
Weep, Weep, Ye Woodmen!

Weep, weep, ye woodmen! wail;
Your hands with sorrow wring!
Your master Robin Hood lies dead,
Therefore sigh as you sing.

Here lie his primer and his beads,
His bent bow and his arrows keen,
His good sword and his holy cross:
Now cast on flowers fresh and green.

And, as they fall, shed tears and say
Well, well-a-day! Well, well-a-day!
Thus cast ye flowers fresh, and sing,
And on to Wakefield take your way.

Anthony Munday (1553-1633)



Anglican Poets: George Herbert

Then shall our brain
All our invention on thine Altar lay

The climate of the mind is positively English in its variableness and instability. Frost, sunshine, hopeless drought and refreshing rains succeed one another with bewildering rapidity. Herbert is the poet of this inner weather. Accurately, in a score of lyrics unexcelled for flawless purity of diction and appositeness of imagery, he has described its changeness and interpreted, in terms of a mystical philosophy, their significance. Within his limits he achieves a real perfection.

Aldous Huxley (1894-1963)

His poetry is the counterpart of Jeremy Taylor's prose: together they are the finest expression we have of Anglican piety at its best. Donne, though an Anglican, is, both in his poems and his sermons, much too much of a *prima donna* to be typical.
Comparing the Anglican Church with the Roman Catholic Church on the one hand and the Calvinist on the other, Herbert writes:

A fine aspect in fit array,
Neither too mean nor yet too gay,
Shows who is best.
Outlandish looks may not compare:
For all they either painted are
Or else undressed.

She on the Hills, which wantonly
Allureth all in hope to be
By her preferred,
Hath kissed so long her painted shrines
That ev'n her face by kissing shines
For her reward.

She in the valley is so shy
Of dressing that her hair doth lie
About her ears:
While she avoids her neigbour's pride,
She wholly goes on th' other side
And nothing wears.

Herbert, it will be noticed, says nothing about differences in theological dogma. The Anglican Church has always avoided strict dogmatic definitions. The Thirty-Nine Articles, for example, can be interpreted either in a Calvinist or a non-Calvinist sense, and her Office of Holy Communion can be accepted both by Zwinglians who regard it as a service of Commemoration only, and by those who believe in the Real Presence. Herbert is concerned with liturgical manners and styles of piety. In his day, Catholic piety was typically baroque, both in architecture and in poets like Crashaw. This was too unrestrained for his taste. On the other hand, he found the stlye of worship practised by the Reformed Churches too severe, too 'inward'. He would have agreed with Launcelot Andrewes who said: "If we worship God with our hearts only and not also with our hats, something is lacking." The Reformers, for instance, disapproved of all religious images, but Herbert thought that, on occasion, a stained-glass window could be of more spiritual help than a sermon.

Doctrine and life, colours and light, in one
When they combine and mingle bring
A strong regard and awe; but speech alone
Doth vanish like a flaring thing,
And in the eare, not conscience ring.

[Izaak] Walton tells us that he took enormous pains to explain to his parishioners, most of whom were probably illiterate, the significance of every ritual act in the liturgy, and to instruct them in the meaning of the Church Calendar. He was not a mystic like Vaughan: few Anglicans have been. One might almost say that Anglican piety at its best, as represented by Herbert, is the piety of a gentleman, which means, of course, that at its second best it becomes merely genteel.

W. H. Auden (1907-1973)

Prayer, the Church's banquet, angels' age,
God's breath in man returning to his birth,
The soul in paraphrase, heart in pilgrimage,
The Christian plummet sounding heav'n and earth,
Engine against th' Almighty, sinners' tower,
Reverséd thunder, Christ-side-piercing spear
The six-days' world transposing in an hour,
A kind of tune which all things hear and fear
Softness and peace and joy and love and bliss,
Exalted manna, gladness of the best,
Heaven in ordinary, man well dressed,
The milky way, the bird of Paradise,
Church-bells beyond the stars heard: the soul's blood,
The Land of Spices, somthing understood.

The Visit of Geoffrey May

On a beautiful spring morning Geoffrey May walked up Philellinon Street as the church bell at St Paul's Anglican Church was ringing to call people to worship. Holy Communion had already begun when he arrived but Father Leonard interrupted the service to announce this surprise visitor. A member of the congregation in the nineteen-eighties - indeed for fifteen years he attended services at St. Paul's - had returned at the age of one hundred. Geoffrey had flown from Northern Ireland to Corfu for a week and then to Athens for a day. Joline Koutroulis was there to welcome him.

Father Leonard presented him with a copy of the church history, *Opening the Doors*, and he had a long telephone call with Father Ted in Tolon. Finally he toured the church garden and saw the new paving which has opened up the area behind the church and where Guinevere the cat was spread out enjoying the sun. He noted the garden was well tended with scrubs and flowers in bloom, and was pleased that the church was open for visitors to see and admire the stained glass windows as well as allowing people to light a candle and pray.

Next came a walk in the National Gardens with Joline and myself; Geoffrey outpaced us. We were able to have a break for ice-cream and reminisce about Father Jeremy Peake's time at St. Paul's Church. Geoffrey shewed us the house he had once lived in which was hewn from the rock of the stadium in a *cul-de-sac* at the top of the stadium steps. The silence suited him as besides having studied theology he is a poet. He said he might visit Greece again next year.

After leaving Greece more than twenty years ago Geoffrey bought a small terraced house in Menton in the South of France. He had a seaview, very friendly French and Italian neighbours and just a short walk to the beach. A few times a week he walked over the border and had coffee in Italy. He says the walks just behind him in the foothills of the *Alpes-Maritimes* were bracing and good for his health as well as having stunning sea views. He would also take the train to Ventimiglia to the *alfresco* market and have *pizza* at the station, or walk two hours on the coastal path to Monaco. On Sundays he worshipped at St. John's Anglican Church and sometimes read the lesson. Geoffrey now lives in Northern Ireland and he had not been back to Greece and St. Paul's for about eight years until this year. Bravo Geoffrey.

Carole Papoutsis

Geoffrey May in Athens, photograph by Joline Koutroulis

The Ascent

The inveterate climber
follows the Lear pathway
to the mountain village
pausing for the second wind-
he's well into the green years-
all's greenery around almost
and rare tranquillity-time
to eye-chase butterflies
speckled-brown and gaze
leisurely on Morning Glory
with its purple panoply;
continuing then the climb
considerably steeper now
and therefore challenging
the mini-drama of a snake
scurrying across one's path-
it seemed nonchalantly-
and prompting thoughts
of time and relativity:Man dies
Nature lives on eternally

Geoffrey May (b. 1923)

In Praise of Creation: The Death of the Moth

Moths that fly by day are not properly to be called moths; they do not excite that pleasant sense of dark autumn nights and ivy-blossom which the commonest yellow-underwing asleep in the shadow of the curtain never fails to rouse in us. They are hybrid creatures, neither gay like butterflies nor sombre like their own species. Nevertheless the present specimen, with his narrow hay-coloured wings, fringed with a tassel of the same colour, seemed to be content with life. It was a pleasant morning, mid-September, mild, benignant, yet with a keener breath than that of the summer months. The plough was already scoring the field opposite the window, and where the share had been, the earth was pressed flat and gleamed with moisture. Such vigour came rolling in from the fields and the down beyond that it was difficult to keep the eyes strictly turned upon the book. The rooks too were keeping one of their annual festivities; soaring round the tree tops until it looked as if a vast net with thousands of black knots in it had been cast up into the air; which, after a few moments sank slowly down upon the trees until every twig seemed to have a knot at the end of it. Then, suddenly, the net would be thrown into the air again in a wider circle this time, with the utmost clamour and vociferation, as though to be thrown into the air and settle slowly down upon the tree tops were a tremendously exciting experience.

The same energy which inspired the rooks, the ploughmen, the horses, and even, it seemed, the lean bare-backed downs, sent the moth fluttering from side to side of his square of the window-pane. One could not help watching him. One was, indeed, conscious of a queer feeling of pity for him. The possibilities of pleasure seemed that morning so enormous and so various that to have only a moth's part in life, and a day moth's at that, appeared a hard fate, and his zest in enjoying his meagre opportunities to the full, pathetic. He flew vigorously to one corner of his compartment, and, after waiting there a second, flew across to the other. What remained for him but to fly to a third corner and then to a fourth? That was all he could do, in spite of the size of the downs, the width of the sky, the far-off smoke of houses, and the romantic voice, now and then, of a steamer out at sea. What he could do he did. Watching him, it seemed as if a fibre, very thin but pure, of the enormous energy of the world had been thrust into his frail and diminutive body. As often as he crossed the plane, I could fancy that a thread of vital light became visible. He was little or nothing but life.

Yet, because he was so small, and so simple a form of the energy that was rolling in at the open window and driving its way through so many narrow and intricate corridors in my own brain and in those of other human beings, there was something marvellous as well as pathetic about him. It was as if someone had taken a tiny bead of pure life and decking it as lightly as possible with down and feathers, had set it dancing and zigzagging to show us the true nature of life. Thus displayed one could not get over the strangeness of it. One is apt to forget all about life, seeing it humped and bossed and garnished and cumbered so that it has to move with the greatest circumspection and dignity. Again, the thought of all that life might have been had he been born in any other shape caused one to view his simple activities with a kind of pity.

After a time, tired by his dancing apparently, he settled on the window ledge in the sun, and the queer spectacle being at an end, I forgot about him. Then, looking up, my eye was caught by him. He was trying to resume his dancing, but seemed either so stiff or so awkward that he could only flutter to the bottom of the window-pane; and when he tried to fly across it he failed. Being intent on other matters I watched these futile attempts for a time without thinking, unconsciously waiting for him to resume his flight, as one waits for a machine, that has stopped momentarily, to start again without considering the reason of its failure. After perhaps a seventh attempt he slipped from the wooden ledge and fell, fluttering his wings, on to his back on the window-sill. The helplessness of his attitude roused me. It flashed upon me that he was in difficulties; he could no longer raise himself; his legs struggled vainly. But, as I stretched out a pencil, meaning to help him right himself, it came over me that the failure and awkwardness were the approach of death. I laid the pencil down again.

The legs agitated themselves once more. I looked as if for the enemy against which he struggled. I looked out of doors. What had happened there? Presumably it was midday, and work in the fields had stopped. Stillness and quiet had replaced the previous animation. The birds had taken themselves off to feed in the brooks. The horses stood still. Yet the power was there all the same, massed outside indifferent, impersonal, not attending to

anything in particular. Somehow it was opposed to the little hay-coloured moth. It was useless to try to do anything. One could only watch the extraordinary efforts made by those tiny legs against an oncoming doom which could, had it chosesn, have submerged an entire city, not merely a city, but masses of human beings; nothing, I knew, had any chance against death. Nevertheless after a pause of exhaustion the legs fluttered again. It was superb this last protest, and so frantic that he succeeded at last in righting himself. One's sympathies, of course, were all on the side of life. Also, when there was nobody to care or to know, this gigantic effort on the part of an insignificant little moth, against a power of such magnitude, to retain what no one else valued or desired to keep, moved one strangely. Again, somehow, one saw life, a pure bead. I lifted the pencil again, useless though I knew it to be. But even as I did so, the unmistakable tokens of death showed themselves. The body relaxed, and instantly grew stiff. The struggle was over. The insignificant little creature now knew death. As I looked at the dead moth, this minute wayside triumph of so great a force over so mean an antagonist filled me with wonder. Just as life had been strange a few minutes before, so death was now as strange. The moth having righted himself now law most decently and uncomplainingly composed. O yes, he seemed to say, death is stronger than I am.

Virginia Woolf (1882-1941)

Print (the Tafmine Moth and Caterpillar); J. A. Rosel von Rosenhof (artist), C. H. Hemmerich (engraver); ca. 1760-1770

Lay Learning Course: Walking together in Faith

The Diocese in Europe's lay learning course 'Walking Together in Faith' is back for a second year, starting in mid-September. Initially launched in September 2022, the course was offered last year in an online version on Zoom. In addition, a small number of groups met in person locally and drew on the course material that has been made available. It was clear from the response during this first year that the course has both met a need in the diocese and has been well received.

I, myself led most of the 'Zoom' sessions (drawing in other colleagues and friends as appropriate). The group of about 25 people who joined us regularly came from different parts of our diverse diocese. Part of the enjoyment and learning was the way that participants were able to share their different geographical and cultural insights.

Module One: Knowing God looks at prayer, and focuses on the Lord's Prayer, and the context in which Jesus taught it to his disciples

Module Two: Growing in Christ explores what Christians over the centuries have wanted to say about Jesus Christ and what he did.

Module Three: Building Community looks at our common life as part of the People of God, and how it is expressed, for example in our worship.

Module Four: Living beyond Ourselves asks about how our Christian faith should affect our responses to key issues of our time such as the care for creation and migration.

This year's online version of the course will start on Tuesday 26 September, and will then happen more-or-less fortnightly over the coming year. Module One will run before Christmas, and Module Two will start as soon as possible in the New Year. The online sessions will last for 90 minutes, and they will begin at 18.30 (U.K. time).

The intention is that those who wish, and who follow the whole course as well as submitting a piece of work for assessment for each of the four Modules, will be eligible to receive a 'Bishop's Certificate'.

We welcome both lay people and clergy connected in some way with the Diocese in Europe to sign up to join us.

For those who are wanting to run local in person groups a familiarisation session is being offered on Tuesday 19 September, again at 18.30 U.K. time. Please write me, Clare Amos, at clare.amos@europe.anglican.org if you would like to join this.

The material for Modules One and Two is available on a dedicated Moodle site at https://europe.learn.anglican.org. Guest access to the Moodle site is available by clicking the box 'Guest Access' and using as a password 'LayLearning2022'. For full access to the Moodle site and/or to receive the Zoom link for the online sessions people will need to fill in and return a short course application form [please enquire to the editors for a copy of this form - eds.]. Please return the application form to the Administrator in the Ministry Team Polly Freeman at polly.freeman@churchofengland.org

I am very happy to try and answer directly any questions you may have.

Dr Clare Amos, Director of Lay Discipleship

The Liturgical Year

All Saints to Advent (November the first to, this year, December the third)

No Christian is solitary. Through baptism we become members one of another in Christ, members of a company of saints whose mutual belonging transcends death:

One family, we dwell in him,
one Church, above, beneath;
though now divided by the stream,
the narrow stream of death.

Charles Wesley

All Saints' Day and the Commemoration of the Faithful Departed on All Souls' Day both celebrate this mutual belonging. All Saints' Day celebrates men and women in whose lives the Church as a whole has seen the grace of God powerfully at work. It is an opportunity to give thanks for that grace, and for the wonderful ends to which it shapes a human life; it is a time to be encouraged by the example of the saints and to recall that sanctity may grow in the ordinary circumstances, as well as the extraordinary crises, of human living. The Commemoration of the Faithful Departed celebrates the saints in a more local and intimate key. It allows us to remember with thanksgiving before God those whom we have known more directly: those who gave us life, or who nurtured us in faith.

Redemption is a work of God's grace; it is God who redeems us in Christ and there is nothing to be done beyond what Christ has done. But we still wait for the final consummation of God's new creation in Christ; those who are Christ's, whether or not they have passed through death, are joined in prayer that God's kingdom will be revealed finally and in all its fullness. We also sense that it is a fearful thing to come before the unutterable goodness and holiness of God, even for those who are redeemed in Christ; that it is searing as well as life-giving to experience God's mercy; and this instinct also is expressed in the liturgy of All Souls' Day.

Remembrance Sunday goes on to explore the theme of memory, both corporate and individual, as we confront issues of war and peace, loss and self-gift, memory and forgetting.

The annual cycle of the Church's year now ends with the Feast of Christ the King. The year that begins with the hope of the coming Messiah ends with the proclamation of his universal sovereignty. The ascension of Christ has revealed him to be Lord of earth and heaven, and final judgement is one of his proper kingly purposes. The Feast of Christ the King returns us to the Advent theme of judgement, with which the cycle once more begins.

Accessibility

As this stunningly hot summer closes with dramatic storms and cloudbursts, I reflect on some small beach scenes which were specifically memorable for me over the past three months.

In Lefkadi, Evia, we have two beaches, the smaller one, our family's favorite, involves a walk of a few hundred metres, fine for the fit, but as I discovered, a disincentive to the disabled, of which group I became a temporary member following a foot injury in early summer.

During the week, both beaches are mainly used by grandparents like us with grandchildren, who are joined by the working parents at week-ends, this being a common arrangement for families not only to survive but enjoy the Greek summer.

The long beach, washed away three years ago during a disastrous flash flood, has happily been restored and, despite many complaints, the road running immediately parallel to the beach has been renovated for continued use by cars. Although one of the main initial complainants, I suddenly discovered the positive side of this accessibility by car, which allowed us to park and swim directly, resulting in my rapid and full recovery of mobility. As we all know, beach visits give ample time for observation of, and chats with, one's fellow swimmers, many of whom had various disabilities and for whom the accessibility of our long beach to all has been a life-changer. Children and adults in wheelchairs and mobility aids are able, with a little help, to spend hours in the warm water, with immeasurable benefits both to themselves and their families.

I watch entranced as a very old lady is carefully immersed in the sea by two women, who then proceed to float her gently before starting a regime of comprehensive exercises, accompanied by much backchat and laughter, before lovingly returning her to her seat on the beach, under one of the umbrellas thoughtfully provided free by the Municipality and in strong contrast to the media reports of commercialization and expropriation of public beaches for profit it many tourist areas this summer.

Another scene, witnessed during one of my early morning swims, when most swimmers are of my generation, involved a mysteriously long pole stuck in the shallows and topped by a red hat. As I watched curiously, an older man swam slowly towards it from some distance away and as he approached, grasped it and hauled himself to his feet with some difficulty, then used it as a walking aid to struggle out of the water to where his wife waited discretely with his towel, carefully allowing him to exercise his independence without taking away his autonomy.

A group of children who were staying in a beach-side pension and given daily swimming lessons could probably be classified as having special needs, but in the water they were indistinguishable from all the other kids larking around and enjoying the fun, before retiring to a beach-side cafe for ice-creams. Another smaller group of young refugee men from one of the local encampments approached the beach rather cautiously and, finding no-one noticing them, slowly entered the water still in their clothes, some clutching blow-up plastic floats and eventually staying in joyously and vociferously for the longest time, again their darker skins being indistinguishable from the rest of the sunburned swimmers.

This acceptability of all ages, sizes and colours is what I enjoyed most about our summer on the beach, with no room for discrimination and a remarkable tolerance and lack of the short-tempered acrimony which characterises much of Greek social life and, dare I say, predominantly urban lifestyles. Amidst all the latest disasters of fires and floods, is it too much to hope that we can all take these positive messages of summer and put them into practice in our daily lives, thus making our urban environment more friendly to all?

Judy Triantafillou

Editorial: Notes on Nursery Rhyme

An error it would be to presuppose that the vast and variegated hoard of verse conveniently, if somewhat reductively, designated as *nursery rhyme* was conceived and brought forth at the cot-side or in the schoolyard, devised *in principio* for the felicitation and diversion of children. Indeed, so far as can be determined for the more recent additions to children's lore - the sources of the majority of rhymes older than, say, three or four hundred years having been condemned to Time's everlasting oblivion – it is evident that the process by which the enchanting nursery repertoire is defined and refined may well *terminate* in the ludibund realms of childhood but, discounting the lullabies, rhyming alphabets, and certain of the infant amusements ("this little pig went to market", to cite an enduring favourite), has its *origins* in an adult code of joviality. The adducible sources indicate that this repertoire of, often exquisite, poetry – nay, some of the finest in the English language – has been culled from diverse and sundry sources. Children have appropriated verses from ballads and folk songs; songs from the ale-house and barracks; proverbs, prayers, and riddles; ancient Britannic languages ("eena, meena, mina, mo"); cries of street hawkers and pedlars; scurrilous political lampoons; fragments of ancient ritual and custom ("Ladybird, Ladybird, fly away home"); verily, as James Joyce understood, nursery rhymes encompass the eternal verities of human experience, the whole universe withal.

This process by which, children, conservative as they are, have preserved what has been discarded from the culture of their elders, have scrumped the windfalls from their fathers' orchards, is seemingly of utmost antiquity. Although it would not be fantastical to posit a ritualistic origin for the juvenile obsecration that Strattis records to in his *Phœnissæ*: "εξεχ' ώ φίλ' ήλιε" ("come forth, beloved sun") (as English children continue to enjoin the rain to "go to Spain"), by the early fourth century B.C. it had assimilated utterly into childish lore.

Children have ever maintained, or been offered, their own verbal culture and their poetry is as old as languages; in lullaby, for instance, as Sir Edmund Chambers has not unjustifiably declared, one finds the nativity of all song. The evidence for the antiquity of such lore is scant, partly due to the insignificance undoubtedly attached to such ostensibly trifling matter by the earnest chroniclers of earlier epochs – and yet, that which remains is decisive enough to disperse even a little of the romantic mist that attends upon such surmise. If in the Galilean marketplace children had their neat parallelism ("We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned to you, and ye have not wept") (St. Luke vii; 32) and if Petronius Arbiter, in the same century, was witness to a small boy's demand: "*Bucca, bucca, quot sunt hic*" (comparable to the English "Buck she, Buck she, buck, how many fingers do I hold up"), then it is quite probable that children rhymed on the eve of the battle of Kadesh, or that on some earthen floor siblings divined "tinker, tailor, soldier, sailor" - or their neolithic equivalents – with the seeds with which their father would sow the first fields.

Indeed, if this is so then such lore must be appreciated as a foundation stone of the great edifice of subsequent human endeavour. Prior to the onset of capability - of adequacy - when a child is nought but a solitary fledgling exposed to the apparent menace of the world, such poetry offers harmony, order, comfort, and consolation. For before scornful reason sets its cudgel against the Great Mystery, for children that which is *in posse* might truly be found *in esse*. Notwithstanding the humour, gaiety, and sheer nonsense in nursery rhymes, they are of some consequence in childhood and their import is often lamentably forgotten; as Michel de Montaigne understood: "Childrens playes are not sports, and should be deemed as their most serious actions". Harmony and concord – the formal relationships between sounds, words, rhythms, and concepts – are the essence of nursery rhymes, and, indeed, the source of all artistic pleasure, and thus the formal qualities - metrical regularity, alliteration, assonance, rhyme, parallelism, anaphora &c. - so often make these poems pleasurably memorable; "Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers" endures by its spitting alliteration alone. The capacity to appreciate the rhythms, the very musicality of the world, to find delight in the inexhaustible possibilities of languages – humankind's greatest endowment – the capability to comprehend the miracle of order, such things all children deserve.

excerpted from a rather rambling bit of bombast.

A Recipe for Toffee Pudding

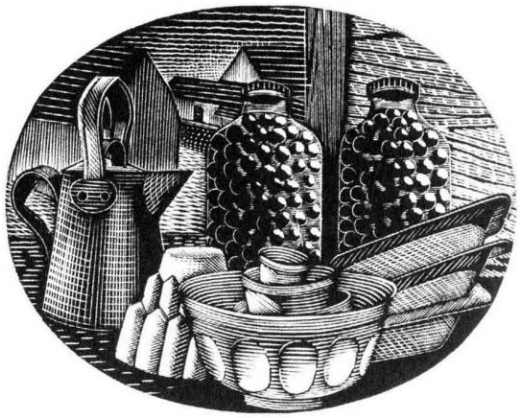
Ah, toffee pudding: glutinous *stodge* to fill the Sybaritical belly in dreary November. Like Proust with his evocatory *madeleines*, we are led into memory's *cul-de-sac* by the richness of this perilously cloying mess: thousands of plane leaves smeared on the oily flags, seen from the window of a tenement in Victorian Kensington - where the heaviness of the pudding was rivalled by the Pre-Raphaelite weight of the *decor* - and, on the radio, the madness of Thelonious Monk and his jabbing *fambles* at the keyboard disturbing the degustation. Eight ounces of golden syrup: what ambrosial excess we advocate! Nevertheless, despite printing our own method, really we must confess our utter culinary incompetence: we could not satisfactorily make this pudding for toffee...

The necessaries [to serve, say, six]:

Four ounces, or one hundred and twenty grams of unsalted butter.
The same quantity of light brown demerara sugar.
Eight ounces, or two hundred and twenty five grams of golden syrup.
Half a pint, or two hundred and seventy five mililitres of milk.
Fingers of bread, preferably white, one day old.

The method:

Slowly melt the butter, sugar, and syrup in a frying pan (that is, over a low heat), and then boil the stuff more rapidly - stirring all the while - until the colour is an autumnal golden brown. Bring the milk to the boil and then arrange the bread fingers in a large dish and pour the milk upon them. Take the fingers from the dish forthwith and coat them in the toffee sauce. Finally heap the same in a fire-proof dish and pour a little more toffee sauce upon the heap. This pudding should be served hot with whipped cream. Gramercy!



Notices &c.

At the time of writing - for these things are provisional - the chaplaincy is almost prepared to advertise for a new chaplain. It is thought that, by the ides of October, the advertisement will have been published and thereafter the first applications will be received.

A *locum* has offered to preside over worship at the church for the months of November and December. Fr. Terry Hemming of Andover, Hampshire shall, we understand, arrive in Athens at the end of October or the beginning of November.

The Harvest Festival is to be held at the *Kokotos* estate in Stamata on the twenty-second of October. Those who wish to attend should communicate their intentions to Churchwarden Lynn Stavrou or chorister Shirley Poulakis. The price for a *exceedingly palatable* luncheon is fifteen euros and there is a coach engaged to convey those wanting transportation to and from the church. For further particulars apply to the aforementioned organisers.

The Christmas Bazaar is slated for Advent Sunday (viz. the third day of December. More on this annual *bezesteen* to be announced in the weeks to come. Volunteers are sought, as ever.