

## *Fr Hoyal Writes*

The Diocese of Bristol is launching its radical Diocesan Strategy for 2010-2015 *Releasing the Energy*. It has been approved by Bishop's Council, and is due for approval at Diocesan Synod very shortly. No doubt it will get it.

If you want chapter and verse, please Google [www.bristol.anglican.org/ministry/strategy](http://www.bristol.anglican.org/ministry/strategy) and follow from there. I think you will be amazed. I am, and what is more, I am apprehensive.

I love the Church of God. I admire our Bishop as a good and able man, and I respect him as an apostolically consecrated leader of God's people. Like him, I am deeply committed to the Church's calling to be one, holy, catholic and apostolic.

But I am anxious about what seems to be becoming Bristol Diocese plc, much as I accept the new strategy has been formulated with the highest motives and the best of pastoral and evangelistic intentions.

Certainly it very understandably seeks to address major difficulties being experienced by the Church in times of great change and challenge. And it is nothing, if not bold.

And in one respect it must surely command widespread support – its emphasis on equipping the whole people of God for ministry, service and witness.

But while I am all for more and better lay training, I am less comfortable with the strategy's emphasis local "ministry leadership teams" which, with the bishop's authorisation, will be largely responsible for parish programmes but may well not be led by, nor even include, an ordained person.

The strategy document candidly acknowledges that the 20<sup>th</sup> century has for various reasons seen considerable centralisation of Church of England structures nationally.

But it openly advocates a degree of diocesan centralisation and control that would have left the founders of All Saints Clifton astounded. Almost certainly, it would have prevented their ever achieving their great project.

We have already travelled a fair way in just a decade. Parishes have less and less autonomy in relation to the diocese. Its blanket policy of suspending all livings (of questionable legality, but what parish could afford, or would want, to take the matter to court?) means that every parish feels vulnerable, especially if the current priest-in-charge may be retiring or leaving. For good or ill it is already harder and harder to resist partnership schemes and parish clustering. Diversity and distinctiveness inevitably succumb to gradual centralist McDonaldisation.

The new strategy will make it easier to browbeat a vacant parish, albeit with kid gloves and steely kindness and in full accord with the strategy rule-book.

In line with growing authority being accorded to deaneries (or, rather, the essentially diocesan-controlled leadership cell within each deanery) Deanery Leadership Teams will have extensive powers to examine a vacant parish's performance and press for adoption of the team's recommendations.

This will frequently mean prescribing a period of leadership development in the parish under the guidance of a diocesan-appointed Vacancy Leadership Adviser with a view to promoting and extending lay leadership and general parish initiatives.

If the Deanery Leadership Team is satisfied with results after six months, a trial period which it may choose to extend, it may recommend authorisation of existing or emerging leaders, or recruitment of further ministers (perhaps ordained, perhaps not; perhaps licensed, perhaps not).

If a parish is deemed to have significant problems the Deanery Leadership Team may recommend bringing together a team under the Vacancy Leadership Adviser to work in the benefice with a view to resolving the difficulties.

Where a church is judged to lack the resources to sustain itself, but is deemed to be potentially viable, the Deanery Leadership Team may recommend introduction of a church plant from another parish. Where viability is discounted, it may even recommend closure of the church.

To my mind the new strategy assigns too much power to deanery leaders, albeit power that is overall very much under diocesan policy control. As far as I can gather, many key players in practical implementation of the strategy will be diocesan appointees rather than representatives elected from the ranks.

Perhaps I have read the strategy document through cracked lenses. Perhaps I am too suspicious about deanery evaluation of parishes – especially if the parishes are regarded as oddball or untypical. Perhaps I am just too old to change. Perhaps I am plain wrong.

But perhaps we are being moved on too hastily and too far from days when the respective rights of patrons, incumbents and parishes allowed churches greater autonomy than now.

Perhaps there is something rather important about parish and priest, priest and people, as models to encourage. Is a ministry-team parish quite the same thing?

Perhaps emphasis on every-member *ministry* (as opposed to every-member *involvement* or *discipleship*) is subverting our commitment (endorsed by Bishop Mike in his introduction to the strategy) to the three-fold apostolic ministry of bishops, priest and deacons.

A practical test-question. Does the diocesan strategy make you feel more reassured about the future of All Saints Clifton, or less?



### **Making All Things New: 3. “Temple – New Worship?”**

Sermon preached by Fr Hoyal at 8 am Mass on Lent 3, 2009

*Readings: Exodus 20.1-17 – The Ten Comandments; John 2.13-22 – Jesus’ Cleansing of the Temple*

“I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery; you shall have no other gods before me.”

“You shall not make for yourself any idol; you shall not bow down or worship it.”

The first and second commandments leave us in no doubt. God, the true God, comes first. We are not to put anything before him. We are not to worship false gods; we are not to make an idol of anything. Nothing is to get in the way of our commitment to God, not even golf or detective stories. He is to be loved with devotion and awe, honoured and worshipped with reverence, and obeyed faithfully and joyfully.

And why does he have this great claim on his people, in the first instance the Israelites Moses led out of Egypt?

Firstly, of course, because he *is* God, and God who is truly God must come first. But also because these are God’s commandment to his own dear people, the people he rescued, the people he saved, the people that is, whom, at the hand of his appointed servant Moses he brought out from years of oppression and slavery under Egyptian tyrants. He is the only true God, and he is the God who saves his people.

It is this same God, many centuries after Moses, that the Jews of Jesus’ time worship in the great temple of Jerusalem, the fourth temple building on the site, the one begun by Herod the Great in 19 BC. So forty-six years on or more it is probably about 28AD or a little after that Jesus makes his dramatic visit to the temple and upsets just about everybody there as well as

animals, tables and money. It is a huge and shocking disturbance, rather like a rowdy and abusive protest demonstration erupting during a great service at St Paul's perhaps.

Note that it is Passover-time, the time when Jews are celebrating the Exodus, God's great work for his people when he delivered them from Egypt all those centuries before.

Jesus isn't just criticizing the trading going on in the temple precincts. I'm sure he's not against legitimate business concerns run trading fairly and decently. Nor, to my mind, is he just attacking self-interest and possible sharp practice among the animal sellers and the money-changers. But what he is doing is also more than trying to reclaim some sanctity for the building being treated more like a cattle market than a shrine of great holiness. No, what Jesus is about is much more than this.

Jesus is calling time on the temple itself and the whole sacrificial system – the ancient worship tradition of seeking to honour and appease God by offering animals in sacrifice – whole offerings, burnt offerings, sin offerings, the lot. More than once in the gospels Jesus warns that the fine new temple hasn't got long, and as we all know that it was in 70 AD, only 42 years later, that the temple was destroyed by Roman forces, never to be rebuilt. There is no fifth temple, just a bare wall where people wail in sorrow.

Yet there is a temple for God's people still. It is not located in a particular town or city. It is not built of stone. It is a place of true worship and pure sacrifice, a place where God and man may truly meet.

When Jesus provocatively says to those about him, "Destroy this temple and in three days I will build another," he is speaking, we're told, of the temple of his body. To come to Jesus who died for us at Passover-time and rose again the third day, to put our faith in his great sacrifice on the cross, to know that it is through his dying and rising we are rescued from the slavery of sin and death: all this is to come to him who is a true and living temple.

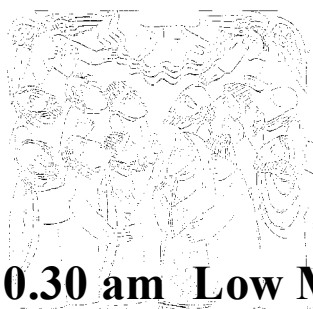
It is because of Jesus that we can worship God in Spirit and in truth. Indeed it is in Jesus and through Jesus that we can offer the Father authentic and acceptable worship – that's why Christian prayer to the Father is always offered through Jesus Christ, or in the name of Jesus. Jesus himself is our meeting-place with God, for one and the same Lord Jesus Christ is truly man and truly God.

Time and again, Christians have slipped back into the idolatry old ways, letting bricks and stone assume more importance than Christ the living temple, letting man-made rules and commercial priorities take precedence over God's priorities and divine commandments. But when that happens we are just foolishly shoring up a spiritually defunct building that was destroyed for good long ago.

But only the new and living temple in which alone true worship is possible, only Jesus Christ himself, is the temple we can look to and come to with assurance.

# ASCENSION DAY

Thursday 21 May



7.30 & 10.30 am Low Mass  
7.30 pm PROCESSION  
& FESTIVAL MASS

*Schubert in G*

**Guest Preacher: The Very Revd Alan Finley**  
Dean of SS Peter & Paul Roman Catholic Cathedral, Clifton

*Refreshments afterwards. Come and join us in celebration of Christ who lives and reigns.*

## FORTHCOMING FESTIVALS

**Corpus Christi Thursday 11 June.** Guest Preacher at 7.30 pm Festival Mass with Sacrament Procession is the Revd Timothy Bugby, Honorary Chaplain, Christ the King, Gordon Square, and formerly Vicar of St Augustine's, Highgate, and Superior General of the Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament.

**Dedication Festival Sunday 5 July.** As our preacher at the 11 am Friends Festival Mass on this year we are due to welcome the Right Revd Lindsay Urwin OGS, a brilliant missionary and evangelist, until recently Bishop of Horsham and now the new Administrator of the Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham.

**All Saints Day Sunday 1 November.** Guest Preacher at 11 am Festival Mass is the Right Revd Dr Michael Nazir-Ali, currently Bishop of Rochester.

## IN THIS MONTH ... MAY 1985

*[Father Peter Cobb's letter to Magazine readers, when the 'young theologian' to whom he refers, a mere stripling of 35, was a lecturer and Dean of Clare College, Cambridge. David Jenkins was Bishop of Durham from 1984 to 1994. His controversial remarks on Christian doctrine were made on the TV programme Credo in 1984, when he was Professor of Theology at Leeds, but already named as the next Bishop of Durham.]*

'The war of Jenkins's mouth,' as one of the Sunday newspapers gleefully described it, goes on. The Bishop congratulates himself that because of his remarks people have talked more about the Resurrection this Easter than ever before. If this were the whole truth it would be all to the good. Certainly some have been provoked to think more deeply about what they mean by belief in the Resurrection, but most of the talk has been about differences between the bishops of the Church of England and about the propriety of a bishop (as opposed to an academic) airing his doubts in public.

The Bishop has in fact repeatedly affirmed his faith in the Resurrection as well as in the Incarnation. Unfortunately it is the negative side of his statements - for example his saying that

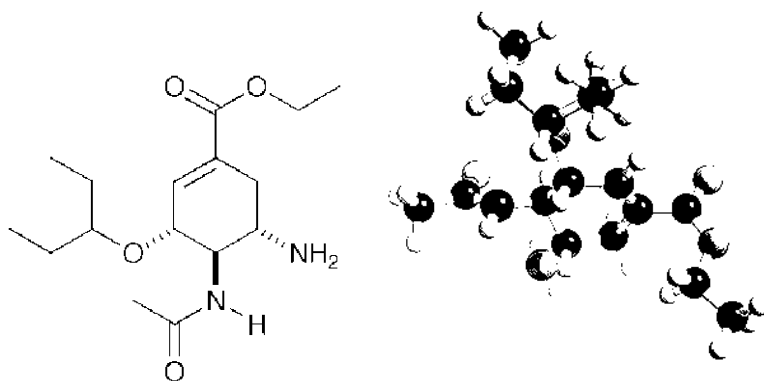
he is “wholly uncertain about the Empty Tomb as literal historical fact,” – that has come across. This is partly due to the way the press has tried to sensationalise his remarks but it is also due to his own phraseology. The popular view of the Resurrection as the resuscitation of a corpse is very inadequate, but to describe it as belief in a “conjuring trick with bones” was pastorally insensitive and needlessly offensive.

The Bishop is making an important point. The heart of the Resurrection faith that God has raised up Jesus and he is alive for evermore “depends on the encounter of faith, the assurance of faith and the practice of faith.” I think he is unnecessarily sceptical about the evidence of the tomb’s being empty, but the empty tomb alone does not and could not prove what we mean by the Resurrection. The empty tomb, moreover, is not irrelevant as the Bishop seems to imply. In the words of a young theologian, Rowan Williams, ‘Matthew at least is perfectly well aware that the tomb story is not a sufficient condition for resurrection faith, but that is not to say that the evangelists are mistaken in seeing it as a necessary condition.’

The raising up and glorification of Jesus’s physical body is part and parcel of our belief in the goodness of the material world and of our understanding of the nature of man. We are not spirits temporarily inhabiting bodies. We are as much bodies as spirits. The John Brown idea of the Resurrection – ‘John Brown’s body lies a-mouldering in the grave, but his soul goes marching on’ – is totally inadequate. The tomb must have been empty if our beliefs about creation and the nature of man are true.

Christ is risen! Alleluia!

**Molecule of the month: ethyl (3R,4R,5S)-5-amino-4-acetamido-3-(pentan-3-oxo)cyclohex-1-ene-1-carboxylate (Oseltamivir or Tamiflu™) C<sub>16</sub>H<sub>28</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>4</sub>**



The current raw material used in the synthesis of <sup>TM</sup>Tamiflu is shikimic acid which is extracted from the pods of the Chinese culinary spice, star anise. A 10-step process will synthesise it into Tamiflu. This takes between 6-8 months to complete. The process requires 30 kg of star anise for every 1 kg of shikimic acid produced. This process is inconveniently slow in the face of a bird or swine flu pandemic, regardless of the availability of sufficient quantities of star anise. Roche, the pharmaceutical company which patented Tamiflu, now use a faster fermentation process to produce required quantities of the acid. A particular strain of *Escherichia coli* bacteria are overfed glucose to make them produce shikimic acid as a waste product. Another research group, headed by Elias Corey at Harvard, has devised another means of synthesis which uses two cheap petrochemicals, acrylate and butadiene, and a catalyst made from the amino acid proline. Other groups are attempting to produce the Tamiflu molecule without using shikimic acid as the raw material.

The coating on the outside of the influenza virus can dissolve its way through the membranes of human body cells and replicate. The new replicated viruses then dissolve their way out of the cells in which they formed and invade neighbouring cells. The cells they leave behind die as their membranes are broken. If the virus replicates beyond a certain point, symptoms such as raised body temperature, headaches and muscle pain are felt. Tamiflu works by binding to the viral coating, thus inhibiting its ability to escape from the infected cell. It restricts the virus to a smaller number of cells so that the body's immune system has a better chance of killing the virus. Tamiflu cannot kill the virus, but does inhibit its replication. In order to be effective, it must be taken as early in the infection as possible.

### BRISTOL CATHOLIC SOCIETIES

*(The Catholic Societies of the Church of England)*

The Assumptiontide Festival will take place this year on Saturday 15 August, the Feast of the Glorious Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Bishop Edwin Barnes will preside and preach at the Solemn Concelebrated Mass in Bristol Cathedral at noon. At 3.30pm there will be Benediction in the Lord Mayor's Chapel, College Green. All are welcome to either or both Services. Further details will be announced later.

It is understood that the Feast of the Assumption will be celebrated at All Saints and All Hallows on the following Sunday, 16 August.

*Chris Verity*

## MUSIC EVENTS

**Saturday June 6th**

**16.00**

**"HURRAH FOR HANDEL, HAYDN & PURCELL"**

A celebration to mark their anniversaries sung by The choir of St Mary Redcliffe, Bristol followed by tea.

**Saturday 20th June**

**From 16.30**

**GLYNDEBOURNE-STYLE OPERA PICNIC**

With Ian Yemm (tenor), a former member of the Glyndebourne Chorus now with the Welsh National Opera, Rosie Hay (soprano), Joanne Thomas (mezzo soprano), Owen Webb (baritone) and James Southall (piano).

Church garden open from 4.30pm for ticket-holders to set up their picnic tables. Cream teas at £3 per head will be available. The concert will start at 6.30 pm with an hour-long supper break from 7.30pm prior to the second hour of the concert. Tickets priced at £15 for adults (£12 concessions and £2 for under-16s if accompanied by an adult) – are available from Andrew Morgan at 147 Whiteladies Road, Clifton, Bristol BS8 2QT, telephone: 0117 9467100, email: [andrew@morgan-beddoe.co.uk](mailto:andrew@morgan-beddoe.co.uk) or Providence Music at 1 St Georges Road, Bristol BS1 5UL, telephone 0117 9276536.

**Wednesday 15th July**

**19.30**

**ORGAN RECITAL**

An organ recital by Colin Andrews, an American based international organist who was originally born and educated in Bristol.