

Fr Hoyal Writes

YES, WE CAN

Deaths of UK service personnel in Afghanistan have jumped sharply. As I write, 184 have now died in Afghanistan since the start of the campaign.

The number of UK unemployed has increased by 281,000 over the last quarter to 2.38 million. This is the largest quarterly increase since comparable records began in 1971.

The UK total of swine flu deaths has risen to 29 (as of 16 July). New cases in the last week alone are estimated at 55,000.

While cases are mostly reported as mild, public anxiety is rising; hence the Communion precautions now being suggested by dioceses – see the Ebbsfleet release published in this magazine.

Each of these stories is hugely concerning. War, recession and pandemic are no strangers to human society, sadly, and people are understandably worried.

But we need not let ourselves be paralysed by media overkill. Nor need we retreat into escapism.

Hopefully, our faith is in all situations a spur both to concern and to hope, both to prayer and to practical action.

People forever say, “I can’t do anything,” but this isn’t so.

Just keeping sensibly informed and making a situation the subject of regular thoughtful prayer is a powerful trigger for ideas great or small that we can help promote or even begin to implement ourselves.

This is one of the ways in which faith can move mountains.

Perhaps your prayers will lead you to make a contribution to current debate about the war in Afghanistan and what we owe our troops.

Perhaps your prayers will prompt you to create a job opportunity for an unemployed young person or support a local scheme for people out of work.

Perhaps your prayers will encourage you to be more careful (though, hopefully, not obsessive) about spreading infection, or to perform an act of kindness for someone who is ill.

It is in ways like this that our praying allows God to change us in his service and for the benefit of others.

For myself, I have no doubt that sincere prayer is also powerful and performative in its own right, accomplishing huge things for God's kingdom.

Through faith we can do a lot more than we think. It teaches us to be properly concerned but not counterproductively anxious. It teaches us to hope and to pray and to love.

For there is indeed a God of hope who will grant us his joy and peace through our faith, even when by human estimation joy and peace seem in short supply.

May he help us see that, yes we can, as we let him fill us with joy and hope in believing.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Richard Hoyle". The signature is written in black ink on a white background.

CATHOLIC AND EVANGELICAL: TWO SIDES OF THE SAME COIN?

This was the title of national Affirming Catholicism day Conference held in Bristol Cathedral on 20 July.

In November 2007 I was approached by Archbishop Rowan's chaplain to see if we would like Archbishop Rowan to do something for us. I jumped at the chance and the Bristol branch of Affirming Catholicism agreed that we our branch should host the day, so started a long process of arrangements. Fr John Bradley and I worked well together, aided by Derek Jay who put a serving team together for the Mass, and our treasurer, Margaret Morgan

Initially, I naively hoped we could have the day here at All Saints where we know and love Archbishop Rowan and he has been a regular visitor in the past, but was I very gently and politely told it would not be possible. Just as well, really, we couldn't have accommodated the numbers! So we approached the Cathedral who were overjoyed at the prospect. Apparently there hasn't been a visit to Bristol from an Archbishop of Canterbury for about 60 years or more.

Arrangements went ahead and we decided that we could manage with space, giving people lunch, getting people to the loo etc in the tight programme we would have to limit numbers to 300. We were booked up by early June with people coming from Durham, Kent, Ireland and everywhere in between. People were still ringing me trying to persuade me to 'squeeze them in' up to the night before!

When I arrived at the cathedral early on the morning of 20th it was quiet and there were flowers around, icons with votive lights and a faint smell of incense – it was so peaceful. The cathedral staff were wonderful and they put tables in various parts of the cathedral for coffee, food, bookshop, and near the entrance we had the registration table. Servers and Eucharistic Administrants were rehearsed at 9 am and then a run through for stewards. David Ogden brought a choir of RSM singers and they rehearsed for an hour. By 10 am the queue was way out into College Green and there was a discreet police presence. Points West arrived and I was called to speak to Amanda Parr to arrange an interview with Archbishop Rowan. They stayed all morning and so recorded the talk and then the wonderful Mass.

The Archbishop was expected at the Cloister entrance and Fr John, Canon Wendy and I were getting ready to go and meet him and take him up to the Canon's Vestry to meet Bishop Mike and Canon Andrew Tremletts (Acting Dean) and for him to have coffee etc. However, he arrived early and I found him and his Chaplain wandering happily down the South aisle. I confess I am delighted to tell you he gave me a huge hug on greeting (the first of three during the day) – yes, I am boasting!

The day began at 11 am with a Welcome from Bishop Mike, and he said how we respected Rowan and held him in great warmth and affection – the applause went on and on and on, much to ++Rowan's embarrassment, he was very moved.

Archbishop Rowan then gave a talk for 40 minutes and I will try and pick out a few points, if I can, from my very badly scribbled notes:

- Catholics and Evangelicals believe themselves to be under authority and believe themselves to be answerable to that authority.

- The bible is not a deposit – it tells what God wants us to know and we ask how this is uniting and informing. Scripture gives us roles that faith can occupy.
- The church catholic gives us the sense of the gift of life, of Christ in the stranger, a living reality.
- Both ways God challenges us as to who we are and what we need.
- To be Catholic we need to listen, are we a Church that talks to itself?
- Here is a potential for a unifying language.
- Catholic/Evangelical faith see the Bible as something to be read in community.
- The Catholic Church maximises the possibility of Christ in the world; interpreters of the Bible in communion – an explanation of how we live out the Christian life.
- The Bible represents that which draw us together. Church orientated faith draws us together, not all powerful text – we are a communication which calls us.

There was so much more, but I can't read my notes! For those who are interested the whole text to the talk will appear on the Archbishop of Canterbury's web-site as soon as they have transcribed it, so his chaplain tells me.

There was a very short break before Mass and I took the boat boy, one Samuel Dowling up to get robed.

The mass was wonderful, we celebrated the feast of Mary Magdalene (2 days early). The Archbishop's chaplain, Canon Anthony Ball, carried the Metropolitan Cross before the Archbishop in the procession in and out. Emma Langley was +Mike's chaplain. All Saints was well represented – I read the first reading from the Song of Solomon, Anne Bradley administered the chalice with +Mike and I administered the chalice with ++Rowan, there were 4 communion stations. Samuel Dowling was boatboy and was excellent, he had a great sense of

presence and was very dignified and he looked very tiny next to Derek Jay! The cathedral was packed out and it was good to see some All Saints people in the congregation. One member from All Saints said that,

The Mass was fantastic! There is hope for the catholic wing of the Church of England after all.'

For those who are interested musically, our hymns were – Introit: Christ Triumphant, ever Reigning; Offertory: Where is the Lord of Light (written by Fr John Hadley and sung to Love unknown); Communion: Let all Mortal Flesh Keep Silence; Recessional hymn: Thine be the Glory. The Mass settings were by David Ogden and Fr John Bradley and we sang the Celtic Alleluia.

Angela Tilby preached an excellent on Mary Magdalene – I have stolen a few ideas!

When Mass was over we broke for lunch and I took some lunch up to ++Rowan in the Canon's Vestry before he gave a brief interview to the BBC, then came and mixed so informally, as is his way, with the congregation. Some primary school children came on a visit and he crouched down on the floor and talked with them for a while. Then there was time for a few informal photos before the afternoon session.

The afternoon session was a panel discussion with Archbishop Rowan, Angela Tilby and Jonathan Clark (National Chair of Affirming Catholicism). Written questions were sent in and Bishop David Stancliffe, our President, chaired this session. I do not have notes of the questions, but they were interesting and varied.

The day ended with Closing Devotions led by Bishop David Stancliffe. We sang 'Victim Divine, thy Grace we claim' – a wonderful Wesley hymn and the Lord's Prayer to Rimsky-

Korsakov arr. David Stancliffe. The Angelus was said. Then Archbishop gave us his blessing and after another archiespicopal hug we saw him off.

It was a truly inspiring day, a happy day, a relaxed day – and nothing went wrong. My mail box has been crammed with emails of a very positive nature, and ++Rowan's chaplain emailed me late that evening to say just how much he and Rowan had enjoyed themselves.

Our thanks go to Canon Wendy Wilby and the Cathedral staff who made us so welcome and worked so hard to make the day go smoothly.

This is to be the first of Aff Cath (as we call ourselves) annual national days to be held in Bristol – we are already planning the next one!

Liz Badman

09-06-21 All Saints. 12th Sunday of Ordinary Time (Trinity 2)

Every so often I like to revisit the SS Great Britain; I imagine most of us have been round it at some time or other. One of the things that impresses me below decks is the cramped nature of the passenger accommodation. Tiny cabins even for the first class travellers, barely a bunk for those going at the cheaper end. State-of-the-art in its day, but dwarfed by the cruise liners that exist now, virtually small towns afloat. The biggest ship I have ever actually sailed on was a channel ferry; I can hardly imagine crossing the Atlantic in bad weather in the nineteenth century.

All this is leading up to today's Gospel story. Jesus has been engaged in preaching and teaching, as we heard last week.

Evening comes, and he tells the disciples that he wants to cross the sea. This is the first of several trips reported by Mark in which Jesus crosses the sea of Galilee from Jewish to Gentile territory or vice versa. For Mark, they seem to have symbolic overtones, revealing the underlying pattern of Jesus's life and ministry.

Archaeological discoveries in modern times suggest that the boat would have been about twenty-six feet long and eight feet wide, capable of carrying twelve to fifteen people: in this case, Jesus and "the Twelve". We have been told that "the crowd" had been left behind, so the other boats in the little fleet probably carried other disciples. A nice image of the Church, sailing across the "world's wild, restless sea."

Suddenly, a fierce windstorm blew up, scattering the boats and threatening to swamp the one with Jesus in. In Mark's mind, this is a foreshadowing of the metaphorical storm that scattered and almost overwhelmed the disciples when Jesus was arrested and crucified, as well as the threat of persecution that overshadowed his readers thirty years or so on. At times like these- which have recurred throughout the Church's history- it feels very much as if the Master is asleep, unaware or uncaring about the fate of his followers.

But no! The disciples wake him up! Historically, this shows that, amid all their panic and fear, they spontaneously turned to Jesus, with the implied expectation that he could do "something", even if they knew not what. Even when apparently asleep, he is still the Master. In our storms, we must never lose confidence in this: he is in charge! And Jesus wakes, takes in the situation at a glance, and "rebukes" the wind, telling the sea to "be quiet", just as if they were naughty children! The Liturgy is right to give us as our first reading the magnificent words of the Lord to Job, in the midst of his storm of troubles.

“Who shut in the sea with doors, and prescribed bounds for it, and said:

Thus far you shall come, and no farther, and here shall your proud waves be stopped!”

Or the psalm:

At his word the stormy wind ariseth, which lifteth up the waves thereof.

When they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, he delivereth them out of their distress.

For he maketh the storm to cease, so that the waves thereof are still.

Jesus spoke, and all was calm again! At which point, the Lord has a further gentle rebuke for the disciples: “Why were you so afraid? Did you not trust me?” Fundamentally, when the New Testament talks about “faith”, it is not talking about some complicated theological gymnastics, but about simple trust in the ability of God to help us, and in his good-will towards us, to want to help us. As the hymn says, “In simple trust like theirs who heard, beside the Syrian sea.”

“And they were filled with great awe”- literally, “they feared a great fear”, but this is not the terror of those who thought they were at the point of death, but the overwhelming sense of those being in the presence of divine power. “Who is this?” they say- but Mark wisely leaves us to give our own answer.

St Paul had a stormy life- sometimes literally, with several shipwrecks, but more often simply with hardship, beatings, imprisonment, and the other things he mentions in the Epistle. What kept him going was not human hope, but the conviction that Jesus was with him. At this point I was going to tell you a story about St Antony of Padua, but this morning I came across a better story, about a (possible) relative of mine, Jim Spilsbury, who in the 1930’s ran a radio repair business up and down the coast of

British Columbia. Just before Christmas, 1937, he got married in Vancouver, and he and his new bride, with two others, set out in their boat to spend Christmas with friends up the coast. About half past five on Christmas Eve they ran into an Arctic wind coming down one of the fjords that stud that area. Jim said, “visibility was almost nil, and we were making very little headway. We shouldn’t have been out there at all, but I wanted to keep our appointment for Christmas dinner with Jack and Rose.”

They were just about to turn the corner round one of the islands, and head for quieter waters, when the engine failed, about half a mile off shore. Jim tried everything he knew, but could not get it going again. Meanwhile, the tide was carrying them ever closer to rocky cliffs that would smash the boat like matchwood. “Our situation was most uncomfortable- desperate in fact,” he said. “So I did the only thing left to do... lowered the anchor.” With 175 feet of wire, he could only hope that the anchor would take hold before they hit the rocks, but the water was deep off the point. It would be touch and go. “All this time poor Glenys was just hanging on like grim death and saying nothing. What an introduction to boating- and married life.”

“I think it was at this point that I decided to pray. I seem to recall that it was what other people had been known to do under similar circumstances. But I was not a very good hand at that sort of thing. I wracked my mind but in spite of being brought up by a religious-minded father and named by a clergyman grandfather, I couldn’t think of any words. What would the Governor think of me now? Then I wondered just how important the words actually were, so long as the intentions were thee. If the scheme could work, I was more than willing to give it a try, words or no words. Then words came to me- silent words, but they surfaced in a rush:

‘Break, break, break,
on thy cold grey stones, O sea!
And I would that my tongue could utter
the thoughts that arise in me.’

Not out of the prayer book but I was in no position to be choosy. I felt the vessel suddenly swing round into the wind, and the rolling ceased. The anchor had caught, and only just in time.”

By the light of a torch Jim saw that they were within ten feet of the cliff, covered in icicles where the spray had frozen. And after another attempt he at last got the engine going again. “To this day I don’t know what the trouble was, and it never happened again,” he said. View it how you like- in his need, Jim prayed, even if the only words he could think of came from Tennyson rather than Scripture. “I would that my tongue could utter the thoughts that arise in me.” Or as St Paul says, “When we cannot choose words in order to pray properly, the Spirit himself expresses our plea.”

I am sure there are people here this morning whose lives seem beset by storms right now. Others have been through such experiences. None of us can be sure that it will never happen to us. This is a challenge to faith- but we need to understand what that challenge actually is. It is not about our intellectual beliefs; it is about our trust in the Lord. It is a challenge to our trust that, whatever happens, he is with us, he cares for us, that whatever happens to us outwardly, he will never let us go. “Whether we live, we live for the Lord,” says St Paul in another place- and then he adds, “and whether we die, we die for the Lord. Whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord.” “We are treated as dying,” he says in today’s Epistle, “and see- we are alive!”

St Mark’s Gospel repeatedly contrasts the authority and strength of Christ with the incomprehension and weakness of his followers. This could be taken in a discouraging way- the Lord has done his part, but we always let him down and ruin his work. But it can and should be taken as encouragement- whatever our failings and faithlessness, the Master is not asleep in the boat. He is trustworthy and will keep us safe.

are issuing largely similar advice about the impact of the Swine Flu pandemic. This notice supports that advice. Whilst the disease continues to be spread by touch, and at least until a vaccine is available, it is prudent to remind everyone of the importance of hand hygiene and to minimise physical contact. Church lavatories should use throwaway towels or electric hand driers.

It seems sensible, for the time being, for _____, and informal greetings before and after service, to be a verbal greeting between priest and people and amongst the congregation, rather than a hug or handshake.

At the time of _____, in addition to the symbolic use of water and a linen towel, the celebrant, and any other minister distributing the host, should use a hand gel. A bottle of hand gel should routinely be on the credence and the lavabo towel should be renewed for every use.

It seems sensible to receive only _____, though the celebrant himself must receive the cup representatively. The whole Christ is present in both species.

Holy Communion should be placed
being, directly on to the tongue.

and not, for the time

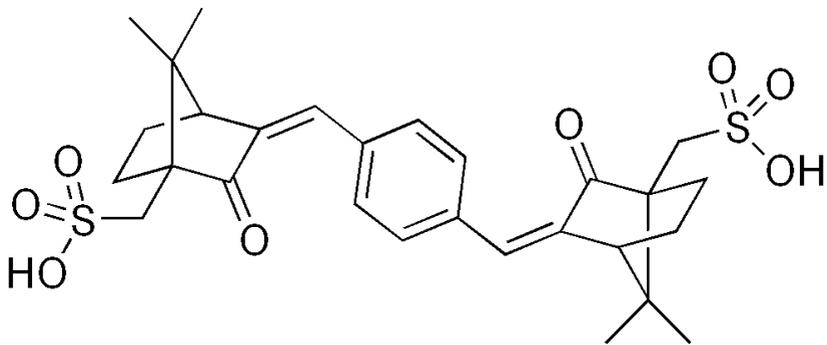
However should be available for
those who wish nonetheless to receive the Precious Blood. People
should be reassured that, as medical advice at the time of the outbreak
of HIV-AIDS indicated, the risk of infection by means of the chalice is
minimal: must always be used for the cup and the wine
therein is alcoholic.

+  Ebb, Fleck

Molecule of the month – Ecamsule



Terephthalylidene dicamphor sulphonic acid



Ecamsule is a molecule included in sun creams. The molecule
itself blocks UVA rays; these are a certain wavelength of ultra-

violet rays responsible for wrinkling of the skin and skin cancer. It works through reversible photoisomerization, followed by photoexcitation. The absorbed UV is then released as thermal energy, without penetrating the skin. Even though UVA rays can be responsible for skin cancer they are mainly involved in early aging (photoaging).

Applying ecamsule to mice shows that it is effective in reducing skin wrinkling under exposure to UVA rays. Ecamsule is also shown to delay the onset of skin cancer in mice. It is used alongside other molecules with similar properties to provide a broader spectrum of protection against UV light.