

September 2017

New Wine – a catholic perspective: thoughts from Father Charles

New Wine

Since 1989 there has been a 'New Wine Christian Conference' held at the Royal Bath and West Showground. The event, which lasts over two weeks during August, is attended by about 30,000 people. Primarily, those who attend are what we might label (for what labels are worth) as charismatic or evangelical. New Wine is essentially a network that aligns evangelical churches from all over Britain (and with an increasingly worldwide presence).

Though having said this, a number of our own congregation attended the event this year – do ask Sister Teresa to talk about her experience. In comparison some 80 or so went from Christ Church Clifton.

Two themes emerged during this year's event which are of real interest to the whole church, from whichever wing we feel we represent. They are especially of interest to those of us who represent the 'catholic wing' because of our heritage and that they reflect a coming together of understanding.

These two themes are:

- The Forgotten Poor
- A Liturgical Audit

The Forgotten Poor

First, was the presentation of Bishop Philp North. His essential point was that "*we are seeing the slow and steady withdrawal of church life from those communities where the poorest people in our nation live*". Despite, he adds, seeing the 'two decades of Evangelical ascendancy' and the 'vast and ever-growing industry of evangelism' numerical decline continues. And remembering that he made much the same presentation at Walsingham during the same month.

The answer, he suggests, is that we've forgotten the poor. Without pulling the punches he says "*Unless we start with the poor, the gospel we proclaim is a sham, an empty hypocrisy.*" In his argument he drew upon the evidence of budget allocation (at national and diocesan levels, as well as Holy Trinity Brompton (HTB) and the focus of New Wine); he held the lens over the selection and training of licensed and ordained ministers; he pointed out that the planting of new churches was focused on the more pleasant of needy areas (especially in London if they fell into Zones 1 & 2); and he provided narrative accounts of what he deemed as success.

Of the accounts one gave the story of Fr Basil Jellicoe in Somers Town, London (during the 1930s), who he saw as one of the forerunners of catholic evangelism. Some of us will remember Fr Paul Hawkins describing the life and work of Fr Jellicoe during the Lent talks

last year. He also gave an account of the work at St Peter's Brighton (a current church plant from HTB) that had established a very effective church satellite.

It may be that Bishop North deliberately seeks to overstate this case to force us to respond. But what is certainly clear is that his message needs to be taken on board to provide opportunity for reflection and action. This is regardless of our roots, evangelical or catholic.

A Liturgical Review

New Wine takes place over two weeks and each week has a major theme which is 'driven from the main tent'. This year, in week two, the pastor for teaching and vision at Bridgetown Church (Portland, OR) who is John Mark Comer talked each day about 'Practising the way of Jesus'. Now, Comer is a very well-known and acclaimed evangelical and his central theme would loudly resonate in the ears of those whose heritage is of a more catholic nature.

His message was that many evangelical churches have lost the real rhythm of worship and prayer, and this they need to reclaim as an existing characteristic that sits at the heart of our Christian heritage. In his language he says that a 'primary task of discipleship to Jesus is learning how to curate our heart'.

Still using his way of speaking, he says this means we should 'take a Liturgical Audit'. For him this is regaining the 'spiritual disciplines and practices that create time and space for us to access the presence and power of the Holy Spirit'.

During the week, in each of his presentations, he expanded on the 'how' of this. And it's a 'how' that we easily recognise. Regular retreats, that include silence, solitude, prayer, simple living and study; daily worship, with reading and prayer (that we may see as the Daily Office); the Lord's Supper carried out with reverence and dignity (our daily and Sunday Parish Mass); combined activity of the church and worshipping community; and how this works its way through to how we live out our individual and collective life in this world.

Our Heritage

I have spent a little time here providing some brief observations on two presentations made at this year's New Wine Conference at Shepton Mallet. My purpose has been to recognise that these took place in a context which we would typically define as 'evangelical', yet the messages contained in each are very much embedded in the tradition of the catholic renewal (and the Oxford Movement) of which we, at ASC, are very much a part.

These two features remind us of what lay at the heart of the catholic renewal from which we emerged 150 years ago. As our more evangelical brothers and sisters are directed to reflect on how these may be regained, perhaps as we approach our anniversary year we too may reflect on how we ensure they continue to live as part of what we do as individuals and as the worshipping community at ASC.

With prayers and blessings,



Lightenings viii

The annals say: when the monks of Clonmacnoise
Were all at prayers inside the oratory
A ship appeared above them in the air.

The anchor dragged along behind so deep
It hooked itself into the altar rails
And then, as the big hull rocked to a standstill,

A crewman shinned and grappled down the rope
And struggled to release it. But in vain.
'This man can't bear our life here and will drown,'

The abbot said, 'unless we help him.' So
They did, the freed ship sailed, and the man climbed back
Out of the marvellous as he had known it.

Seamus Heaney
Seeing Things
1991

Rodney King: Requiem Funeral Mass

'Learning from Rod'

"Every day, day-in-day-out, the Daily Office, Morning and Evening Prayer, is said in this sacred space which is All Saints Church. The Office is said by one of the 'Daily Office Team'. Wednesday was the day that Rod said Evening Prayer and has done for a good many years.

At six o'clock he would be here saying the office. Now it's true that he used his own variation of the Office, and he always sung an office hymn as a solo (actually he sang it rather well), and he always gave the prayers, the intercessions, a personal and emotional charge that lifted them from being simply words but prayers with real meaning.

Yesterday was Wednesday. Rod was received into church in the late afternoon and it was in this sacred space that his earthly mortal body rested for its final night amongst us. This was so fitting, not only because it has been here at All Saints that over the years Rod has been sustained and fed at the Eucharist, but also because he has been such a significant part of the life, prayer and worship of the All Saints family.

And yesterday was Wednesday; the day on which he pretty much always would have been saying Evening Prayer. On this occasion the office was said beside him, and we could only imagine his singing of the office hymn. His physical body may have been here but I have little doubt that he had already been welcomed at God's table in heaven, and was mixing with all the Saints rather than us at All Saints."

Turning the Tables

"As a priest and some of my brother and sister colleagues here today will recognise this, you often visit or spend time with those confronting life's challenges. Those points of loss, or illness, nearing death or the other traumas that confront most of us at some time. As a priest you hope that in such times you are given the words or the ability to be useful, supportive, comforting, to provide insight or just to be with someone.

But sometimes the tables turn.

Sometimes it seems the priest role has been lived out by another; and you step away from the encounter feeling uplifted, or humbled, or with the gift of fresh insight or understanding.

This was Rod's capacity. Especially in these last few months when he has been confronted by his own challenges and fears.

Now, I know that most of you have known Rod for a good many years and far longer than I have. I am in a sense the 'new person here'. But I would like to spend a few moments to talk about two moments of insight, gifts from Rod, which are important to hear today and have relevance for each one of us."

First, Faith

"A few weeks ago Rod said "I'm sure I know where I'm going; but I don't know the way." Like yourselves I was immediately minded of the account from the Gospel of John, where Jesus says: "You know the way to the place where I am going".

Thomas, you recall, said “how can we know the way?”; and Jesus answered simply and completely “I am the way”.

Over time, as this conversation progressed with Rod, it became increasingly clear that he was finding real meaning in the words of Christ Jesus. His thinking about ‘the way’ was not about directions, route finding, things that must be done; but was based on one factor alone. This factor was the personal relationship that he has with God in the person of Jesus. It was increasingly clear that it was the very nature of this personal relationship that is the way.”

Second, Our Lord Incarnate

“It is this personal relationship that binds the second insight to the first. And it was the ability that Rod had to recognise and respond to the face of our living lord in the face of those in need.

Again, whilst in hospital, Rod was in a small ward for time that consisted of six beds. In the bed opposite was a man of mature years who was clearly distressed and in anguish. Rod, despite his own considerable cares and fears, quietly said to me “I feel so guilty”. And yes, it was the word guilty he used. “I feel so guilty, I can’t get out of bed and across the ward to talk with him!”

Rod’s response to this man’s need; Rod’s response to the needs of others was always direct and personal. I know he wouldn’t have said, of himself, that his response was driven by the cries or the sight of our Lord in others – his was a need, perhaps a drive, to simply respond.

This was something he demonstrated throughout his life. His recognition and action to the need of others was often at his own expense; very often it was those who lived or experienced life at the edge or on the periphery (as refugees or in society) that gained his attention and caused him to act. And here at All Saints we cannot forget the care he gave to a previous incumbent, Fr Peter, in his last years of illness, that transformed his life experience in his last remaining years.”

Remembering Rodney

“So, when we think of Rod and give thanks for his life in the business community here in Bristol, within the various other networks that he was engaged, and in his life amongst us the worshipping community here at All Saints. When we recall Rod’s energy, his humour, the wise cracks that bubbled so readily to the surface. When we think of the challenges that he faced over the last few years in his own life, with the death of his mother, Joyce, the problems within his business and the way he faced his own illness and death.

Let us not forget the example he gives us all in the depth of his faith in the strength of his personal relationship with our Lord Jesus Christ, and how this became so evident in the moving and meaningful nature of his public prayer and in his sacrificial response to the needs of others. Amen.”

**Rest eternal grant to him
And let light perpetual shine upon him**

**May he rest in peace
May he rise in glory**

HOMILY

FUNERAL OF ANNE GUINIVERE HANCOCK

Anne Guinivere, two beautiful names for a beautiful woman.

Anne had a strong, but quiet faith, solidly middle of the road Church of England Book of Common Prayer. She and her late husband Paul were regulars at the Cathedral and also Christ Church Clifton.

I quote from her long-term friends, Mike and Mary Benton, who sadly are unable to be here today.:

“Anne arrived at AS when Paul was terminally ill in 1998. Paul was a colleague of ours and a dear friend, as Anne became. They had been regulars at the Cathedral and at Christchurch, the latter not being a natural fit, but they felt loyalty to the parish system, and when Paul was unable to get out, we brought her to church with us if there was a Marie Curie sitter for him. It had to be that way even with the trendy liturgy she rather disliked because a child or more usually both would be serving. She grew to love it, unfamiliar as Anglo-Catholicism was to her. She started an All Saints book club that ran for several years until the parking at Royal York Crescent became too difficult for the participants who were mostly retired, but also included some school children, such was her ability to get on with people. She coached various All Saints youth for English Literature exams entirely voluntarily and brought Shakespeare and Jane Austen alive for some rather reluctant scholars. She read the Parish magazine avidly until the end, brave woman.

As Anne became more frail she was unable to get to church, so Jessica, Norman and I took the sacrament to her – Jessica and Norman more recently than me – and she loved us, though we are three very different characters.

Anne’s faith shone through in her relationship with other people, she loved people and wouldn’t hear anything bad said about anyone, and she enjoyed company, and it hurt her when people she loved didn’t get on with each other. I used enjoy visiting her in her glorious apartment in Royal York Crescent, for our regular Book Club meetings a few years ago, or just to pop in for a chat, I can remember lovely late summer afternoons sitting on her balcony eating cake and drinking gin and tonic and gazing over Bristol and talking about books, and our travels, and family. I was able to share with her some of work my great grandfather had done as Librarian and Trustee of the Shakespeare Trust in Stratford-upon-Avon.

Last summer I told her I was going to Prague with my daughter and when I went to visit her a few days later she generously gave me some papers she had looked out from her study, about the history of Prague and a detailed plan of the statues on the Charles Bridge, which really helped us to understand the atmosphere there. She didn’t want them back.

Anne’s home, especially her large study was full of books, papers pictures and varied artefacts from her full and interesting life. We think of her as being interested in literature and poetry, but that was only a part of her interests, though maybe the main ones.

Anne's ability to get on with one everyone was wonderful, a few years ago she would come to parties at our house and she became very friendly with a young woman friend of my younger daughter's and they would meet up for coffee in Clifton Village. Young and old, age didn't matter to Anne, her friendships spanned all age groups.

Anne will be very much missed here at All Saints. Her faith and her delight in the Sacrament were strong and she gained comfort from them. I have no doubt she has gone to join the great company of saints in heaven.

As Christians we believe that Christ is present in everyone., in spite of everything the light of Christ shone in Anne and in how she lived her life.

Anne Guinivere, may you rest in peace and rise again in glory.

Liz Badman

PARISH RETREAT 2018

As many of you now know Glastonbury Retreat House will close on 27 December 2017. This comes as a shock as it has been a Retreat House since 1931 and All Saints has been going there for many years. We have been very happy there.

Many years ago All Saints also went to Llangasty, near Brecon, for retreats and that is where we will be going in 2018.

- The dates are
Friday 2 February 4pm to 4pm on Sunday 4 February

- Cost approximately £160 per person – the new tariff hasn't been confirmed yet.

We have to pay for 16 places regardless of whether that many go, so the cost may be a little more. We will need to pay with one cheque when we arrive, so I will need your full payment by 21 January 2018 to confirm your place.

Llangasty is much smaller than Glastonbury and is rather remote, so for the few, retail therapy will not be an option! It is intimate but friendly and has two chapels and a library. The scenery around is magnificent and there are some good walking places. I would suggest looking it up on the internet:

www.llangasty.com/

We are waiting for confirmation of a Conductor.

I will be putting a list to sign in the porch soon and update as necessary. I will also give details of directions and offer of lifts nearer the time.

Liz Badman

TRIBUTE TO HELENE CHALKER

Funeral 16 August 2017

Mal, Sholto, has asked me say a few words about my friendship with his mother. Words can't quite come up to the brilliance of her presence in my life back when I was a young woman, she influenced me a lot.

I knew Jack Chalker when he was principal of West of England College of Art and Design, now Faculty of Arts of UWE, way back in 1966, he and my step-father were good friends and I went to work in the Library there. I remember the day Jack brought Helene to look around the college word got round fast that Mr Chalker had brought a colourful woman into the college. I was bowled over by her. How can I describe her? She was beautiful, she was so glamorous, she was confident and she glowed. Sholto says he was there, but I don't remember him on that occasion.

Always perfectly coiffured and madeup and beautifully dressed she was often around Clifton and stood out from the rest of us. I remember when she lived in Queen's Court.

Then she and Jack bought a house in Freeland Place which they were doing up, and I went and spent time there and remember one particularly happy day when we all went for a walk with Jason in Ashton Park and Jason ran off, as he often did, so off we went calling him. Helene didn't like Jason and there are dark rumours about their relationship. By the way Jason was a beautiful golden lurcher who was very boisterous and naughty.

After a gorgeous meal Helene sent Sholto and I off to the Granary for the evening, this was a rather good jazz club. Well we had to go as she more or less gave us a royal order.

Many times Helene would spontaneously call on me, 'I've just dropped round for lunch, Darling.' She would dash in wearing the famous mink coat and loads of jewellery. There was the time I met her in Clifton, in her mink coat of course, and she had just been in to the fish and chip shop and was carrying cod in batter, wrapped up in paper 'I was just coming to see you darling'. Well I had to turn away from errand I was on and we went back home where she stripped the batter off the cod and ate it out of the paper!

Just before I got married she swept me off to Brights and bought me my rather grand make-up for my wedding. At our wedding she decided when it was time to cut the cake!

When I was pregnant she continued her visits and I think was amused at my appearance – shapeless pregnancy trousers and a sailing smock and always barefoot. My husband was completely smitten by her and when our elder daughter was born insisted that we named her Helene.

Helene was naughty and got away with saying and doing outrageous things, her mantra was, everyone was guilty until proved innocent. She was great fun, she was warm and she was very generous, and there are funny things which would not be quite correct to repeat here!

I don't know what Helene's religious beliefs were, but she was a good person. The 14thC philosopher and Dominican, Meister Eckhart, taught that there is a spark of God present in every single human being and this was true in Helene in her care for Jack, in her friendliness and her generosity, in her fun, and in the joy she brought to people by her presence.

If I close my eyes I can still see her – the mink coat, the jewels – and that wonderful smile.

Helene, rest in peace, I miss you.

Liz Badman

THE TRANSFIGURATION preached at 8am & 11am on 6 August 2017

(Adapted from a sermon given in 2010)

There was a cloud – and there was blinding light.

On a mountain 2,000 years ago.

On a city 72 years ago.

On 6th August we celebrate the Feast of the Transfiguration, and we also remember the terrible act of the Americans dropping the first atom bomb on Hiroshima. We commemorate 2 events, and in doing so see the radiance of the glory of Christ in stark contrast to the radiance of the destructive power of the atomic bomb.

In the Transfiguration our Lord was revealed as the God of Peace, *he exploded with the spiritual power of non violence and unconditional love into the light of the world, the fullness of love and peace for the whole human race.*¹ The words of John Dear, a Jesuit and a pacifist.

In the dropping of the bomb on Hiroshima, Dorothy Day, who founded the Catholic Worker, called the event the 'anti-transfiguration', when we rejected Jesus's nonviolence and created our own demonic light, the blast of the bomb, the dark cloud. So instead of bringing light and peace into the world to the human race, we bring death and destruction.

In our Lord's transfiguration, it was only those closest to Jesus who saw what happened and who heard the voice from the cloud saying, 'This is my Son, my chosen One. Listen to Him'. They saw Jesus in his glory, as he was meant to be.

At Hiroshima the effects could still be seen and felt only too well at 1500 metres. Over 200,000 died, either immediately or more slowly from related illnesses. A nine year old boy described the aftermath,

'I was astonished to see my sister covered in blood. Then I looked at myself and saw the skin of my hands and legs peeling and hanging down. I started crying with fear'.

¹ John Dear *Hiroshima Day sermon for the Feast of the Transfiguration 5.8.06*

A sixteen year old girl who was nearer, 600 metres, records:

'My hands were red with blood, my skin hanging down. In my wounded flesh I saw black red and white things appearing. I was alarmed and tried to remove them by taking my handkerchief from my pocket. But there was no handkerchief and no pocket. All the clothes below my waist were burned away.'

Why am I telling you this? It is not because I want to dwell on injury, it is because we must remember, and we must keep on remembering the terrible things that humankind is capable of doing to other humans and to the whole environment. *It must not happen again.*

Hiroshima happened when I was 7 months old and when I was a teenager and in my early 20s we were very conscious of the threat of nuclear weapons. That threat has not gone away, but there seems to be a complacency amongst many people that is worrying. Governments amass nuclear weapons, that also is worrying. Donald Trump talks of using nuclear weapons in the Middle East. During the build up to the last elections there people at television debates saying that we should use them. We are currently living with tensions between the USA and North Korea.

So there was a cloud and dazzling light – Jesus was changed physically, his face was changed, his clothes were dazzling white and he shone brighter than the sun; and he was talking with Moses and Elijah. It must have been terrifying for the disciples. John Chrysostom said, "It revealed something of His Divinity to them, as much and insofar as they were able to apprehend it, and it showed the indwelling of God within Him." Then they were enveloped in a cloud and heard a voice.

Clouds can be terrifying, or they can carry beauty. They can bring peace and wonder or they can bring destruction. The cloud of terror has hung over us for 72 years – the nuclear cloud of Hiroshima at 8.15 on 6 August 1945, destroying over 4 square miles of the city and damaging a further 9 square miles.

But there is another cloud that has followed its way through history – the cloud of God. The cloud led the people of Israel through the desert. The cloud covered Mount Sinai where Moses met with God. God led his people out of slavery to a promised land by a cloud. A cloud appeared at Jesus's baptism, the heavens opened and the Holy Spirit descended on him and the voice of God was heard,

'You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.'

The cloud appeared on the mountain at his transfiguration and they were swallowed up in the cloud of God and again God's voice was heard,

'This is my Son, my chosen. Listen to him'

Then finally at the ascension he was taken up in a cloud. God was in the cloud.

There is a wonderful 14thC spiritual writing called 'The Cloud of Unknowing' which says that God cannot be reached by our intellect, only love can pierce the cloud of unknowing which lies between us and God. Rowan Williams says,

This is a great challenge to faith: knowing that Christ is in the heart of darkness, we are called to there with Him.²

Takashi Nagai, a Japanese university doctor was among the thousands injured by the bomb at Hiroshima. The flash of light came, brighter than the sun and a thick white mushroom cloud was over the city followed by the blast that destroyed everything from the centre of the city. Dr Nagai was flung into the air and buried beneath a pile of rubble and broken glass. When he escaped he found 80% of his colleagues and students were dead and the university in ruins and about to be burnt to the ground. He and his few colleagues who survived set about helping the wounded and dying around them.

He did this because he saw God in the light and in the cloud. He believed that he saw the suffering that the nuclear cloud caused as an invitation to share in the sufferings of Christ. Christ's transfiguration spoke of Christ's glory even when he was dying on the cross. So he felt the cloud at Hiroshima spoke of the same glory experienced through the great suffering.

Back to John Dear the Jesuit pacifist who believes that the Transfiguration is about the paschal mystery, about the cross as the way toward global disarmament and the new life of resurrection. Jesus turns into the bright white light, which is the biblical symbol of martyrdom, and he becomes the risen Christ. It is for us to follow the transfigured Jesus on the way of the cross to help him carry out his mission of Peace. It is for us to be transfigured by Jesus and to bring His Love and His Peace to the world, so that atrocities like Hiroshima may never happen again.

We, the Church must look for God in the clouds of fear, apathy, and weakness surrounding us.

We the Church must pray and hear God speaking to us.

We the Church must see God's glory in the powerful, transfigured Jesus and be transfigured by Him.

It is up to us to walk in his light.

AMEN

Liz Badman, Lay Minister

² Williams, Rowan *The Indwelling of the Light: Praying with the icons of Christ.*