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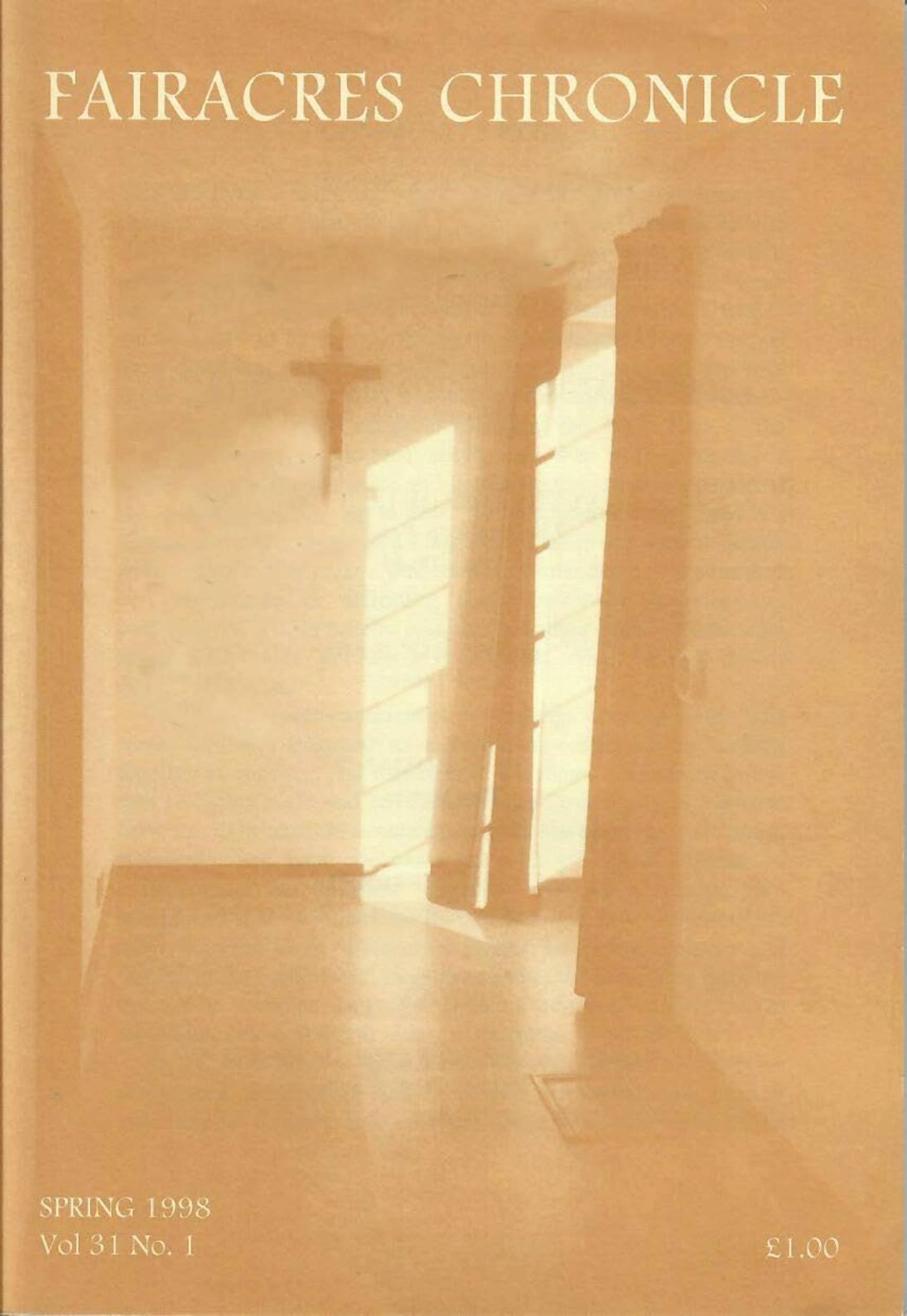

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHRIST WHO HALLOWS THE WATERS **2**

MARTIN LINSKILL 2

THE COMMITMENT OF WILLED PASSIVITY **5**

FATHER RICHARD BUCK 5

SAINT THÉRÈSE OF LISIEUX **9**

MARY DODD 9

EDUCATION SUNDAY **19**

JANET TROTTER 19

FACING ROMANIA **22**

TIM HEWES 22

AUTUMN'S STREET **26**

ALEXANDER POPESCU 26

BOOKS **27**

FROM SCM PRESS **34**

SLG AND ASSOCIATES **35**

CHRIST WHO HALLOWS THE WATERS

MARTIN LINSKILL

CHRIST at Cana is John's first Sign, the first act of God-disclosing power and love, of the series in his narrative which show the world who Jesus is and move beholders to believe in him. The miracle at Cana belongs in John's scheme as the first disclosure, the beginning of Signs, of Christ's glory. It has also been seen as the disclosure of a lot else, for once the story is explicitly presented as bearing a special meaning it is hard to know where to stop in the search for meanings.

If nothing else, Christ's 'presence and the first miracle that he wrought' have been greeted as hallowing and beautifying the human and holy estate of marriage: here is a whole vast range of human experience and relationship claimed for and blessed by the redemptive as well as creative purpose of God. Even monks, preaching to edify their fellow-monks, such as our own Bede or the Cistercian Isaac of Stella, found it appropriate to say as much to counter heterodox hyper-ascetical calumniators of marriage. This endorsement of marriage as Christ-borne and Christ-bearing is taken to its logical conclusion when a couple wants to be married in the course of their Sunday Parish Mass.

We may take it, though, that John's interest in telling the story is not centred on marriage. His concern is with what the Lord did, the sign he performed on and for that occasion. The couple as a couple are not mentioned, and the groom is only spoken to. The need being met, the distress compassionated, was a great neighbourhood celebration whose swing was threatened, a whole embarrassed family or clan whose honour and good name for hospitality was in the balance. It is to be expected from John's telling of other Signs that the new supplies should be both of better quality than the old that failed, and furnished in spectacularly lavish quantities. The tanker of champagne compares with the shoal of breakfast kippers, the hampers of picnic fragments, and even perhaps, in a kind of reciprocal gesture, the disciples' sackfuls of spices for the Lord's entombing. Where the Lord is amidst our doings, we may be sure the yield will be ample, the joy unfailing.

Both Bede and Isaac are fascinated by those waterpots, especially by their sixfoldness, and both produce wonderful schemes which these might betoken. For Isaac, since it is in or from out of these jars that the glory is revealed, they must stand for the six modes of Revelation, the six metaphorical 'books' or places where the Divine Wisdom is to be found, which, as well as Scripture, include the mental and spiritual capacities of the

creature and the Incarnate Word himself. For Bede they are the stout hearts of the faithful in the six ages of mankind, from Abel's murder to the Incarnation, all of which scriptural phases convey both cleansing and cheer to those who ponder them. They all present also a typology of Christ's Passion and the sacraments—Noah's deliverance, Abraham's sacrifice, David's exile, Israel's return; each in turn to be filled up and drawn off from in the divine scheme of salvation.

If I may fling in my own halfpenn'orth to these musings, what strikes me in this Sign is the incongruity of the transformation. It wasn't drinking-fountains that now ran with wine, but as it were showers that sprayed wine, bathwater to wine: pots for outward washing clean yield draughts and potation to be taken internally, draughts of life's joy to drink. The external/internal distinction does not escape the highly analytic Isaac, and Bede makes the expected connection with baptism and the eucharist, and the believer's progress from baptistery to altar, as it were from washroom to table. But I want to stay with the labours of the ladlings and douchings as themselves the substance of the furnished cheer. The waters of cleansing *become* the wine of joy: Christ sanctifies that toilsome process under obedience, undertaken at his command (with some prompting by our Lady), to *be* that well of salvation from which we shall gladly draw. Have you ever considered what a business it must have been to fill large immovable jars with 150 gallons of water from the nearest source, by pails and pitchers without benefit of piped mains and taps, and the to decant it all again so as to be served to guests, even with several staff on the job? Yet that was the labour—an ablutionary one which could not possibly have been expected to have any other end—which was blessed into the quite unlooked-for yield: and primarily and most obviously for others(did the servers set to more than look at it?) and not those who had done the baffling hard work.

This kind of transformation of chore when Christ is invited I am sure applies more widely than to the experience of marriage, though I am sure it is true there as well. Somehow, and maybe it is only Golden Wedding, anniversary reflections that acknowledge the fact, it is the years of purgations, years of the necessary washing off of the grime of living together, and the hurts and aches we deal and cause one another, that are themselves the stuff we celebrate, and celebrate with, and the cheer may not be ours but have been given to many lookers-on and hope-takers-from our ramshackle household. At the least it will be true that the mirth and the delight, the glory, will come from the same place, be drawn from the same vessels as we slogged and bustled over because we were told to. The washing of the feet and the sharing of the super come very close together in one Gospel episode,

and neither has its value except in the light of the Resurrection and of the gift of the Spirit, and of our own vocation and our primed alacrity to follow it.

To Christ who hallows the waters and makes glad the hearts of all the faithful, be with the Father and holy, divine, and life-giving Spirit all love, all glory, for ever.

We print this homily as a memorial to Martin Linskill who died in February 1998. It was originally preached on the Second Sunday of the Year at Fairacres in 1989. Martin spent some years on the staff of St Stephen's House Theological College then went as Chaplain to Bede House from xxx to xxx, before becoming vicar of St Martin's Church, Bedford.

THE COMMITMENT OF WILLED PASSIVITY

Address at the Clothing of Sister Diana
First Vespers of the Feast of the Presentation 1998

FATHER RICHARD BUCK

HAVE YOU ever stopped to wonder why it is that the account of our Lord's Presentation in the Temple is only recorded in St Luke's gospel?

It is not surprising that St John does not mention it. He jumps straight from his Prologue to the eve of the baptism of Jesus and shows no interest in the details of his childhood. The other three gospels are known as synoptics, because the authors all worked from common source material, which they edited and supplemented to make their individual points. But neither Mark nor Matthew mention the Presentation.

Why Luke? Well, I suggest that in a sense, he is using this little incident at the outset of his gospel as a sort of enacted parable of some of the great themes which would emerge later in his writings, both in his version of the gospel itself and in its sequel, the Acts of the Apostles. Far from being merely a charming little vignette which would provide subject matter for countless artists down the ages, the Presentation of Christ in the Temple encapsulates for Luke the heart of the Good News. Let me isolate just three of those themes to show you what I mean.

First, Luke's gospel was to be good news for the Gentiles. Unlike Matthew, Luke was not primarily concerned to vindicate the claim that Jesus was the true Messiah. He traces the genealogy of Jesus back, not to Abraham, the father of the Jews, as Matthew does, but to Adam, the father of the entire human race.

Jews inevitably figure prominently in his gospel, but Luke also peoples his story with men and women from other cultures—Romans, Syrians, and above all, the despised and heretical Samaritans, who were completely beyond the pale as far as the Jews were concerned.

Luke passionately believed that the good news was for everyone, irrespective of colour, class or race. It is only in Luke, for instance, that Jesus is recorded as saying that 'men will come from east and west and from north and south, and sit at table in the kingdom of God' (13:29). God's kingdom was an universal kingdom, open to all who would repent and believe. That radical breakthrough from the narrow confines of Judaism is now prophetically glimpsed by old Simeon as he takes the young child in his arms. 'This child,' he says, 'has come to bring salvation to *all* people, and to be a light for revelation to the Gentiles as well as glory to his people Israel'

(2:31–2). This refusal to limit grace and salvation to the Jews surfaces time and again in Luke's writing, and the universal claims of the gospel are triumphantly vindicated in Acts, when Paul, in a major confrontation with Peter and the Judaizers, insists that they must move from being merely a Jewish sect to becoming a world-wide Church.

Secondly, Luke is the champion of the underdog. He instinctively sides with the *anawim*—God's little people who are so often despised and dismissed by the rich and the powerful. It is only Luke who gives us the parable of Dives and Lazarus; who identifies with all the rebels and drop-outs of this world in the person of the prodigal son. And whereas Matthew's version of the Beatitudes has Jesus saying 'Blessed are the poor in spirit' (Matt. 5: 3), Luke has no qualifications: 'Blessed are the poor' (6:20), purely and simply, for Jesus specifically came to preach the good news to the poor, and to identify with the lost, the outcast and the marginalized.

No wonder then that he stresses in his account of the Presentation that Mary and Joseph cannot afford the statutory offering of either an unblemished lamb or a pair of turtle-doves to redeem their first-born according to the Law of Moses. But the Law was compassionate in this matter. It recognised that lambs and doves would be beyond the means of many parents, who would thus be unable to fulfil the Law; so it was permissible to substitute the cheaper pigeons instead. Mary and Joseph are therefore firmly identified with the poorest section of Jewish society, and Luke, anxious as always to proclaim God's option for the poor, places the Son of God squarely among their number.

But he doesn't stop there. Poverty isn't merely a matter of lack of income. In her Magnificat, this young girl who now offers the fruit of her womb back to God, had fiercely proclaimed that this same God exalts the humble and meek even as he puts down the mighty from their seats. And if Mary and Joseph are to be numbered among the poor, Simeon and Anna are presented to us as types of the humble and meek.

Year in, year out, these two old people had waited in the wings, faithfully saying their prayers, and making their sacrifices, and patiently awaiting the Messiah they never doubted would one day come. Every temple, every synagogue, every church (and every religious community, I suspect), has its Simeon or Anna, although often we don't realise it. They have been around so long, have become so much permanent fixtures of the place, that they have become almost invisible to us. We are usually so busy making a fuss of the newcomers, the important people and the young who are our future, that we hardly recognise Simeon and Anna among us. Yet it is to them that the Lord Christ is revealed. Their quiet faith and dogged

determination are not written off by God. Being pure of heart, they see God in his holy Temple, and find their heaven-on-earth in this tiny child.

Finally, Luke's gospel is good news for women. Time and again, it is women who occupy centre stage in his story, and this despite—no, knowing Luke, *because*—they were so firmly relegated to the periphery of Jewish life. It is Luke who gives us the tender meeting between Mary and Elizabeth, who tells us about the widow of Nain and the passionate devotion of the woman who ministered to Jesus in the house of Simon the Leper. It is Luke who highlights the key place occupied by Martha and Mary among the friends of Jesus, and who underlines the central significance of Mary Magdalene in the gospel drama. But above all, it is in this picture of Mary the Mother of Jesus, at his presentation and her purification, that we recognise how profoundly Luke identifies with the feminine.

It is a moment of supreme paradox. He who is to become our Great High Priest is now redeemed from priestly service in the Temple. His mother, the immaculate, the pure virgin, undergoes ritual purification to rid her of that uncleanness she is supposed to have incurred in childbirth. Both son and mother submit to the Law, content for now to be bound by its demands.

But Luke doesn't leave Mary in the Court of Women, meekly complying with the Law's assessment of her as contaminated and unclean. Simeon discerns that her significance in the story of our redemption is not merely that God used her body to carry his Son for nine months. He predicts that she will also have an intimate share in his coming suffering: 'a sword shall pierce through your own soul too', he tells her (2:35). Jesus alone could die to atone for our sins, but by her compassionate identification with her son in his Passion, she would become the Mother of all the Faithful as well as being the Mother of Jesus. Tradition has it that the source of Luke's intimate knowledge of the childhood of Jesus was Mary herself; that she confided to him many of the things that she had pondered in her heart over the years. Perhaps that is why he alone knew the secret of Mary's union with her beloved Son.

Several of the themes I have touched on here are, I know, close to your heart, Diana, especially social justice and women's rights. I suspect that at times you must have wondered whether you were turning your back on those aspects of your life by seeking to join an enclosed community such as this. But that would be to misunderstand the nature of enclosed religious life. You have not moved from active commitment to disinterest. You are moving from active involvement as the world understands it, to a willed passivity in which your commitment is now to be expressed specifically through prayer, penance, and sacrifice. The supreme model of such willed passivity is to be

found in Jesus on the Cross, and Mary standing under the Cross. That is the heart of the matter for religious.

Let me leave you with a quotation from the writings of Adrienne von Speyr which sums this up perfectly:

> The sword in the Presentation reserved for his mother is the repetition and strengthening of her former participation. It is a reward, as it were, for all the Son owes her: assent, pregnancy, birth, prayer, apostolate. Humanly speaking, such gratitude seems like ingratitude—his thanks consisting in allowing his Mother to suffer. But the suffering given her is so very much part of the redemption that Mary cannot conceive it except as the visible presupposition of her co-operation in the work of redemption. She has given him everything; and now the only remaining possibility is for *him* to give *her* everything. The high-point of her life was his birth; at that moment she was fully active, completely passive, entirely devoted: she brought the God-man into the world out of herself.
>
> His supreme moment was to be the Cross; he too was then both active and passive in the highest degree, renouncing himself completely, so that the redeemed world was born of his toil and suffering. And just as he participated in his mother's suffering, being its fruit and consequence, so he did not deny her a part in his supreme anguish and its results. That is the new community into which Simeon led Mary and into which she herself leads all those who participate in the mission of the Cross.

So, Diana, by asking to receive the habit of the Sisters of the Love of God, you are implicitly asking to participate in the mission of the Cross. May God give you the grace of perseverance in this great work.

Richard Buck is Warden of the Sisters of the Love of God.

SAINT THÉRÈSE OF LISIEUX

The Response of the Anglican Church in the British Isles

MARY DODD

AT FIRST SIGHT, it might well seem that few Anglicans know much about Saint Thérèse, and her devotees are even fewer. But there are a surprising number of exceptions. A few were so completely overwhelmed by their encounter with her that it transformed their lives; others acknowledged her gifts, but their lives were unchanged by the experience; still others were profoundly moved by her life, even transformed by it, but they did not feel the need to mark this new perspective by a radical change in their manner of worship. It would be simplest to follow through some of these personal histories in chronological order.

The first and perhaps the most striking of her early admirers on this side of the Channel was the Reverend Alexander Grant, a minister of the Church of Scotland whose life affected many Anglicans and others. He was so impressed by the life of the Saint that, following the example of his wife who had become a Roman Catholic, he was himself received into the Church of Rome on 20 April 1911. In 1912 the couple moved to Alençon where they founded a hostel for pilgrims who had come to venerate the relics of Thérèse. After the death of her husband in 1917 Mrs Grant continued the work on her own until 1956

Father (later Monsignor) Thomas Nimmo Taylor, a Scottish priest, seems to have been the first Briton who actually made the pilgrimage to the tomb of Thérèse at Lisieux, and it was he who suggested to Mother Marie de Gonzague that the Process of Canonisation should be initiated. Despite some references to his 'conversion' he was, and always had been, a Roman Catholic. But through his words and deeds he had a profound influence on many of his compatriots who were not. In January 1902 a Presbyterian minister, the Revd Charleson, set off for the Major Seminary at the Scots' College, Rome, armed with a copy of *L'Histoire d'une Ame* which had been given to him by Father Taylor. Although the first English translation of the book had been made in 1901 by a Polish professor, Michael Dziwicki, in 1912 Father Taylor published the beginning of a series of his own translations.

The first record of the influence of Thérèse on an Anglican is given in Monsignor Taylor's biography. The author refers to an anonymous

> young Anglican student who arrived at the Carfin presbytery the day before he was due to take up service in one of His Majesty's torpedo boats. Some months earlier, the young man had been browsing through the shelves of his

> college library when his eye caught Mgr Taylor's book, *St Thérèse of Lisieux*. As he scanned the pages a Dean approached, and glancing over the student's shoulder, remarked, 'You had better not read that book; that's the one that caused us to lose Vernon Johnson.' The young man did read the book, and as a result he came to Carfin to meet Father Taylor.

The outcome of their meeting, however, is not recorded.

Vernon Johnson (1886–1932) is perhaps the most important of our characters. An Anglo-Catholic, and one of the intellectual élite at Oxford, his conversion caused a sensation. He in his turn was to influence many others, among them the late Father Michael Hollings, one-time University Chaplain to Roman Catholic undergraduates at Oxford. Hollings recognised this influence in his book, *Thérèse of Lisieux*.

In 1924 Father Johnson had led a retreat for some Anglican sisters. The Mother Superior when welcoming him suggested he read *The Story of a Soul.* The effect was all the more overwhelming as it was totally unforeseen. As he wrotes in his autobiography, *One Lord, One Church, an Explanation*:

> The first two chapters did not appeal to me at all…gradually the story gripped me…it moved my whole being… Here was someone who had loved our Lord to a degree beyond anything I had met before.

Johnson was, as he put it, 'a very ordinary Englishman,' who had never been to France before and had never spoken French since his schooldays. But he set off to Lisieux at the very first opportunity, and 'all unknowingly…stumbled upon the very day her Canonisation for my first visit to her shrine' (p. 28).

This visit was a turning-point, as his little book movingly describes. At first he felt very homesick; but on the second day he returned to Thérèse's family home, 'Les Buissonets', to experience once again its prayerful atmosphere. As he was reading peacefully in the garden a Belgian priest came and sat beside him. He introduced himself, and overcoming the language barrier as best they could, they began to converse. When they decided to return to their hotel for dinner, however, they found that the gates had been locked. It was Ascension Day, so the Museum had closed earlier than usual. The enterprising Belgian went and found a ladder in an outhouse and used it to climb the perimeter wall. Unfortunately, the streets were deserted, but the undaunted Belgian, rattling a pebble in an old tin he had found, succeeded in making such a din that the neighbours came running to find out the cause of the disturbance.

Meanwhile Father Johnson was crouching miserably at the foot of

the wall in a state of unutterable embarrassment at the thought of creating a scene in a foreign country. When he eventually summoned up the courage to t climb onto the top of the wall he was greeted by cheers from the crowd below. He was quick to appreciate the comic side of his escapade, but the idea of being 'the prisoners of little Theresa,' as the Belgian delightedly expressed it, appealed to him and lingered in his memory. He wrote:

> By the power of her life and love, I had been caught up so that I had been nearer to Our Blessed Lord. I was conscious that my visit had been guided in a mysterious way… I must believe it was the prayers of the little Saint herself. (p. 37-8)

At that time he had no desire to become a Roman Catholic. He was, however, experiencing difficulties with the Anglican Church over the question of authority, and over other controversies raging at the time, particularly over changes to the Book of Common Prayer. He had felt at Lisieux,

> an increasing consciousness of the Supernatural and a growing sense of the Unseen. I found my whole life focused…on one all-absorbing point— "What was it that had made such a life possible? (p. 39)

When he returned later to Lisieux he followed the advice that Mother Agnes had given him on his first visit, of which he had understood and remembered just the one word *abjurer*. Fortified by the sufferings of the little Saint, he bravely took the path which was to lead to loneliness, misunderstanding, even rejection. 'With dreadful clearness I could see the time approaching when I must walk as it were an exile in my own land' (p. 187).

The case of his friend, Ronald Knox (1888–1957), was a quite different one. Like Johnson a distinguished Oxford graduate and a devout Anglo-Catholic, he too was received into the Roman Catholic Church. There are those who think he was gently influenced by the Saint. He certainly translated the complete text of *L'Histoire d'une Ame*, but he did not begin the translation until 1954, the last piece of work he was able to finish, whereas his conversion dated back to 1917. Moreover, in his biography, *Ronald Knox*, Evelyn Waugh, writes: 'He had not, as had his friend Vernon Johnson, any particular devotion to the saint,' and he quotes Knox as saying:

> I have a superstition that she was asked in Heaven whom she'd like as her translator, and replied, 'Ronald Knox—he'll mind my style so terribly, and the great thing is always to do something you don't like.' (p. 326)

Their contemporary, Evelyn Underhill (1875–1941), falls into yet another category. She became a Christian in 1907 and an Anglican in 1921.

She inclined towards the High Church wing, but took no part in the sometimes unedifying conflict between the Catholic and Evangelical parties. *The Essentials of Mysticism,* published in 1920 includes a chapter on St Thérèse, but the saint does not seem to have had any direct influence on her spiritual life. Her keen critical powers did not blind her to Thérèse's exceptional qualities, of which she showed a genuine appreciation and understanding.

> The sense of a special relationship and special destiny which more and more possessed her, far exceeded her powers either of realisation or of expression, and unfortunately impelled her to describe herself as *fleurette,* the *petite fiancée*, even the *jouet* of Jesus…Whilst no doubt these declarations represent the invasion of human desires and instincts into the field of spiritual experience, its natural craving for protection and personal love, they also witness to the mystic's intense personal consciousness of close communion, a consciousness which far transcends the poor vocabulary and commonplace symbols though which it must be told. By this hard yet humble way she rose in a few years to the heights of perfect self-conquest and moral perfection: passing through suffering to a state in which love, and total self-giving for love, was realised by her as the central secret of the spiritual life. (p. 206-7)

Of the miracles attributed to Thérèse, she writes:

> her "miracles"…range from the cure of cancer to the multiplication of banknotes, and even include the restoration of dead geranium cuttings. Many are obviously explained by coincidence or hallucination, some are admirable examples of faith-healing. But a few, apparently supported by good evidence, seem to defy rationalistic explanation. (p. 213)

In more than one passage echoes of the 'Little Way' may be discerned:

> So all our feeble Godward thoughts and prayers, all the little acts and sufferings and renunciations and achievements in which his Spirit moves in us, all our tiny separate contributions that don't seem much by themselves, are part of this…Christ Triumphant in all His Christians.*The Light of Christ*, p. 90.

So far we have considered only the Anglo-Catholic wing of the Church of England. There is, however, the case of the Reverend Newman Guest. In his book, *A Warrior in Chains*, James Norbury refers to this

> well-respected Rector of the Parish Church of Stantonbury. He was very much…a middle-of-the-way parson, who abhorred the bigotry of the Low Church element in the Anglican Communion, but was also sceptical of the value of the High Church faction. He wrote a very remarkable letter about the influence of the nun of Lisieux'.

Norbury then quotes from a letter of Guest's on the subject of the unity of

the Church which he fervently desired: 'For the attainment of this end I count on the autobiography of the Little Flower of Jesus, this young soul, who will soon, let us hope, be canonised by the Church of Rome' (p. 202).

Time passed without any further dramatic or public conversions, or indeed, apparent signs of influence. In Kirk's *The Vision of God*, there are references to Teresa of Avila, St John of the Cross, Madame Guyon, Fènelon, Meister Eckhart, Mme de Chantal, Hildegard of Bingen, but not a word about St Thérèse of Lisieux. Your average Englishman hates excess, especially in the emotions, and even Mgr Vernon Johnson admitted that at first he had found the ceremonies at Lisieux 'foreign, sentimental and artificial. I couldn't bear the paper flowers' (p. 28).

According to memories of a number of priests and religious the doctrine of the 'Little Way' had no place in the religious training of most Anglicans before the end of World War II. Within SLG a Sister who had the same dedication as the Saint to the Holy Child Jesus seems never to have mentioned her, having taken her inspiration rather from the Holy Family. Another Sister, professed in the immediate post-war years refused to be influenced by her because she was so irritated by the sentimental line her followers took. It was much the same in the theological colleges.

Studies marking the fiftieth anniversary of the death of Thérèse were beginning to bear fruit. More important was the fact that after the death of Mother Agnes in 1951 documents hitherto inaccessible began to be made public, together with work on the original manuscripts by Père François de Sainte-Marie. Then, as already mentioned, Ronald Knox in 1954 published a new translation of *L'Histoire d'une Ame*. Father Northcote, in *The Venture of Prayer*, published in 1950, refers to some of her writings:

> St Thérèse of Lisieux, commenting on the verse from the Canticle, 'Draw me, we will run after thee', cries, 'O Jesus, there is no need to say, "Drawing me, draw also the souls that I love." A soul taken captive by Thy beauty could not run alone; all the souls it loves are drawn in its train. (p. 149)

He continues: 'Thus all the little pains and vexations of life, as well as the great agonies, can be utilised in this work of reparation,' and he quotes Thérèse, as she painfully took her prescribed walk during the later stages of her illness, responding to a concerned comment: 'I do it for a missionary…to lessen his weariness I offer mine to God' (p. 276).

It was, however, two German writers who were to change the perception of the Saint common at the time. In 1959 *The Hidden Face* by Ida Gorres was translated from German by Richard and Clare Wilson. A revision of the original 1944 edition, it included a reply to critical observations made by the well-known theologian, Hans Urs von Balthasar in his 1953 book on Thérèse

(translated into English by the late Donald Nicholl. Both took advantage of the recent studies and publications, and showed Thérèse, her family and the society in which they lived in a more objective and less sentimental light, reminiscent of Evelyn Underhill and of Henri Ghéon in his *The Secret of the Little Flower*. Ghéon's detachment both linked him with her and distinguished him from his contemporary Catholic compatriots. All this was much more to the English taste. Gorres' and von Balthasar's books soon appeared in the libraries of Anglican religious houses, and became part of the stock-in-trade of every spiritual director.

Though imperceptible at first, the effect of her teaching increased with time and continues to this day. By the 1960's novices were given Gorres and von Balthasar as spiritual reading. Indeed, it was when Sr Eileen Mary SLG was Novice Guardian in the late 60s that she wrote *Saint Thérèse of Lisieux, her Relevance for Today* (Fairacres Publication 127), drawing heavily on von Balthasar's thought. Novices would take the name of the Saint for many reasons: through reading *The Story of a Soul*; through a desire to emulate her single-heartedness in following Christ; through correspondence with priests. But perhaps most significantly because Thérèse lived the religious life in letter as in spirit, without heroics, working within the system while transcending it.

People living ordinary everyday lives have similarly been inspired by her autobiography. For example, a mother and grandmother, whose prayer life had to develop amid the preoccupations of family life, found in Thérèse comfort in the dark night in which she felt abandoned by God. She said:

> Times when God seemed to be absent I found the picture of the Child Jesus and the ball helpful. All I wanted to do was to give myself wholly to him, but there were times when he didn't seem to want me. I felt he was throwing me aside. Yet my prayer would be, 'Do with me what you will.' At such times I would remember her words, 'God holds our hearts in his hands, and does what he likes with them'.

Another example is the young woman Baptist theological student who was lent copies of both *The Story of a Soul* and *The Spiritual Journey of St Thérèse of Lisieux* by Guy Gaucher. She took Thérèse as the subject of her long dissertation, and in consequence became an Anglican. She is now preparing for ordination as an Anglican priest.

In the immediate post-war years there were many books on the Saint either written in or translated into English, but none by Anglicans. Then in 1987 Virago Press published *Thérèse of Lisieux* by the Anglican writer, Monica Furlong. In it some see an apologia for the ordination of women, but to me it appears primarily an attack on a society in which the only acceptable

possibilities for a woman were marriage or the cloister. This theme had already appeared in Gorres' study. It is an interesting book, but disappointing. Despite a number of contacts with religious houses she does not seem to have understood either the religious vocation or life in community. She is severely critical of the Lisieux Carmel, of Mère Marie de Gonzague and of Thérèse herself. There is obviously an element of truth in what she says, but, following the current fashion for demystification, and perhaps with the intention of presenting a subject with whose human frailties her readers could identify, she overstates the negative aspect. Of Thérèse's timing of her decision to enter Carmel, she speculates:

> Did she fear to see her father die, as her mother had done, or worry that he was about to become an invalid, so that she would be stuck with the job of sick-nurse?

or again, after her Uncle Isidore's refusal to support her in her desire, she writes:

> Thérèse's immediate response to this rebuff was to go into a three-day depression which she compared, excessively, to the agony of Jesus in the garden. (p. 65)

Of her life in community she remarks:

> Her ingenuous habit of pointing out other peoples' faults, even outside the Chapter of Faults, did not make people like Thérèse any better… What seems to emerge is that , after the first welcome, Thérèse was not very popular with her Sisters in religion… Knowing that she was an oddity, she was sharp and defensive in her relationship with others. (p. 82)

Of the Prioress she writes:

> Reading of the almost flirtatious way Mother Marie alternately approached and neglected Thérèse…it is impossible for a modern reader not to observe a sado-masochistic pattern at work. (p. 85)

Of the autobiography itself Ms Furlong writes, with rather more justification:

> There is sentimentality and false piety (some of it inserted after her death), moments of sheer silliness and a pervading lack of humour, but nevertheless it is a literary *tour de force*. (p. 99)

She is not entirely consistent, referring elsewhere to 'one of [Thérèse's] rare flashes of humour', and seems to have worked exclusively from the early editions of the autobiography which suffered from the editing of Thérèse's sisters. She does appreciate some of her heroine's qualities, but appears not to distinguish between consecration and religiosity, the love of God and the false devotion of the time. It would seem that she is more familiar with Freud

than with the Fathers of the Church, and so fails to understand fully not only the Saint herself, but also the world in which she lived.

To end on a more positive note I mention a work at the opposite pole. Professor David Ford includes in a book still in preparation a chapter on Thérèse of Lisieux and Dietrich Bonhoeffer. I am most grateful to Professor Ford for allowing me to read and use this unpublished material, entitled, *Being Transformed, An Essay on Self and Salvation*. Chapter Nine, 'Joyful Responsibility: Holy Selves,' identifies the essential elements of sanctity. It is a dense philosophical chapter, devoted in part to refuting some of the Edith Wyschogrod's assertions about the saints in her book, *Saints and Postmodernism, Revisioning Moral Philosophy*. Owing to Wyschogrod's highly technical use of language it is an effort to follow the argument, but one well rewarded. Dr Ford points out how she overlooks the element of adoration in the lives of saints. He begins by emphasising the diversity of those generally regarded as saints, asking the question, 'What sort of selves are formed before the face of Christ?' and concludes that

> Transformation into his image is not a recipe for uniformity but precisely the opposite. The dynamic of the Spirit is particularising, resulting in lives that elude general descriptions and are as differently unique as faces.

Although Thérèse and Bonhoeffer differed in almost every respect, their lives were shaped through facing Christ. He shows how Thérèse's devotion to the Holy Face affected her whole spirituality. 'In the metaphors of flowers, petals, scents and singing she points to the practices that are at the heart of her vocation.' These practices are in the first place a devotion to the hidden and despised face of Christ ('Our Lord, who suffers with closed eyelids'). This phrase is associated with the Suffering Servant of Isaiah 53, and symbolises aridity, 'doubt, temptation, abandonment, persecution by well-wishers as well as ill-wishers, and sheer physical pain and disintegration.'

Secondly he examines her conduct with her sisters in the convent. For her 'the Holy Face above all was a thread through the life, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus', and he sums up the implications of this as 'a radical embodiment of joyful responsibility, worked out in practices of facing,' most obviously those of 'worship, meditation, prayer and the liturgical year,' and all the expressions of a childlike trust in god. He adds that she took literally the instructions in the Sermon on the Mount not to allow suffering to be revealed in the face (cf. Matt. 6:16–18).

> The face of Jesus becomes for Thérèse a way into the basic truths of faith, from God to eschatology. She sees God delighting to look upon his children, but not in a way that makes them self-conscious. The effect is to focus them

on one another, on Jesus alone, above all in his hiddenness and suffering, but there is also a hope for the vision of God, which she expressed with great confidence.

He points out that for her,

> the Holy Face above all was a thread through the life, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus. She embraces suffering to the point of being masochistic, if taken out of context. But it fits very well Wyschogrod's description of altruistic desire for the beatitude of the other. The ultimate simplicity of its desire to suffer for love and rejoice through love is in its constant orientation to the face of Christ… Encompassing both of those is her grasp of the 'new commandment' to love one another as Christ has loved us. In chapter ten of *The Story of a Soul* she repeatedly returns to the Sermon on the Mount in order to interpret the commandment… And woven into the meditation are examples of her practice of smiling.

He admits that her smile can easily be misunderstood,

> but Gorres' sensitive analysis is convincing: 'To Thérèse her smile was simply honest fulfilment of her vocation.' Its theological basis is clear. On the one hand it springs from living before the face of Christ…on the other hand it springs from the certainty that each person is made in the image of God.

Ford next addresses the question of joy.

> Joy is a frequent topic in what she says and writes. It is radically oriented towards others and is essentially joy in the joy of others. This is 'substitutionary joy' inseparable from substitutionary responsibility. It is, therefore, a joy which does not exclude suffering

He refers to a passage in von Balthasar, citing Thérèse's idea that we remain responsible before the face of Jesus even when he is asleep, and therefore apparently unresponsive. Finally Ford sums up his 'leading concept' of the teaching of Thérèse as 'one of worship-centred joyful responsibility before the "holy Face" of Jesus Christ, embodied in an ordinary life of love for others.' He ends on an ecumenical note. Having compared the divergent traditions which produced Thérèse and Bonhoeffer, he concludes,

> Those traditions were either hostile or deeply unsympathetic to each other, yet the developments of them embodied by Thérèse and Bonhoeffer open up French Roman Catholicism and German Lutheranism to each other in a new way. The effect of this is to challenge each to recognise in someone deeply loyal to the other tradition a member of the 'communion of saints', and at the same time to respond to the transformative imperatives with which Thérèse and Bonhoeffer, when taken together, confront those and other traditions… Each manages to open their own tradition to the riches represented by the other by a reinterpretation which is at heart scriptural.

The response of a wide variety of Anglicans has been represented: priests, both extreme Anglo-Catholic and moderate, a housewife, a feminist journalist, a university professor. They belong to different stages in the history of the Anglican Communion and had differing reactions to the Saint. The characteristics that divide them from one another are at least as striking as those which distinguish them from members of other Churches, and there is less to link them together than there is to connect them as individuals to some other rite. The conclusion would seem to be that it is that which each may seek in Saint Thérèse, the personal need which she fills, which determines her influence on any given life, rather than accidents of chronology or religious upbringing. Perhaps that is her last secret.

There could be no better conclusion than the words of James Norbury's 'middle-of-the-way parson', the Reverend Newman Guest:

> If we Anglicans and Roman Catholics (and we could add, Armenians, Free Churches, Graeco-Catholics, Lutherans, Orthodox and a host of others), if we could unite in the same prayer, and if a novena of our reunion through the intercession of Sister Thérèse were begun, I have no doubt a happy result would come suddenly, as came the conversion of three thousand Israelites on the day of Pentecost. I say, cease your controversy and pray.

Mary Dodd is an Oblate Sister of the Sisters of the Love of God. This essay is based on a talk she gave at the Monastère St Elie, Montbard, France, in 1997 when St Thérèse was made a Doctor of the Church.

EDUCATION SUNDAY

JANET TROTTER

THERE can be no greater contrast than the images conjured up by the two names of one man—Saul of Tarsus and St Paul, the Apostle.

Saul, the well-educated Pharisee, who set out to Damascus 'breathing threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord,' had such a life-changing experience on his journey that his old friends could not believe their eyes and ears when he became a supporter of the small Christian church he had intended to destroy. In the course of three days Saul's life was changed and he began to travel in a direction that was the exact opposite of what his religious training had equipped him for.

Christians and non-Christians alike, we can all experience such life-defining moments: moments in which we encounter some special truth, or understand our world in a new way. And after such events we are never the same again—we live and act in the knowledge of that new experience. Whether described in secular or religious terms, each Damascus Road experience involves an inner crisis—a judgement on the past as it were—a re-orientation and the re-dedication.

The connection between the conversion experience of St Paul and modern education may not be immediately apparent. We hare, regrettably, become accustomed in the late twentieth century to regard education as a personal commodity which we can trade for own purposes.

But it is worth reflecting afresh on education and trying to see it in the light of that event on the road to Damascus 2000 years ago.

Last year a group of students from this College was studying a programme entitled 'Holocaust Landscapes.' I was privileged to join the group for lectures and for the visit to Poland where we explored the relationship between landscape, event and memory.

I vividly remember visiting the labour camp of Auschwitz, now turned into a holocaust museum. We then travelled the short distance to Birkenau, the death camp, where millions of Jews, Poles and gypsies were systematically exterminated.

The horror cannot be described, except to say that experienced in the depths of a Polish winter it compelled reflection on an ugly process that misused education. It was disturbing, even distasteful, for us to recall that Auschwitz and Birkenau were not the product of ignorance but of a political machine commanding the loyalty and allegiance of college graduates at all levels of European civilised society.

We had, of course, read in advance about the history of fascism: we

had also studied the geography of war: we were prepared as fare as possible for shock and trauma. But the fact of being at a place which has become a symbol of evil in our time was in itself an experience that compelled us both to question the nature of our humanness, and to reflect on barbarism and its accompanying acts of heroism and self-sacrifice. It also forced us to question our fundamental beliefs.

What we experienced in Poland convinced me that this was something that we would not forget. We were touched in a new way, the scales fell from our eyes and we determined to commit ourselves to the words of the Treblinka Memorial, 'NEVER AGAIN'.

As I look back on this 'road to Auschwitz', which for me paralleled the 'road to Damascus,' I see our small College party facing an important contemporary dilemma in the field of education, namely, how can we ensure that alongside our idealistic commitment to education we also become active in changing our world?

It is easy for us to be critical of crimes like the holocaust, but difficult to acknowledge fully that we are witnessing in our own society the horrors of social injustice and deprivation on the one hand, and conspicuous consumption and greed on the other. When Saul of Tarsus set out from Jerusalem to Damascus he was quite sure where he was going, what he was doing, and why he was doing it. We should remember that his dramatic encounter was not only with a heavenly voice and vision, but that it was followed almost immediately by intimate association with the lowly despised followers of Jesus, hitherto in his opinion fit only for extermination. It was this that gave a new purpose and a new direction to Saul's life.

It is our need, not only for voices and visions, but for practical encounter with our broken and tortured world which is the harder lesson to be learned by those of us who are involved in education today It was tempting for our College party to Auschwitz to express astonishment, amounting almost to disbelief, that an educated nation could, at all levels, have been involved in State-inspired and -managed genocide. How could decent, educated and respectable people like ourselves have participated in or closed their eyes to what was happening in the holocaust. But we must remember that when we have no reverence for knowledge and learning and when we are quite sure that we are right, we are on the way to crimes like this. It follows, then, that when we are dogmatically certain that the end justifies the means, we become oblivious to our neighbour and mentally closed to the world in which we live.

We cannot assume that education will somehow ensure that the promise on the Treblinka Memorial will be kept, and that all this will never

happen again. Certainties in this world are mere passing shadows.

But at the heart of Christianity is the transforming Resurrection experience. And at the centre of the Damascus Road experience is the risen Lord who challenges us as he challenged Saul to depart from the path of certainty and conformity. Saul finished his journey into the city of Damascus, not as an up-and-coming religious leader, confident of his youthful vigour and his formidable education, but led by the hand in the vulnerability of blindness. It is the humility born out of this sort of experience that we need today if we are to make sense of our education and to give purpose and direction to our lives.

The central square of the small but illustrious university town of Göttingen in Hanover proudly boasts an iron statue some two centuries old. The statue depicts what was then in local terms the lowest rung of the social order, namely a ragamuffin barefoot little girl, tending her geese. The University was renowned for its schools of philosophy and physics: maybe it was the insight conferred by this combination of wisdom that demanded of every graduate that he publicly kiss the goose-girl before leaving the academic cloister and returning to the everyday world.

'You came here to acquire education,' the professors of Göttingen seemed to be saying to their students: but now, 'Kiss the goose-girl as a pledge that your education is not complete until you are on intimate terms also with a world both of brokenness and beauty—a world in need of healing and light.' Let us pray that our own education is in the process of such completion.

Janet Trotter is the Director of Cheltenham and Gloucester College of Higher Education. This address was given during a morning service broadcast from the College in 1997.

FACING ROMANIA

TIM HEWES

In early 1994 I was greatly disturbed by the news from Bosnia. I had an overwhelming feeling of helplessness, and was unable to watch news bulletins or even to read newspaper articles about the conflict and about how ordinary people's lives were being overtaken with atrocities almost beyond imagination. I tried to get involved, to drive a lorry, to be of use in some way, but as a middle-aged dentist my skills seemed totally inappropriate, and all doors remained closed.

Then, out of the blue, my cousin came to see me for a dental check. She gave me an article about a mobile dental caravan which had been taken to a large town in north-west Romania, called Baia Mare. In this area near the Ukrainian border, there were 2000 orphans in ten orphanages, most of the institutions being in isolated villages. The purpose of the caravan was to provide emergency dental treatment for these children. Teams of dentists with their assistants were being asked to go from the UK to do this in the summer months.

I realised that this was something that I could do, although it was the part of eastern Europe that I had intended to get involved with. Then our daughter, Alexa, returned from University and announced that she wanted to work in a Romanian orphanage during her holiday. I was astonished that we were both being led in the same direction. Encouraged by this senses of being guided, we agreed to go together, with Alexa as my assistant.

Many people have been touched by the heartbreaking sights of unwanted children in cots across much of Eastern Europe; the reality proved as disturbing as we had expected. We worked hard extracting abscessed permanent molar teeth from children as young as nine years old. They were children to whom most of the bad things in life had already happened, and though desperate to have their pain removed were very nervous about receiving treatment. We were both deeply distressed at having to leave with so much work left undone, typified by one little girl, Mirebella, who had an abscess so big that her neck was stiff.

After the first year the project was in danger of failing due to a lack of people to head it, until a community dentist from Slough, Dermot O'Brien, and I decided to risk taking it on. We recruited dentist who were 'happy to accept the Christian ideals' on which the group was founded through advertising in the professional dentistry journals.

The dentist were supported by their work colleagues, friends and patients, and soon teams from all parts of the UK were going to the town to

work for a week or two at a time. They were co-ordinated by a young English woman, Sam Cartwright, who vision it was to work as a house mother in one of the orphanages for a year. These orphanages have Romanian staff working in them, but on other than the children actually *live* on the premises, so the children have no family role models. Sam was to stay in the area for three years.

Sam started to drive the orphan children to the caravan for treatment. As they had no other access to dental treatment, had a very high sugar intake, and much tooth decay in consequence, there were always so many. They were well used to coping with the most severe dental pains imaginable. Many of the dentists were deeply upset by the obvious distress of their small patients. Their assistants most young women or the spouse of the dentist, were equally moved, but often able to provide that vital word of encouragement needed by dentists suddenly faced with their own inadequacy.

The teams also worked in the more distant orphanages, driving the car we had bought for this purpose. When it was not needed for the dental teams we donated the car to the large local hospital for doctors to use to travel to outlying clinics. Strong friendships were forged with Romanian colleagues and hospital staff.

Sam once took me to work in a street where gypsies lived. Here I was received with such warmth. While I was working, Sam was asked if she would baptise a baby. An elderly lady brought out an old Bible from the derelict building where they all lived. She was sad that her failing eyesight no longer allowed her to read the small print. Sam later arranged for an Orthodox priest to baptise the baby, and got a large-print Bible for the old lady.

Some of the Romanian churches did all they could to encourage and support the work. Families from the Pentecostal Church, which is growing rapidly in Romania, provided food accommodation for the volunteers. In the UK many churches have assisted and sponsored our work, in particular Presbyterians at Portrush in Northern Ireland, and community churches, Church of England and Roman Catholic parishes, and Nonconformist churches from all over the UK. Each supported us in prayer, and financially the work being done by those known to them. This is vital to our work; so many times we have been aware of an enveloping aura of prayer from countless friends at home. Situations of physical risk have been overcome with safety, and we have been given strength enough to meet the challenge of each day.

Working with the orphans was and is a very challenging experience.

Often the teams would make special little friends, separated by language, culture and country, but united by moments of eye contact, by a hug, and by tears at our departures.

Support grew when a Christmas project to provide presents for all the children snowballed. Schools and church congregations collected presents, food and clothing to be driven out by lorry along with the annual delivery of dental supplies. Some schools wanted to do more, and fourteen students and four leaders arranged with Sam to take an entire orphanage on holiday to a distant coastal resort in Romania. The twenty-four hour train journey with eighty children was an experience in itself, the train was so crowded that many of the orphans slept in the luggage racks overhead. The forty other children at the orphanage, who had hepatitis, wen on holiday in the mountains, since the doctor felt it unwise for them to go to the seaside.

In another project a few months ago, a group of ex-orphanage young people and British students erected an adventure playground at Bocicoi. The equipment for it had been constructed in Romania. They all lived together in the orphanage so the students could not help noticing the lack of heating and hot water, and were stunned to hear that winter temperatures drop to -30C. After their return to Britain they resolved that they would go to Bocicoi again next year.

Last May a first visit to the medical room of the Bocicoi orphanage, home to three hundred children, had revealed that it was empty: no dressings, no instruments, no medicines. When the students arrived to set up the playground they brought with them £2000 of medical supplies for the nurse, provided through donations from two churches.

A dentist from Portrush whose church has provided much support for the Romania Dental Link Foundation was the first to work at the Bocicoi orphanage in the newly acquired mobile dental van. He worked, with an assistant and a Romanian friend acting as interpreter, fifteen hours a day for the few days that he was there. He could not deal with all the children in pain before he left. It was his second trip to Romania, so he had felt adequately prepared, but he said that this time ‘leaving the children was one of the most difficult things I have ever had to do in my life.’

Monitoring the use of the aid provided is essential, so last November I and my son James, who is a young doctor, went to Bocicoi for this purpose, and to bring the dental mobile unit back to the UK for servicing and restocking. The day before we went to Bocicoi James carried out an operation in the orthopaedic theatre of Baia Mare Hospital. He was dismayed by the conditions that the skilful surgeons worked in, with poor heating, often having to make their own instruments.

Crossing the snow-covered mountains we were accompanied by three children who were being transferred to Bocicoi after spending the first seven years of their lives in an orphanage in the centre of Baia Mare. There they will stay until they are eighteen, when they must leave to fend for themselves. They will have their identity papers stamped to show that they are 'ex-orphanage', which makes it almost impossible for them to get work or accommodation. This is of special significance in Romania as there is little welfare help, since most of this is provided by the extended family. It means that both girls and boys have to live as best they can on the streets. Until the girls, especially, have a chance of work and somewhere to live there will always be a high number of unwanted babies to go back into the orphanages. So the orphan problem has become self-perpetuating.

All the dental teams, the drivers of lorries and students on electives now stay in a small apartment that we rent in the town. It provides an important and much-valued opportunity to relax and to share experiences, sometimes with local ex-orphanage young people who have become dear friends. Always there are discussions about the real values in life. It is a great privilege to have a common aim with people of a vastly different background, and to mutually recognise that as we work towards our common aim we come closer to the truth, closer to god at work in the vulnerable children who have been entrusted to us, closer to each other. The differences no longer matter.

Now we are in the process of involving our Romanian colleagues with this work. It was never our intention to try to solve the dental problems in the area, but rather to act as a catalyst, to stimulate others to take over the work. Since the revolution it has been a slow process for the people of Romania to accept responsibility for themselves. Having for decades been told that the State would provide they have found it difficult to cope with the concept that they have a role to play where there are social problems, and that they can achieve great things on their initiative. So we are especially pleased to have two Romanian dentists contracted to work for us, each responsible for a separate orphanage, in exchange for which we provide equipment or materials. We have others who have volunteered their services to work with the children with our support. Three Romanian nurses have also taken over the supervision and co-ordination of our dentists from the UK in exchange for trips to England to improve their own skills with work experience in our hospitals.

We also aim to stock the orphanage medical rooms as best we can and to supply toothpaste, toothbrushes and toiletries to all the children. We are always in need of these items, because although the dentists always

provide as much as they can, as well as financing their trips and paying for the materials they use, 2000 children use a lot of toothpaste.

Romania is a country of huge contrasts. It is very beautiful but has some major problems. The people are warm and hospitable. They have a society which relies more on skill and ingenuity than on modern equipment and infrastructure. They are a proud people and have much to be proud about. Over these last few years I have come to love Romania and value the culture, and look forward to returning just for a holiday and enjoy the wonderful friends that we have made. But for now, there is still much to do.

With the grace of Jesus Christ and with the heartfelt support of so many people we will continue this exciting work so that the children and young people whom we have been given to serve may know for themselves the depth of God's love in their lives.

Tim Hewes is a member FLG.

If you would like to support the work of the Romania Dental Link Foundation donations may be sent to 279 Banbury Road, Oxford OX2 7JF. Phone: 01865 558 822; Fax: 01865 310 143.

AUTUMN'S STREET

To Granny

On Autumn's Street
the fool of the town
watches the fluttering hearts
of dead leaves…

Multicoloured and floating
like weightless feathers from a carnival bird
they loop in the air and turn smoothly into
the pious smile of the fool…

Overturning the golden rule
of the thumb,
the letters or leaves of my family tree
so full of nuances…

are falling in numbers
and numbers
and numb…

Alexander Popescu

BOOKS

LIGHT TO THE ISLES: Missionary Theology in Celtic and Anglo-Saxon Britain by Douglas Dales. The Lutterworth Press, 1997, 190 pp.

According to the *Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church* 'the Dark Ages' are supposed to run from the fifth to the eleventh centuries. Douglas Dales's book begins in the fourth, with Martin of Tours, and ends in the eighth with Willibrord and Boniface. It is a notable record of how the alleged darkness was illumined by saints and scholars who were indeed ' lights of the world in their several generations,' and to whom we owe, if not he foundation, at any rate the upbuilding of Christianity in modern Britain and Ireland and beyond. Hagiography is a type of literature little appreciated today, but Douglas Dales, taking it for the most part at its contemporary valuation, is judicious in his use of it. Miracles are recorded bur are not allowed to displace wisdom, courage and self-discipline in the pursuance of the Church's mission.

It was a violent age of invasions and battles, though far smaller in scale than the 'enlightened' twentieth century. Amid many changes of secular power the importance of kings and in almost equal measure of queens, is evident. Bede describing the life of Oswald of Northumbria bears witness to this. It is not surprising, therefore, that many of the saints were of noble birth and social influence and in consequence natural commanders, as we see in Columba. 'Conversion from above' could be called the norm for the tribes, and it is interesting to reflect how this may have affected the subsequent history of our national Christianity. Yet in the saints themselves the transition from arrogance to a penitential humility seems almost uniform. So it is something of a relief to the modern reader accustomed to the debunking attitudes of the media, to see 'the old Adam' at work in Wilfrid's career.

There are many things to marvel at here; not new, certainly, but admirably brought out by the author. He describes the intrepid travels despite the hazards of war and disease; the sense of Europe as a place of spiritual unity, which is only struggling to be reborn in our own day, and a field of mission; the importance of monasticism for men and women alike—for how could such journeys and austerities be undertaken by those with family ties; the constant attention to scholarship and education, which were treated as responsible not just to the religious, but to the community as a whole. Nor should one omit the devotion to the Papacy, in some of its most glorious but not ostentatious days. Ought not the patron saint of England be St Gregory

the Great rather than St George?

Lest we become too euphoric, we have also to recall the bitter jealousy and suspicion between British and Anglo-Saxon Christians, those successful usurpers, as they appeared to the Celtic West and North. For this is something which continues to surface to this day. Nor have we yet managed to win universal consent about the observance of Easter! Since this was such a tough bone of contention in the period covered by this book, the complexities of the arguments might perhaps have been explained in greater detail.

However, it is hard to offer any but small criticisms of such a comprehensive and well-reasoned history. Although those brought up on the romantic genius of Helen Waddell may find Douglas Dales a little pedestrian in comparison, he clearly has an affinity for the monks and nuns whom he has studied. As a result we are helped all the more to admire and love their zeal to convert this land to Christ.

BISHOP PATRICK RODGER

LIVING WITH CONTRADICTION by Esther de Waal. Canterbury Press, 1997. £5.99.

Isaiah Berlin, in his essay *The Pursuit of the Ideal*, argued that values can and do clash: liberty pursued to the extreme conflicts with equality, justice with mercy, and so on. Mrs de Waal's choice of title for her introduction Benedictine spirituality shows how well aware she is of this. Indeed, she maintains that the secret of St Benedict's enduring influence and adaptability of his Rule to all kinds of circumstances, is the way he allows opposites to co-exist. He caused to flow together two streams of monastic tradition, the call of solitude in the desert fathers and the demands of community in St Basil. Mrs de Waal writes:

> Balance and moderation are commonly regarded as the hallmarks of Benedictine spirituality. Yet it is vital, if we are to recognise the power and the influence of the Rule, not to see this as anything mediocre, lukewarm or middle of the road. There is nothing soft or easy in holding a central position between opposites.

She uses the analogy of the Gothic vault, a harmonious unity achieved by the balancing of opposing forces. Our century has been beguiled by the claim of consistency on the one hand and by theories of chaos and randomness on the other; but the Gospels—and the Rule—offer a 'structure of dynamic contradictions'. As Charles Symeon maintained, the truth is not at one

extreme or the other, but at both extremes.

The Benedictine Rule can help us all, whatever our circumstances, to live fruitfully with paradox.

> The Three vows which the novice lays on the altar at the moment of entering the community, while he or she says *suscipe me*, speak to all of us even if we are not living in community, or under any vows other than those of our baptism.

This is not a new book; it is a welcome reissue of one first published nearly ten years ago, itself based on addresses given at the Benedictine Experience weeks which Mrs de Waal started at Canterbury. They are meditations, meant to be read slowly and ruminatively, so although they form a relatively slight book they will take a fair while to digest. To take just one example of her thought-provoking reflections, 'Those three temptations which Christ faced in the wilderness are equally me own temptations: to be relevant, to be spectacular, to be powerful.' Real temptations to which we readily succumb: this is perhaps why, in words she quotes from an American newspaper, 'The Church is getting a bad press—except for her monasteries.

MICHAEL PATERNOSTER

THE FOOD OF LOVE: Reflection on Music and Faith by Christopher R Campling. SCM Press, 1997. £9.95.

Father Campling's last post before retirement was as Dean of Ripon Cathedral, 'a place alive with music,' as Richard Baker describes it in his Foreword to this book. Unlike Dean Inge, who found choral services at St Paul's so boring that he always took a book to read in his stall, this Dean clearly revelled in every opportunity of hearing and participating in great music.

Scottish cathedrals do not have the musical resources that are one of the glories of English cathedrals; even so, one Provost thirty years ago had some cause for complaint when he had three unmusical curates at the same time. I was one of them. That, at first sight, disqualifies me from reviewing this book. But although music was not from the first a part of my life, as it was of Father Campling's, yet over the years I have grown to appreciate and love a wide range of music. Indeed, in some ways this book is written more for people like me than for expert musicians; his perceptive comments on the works he loves, unlike more technical attempts at musical analysis, are in terms that I can comprehend, and they illuminate further works that I already love and hope to understand better.

The book is in three parts. The first seven chapters explore analogies between musical appreciation and awareness of God; the next seven are about music and the practice of faith through worship, behaviour, involvement. The final section takes a number of specific works seen as affirmations of faith. Bach's *B-minor Mass*, Handel's *Messiah* (surely the best one-volume Bible commentary ever written), and Haydn's *Creation* each have a chapter to themselves, and the last two chapters look at music concerned with death and resurrection.

For myself, although the argument of the first two sections is rich in apt quotations, memorable phrases and helpful analogies, it was the third part from which I learnt most: I could wish that he had said more briefly what he wanted to say about the relationship between musical experience and religious commitment and given us more of his reflection on specific works which for him illustrate this relationship.

At one point he recalls a captain under whom he served in the Navy who had no use for music and assumed that it was a meaningless noise which people only pretended to like: but tone-deaf people who believe that tell us more about themselves than about the works they are disqualified from understanding. He suggests by analogy that those who, having had no religious experience and felling no need for God, dismiss religion as an illusion, are as ill-qualified to express an opinion about it as the tone-deaf are to discuss music. The hostility to Christianity of the likes of Delius and Dawkins is seriously suspect.

However, while his favoured trinity of Bach, Handel and Haydn were lifelong professing Christians and churchgoers who deliberately and consciously expressed their faith in their music, there are other composers who have contributed richly to the repertoire of religious music without being either committed Christians or regular churchgoers, as he acknowledges to be the case with Beethoven, Mozart and Verdi. Interestingly, the very last pages of the book are devoted to Vaughan William's' *Five Mystical Songs*; they are settings, certainly, of words by a priest-poet, but the work of a lifelong agnostic. He might have made more of the striking difference between dogmatic atheism and reverent agnosticism, a difference akin to that between those who refuse to believe that music means anything at all and those who are aware that their own limitations exclude them from a realm of enchantment open to others, who are open and willing learn, and who may in time come to perceive pattern and meaning in what was at first obscure to them.

MICHAEL PATERNOSTER

TWO WAYS OF PRAYING: Introducing Liturgical Spirituality by Paul Bradshaw. SPCK, 1995, £6.99.

The last ten years have seen a renewed interest in daily prayer. 1988 saw the publication of *Company of Voices* by George Guiver CR, and then in 1992 came the publication of *Celebrating Common Prayer*, a version of the Franciscan office book. *Two Ways of Praying*, written by an eminent scholar in the field, continues the debate in a readable and accessible style. In tracing the historical development f Christian daily prayer Bradshaw distinguishes between 'Cathedral' and 'Monastic' forms of daily prayer, and although he argues elsewhere in more detail that in many urban centres, and different times, elements from these two ways of praying were often combined together, he is really wanting to highlight the distinctive elements of the 'cathedral form, or what Guiver more helpfully has called 'people's daily prayer,' with its basic twin structure of praise and intercession. Bradshaw's aim in this short popular book is shown in the dedication, and the inclusion of an appendix outlining forms for daily prayer. In effect, he is wanting the church to promote the practice of public daily prayer!

The book is divided between chapters on the form and content of prayer, but the subtext running through the whole is the difference between liturgical and non-liturgical spirituality. As a historian, Bradshaw traces the beginnings of this divorce to the emergence of 'monastic' prayer in the fourth century, with its intended purpose of cultivating the soul of the individual ascetic. But this is not a full, or the most important explanation of the divorce between what is styled today as private and public prayer. Monastic prayer has a rich and varied history, and the monastic office in its more developed forms, and the adoption of the choir arrangement for it celebration, illustrate the corporate aspect of Christian prayer. Secondly, underlying the divorce between liturgy and spirituality is the prevalent view that spirituality is essentially individual and interior. Spirituality is an elusive and comparatively modern term, and a discussion of its meaning, and a critique of its antecedents and assumptions would have been a useful section in the discussion of the separation of spirituality and liturgy. It has been argued that what is taken as spirituality has flourished at those times when the liturgical life of the church has been at a low ebb. But two notes of caution might apply here. First, the anachronistic use of the term 'private prayer,' and secondly, the easy and frequent dismissal of medieval liturgical life. Of the second, even as careful a scholar as Bradshaw is guilty, as when he speaks of the Eucharist and office in the Middle Ages being 'performed in a purely external, mechanistic fashion' (p. 37).

Bradshaw is at his most illuminating in uncovering the biblical roots of Christian prayer, and his chapters on the psalms, the use of the Bible in daily prayer, and the need for ritualising prayer in word and action, provide much food for thought.

CHRISTOPHER IRVINE

THE LUTTERWORTH DICTIONARY OF THE BIBLE edited by Watson E. Mills et al. Lutterworth Press, Cambridge, 1994, reprinted in paperback 1998. ISBN 0 7188 2974 3. £19.99.

A good dictionary of the Bible is worth its weight in gold. There are some fine examples currently on the market, not least the magisterial *Anchor Bible Dictionary,* the result of collaboration between nearly one thousand contributors, representing a wide spectrum of scholarship and confessional perspectives, Jewish as well as Christian. At six hefty volumes, however, it can be both daunting and an expensive acquisition for many. If one is looking for a reliable, one-volume alternative, *The Lutterworth Dictionary of the Bible* has now been issued in paperback for the first time, making it, at £19.99, an attractive and affordable proposition. Its 1,500 articles are the product of more than 225 contributors, all of them members of the National Association of Baptist Professors of Religion in the USA

The editors describe this work as providing 'a new and major highway to biblical understanding'. I wonder whether a Baedeker's guide-book might be a more appropriate metaphor: a vital resource to have in hand (or rather, given its one thousand or so pages, on the desk!), guiding one through the biblical terrain, often with suggestions as to the most appropriate mode of transport, pointing out places of interest, setting them in their historical and cultural context, and illuminating the occasional obscurity. The range of topics covered is enormous, reflecting the diverse disciplines and methods which contribute to our understanding of the biblical literature and the biblical world: historical, linguistic, literary, theological, social and cultural. Thus one will find articles spanning the alphabet from Ashkelon to Zion, Amos to Zephaniah, the Apocalypse of Adam to the Zadokite Document, Aramaic Language to Writing Systems, Angels to Worship.

There are a number of features which make this a particularly attractive dictionary. First of all, it has been designed by teachers, for use in the classroom alongside other introductory text books. Thus there is helpful cross-referencing between articles, to help the user link connecting themes, places and personages, and many articles contain brief bibliographies, to enable the interested reader to pursue things further (this being a reprint of

an earlier edition, some of the bibliographies do appear a bit dated). Secondly, the articles on the canonical writings attempt to encourage firsthand reading of that text, through the provision of an outline of its contents and structure. Thirdly, there are introductory articles on many extra-canonical texts (OT pseudepigrapha, Nag Hammadi Library, Dead Scrolls etc.), opening up a whole area which is of crucial importance for the interpretation of the New Testament and early Christianity. Finally, the dictionary attempts to take seriously the diversity of methodological approaches, supplementing traditional methods of critical scholarship, such as textual source, form and redaction criticism, with articles on literary criticism, feminist hermeneutics, rhetorical criticism, and sociological approaches. Nor are older, time-honoured approaches neglected: the article on the 'History of Interpretation', for example, introduces some of the features of the Alexandrian and Antiochene schools, as well as aspects of medieval exegesis. These are dealt with rather briefly, however. Readers in the Catholic tradition might have hoped for a greater exposure to the riches of patristic and medieval exegetical traditions.

Given the range of topics covered, many of the articles are quite short. There are, however, a number of longer articles which set out succinctly the state of scholarly play on a number of issues or which raise interesting and vital questions. There is for example, an important article on Anti-Judaism in the New Testament, which calls for necessary reflection on the ways in which historical and sociological factors and apologetic concerns have shaped the New Testament portrayal of particular Jewish groups and the Jewish people as a whole, as well as highlighting the influence of anti-Semitism on fairly contemporary biblical scholarship. It concludes with some thoughtful suggestions as to how scholars might help to change abiding popular attitudes to the Jewish people. There is also a very full entry on the formation of the biblical canon, and a helpful discussion of New Testament Christology by the respected scholar R. H. Fuller. Despite the declared confessional perspective of the authors, the article on Justification takes seriously the corporate and covenantal aspects of the term, as well as the contextual nature of Paul's discussions of 'justification by faith'.

There are one or two minor criticisms of the work. The monochrome production of the work, for example, means that the otherwise excellent set of maps provided are rather difficult to read. Some articles are incomplete or even misleading when taken on their own: thus the article on 'Messiah/Messianism' needs to be read in conjunction with that entitled 'Messiah/Christ', in order to appreciate something of the necessary intertestamental context for understanding the title. There is also the

occasional slip: the Johannine reference to 'hyssop', for example, is surely from John chapter 19, not chapter 18. Moreover, in reading or recommending this resource, one should be aware both of its confessional (predominantly Baptist) and its cultural (United States) stance, not as a criticism, but to enable the reader to know where he or she stands in relation to the authors. Generally speaking, the articles are careful and balanced, even if, naturally, many of the topics reflect the kinds of questions which American Protestants are asking. Now and again, however, one wishes to say that there is another side to the story. Thus, for example, why is there a history only of the *English* Bible? Further, the article entitled 'Ethics in the New Testament' is almost exclusively concerned with Jesus and Paul, with James only brought in to explain the differences from Paul, and no exploration of either the ethical concerns of the individual evangelists or the very striking stance of the Apocalypse.

Generally speaking, however, this represents an excellent and affordable resource for anyone who wishes to take the study of the scriptures seriously. It is clear, concise, and user-friendly. For anyone searching for a reliable vade-mecum to the Bible this will be twenty pounds well spent.

IAN BOXALL

BOOKS RECEIVED

From SCM Press

Chiara Frugoni, *Francis of Assisi*, £12.95.

From Hodder and Stoughton

Carol Wilkinson, *The Hallowing of Time, A Daily Prayer Resource,* Vol. I, £16.99.

From Darton, Longman and Todd

Robert Durback, ed., *Seeds of Hope, A Henri Nouwen Reader*, £10.95.

David Torkington, *A New Beginning, A Sideways Look at the Spiritual Life*, £8.95.

Sr Margaret Magdalen CSMV, *Furnace of the Heart*, £7.95.

From Mowbray

Una Kroll, *Trees of Life, The Prayer of Intercession and its Cost*, n.p.

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