

October 2006 Newsletter

S. CLEMENT'S CHURCH

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From the Rector

My dear People.

Recently I was in Los Angeles to baptize the son of old friends and to preach in the church of St Thomas the Apostle, Hollywood. The Rector there is Fr Ian Elliott Davies whom I knew in London when he was Curate of the famous Anglo-Catholic church, All Saints, Margaret St.

Having some time to myself, I visited the ultra-modern Roman Catholic Cathedral of St Mary-of-the-Angels in downtown Los Angeles. It is a very fine building, using the best of materials, though (as you would expect) I found it pretty stark and empty compared with the great Cathedrals of England and Europe.

However, one thing that did impress me was the ranks of banners hung down both sides of the nave, which show a multitude of saints, all facing east to the altar. What was most intriguing about them was that they were not grouped in any kind of order, either chronological or typological. To an eye used to seeing the Twelve Apostles, or the Virgin Martyrs, or the Doctors of the Church all grouped together, the glory of this array was the total disregard for type, calling or century.

Side by side were St John the Apostle, St Agatha the Sicilian martyr, St John Fisher, Bishop of Rochester at the time of the Reformation; Mother Cabrini, then back to St Paul, St Augustine, St Rose of Lima, St Paul Miki, a Japanese martyr, St Anselm of Canterbury, St Maximilian Kolbe of the Auschwitz death camp, etc, etc.

Never have I been made so aware of the glorious diversity of the saints throughout every century and yet how they all stand together, looking to Jesus “the author and finisher of our faith” as the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews puts it.

The stained-glass windows in S Clement’s give the same message, though they are more ordered and keep the different kinds of saints in orderly fashion. Except for the window beyond Our Lady of Clemency, they are all represented by their special symbols.

On the Gospel side of the nave, the top line of saints are the twelve apostles, while on the Epistle side they are the Archangels and the different collective types of saints, virgins, confessors, doctors of the church, etc.

The middle rank on both sides of the church are saints of the Church of England, both before and after the Reformation. So we have early English saints such as Augustine of Canterbury, the Venerable Bede and S Dunstan, and nineteenth century saints such as Fr Benson, Founder of the Cowley Fathers, Mother Harriet, Founder of the Sisters of S John the Baptist at Clewer and Lord Halifax, the Anglo-Catholic promoter of unity with the Holy See.

The bottom line of saints on both sides of the church consists of the Fathers of the Early Church, those whose lives and writings are the foundation of the Catholic Faith which we teach and live out to this day.

It is a salutary exercise to go round the windows (as we do for Stations of the Cross) and meet all these heroes of the Faith. The computer has made it very simple for us to find out more about them and we can read of their lives and their teachings and of their holy deaths. Then we can walk round them again and, knowing them a bit better, begin to talk to them and ask them for their prayers. We may find we feel closer to some of them than to others and, knowing what they suffered and what they experienced, we may choose to ask their prayers for the same sort of

things in our lives or the lives of those for whom we are praying.

A solitary Christian is a contradiction in terms, for we are all part of the Body of Christ and therefore of one another. But there are times when we are alone, and some people spend much of their lives alone. Yet they are not alone: they are surrounded by that great cloud of witnesses, the saints of God. Even in our deaths, we may seem to die alone, but on the other side stand a host of loved ones, those whom we have known in this life in the flesh and those whom we have come to know in our prayers, the saints of God, waiting for us. Then our friendships will be made perfect, and the love of God will fill our beings so that we can live with him in the Communion of Saints in his eternal kingdom. We begin to practice that life here and now, and the prayers of our friends the Saints can help us.

Your friend and Rector,
W. Gordon Reid

Kalendar

October 2006 – *The Holy Guardian Angels.*

- 1 Su **Solemnity of the Holy Rosary.** Pentecost XVII. *S Remigius, BC.* [Parish]
2 M Holy Guardian Angels. [Growth of devotion to the Angels]
3 Tu S. Theresa of the Child Jesus, VD. [Community of the Resurrection & the College at Mirfield]
4 W S Francis of Assisi, C. [All Franciscans]
5 Th S Placid & his Comp, Mm. [Vocations to the monastic life]
6 F S Bruno, C. *Abs.* [Increase in the contemplative life]
7 Sa HOLY ROSARY BVM. S. Mark I, PC. *Ss Sergius & Comp, Mm.* [Living Rosary of Our Lady & S. Dominic]
8 Su **Pentecost XVIII.** S Bridget, W. *Harvest Thanksgiving.* [Parish]
9 M S John Leonardi, C. *Ss Denis, B, Rusticus & Eleutherius, Mm.* [The Church in France]
10 Tu S Francis Borgia, C. [Delayed vocations to the priesthood]
11 W MATERNITY BVM. [Society of Mary]
12 Th S Kenneth, Ab. [The Church in England]
13 F S Edward, KC. *Abs.* [Christian Rulers]
14 Sa S Callistus I, PM. [Pope Benedict XVI]
15 Su **Pentecost XIX.** S. Theresa of Avila, VD. [Parish]
16 M S Hedwig, W. [Delayed vocations to the religious life]
17 Tu S Margaret Mary Alacoque, V. [Guild of All Souls]
18 W **S Luke, Ev.M.** [For physicians and their ministry of healing]
19 Th S Frideswide, V. *S Peter of Alacantra, C.* [Growth of Vocations to the Religious Life]
20 F S John Cantius, C. *Abs.* [The Church in Eastern Europe]
21 Sa BVM on Saturday. *S Hilarion, Ab. SS Ursula & Companions, VvMm.* [Teachers & Students]
22 Su **Pentecost XX.** [Parish]
23 M Feria. *Monthly Requiem.* [October Chantry List]
24 Tu S Raphael, Archangel. [Pilgrims & Travellers]
25 W Ss Chrysanthus & Daria, Mm. [Guild of All Souls]
26 Th S. Evaristus, PM. [Organists, Choir & Servers]
27 F Vigil. *Abs.* [Increase of the spirit of penitence in the Church]
28 Sa **Ss Simon & Jude, App.** [The Bishop & Diocese of Pennsylvania]
29 Su **Christ the King.** Pentecost XXI. [Parish]
30 M Resumed Mass of Pentecost XXI. [Christian kings and rulers]
31 Tu Vigil. [All Saints Sisters of the Poor]

Music for the Month – October 2006

1st October, Holy Rosary:

Ordinary: *Juan Gutiérrez de Padilla*, Missa Ego Flos Campi

Motet: *Victoria*, Ave Maria á 8

Organ: *Fritz Kreisler*, Variations on a Theme of Corelli

Alexandre Guilmant, Grand Choeur in D (alla Handel)

8th October, Pentecost XXIII (Harvest Thanksgiving):

Ordinary: *Herbert Howells*, Mass in the Dorian Mode

Motet: *Edward Bairstow*, I sat down under his shadow

Organ: *Howells*, Scherzo

William H. Harris, Flourish for an Occasion

15th October, Pentecost XIX:

Ordinary: *Giovanni Croce*, Missa Prima Sexti Toni

Motet: *Charles Wood*, O Thou sweetest source of gladness

Organ: *Johann Sebastian Bach*, Prelude & Fugue in b minor

Bach, Fugue in g minor 'The Little'

16th October, Requiem for Fr Offerle:

Ordinary: *Maurice Duruflé*, Requiem

22nd October, Pentecost XX:

Ordinary: *Leonhard Lechner*, Missa Prima

Motet: *Lechner*, Novit Dominus

Organ: *Percy Whitlock*, Fidelis (from Four Extemporizations)

Whitlock, Paean

29th October, Christ the King:

Ordinary, *Charles V. Stanford*, Mass in G Major

Motet: *Josef Rheinberger*, Hymne (opus 69)

Organ: *Johannes Brahms*, Variations on a theme of Haydn

Brahms, Finale (from Variations)

Christian Spirituality

Over two thousand years certain famous prayers and writings have informed and inspired the spirituality and prayer lives of ordinary Christians. These pieces often have their origins in the Old and New Testaments and beyond, drawing on a wide range of traditions.

During this study course we will look at some of the great texts of the Christian spiritual tradition, examining not only their roots and history but also their relevance to our faith in the here-and-now.

This course will run over eight sessions. Everyone is welcome to come to all or any of them. They will be held on Sundays in the Anchor Room from 9.30 – 10.15 a.m.

For more information please contact Fr Wall – FrRichardWall@s-clements.org

October 8 – Christian Spirituality & Prayer

October 15 – The Psalms

October 22nd – The *Our Father*

October 29th – The Beatitudes

November 5th – The Apostles' Creed

November 26th – The *Hail Mary*

December 3rd – The Jesus Prayer

December 10th – The Battle Hymn of the Republic

October

Month of the Holy Angels

The sky is black. The great moonless arch sweeps from horizon to horizon, high over the zenith. It is black, and utterly unlit except for a golden shimmer, a dust of light, which is less light than radiance, as it were a bloom upon the grape of darkness. Here and there against this background of darkness and dim bloom, the nearer constellations swing their homely shapes—the chair, the horse, the plough; and high across the heavens is the span of that great road, track of the sun’s chariot astray in mortal hands, the road of stars, where they lie like dust.

Looking up into the sky, into the blackness lit by radiant dust, we almost forget the earth under our feet. It shrinks in all this hugeness of space, and we ourselves shrink with it till we cry the age-long cry of those that watch the stars—“What is man that thou art mindful of him, or the son of man that thou visitest him? Thou madest him a little lower than the angels. . .”

We see the earth as one of the smaller planets revolving round one of the smaller of the myriad suns that are as small dust in the small corner of the universe that is before our eyes. We see mankind as one of innumerable forms of life, some known, some unknown. Important in his small sphere, what is he in the spaceless immensity of the stars? Where does he rank in the scale of being, with its hierarchies that tower above him into eternity? Is he only a little lower than the angels?

We cannot count the suns we see—we cannot imagine the counting of the suns we do not see. We cannot count the miles, nor the years of the sky. We can only gaze upon it as it hangs above us in this moment of time, and use for our homely ends the faint glimpses we have down here of its wonderful order . . .

A red star suddenly cleaves the heavens. It appears to fly through them, though in reality it is far below them, burning because of its contact with the earth’s atmosphere, and only for that reason visible. It streaks the sky with a fading crimson gleam—then sinks among the woods and is lost.

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“How art thou fallen, O Lucifer, son of the morning,”

It is easier to drop the counting of years and go outside time. Created will exists, and has power of itself. In part it has made the evil choice, it has turned away from the Creative Will which is both its source and goal. It has become evil. It is at war with good. There is war in heaven. Michael and his angels fight against the dragon; and the dragon fights and his angels, but they prevail not, neither is their place found any more in heaven. “And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil and Satan . . . he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him . . . Woe to the inhabitants of the earth, and of the sea: for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.”

Evil, in itself, must die, since life subsists alone in God. Therefore every existence cut off from him must end. The dragon must perish apart from the Lord and Giver of life, his only hope is to establish an indirect and factitious union with his God in time. This he achieves through the material universe with which he is able to ally himself and which itself is sustained by God. He maintains his life through the elements—he becomes the Prince of the Power of the Air.

He enters the cycle of evolution, and we can follow his trail through natural law—in the cruelty and futility of nature, which we cannot believe formed part of her Creator’s original design. As life develops, becomes more subtle, rich and various, we see the adversary’s growth more explicitly revealed, till at last in animal consciousness, with its capacity for fury and pain, he attains a new power and satisfaction. The world is like a beautiful tree with a worm gnawing at its roots—twisting, stunting, and warping it, so that the fruit shrivels among the wilting leaves. J_mungund gnaws at the root of Yggdrasil

But a new wonder happens upon the earth. To consciousness is added mind and will. Created will makes a new appearance—in time. Here is a great new opportunity, both for good and evil. If the adversary can obtain power over this new form of conscious will, he can prolong indefinitely his own life and activity—perhaps even obtain once more a holding in eternal things, by means of this new creature which has been made in the image of God. On the other hand, man may by a right use of his free will redeem the world, save nature from her curse of cruelty and futility, and set her free to return to the kingdom of God. Then the evil one and his angels would fail and perish—they would be cast out of earth as before they were cast out of heaven, and be unable to maintain any longer through creation their illicit hold on life.

These were the issues, and the myths of many races tell us how mankind failed to rise to his high calling. Instead of devoting the sword of his free will to the service of good, and assuring thereby the overthrow of evil in time as it had been overthrown in eternity, man, thinking thereby to serve himself, turned it to the service of evil. Thus evil, defeated in eternity, became victorious in time. The adversary’s power, till then bound by the limited consciousness of animal life, was enormously increased by its new hold on human mind and will. He was now the Prince of this World, its ruler and potentate, and would

inevitably have destroyed it if the Almighty King of Heaven had not decided that evil should not triumph even in time—that mankind’s lost battle should be fought over again, and won.

By assuming our manhood, God fought our lost battle over again in his own person, and won it for us, redeeming not only ourselves but the kingdom of nature which we had betrayed. The serpent’s head was bruised—he lost his kingdom. He has no more real power even in time—he is bound by time and must end in time. The Prince of this World is judged.

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This is only a dream of good and evil, of the mystery of their conflict. It is only a theory, a guess at the explanation of the apparently distorted processes of nature, and the slavery of mankind to the elements of the world. The eternal issues between good and evil have been fought outside time, by beings of a different nature from ourselves, in that symbolic heavenly war wherein Michael and his angels triumphed over the devil and his angels. In that conflict the victory is already won by the forces of good. Evil is already cast out of the eternal sphere, neither is its place found any more in heaven. There is no dualism in the Christian religion, no setting of Satan against God as Ahriman is set against Ormuzd in the Persian myth. For evil is definitely cast out and trampled under the foot of triumphant Godhead. It has only a secondary and limited existence—in time; whereas good is primary, unlimited and eternal.

In time, the forces of good are in conflict with the forces of evil, though outside their time victory is won. Michael and his angels still have need to succour and defend us on earth, and their power lies in the fact that they also do continual service in heaven. Their power is not secondary and limited by time as is the power of their adversary and ours—it derives from an eternal source, it is

the same power that overthrew the Dragon on the plains of heaven—the power of God.

The power of the dragon lies in the life he is able to absorb from creation—from ourselves—just as the meteor owes its light to its passing through our earth's atmosphere. In one of Dr M. R. James's ghost stories there is a spectre which makes itself a body out of some bedclothes, but is unable to injure its victim, as its strength lies entirely in the medium it has chosen, which is merely a bundle of linen. So the harm that evil can do is merely a question of the body it acquires. It rests with us whether it embodies itself in our highest thoughts and strivings or can do no more than frighten us with a bogey made of our discarded primitive instincts. Its most common

embodiment is in the elements of our human psychology which we inherit from our animal ancestors—the grave clothes that the risen man has cast aside.

In our fight against evil we fight against what is merely temporary, parasitic and doomed, and on our side are forces which are primary, self-existing and eternal. On our side are the unchanging stars in their order, and our adversary is only the meteor that streaks the sky for a moment of earth-derived brightness, falls and is lost.

—from *THE MIRROR OF THE MONTHS*, by Shiela Kaye-Smith, London: The Society of Ss Peter & Paul

“O Worship the Lord”

An article in The Salisbury Review by The Rev'd Peter Mullen, Canon Reid's successor at St Michael's, Cornhill, London

The Pope says he wants an end to aisle-dancing and numbskull jogging for Jesus choruses at the Mass. He did not quite put it like that, but he said church music should follow in the tradition of plainsong or 16th century polyphony. Pope Benedict's suggestion provoked a typical piece of institutionalised ignorance from the BBC. *The Sunday Programme* interviewed two contemporary church music composers and asked if they would agree that the Pope was preaching 'cultural authoritarianism.'

The two composers replied by uttering a string of *non sequiturs*. First that ordinary churchgoers in the Middle Ages never did sing plainsong, for they did not have access to the manuscripts and would be unable to read the notation. The Pope never claimed they could. Plainsong was sung in the cathedrals and monasteries by professional musicians to a very high standard. The congregation participated by listening and so ascending in heart and mind to the beauty and dignity of the plainsong chants. And, incidentally, the rise and fall of the plainsong chants exactly paralleled the Gothic arch—thus uniting in one audible-visual experience a single evocation of God's majesty.

This of course was not good enough for the BBC. It was dismissed as elitist. For the modern prejudice insists that all cultural expression has to be 'accessible' and 'inclusive.' This is because the dumbed down moderns cannot understand that one can participate fully by ears, heart and mind; and that it is far better to have appropriate music performed by a few on behalf of the many

than to have the mob blaring tosh and musical doggerel, which is a form of blasphemy.

Over the years I have endured too much of the sort of tripe the Pope rightly wants to reject. Dirges such as *Bind us together, Lord* sound like nothing so much as a plea for communal constipation. When I see the overhead projector in church and hear for the umpteenth time the twang of the liturgical guitar, I am not sanctified but angry. God is not adequately praised by these excrescences, only mocked. It is disgraceful to hear congregations repeat endlessly choruses so vacuous and mindless they were not worth singing once.

Make me a channel of your peace is so sentimental that syrup seems to drip from the rafters. For the severely mentally challenged 'worship group' at St Knees Up and All Change there's *I will sing, I will sing a song unto the Lord*—the first line repeated thrice in case we didn't get it first time. The modern revisions of old favourites merely denature the traditional words and fall into farce. The great eventide hymn *The day thou gavest Lord is ended; the darkness falls at thy behest*, in *Hymns for Today's Church*—a book which can only be described as a parody of a hymnbook—is destroyed and replaced by *The day you gave us Lord has ended; the sun is sinking in the west*. While the original couplet teaches that day and night are created and ordered by the power of God—the darkness falls because He commands it—the modern version is merely banal. *The sun is sinking in the west*. It conjures up old cowboy films and Roy Rogers riding off into the sunset

with his guitar. There would be a guitar somewhere but there is no theology in it. There is one hymn in that book with the deathless line *Lord be with me in my depression* which just makes me think it should be re-titled *Who would true valium see*.

The Pope did not say that we should sing only medieval plainchant and Tallis and Byrd—though that is how he was misrepresented and traduced by the BBC and those two de-composers. He said what we sing should be ‘within the plainchant and polyphonic traditions.’ There are plenty of good modern composers turning out decent polyphony, and congregations have been singing in the plainchant tradition for centuries.

This is not ‘élitist’ or ‘cultural authoritarianism.’ I started to attend church as a

boy in the 1950s at S Bartholomew’s in the back streets of Leeds. And every Sunday morning we sang the Creed, the Gloria, Sanctus, Benedictus and Agnus Dei. To the setting by Merbecke. Simple. Moving. Uplifting. Highly appropriate. The ordinary working class congregation sang it without difficulty and loved it. And in the evening we came back to sing Psalm, Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis to traditional chants from *The Parish Psalter*.

It is not a question of old versus new, but of good rather than bad. There is fine music from all eras suitable for singing and making a joyful noise unto the Lord. It is the idiot choruses and the rock and rubbish banalities which should be thrown out. Let us restore the beauty of holiness.