

REPORT OF THE SIXTH
ANGLO-CATHOLIC
CONGRESS

SUBJECT: THE CHURCH

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Introduction

I

The Sixth Anglo-Catholic Congress was originally planned for the summer of 1940; it was to mark the close of the seven years' evangelistic work in the parishes of the country which followed the celebration of the centenary of the Oxford Movement in 1933; it was expected to precede the sessions of the Lambeth Conference, and to be marked by the presence of many of the bishops from overseas who would be in England for their decennial gathering. Before the Congress took place, an international convention was to be held, consisting of representatives of Catholic organizations from all over the world, who would consider the evidence supplied by study-circles in almost every province of the Anglican Communion on the union of Christendom, and would report to the Congress their own findings.

The summer of 1940 was marked by events of a very different character. The Lambeth Conference was postponed, London was the most unlikely place in all the world for a great gathering of people, and those who were in these shores from across the seas were here for a very different purpose than that which the Congress committee had planned. The churches which would have been filled with worshipping crowds were often the scenes of devastation and ruin as the Battle of Britain was fought out in the skies above them.

The end of the war brought its own problems: many famous shrines had been destroyed, priests were few and over-

worked, congregations were struggling to re-establish their normal life. The practical difficulties for large-scale organization had increased beyond all experience, and the pressure on accommodation in London was enough to daunt the most sanguine of organizers. A congress seemed a hazardous venture.

The need however was great: priests and people needed encouragement in their patient struggles; the Church of England was giving its blessing to evangelistic effort; a new start was needed for the active propagation of the Catholic faith. The Church Union, the heir of the previous Anglo-Catholic Congress organization, took its courage in its hands, and decided that the Congress should meet without further delay. The actual date was fixed, as had been previously intended, by the date of the Lambeth Conference, and plans began to take shape.

The difficulties were even greater than had been expected. The old scene of the Congresses, the Albert Hall, was not available, and the Congress committee found that it had to be content with the next largest hall available, the Central Hall in Westminster. The staff to deal with Congress matters was much smaller than had previously been available, and it was necessary to simplify arrangements whenever this was possible. The cost of printing, as of other things, had become formidable, and the scale on which literature was produced had to be greatly curtailed. On the other side, the encouragement was unexpectedly great. Within a week of the beginning of the issue of Congress tickets, it was obvious that the Central Hall would not be adequate, and the Kingsway Hall was taken to supplement it; voluntary workers offered their services to help the office staff; and signs of goodwill in the parishes were abundant. When the Congress took place, it

was inevitably on a smaller scale than its immediate predecessors, but the authentic Congress spirit was apparent, and its effect on the life of the Church was as marked as ever. About 13,000 members enrolled, and of these about 11,000 were actually present at Congress functions; it was encouraging, but perhaps in view of the physical strain of attendance not surprising, that the proportion of young people was unusually great.

As to the subject of the Congress, there was no need for decisions. The whole theological climate of the time, the experiments in reunion in different parts of the world, and indeed the fundamental problem of the day for the whole of mankind—how to live in community with freedom and enrichment of personality—all demanded that the doctrine of the Church should be proclaimed. And since in its official pronouncements the Lambeth Conference had taken over the subjects of the Chicago Quadrilateral (the Bible, the creeds, the ministry and the sacraments) as the focal points for any adequate theology *de ecclesia*, these provided the natural divisions of the programme of the Congress.

II

The subject of the Congress was summarised by: "What do we mean by the Church?" The four subjects of the Lambeth Quadrilateral are not, and were not regarded as being, separate matters. They are elements in the whole life of the Church, isolated indeed for purposes of thought, but related one to another. Differing ideas as to the nature of the Church cause men to give these elements different contents. The Congress, concerned to further Catholic doctrine about the Church, had to show them as the expressions, under different

aspects, of one underlying authority, that of Christ-in-his-Church; as the result of a process in which the authority of the Church has been worked out in the material supplied by history, which is the sphere of the action of the living God, and as part of the divine answer to the needs of mankind.

The Lambeth Quadrilateral is an indication of four essential factors in the life of the Church. That life, however, is not merely the sum of these four elements, but a whole, in which they can for convenience be distinguished. In its negotiations with other bodies, the Anglican Communion has often appealed to these elements as the necessary minimum required to guarantee the unity of the Church, but they are more than that. The unity of the Church is indeed expressed in them and safeguarded by them, but it has also shaped them and given them a particular significance. Moreover the Church is not only one, but also holy, catholic and apostolic. Its holiness has also therefore been nourished by these elements of its life, and itself has added to their meaning and value. And this is true of all these elements, scriptures, creeds, ministry and sacraments. Christian sanctity has been developed by the acceptance of the divine message of the scriptures, by the call to witness to the truth of the creeds, by the willing acceptance of obedience to the constituted authority of the ministry, and by the grace of the sacraments. In a similar way, both the catholicity and the apostolicity of the Church have been expressed in these four elements, and have been preserved in and by them.

Of the four subjects in detail it is not necessary to say more here. They have been treated at length in the papers which constitute this volume. A study of these will reveal a remarkable consensus on the part of Catholic scholars, a unity in the faith which allows of different emphases and insights, and

which is full of encouragement for the development of theology in England.

The Church is the Israel of God; like nations and races, its unity is a complex in which many factors may be discerned. The four subjects dealt with at the Congress are such factors. As with nations, the Church's unity reaches back into the past, and it has been one of the special claims of the Church of England that it is willing to have the past thoroughly investigated, and to face the judgment of history. By that judgment we find ourselves committed both to the acceptance of the Bible, the creeds, the ministry and the sacraments, and also to a particular pattern of church life in which they have a regulative importance and a deep significance.

III

The theme of the Church was also taken up in other ways than by the reading of papers. It was reflected in the arrangement of the whole programme. The Congress began in Westminster Abbey, the best-known church in the whole Anglican Communion; its President was Dr Wand, the Lord Bishop of London, in whose diocese the Congress meetings were held; it included a pilgrimage to the cathedral of Canterbury, the mother-church of the land; and it ended in the Bishop's own cathedral of St Paul. No one attending or observing the Congress could fail to realize the extent to which these facts bore witness to the vindication of the claim of the Catholic movement to be a true expression of the essential character of the Church of England. The days are past when the Catholic revival is merely a movement to be suppressed; the resulting situation has its own dangers, but the gains have certainly been great.

In order to express our belief in the Church as it were in a geographical rather than a theological medium, the overseas meetings of the Congress brought bishops from all the continents to bear witness to the function of the Church in the very varied conditions of different lands and civilizations. The outstanding success of these meetings was a triumphant proclamation of the interest of Catholics in the vocation of the Church to preach the faith in all the world, and to call the whole of mankind into the fellowship of Catholic life.

Lastly, since for many people the truest appreciation of the significance of Catholic doctrine comes through the implications of their worship, the general theme of the Congress was expressed in the liturgical medium in the lucid expositions of Dom Gregory Dix, as he presented a demonstration on the primitive eucharistic rite. The large audiences which saw this probably expected to derive much information from it; few, we think, had any idea of how spiritually moving it would also prove to be.

IV

The opening service of the Congress was Evensong in Westminster Abbey on the evening of Monday, July 5th. At its close the Bishop of London preached on the legacies left to us by the Tractarians: their zeal for holiness, shown especially in the revival of the monastic life; their vision of the Church as a glorious gift from God, and of the ministry as a vocation to self-sacrificing service; a new vitality of devotion, shown both in private prayer and spiritual exercises, and in public worship. He closed with an appeal for self-consecration, that the work of God might be done in our days.

After the opening Evensong, the President held a reception

in the Central Hall. It was attended by thousands of Congress members, bishops, priests and lay people, full of enthusiasm as they realized that their hopes for the Congress were going to be fulfilled, and their efforts justified.

The following morning the church of St Paul, Knightsbridge, was crowded for the first High Mass of the Congress. The celebrant was Father Colin Gill, of St Martin's, Brighton, and the preacher was the Bishop of Oxford, Dr Kenneth Kirk. Again in an eloquent sermon from one of the revered leaders of Catholic thought, the congregation heard faith in the Church expounded and made the basis of an appeal for persevering service. "Let us, in our Congress, have two goals," said the bishop as he concluded: "Let us proclaim the Gospel of God in its entirety. Then let us make that proclamation the invitation to all to come, fall down and worship him, and so enter into the mysteries."

Tuesday evening saw the opening session of the Congress, with Dr Hudson, the Bishop of Newcastle, as chairman at the Central Hall, and Dr Wynn, the Bishop of Ely, as chairman at the Kingsway Hall. The main papers at this and the following sessions are printed in this volume. In each case they were followed by a short popular speech which it has not been possible to reproduce.

St Matthew's, Westminster, the scene of many Congress services, held a large congregation the following morning for a solemn Requiem Mass for departed pioneers of the Catholic revival. The traditional chant was sung by the Renaissance Singers.

On this same day, the feast of the Translation of St Thomas, there was a pilgrimage of a thousand people to his shrine in Canterbury Cathedral. On their arrival, the holy sacrifice was offered at the high altar; and in the afternoon the pilgrims

followed the path taken by St Thomas to his martyrdom. Evensong was subsequently sung by the cathedral choir.

Back in London, the Rt Revd K. D. Mackenzie, the chairman of the Church Union executive committee, presided over the evening session at the Central Hall; at the Kingsway Hall the chairman was the Rt Revd I. S. Watkins, the Lord Bishop of Malmesbury.

According to precedent, Thursday was the Provincial Day. High Mass was sung in churches near each of the railway termini, and in the afternoon the Overseas meetings roused great enthusiasm. The report of the International Priests' Convention, which had taken place at Farnham Castle in June, was presented to the Congress by Canon Hood, the Principal of Pusey House and by Father Haselmayer, the secretary of the American Church Union. The chairman of the International Convention, the Bishop of Chicago, was also chairman of the Central Hall meeting; the Archbishop of Brisbane presiding at the Kingsway Hall. The long panel of speakers consisted, at the two halls, of the Bishops of New Guinea, Nyasaland, Korea, Barbados, Dallas, Zanzibar, Labuan and Sarawak, and the Windward Isles.

The evening session, on the Ministry, was presided over at Westminster by the Bishop of London, whose association with the Congress had done so much to ensure its success. It was fitting that the final speech at that meeting should be by Father Ronald Dix, the chairman of the Congress Committee. At the Kingsway Hall the Bishop of Oxford presided.

The ruins of St Alban's, Holborn, once again echoed with the music of the mass on the Friday morning. Father Charles Preston, S.S.F., preached to the congregation of priests, some of whom must have remembered the priests' mass within the same walls at the time of the first Congress.

The demonstration of the primitive liturgy, arranged by Dom Gregory Dix, the Prior of Nashdom, was produced on the afternoons of Friday and Saturday. In order not to lose the naturalness of primitive worship, those taking part wore their ordinary dress; an attempt to clothe them in the garments of the second century would have been out of keeping with what was being attempted. After Dom Dix's introductory explanation, the primitive rite was represented, while he gave a commentary on what was being done.

'The Sacraments' was the subject of the Friday evening sessions, with the Bishop of Gibraltar and the Bishop of Barbados as chairmen of the two meetings.

So the Congress came to its last day. The final High Mass was sung at St Augustine's, Kilburn, in the presence of the Bishop of the diocese, the congregation overflowing from the church into the grounds outside. Even this great congregation was surpassed by the throng that filled St Paul's Cathedral to the doors for Evensong and the *Te Deum*, a service at which the Bishop of Barbados preached.

Apart from the events that have been recorded here, there were a number of subsidiary activities of the Congress, instructions in the faith and demonstrations of various kinds, designed to help in the work of Catholic evangelism. To publish full reports of these would be beyond the present limits of possibility.

V

The venture of holding a 1948 Congress was abundantly justified. What now remains to be done? For the next few years our efforts must be concentrated on carrying the Catholic message to the people of the parishes throughout the

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land. A new impetus has been given to many in their work of teaching the faith, guiding Christ's people in their worship, and training them in their Christian lives. A renewed zeal for the Church of God, and a new insight into its meaning, are among the conditions necessary for fruitful evangelism. It is to the proclamation of the Gospel to those outside that our eyes are turned.

HAROLD RILEY

Secretary of The Church Union

Note

Some of the papers delivered at the Congress were not committed to writing beforehand, and an exact verbatim report is not available. As printed, they follow the text of the original speeches as closely as possible in the circumstances.

THE BIBLE

I

A. M. RAMSEY

The Church is the theme of this Congress: the Bible is our subject tonight. And I ask you to begin by considering the relation between them. First, we turn to the Bible to see what is the meaning of the Church; then, turning our thoughts to the Church with its mission in the world and with the problems of its unity, we shall see how the Church uses and understands the Bible.

I

People have often discussed questions about our Lord's foundation of the Church as if the Church of God came into existence only in the Christian era. The Church, we believe, was there already when our Lord came. It is at least as old as Moses and the Exodus: Israel was the *ecclesia*, the people of God. We are fellow-churchmen with the patriarchs, the prophets, the Israelites of old; and, though by the coming of our Lord and his new creation some utterly new principles appeared, we can still find in the old Israel of God principles of permanent importance for the meaning of the Church whose members we are.

(1) The Church begins with the act of God's sheer goodness in choosing and delivering Israel. He bore them upon eagles' wings and brought them to himself. Israel as she worships God looks back in gratitude to his gracious act in leading her out of Egypt, looks up to him in his righteous govern-

ment and providence, and looks forward to the final vindication of his promises.

(2) Israel in her worship of God bears witness to the meaning of man as God's creature. Her worship is peculiar to herself, it rests upon her privilege as a redeemed people, it isolates her as a peculiar people from the rest of the human race. Yet her worship is not unconnected with the life of mankind around her; for it is the worship not only of a redeemed people to their Redeemer but of creatures to their Creator. Man was made in order to worship and adore him who made him in his own image, leading the praises of all created things. And in Israel man's lips are unsealed to lead creation's praises.

(3) Israel as God's Church shews us the Church's besetting temptations. There is the temptation to be introverted, to try to enjoy in isolation what God means her to share with mankind. There is the temptation to try to turn to her own glory and merit what God gives her through no merit of her own. The law shewed Israel what God demanded, and judged Israel when she failed. But woe unto the Israelite, the churchman, when he seeks to earn merit before God by the keeping of God's precepts; for God's precepts, while they discipline us in God's way, speak to us of his sheer unmerited goodness.

Such was the Church of the old covenant. We see its story in the scriptures: it is the Church we ourselves belong to, and the distance of years and the great act of the incarnation have but verified these ancient truths. The Church was then, and the Church is now, a spiritual race: judged by God in the days of its members' presumption: raised up by God in the days of their contrition: its members fallible and sinful, itself imperishable because the righteous purpose of God—through his Church and for his world—remains.

Into this Church our Lord, God's Son and Messiah, came.

"His own received him not," for "his own" were using their privileges for their own glory and not for his. And from the nation and the Church in the day of its apostasy our Lord gathers a remnant under the rule of the apostles: a Church new—for a new covenant is given to it, yet old—for the continuity is there in Jesus, Israel's head and king. They all forsook him on Good Friday; but by that supreme act of forgiveness, the resurrection, he filled the now contrite and penitent remnant with his own risen life. The Church is now Christ's Body: the members are sinful and fallible, but that whereby they are the Church is Christ's own risen life. This is why the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

So it is that we learn in the Bible, as nowhere else, the present meaning of the Church's shame and the Church's glory.

II

Now for the Bible itself, within the Church. How do we use it and understand it? The books of the Bible are holy Scripture, because they are the canonical books of the Israel of God. Both in the old and in the new Israel, before the books were written God had redeemed the Church and set his name and glory in her midst. Within the Church men wrote (under God) the books which tell the sacred story of God's redemption and its impact upon his people; and finally the Church canonized those books which, guided by the Holy Ghost, it recognized as the authoritative witnesses to the tradition. If therefore we want to understand the scriptures aright we read them within the common life and the worship of the Church, not daring to put asunder what God gave to us together in a single bundle. In this way we may

enjoy a use of scripture which is catholic—true, that is, to the catholicity or wholeness of scripture. In three ways specially our use of scripture must be catholic, or whole:

(1) Our use of scripture is catholic, or whole, in the unity of the two covenants. Our preaching and our sacramental life rest not only upon the fact that the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, but also upon the facts that in the beginning God created the world and that God gave the law to Moses. This unity of the two testaments carries with it two theological unities which are forgotten only with disaster. There is the unity of *gospel and law*: it isn't specially catholic to omit the ten commandments; for, while the gospel puts an end to the law as a means of salvation, it vindicates the law as a revelation of the divine order of the world. As we preach the gospel to the world we open men's eyes to the divine law in the natural order. There is the unity of *redemption and creation*. The Son of God redeems a world which the Son of God himself created; and the more we enter into our privileges as God's redeemed children under the New Testament the more we rediscover the meaning of ourselves as creatures in God's image, as the Old Testament still teaches. In the fulness of Christian worship our praise of the God who redeemed us is penetrated through and through by the creature's adoration of the Creator. The two Testaments which God hath joined together, let no modern Marcion put asunder.

(2) Our use of scripture is catholic in the unity of its divine and its human elements. Like the Church, like our blessed Lord, the Bible is of two natures. It has not always been easy to grasp both aspects of the Bible in its unity. There have been ideas about the Bible's inerrancy, upon all topics on earth as well as in heaven, which have been true to the divine nature of the Bible, but have let the divine override or supplant the

human. There have been ideas about the Bible in its historical development which have been true to its human nature, but, through failing to interpret it in terms of Israel's faith in God, have missed its divine nature. A truly catholic use of the Bible is "Chalcedonian"; and, after the violent conflicts of inerrancy and liberalism, some of our theologians are shewing us such a use. Because the Bible is divine we understand it only by entering into the Church's faith in God: because it is human we realise that God's revelation did not drop from heaven in a neat pattern, but was wrought out in a rough and bloody history—a history which demands the scientific study which critics and historians can bring.

(3) Lastly, the right use of the Bible is catholic, or whole, in the unity of scripture and tradition. This unity is best described in the opening words of St Luke's Gospel. He wrote the book not because nothing had been taught and known about our Lord hitherto: much had been handed down and learnt in a tradition of teaching and catechising, and St Luke wrote the book in order to bear witness to this tradition and crystallize a portion of it. The tradition was living: it included preaching, teaching, common worship, sacramental rites and apostolic rule. On the one hand therefore we test tradition by the principles we find in scripture, for scripture is the supreme witness as to what the earliest tradition was. And on the other hand we do not separate scripture from those things in the Church which are parallel to the formation of the canon of scripture—namely the creed, the liturgy, the apostolic office of the bishop. God never gave us—this is a plain fact of history—scripture apart from the tradition, or the tradition apart from scripture. Let us banish both a false scripturalism and a false traditionalism, which create a false antithesis and rend the truth.

III

We are living in a time when, while millions in our land neither open a Bible nor possess one, a revival of the theology of the Bible has been taking place. This revival, taking as it does many forms, has been conspicuous amongst Christians of Protestant-Reformed tradition, where a big swing-back has occurred from extreme liberalism to the living God of the Bible and his word of judgment and grace. It is often said, in what are called "oecumenical" circles, that in "biblical theology" the hope for unity lies. Let me end with a few sentences about this revival in Protestant theology: our debt to it, and our essential divergence from it.

(1) We are debtors to those scholars and divines who, from the midst of the Protestant tradition, have taught once again that the Bible is the record not of man's evolutionary religious progress but of God's word of judgment and self-revelation to man. It is not only that these scholars and divines have brought deliverance to many from a shallow and optimistic liberalism: we owe much to them for the recovery of those stern and catastrophic elements in the Bible—wrath, judgment, election, resurrection—which we were inclined to smooth away in our own Liberal-Catholic synthesis. We have a debt, as the traditional churchman often has, to those who remind us of the Word, living, active, sharper than any two-edged sword.

(2) But there is also our divergence. The return to the Bible, of which I have been speaking, has not been a return to the fulness and balance of truth which the Bible contains. There is in this teaching a lopsidedness sometimes as great as that of the liberalism against which it is a reaction. In particular, through its intense concentration upon "the Word"

and the "hearing of faith", it sometimes makes speaking and hearing exhaust the whole relation of God and man; and there is in the Bible a great and many-sided theme—concerning man as creature and worshipper, man in his place in a sacramental world, man in his quest of sanctification with the Beatific Vision as his goal—which the Reformed biblicism mutilates or ignores. "Back to the Bible" is not in itself the way to the recovery of the fulness of the Bible's message: for "Back to the Bible" still gives us those partial, one-sided and ultimately divisive apprehensions of biblical truth which we have known in the past.

We all are indeed the heirs of a divided Christendom, and the sin of our divisions has involved us all in a grasp of scripture which is far from balanced and complete. And the recovery of the fulness of the truth of scripture in the Church demands that we shall all link together the return to the living God in the Bible with the appeal to the tradition of the Catholic Church—the ancient fathers, the liturgy, the sacramental life, the visible order of the visible Church. Only thus do we recover the fulness of the Bible, for only thus was the fulness of the Bible first given. We shall hold fast to all these things for the sake of that fulness wherein Christ's people shall one day be made one.

II

F. W. GREEN

I propose to confine my contribution tonight to one aspect of our subject—the Bible in the context of the Church; an aspect which like biblical theology has received a good deal of promising and, I think we may say, eirenic attention in many quarters recently; I mean the relation of holy Scripture to tradition. This has been a vexed question since the sixteenth century and one of the great dividing tensions, which must be faced if not resolved, lest in building unity on the Lambeth Quadrilateral we find ourselves once more building upon a “conscious ambiguity”. Are there any fresh insights which may help to reduce if not to resolve this tension?

I do not think that any Catholic theologian today would question either the sufficiency or indeed the supremacy of Scripture within the context of the plan of redemption as it has been received and handed down in the Church. There is nothing to fear in this admission, so long as no attempt is made to isolate the Bible from that context or exalt it as a judge over the mind of the Church, the no less inspired spirit-bearing body. There is no need to question the judgment that “the whole weight of authority, certainly ancient authority, is unanimous in favour of the sixth Article of Religion”. I need make only two typical quotations in support of that statement: one from St Athanasius in the East: “The holy and divinely inspired Scriptures are of themselves all-sufficient for the enunciation of the truth” (cont. Gentes 1); the other from St Augustine in the West: “In those things which are

openly set down in Scripture all things are found which embrace both faith and morals” (de Doct. 11: 9). They did not perhaps mean quite the same thing as the Article, whether Cranmer’s or that of Trent. For the fathers did not appeal to the Scriptures merely as an authority, still less as a happy hunting ground for texts in proof of particular doctrines. In the words of the late Professor N. P. Williams, “authority is a thing belonging to persons and only by metonymy applied to writings” (*Northern Catholicism*, p. 156). To the fathers, it has been recently well said, Scripture was (as it was to Newman) a “world”; the atmosphere they breathed, the life and centre of their culture and their cultus (*Eastern Churches Quarterly*, Conference at Blackfriars, Vol. 7, Supplement). And to be quite fair, the first flush of the Reformation appeared to Luther, Erasmus and our own Collet, as the recovery of that world, submerged beneath the tropical growth of the scholastic system. When Luther uttered his famous “scriptum est”, he was not appealing to scripture proof any more than our Lord was when he quoted Scripture to the devil. He felt himself to be escaping from the terror of an unknown God, the God of the philosophers, which haunted him like a ghost, to the God who has turned his Face to him and revealed to him his Name; a God who has spoken in history, whose self-communication has taken form in the Bible, as it had taken concrete form in the incarnation. So Erasmus in well-known words wrote “these writings bring back to you the living image of that most holy Mind, the very Christ himself, so entirely present that you would see less of him if you beheld him with your eyes” (*Preface to New Testament*, 1510). The primary supremacy of Scripture is historically, theologically and devotionally beyond question. For if by the incarnation we mean that God is not merely

revealed in Jesus Christ, but that the mystery of God has entered into a concrete earthly form, of which the Church is the extension and the divinely appointed dispenser, then it is not too much to say that the same mystery or "economy", as the Greek fathers called it, belongs likewise to this book: and only on this background and in the same context, can it really be understood what Scripture means to Christendom. It was the tragedy of the later Reformation that the Bible became the prison and the grave of the word of God; a good illustration of which is to be found in the story of the young Abraham Lincoln who read the Bible out of its true context, and in reply to the challenge of a Calvinist friend, remarked "I am not a Christian; I have read the New Testament, and have not so understood this book". After which he stated his own creed, which corresponded amazingly to that of the Church. He is said to have had a Catholic as his earliest teacher in a log cabin school.

Supremacy, yes; and sufficiency; but never sole! For like the philosopher who found that cheerfulness would always keep breaking in, so tradition, "paradosis" as the Greeks called it, is always coming up alongside the Scriptures. "To whom do the Scriptures belong?" exclaims Tertullian. "Mea possessio, mea possessio—They are mine, says the Church, and heretics have no right to them" (*De Praes. Haer.* 37. 14). It must indeed be admitted that the New Testament is a book for Christians and pre-supposes an antecedent knowledge of the faith. Each Church to which an apostolic epistle was addressed could read and understand such a document only by the light of a faith which it already possessed; so that St Irenaeus goes so far as to say that had there been no written scriptures the Church might have managed well enough; indeed its missionary work had been already to a large extent

done without it (*Adv. Haer.* 3.4.1). Does that therefore mean that there are two sources of Christian doctrine, two streams of Catholic truth, as would seem to be implied from a hasty reading of the article of the Council of Trent (Session 4), though even there it will be noticed that scripture is put first and tradition second (an order unfortunately reversed in the creed of Pope Pius IV)? The answer is No! Read what Dr Prestige has to tell us about the meaning of the word *paradosis* in the fathers. Tradition means the whole deposit of faith, both written and unwritten, including the Bible and creed and (most important today) the liturgy, and all the oecumenical documents of the faith; as our own Bishop Bramhall put it, the "Rule of Faith, dilated in Scripture, contracted in Creeds". The Church has ever guarded that sacred deposit once delivered to the saints, whether written or unwritten; for they are not two sources of doctrine but one and the same object of Faith. Indeed it is not easy to determine what the early fathers meant by "The Rule of Faith" or "The Canon of Truth", whether Scripture or unwritten tradition or creed. For it seems to include all. The signal and most spectacular example of what was meant by tradition *vis-a-vis* scripture was of course the insertion in the Nicene Creed of the word *homousion* (of one substance), which was opposed because it was not found in scripture; but which has nevertheless safely guarded the deposit and guards it still. You can't get beyond it. *Scriptum est*, as Luther would have said; and, as Athanasius maintained at the time, it was true to the sense of scripture.

Now from this follow two important conclusions. First, the Church holds and can never renounce what Tertullian calls its *magisterium*; that is its primary office to teach and preach, sitting in the seat of the Apostles who first declared the mystery of the incarnation. And this is how St Thomas

answers the question why the New Testament contains no books written by Christ himself, in a passage of singular beauty and restraint: "because of his dignity; for the more excellent the teacher, the more excellent the manner of the teaching; and therefore Christ the most excellent Teacher of all used the spoken word only, as did Pythagoras and Socrates" (*Summa Theol.* III, xlii). And so the Church, which is the Body of Christ, continues to teach *ex ore*, and is never tied to the written word any more than Christ is tied to his sacraments. This too is probably the reason for that strange phenomenon in the early Church known as the *disciplina arcani*; according to which a candidate for baptism was not allowed to write down the creed which he had to recite at his baptism, or even to read it out of a book. So the first Council of Jerusalem (*Acts* XV) did not think it sufficient to send letters to Antioch containing the decrees, but sent Barnabas and others to convey them by word of mouth.

Do we then make void the written word by our tradition? Nay, rather we establish it. For the unwritten tradition, the deposit or rule of faith, is seldom referred to without the epithet "apostolic". And the reason why we hear as much in the early Church of that blessed word as we do today, is that it conveys a second most important truth about the Bible in the Church. The Church is apostolic not only because the apostles represent in the most absolute way our Lord and hand down his teaching, but also because the Church is an apostolic as contrasted with a prophetic Church. Here we have another tension which needs solution. The primary function of an apostle was to witness, first of all to the resurrection, then to the whole body of redemptive acts wrought by God in Christ. If the Church were to claim to exercise a spirit of prophecy, as it were on its own (as the Montanists claimed to do and as

the so-called religions of the Spirit, like that of the Quakers, still profess to do) that would be to endanger the finality of the revelation in Christ. Ever since Christ ushered in the new dispensation, the prophetic word of God, prevalent in the old, is tied to the Word made Flesh. The Spirit is henceforth the Spirit of Jesus; whose function is to take of the things of Jesus and show them to us. The prophet now takes second place to the apostle, and the prophetic was rapidly superseded in the Church by the apostolic office. And it is for this reason that the Church is rightly called, not the judge of Scripture, but the *witness* to it; its interpreter, but not at its own pleasure or by arbitrary authority. Its principle of interpretation must always remain the same—the personality, life, death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ; understood as the development of one single plan of God's merciful providence to redeem the whole world. This may perhaps include those other dogmas which many of us don't quite see our way to as *de fide*; which that great teacher, Professor Karl Adam, has done more than anyone else to elucidate to those whom he would call non-Catholics. Thus the written word implies the living word as its correlative; the one receives, applies, interprets the other. In other words the antithesis "scripture and tradition" is seen to be a false one, for both are needed if we are to attain to the wholeness of a true Catholicity.

To sum up, then, the function in our day of the unwritten tradition is to interpret the written; but as an interpreter strictly bound by the terms of its witness, or to use the phrase so often on our lips of our great English Church doctors, Hooker, Bull, Pearson: "according to the analogy of Faith." As Archbishop Laud put it in answer to the exaggerated stress laid by the Jesuits on the unwritten tradition, "The key that lets me in to the Scriptures is the tradition of the Church; but,

when men are in, they hear Christ himself immediately speaking in Scripture to the faithful, and his sheep do not only hear but know his voice" (*Conference with Fisher*, 16, *Works*, Volume 2, p. 115). And Bishop Gore was right when he said that the Church gives to the reader of the Bible a point of view, thus translating into simple language Athanasius's great phrase the ecclesiastical *scopos* (*contr. Ar.* iii. 53).

Once some rash and foolish men tried to convert the philosopher Kant to some sort of Lutheranism, saying in effect, "Draw your conclusions from the source itself, the Bible, but take care that you do not discover anything in the Bible except what we find there". "My good friends," he replied, "you had better tell us what you find in the Bible, that we may not search in vain and be told by you at last that what we thought we had found there is our own misinterpretation!" His conclusion is what we might expect from the man of pure reason, that no external standard of dogmatic truth can be maintained in a Church which does not claim authority in the interpretation of Scripture. Thus it was because Pusey in his famous challenge called *Eirenicon* admitted that claim on behalf of his Church, that Newman in his reply to that document was able to remark, and repeat in the later edition of the *Via Media*, that for Anglicans the difference between their view and that of Rome on scripture and tradition is one of words; (Newman, who had come to find in the Catholic fathers the truth which he had sought to find in Calvinism). "Anglicans," he said, "in allowing that Scripture requires an interpreter do necessarily agree with Catholics in denying that Scripture is the one authentic informant" (*Via Media*, pp. 228, 327. Ed. Longmans). Can we now say that for some Protestants also the difference is a verbal one? Are they yet prepared to disown Chillingworth's dictum, "the Bible, the

only religion of the Protestants?" (*Works*, 1.6.56). If that can be said, then one great stumbling-block will have been removed out of the way of reunion. But it would be less than honest if I did not conclude by saying with emphasis, that as Anglo-Catholics we must view with grave distrust and disquiet the phrase repeated in so many current documents, "reasonable liberty of interpretation". Of study, by all means; and searching enquiry, yes; but the interpretation of the sense of scripture belongs to the Church and to the Church alone—"The inspired mind of the Church the perfect critic". Progress and development there will of course be, but the progress, as St Vincent of Lerins reminds us, will be that of the body which grows but does not change into something different (*Comm.* cc. 28, 29). For progress in Christian theology and in religious faith is in apprehension of the object of faith, and not in its change into something else. Tradition does not mean an "ossification", to use another phrase of Dr N. P. Williams; otherwise Origen, the most progressive of the Fathers, could not also be the greatest conservative where the Rule of Faith is concerned.

But I should not like to conclude with a challenge. As a Catholic party we stand for unity and peace, and what matters after all is the spiritual life of the Church; and it is in the spiritual life of the Church, as the Russian Arseniev writes, the unity between Scripture and Tradition is found, for the Spirit of God is the author of both. The Church has never defined inspiration; but I wish we heard more often of that other inspiration, that 'engrafted word' of which a great deal is said by the sadly neglected but truly Catholic theologian of the Church of England, Robert Isaac Wilberforce (*Doctrine of the Incarnation*, c. vi). Scripture, he would say, is the very sense of God's revelation, from which the instructed

and inspired mind of the Church draws and develops the true meaning. Or, as Bishop Gore puts it (*Roman Catholic Claims*, p. 57), "The Spirit in the Society interprets the Spirit in the Bible."

And so I would wish to end with the thought that St Thomas, in the passage I have already quoted, leaves with us, where he said that "on account of his dignity" Christ left no written book; but adds that as Christ stands as Head in relation to his disciples, the members of the Mystical Body, and they wrote only what he commanded them, after all it is true to say that he did write it with his own hands: so close is the union between them. To which, as in private duty bound, I would add the little postscript by an unknown hand appended to one of the manuscripts in which that 'unlettered creature,' the Lady Julian of Norwich, still speaks to us as from her cell. She could not read a letter, yet somehow knew it all (St Thomas included), depending only on the spoken word:

"Truly understood all (the Revelation of Divine Love) is according to Holy Scripture and grounded in the same. And that Jesus, our very love, light, and truth, shall shew to all clean souls that with meekness ask perseverently this wisdom of hym."

III

A. G. HEBERT

The subject of our Congress is the Church. Therefore we begin by thinking of the Bible, and its relation to the Church. Hence I shall not attempt to deal with the so-called Bible difficulties, or with the higher criticism, or to develop a theory of inspiration. I must try to give a line about the general interpretation of the Bible, as being God's book and truly inspired, written in the Church and for the Church's use; and as written by men, because it has been God's method to reveal himself through men. It was written by men, and tells a story which is real history; therefore we must have thorough critical investigation of the Bible. It is God's book because it tells the story of God's saving purpose, worked out in the history of the believing and worshipping people of God, Israel, his chosen nation. Because this story is true, we have nothing to fear from the higher criticism. If that criticism has been at fault, as it often has been, it is because it has often failed to see the record as it needs to be seen, from the point of view of believing and worshipping Israel.

For the Church is the people of God, God's Israel. As such, it has existed not for some 1900 years only, but for more than 3000 years, since the day when the Lord God redeemed it out of Egypt and made his covenant with it. Within this Israel Jesus the Messiah was born, and he re-constituted it so that henceforth it might not be limited to one nation only, but might be catholic, including all nations, and that in Abraham and his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed.

This story the Bible tells. Its books were all written within the Israel of God; and they can be rightly understood only in relation to the tradition of its faith and worship and way of life, that tradition of the believing and worshipping community which has continuously existed for more than 3000 years, and within which we ourselves live. The latest critical book which I have read speaks of the first fifteen chapters of Exodus, which describe the call of Moses, the plagues of Egypt, the passover and the exodus, as having been written for recital at the annual passover festival; and similarly it is probable that the tradition of the solemn reading of the passion-narrative at the eucharist during Holy Week goes back to a date earlier than the writing down of our canonical gospels.

Perhaps the clearest way to exhibit the continuity of the tradition of the faith in its historical development is to set out three confessions of faith, dating respectively from the middle period of the monarchy, about 850 B.C.; from the exile, about 550 B.C.; and from the apostolic age, about A.D. 50.

The first of these confessions of faith, dating from the time of Elijah, will run somewhat thus: "We believe in the Lord our God, who redeemed us out of Egypt, made his covenant with us at Horeb, and brought us into the promised land. Now we are his people; his presence dwells in our midst on the sacred ark at Jerusalem; and for the future we pray that we may live in peace under his protection."

After Elijah came Amos and Hosea, Isaiah and Micah, Deuteronomy and Jeremiah. The work of the prophets was to convict Israel of sin, and to interpret the danger to the national independence which arose from the militaristic empire of Assyria as the sign of God's judgment on his people. Because the Lord was the real God, because he cared about

his people, therefore he must and would chastise them for their iniquities. Isaiah said that only a remnant would survive the chastisement, but that through this remnant God's purpose of salvation would go forward.

These terrible warnings were fulfilled. In 722 B.C. Samaria was taken and its people deported; 140 years later a like fate befell Jerusalem. Under this utterly crushing blow, what were the people of God to say? Was it that their God had tried in vain to save them, but had been overpowered? We may remember that this was what Rabshakeh said to them at the time of Sennacherib's invasion: "Hath any of the gods of the nations delivered their people out of my hand?" It was vain to hope that the Lord would be able to save Jerusalem. But no, they could not say this; for the prophets had proclaimed for generations past that he himself was sending the invader against them to chastise them for their sins. The prophets' word had been most terribly verified; they must accept his just sentence, and repent.

And repent they did; and repenting, they were able to hear the voices of the prophets telling them that he who had smitten was able to save. His purpose with them was not finished. Now we come to our second confession of faith, as it might have been made by one who had learnt from Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Second Isaiah. It will run thus: "The Lord did indeed redeem us out of Egypt, make his covenant with us, and bring us into that good land. But we sinned so fearfully against him that we have had to suffer a fearful punishment. But now we look for a second exodus, when he will again redeem us, not out of Egypt, but 'out of the north country and from all the countries whither I had driven them'; a new covenant, when his law will be written in our hearts and we shall all truly know him, and our sins and iniquities he will

remember no more; an outpouring of his Spirit, that we may keep his commandments and do them; the return of his presence to abide in our midst in the restored temple; and the coming in of all nations to share in these blessings, in this coming day of the Lord when his glory shall be revealed."

Clearly they expected that that day of the Lord would come soon. Jeremiah had spoken of 'seventy years'; and we know that about 520 B.C. Haggai and Zechariah were urging the rebuilding of the temple, that it might be ready against his coming. But God is never in a hurry; and we, with the history before us, can see that his time was not yet come: he had much yet to do with his people. They must go under the discipline of the law; there must be the punctual and devout offering of sacrifice in the second temple; there must be in every city and town the synagogues where the people heard scriptures read till they knew them by heart, praised God in the psalms, and were trained up in a way of life ordered and disciplined according to God's law. There came the Maccabean persecutions, in which their faithfulness was tried even unto death, and there were hundreds, perhaps thousands, of martyrs. But still the promised day did not dawn.

At last there were seen in Israel people whose faces were radiant with joy, announcing that it had happened: "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he hath visited and redeemed his people." Now we come to our third confession of faith, by an apostle of Jesus: "Yes, God did of old redeem Israel out of Egypt, and give them the Mosaic covenant; and he did send the prophets to make in his Name the promises of a future salvation. Now the time is fulfilled and the promised reign of God has arrived. Jesus the Messiah has come, has been crucified, is risen from the dead; this is the promised redemption, not from Egypt, nor from the lands of the exile, but

from the power of the last enemy of man, from the devil, sin and death. The new covenant is now ratified by his self-offering in sacrifice for sin, and the eucharistic chalice is his blood of the covenant. The promised Spirit has been poured out at Pentecost. The presence of the Lord has returned, for the Word was made flesh and tabernacled among us and we beheld his glory; and the tabernacle where he dwells is no mere temple of stones and timber, made with hands, but is built of living stones: we ourselves are the temple. And the Gentiles are now being baptized into the Israel of God; in the new Israel there is neither Jew nor Greek, for we are all one man in Christ Jesus."

So then, this is where we now are. We are the heirs of this great tradition of believing and worshipping Israel. Our creed is simply the message of the fulfilment of the messianic promises, translated into terms of a baptismal confession of faith: faith in God the Maker of heaven and earth, in his Son Jesus the Messiah, in the Holy Ghost. When we confess our faith in the Holy Ghost, we are not merely saying that he is the author of our religious experience; we are saying that God's purpose for mankind, which is recorded in the Bible history, has reached its fulfilment, and we are sharers in its benefits. A Christian is one who has received the Spirit who came at Pentecost. To know what it means to be a Christian, it is necessary to know the story which the Bible relates.

Therefore the Church in its liturgy continually reads and refers to the Bible story. In the Church's use of the Bible we can distinguish three main points. First, we have there the historical record of the mighty acts of God in history, whereby we have been redeemed. Second, we are there taught the fundamental truths about God and his presence with his people and his saving activity in the lives of men and

women. Third, we have there presented to us the mystery of Christ, in which the Bible reaches its consummation.

First, then, the Bible contains the historical evidence of the acts of God in history, both in the redemption of Israel from Egypt and in the second redemption through our Lord's death and resurrection. On the truth of these events the very existence of the Israel of God depends. The prophets spoke their message to recall the people to the covenant; if there had been no exodus from Egypt and no covenant, and no revelation of God except that which came in the prophets' own religious experience, that would have knocked the bottom out of all their preaching. Equally fundamental is it to our faith that our Lord really was the Son of God come down from heaven, and that after he had been crucified God raised him from the dead. If those things are not true, then, as St Paul says, our faith is vain and we are yet in our sins; there is no gospel left if our Lord was only a religious reformer. That, incidentally, is why we must have the higher criticism. The truth of the events of the redemption must be rigorously tested by every method of historical science. If we were not allowed to do this, we should be refused the opportunity of proving that the gospel narratives are not a tissue of legends.

This point is important because multitudes in our day think of the Christmas story, for instance, as a myth, beautiful but quite unreal; and they are encouraged in this by books such as that of Bishop Barnes, which make a pretentious but quite unreal claim to genuine scholarship. The claim of the Christian gospel is that the Son of God was made man, true man, and lived an actual life in our world. It was in a civilization like our own that he was hounded to death and triumphed through death, as his martyrs have done after him. It is our actual human life that has been redeemed to God.

Second: we have before us in the scriptures the fundamental truths about God, as he made himself known to Israel his people. They interpret to us God's purpose for the lives of ordinary men and women and his dealings with them. And here, I think, the Bible is of especial importance for us Catholics in the Church of England. As practical people, anxious to see the Church treated seriously, and to secure an intelligent and responsible attitude towards membership in it, we often tend to lay the emphasis on "holding the Catholic faith", meaning by that a firm assent to the truths concerning himself which God has revealed, and on the importance of a Catholic discipline of life, of the precepts of our religion which we obey, and of the Catholic religion as a series of observances which we practise. All this is right and good and important. But there is a certain danger of leaving the Bible out, or rather perhaps of taking it for granted, taking it as read, taking it as if it constituted merely the title-deeds of a religion which we practise. For in the Bible we are confronted with God's own personal action. In the New Testament, it shews us the personal coming of the Son of God into the world and into our lives; the Christ who comes to us in the holy sacrament is the same Christ who is presented in the gospel at the mass, doing his works of healing, and speaking words which are there addressed personally to us. In the epistles, we are confronted with the personal action of God the Holy Ghost, for the epistles describe what happens when the love of God is shed abroad in human hearts through the Holy Ghost who has been given. No less in the Old Testament God is shewn as throughout living and active: as wroth with his people when they fall away from him; as raising up judges to save them; as sending the prophets and giving them his word. The matchless stories, such as those about

Abraham or Joseph, which were originally written for the edification of the people of Israel, and on which the people of God have been brought up from that day to this, all tell of his presence and his action in the lives of men.

The Bible history is all related from this point of view. The books of Joshua, Judges, Samuel and Kings are headed in a Hebrew Bible "the earlier prophets". For these are prophetic books; they do not, like the books written by modern historians, endeavour simply to determine the actual course of events and the causes and consequences of the events, but try rather to see the history from the point of view of God's action in it and his judgment upon it. Thus, the record of David's life (which seems to have been written very soon after the events and to depict them for the most part very accurately), is very different indeed from modern journalism. After David has taken Bathsheba to be his wife, having caused Uriah the Hittite to become a casualty in battle, we read "But the thing that David had done displeased the Lord". Similarly a long note is added in the second book of Kings, after the account of the fall of Samaria, to explain that this terrible event happened as God's judgment on his people for deserting him and going after other gods. Thus as we read and ponder this history we find that we are there given a key to the understanding of all history. It should move us to think of our own contemporary history also as a story in which the same pattern of judgment and salvation through judgment is being unfolded.

Similarly the psalmists refer everything to God. In the situations in life with which they are confronted they try to see what God is doing, often in great perplexity. They plead for his help, glorify him in his mighty acts, adore his majesty, confess their sins. Therefore the psalms always have been and

always will be the pattern of Christian devotion, not only as regards personal piety, but also in the endeavour to find and follow the way of God's will in all the circumstances of life. The Church has used the psalter as the prayer of the many members of the Body, speaking to God in and through Christ the Head.

This brings me to my third point: that the centre of the Bible, the meeting-point of the two testaments, is Jesus the Messiah in whom the messianic promises made through the prophets were all fulfilled. Therefore, when at the great festivals the mysteries of the faith are set before us in order in the Church's liturgy, at each of them the appropriate Old Testament texts are read to us: at Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Passiontide, Easter, Ascension, Pentecost. The Old Testament lessons which are then read, and the proper psalms which are then recited, unfold to us the richness and fulness of the messianic hope of that day of the Lord to which the prophets looked forward; and they are read in order that we may understand what it was that happened when Jesus came. God's purpose for Israel his people was then made complete; the day of the Lord arrived.

The Church lives in that day of the Lord. The Messiah came in judgment, exposing evil as evil, laying bare the sin of the publicans and prostitutes and the greater sin of the self-righteous Pharisees. He bore it all himself, as the Servant of the Lord who bare our griefs and carried our sorrows, and when all we like sheep had gone astray, the Lord laid on him the iniquity of us all. He gave his life as a ransom for many. In his resurrection he has seen of the travail of his soul and has been satisfied.

The day of the Lord came in that central hour of the world's history when he rose from the dead victorious. Therefore the

paschal celebration, year by year, is the central act of the Church's life. Then we all stand before the cross of the Messiah as sinners, sharers in the guilt of murdering him; and because in that day of the Lord his love triumphed over man's sin, we are raised to life by him who died for us.

Here is the central point in which the whole meaning of the Bible is gathered up. The law and prophets are fulfilled. The animal sacrifices ordered in the law are seen to be pointing to this; while as the prophets taught, what God really wanted was not an animal victim, but that sacrifice of the broken and contrite heart which is exhibited in God's sacrificial Lamb who takes away the sin of the world.

By keeping the precepts of the law it was impossible for man to come to peace with God and be justified; for that way led to self-righteousness and a deadly pride, as Saul the Pharisee found. Peace with God and justification come by faith in him who alone is righteous. And when peace with God has been found through the death of the self-righteous self, and baptism into Christ's death has led to newness of life, then it becomes possible for the spiritual discipline of the law to find its right level in a Christian rule of life accepted and obeyed in a spirit of humility.

Such is the fulfilment of the Old Testament day of the Lord; such is the mystery which is re-enacted when we celebrate the mass and receive the sacrament of Christ's sacrifice. The cross and the empty tomb stand at that central point of history; and their meaning is diversely exhibited in manifold radiance by the wonderful texts from psalm and prophecy, words of apostles and sayings of the Lord himself, which the Church gives us to use in the liturgy. There the biblical texts come alive again; there they are for us to use, and go back to them, and find ever new meanings in them.

For the Bible is the book of the Israel of God, written within the tradition of the believing and worshipping community. God's servants wrote the words, according to what God gave them to see. The writers were men, limited in understanding, liable to sin; yet their minds were directed towards God, and they sought to discern and interpret the working out of his purpose. In Jesus that purpose is fulfilled. We live now in the Church, with the Bible in our hands, in the interim period between his first and second advents, looking for the completion of our glorious hope.

IV

J. D. GRAHAM

The Church militant must fight; and be faithful unto the end: or it loses its title to become the Church triumphant. No triumph is achieved without fighting; and no fight is won without weapons; and there is no weapon that can be wielded without practice. No fight is won without weapons; and they must be the right weapons, adjusted with precision to meet the dispositions and attacks of the enemy.

The English Church has been in the forefront of those who would diagnose the sickness of our times; our prophets have sifted the economic system, our philosophers have ridiculed the humanism of the last century, our educationalists have disclosed the hollow pretensions of the Education Acts of the last eighty years. Meanwhile the parish priest is confronted by monstrous difficulties; often single-handed among thousands, he is beset with financial difficulties, personal, parochial, diocesan; he is met on all sides with hostility and indifference; he is the subject of countless advisers who would tell him, "if you only do *this*, all your difficulties will disappear."

All this in a world of tottering instability and international confusion. No wonder we are a prey to the devil's trusted weapon—the temptation to despair. For the real enemy is the devil; and the Church has in its armoury the unfailing lethal weapon of attack, the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

The real enemy is the devil; and here is no bogey with

horns and hoofs and tail; but a skilled and subtle enemy who knows how to tempt Judas to betray and Peter to deny and Thomas to doubt; who knows how to tempt the Son of God incarnate. But he, in his turn, led as he was by the Spirit into the wilderness, meets his foe and puts him to rout three times, using that Spirit's sword, the Word of God. Our Lord comes upon the strong man armed; and, being provided with the sword of the Spirit, he is stronger than him and spoils his goods. On the cross, says St Paul, he put off from himself the principalities and powers and made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it. And his weapon is ours, if we abide in him and he in us; for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but mighty before God to the casting down of strongholds so that we can cast down every high thing that is exalted against the knowledge of God. But without him we can do nothing.

Few things are so important for the Church militant as to realise that it has an enemy; to know who that enemy is; and to forsake the tactics of back-to-the-wall defence (let alone the pathetic surrender of despair) and to take up its Spirit-given sword, the Word of God. So often at confirmations we sing with great gusto:

*Soldiers of Christ, arise,
And put your armour on . . .*

How seldom do those boys in their new suits and those girls in their white frocks know who the enemy is, or imagine he is real, although he is about to attack them in a hundred well-proved and simple ways, obvious and obscure! And how pathetic is their ignorance of the sword of that Spirit who comes to them in confirmation: when their knowledge of the Bible consists of a few irrelevant stories, the twenty-

third psalm by heart and a few confused snippets from the gospels.

Yet they, as all of us, are engaged in that conflict of which St Paul spoke, not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. And we all stand in urgent need of the one supreme weapon of attack, the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.

Terrible, well-organized and highly skilled is the enemy; yet it never occurs to St Paul to doubt the issue of the conflict. For the battle has already been won by Christ himself; his triumph has now to be realised in his Body the Church. He was stronger than the strong man armed; he now goes forth to battle in the person of his Church, filled with his Spirit, armed, as he was, with the Spirit's sword. The possibility of defeat is never contemplated; the victory is certain; our part in the campaign is the "mopping up".

This victorious conflict is the theme of Holy Scripture; for have we not heard from Father Hebert tonight that the Bible is the book of the kingdom? The kingdom wrested from the devil by him who must reign till he hath put all his enemies beneath his feet. And his enemies he slays with the sword. The sword of the Spirit is first and foremost a weapon of slaughter. Let us make no mistake about that.

No doubt many of us are familiar with that truth in the combat with the cruder temptations. The temptation arises, suddenly, unbidden; we try to dispel it with the weapon of reason. "I know this is wrong because . . ." Again and again we are defeated. We search our armoury and try the weapon of our self-esteem: "What, *I* fall to a temptation like that?" And again we are defeated. We glance at the consequences of

falling; we estimate our stupidity; we search our memory: yet time and again we are defeated. But if, like Christian in his fight against Apollyon, we "nimblely stretch out our hand" and attack with some swift word of God in ejaculatory prayer, the enemy is killed. Yes, even though, like the second beast in the Apocalypse, the same temptation should arise with its death-stroke healed, the ultimate victory is sure if we are content to stick to the one weapon that is reliable.

The sword of the Spirit kills; just because it is the Word of God. It is not the weapon of human ingenuity or cleverness; but the very weapon of the ultimate source of all things, of the final reality of the universe. "*I* have slain them by the words of *my* mouth," so spoke God to the prophet Hosea. And this weapon, all powerful in heaven and earth, he has entrusted to us.

Yet upon one condition: that we first are wounded by this very sword. It is not for us to wield irresponsibly, as the devil did in the temptation; we are not to handle the word of God deceitfully, scoring debating points or bandying texts. As with every catholic privilege, it can only be used triumphantly if we are content to suffer. It is true for us, as for our Lady, that "a sword shall pierce through thine own soul also".

Complacency is our subtlest danger; the great longing of the natural man to surround himself with a home-made universe, where nothing may disturb him. To build up, it may be with the best motives, a tidy spiritual life, a clear rule, a set of obligations to be fulfilled and a number of propositions to be believed; and then to settle down, secure and cosy. But our Lord won't have it; he came not to send peace on the earth—not to provide magically an escapist's paradise—but a sword, to pierce, to judge, to divide. And judgment must

begin at the house of God. For the word of God, cries the Epistle to the Hebrews, is alive and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and quick to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart . . . all things are naked and laid open before the eyes of him with whom we have to do.

The Church, said Reinhold Niebuhr, is the place where men are disturbed by the word of God; and the devil spends his time profitably in trying to make it a place where men may quote it, as he did, for his own ends.

Many and various are the attempts of the devil to blunt the sword of the Spirit. Seldom is he happier than when he is making the Bible appear ridiculous, self-contradictory or incredible; if he can take the edge off the paradoxes that lie at the heart of truth, he is only too content if we will mistake a sham for a reality and rest back, soothed and complacent.

What havoc the devil has tried to make of holy scripture down the centuries! Interpreters who have laid down the rule that the first meaning of scripture is the literal have been misrepresented as affirming that such is the *only* meaning. Others who have sought for meanings, mystical, allegorical or typological, have constantly been led astray, in ancient and in modern times, into assuming that their interpretation only is correct, until the Bible has been made to appear one vast cryptogram, whose secrets are to be solved only by the élite who know the clues.

Those who have started to elucidate holy scripture by textual criticism or by criticism of the language and sources have too often given the impression finally that the Bible is a closed book to all but scholars of their particular endowments. In controversy it has been prostituted to pre-conceived theories;

St Paul, for instance, has been claimed as the champion of justification by faith alone, while it has been forgotten that such faith admits one into the organized society of the Body of Christ, the Catholic Church. It has been exalted in Church order at the expense of the sacraments; or, contrariwise, by sacramentalists despised and neglected. Its miracles and morals (especially those of the Old Testament) have been impugned by the self-styled 'enlightened'; it has been made the textbook of oppressive stuffiness and grundyism. The devil has even achieved the crowning delight of seeing the holy word of God, designed by its author the Holy Spirit to judge the human heart and slay principalities and powers, edited with choice woodcuts and "designed to be read as literature".

One of the Church's tasks is to rescue its weapon from the devil's subtle rusting and blunting tactics; to pray that once more God may whet his glittering sword; to wrest it from the enemy's grasp, claiming it with the high courage of David when he claimed the sword of Goliath: "There is none like that, give it me."

Now is the moment to claim it, not only with high courage, but with confidence and hope. For the English Church has borne the brunt of the fight against all the subversive attacks of the past century. In the forefront of the battle stood the great chiefs of biblical scholarship: Lightfoot, Westcott and Hort at Cambridge, Driver at Oxford. And now in our day we have seen their victory exploited and developed by Sir Edwyn Hoskyns, Sir Frederic Kenyon, Canon Phythian Adams and Father Hebert himself, to name only four of the most eminent and enlightening scholars. Nor are we stranded without a number of really first rate small books on holy scripture which the least learned may find within their grasp. Father Hebert's *Scripture and the Faith*, Professor Dodd's *The*

Bible To-day, Canon Alan Richardson's *Preface to Bible Study*, most direct and admirable and far too little known, *The Loom of God* by Hanson and Harvey.

Yet with all these aids no one has the right to pretend that the way is easy or smooth; no one can presume to tell others that there are no hardships to be encountered in listening to the word of God: as always, the prayer must be that we may read, mark, learn and inwardly digest. And each of those four verbs in the collect has to be taken seriously by him who would avail himself of the sword of the Spirit. There is no weapon that can be wielded without practice; and the practice in this case is often wearisome and uncongenial and puzzling and inconvenient and wounding. Those of us who are ordained are solemnly vowed to this practice; those of us who are not must be humble enough not to acquit ourselves of the duty of Bible reading on the plea of ignorance, but join the Bible Reading Fellowship and start where we can. For the word of God is not bound; not restricted to those who can read Greek. No, but open to all those who with an honest and good heart hear the word of God and keep it, and bring forth fruit abundantly.

St Paul concludes his enumeration of the weapons of the Church's armoury with these words: "... and the sword of the Spirit which is the word of God; with all prayers and supplication praying at all seasons in the Spirit and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints." The sword is given us to slay the enemies who would stop us from perseverance; the battle is on and there is no quarter given. It is to be waged at *all* seasons, in *all* perseverance, with watching, ceaseless vigilance, with a responsibility for *all* the faithful, all the saints.

Impossible! Nothing is impossible with God. And that is

the constant theme of the Bible from first to last. Those of us who are students of Hebrew will know that there is a technical term for the wonderful works of God; and that it derives from a verb which means "it is too hard". The characteristic action of God in his Church is *just* that; that which is impossible for man, too hard for man, that which is beyond human capability. The characteristic action of God is to lead his Church dryshod through the Red Sea waters; to face them with starvation and feed them, to face them with drought and strike water from the rock, to hand them over to captivity and deliver them, to be born in the womb of a virgin, to heal the sick, to cleanse lepers, to make the blind see, to raise the dead, to rise from the dead himself, to lift the appalling burden of sin by his free forgiveness, to make bread his Body and wine his Blood: the characteristic action of God in the Church is just that—to do the impossible.

Armed with his sword and only so, that characteristic action becomes ours too, for the sharing: so gird thy sword upon thy thigh, like the hero of the psalms; the Lord sounds the trumpet, we must build everyone with his sword girded at his side: and we shall find that his Word will not return unto him void, but it shall prosper in the thing whereto he sends it.

THE CREEDS

I

E. G. SELWYN

The affirmation of the creeds is always an act of worship, and it is in the spirit of worship that we must approach them, and can alone hope to understand them. They represent, not man's thought of God, but God's revelation of himself to man; such faith as we have comes by the gift of his Holy Spirit dwelling and active within us; and not the mind only, but heart and will also are engaged when we say "*I believe*". The truths of Christianity embodied in the creeds contain the answer to the deepest questions men can ask about the world, themselves and God: the *lex credendi* is both *lex intelligendi*—the right law of understanding—and *lex vivendi*—the right law of living; and it is both these things because it is *lex orandi*—the right law of worship and prayer, claiming the allegiance not only of the intellect and the will, but also of the heart.

Although the title of this paper appears in the plural, "The Creeds", you will not, I think, expect me to dwell at any length upon the varieties of form which they present, but rather upon the one faith which is the substance of them all. In the early centuries there were several creeds in use, their differences resulting partly from their relative dates, which means that some are simpler and others more highly developed, partly from their lands of origin—for broadly speaking the eastern creeds are more interested in the 'ideas' of Christianity and the western in the 'facts'—and partly also from their purpose; for the baptismal creeds which arose out

of the early catechetical instruction did not need to be so full as those which were designed, like the creed of Nicea, to define the Church's faith in relation to controversies and errors of the day. Nor indeed are the creeds themselves the sole repositories of the faith: not only are there other dogmatic formularies of great importance, such as the Chalcedonian Definition, but concordant testimony is given by the liturgies and hymns of each successive age. These things, however, and their relationship to one another, are for the student rather than for *everyman*. What concerns us, rather, is the one faith which finds expression in these varied forms, the one gospel, of which the creeds are the most concise and characteristic expression; the one creed or body of truth which every Christian needs to believe and to live by.

I

To believe and to live by—and first to believe. The claim of the Catholic Church is that the creed is the broadest platform on which Christians can unite. For it is sufficient, clear and irreducible. Its sufficiency does not mean that it does not need explanation, or demand fresh and fuller interpretation as the centuries pass; every article in it, indeed, should be used as the key to some fresh door of faith in the “many mansions” of our heavenly Father's house. But it does mean that the creed needs no addition. The Chalcedonian Definition in the fifth century was in the strict sense of the word an explanation of what the creed had always affirmed, and the council was careful to state that it was putting out no new confession of faith. But the same cannot be said of certain later dogmatic formulations which have been promulgated both in East and West. These have been accretions; and the effect of such ac-

cretion is not only to make the task of the Christian apologist more difficult, but to blunt the original force of the gospel and to obscure the unique authority of the oecumenical faith.

Secondly, the creed is clear. We live in an age of moral and intellectual confusion, and in a land where religious vagueness has come to be exalted into a virtue. Never, therefore, was definiteness more needed; and we may well not only recite the creeds but thank God for them. A world of meaning lies in the word regularly used for a creed by the churchmen of the early centuries: they called it *symbolum*—that is, a *watchword*, the watchword of men engaged in a common enterprise or warfare, signifying their common mind and allegiance, the badge of their calling and the reminder of their aims. I need hardly say that a watchword is useless unless it is definite. Moreover the creed is definite both when it states facts and when it speaks in the language of pictures. We are sometimes told that to speak of “heaven” as the creed and the Lord's Prayer do, or of our Lord “sitting at the right hand of God”, is to be guilty of a crude literalness of expression, which, however natural in primitive times, is an affront to educated men of to-day who have been brought up on Copernican astronomy. But one may fairly ask these slightly superior people whether they are aware that, more than 1000 years before Copernicus was born, it was the regular teaching of the most orthodox fathers, in East and West alike, that this language of the creed was not to be understood literally but figuratively: St Jerome, indeed, describes the contrary view as “nonsense”. The language of religion, like that of poetry, has never been bound up with any particular astronomy; and so long as the sky appears boundless in space and full of light, and so long as God is conceived of in personal terms, and so long as man's language is governed by his experience of earth

—for so long will figurative or picture-language remain the only vehicle in which a large part of his faith can be expressed.

Finally, the creed is irreducible. There is not a clause in it which does not embody or protect some part of the truth which is vital to Christian faith and life. Men know to-day that what they need more than anything is what is called “wholeness of life”. But wholeness of life depends upon wholeness of faith—belief in the whole truth which God has vouchsafed to us in revelation. As Catholics and members of the English Church, with its age-long witness to the creed, we cannot agree to any short cuts here. It is sometimes claimed that by reducing the fulness of the creed you will provide a broader platform on which men of good will may stand together and a wider basis for Christian re-union. This is as much as to say that, whereas hitherto the Church has provided a bridge for those making the hazardous passage between time and eternity, now you are somehow going to get more people across upon a plank. But it will not work. No doubt a plank is easily erected; but it is a narrow thing, frail and dangerous, and can only take a few at a time; whereas a bridge is durable, broad, a real high-way, indeed the King’s high-way, built for the safe journey of his people.

II

I said just now that the affirmation of the creed is always an act of worship. That is because it is all about God—God the Creator and Father, God the incarnate Redeemer, God the Strengtheners and Sanctifier; Father, Son and Holy Ghost, three Persons in one God. The opening words of the creed are themselves a call to wonder, awe and adoration, as we lift our hearts to him who is perfect wisdom, power and love,

and contemplate his ceaseless creativity, his changeless repose, his infinite beatitude and glory. It is hard to know whether to marvel most at his majesty or his mercy; at the manifold operations of the unmoveable Mover of all things, or at the fact that he is *our Father*, and that we can approach him as such. Here, at any rate, at the outset are two great truths announced. First, he whom we worship is the creator of all things—that is, of both the levels of reality with which we are acquainted, of heaven as well as earth, of the visible as well as the invisible, of the world of angels and archangels and of just men made perfect as well as of the world of man and beast on earth, of the natural as well as the supernatural, of the things which are apprehended by science no less than of the things which are known through religion. Secondly, in confessing God as father, we bear witness to a truth which carries with it man’s primary adjustment to life—the conviction, that is, that man’s environment is fundamentally good, orderly and friendly, and that nothing in it that is of a contrary character can be laid at God’s door, but must be laid at our own; with this further corollary that God is never more men’s Father than when he punishes them for their sins—except it be when he forgives them.

Such a revelation of God as Creator and Father of all must surely bring us to our knees, filled with humility as we learn our own creatureliness and sin. “Lord, what is man that thou so regardest him?” The second section of the creed is the answer to that question. “God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son. . . .” Well is this sentence called a *comfortable word*; for it means that man *was* worth, and *is* worth that—the incarnation and death of the only-begotten of the Father. People sometimes ask where it is in Christian dogma that the sacredness of human personality, of which

the Church speaks so plainly to-day, is asserted. It is here, in the gospel of redemption. It was "for us men and for our salvation" that the transcendent became incarnate, and was crucified, and rose again, and ascended. There is the index of the value that God sets upon us.

Moreover, what wonder if, when the transcendent was embodied like this in human life and history, there occurred what we call miracles? The strange thing surely would be if it were otherwise. St Mark tells us that, as Jesus went before the disciples on the road towards Jerusalem, the disciples "were amazed" and "were afraid"—and the mention of these two emotions, wonder and fear, which represent in the gospels the regular reaction to Christ's miracles of those who saw them, implies that he himself was in their eyes the great miracle. What more likely, then, than that many of his actions were miraculous too? We make a mistake if we suppose that the only miracles which matter to the Christian faith are the two which are mentioned in the creed. On the contrary, these two are not only symbolic of much else in the way of doctrine besides themselves; they are also illustrations of the part which miracles played in every phase of Christ's ministry. This fact is deeply graven upon all four gospels, not least upon the earliest, St Mark—so deeply graven that you cannot take it away without robbing the record of all consistency and Christ's teaching of much of its significance. Christ's miracles were the badge and sign of his divine nature and of the supernatural order of the kingdom of God which he came to establish amongst men. Moreover what they were they still are. This order of grace, this realm of the Spirit, is still with us: wherever in Christ's name men are converted and forgiven, wherever prayers are answered, wherever God's hand is made plain beyond our fondest hopes

or expectations, wherever the world is renounced for a noble vocation, there is a miracle. Christianity cannot surrender miracles without treason to the supernatural gospel on which it is founded and which it exists to proclaim.

Finally, the creed speaks of God the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Lifegiver, who inspired the scriptures and inspires the Church and gives it whatever holiness and unity it has. As in Christ we see the transcendent become incarnate, so in the Holy Spirit we see the transcendent made immanent: where he is, there are the powers of the world to come. In this third section the creed seems to indicate to us in a few strokes of the pen that the whole Christian life—its beginning, its course, and its end—is a process which takes place within the sphere of the Spirit. Moreover, the Spirit himself is revealed to us as indissolubly linked both with the incarnation—he proceeds from the Father and the Son—and with man's final destiny at the end of the world. The Christian conception of him, that is to say, is governed both by history and by eschatology. The result of this is important. Inspiration may be true or false, as St John was aware; and he knew that it was possible for men to say "Jesus is Lord", yet not to mean by it what the Church meant. And so he lays down a more definite test (I quote from Dr Dodd's translation in his commentary on the First Epistle): "You can recognize the Spirit of God by this: every spirit which confesses Jesus as the Christ incarnate comes from God, and every spirit which does not confess Jesus incarnate does not come from God." The apostle's words are surely a warning against any attempt to broaden the basis of the Church or to promote its re-union by means of formulae which fall short of the Catholic faith. Certainly the Holy Spirit inspires in Christian people things new as well as old; and the Church has often mistaken

conservatism, both in thought and action, for fidelity to the faith, and been blind to real movements of grace. But equally we must beware of claims that are sometimes made on behalf of novelty as such; for it is fatally easy for good men to suppose that new ideas or plans, simply because they are new and attractive, are derived from the Spirit of God.

The Church brings, then, all spiritual aims and activities to the touchstone of the incarnation. But it demands also that they shall have in them the true ring of eschatology. It is no accident that the creed closes on the grand note of "the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come". You can hear this note in every ancient creed and every ancient liturgy; and it sounds loud in the New Testament from cover to cover. Charity, which is the supreme gift of the Spirit and highest glory of the Christian life, is not only born in faith, but also nourished and sustained by hope—not those superficial hopes of "a good time coming", an earthly paradise, which can only end in disillusionment, if not despair; but the abiding hope of everlasting life, of "an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away". This is no day-dreamers' philosophy, no escape from the tough business of overcoming obstacles into a world of fancies: the men who have done most in history to improve man's lot have been precisely those who brought to the tasks of practical reform the intensity and fire of Christian conviction and hope. And that hope will yet conquer the world. The path of our pilgrimage is lit from behind by the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ; and it is lit from in front by the light of the heavenly city, illuminated by God's glory and by the Lamb; and it is lit from above by him who is the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness neither shadow of

turning, by whose Spirit we are made children of light. Wherefore to Father, Son and Holy Ghost, three Persons in one God, be ascribed all might, majesty, dominion and power, now and for ever.

II

FREDERIC HOOD

A question which is nowadays constantly put to the clergy is whether there is a religious revival in this country. I think that most of us reply by saying that there is at least a clear revival of interest in religion. Millions are eagerly looking to see whether Christians are in fact different from other people, and whether membership in the Church has any relation to everyday life. It is certain that no vague or nebulous religion is of any use to the present generation. What they need is dogma. But here we must remember that the simple sentence—God is love—is at the very heart of all dogma. Merely to read or hear in Church such ancient documents as the three creeds may seem, on a superficial estimate, to be dry and dull. One of the main duties of the Christian teacher, whether priest or layman, is to show to the world outside that every clause in the creed has in fact a vital bearing on real life. The opening words of the Apostles' Creed both in Latin and Greek, *Credo in Deum* and *πιστεύω εἰς Θεόν*, at once imply something dynamic and forceful, not static and dead. Let us consider the clauses of this shortest summary of Christian belief, and see how readily they come to life.

I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth:

It is sometimes said that we hold this article of our faith in common with Jews, Mohammedans and many of the great thinkers of all countries. It is pointed out that it was the belief

of Plato and Aristotle, as well as of Isaiah and Jeremiah—of Seneca and Epictetus, as well as of St Paul and St John. But the fact is that only the Christian revelation shows us in its fulness the meaning of the fatherhood of God. He has made of one blood all the nations of the earth. It is inconceivable that a Christian should hold that God loves an Englishman more than a Russian; an American more than a Japanese; a white man more than a coloured man; a rich man more than a poor man. Our whole relation to our fellow men is transformed by our active acceptance of this clause. And when we affirm our belief in the Father as *maker of heaven and earth* we assert that we are not parts of God, as the pantheists would have us believe, but creatures of God, dependent on him from moment to moment for our very existence. God created us for his own glory. We are his instruments to manifest his character. And this has a direct bearing on the next clause.

And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord:

Notice the word "only". The Word—the very utterance of God the Father—"was made flesh and dwelt among us and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth". He is the only son by right—we are the children of God by adoption, because of him. False teaching has at many periods of the Church's history been current to the effect that we are all sons of God in the same sense as is Jesus. The slogan of what used to be called 'the new theology' forty years ago was "Jesus is God and so are you". But this is clean contrary to the doctrine of the Church as crystallized in the creeds. It is only by the supernatural grace of Christ that we can enter into our sonship, and grow into his likeness.

Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary:

Scientists are accustomed to say that like things happen in like manners, and it is therefore sometimes argued that if Jesus was really born as a human baby on this earth, he must have been the child of two human parents. But, if we accept the stupendous truth which is called the Catholic doctrine of the incarnation, this is not a thing like any other; it is something which has happened only once in the history of mankind. Just as the bringing into existence of the first Adam, the head of the old race which became involved in sin, required a new creative act of God, so when the new Adam, the head of the new race which he came to redeem, entered this world—again there was a parallel creative act. A pure virgin, predestined from all eternity for this cosmic task, had no relations with a human husband, but was overshadowed by the power of the Holy Ghost. Her divine Son was born, and she remained ever a virgin.

Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried:

We have come here to the core of the gospel. Because God is revealed to us as holy, one into whose presence we are to come with fear and trembling, some vast, central, shattering event must happen in the history of the world to make it possible for sinful man to walk along that way to heaven which is intended for everyone whom God created. And because God is revealed to us as love, that central thing which happened was the giving of himself in sacrifice. "So God loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son to the end that all that believe in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Our Lord as paschal priest and victim fulfilled on Calvary the whole purpose of sacrificial self-offering, and the very relationship between God and man was thereby changed.

He descended into Hell:

Our Lord entered so fully into the incarnate state that he experienced not only bodily death, but deigned to pass through the stage which all human spirits must undergo after death. Moreover even those of the old dispensation were to be given an opportunity to share in the benefits won by our Lord's self-giving, and so, as St Peter reminds us, he preached to the spirits in prison.

The third day he rose again from the dead:

Our Lord's physical resurrection is one of the best attested events in history. Every objection to it founders on the fact of the empty tomb. If he had not risen with his body, either his friends were concealing it, or it was in the hands of his enemies. If the latter: why did not they produce it and quash for all time this fantastic tale? If the former: is it psychologically conceivable that the Apostles could go out with enthusiasm, making thousands of converts in a day, basing their whole message on an alleged fact which they knew to be a fake and a fraud? It has been truly said that the growth of the Christian Church without the resurrection would be a greater miracle than the resurrection itself.

He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of the Father:

It is a lovely metaphor. He sits because his work on earth is completed. "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." "It has been accomplished." Yet one all-important work remains. The immolation of the victim—the dedication of the life which culminated in the death—happened once on Calvary two thousand years ago, and could not be repeated: but our Lord is still man, still capable of prayer, still able to offer sacrifice; and so the high priestly work of *self-oblation*

goes on in heaven and on earth—in heaven, where he ever liveth to make intercession for us, and on earth, wherever the eucharist is offered.

From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead:

Judgment is a continuous process which goes on day by day. We idle away our time: the waste is already judged: the time is beyond recall. Our personality, effectiveness, influence for good, are so much less because of a lost opportunity. So silently, imperceptibly, judgment is always going on. Each hour and day, as we make it our own, passes to the right hand or the left hand of God's throne, according to whether or not it was in harmony with the will of God. But there will be a final day of reckoning when our Lord comes again. We are to prepare then to meet our judge. He is a judge indeed, but not a hard taskmaster—rather one who understands our weaknesses more completely than any earthly parent could do, and is searching for any spark of goodness so as to fan it into flame.

I believe in the Holy Ghost:

Our Lord said that it was expedient for the disciples that he should go away. He promised that the Holy Spirit would be leading the Church into truth, and that by his power members of that Church would be enabled to do works as great as, or even greater than, those which the Master did on earth. The Holy Spirit inspires the scriptures, illuminates the conscience, and guides us along the way to heaven.

The Holy Catholic Church:

We assert here our belief, not in an organization or a loosely knit together collection of sects, but in a divine society coming

down from God out of heaven. It is *one* in that the life of Christ flows to every limb in his Body through sacramental grace—and no external disunity caused by the sin of man can alter this. It is *holy*, separate, set apart, in the world, not of it; and every member of the Church is called to share in that holiness. It is *Catholic*, universal, covering the face of the earth, and appealing to every nation and temperament. It is *apostolic*, faithfully continuing to teach the apostles' doctrine, restated in the terms needed in every successive age.

The Communion of Saints:

This clause emphasizes our fellowship with the whole Church of God in this world and the next. To make our belief in this the warp and woof of our lives is the surest antidote to such cults as spiritualism, which lead all too often to nervous distress or even mental derangement. When our prayers seem pathetically feeble, we can take courage from the fact that they are only a tiny part of a tremendous whole. We are joining with angels and archangels, prophets, apostles, martyrs, confessors, virgins—those who have gladly gone to torture and death, even up to this last decade, rather than betray their Saviour—as well as with our fellow-churchmen on earth, God's elect people, a royal priesthood.

But grammatically this clause in Latin can mean either the fellowship of holy persons or the partaking in holy things: and so we think too that our growth in sanctity is only made possible by sacramental grace. And this leads on to the expression of our belief in *the forgiveness of sins*, which comes to us from Christ himself by the power of his Spirit, through the sacraments of baptism and penance.

The Resurrection of the Body:

This clause draws attention to an all-important truth. We believe in the ultimate persistence of the whole personality, spirit, mind and body. By "body" we mean something more than the mere physical integument. The body is one side of our complex make-up, an organic principle which will spring to new life in the resurrection. If we make this doctrine our own, we shall treat our bodies with the utmost respect, for they will still be ours when by God's grace we attain to the beatific vision. Faithful reception of holy communion will be preserving both body and soul unto everlasting life. But the *life everlasting*, in which finally we affirm our belief is not something merely in the future. Eternal life is a present possession. Even in the midst of this noisy world we are called to live in such union with God as to be already in heaven. The whole of the process of costly purification through suffering *can* happen here, so that when we die, we are merely freed from the trammels of this flesh, and go on into that state of union with God in the world beyond, which is usually called heaven.

It is sometimes thoughtlessly asserted by those who ought to know better that it does not matter what a man believes so long as he lives a good life. I once read a book in which the writer, himself a professed Christian, said that he had never known a person's actions to be affected by belief or disbelief in the holy Trinity. I hope I have said enough to show how utterly false such a view-point is. The Spirit-illuminated creeds are the light by which we walk. Our Lord said: "If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world. But, if he walk in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no light in him."

He also said: "He that heareth you heareth me." The creeds

give us in summary the main points of the Church's teaching. They come to us with the authority of God himself. Whatever our Lord taught us about faith and morals has that authority, and he who listens to the Church listens to Christ himself. This does not mean however that all our questions are answered in catechism form. The method of Jesus was to make his hearers think. He rarely gave a plain answer to a plain question. He replied by posing another question or by telling a story. And God's method has not changed. The Church's authority provides a firm basis which alone can make us free. The articles of the creed are luminous sign-posts showing us the road along which we are to walk. Let us *accept* them with every faculty of our being, *know* them so that we can defend every part of the faith against attack, *live* by them and thus show the world that there is a distinctively Christian quality of life.

I hope it is not wishful thinking, but I believe that at these Congresses—and I have been an enthusiastic member of all six of them—I see something of those special fruits which only the full practice of the Catholic religion can produce. As I look round, I know anyhow that I love you all, and pray that by this Congress our adherence to the truths of the faith with mind and heart and will may be strengthened a hundred-fold: and that in the face of the secular menace with which we are surrounded to-day we may be shining reflections of that light, the fount and source of which is our Saviour Christ himself.

III

AUGUSTINE MORRIS

"I believe in looking after Number One." Such is the creed professed openly by some, acknowledged in the secrecy of their hearts by others, acted upon in practice by many more. Must not we ourselves confess that our own conduct sometimes gives rise to the suspicion that this creed is ours? We profess differently: but there are indeed those who openly proclaim the creed of selfishness. It is not merely the creed of the common fleshly man, but in a refined form it is elevated into philosophical and economic systems. It leads inevitably—for all except perhaps the favoured few—to frustration and death.

There are others whose creed is a belief in the service, not of self, but of some human group: the race, the party, the class, the nation. Such creeds are tenaciously held by their adherents with the fervour of religious devotees. Deeds of noble self-sacrifice are done in their names. From these creeds, however, spring wars, and if the human race persists in such beliefs it is doomed to self-destruction.

A third creed which has many adherents to-day is the belief in humanity. Self-worship and the worship of the group being so obviously destructive in their effects, there are many who, rising to a wider vision, desire to serve not self, nor any group, be it party, class or nation, but the whole human race. It is as well to realise that the basis of this creed lies—at least as far as the western world is concerned—in the Christian conception of the universal brotherhood of men as being all

alike children of God, for whom Christ died and who will all alike have to appear before the judgment seat of God. But in many minds the belief in the universal brotherhood of man has become detached from its Christian roots and indeed from any belief in God at all. Humanism, the belief in human progress as the be-all and end-all of human life, is the religion of—or takes the place of religion for—a great number of men and women in the western world to-day. Yet humanism is powerless to hold in check either the selfishness or the party spirit of man. "I believe in humanity" is unable to counteract "I believe in Number One" and "I believe in my group". Humanists themselves recognize this powerlessness and deplore it: some of them are in despair over it. Modern man, they say, is a technical giant but a moral pigmy. Sometimes the cures they advocate are somewhat ludicrous. The article from which I have taken this diagnosis of modern man's sickness goes on quite seriously to advocate as a remedy the study of the social behaviour of ants. But even in this our humanist friend is but following the Christian tradition, or rather the Jewish tradition which preceded it. It was a very long time ago that someone said, "Go to the ant, thou sluggard."

If it were possible to carry out a really heart-searching analysis of the radical beliefs, philosophical and religious, of the Britain of to-day, we should, I imagine, find the country mostly composed of egotists and humanists, with a minority of those who believe in a group, Communists and the like, and another minority of practising Christians.

If we had to choose between egotism and humanism, there is little doubt which we should prefer. Humanism, drawing as it does from the Christian tradition, can often rightly claim the support of Christians. In fact, in many matters we find ourselves in alliance with the humanists in their attempts to

better the conditions of human life, spread the spirit of universal brotherhood and educate the social conscience of mankind. Humanists have not infrequently performed duties which Christians should have done, and have not done. But, as we have seen, humanism is woefully inadequate. It is doomed to failure because it is based on an erroneous estimate of human nature. It leaves out two fundamental facts about man: first that he is a creature of God and secondly that he is a sinful creature. You cannot have an adequate doctrine of man unless it is based upon the doctrine of God.

Consequently, we find humanism in the straits in which it finds itself to-day turning for support to Christianity. But the Christianity with which humanism desires to ally itself is a humanized Christianity. You and I ought to have our eyes open to a very real danger. We ought to have the contrast between humanism and the Christian religion set clearly before us. Is the Christian religion something which we can use to further the ends of humanism? Can we use God for the exaltation of humanity?

Clearly, if we come to God, we can only come on his terms, not ours. Yet both in the privacy of our own hearts and in public policy we are constantly making the attempt to use God for human ends. I need only mention education as one sphere in which this tendency is present in our national life. But not merely in our national life but among practising Christians and in the Church itself the same infection spreads. The invasion of Christianity by humanism has been going on for years and its results are manifest in many directions. For instance, it is to be feared that many schemes of Christian reunion are built to far too great a degree upon a humanist rather than a divine basis. For, with regard to the nature of the Church, the most important question of our time is

fundamentally only a particular form of the dilemma between humanism and true Christianity: is the Church something which *we* make by gathering ourselves together or is it something *divinely* made and *divinely* given to which we can only adhere by acceptance and submission? Such schemes as that of the South Indian Church appear to presuppose the humanist and not the Christian answer to this question, and to be based upon a theology which has in large part surrendered to the humanist outlook of our age, a theology discarded as outworn and outmoded by scholars.

A large part of our answer to this insidious attack of humanism upon Christianity must be: "Back to the faith", "Back to the creeds"! We must come to God not as allies offering services upon our own terms, but as repentant rebels offering submission. We must accept his Church's teaching not as a convenient starting point for speculation, but as a divinely given truth which we must accept and absorb, and which we are as little free to alter as we are to change the laws of motion. You and I, if we have the mind of Catholics, accept the creeds, and accept them on these terms. We do not consider faith—that is to say faith theologically understood—to be merely something that grows out of reason, as though a Christian were free to accept or discard as much of the creed as his reason alone tells him to. Of course, the truths of our faith may be examined by reason, and we try to present them in a reasonable and convincing manner. Yet faith itself, though not contrary to reason, is above it, transcends it and finally enriches it. God demands from our minds surrender and acceptance, "Lord, I believe: help thou my unbelief." On no other terms than that can we really come to God, or expect his blessing.

It is on these terms and these terms only, that the Church

has always put forth the creeds. They are, to use the old Latin and Greek name, her *symbolum*, her watchword or password. "Whosoever will be saved" (though the Latin word means rather 'safe' or 'healthy') "it is above all things necessary that he hold the Catholic faith." This faith we hold and profess: by it we strive to mould our lives. For it provides us with a working philosophy of life: it is our inspiration in life and our consolation in death.

I should like to spend the rest of my time in making some suggestions as to how we may make more of the creed which we profess. Holy Church does indeed provide us in her ministrations and particularly in her liturgy with the means of doing this. Let us consider the clauses of the Apostles' Creed in this relationship. "I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth." Now of course every prayer, every act of worship and particularly every mass is a reminder and a reaffirmation of this tremendous statement. Every Sunday, the first day of the making of the world in the Genesis account, commemorates and is a thanksgiving for creation. But in particular, in the course of the year's round of worship, the Church reminds us of the great fact of creation in the lessons of Septuagesimatide. "And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord": each prayer is made through him and in trust in his merits; the whole sacramental system draws through and from him and him alone its power and effectiveness. "Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost": the feast of the Annunciation of Our Lady. "Born of the Virgin Mary": Christmas. "Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified dead and buried": Passion-tide and Good Friday. "He descended into hell": Holy Saturday and also All Souls' Day. "He rose again from the dead": Easter Day. "And ascended into heaven and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father":

Ascension Day. "From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead": Advent. "I believe in the Holy Ghost": Whitsuntide. "The holy catholic Church": the feasts of apostles. "The Communion of Saints": the feasts of martyrs, confessors and other saints. "The forgiveness of sins": our confessions. "The resurrection of the body and the life everlasting": All Saints' Day.

It is therefore by an intelligent observance of the Church's year and a devout and meaningful reception of the Church's sacraments that we can most effectively deepen our faith. This should also come to mean that we become more effective missionaries on its behalf. We hear a good deal about evangelism; and rightly so. But the Christian faith is like measles—you can't give it to other people unless you have it. After a recent religious broadcast a working-class hearer commented: "Most of these parsons on the wireless—you hear them and you say 'He doesn't believe it himself', but this chap, you couldn't help feeling that he believed it, and he made you believe it too." That is what we need more and more, before we can be really effective in our evangelistic efforts: we need men and women who are convinced Christians in their faith and practice, whose faith, continually nourished and strengthened by the part they take in the worship and sacraments of the Church, will be as a beacon light to summon and guide others into the truth which they themselves hold more precious than life itself.

(1) The Christian faith is not something to be constructed by *us*. It can never be the result of human ingenuity working upon what it can discover of God from his creation. It is not, that is to say, a natural religion, but a supernatural one—something which it would have been beyond man's powers to have thought out, or even to have discovered, for himself. Consequently its essence is a deposit of faith over which we have no power; if we receive Christianity at all we do so as a treasure committed to our charge, which we shall lose or distort at our peril.

(2) Being a revelation of God it is something which cannot be added to or subtracted from without its nature being changed. It is like a chemical substance of the kind which cannot be made by man in the laboratory, which occurs only in nature. If you analyse such a substance into its parts and remove some of them, or if you combine it with other substances, it just ceases to be what it was—and you cannot remake the original product. The comparison is not exact because as time goes on we are able to synthesise more and more natural substances; perhaps in time we may be able to manufacture them all. But no development of the human intellect could enable us to think out a substitute for the Christian revelation, for the simple reason that the Christian revelation depends upon certain historical happenings—chiefly the incarnation, death and resurrection of Christ—which are *ex hypothesi* unique. If they are true they do not need to be repeated, and so we cannot imagine God repeating them. If they are false then any alternative devised by man would just not be historic Christianity, but something else, however closely it might seem to approximate to Christianity in some respects.

The very idea, then, of a revealed religion implies also the

idea of a connected body of dogma, uniquely given and in its essence unalterable—a whole which it is our business neither to criticise nor to add to, but to understand. That is what is meant by the “deposit of faith” which lies at the base of all Christian belief and theology. It is emphatically a *datum* or a series of *data*—something given to us to keep, change in which destroys its nature, which is irreplaceable. How different is this conception, both from the idea of a religion slowly being discovered by the march of human mind (which is the notion of natural religion to which many agnostics are addicted), and from the idea of a vague tradition, derived from many sources and incapable of exact definition, which is that of the ethnic pagan religions with which all mankind except Israel began. We can, I hope, now begin to see why Christianity is, and always must be, a theological religion, a religion of creeds, definitions and, above all, of a tradition which either comes, as it claims, ultimately from God himself speaking to man or else is a vast illusion.

It is from this fact that the creeds arise and it is because of it that an exact, explicit faith is demanded by the Church from all who seek admission to her fold and all who bear office therein. Just as a political movement demands assent to the central ideas which form its *raison d'être*, so the Church requires assent to the revelation she exists to enshrine. She does so necessarily with a greater and not a less rigidity than that of political movements, since political ideas have at best no more than human authority. If men accuse the Church of a demand for conformity which exceeds that of the great totalitarian secular churches of to-day—though actually her doctrinal discipline has never been as minute and savage as theirs—we are entitled to reply that she has far more reason for so doing, since however high their claims, they do not dare to ascribe

to themselves a directly divine origin. You may accept the idea of revelation or you may deny it; but if you accept it, all else, definitions of the faith, creeds and formularies of belief and the right to exclude from membership of the Church those who deny or mutilate them, inescapably follows. To object to the Church's having standards of belief is like objecting to the fact that a vertebrate animal possesses a backbone.

Does this, however, mean that the Church's faith is like a frozen statue, something given for ever in its final form to be gazed upon by men but never developed? By no means. The creeds themselves give the lie to such an idea. You will not, as some people are never tired of reminding us, find the creeds in so many words in scripture, which is the inspired record of God's revelation. Nay more; the creeds themselves have developed, and the story of their development is one of the most complicated studies in church history. For the Church's faith, though given once for all, was not given in the form of a logical system. It was ever our Lord's way to say and to do things which would cause men to think, not to do their thinking for them. Like those of the great poets his sayings were provocative and seminal—not bald, dry scientific statements of fact. And his deeds were deeds of power to which he gave the key in pregnant utterances; they were not actions fully explained beforehand like those of a demonstrator in a laboratory. So it had been under the old dispensation. God delivered the people from Egypt; he gave them a law which gave commands without fully explaining them; he spoke to them in half-veiled oracles through the prophets; he did not teach his people in minute detail in the way that the exact sciences are taught. He taught them rather in the way that the humanities are taught, by laying down general principles and then communicating insight, so that the pupil might see their

meaning gradually for himself. The Bible, which, as I said before, is the record of his revelation under both covenants, is throughout of this nature. It is not a developed manual of doctrine, but a record of divine words and actions and of men's response to them. Therefore, as the Ethiopian eunuch saw, it needs an interpreter. "Understandest thou what thou readest?" "How can I, except some man should guide me?" (*Acts viii. 30-31.*)

The predestined guide sent to the Ethiopian was, you remember, an emissary of the Church, Philip the Deacon. So it has ever been. For God together with his revelation sent to mankind that revelation's authorised guardian and interpreter—the holy Catholic Church, belief in which is one of the articles of our faith. That Church began with the call of Abraham and was renewed by our Lord with the apostles as its nucleus and directive force. It is this which makes of the Christian revelation something more than a formed, frozen entity, for it is enshrined in a living organism, just as a tradition of learning or art is enshrined in a succession of great teachers and pupils. And let us notice that teacher and pupil are not mutually exclusive terms. Every teacher has first to be a pupil and indeed he remains one; he learns from his teaching, he learns indeed from his pupils and, if he is a good teacher, he researches and so increases the knowledge he hands on. A great tradition gains in every generation to which it is handed on and yet it remains the same.

This may help us, I suggest, to understand together those two apparently opposed truths about the Christian faith which are a puzzle to many—its unchanging character and its development. Many can grasp the idea of a "faith . . . once delivered unto the saints" (*Jude 3*); many can understand the notion of a growing faith; but few can hold both these con-

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ceptions together and understand how both can apply to the faith of the Church. Yet it is not so difficult. The whole of the propositions of Euclid are deduced from a comparatively small number of postulates and axioms about the nature of space and of thought. It might seem incredible to an uneducated man that the whole complicated teachings of Euclid could all have been originally enclosed in the short and very general statements of basic notions with which Euclid begins. Yet it is so. And when we come to Christianity, which is something far richer and deeper than geometry, we can see all the better how the faith can grow and yet remain the same thing. It is the old story of the dual rôle of master and pupil. To the apostles was committed the teaching to others of what they had heard and witnessed in Christ, together with the promise of divine assistance in understanding it. "The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." "When he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth. . . . He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you" (*John* xiv. 26, xvi. 13 and 14). They, the teachers, and their successors in that office would learn as well as teach and would learn in teaching.

So it has been. The teaching office of the Church has been first and foremost the handing on of a tradition derived from Christ himself and so of a divine revelation; when that tradition has been mutilated or changed or added to there has been heresy which has sooner or later had to be expelled from the fellowship of the Church. But there has not been a static tradition. In each generation its meaning has been more clearly seen and so what appears to be an enlarged body of doctrine has been handed on—enlarged but not changed. It is for this

reason that in each generation the possibility of heresy has in one sense increased, for it has now become possible not merely to deny or falsify the basic facts of revelation but also their meaning as the Church, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, has come to see it. So the developments of doctrine have had to be safeguarded as well as the basic *data* of revelation upon which they rest.

Hence the great definitions of the faith. If you study the decisions of the great councils of the Church or the ideas of the great doctors which have been made her own, you will find that nearly always they are *negative* definitions. They are designed to rule out some false interpretation of the revelation which would adulterate or destroy its content. Thus the decisions of Nicaea do not attempt to explain fully what the deity of Christ is—an impossible task—but they do define one thing that it is not, namely a deity unlike or unequal to that of the Father. The famous definition of Chalcedon does not vainly try to give a full picture of how deity and humanity are joined together in Christ; it rules out explanations of them which make of them either two utterly divided things or two principles inextricably confused. And so throughout the history of the Church. As always, progress towards full truth is made by the discarding of false or inadequate notions which might be drawn from the brute facts with which we start. But, just because of that process of elimination, the content of the faith in its defined form becomes more precise, and therefore apparently fuller, as time goes on. We should not be scandalised if we find that in order to be orthodox we are apparently expected to believe more than Christians of earlier times explicitly did. It is not really that we believe more—for, as with them, our act of faith is in the whole revelation of God—but that we believe it in a more explicit and detailed

way. That is the way with all unfolding and developing traditions. And perhaps we should regard the greater clarity and exactitude with which the faith is nowadays presented to us for acceptance as some compensation for the more complicated and perplexing questions which face us at the present day—problems more harassing, though not more vital, than existed in the earliest ages of the Church.

It is here that the creeds come to our aid. For they are concise and simple outlines of the main doctrines of revelation, easily memorised, and put in a form which brings easily to our mind the content of what we have to believe for salvation. They are *not*, let us note, full statements of doctrine; they are not intended to be. People sometimes speak as if the creeds in themselves contained the faith, so that all that is necessary for the Christian to do is to accept the bare words, putting what sense he likes upon them, and as if nothing that is not stated explicitly in the creeds is part of the faith. That is very far from the fact. The authoritative teaching of the Church is not to be found primarily in the creeds, which are only convenient summaries of the main points of it. It is to be found in the definitions of faith made by the great Councils or in the documents authorized by them, or in the general and undisputed teaching of the Catholic Church, even though undefined. It is here that the faith is to be found, and the real test of orthodoxy is whether or not a man accepts the Catholic tradition as it has been handed down and given precision by these means.

What then is the use of creeds? It is twofold:

(1) Since in order to live the Catholic life it is necessary even for the simplest believer, in the measure possible to him, to have a knowledge of the truths by which alone that life is lived, creeds supply him with the essential framework into

which he can fit his ideas and serve to remind him of the principal truths. They are easily remembered, and each clause of them can and should recall to mind the detailed teaching which we received when we were being instructed in the faith as children or when we entered the Church. A creed is a kind of mnemonic; it ensures that we do not forget any one truth of importance and that we remember it rightly. It serves therefore very much the same purpose as a catechism learned by heart—which is one reason why the apostles' creed and a short explanation is included in the Church catechism.

(2) From the earliest times the Church began to use creeds at baptism to assure herself as far as possible that no one was entering her fold under any misapprehension. Heretics were accustomed to put their own interpretation upon the Christian tradition and upon scripture, and such heretics, either deliberately or by misunderstanding, tried to enter the Church. A profession of faith at baptism to some extent guarded against this, or at least left anyone later convicted of unorthodoxy without the excuse that he had honestly believed that this was the teaching of the Church. How necessary that still is we all know. There are many people to-day who claim to be Christians and yet understand Christianity in a way wholly different from the tradition of the Church, putting their own interpretation upon the sayings and actions of Christ. The existence of the creeds does not, as we know, succeed in keeping them out of the body of the faithful, since they either give the creeds themselves a sense of their own or they regard them as possessing no binding authority. But at least the creeds stand as a perpetual witness against their ideas and prevent men thinking that heretical aberrations represent the real mind of the Church. That is why the depreciation of

the creeds in some re-union schemes of the present day, or the explicit granting of freedom to reject parts of them, is such a serious matter and prevents Catholics from assenting to these plans.

Creeds then are not in themselves full and perfect statements of the faith, any more than a synopsis is a book. They bear indeed the same relation to the faith that a table of contents does to a large volume. The revelation of God is far too vast and august a body of truth to be compressed within a few lines of print; it is a profound teaching about God, his universe (including man) and God's relationship to it. Even the profoundest theologian has never fully plumbed its depths and all of us spend our lives growing slowly into what can at best be only a very incomplete knowledge of the faith. We accept it as a whole, because it is the word of God, who cannot deceive nor be deceived, and we live by it as far as God gives us grace to see it. But, however great our education or our natural genius, we remain as incapable of taking the full riches of the faith into our small minds as, in the old legend, the child's hole in the sand was of receiving the ocean. The definitions of the Church herself do not exhaust its meaning and there will always be, until the end of time, further work for ecclesiastical authority to do in giving precision to the tradition and for theologians in shedding new light upon it. But that thought need not frighten the simple soul which desires with all its heart to live by the faith and grow into it. For, besides the hidden grace of the Holy Spirit which teaches us, if we are docile, as much of the nature of God's word as we can comprehend at each stage of life and as much as is necessary for the degree of the spiritual life to which we have attained—besides this, that same Spirit has inspired his Church to provide her faithful with those simple sketch maps

to the rich landscape of the faith which we call the creeds of Catholic Christendom. Let us see that we so use them in our pilgrimage as eventually to arrive at the heavenly destination to which the terrain of the faith leads us.

THE MINISTRY

I

GREGORY DIX

My subject is "the apostolic ministry to and in the Church of God". If I am to speak intelligibly in half an hour of one of the most vexed theological questions of our day, I must begin at once by establishing a distinction. We are dealing with two realities, which are always inseparable—let me emphasise that—but which nevertheless the Christian must distinguish, because they bear a different relation to Jesus Christ. We can never usefully discuss them separately, because of this.

Our Lord by his incarnation and atonement did not *found* the Church. He redeemed it. The Church is, in essence, as old as the creation of man. More obviously, the old covenant of God with Israel, like the new, is a covenant founded upon faith and hope in Christ. But the Son of Mary, God incarnate, *did* begin and commission the Christian ministry as a new thing, round about the year 30 of the first century A.D. Put the contrast more generally, in a way which still applies to-day: our Lord Jesus Christ *is* the Church; but he *creates* the ministry. Both owe their being to him, but in different ways.

It was always so. The very earliest first-hand evidence we have of how the infant Church appeared to one entering it for the first time is contained in the first chapter of *Galatians*. When Saul the Pharisee on the Damascus road recognised the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, he was called to be an apostle by Christ himself and also baptized into the Christian Church. He was at once confronted by two reali-

ties. There was "the Church of God", which he brokenheartedly confesses he had "persecuted above measure", and into whose life and faith in Jesus he had just entered by baptism and the gift of the Spirit. And within that, yet distinguished from it in his own account in *Galatians*, is the group of men whom he calls "them which were apostles before me". True, he emphasises that he did not "confer" at once with those at Jerusalem. But then he did not "confer" with the Church either. Instead, he went off for a long retreat in Transjordan. But when he emerged from the re-fashioning, on his own shewing the new Christian apostle did have to re-adjust his position, both as Christian and apostle—and separately—with both the Church and the apostolate.

Let us look at the Church and the apostolate as St Paul found them. That Church was sure it was no new thing. St Stephen begins his account of the Christian Church with the call of Abraham, and speaks of "the Church which was in the wilderness" with Moses. The Church of those first years, still largely composed of Jews, easily saw itself as the old Israel, the people that stood in covenant with the living God. What was the difference now was that it knew that that old covenant had just been renewed, enlarged and fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth. In him God had kept all his promises to the fathers, and more than kept them. In him the fallen creature man had entered again into his own forfeited relation with God as God's son. So the Jewish-Christian Church of the first years after the Passion saw itself quite simply as the *unity* of those who had entered into that covenant of restored sonship to God through Jesus the Messiah, the Christ.

I say the "unity" rather than the "society" or some other such word, because that was how they conceived it. The "Church" in the biblical idea is necessarily an intensely single thing. It is

simply the other party to the covenant with God. God's ancient covenant was not with *Israelites* as individuals at all, but with Israel. A man did not enter that covenant by being convinced in his own mind that God was one, and resolving to keep the ten commandments; nor yet by seeking a private repetition of the theophany at Sinai. He entered it by entering into Israel, the covenant people. Once within that, he was within the covenant. There was no other way. As the "Church", Israel stood before God as a single entity—to be loved, to be judged, to be taught, to be punished, to be redeemed as a unity—as the other party to the covenant. The mercy and faithfulness and righteousness of God were sure. Wherever and whenever a group of the covenant people stood before God upon the covenant, there was the other party of the covenant, the whole Israel of God in all its settlements and in all its generations, past, present and future—in its single wholeness. This single Israel, now for ever renewed and fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth, is "the Church" into which Saul of Tarsus was baptized by Ananias at Damascus. Twenty years later, as St Paul the apostle, he gave to Christendom for ever the classic teaching on the Church as "the Body of Christ". It is *not* a voluntary association of faithful individuals, but a divinely-created organism, a single thing, the life of whose members derives only from the life of the whole. But the life of the whole, even in this world, is nothing else than the resurrection-life of Jesus. Every member thrills with his Spirit only because in "the Church", his Body, the member is incorporated into him. It is a visible society, full of earthly imperfections. Its members are sinful, limited men and women, even the best and most important of them. Yet it is also, even in this world, nothing less than the *fulfilment* of Christ, without which Christ himself is frustrated and pointless. But in all

this St Paul *adds* nothing whatever to the original conception of "the Church", though he does bring out the point of it, both as regards the absolute uniqueness of the Church, and the depth of its renewal in Christ. There can be but *one* Church, however scattered in place and time, because there is but one Christ and one covenant in him.

What then was the apostolate? It was the only direct historical consequence in this world of Jesus of Nazareth. It was new, as the Church was not new. To speak in earthly terms, its creation is the source of all the differences in the covenant life of the Church under the old dispensation and the new. Every stratum of the primitive evidence witnesses that Jesus devoted much of his ministry to training twelve men. They were to be the authoritative witnesses in the Church and to the Church of what he had taught and what he had *been*. This function they alone could fulfil. Afterwards they consigned their witness to writings which became the New Testament. But there was more. He had solemnly endowed them with his own messianic Spirit, to empower them to act for him, according to his will, in the earthly life of the Church, when he was no longer visibly with them. It was a commission in the widest terms, to act in his own name and person. It is summarised in one of the latest books of the New Testament, when the Church had had time to discern all that was involved, in the startling phrase "As my Father hath sent me, I also send you". As Jesus, the plenipotentiary of God, has been "sent" into the world and into history, so now in turn *they* are "sent" into the world and into history as *his* plenipotentiaries. But they are not left as stewards of an absentee Christ—any more than Jesus incarnate is the deputy of an absentee God. Christ cannot be absent from his Body the Church, any more than the Father can be separated from his

incarnate Son. There are no limitations on their powers, no qualifications, no safeguards, no instructions even, beyond those implied in the gift of the Spirit of the Father and the Son which accompanies this commission. And with that there needed none. They are, in the earthly visible life of the Church, to fulfil the office of Christ towards the Church: to shepherd, to guard, to minister, to teach. But the life of the Church comes not from them or because of them, but from Christ himself through the Spirit.

We see in the rest of the New Testament the working out of this twofold principle. Just as in his lifetime his gospel centred in himself and indeed *was* himself, and was authenticated by his being what he was, so after his ascension the earthly life of his Body centres round these men, is inseparable from them, is authenticated through them and by its association with them. Yet it is obviously not from them. The result of the first proclamation of the gospel on Pentecost Day is that "they that gladly received Peter's word were baptized and there were added about three thousand souls. And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in the breaking of bread and the prayers". It is extraordinarily difficult, I think, to sum up accurately and briefly the very delicate balance which is displayed in the New Testament between the vital reality of the Church's corporate life coming from Christ himself, and the no less striking reality of the apostles' personal commission to the Church and their discharge of it. They are within the Church, members of it, dependent on its corporate spiritual life in many ways. Yet as apostles they are in no sense merely products of the Church or officers of the Christian society, but the envoys of God, "sent" to it, set over it. They exercise as a personal prerogative the mysterious power of "handing over to Satan", which

cuts a man off from the Church; they alone replenish its ministry; they guard its doctrine; they judge its morals. They stand before the Church for Christ, no less clearly than they stand all the time within the Church under his judgment. Perhaps the clearest summary we can find is that they yield themselves to be the earthly instruments of Christ's reign in his own Body. Two things, at least, are certain. One is that this commission was soon extended outside the original twelve, not only to men like St James and St Paul and St Barnabas, but to men like Andronicus and Junias, who are merely names to us, but who are described by St Paul as "notable among the apostles". The other is that it was not given to all Christians as such, or even to all Christian ministers, but was a strictly personal commission restricted to a relatively small number of men. To the question "Are all apostles?" St Paul expects an unhesitating answer, "No."

It was the universal belief of the Church of the second century that this apostolic commission had not died out of the Church with the death of the original holders, and it is indeed difficult to see how it could. If it could later be extended in its fulness to men like Barnabas and Andronicus and Junias by the action of the original holders, there was no obvious reason why it could not be extended by these others in their turn. There was no point at which *all* the apostles died to make a sudden break. The sort of thing that happened may be illustrated by one case. We know that St Polycarp, the great bishop of Smyrna in Asia Minor, was born about A.D. 70 and was a Christian from childhood. His disciple, St Irenaeus, says that "he was appointed by apostles over Asia as bishop of the Church of Smyrna", and we know that he was already bishop there about A.D. 110. When he was martyred in A.D. 156 his own church spoke of him as an "apostolic teacher in our own

times". The process may not have been so simple everywhere. But at least the consequences were everywhere the same. The apostolic functions in the Church passed everywhere to the bishops of the local churches. And it was then universally believed that those functions passed to them only because the solemn apostolic commission to discharge them had been extended to them by those who themselves held it. That belief was unchallenged in Christendom down to the sixteenth century. It was not challenged in the second century when the transfer was taking place. As the one Church of the apostolic age had been ministered to by the one apostolate, exactly so the one Church of succeeding ages is ministered to by the one episcopate. Even when later tragedies had rent the outward unity of the Church, the episcopate in every sundered portion continues to discharge without question the apostolic function in virtue of the apostolic commission received, not *from* the Church, but *in* the Church, from Christ.

This original God-given pattern was everywhere maintained until the sixteenth century, and over three-quarters of Christendom it is maintained to-day. Increasingly, perhaps, its restoration where it has been lost is seen as the one hope for the future. But there is a great difficulty, and I should say a great duty, which particularly confronts us Anglicans. It is hard to speak of it wisely, but in loyalty to our Lord we are bound to face it, humbly, very penitently, but with open eyes.

The events of the sixteenth century were a tragedy for western Christendom. We need not even try now to assess the blame for this. The life of Christ was still in his Body; the hierarchy still had its apostolic commission; but the unreformed Catholicism of the early sixteenth century cried aloud to God for healing. It may well be that the Protestant Reformers asked some of the right questions. I think myself

that they did, though that is not to say that they necessarily gave all the right answers. But there were too many of them, and they disagreed too violently among themselves, and the impulse behind the whole movement was too much entangled with quite earthly motives for the result to be anything but catastrophic. I am not trying to distribute the blame for this. It may well be that the blindness of the hierarchy to the needs of the Church was far more sinful in the eyes of God than the blind zeal of the Reformers to apply their own remedies. It may be that the results of the Reformers' actions were shot through with as much good as evil. We need not argue about that. We are concerned with the long-term result as it affects us all to-day. That is the modern 'denominations' of western Christendom. It took a long time to produce that result, which was not intentional. Nevertheless, that is the consequence to-day of the actual process of the Reformation.

It is a problem which nobody knows what to do with. We cannot simply put an end to it. All our modern corporate religious experience in the west, whether we are Roman Catholics or Anglicans or Protestants, is to-day in varying degrees a "denominational" experience—not only of religion but of Christ. St Paul could say "Christ loved the Church and gave himself for it" in a sense in which it is not true to say that "Christ loved the Anglican Communion" as such "and gave himself for it", or that "Christ loved the Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion" as such "and gave himself for it". The so-called "Oecumenical" Movement has tried to solve the difficulty by treating each "denomination" as though it were what the New Testament means by a local "church", and hoping that "the Church" will emerge somehow when they are all brought together. But men cannot create "the Church".

Even to hope to do so is blasphemy. And a "denomination" is not at all what the New Testament means by a local *ekklesia*. It has a wholly different origin; it exists on altogether different presuppositions; it lives with a different sort of life. And we have got to say so.

But I will venture to say that the problem of different sorts of ministries which to-day seems so formidable to ecclesiastical diplomatists would not in fact be proving so intractable if it had not been for this disastrous diagnosis in approaching the question of "the Church". It is the practical substitution of the concept of the "denomination" as the *working* reality, in the place of "the Church", which has led us up a blind alley on the question of the ministry. It is sometimes suggested that the origin of non-episcopal ministries is in a sense accidental; that the sixteenth century Protestants would have been glad to retain episcopacy and episcopal orders if they could have had them. If anyone thinks that John Calvin hankered after episcopal ordination he had better read the *Institutes*. The Lutherans in Germany could have had episcopal orders, if they had wanted them, from men like Archbishop Hermann of Cologne, or later from Lutheran Bishops in Sweden. No! I think the fact must be faced that they did not retain them because they did not want them, and that they substituted for them something which they sincerely believed was better, and which was at all events undeniably and designedly different. It was for this reason that in many cases they re-ordained according to their own fashion Catholic priests who were converted to Protestantism. And this change in the conception of the ministry was closely connected with that particular element in their theology which in the end has led to the substitution of the idea of the "denomination" for that of "the Church".

You will hear later how Anglicanism has clung to episcopacy. And under God that has been our principal means of preservation from a mere Anglican "denominationalism". It has linked us with an older, wider world, and maintained among us something of the true conception of "the Church". But we have sometimes valued it less, perhaps, for what it is by our Lord's commission than for political reasons; and we have pressed it on others by political means. We Anglicans have to remember that when English Free Churchmen seem to us to show an unreasonable prejudice against episcopacy. Do not let us repeat that offence in another way, by allowing it to be recommended as any sort of ecclesiastical *expedient*. It is for its apostolic character, and for no other reason, that episcopacy has to be valued and accepted, out of loyalty to our Lord.

In one respect, the very statement of this is a sharp criticism of ourselves in the Church of England (though not of the rest of the Anglican Communion). It is now the accepted duty of our modern secular state to observe a strict neutrality between the Church of Christ and those who are not of it—rather like the Roman procurators in *Acts*. If St Paul's name had first been presented to the Church in a "letter missive" from Pontius Pilate along with a *congé d'élire*, he might have found some difficulty in convincing those "who were apostles before him" that he had truly been called to be an apostle. We cannot without some shyness press upon others the apostolic character of the episcopate when it is notorious that there is hardly any problem of the modern Church of England which is not aggravated and confused by the fact that our Church somehow does not seem wholly to trust its own episcopate. This is not a personal criticism of the men. Many of them make themselves personally very beloved and trusted. But

the unpleasant fact remains. And if they each combined the virtues of St Peter and St Paul and St John, that still would not make a wrong system of selection right. That system does in fact distort and obscure the relation of the apostolic ministry to the Church in a way which, though not fatal, is seriously harmful to both. It undermines the moral authority of the bishops. It undermines the Church's sense of responsibility towards them. Whatever the justification for it in the past, it has now become for the Church an open rendering unto Caesar of things that are God's. Because that is the lesson of scripture and of history—that the Church and the apostolate belong together. They cannot even be understood separately. One can discuss the technical validity of the succession of a series of consecrated individuals isolated from the Body of Christ (like some of the "Free Catholic" successions of *episcopi vagantes* in this country). And one can discuss whether "the Church" can in some sense persist in a separated body of ministers and people without the apostolic succession. But in either case you are debating an anomaly, something which ought not to exist—an historical freak. The Church and the apostolate have to be accepted—each of them but together—for what they are by the act of Christ himself.

II

B. M. JALLAND

In a short paper on the Anglican ministry it is clearly impossible to cover the whole ground, so it is proposed to deal with the first century of Anglicanism—by that century the Anglican theory of the ministry must inevitably stand or fall. It is a popular belief that the Reformation in England was the work of Henry VIII; but obviously so long as the old pontifical and ordinal were used, the *form* of the ministry was in no way altered. We ought to begin our survey with the introduction of the new liturgy which properly belongs to Edward VI, but because of the intervening years of Mary's reign, we may more conveniently start with the opening of the reign of Elizabeth.

Elizabeth found herself in a curious position. Since her father's death there had been two distinct phases in the history of the English Church:

(1) The second period of reformation under Edward VI, when during his minority reforming ideas had been made known in universities and among scholars, and a vernacular liturgy had been introduced, though no attempt had been made to set up Calvinist discipline instead of the traditional form of church government.

(2) The complete reversal of her brother's policy under Mary and a return to the *status quo* of 1529 by the second Act of Repeal (1554).

The dearth of bishops owing to death or deprivation offered Elizabeth a splendid opportunity, if she wanted it, to intro-

duce either a Calvinistic form of discipline in church government, or simply to appoint bishops without troubling to see that they were consecrated. The central point to remember is that Elizabeth was a believer, as were her subjects, in the typical sixteenth century doctrine of the "godly prince", which underlies the whole theory of royal supremacy, with the right to lay down whatsoever form of church government she pleased in her own dominions. She was more content than her father to *delegate* full authority to bishops, for whatever may have been her theological position or her belief in historical argument, she was certainly a firm upholder of episcopacy as the *most convenient* form of church government, and, like all Tudors, she was no believer in half-measures. She took care to find a suitable person for archbishop, and found him in Matthew Parker. She also took every care to safeguard the validity of Parker's consecration, to ensure that Parker and his successors were bishops in the Church of God, with the intention of perpetuating an ecclesiastical hierarchy.

The Edwardine ordinal was possibly defective in its failure to make a proper distinction between the episcopate and the presbyterate, by omissions rather than by what it actually said. This was altered in 1661-2, largely to meet the contention of the Presbyterians that the office of a bishop and of a presbyter or priest is one and the same, not at all distinct, and that both names belong to every presbyter. They tried to support this contention by alleging that the Edwardine ordinal "added no new authority to that which was often given him by the priests and that both orders were the same according to our old ordinal" (see *Liturgy and Worship*, ed. Clarke and Harris (1932), p. 674).

The general opinion of bishops thereafter stiffened and the official pronouncements of the Church of England leave no

doubt that there is a clear distinction between the two, and that bishops and bishops alone have the right to confer orders.

This stiffening is noticeable from the early days of the Elizabethan settlement. There was a reluctance at first on the part of the returned exiles to take part in an episcopal church, but once they had been prevailed upon to do so, there was a general tendency to shew a sense of vocation and pride of office. For illustration of this we have much valuable material in the collection of documents known as the Zurich Letters. (*Parker Society*, 1842-5.)

Elizabeth's *via media* was difficult to maintain at first, but gradually by the pressure of the Romans on the one hand and the Puritans on the other, it became a clearly defined cause-way. Elizabeth's bishops to begin with were drawn from the ranks of moderate reformers, whose theology was Calvinist but not extreme, for, of course, they rejected the Calvinist theory of church government. By the time that Richard Hooker was writing his calm and reasoned exposition of the ecclesiastical polity, "Anglicanism," as we call it to-day, was well in being. This strange phenomenon, Catholic in structure, but Protestant in its alignment with the Reformed Churches against Rome, was beginning to make itself felt. But the bishops and theologians were still very cautious about their view of episcopacy, and even Hooker would not commit himself to saying that no church without it, is a true church. He places it among what Cosin later called the *agenda* of religion, about which churches may agree to differ, although they must agree upon the *credenda*, the central points of faith. It is at the end of the century, when non-conformists grew so numerous and troublesome that they had to be regulated, that we may look to bishops such as Whitgift and Bancroft

for a clear exposition of the Church of England's insistence upon the maintenance of episcopacy as a matter of order. By the time of the second and third generations of the upholders of the *via media*, a definite Anglican theology had come into being, still Calvinist in many of its tendencies, but largely influenced by the appeal to history and to the doctrinal agreements of the first four centuries, which caused the leaders of the Oxford Movement to look to the Caroline period as the golden age of the Church of England.

We find more and more, moreover, the idea of the "godly prince" and the retention of episcopacy bound tightly together, so that they eventually stand or fall together in grim earnest. All the same it is very difficult to prove, as the leaders of the Oxford Movement firmly but mistakenly believed, that the official position of the Church of England, apart from that of a few extremists like Montague in Charles I's reign, went even further than that. Certainly many held that though bishops were essential to the *Church of England* as divinely appointed by God, it was not necessary to 'unchurch' those foreign Protestants who did not themselves maintain an episcopal system. It is difficult to get a clear statement, even from a staunch episcopal propagandist like Laud, to prove anything else. Two things must be remembered which were making the Church of England particularly tolerant: the prevalent idea generally illustrated by the phrase *cujus regio, ejus religio*, which appeared in England in the theory of Divine Right; and the strong feeling that the Church of England must join with other "reformed" churches, particularly the Huguenots, in a common front against Rome. But it is impossible to prove that the Church of England held anything but the view that episcopacy was of her own essential being.

The tolerance of the Church of England about foreign

Protestants has made her much criticised in later years—blamed by some, praised by others. Many individual bishops are taxed with having preferred men to benefices for the administration of sacraments without re-ordination if they had been ordained by a “reformed” church abroad, thus tacitly denying the essential nature of episcopal orders. It should be remembered that although various individual bishops, for many reasons, were tolerant in this respect either for want of principle or out of sentiment (like Cosin), nevertheless the official mind of the Church of England was perfectly clear, and nothing was left undone to make the position as regular as possible. It is easy to cite cases from among such bishops who were most prominent for their individualistic views, and to pass over scores of men who from Elizabeth’s Act of Uniformity onwards toed the line. It is perfectly clear in all the regulations that the underlying principle is that bishops and bishops alone, by divine ordinance and Catholic custom, were given certain unique and essential apostolic powers; with the inevitable corollary that, though presbyters shared with bishops the power of administering the sacraments and various pastoral functions, they were expressly excluded from authority to constitute in themselves that essential body of persons without whom there could be no Church.

The main regulations relevant to the official position may be briefly cited here:

(1) *Preface to the Ordinal*, which states that the orders of the Anglican Church are of divine institution, and that the power of conferring them is confined to bishops alone.

(2) 1562 *Injunctions* of two archbishops and their suffragans, confirmed by Convocation, putting right an irregular situation which had arisen by the temporary appointment of “readers” during the dearth of clergy. By these injunctions,

readers are not to administer the sacraments. In 1571 readers were inhibited from ministrations of any kind.

(3) *Grindal’s Articles*, 1575, which enjoined a search for “pretended” clergymen with counterfeit letters of orders.

(4) *Canons of Convocation*, 1597, 1604, forbidding any bishop to institute anybody to a benefice who had not been ordained by himself or who did not first produce letters of orders.

(5) *Visitation Articles* of Whitgift, Bancroft, Sandys, etc., causing enquiry to be made of all purporting to be priests or deacons, to know by whom and in what manner they were “ordained and provided”.

(6) The insistence after the Act of Uniformity of 1662 upon the episcopal ordination of foreign ministers wishing to exercise their ministry in the Church of England. This may be, as some would have us think, merely a “civil necessity” and an expression of the will of a “godly prince”; but it is difficult to hold that it is other than a definite recognition of the unquestioned belief in the Church of England that episcopal orders were part of her very essence, however tolerant she might be of Protestant churches abroad.

This tolerance of Protestant churches has already been explained in broad principle. It may be added that it does not seem materially to weaken the Church of England’s position with regard to episcopacy that she refused, in the language of the day, to “unchurch” Protestant churches abroad. The distinction seems very often to have been made, even by Laud, between those men who sought Presbyterian orders abroad in times of stress, when there were no bishops to be had, and who therefore might be treated charitably at home (sometimes, even, in the name of charity, given preferment without reordination) and those who sought Presbyterian

orders at home wilfully and deliberately, when there was no need.

These latter had transgressed the maxim of *cujus regio, ejus religio*, and had weakened the Protestant front by dissenting from the reformed national Church, while the Protestant churches abroad were all part of the united protest against the pretensions of Rome. The distinction must be made, otherwise the impulsive statements and acts of Overall, Cosin and others appear in flat contradiction to the official teaching of the Church of England which they had undertaken to maintain.

The official position of the Church of England therefore seems to have been at the time of the Restoration and the Act of Uniformity of 1661:

- (1) A positive affirmation or claim of episcopacy.
- (2) Allowance for its lack in continental reformed churches on the grounds of inculpable necessity.
- (3) A censure of Presbyterians and others at home who openly defy that which the "godly prince" has decreed to be the rightful form of church government.
- (4) A refusal to "unchurch" foreign Protestants on the grounds of their defective orders, though not allowing their orders to be valid in the Church of England.

As Dr C. Jenkins has said: "It seems . . . impossible to deny that there were probably cases of men not episcopally ordained having ministered in the Church of England. But it is not merely probable, it is certain that such cases indicate no weakening at any time of the Anglican view of the ministry contained in the ordinal, nor what was requisite in England."

III

K. D. MACKENZIE

"The basis of a true understanding of the ministry is a true understanding of the Church." So Moberley wrote fifty years ago, and his words are specially applicable to our task this evening.

Now as regards the Church, I think we may read an obituary over the older protestant ideas about its origin; the idea that it was formed by the gradual gathering of individual Christians into societies, and the subsequent gradual coalescing of these societies into a universal Church. Responsible theologians no longer talk like that. Even Congregationalists, to whom such a view would seem congenial, have learned to speak of the Church in very different terms. Their best representatives, even in the last generation (men like Garvie and Forsyth), have taught that it is the world-wide Church which is the primary idea and that the local churches only deserve the name because they are "the outcrop of the total Church: its local manifestation and operation". "What the apostles founded", wrote Forsyth, "was not churches, but stations of the Church." So because of this, we find that his teaching about the ministry, though much unlike Catholic doctrine, is deeply imbued with the truth that the minister is not a minister or servant of the local church or congregation, but a minister of God to it; "minister and apostle", as he says, "speaking with the authority of Christ himself."

Now if that is what the Congregationalists say, we need not waste time in rebutting the idea of a clergyman which

would make him a kind of employee, appointed and paid to provide acceptable services and give expert advice; though indeed it is an idea which lingers in unexpected quarters: "After all", a Scottish vestryman is reported to have said not long ago, "the rector is the servant of the vestry, isn't he?" No; he is the servant of his flock for Jesus' sake in the sense that it is his duty to serve them, as the Pope proclaims himself *servus servorum*. But primarily he is the representative, however inadequate, of the Church universal, and therefore, as the whole tenor of our Congress has proclaimed, the representative of the Lord Christ, and to him responsible.

Now as to the true place of the ministry within the Church, Father Couratin has placed before you the historical facts as far as they can be ascertained: it is my task to try to say something about what they mean.

Let us take one of the historical facts, the baptism of the whole Church, so far as it then existed, with the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost. The Holy Spirit, who is the Spirit of Jesus, brought about what might be called a further stage in the incarnation: God, already incarnate in the perfect humanity of Jesus Christ, was made to suffer a more humiliating embodiment in the humanity of sinful man. The Church is a new body for Christ. So the very word "Christ" takes on a new meaning. By this word "Christ" we usually mean the Lord Jesus, the historical figure who was born and died, rose and was glorified. That of course is perfectly right. In that sense "Christ" is God the Son who took into himself an unsullied humanity to be perfected by suffering and received up into glory. But there is a new meaning of the word put into our mouths by St Paul: "As the body is one and has many members, so also is"—we expect him to say "so also is the Church"—but what he does say is, "so also is Christ." So we

get the key idea of the *totus Christus*, Christ entire, Jesus and his Church as one Body. The Lord Jesus has united to himself all our corrupted nature, that by union with his humanity it too may be made perfect, and with him be received into glory.

The Christian community, then, is something mystical and numinous, a new embodiment of Christ. And, like other organized bodies, it develops its necessary organs according to its needs, and may even shed them if they cease to be needed. *But*, and this is the all-important point, one great and indelible distinction is already there even before Pentecost: the apostles on the one hand, and on the other the "rest", who "durst not join themselves to them". The sacred ministry was there already; it was part of the form imprinted by Christ on the Catholic Church when it was still unborn. As in Ezekiel's vision, the bones had come together and were covered with flesh *before* the infant Church drew breath. The gospels indeed are to a very large extent an account of the institution of the Christian ministry. I once heard Walter Lock, the Warden of Keble, make the rather startling remark that it might be said that the gospels were written to explain the apostles' claim to forgive sins.

The apostolic ministry is therefore an essential part of the form of the Church: not an excrescence or an aftergrowth, but something set by God in and over the Church in the foremost position. "First, apostles", says St Paul. The actual apostles are no doubt unique and they stand by themselves. They are the twelve foundation stones (even though in fact they came to be more than twelve), and as *foundations* their status is obviously unique: they can have no successors. You cannot go on laying foundation stones *ad lib*. It was theirs to bear individual witness to the resurrection of our Lord. They

had *seen* him. It was theirs also, in the persons of some four or five of their number, to put down in black and white, either by their own hands or by means of one of their disciples, the historical facts and theological truths on which the Church must depend through all time. They, being dead, yet speak through the contemporary writers of the New Testament. They are our historic moorings, and nothing and no one can take their place.

Now there are those who say that the teaching Church has usurped an apostolic function which properly belongs to apostles, and which they exercise through the New Testament; that we assign to bishops what properly belongs to the Bible. But that is to mistake the character of the New Testament. The New Testament is not a beginner's manual of Christian doctrine. It was written, every word of it, for those who had already received Christian instruction from apostles or apostolic men, that, as St Luke says, "they might know the certainty concerning those things which they had been taught by word of mouth". Long before the apostles had written anything down they had taught their converts about repentance and faith, baptism with confirmation, resurrection and judgment to come. They had been teaching them about Christ the Son of God, his Virgin Mother, his death and resurrection and his glory. These things are presupposed in the New Testament, and each generation needs to be taught them afresh. Apostolic teachers to do this preliminary work are needed in every age, and for this the apostles themselves made provision.

What then are these *continuing* apostolic functions of the apostolic ministry? The first is to be missionaries, ambassadors of Christ to the whole world. The most obvious specific duty of the apostolic minister is to proclaim the gospel and make disciples, and bring men, or bring them back, into the

sacramental fellowship of the Church. In this they approach most closely to the distinctive *apostolic* duty of witness. They are to proclaim what they know to be true, and let the very proclamation draw men into the Catholic fold. I read somewhere the other day of an occasion when Bishop Winnington-Ingram was preaching to undergraduates about the evidence for the resurrection. As he went on he seemed to sense that he was not carrying conviction, or holding attention. He held up his hand with a characteristic gesture, and exclaimed: "And *I know* it's true", and went on to speak of his own experience of the power on men's souls of the living Christ. That was apostolic preaching. No doubt all Christian people are pledged to the duty of witness, and the lay-apostolate, as it is sometimes called, is a necessity if ever the country is to be won: but the ministry must be the spearhead of the assault in zeal and devotion, and if the spearhead is blunted the shaft behind it will have little power. The first duty of the apostolic ministry is to preach the gospel.

Secondly, the ministry represents the *teaching* of the whole Catholic Church as opposed to the views and opinions which may be popular, fashionable or traditional in a particular place. *Teaching* the faith is not the same as *preaching* the gospel; but though it comes second it is equally important. This is primarily the responsibility of bishops, who are the appointed link between the universal and the local Church, and their duty is to keep that which is committed to them, the Catholic faith, in its integrity. But the presbyter also is a Catholic priest, a priest, that is to say, of the universal Church, and his people rightly look on him to teach and govern in conscious obedience to the will of Christ and the mind of the whole Church.

We shall come in good time to the sacrificial side of the

priestly office, but we should remember that the Christian priesthood, like the Jewish, is not only a sacrificial but a *teaching* order. The priest's lips are to keep knowledge and men are to seek the law at his mouth. The priest need not be an inspired prophet; if he is so much the better, but as a priest he is responsible for knowing his subject, which is theology, and teach he must in virtue of his office. He will have his private opinions on all sorts of subjects, both moral and religious; they may be very valuable (or of course they may not), but his *priestly* duty is to teach with authority the doctrines of the Church, and to do his best to persuade others that they are true.

So also, normally a priest has some measure of apostolic jurisdiction. It is his business to "lay down the law", as the phrase goes, and this he is constantly doing in the pulpit and the confessional: but this does not mean inventing a law and saying, "You can take it from me". No: we must take it from the Church: and that means moral theology.

But no doubt the most distinctive and the highest function of priesthood is the offering of sacrifice. Priest and altar are correlative terms, and it is at the altar that the Catholic priest enters most fully into his priestly vocation. Ultimately, there is but one priest and one sacrifice. The priest is the Lord Jesus Christ and the sacrifice is his self-sacrifice. But here especially the all-important thing is to remember the central truth that the Church is Christ's Body. Her acts, so long as they accord with his will, *are* actually his acts. Christ's sacrifice of perfect obedience was brought to its historical climax on Calvary; but the pleading and acceptance of that obedience belong to the eternal sphere, and the daily repetition of our eucharistic oblation is our human way of emulating eternity; the mass is the broadcasting of the whole series of the saving acts of

Christ: passion, resurrection, ascension, already recorded in the eternal order.

The offering of the mass is indeed the act of the whole mystical Body of Christ. That too has often been forgotten. In the Middle Ages, as Dom Gregory Dix has said, the mass was "clericalized". But the truth is that every Christian assisting at mass is in his own degree and order doing a priestly act: the deacon, the sub-deacon, and other lesser ministries, and the whole body of the laity. But for so august a function as the consecration of the eucharistic elements, the creative act whereby they become the Body and the Blood, the first question to be asked concerns the adequacy of the celebrant's commission. Is he authorised or empowered to do this? Dr Whale says the question makes him smile, another eminent theologian that it makes him yawn, but it was to the apostles that the original mandate was given, and it was for the apostles to arrange for the appointment of their legates. It was for this, to "offer the gifts", that the apostles "appointed their first fruits". The priest's commission is that apostolic commission which gives authority to act in the name of the universal Church and therefore in the person of Christ. And, as we all know, it is the bishop to whom the responsibility is entrusted of replenishing and perpetuating the ministry. In this respect he is most clearly the successor of the apostles. The consecrated bishop and the ordained priest represent Christ in the fulness of his high-priestly life, as the Head of the Body which was prepared for the only real sacrifice, that of perfect obedience to the will of God: true, pure, immortal, and therefore essentially one, unique. It has been said that as baptism unites a man to the Body of Christ, ordination unites him to the Head.

This is no matter of a sacerdotal caste. Every member of

the Church is a member of the royal priesthood, a priest unto the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Christ abides a Priest continually, and therefore his whole Body must be priestly too. But it does not follow that every member of the Body is the distinctive *organ* of its priesthood. It is at least antecedently probable that priesthood should be exercised through the duly appointed members of the Body; and that in fact is what has always happened, and that is the meaning of ordination.

But, it will be said, it has lately been said very forcibly by the distinguished missionary bishop, Stephen Neil, "What view do you take of Holy Communion administered by non-episcopalian ministers?" This is what he says: "They hold" (he is referring to the writers of a recent book on the ministry) "that they themselves are priests, and that when they celebrate the Holy Communion the faithful verily and indeed receive the Body and Blood of Christ. But what do they think happens at a Presbyterian or Methodist observance of the Lord's supper? Do they believe that in them the faithful receive simply bread and wine, and that these gifts, though they may have some commemorative and edifying value, are in no sense really sacramental?" Then he poses the case of an emergency such as that of a group cast on a desert island, and asks what would their action appear in God's eyes if they proceeded to celebrate the Lord's supper without a priest, and he asks other questions of the same kind. Then he continues, "No doubt different answers will be given to these and other questions by different people. But . . . we must not deceive ourselves by refusing to face the fact that what makes one give different answers from another is that we do not believe in the same kind of God, or at least do not believe in God in the same way." He concludes with the admirable

statement that "every question of Church order or practice resolves itself ultimately into a question of theology". So far Bishop Stephen Neil.

The true answer seems to be that in almost all cases the non-episcopalian finds and receives quite truly in his Communion service all that he seeks and faithfully expects. In some cases what he seeks is no more than that "commemorative and edifying value" which the bishop rightly thinks insufficient. But the more theologically minded Presbyterian or Methodist really does believe that in the Communion he receives grace: that he is made partaker of the Body and the Blood, of the values of the incarnation and atonement. Well, who is rash enough to deny it? Often he will claim a real presence of our Lord, though probably he will use Moule's distinction and affirm a presence *at* the table, but not *on* it. Well again, the minister and people are gathered together in Christ's name, and will he not be there in the midst of them? But that is not to say that it is the same thing as the Catholic eucharist, or that it represents, in that familiar but unfortunate phrase, "a real ministry of the universal Church". The apostolic commission is lacking; therefore we cannot assert, nor does the non-episcopalian minister himself assert, the objective identification of the sacred elements with the Body and Blood of the Lord: *this* is his Body and *this* his Blood.

From this it seems to follow that there can be no full or true identification with our Lord's own sacrifice. There is no real and effective lifting of the elements into the heavenly places: they are blessed for a sacred purpose upon earth, and that is all. There remains a vast difference between the Communion service of the Protestant sects and of the Catholic Church.

Of course the desert island problem is quite different. A

group of Catholic churchmen might well arrange for some form of spiritual Communion: and this, because God is what he is, would bring them all the benefits of the sacrament although there was no priest to offer the sacrifice. You will remember that in emergencies men have eaten blades of grass with desire for Holy Communion, or rice instead of wheaten bread (cf. the French Jesuit who *said* his mass daily in the prison camp without any elements): or again, they have made confession to a layman and received assurance of forgiveness. To speak strictly, such activities are not actual sacraments, but because of the revealed character of God we cannot doubt that he will grant the grace which is expected, outside the actual covenant though it is.

So, finally, it is the duty of the priest to impersonate our Lord in dealing with the sins of Christians. In the ministry of penance he is most plainly acting, in St Paul's phrase, "in the person of Christ." He is Christ's ambassador. Dare we say "plenipotentiary"? Well, the word is liable to misunderstanding, and has actually been misunderstood, and after all the sentence of absolution is always in a sense conditional: conditional on the penitence of the penitent, and even in some cases on the wisdom or the status of the priest. But if he is less than a plenipotentiary, he is more than a representative, for it is Christ himself in the priest who welcomes the sinner and discharges him.

To sum up: One principle lies behind the whole conception of the apostolic ministry. Christ is embodied in the Church, and he uses the priest as the living instrument of his power and mercy. In this sense the priest is *alter Christus*, Christ's counterpart, the living instrument of his power.

IV

A. H. COURATIN

The Christian Church is like the other mysteries of the Christian religion—you can look at it from two points of view, from the point of view of time and from the point of view of eternity. You can look at what is outward and visible, or you can go deeper and see what is inward and spiritual. This is true of the Christ himself. You can contemplate in the gospel narratives a person who is obviously man—a person who eats and drinks and sleeps, who is weary and sad and angry—a person who is like us in all things, except for sin. But you can go deeper into the gospel story, and you can see that he claims to reveal his Father's character and to do his Father's work and to be one with his Father. And if God gives you the gift of faith, you can with St Peter recognise in Jesus of Nazareth incarnate God.

And what is true of the Christ is true of the Bible. It is clearly a collection of human writings of various types, produced in different places at different times. Yet we know by faith that it is the inspired word of God—God's word written, as our article so happily puts it. And what is true of the Christ and what is true of the scriptures is also true of the blessed sacrament. It is quite obviously bread, it looks like bread, it feels like bread, it tastes like bread, it nourishes like bread. Yet we know by faith that it is the Body of Christ, which is given, taken and eaten in the Supper after a heavenly and spiritual manner.

And what is true of the Christ and of the Bible and of the

Sacrament is also true of the Church and ministry. The Church is obviously an earthly institution, and its ministry is obviously a set of officials, appointed to do certain jobs of work. Yet by faith we know that the Church is the mystical Body of Christ, the spiritual organism in which Christ has been incarnate since the day of Pentecost. And by faith we also know that the ministers of the Church are supernatural organs of that mystical Body, through which the Christ performs certain specialised functions of his Father's work. These are the two aspects of the Church and ministry which we shall consider tonight. Bishop Mackenzie will speak theologically of the ministry as the supernatural organs of the mystical Body of Christ, and I shall try to speak historically of the ministry as the officials of the human society which we call the Church.

One of the facts which has become increasingly clear to scholars in the last twenty years is the essential continuity between Judaism and Christianity. We know that the Jewish Church was organised in local churches or synagogues. And we know that these were presided over by bodies of officials called presbyters or elders. These were responsible for the government of the local communities; they exercised discipline over individual members. They were responsible for the maintenance of public worship; they chose the readers of the lessons and the preacher of the sermon. And they were responsible for the adequate provision of teaching; this they commonly provided by appointing some from among their own number to give the required instruction.

When the first Christians preached our Lord as God's Messiah in the Jewish synagogues, there was usually a division in the congregation. Some accepted him as the Christ, but the majority generally rejected his claims, and those who accepted

him were commonly put out of the synagogue. We should naturally expect those who were thus put out to organise themselves as a separate synagogue on traditional Jewish lines. To do anything else would invalidate their claim to be the Circumcision, the true Israel of God.

So we are not surprised to read in the *Acts of the Apostles* that Paul and Barnabas ordained elders in every church, i.e. organised their converts as Christian synagogues with governing bodies of elders in the traditional Jewish manner. These Christian presbyteries apparently exercised in the Christian Church the same ministry as the Jewish presbyteries had exercised in the Jewish.

But the Christian Church was not merely to be a continuation of the Jewish Church. It had to carry out the new and peculiar work of atonement and reconciliation which the Lord Christ had come into the world to do. It therefore needed something more than a ministry of elders, something more than government, organisation, teaching. Our Lord came to his Israel as "the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls". And if the Christian Church was to be the instrument of his atoning work, it needed a new ministry—a ministry of grace as well as a ministry of truth—a ministry of apostolic priests no less than a ministry of teaching and ruling elders.

Such a ministry was given to the Church by our Lord himself when he chose the twelve apostles. He appointed them to be his personal representatives, as he was the personal representative of the Father. As Christ's personal representatives they were like him apostles and high priests, shepherds and bishops; and as his personal representatives they could extend his commission to others.

It is sometimes said that the Christian Church was origin-

ally presbyterian in organisation and only later became episcopal. And in a sense this is true. For the Jewish Church *was* presbyterian in ministry, and the Christian Church which grew out of it was therefore presbyterian too. But the Christian Church was instituted to perform greater works than the Jewish. Therefore from the very beginning it was equipped by God with a new and greater ministry. From the day of Pentecost there existed within the Church the ministry of the apostles, ordained by Christ himself, alongside the ministry of the presbyters or elders, which was traditionally derived from Moses.

Now the ministry of the Twelve was to be both apostolic and priestly. As apostles they were to be witnesses to the historical truth of the passion and resurrection of incarnate God, and as apostles they had power and authority to send others to continue that witness. The apostolic succession not only confers sacramental power on each newly-consecrated apostle; it also places him in the unbroken line of official historical witness, which goes back from the twentieth century to the events that took place under Pontius Pilate.

But the Twelve were not merely appointed to be apostolic witnesses to the historical truth of man's redemption. They were also to be high priests and shepherds to the people of the new covenant. Under the old dispensation there had been teaching and discipline, law and judgment. Under the new there was also to be grace and mercy, reconciliation and communion. And so the first ministers of the New Testament were commissioned to make converts of all nations, and to baptise them with water and the Spirit. They were given power like their Master's to forgive sins on earth; and they were commanded to make the memorial sacrifice of his passion and resurrection. And all subsequent members of the

apostolic ministry have received the same commissions, and have carried out the same works.

The ministry of the apostles is the only ministry in the Church which was instituted by our Lord himself. "He ordained twelve," we read, "that they should be with him, and that he should send them forth to preach." After his resurrection he appointed St James and St Paul, and other apostles besides. To these he entrusted the ministry of reconciliation, which he intended that his new Israel should possess. These he constituted apostles and high priests, shepherds and bishops. We do not know whether he commanded them to perpetuate the ministry by appointing others to their office, or whether they learned to do so under the guidance of his Spirit. What we do know is this: that the immediate followers of the apostles believed that they had done so. They believed that although the apostles themselves were dead, there existed in the Church not only shepherds and high priests, men who offered the gifts of the bishop's office, but also apostles who were able to send others into the apostolic ministry.

In New Testament times the duty of witnessing to the gospel and the duty of commissioning others to the ministry was exercised by the apostles themselves, and by those apostolic men about whom we read in the *Acts* and the *Epistles*, men like Timothy and Titus. But the duties of priesthood and shepherding, the duties of pastoral oversight, could not be confined to so small a number. In every local church there were converts to be baptised and confirmed, and penitents to be restored. And in every place the pure offering of the new covenant was to be made Sunday by Sunday. And so the apostles commissioned in every Church some men who would carry out the priestly and pastoral duties of their own apos-

tolitic ministry. These *bishops*, as they were called in those days, together with their personal assistants the deacons, performed these new works of Christ within the old Jewish framework of elders and congregation. They were themselves elders, they shared with the other elders the old duties of government, organisation and teaching. But unlike the other elders they alone were capable of the new ministry of reconciliation. In the old Jewish set-up, you remember, the governing body of elders had been responsible for the ministry of teaching, and had exercised it through certain elders set apart for that purpose. So in the new Christian set-up the governing body was also responsible for the new ministry of reconciliation, and exercised it through certain elders, ordained for that purpose by the apostles.

We may say then that the apostolic ministry existed in its fullness in the apostles and in the apostolic men whom they appointed to succeed them in their office. The fullness of the apostolate and the high priesthood, of the pastoral and episcopal office belonged to them alone. But they entrusted a part of their office, some of their duties, to assistants drawn from the older order of presbyters or elders; and these ministers, because they were commissioned for the work of sacrificial worship and pastoral oversight, were therefore known in the earliest ages without distinction as high-priests or as bishops. It is this delegation, and this indiscriminate use of titles, which make the early history of the Christian ministry so difficult to follow. But although the duties of the ministry are put into commission in different ways at different times and in different parts of the Church; and although the titles of the various ministers vary from age to age and from place to place; one factor remains constant. In every age and in every historic Church there are always to be found persons who exercise

the fullness of the apostolic ministry, and who commission others to exercise that ministry, and who delegate that ministry in part to others.

In the sub-apostolic age the guardianship of the faith and the ordination of ministers was exercised by apostolic men who moved from place to place, as the apostles had done before them; but the offering of the eucharist and the administration of the day to day sacraments was delegated in the local churches to men called bishops, who exercised their ministry within the local presbyteries. In the second century the apostolic men still moved from church to church, witnessing to the faith and ordaining new ministers. But in the interests of unity the priestly and pastoral duties in every church were now committed to one among the local presbyters, who henceforward became known as "the bishop". By the third century the bishop of every local church had by consecration been constituted also an apostolic man, responsible for the guardianship of the faith and the ordination of ministers as well as for the offering of the eucharist and the administration of the sacraments. By the end of the fourth century the bishop had been forced by the growing numbers of converts to commission the members of his presbytery to perform all or almost all his priestly and pastoral duties. And that is the arrangement which has obtained ever since.

To-day then we have in every diocese a person whom we call the bishop. Historically he is an elder—one member of the presbytery, or governing body of elders, which the Church took over from the synagogue. But he has been given in ordination the fullness of the ministry, apostolic and priestly. From his mixed historical past he derives his various powers and duties. As elder he teaches and governs. As shepherd and high priest he is the principal celebrant of the

eucharist and the principal minister of the sacraments throughout his diocese. As apostolic man he is the official witness to the gospel and guardian of the faith, and the only source of ordination to the ministry.

And we have in every diocese persons called priests. Historically they too are elders, members of the presbytery, which the Church derived from the old dispensation. But they have been given in ordination the priestly and pastoral duties of the ministry, yet not the ministry in its apostolic fullness. As elders they assist the bishop to teach and to govern. As shepherds and high priests they celebrate the eucharist and administer the sacraments. But not being apostolic men they are neither official guardians of the faith, nor have they power to ordain to the ministry. They are called presbyters, because like the bishop they are members of the old presbytery or body of elders. They are called priests, because they share with the bishop in the apostolic priesthood. They could be called bishops, because they have a share with the bishop in the pastoral oversight of the Church. But they could never be called apostles, for they have not been entrusted with the fullness of the apostolic ministry. That fullness belongs to the bishop alone, and he could therefore properly be called apostle. For to him at his ordination is committed that whole ministry of reconciliation, which the Lord Christ entrusted to his apostles in the days of his flesh.

THE SACRAMENTS

I

R. C. MORTIMER

There are two official definitions of sacraments in the Church of England. There is, first, that in the Catechism, "An outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace, given unto us, ordained by Christ himself, as a means whereby we receive the same, and a pledge to assure us thereof." And secondly there is Article XXV: "Sacraments ordained of Christ be not only badges or tokens of Christian men's profession, but rather they be certain sure witnesses and effectual signs of grace and God's good will towards us, by which he doth work invisibly in us, and doth not only quicken, but also strengthen and confirm our faith in him." A sacrament is, therefore, first a sign, something sensible, perceived by the senses, which, like all signs, represents and points to something other than and beyond itself: and this something other is grace, or God's good will towards us. Secondly, a sacrament is an effectual sign; that is, it not only points to the grace, but is itself the means of conferring it. Thirdly, a sacrament is divinely instituted; it could not otherwise be an effectual sign. For it is not natural to any sensible object to procure divine grace or to bind God. Only God can bind himself, and the sacraments are means of grace only by reason of his institution and promise.

The necessity, or at least the great reasonableness and advantage of the sacraments derives from man's composite nature. Since man is composed of body and soul, and his knowledge of the external world is, at least in general, mediated through

the senses, and his life and growth consist in the mutual interaction of mind and body, it is fitting that he receive grace through the medium of visible signs, and that he apprehend the supernatural by means of the natural. Hooker says (*Ecclesiastical Polity* V, lvii. 3) that sacraments are "heavenly ceremonies which God hath sanctified and ordained to be administered in his Church, first as marks whereby to know when God doth impart the vital and saving grace of Christ unto all that are capable thereof; and secondly a means conditional which God requireth in them unto whom he imparteth grace. For sith God is himself invisible and cannot by us be discerned working, therefore when it seemeth good in the eyes of his heavenly wisdom that men for some special interest or purpose should take notice of his glorious presence, he giveth them some plain and sensible token, whereby to know what they cannot see". The same explanation of the need and reasonableness of sacraments is given, in a later and more modern if less elegant form, by the Doctrinal Commission in its report "Doctrine in the Church of England", p. 126. "Inasmuch as man consists of body and soul, it is fitting that he should offer his worship and receive divine grace through outward actions expressive of spiritual activity." To this the Commission prefaced the further reason that the sacraments are necessary to the life of the Church, for "inasmuch as the sacraments belong to the Church, they afford in special measure an instance of that corporate action without which the corporate life of the Church, as of any other society, must atrophy". But if the sacraments are essential to the life of the Church, they are also of great advantage to the individual not only as means of grace, but also as formative of that right disposition without which the reception of grace is unavailing. In the words of the Commission,

who thus state the third reason of the sacraments, "the actual use of sacraments may strengthen the right disposition for their profitable reception in conformity with the familiar fact of experience that the expression of any emotion, conviction or intention, and especially its corporate expression, tends to strengthen that emotion, conviction or intention." St Thomas Aquinas (*Summa Theologica* III, lxi. 1) is the source behind both Hooker and the Doctrinal Commission. "It is proper to human nature," he says, "to advance to what is spiritual and intelligible by means of what is corporeal and sensible: it also belongs to the divine wisdom to provide for each creature according to its nature. Therefore it is very proper that the divine wisdom confers the means of salvation on men under certain corporeal and sensible signs which are called sacraments."

The first essential quality which underlies and is pre-supposed in these explanations of the reasonableness and advantage of a sacrament is that it is an *effectual* sign. To quote Hooker again (*Ecclesiastical Polity* V, lvii. 5), "We take not baptism nor the eucharist for bare resemblances . . . neither for naked signs . . . but (as they are indeed and in verity) for means effectual whereby God when we take the sacraments delivereth into our hands that grace available unto eternal life, which grace the sacraments represent and signify". And again he says (*Ecclesiastical Polity*, App. to Bk. V, No. 1, p. 554), "Sacraments with us are signs effectual; they are the instruments of God, whereby to bestow grace; howbeit grace not proceeding from the visible sign, but from his invisible power. God by sacraments giveth grace [saith Bernard] even as honours and dignities are given, an abbot made by receiving a staff . . . because he that giveth declareth by such signs his meaning, nor doth the receiver take the same but with effect".

Nothing is more certain than that the teaching of the Church of England is that the sacraments are effectual signs; that is, that there is an intimate and inherent connection between the sacrament and grace, that is, between the sign and grace. So that the sacraments are real means of grace and in some sense cause grace. The doctrinal commission, composed of persons of all schools of thought within the Church of England, positively states (p. 230) that "Anglican theology following the formularies of the Anglican Church has in general consistently affirmed that the sacraments are effectual signs—that is to say that they do not merely symbolise the reception of grace but are means by which grace is received". On the other hand there is much dispute in the Church of England, as there is also in the Church of Rome, as to the precise manner in which the sacraments may be said to cause grace. Some hold the view that they are instrumental and physical causes, that is that God uses them to bestow grace as a painter uses a brush to paint a picture. Others think that they are a moral cause; that is, that the sacraments are prayers offered by Christ in his Church to the Father, whereby the Father is infallibly moved to confer grace. Others again think that the sacraments are causes not of the grace itself, but of those dispositions necessary to the reception of grace. Finally there are others who hold that the sacraments are occasions of grace: just as the man who has a pound note may get a pound's worth of goods. The note does not give the goods, but the shop. So the sacrament is, as it were, a title to grace. All these views are tenable and allowed in the Church of Rome. They are all of them held, I suspect, in the Church of England. There is an admirable discussion of them in an appendix to the report of the Doctrinal Commission. Divergence of view in this matter is not important. What is im-

portant is to deny and condemn the view that sacraments are mere signs and stand in no causal connection with grace whatever. And this denial is clearly and explicitly made in Articles XXV, XXVII and XXVIII. A good deal of unnecessary confusion and acrimony has been introduced into the discussion of the causal efficacy of the sacraments *ex opere operato*, that is of the sacrament considered in itself as an act ordained by God, by failure to relate that to the necessity of a right disposition in the recipient if the grace received is to work in him effectively; that is, the sacrament confers or causes grace of itself *ex opere operato*: it is effective *ex opere operantis*, according to the good disposition of him who receives it.

It is obvious that if sacraments are to be effectual signs they must have been instituted by God. None but God can determine the visible signs with which grace is conferred or which cause grace. None but God can work in the soul, where the effect of the sacrament is; nor can he delegate this power to any creature, for no creature can effect forgiveness of sins, which is the work of grace. Therefore God alone is the author of all sacraments. The Church of Rome teaches that all the sacraments were instituted by Christ himself in his incarnate life, that is, before the ascension: and further that he so specified the matter and form of each that the Church may not substantially alter them. It would be rash to say dogmatically that this is not true, yet there is strangely little direct evidence to support it. Roman Catholic theologians themselves are uncertain how far to push it. They are agreed that the Lord did not specify each and every detail of all the sacraments, that is to say there are "accidents" of matter and form which can be and have been changed without altering the "substance" of the sign; for example, baptism may be by immersion or affusion, the bread of the eucharist leavened or unleavened. They

disagree as to whether Christ instituted the sacraments generically or specifically. Generically would mean that he said to the apostles: "There shall be seven sacraments; you shall use such matter and form as seems to you fittingly to express and signify the effect of each sacrament, which is, in baptism washing away of sins, in the eucharist the food of the soul" and so on. Specifically would mean that he specified the essential matter and form of each; e.g. for baptism, water and "I baptise thee, etc."; for confirmation, anointing with oil and the laying on of hands by the bishop with the words "I sign thee, etc." This latter view is the more favoured because the former would leave to the Church the power to alter the matter and form substantially, and the possibility of this is denied by the Council of Trent (Session 21, can. 2). The difficulty is that except for baptism and the eucharist, the Church has made such alterations. For instance in ordination is the matter the laying on of hands or the laying on of hands together with the bestowal of the instruments? Or again, what is the form of confirmation or of penance? Moreover when did the specific institution of unction or of confirmation occur? Roman Catholic theologians are not agreed. Some say unction was instituted before the passion, since in *Mark* vi. 13 we are told that the disciples anointed many sick persons and healed them. Others say it was instituted after the resurrection and published by James in his epistle. Of confirmation, some think it was instituted at the Last Supper, others after the resurrection. It is perhaps better to say that there are only two sacraments specifically instituted by Christ, baptism and the eucharist, and that the other five owe their specific institution to the Church. If I may once again quote the report of the Doctrinal Commission: "Divine appointment may have been effected in various ways, and

need not be restricted to explicit institution by our Lord himself; it may also be found in the action of the apostolic Church taken under his authority and guided by his Spirit" (p. 124). It follows from this that the Church must remain faithful in essentials to the practice of the apostolic Church so far as she can ascertain it, and that the power to alter the matter and form of a sacrament substantially if it exists at all must inhere in the whole Church and not in any one part of it. To conclude this section, divine appointment is necessary, at least in the form of the authoritative guidance of the primitive Church, in order that there may be a solid basis of assurance that the sacraments are means of grace. The Anglican position would seem to be, and the Doctrinal Commission clearly takes it so to be, that of the seven sacraments two were specifically instituted by Christ and five generically instituted.

Much has been said in this last section of matter and form. These are essential to every sacrament. For if they are not there, there is no recognisable sign. "Everyone who makes use of any sacrament as such does so on the basis of a conviction that it has some recognisable form or matter or both. . . . In order that there may be a sacrament at all, some action must be performed which is recognised to be the proper action of that sacrament" (Doctrinal Commission, p. 129). It is this distinctive action, taken as a whole, which constitutes the matter and form of sacramental theology. The division of the action into matter and form is the result of mediaeval philosophy, which held that every sensible object consists of matter and form: the matter being the common generic stuff, the form being the determination or moulding of that stuff to make one particular thing. So, applied to the sacraments, there is an undeterminate quantity of "matter", a thing or an action, which is determined or applied to signify something

special by the form. Thus the matter of a sacrament is the thing or action, the form is the words or signs by which this matter receives its special significance or is set apart for its special function. Thus in confirmation and ordination the laying on of hands is the matter, the accompanying prayer is the form, which specifies what it is intended by the action.

It is obvious that this clear distinction is most easily applied to baptism and the eucharist. In the other sacraments it is often very forced; e.g. in penance the matter is the sins of the penitent or the confession. In marriage form and matter are the same, the mutual consent and acceptance of vows. But the advantage of maintaining the distinction is that it assists in determining whether the whole performed is or is not the action appointed by God as the sign of the sacrament, and therefore in determining the validity of the sacrament. For a sacrament can only be a *certain* effectual sign of grace if it be the sign appointed by God. And the essence of the sign or action lies in its matter and form. Hence matter and form are immutable; they must always be substantially the same. If, without divine appointment, such as the action of the whole undivided church might be held to be, they are so altered as in their altered state to constitute a different action, it is obvious that that action is no longer the divinely appointed sign. This is the basis of the doctrine of validity and the necessity of the proper matter and form thereto.

It goes without saying that such alterations of matter and form as leave the action substantially the same do not affect the validity of the sacraments, for they do not alter the essence of the sign. For example, the divinely appointed sign of baptism is washing in water. Certain liquids are not water and to wash in them is to perform a different action; but whether the water be hot or cold, to wash in it is still to wash in water.

Again "to wash" is capable of many interpretations, the most natural of which is total immersion; yet to pour water over the head is still to wash. On the other hand, for the water not at all to touch the body anywhere is quite clearly not to wash. What has been said of matter applies equally to form. The form is substantially changed when its plain proper sense is altered so that it no longer signifies the meaning and effect of the sacrament. Thus to alter "I baptise thee" into "I wash thee" would not destroy the validity of the sacrament, but to say "In the name of the Father and of the Holy Spirit," by its omission of "the Son" would clearly alter the whole sense and therefore would destroy the validity. It is not easy to determine with certainty when an alteration of the form is such as to alter its essential meaning. It is generally necessary to consider also the intention of the minister in making such an alteration. When the alteration is unintended and accidental, it may often be allowed that the real meaning is unchanged. Where it is intentional, there is a readier presumption of a fundamental change.

The sign in the sacrament is the combination of the matter and the form. It is therefore essential that there be such a union between the two that they may appear evidently together to form a single action. In the case of the eucharist this is necessarily so. The words of consecration are said over and clearly designate the elements lying on the altar. Nevertheless, to make assurance doubly sure the rubrics command the priest to lay his hand upon the bread and to take the chalice into his hand. Thus in the eucharist there is the closest possible union of matter and form. In the other sacraments the requirement is less stringent. It is enough in baptism if the form be said immediately after the pouring of the water, or if in ordination it be said immediately after the laying on of

hands. For common sense indicates that the words refer to and are applied to the action. But if there be an interval long enough between the two parts of the sign to raise a reasonable doubt as to what the words refer to, the sacrament would be invalid, not having a clear perceptible sign. The length of interval necessary to make a sacrament thus invalid is obviously incapable of being stated in general terms, and casuists have expended their energy in attempting to define it. The attempt is unnecessary in view of the general recognition that all ministers ought always to seek to make matter and form so nearly as possible coincide. In penance there can by the nature of things be no simultaneity—the confession must precede the absolution, and absolution may, for good cause, be deferred for three or four hours. In marriage, if it be by proxy, a long interval may separate the expression of consent by one party and its acceptance by the other.

But in all these matters, the validity of the sacrament depends on the matter and form being so joined together as to constitute together the sign. It is for this reason that it is required that the form be applied to the matter by one and the same minister, so as clearly and certainly to constitute one action. It is not permissible in baptism for one minister to pour the water and another to say “I baptise thee”. Nor in the eucharist for one to consecrate the bread and another the wine. The reason is that such proceedings constitute two separate actions, and not the one action which is the divinely appointed sign.

What all this comes to is that the minister of a sacrament must do what the Church does. Further, it is required that he do it intentionally. Otherwise the action done in joke or on the stage would constitute a sacrament. The intention which a minister must have is an intention seriously to do what the

Church does. Many think that it is also necessary that he have an intention to do what the Church intends, that is, to minister a sacrament or to confer grace. Into this controversy we need not here enter. It is, I think, largely, one of words. For all are agreed on the one hand that the intention must be serious and not frivolous, and on the other that the minister's private beliefs are quite irrelevant. It is not necessary for the minister to have a correct belief as to what it is that the Church does or intends to do in the sacrament. It is enough either that he seriously intends to do what the Church does, or alternatively that he means to do what the Church means to do; it is not necessary that he believes in it. For the validity of sacraments is not dependent on the worthiness or on the orthodoxy of the minister. Furthermore, the adequacy of the minister's intention is to be inferred and presumed from his outward acts and spoken words as he ministers the sacrament. These are proof sufficient that he is intending to minister a sacrament of the Church, or to do what the Church does.

It is otherwise with the public or official intention of that part of the Church of which he is a minister. Sacraments may become invalid because the rite by which they are ministered is itself defective in intention—that is, fails to express adequately or recognisably what the sacrament means. Such a defective intention will manifest itself either in an altered matter or form, or else in the general context in which the rite is set. For even if the matter and form remain unaltered, yet official formularies may make it clear that what is intended is something other than what the Church has hitherto intended. In such cases the sacrament will be invalid. The reason is that the sacraments require the co-operation of the human agent, a voluntary action in obedience to God's commands. Where the intention is to do something other than

what God has commanded, this co-operation is clearly lacking. But it must always be remembered all this has nothing to do with the private belief of the minister nor of him who may have composed the rite. It is a matter of the intention of the body to which he belongs, which is to be found both in the matter and form of the rites and in the official formularies and definitions. All that is required of the minister's intention is that he intends to do what the Church does, that is, intends to act in the name of Christ and the Church as their agent.

And this brings me to my last point. The sacraments are the sacraments of the Church. It is perhaps true that the accepted definitions have tended to foster a kind of individualistic piety which has under-emphasised their corporate character. This tendency is to be seen in the mediaeval and Roman practice of communion outside the mass, and in the Tractarian 8 o'clock early service with its small group of worshippers, hardly ever worshipping as a group but scattered one by one about the church, each anxious to be alone and intent on their own personal approach to their Redeemer. It is not to be denied, of course, that the sacraments are intensely personal; for by means of them each single individual participant is brought into close and living touch with God. Yet it is also true, and important, that they are so brought to God as members of one another, and receive God's grace because they are, and that they may be, lively members of his Body. The Church herself is renewed in and by the sacraments, for in and by them Christ is acting in his Body. Every time there is a baptism a new cell is formed in Christ's mystical Body, the Church; every time a penitent sinner is absolved a dead cell in the body is renewed. At every eucharist, in every communion, the life of Christ flows through his Body. Through its members who receive him,

the Body itself is revived. The Body lives and is healthy through the life and health of its members; the members are alive and healthy through their participation in the life of the Body.

The realisation that the sacraments are an activity of the Church—indeed more than an activity, the very cause and condition of the Church's life—profoundly affects the manner of their administration. If I may borrow an analogy which the Bishop of Oxford has used, there are many who demand free and ready access to the sacraments for all. It is as though the sacraments were properly to be thought of as like the food and shelter which an inn-keeper is bound to provide for any traveller who asks for them; the traveller is under no further obligation than to pay for them and then is free to go on his way: whereas it would be nearer the truth to liken the sacraments to the domestic ceremonies and meals which express and constitute family life. None can participate in them without entering into the life of the family, accepting its rules and discipline and becoming part of the household. It is not so much that the Church exists to minister the sacraments to individuals, but rather that the sacraments exist to minister life to the Church through the members who receive them. They are, as it were, the breathing of Christ in his Body, in which none can truly share who are not incorporated into that Body, who do not share in its inmost life; but so incorporated and so sharing, the sacraments are to them effectual signs, the living vitalising touch of God.

II

DONALD MACKINNON

Whereas Canon Mortimer has spoken of all the sacraments, I wish to confine myself to the Eucharist.

And first a word about the evangelical setting of the Eucharist. Theologians in recent years have made us familiar with Gerhard Kittel's phrase—"the scandal of particularity". But I wonder how often we ponder its inwardness, "looking" (indeed) "unto Jesus;" for he and none other is the author and finisher of our faith. He "whose face was marred above the sons of men, nor was there any beauty that we should desire him".

We forget, don't we, how completely Christ was conformed to the lot of our humanity. We make a Christ after our own image, of what constitutes human dignity; we forget how overwhelmingly like us he was. There was nothing to external seeming to pick him out from so many million others, decent folk caught in the web of man's inhumanity to man, broken because willy-nilly they were involved in situations they could not control. Overwhelmingly like us, too, he was, in that the situation in which he was caught and broken was one that belonged to history; it was a particular, irreversibly placed, historical occasion, falling somewhere between the moment when Pompeius the Great first set his foot in the Holy of Holies, and the term of the tragedy when Titus sacked Jerusalem. Flesh of our flesh, bone of our bone, he is like us in this too—in that he belonged to history, knew the

tyranny of circumstances, knew what it was not to speak to any issues but to those raised for him by the concrete situations of his day. After all, among his disciples we find Simon the Zealot, a prototype of the Stern gangster or the member of Irgum Zvai Leumi.

It is in our flesh and blood that he worked out our redemption. He was crucified on a hill, hanged; and his mother came to watch him die, as a mother will wait outside an English gaol with the curious, to see the notice posted on the morning of her son's hanging. There was nothing "religious" in the crucifixion: it belonged to history, whether you see it as a miscarriage of justice, or as just another example of the fruits of that pride which fanaticism can so surely nourish in men. A raw, ugly deed in a world where raw, ugly deeds are familiar. And yet "all our hopes are there". *There*, nowhere else. Why?

Because, of course, it is in Christ that God has, so to speak, planted himself in history. The very insignificance of the whole episode (it's not by any means important to the historian, let us say, of Roman-Jewish relations: Bar Cochba matters more) is our evidence of the depths at which he struck his roots. *Nihil humanum a me alienum puto*: you could call that the very motto of God in the Incarnation. Nothing human alien: there are no depths to which descent is not made, no point, no phase of the being of man set beyond the reach of healing. All, all can be, *is* converted into the instrument of response to God. Whence death arose, thence life springs new again; and where Satan overcame, there he acknowledges defeat—even as the extremity of agony draws from the Christ his word at once of dereliction and of triumph: "My God, my God, why . . ."

But to see its significance, you must master, be mastered by

its triviality, its sorry cheapness. Otherwise you will not understand. You will forget that Christ redeems us because he comes so close that almost he passes unnoticed. Just as he conforms to no previous model of what Messiah should be or do, so he is beyond any conception of redeemer we may frame. For it is by man in man that man's foe is smitten—there where man kneels in fear of death in the orchard, or is brought forth thorn-crowned by Pilate, with the spittle running down his face, and the purple robe around him. In the Passion of Christ the mystery of Emmanuel, God with us, is consummated.

But of course there was a moment when he declared the significance of it all, spoke a word that was more than a word, a word of consecration. The place was the upper room, where, as the shadows gathered round him, he took bread. Quite simply, quite untechnically we say that there he gave himself at once to his Father and to us. The act is one of incredible simplicity; yet in the Fourth Gospel, where it is not mentioned explicitly, there is gathered round it the immeasurably exalted colloquy of the high-priestly prayer. The action of the upper room, recorded in the Synoptists, is the external expression of the words of that prayer. If you like, the prayer contains an entire eucharistic theology, in so far as such a theology is a commentary on the mystery.

What Christ does in this priestly moment is inseparable from what is to happen to him on the morrow. Religion demands life, as a seal demands wax to carry it. So Christ's self-consecration is the self-dedication of a man who is to die horribly, who has been caught deep in the mire and mud of human life. What he invests with sacrificial significance (to use the language of the great doctor of the Eucharist, de la Taille, and of our own Cambridge theologians) is simply

himself, himself as he goes to death. There in the torments of his end he finds the place where in him the world may find redemption. Only man can redeem man: yet man cannot redeem himself. That is the paradox; yet in the humanity of Christ, perfect God and perfect man, is found the place where pride is slain to the uttermost, where, even as the arms of the Lord were stretched upon the cross and he hung, manhood is set forth in utter and absolute dependence on God, become thereby "as one pleading for us". *Intra vulnera tua, absconde nos.*

And in the upper room he, whose word is never without power, says that it is so. "I am the Way." "Take, eat, this is my Body." A teacher may leave his followers a doctrine, a great teacher the exposition of his method, as Socrates did; but Christ alone gives himself. For he alone is given to God, is in the ending of his life able to say that he has finished the work given him to do. And to his Church we Catholics believe he has given the power to speak, or, shall I say, to whisper the word of giving, and echo his eternal presentation in the heavenlies of his obedience. We are able to say "For the sake of his children, we hallow ourselves in him". We hallow our prayer by the prayer of Christ made present in the sacramental ritual.

There are, I think, four points on which I would like you to fasten your attention.

(1) The eucharistic action is a ritual. In Père de la Taille's language, it is the investing of the agony of Golgotha with sacrificial significance. Prospectively in the upper room, there is the *oblatio hostiae immolandae*; retrospectively (if one may use the language of time in respect of eternal realities) in the heavenlies there is *oblatio hostiae immolatae*. In Anglican eucharistic theology and in Anglican eucharistic devotion (cf. for

instance the well-loved hymn, "And now, O Father," of Dr Bright) the Mass has been presented as the splintered reflection on earth of Christ's presentation of his sacrifice in heaven. To this tradition, I submit, we must be resolutely loyal; and we can do so best, I am sure, by a theology which interprets, along the lines of Fr de la Taille, Dr E. G. Selwyn and Sir Will Spens, the action we perform as a ritual act whereby we consecrate the death of Christ as sacrifice, or rather, participate in the act whereby he consecrates his Passion as the recreation of the world in him.

(2) Our issue with our Protestant friends touches less the "real presence" than the fact of the offering. We should, I am sure, deplore as fundamentally uncatholic a eucharistic theology which develops a doctrine of "real presence" in abstraction from the sacrificial direction of the eucharistic action; which thinks of consecration as a device for bringing Christ into the bread and wine, and ignores altogether the theological character of the *act*.

Where we differ from the men of the Reform is in our conviction that our words and action at the altar effectually embody the words and action, the effectual words and the redeeming action, of the Christ himself. So we construe our ritual as a truly sacrificial performance, a veritably effectual remembrancing—effectual not because of our feelings of devotion, but because thus and thus has he willed that we should echo his words, and draw our flickering fidelity to its true home in his redeeming disposition towards the Father.

Christus der Mensch für Menschen. So Karl Barth of the humanity of Christ. And it is the Catholic conviction that the ritual act of the mass renders present in all his ineffable openness (because, as Sibyl Harton says, "upon his cross all are pleading for us") that Christ, man for men: present in the act

in which he declares himself such, and, as it were, fulfils with the measureless riches of his love our little charities.

Can a ritual act render present, make accessible to us, the fullness of Christ's sacrifice? Can we by its performance thrust our own lives, as it were, deep into the embrace of his obedience, find a home for them in the Passion-action, in the last resort wholly his, whereby the world is redeemed? How is our prayer related to the prayer of Christ? Is it conceivable that he left his Church an action, a meal, whereby the whole mystery of his gathering the world into himself might be made effectually present? Can ritual contain the absolutes of redemption? "Contain", because inevitably for us it could only be in ritual act that the manner of redemption by the self-giving of the one could be spoken.

Here, I submit, is the real issue—or part of it: and it touches of course ultimately the nature of redemption and atonement.

(3) The mass is the centre of the Catholic life: indeed, it is the act constitutive of that life. "The mystery of ourselves is on the altar," as St Augustine said; sons *in* the Son as we are.

And for that reason we must, I submit, set no obstacle in the way either of the intelligible presentation of that mystery, or in making it easily accessible to those who have, in the will of God, to find themselves in it. We must be quite ruthless in discarding traditional forms of devotion, which we may love ourselves for sentimental reasons, but which may for all that serve to hide rather than to declare the meaning of the mass to men and women in the world to-day.

One thing and one thing only matters: the will of the Son of God in his appointment of the eucharist. It was to be the religious act of living men; even as in the upper room his prayer and action was expressive of a disposition in which religion and life were woven into one.

Do we or do we not care that men should find the mystery of themselves there? The mystery of themselves as they live their lives, as they make their decisions, as they are broken, and as pitifully they themselves break others? Or do we think that the eucharist must be preserved as the special preserve of a coterie who can insulate themselves from the struggles of social and personal life in this age? Is it to be the place of self-offering for the exposed or for the protected? If the latter, I submit that it is our eucharistic piety which will suffer.

Devotional form, yes, and discipline too. If I mention the eucharistic fast, it is not because I despise it. I was brought up to reverence the principle of it. I mean that. But it is the principle that matters. Are we or are we not making a fetish of the form? Can we honestly hope to enforce it in the modern world, and at the same time secure the accessibility of the eucharistic action? And it is that which matters—to help folk to find *themselves* there, to find themselves in Christ in his sacrifice, to know the joy of the promise of the final truth of their being in him.

(4) And in the end, of course, we must face the fact of ourselves—our poverty of understanding, our measuring the unspeakable mystery of redemption by our comfortable piety, our wilful refusal to expose ourselves, to accept the dreadful risks of living. The mass presents in the action of Christ the true fusion of religion and living, of ritual and doing. It was the stark horror of his end that in the upper room he declared to be the deed that made the world new. In him we pray, only as much as in him we allow ourselves to be exposed—in this our day and generation, in this moment of history, not apart from but in the very midst of its choices and opportunities, its comedy and its tragedy. To-day the Christian should, I think, be before all else a compassionate man: a man who tries to go

with his fellows, not calmly fortified by the thought of a truth denied them, which he enjoys, but set on edge by the recollection that it is in the Christ that the truth of the world's striving is found, the Christ who has called him to pray his prayer and to care his caring. It could be that to-day we have to learn anew just how much our thinking must be marked with the cross, the sign of division and frustration; at least if it is to be related to our charity. Always we have to remember where our true rest remains: not in the place where the world is dissolved from our view, but where everlastingly through time the word is spoken which declares the reality of healing in the depth of man: "Take, eat, this is my Body."

III

E. L. MASCALL

THIS evening we are to consider the special theme of the sacraments in the context of the general subject of this Congress, that of the Catholic Church. And indeed it is impossible satisfactorily to separate the two. We cannot discuss the sacraments in isolation from the Church without our understanding of them becoming grossly unbalanced and defective. It is one of the great tragedies of Christian history that the great efflorescence of sacramental theology, which began in the Middle Ages and continued right through the controversies of the Reformation and after, took place in the almost entire absence of any comparable development in the thought of theologians about the Church itself, and indeed at a time when the primitive catholic conception of the Church had fallen almost entirely out of view. It must of course be admitted that in the minds of the greatest of the mediaeval thinkers some grasp of the Church's true nature and of the organic connection between the Church and the sacraments was not altogether lacking. Does not St Thomas Aquinas tell us that the ultimate effect, the *res*, of the eucharist is the unity of the mystical Body (*S. Theol.*, III, lxxxiii. 3)? But where, even in St Thomas, shall we find an adequate discussion of the mystical Body itself? Only in the last thirty years or so have theologians recovered and put in the forefront of their thought the understanding of the Church's true nature which was the common instinctive possession of Christians down to the time of Augustine,

though Anglicans may be proud to find traces, and more than traces, of it reappearing in the works of Hooker at the beginning of the seventeenth century, and to find Robert Wilberforce nearly a hundred years ago anticipating the main features of the writings of Mersch, Congar and de Lubac in our own time. In the Middle Ages, however, and more and more as time went on, the Church appeared to the eyes of men primarily in the guise of a great supra-political corporation, having much the same structure and organisation as the kingdoms of this world, differing indeed from them in being concerned with a supra-temporal end, but grossly over-preoccupied with temporal affairs and with the construction of a vast system of legal administration. The sacraments, on the other hand, came to be considered predominantly as means of individual salvation and stimulants of individual devotion; and except for the ominous fact that the Church controlled the sacraments and could bestow them upon the individual or withhold them from him at will, the relation between the Church and the sacraments was hard to discern. The Reformation, whatever its effects for good and bad in other spheres, in this respect certainly made things worse rather than better. Since the break up of mediaeval Christendom, Catholics and Protestants have indeed differed widely about Church order and also in their views about many points of sacramental theology, but on one point they have quite unconsciously and most lamentably agreed almost down to the present day. They have alike been bemused by their common inheritance of the individualism and subjectivism of mediaeval sacramental devotion, by the assumption that the ultimate concern of the sacraments is with the spiritual edification of the individual recipient and that their ultimate effect is to be seen in the change which they bring about in his behaviour

and in his feelings. And, paradoxically enough, the fact that both parties to the dispute have agreed unreflectively in this common assumption is the main reason why their conscious differences on other points of sacramental theology have been at once so violent and so irreconcilable. For each party has been able to see the distortions which the common assumption has produced in the other party's outlook, while failing to recognise that their source is one which has been influential in moulding its own. It is, in fact, very largely true that the antagonism between post-Reformation Catholics and Protestants has been due not so much to their obvious and conscious differences as to their latent and uncriticised agreement. Both sides have so often been right in their denials, and wrong, if not in their assertions, at least in their assumptions. Only in quite recent years have we begun to realise that the resolution of the Reformation and post-Reformation conflicts demands the recovery not merely of a pre-Reformation but of a pre-mediaeval understanding of the nature of the Church. And it is in the setting of this primitive and catholic doctrine of the Church that we must place our consideration of the sacraments.

We can sum up the essence of the Christian gospel in the assertion that God the Son united human nature to himself in order to create a new human race. But he did not simply call a new world into existence to redress the balance of the old. He did not abandon fallen humanity to its own devices and put an entirely novel and independent creation in its place. He made a new human race out of the very substance of the old, so that the old might itself be renewed. God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved. The eternal Word did not bring his human nature with him from heaven; he took it from a

human mother. He did not create a new human race out of nothing; he re-created the human race which he had created at the beginning and which had fallen away from him into sin and misery. He is, as St Paul insists, the second Adam, the Father of the new human race, but he became the second Adam by becoming the lineal descendant of the first Adam. When the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, that he might redeem them that were under the law (*Gal. iv. 4*). He renewed man's nature by entering himself into man's fallen condition and by taking upon himself the supreme penalty of man's sin. He fought his battle not *against* man but *within* man, in order that by his victory man might not be destroyed or enslaved but restored and redeemed. He used the very material of the old creation as the substance of the new. He took a perfect and complete human nature from his Virgin Mother in order that men and women might be able to become part of the new creation by being incorporated into him. By our physical birth we are descendants of the first Adam, part of the old creation, members of the fallen human race; by our new birth in Christ, who is the second Adam, we become part of the new creation, members of the restored human race which is the Catholic Church.

In the light of this fundamental truth about the nature of the Church and our status as Christians, we can, I think, readily see how inadequate is any discussion of the sacraments which is content to base itself merely upon a so-called "sacramental theory of the universe". The phrase which I have just quoted does indeed stand for a very important and fundamental truth, though it describes it in a highly misleading and confusing way. It is, of course, true that the world, just because it is the creation of God, manifests his glory to those

who have eyes to see it. "The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament sheweth his handiwork" (*Ps.* xix. 1). "The invisible things of him since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, even his everlasting power and divinity" (*Rom.* i. 20).

*Earth's crammed with heaven,
And every common bush afire with God.*

(E. B. Browning, *Aurora Leigh*, vii.)

It is to be hoped that we shall never exalt the devil to such an equality of power with God as to suppose that, even in a fallen world, the devil can blot out the mark of God's workmanship from his creation or that he can obliterate the image of God from the human soul. All this is very wonderful and very true and we must never allow ourselves to forget it. But it has little or nothing to do with the doctrine of the sacraments, which belong to an order of God's activity which is more wonderful still. There is, of course, an organic relation between the order of nature and the order of grace. Grace necessarily presupposes nature as the material in which it works, perfecting nature but not destroying it. But the two orders are distinct, and the sacraments belong to the order of grace, not to that of nature. They derive their existence and their efficacy not from the act by which God omnipotent perpetually preserves the world in existence, lovely and beautiful even in its fallen condition, but from the act by which God incarnate, entering into his world and, as it were, making himself part of it, died and rose again that it might be created afresh and be made more lovely and beautiful still. "The sacraments be effectual", says Article XXVI, "because of Christ's institution and promise." They belong to the new order, the new world, the new creation, the world of grace

and of the Church, of the Church which is the new Eve, the mother of all living, the bride of the new Adam, born from his side as he slept in death on the cross. This is incidentally why no amount of worshipping God "under the blue dome of heaven", however good in itself it may be, can ever be an adequate substitute for coming to mass; it is the worship of the old creation, not of the new.

"By grace", wrote that great Anglican divine Richard Hooker, "we are every one of us in Christ and in his Church, as by nature we are in those our first parents. God made Eve of the rib of Adam. And his Church he frameth out of the very flesh, the very wounded and bleeding side of the Son of man. His body crucified and his blood shed for the life of the world, are the true elements of that heavenly being, which maketh us such as himself is of whom we come. For which cause the words of Adam may be fitly the words of Christ concerning his Church, 'flesh of my flesh, and bone of my bones', a true native extract out of mine own body. So that in him even according to his manhood we according to our heavenly being are as branches in that root out of which they grow" (*Eccl. Polity*, V, lvi. 7).

To return to our subject, where mediaeval and post-mediaeval thought about the sacraments has so frequently been defective is not in emphasising the part which they play in the personal sanctification of the Christian, but in looking upon that sanctification as brought about primarily by the stimulation of devout feelings in the recipient and in forgetting the organic relation in which both the individual Christian and the sacraments stand to Christ's mystical Body the Catholic Church. That is to say, our view of sacramental efficacy has been both psychological and atomistic. Now if it were true, as so many people have assumed, that what actu-

ally enables us to receive Christ into our souls is the fervour of our feelings of devotion towards him, it would follow that the sacraments are valuable only in so far as they produce those feelings and that anything else which produces them will be equally valuable. And so we shall look upon the mass as good for those to whom it appeals, and evensong or *The House of the Octopus* as precise and legitimate substitutes for the mass for people whose devout feelings are stimulated by them. And is not this in fact the attitude of most English Christians? However, "the fact remains that the sacraments be effectual because of Christ's institution and promise," and the most fervent admirer of Archbishop Cranmer or of Mr Charles Williams—and in the latter of these two classes at least I am proud to claim membership—could hardly make this assertion for the evening office or the *Octopus*. It must be repeated that the sacraments do not operate by their effect upon our feelings, nor is their primary purpose our individual edification. They operate because they are the acts of Christ in his mystical Body the Church, and their purpose is the building up of the Body of Christ by the ever closer and fuller incorporation of his members into him. It is the function of the sacraments to establish, to maintain and to extend, to vivify and to unify, the mystical Body of the whole Christ, made up of Head and members in one organic and coherent pattern of life, to the glory of God the Father. "All the whole and holy society of the redeemed and sanctified community", writes St Augustine, "is offered unto God by that great Priest who gave his life for us in such lowly guise that we might become the members of so great a Head" (*De Civ.* X, vi). And here it is, I think, necessary to say something about the sacraments in their social aspect.

We have heard a great deal in recent years about the social

implications of the sacraments, and I for one would not wish to deny what has been said. It is surely to be hoped that no such gathering as this will forget the words which Frank Weston spoke to the Congress of 1923, when he told us that it was folly and madness to suppose that we could worship Jesus in the sacrament and Jesus on the throne of glory if we were sweating him in the bodies and souls of his children. Nor would I wish to speak with anything but admiration and gratitude of the work of Church Social Action. But just as the phrase "the sacramental view of the universe" can easily mislead us, so too can the phrase "the social implications of the sacraments". For it can and it sometimes does suggest—though it need not and ought not to do so—that the sacraments are chiefly to be valued for their implications in the sphere of economics and politics and that this is the main justification of their existence. Let us try and get the matter in its true proportions.

It is perfectly true that the sacraments have these implications, and Christians have been only too reluctant to admit them. One of the glories of the Catholic movement in the Church of England has been the courage and persistence with which such great men as Scott Holland, Marson and Gore insisted on them. The fact that in the sacraments man finds his deepest needs and aspirations satisfied in the context of a social gathering does, indeed, remind us that the true pattern of human living is neither that unrestricted struggle of individual man against individual men which has been the curse of capitalist industrialism, nor yet that submergence of the individual in the collective which has been so glaringly destructive of human freedom in the totalitarian states. It sets before us a picture of society in which both the personal and the social aspects of human nature are united in an ordered

harmony of authority and freedom. The fact that the sacraments are concerned with the redemption of sinful men warns us, on the one hand, against that superficial optimism which, as Peter Drucker has pointed out, led the humanitarians of the nineteenth century to identify universal education with the power to know the true, and universal suffrage with the power to will the good, and forbids us, on the other hand, to fall into that cynical pessimism which believes that men and women can only be safe to themselves and their fellows as long as they are kept in chains. The fact that in the sacraments man's eternal destiny is advanced by the divinely ordained use of material things reminds us that man is neither a pure spirit temporarily imprisoned in an alien fleshly body nor yet merely the most advanced product of the process of biological evolution, but is a mysterious unity of flesh and spirit, in which flesh and spirit alike are included in God's eternal purpose for him. The fact that the greatest of all the sacraments can only be performed at all when certain products of human labour—bread and wine—have been manufactured and transported by a process of unimaginable intricacy which has involved, directly or indirectly, the co-operation of countless human beings, many of whom are altogether indifferent or hostile to God, reminds us that the Church is necessarily implicated in the life of mankind as a whole and that she cannot, without being false to her very nature, ignore the interests and the problems, the joys and the sorrows, of the outside world and enclose herself simply in the sanctuary and the sacristy. These social implications of the sacraments are of the utmost importance, and we are constantly forgetting them.

And yet in the last resort the sacraments do not exist to remind us of anything, but to make and preserve and extend

the Body of Christ, the holy people of God. They exist as the means by which Christ draws men and women into his own self in order that his Body the Church, the new human race, the "whole and holy society of the redeemed and sanctified community" may be offered to God by the great High Priest. The sacraments have social implications, the Church has social implications, only because the Church itself is a divine and supernatural society. "Ye as living stones are built up a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. . . . Ye are an elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, that ye may show forth the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light" (1 Pet. ii. 5, 9).

The Church has many functions *in* society, but it can never become a mere function *of* society, for it *is* a society—the Society of God, the life of the Holy Trinity communicated to men. Before the Church teaches, it lives; and before it teaches about society it lives as a society, as the supernatural and sacramental society that it is. The sacraments are not concerned in the first place with having implications for society at large; to suppose so would be to fall into another of those confusions of the order of nature and the order of grace to which human minds are so prone. The sacraments have implications for society at large which are startling and far-reaching, but they have these implications only because in the first place they are concerned with something else, namely the maintenance of the Church's life as the worshipping Body of Christ, the new creation, the family of God in which a man can live as a son in the house of his father, the restored human race. And it is in fact in simply being itself and living its own supernatural life that the Church performs its greatest service to the world.

Many of the services that the Church can perform for society are services that, at least in principle, society, once the way has been pointed out, can perform as well or better for itself. We have seen the state take over from the Church more and more of those functions which the Church originally performed when the state never thought of performing them—the teaching of the young, the care of the sick and the poor, and such like—and opinions will no doubt differ as to how far this transition is to be applauded. Be that as it may, the supreme service which the Church performs for society is one that society *cannot* perform for itself—the maintenance in the midst of society of the new human race in which all the mysteries of God are fulfilled. The world may misunderstand this or ignore it or resent it or even welcome it, but it cannot itself perform it.

Because Christ died for the whole world and commissioned his Church to preach the gospel to all the nations, the Church's sacramental life is the means by which not only the affairs of Christians but of all men are brought under the mercy and the grace of God. The sacrifice which the mass perpetuates was offered for the sins of the whole world as their full, perfect and sufficient sacrifice, oblation and satisfaction. The grace which God pours into the Church through the sacraments overflows the Church's visible boundaries and floods the whole of creation with its regenerative power. It brings under the eyes of God all human misery and suffering, it claims for God every act of human love, it pleads God's mercy for every act of human selfishness and hate, it claims all God's creation as his possession. To outward view the Church may appear to be merely a rather queer gathering of very miscellaneous men and women, inexplicably preoccupied with old-fashioned ceremonies, strangely excited about apparently ir-

relevant issues, and patently failing to live in accordance with the ideals of human life in which they profess to believe. But in its inner reality the Church is the re-created human race, the holy people of God, the divine community in which the Son of God patiently and tenderly draws men and women into his own perfect human nature and offers them to the Father as his members made one with him and clothed with his glory. Such is the Church of God, black with the sins of its members but comely with the beauty and holiness of its Head, and of this Church the sacraments are the very life.

There is one further point on which I must briefly touch and then I shall have done. One day sacraments will cease. The life of the Church and the sacraments, by which, even while we are in this mortal flesh, God gives us his very self and draws us into his being, is a gift of surpassing wonder exceeding anything that we could conceive or desire. And yet God has something more wonderful in store. If by his mercy we attain the end for which he has made us, we shall see him and enjoy him no longer under the veil of material appearances but in his own glory and splendour. "Now we see in a glass darkly but then face to face" (1 Cor. xiii. 12). "Now are we the children of God, but it doth not yet appear what we shall be. But we know that when he shall be manifested we shall be like unto him, for we shall see him as he is" (1 John iii. 2, 3). No one, I suppose, has ever sung the wonder and the glory of the greatest of the sacraments with such fervour as St Thomas Aquinas, and yet four out of his five great sacramental hymns end with the prayer that God will bring us at last to our home in heaven, where there are no longer any sacraments but in their place the beatific vision of the Holy Trinity.

*All praise and thanks to thee ascend
For evermore, blest One in three;
O grant us life that shall not end
In our true native land with thee.*

"Thine eyes shall see the King in his beauty; they shall behold the land that is very far off" (*Isa. xxxiii. 17*).

IV

G. B. BENTLEY

D^r Mascall has furnished me with my text. The sacraments (he said) "are the acts of Christ in his mystical Body the Church, and their purpose is the building-up of the Body of Christ by the ever closer and fuller incorporation of his members into him. It is the function of the sacraments to establish, to maintain and to extend, to vivify and to unify, the mystical Body of the whole Christ, made up of Head and members, in one organic and coherent pattern of life, to the glory of God the Father".

That is our common theme; but whereas my predecessor stated it in general terms, I shall try to work it out with reference to the seven sacraments taken severally. It will be obvious that in the time allotted I can only do this very sketchily; but I shall be content if I succeed in indicating at least something of that which each sacrament contributes to the building-up of the mystical Body.

First, it is characteristic of animate bodies that they *grow*; and the Body of Christ is no exception to the rule. True, its growth is not always perceptible. There are times when the Church militant—all that we can see of the Body—gets smaller, not bigger. Yet in fact the Body as a whole, invisible as well as visible, is growing steadily: it continually "maketh increase", continually moves towards the condition of being "full-grown"; towards "the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ". No doubt when St Paul used those terms he was thinking less of growth in size than of growth towards

spiritual maturity; but the notion of growth in size is there. Christ is all the time being "fulfilled", completed, by the expansion of his mystical Body; and he will not be complete until that Body has reached the limits of its ordained increase. The number of the elect must be filled up before the kingdom of God can have its final consummation.

Now the Body of Christ grows after a most unusual fashion. It grows, not by expanding from within, but by incorporation—by drawing into itself fresh cells from outside. Further—and this is more remarkable still—the cells that it thus incorporates into itself are diseased, infected with sin. Consequently some means is required by which these cells may be not only assimilated to the Body's organism, but also healed and purified. And that is precisely what the sacraments of initiation—baptism and confirmation—are: they are the means by which Christ grows; by which he incorporates fallen, and therefore sick, human beings into his Body, and at the same time both checks the malady of their souls and infuses into them his own life, which, because it has passed through and triumphed over death, is alike immortal and immune from the diseases flesh is heir to. Hence the familiar biblical language about initiates being born anew, of water and of the Spirit, or dying to sin and the world and being raised with Christ to newness of life.

There has been lately a deal of theological thinking and discussion about these sacraments of initiation and the proper conditions for their administration. Increasing appreciation of the essential unity of baptism and confirmation, and of the incompleteness of the former without the latter, has brought with it increasing uneasiness about the practice of granting infant baptism to all and sundry. For if baptism and confirmation together constitute one act of incorporation into the

Body of Christ, so that a person who goes through life baptized but unconfirmed is a sort of monstrosity, can it possibly be right to baptize infants where there is no assurance that they will be instructed in the Christian "way" and in due course receive the seal of the Spirit? That question calls for an answer. To reply, as some do, that the Church has no right to deny the gift of baptism to any infant which is brought to receive it is surely to treat the Church, not as a body which by initiation incorporates human beings into itself, but rather as a charitable society for the administration of sacraments to individuals; and that is a conception of the Church of which we need to beware. If the Body of Christ is to grow healthily, and not merely put on weight, it must use discrimination in this matter of incorporation.

The Body grows, then, by means of the sacraments of initiation. Now we must see how it *keeps itself healthy*. For although the blood of Christ which courses in its veins is immune from disease, yet the Body as a whole is not immune. Incorporation cures those who are incorporated; but there remains in them, and so in the Body, a certain weakness of constitution, which only time and the persistent use of the means to health can overcome. As we know by painful experience, recrudescence of the disease is all too common. Sin, even grave sin, after baptism—a phenomenon that greatly shocked the early Church—has had to be accepted as a fact to be reckoned with. There is plain need for therapeutic measures to keep the Body healthy; and these are provided in the sacraments of penance and of extreme unction.

Penance needs no comment; it is manifest for what it is—Christ's businesslike and effective way of dealing with outbreaks of the old disease. But unction calls for a word or two. Since it combines, as St James teaches us, the grace of forgive-

ness with the grace of bodily healing, it bears witness in a striking manner both to the mysterious interdependence of sin and sickness and to the unity of the human body and soul. Sacramental theology would, I believe, do well to pay more attention to it, especially in view of modern interest in the Church's "ministry of healing". Salutory as that interest is in some respects, it requires very careful guidance from theology if it is not to become eccentric.

Perhaps it is worth-while to remark, in passing, that there is no need to condemn, as many do, the use of the name "*extreme unction*", under the impression that "*extreme*" has some connexion with the phrase "*in extremis*". The sixteenth-century King's Book dealt faithfully with that misapprehension:

"Where it is called the extreme unction, that is to say the last unction, we must not so understand it, as though this sacrament might never be ministered but once, that is to say, in extreme peril of death, when men be without hope of life. . . . But the fathers of the Church did call it by the same name of extreme unction because it is the last in the respect of the other unctions which be ministered before in the other sacraments, of baptism, confirmation, and order, in which sacraments Christian men be also anointed."

It is true that in the Church of England, where these other anointings are not at present commonly used, the qualification "*extreme*" has lost most of its significance; but there is no reason to be frightened of it, as some people seem to be.

That was something of a digression. To return to our theme, we have seen that a body grows, and that it must be kept free from disease. We come now to another characteristic of all but the most rudimentary organisms: namely, that

they exhibit a recognizable structure, their parts and members differing from one another and fulfilling diverse functions. So it is with the Body of Christ, as St Paul explains both in *1 Corinthians* xii and in *Romans* xii: "Even as we have many members in one body, and all the members have not the same office: so we, who are many, are one body in Christ." The Church is not a homogeneous coalescence of identical units; it has a well-defined structure proper to it; and in the maintenance of this structure the sacraments play their part. Thus holy order preserves the differentiation between the bishop, who is the successor of the apostles, his dependent ministers, and the laity. Confirmation also is to be mentioned in this context, since it makes a layman, just as holy order makes a bishop, priest or deacon. And we may consider holy matrimony under the same head; for by this sacrament the natural ordering of human society, grounded in the differentiation of sex, is redeemed and taken up into the structure of the supernatural Body. There is much that one might say about this; for in recent years the Catholic theology of marriage has been greatly deepened and enriched; but it must suffice to note that the old text-book treatment of marriage as little more than a means to the procreation and education of children has given place to a more balanced view, whereby the union of man and woman in one flesh is seen to have meaning and value *in itself*, as the consolidation of Christian community. By matrimony members of Christ are made members one of another in a very special sense.

When I was writing this paper, I left the mass to the end for two reasons: first, because it is (to quote the King's Book once more) "the very consummation of all other sacraments"; secondly, because, I must confess, I was a little afraid of it. It is so many-sided that it defies summary treat-

ment. It is, no doubt, easy enough to point out—maintaining the analogy that we have used throughout—that a body cannot live, grow and develop on the right lines unless it is *nourished with the proper food*; and that the sacramental Body and Blood of Christ are the supernatural food needed to foster the life and growth of the mystical Body. That is perfectly true. But if we said that and no more, we should be treating the mass as if it were simply and solely the means of producing the consecrated elements for holy communion; and that is a half-truth which has been affirmed too often, with unhappy results. Holy communion must always be considered in the context of the eucharistic sacrifice.

I am going to suggest this approach, therefore. The mass is rightly called “the very consummation of all other sacraments” for at least two reasons: first, because the others are preparatory to it and lead up to it (a truth which is represented liturgically by the old continuous sequence at Easter of baptism, confirmation and eucharist, by the mass at ordination and at marriage, and by the communion that follows unction; and which is implicit in the conception of mass as setting the seal upon the reconciliation of penitents); but also because the mass is an act of the whole mystical Body in a sense in which the others are not. One must tread carefully here; for if all the sacraments are acts of Christ in his Body, they must all be acts of the whole Body. Nevertheless in the sacraments other than the mass we can distinguish specific members of the Body who are the ministers of the gifts from others who are recipients; the ministers represent the whole Body to certain members of it. Even in marriage, which is in a class by itself, the man and the woman may be regarded as playing the parts of minister and recipient alternately, when they give themselves either to other. But where the mass is

concerned (in spite of what some of the text-books say) it is surely misleading to speak of minister and recipients—to call the priest minister and the people recipients. That sort of conception comes of taking low mass as the norm; whereas in fact the norm—that in which we see the nature of the eucharist demonstrated most plainly—is not low mass, but pontifical high mass, where every order in the Church plays its appointed part according to its vocation and ministry. In the mass all are both active and passive; all give and all receive; all celebrate and all, ideally at any rate, communicate; and, as if to point the moral, it is laid down that the one person who *must* receive the sacrament is he whose office it is to say the eucharistic prayer by which the elements are consecrated. In the mass, therefore, the whole Body is minister, and active in all its parts, as well as receptive; and its reception of the heavenly food is the climax of its self-identification with the action.

Consequently the mass may aptly be described as the Body of Christ *altogether in action*, exercising itself in that for which primarily it exists, namely, the offering, in complete identification with its Head, of spiritual sacrifices. “Ye, as living stones, are built up a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.” The purpose of the incarnation, and of the incorporation of men into the human nature of Christ, is that a redeemed and re-created human race may be brought into Christ’s own relationship to the Father. The mass is the achievement, so far as this age is concerned, of that purpose; for in it the union of the members with the Head, and with one another, is consummated, and at that moment Christ offers himself, Head and members, to his Father, for his glory.

The mass, then, is the Body in action, fulfilling its supreme

function. Now when a body exercises itself in the function proper to it, it both makes use of all that has been done to build it up, keep it healthy and develop it rightly, and at the same time, by the very exercise, it is made more completely what it is meant to be. Thus, on the one hand, the activity of the mass draws into itself not only the other preparatory sacraments, but also the whole day-to-day life of the Body, so that the offering includes all that the Body has done in obedience to the divine will; and on the other hand, that same day-to-day life is raised to the supernatural plane—made Christian—by the offering; and the Body is enabled to grow up in all things into its Head, even Christ, and to shew forth the excellencies of God, to the praise of his glory.

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