

NETWORK

MAGAZINE

THE PARISH
of
ST. WILFRID
HARROGATE



December 2009

Dear Friends

There are debates, bewildering and strange, often going on in Church circles. Perhaps it's worth reflecting for a moment the situation which has given rise to the Vatican's new Apostolic Constitution. The proposals within appear to be offering an unusual accommodation, not just for Anglo-Catholics, but for a whole spectrum of "conservatives" in the Church of England.

In recent years, some unlikely alliances have indeed been formed between evangelical and catholic Anglicans, who share the common tradition of a distinctive, revealed faith in Jesus Christ. These alliances have come about owing to the increasingly high profile of the other tradition in Anglicanism, which is largely determined by contemporary factors external to the Church, such as agendas of social action.

The divisions of former times - between catholic and evangelical - are often now superseded by distinctions between orthodox and liberal. Furthermore, orthodox alliances are developing both within and across denominations. Many would see in such gathering movements - following a millennium of Christian divergence - an authentic ecumenism after the manner of the Church's ancient Councils.

To oversimplify vastly - Christians ultimately are defined either by the Gospel itself or by the Gospel's assumed implications in a given time and place. Obviously, there always should be a bit of both; healthy tensions between orthodox and liberal styles ought to be mutually fruit-bearing. Both traditions are valuable and complementary aspects to the faith.

Unfortunately, it seems certainly the case that sustained, directed and desperate attacks on those who hold the faith as revealed and distinctive - as opposed to relative and general - will in time foster a radical realignment of world Christianity. This gives us all a lot to think about. Many will be thinking about how - and if - to respond to the Apostolic Constitution.

In doing so, it would be important to remember that this document was actually aimed at the Church, neither of England nor in England, but at Anglicans elsewhere, who had already separated owing to doctrinal issues. As an Anglo-Catholic, who has always longed for the full reunion of these Provinces with the Holy See, I might suggest that these proposals do not quite offer that; but that is because they are intended for more than simply people like me.

150 years ago, Keble, Newman, and others, sought to revitalise the true concept of the Church as a divine society – the genuine community of the Risen Lord - challenging the status quo which viewed the Established Church as simply one of the “props” of the state. The Oxford Movement began the Church of England’s Catholic revival in earnest; has this Movement now come full circle and run its course? Many will be wondering: How can we reconcile the duties of our inheritance and home with the higher demands of the Church as authentic Apostolic community; its true sacramental life and means of everlasting salvation?

At the same time, one might wish to ask the paradoxical question: How effectively, then, does the RC Church today both celebrate and proclaim the Catholic faith in England? For Anglo-Catholics, would membership of the proposed Ordinariate either strengthen or reduce our ability to do this? Ultimately, for orthodox Christians in our historic Communion, what are all the choices and responsibilities before us in the years ahead?

There are few answers here; but I hope we know the right sorts of questions. We live, as they say, in interesting times. In all of the above, however, there is nothing to be afraid of. Our Lord Jesus Christ has already overcome all things. He is the same yesterday, today and forever. Jesus simply asks us to be faithful to him. May God bless all who seek to follow him.

Fr John

THE PARISH CHURCH OF SAINT WILFRID, HARROGATE

Intentions List & Rota for January 2010

1.	Friday	Mary, Mother of God	Shrine OLW	W
2.	Saturday	SS Basil & Gregory	Jeffrey Carbutt RIP	W
3.	Sunday	The Epiphany of the Lord	Our Parish	W
4.	Monday		Citizens' Advice Bureaux	W
5.	Tuesday		Parish Schools	W
6.	Wednesday		Healing	W
7.	Thursday		Our CWs & Sidesmen	W
8.	Friday		The Team Rector Applications Process	W
9.	Saturday		Prisoners & Refugees	W
10.	Sunday	The Baptism of the Lord	Our Parish	W
11.	Monday		Medical Professionals	G
12.	Tuesday	S Aelred of Rievaulx	Monastic Vocations	W
13.	Wednesday	S Hilary	Our Bishops	W
14.	Thursday		SSJE	G
15.	Friday	<i>of the Holy Cross</i>	SSC	G
16.	Saturday	<i>of Our Lady</i>	Our Sacristans & Vergers	W
17.	Sunday	Epiphany 2	Our Parish	G
18.	Monday		Military Chaplains	G
19.	Tuesday		Fishing Industry	G
20.	Wednesday		Public Sector Workers	G
21.	Thursday	S Agnes	Victims of Child Abuse	R
22.	Friday	S Vincent, Proto-Martyr of Spain	Our Witness to Jesus	R
23.	Saturday	<i>of Our Lady</i>	Those to be Married	W
24.	Sunday	Epiphany 3	Our Parish	G
25.	Monday	The Conversion of S Paul	Christian Unity	W
26.	Tuesday	SS Timothy & Titus	Fr Martin Warner	W
27.	Wednesday	S Angela Merici	Orphan Children	W
28.	Thursday	S Thomas Aquinas	Theologians & Preachers	W
29.	Friday		Ministerial Vocations	G
30.	Saturday	<i>Charles Stuart, King & Martyr</i>	Francis, Duke of Bavaria	R
31.	Sunday	The Presentation of the Lord	Our Parish	W

Please take this list away with you for your diary and your prayers