

NUMBER 453

LADY DAY 2016

QUARTERLY REVIEW OF THE
COMMUNITY OF THE RESURRECTION



CR Review



A Birds Eye View

I am on the cusp of my next residency. I will be working for a community charity in Bradford which is based in a church in West Bowling, one of the poorest wards in the country, with one of the highest unemployment and poverty levels in the UK. This residency will be a very different experience to my wonderful time at CR. Silence, stillness, reflection will have to be grabbed. I will be staying in the vicarage where the phone rings 24/7 and new problems arrive at the doorstep by the day, sometimes the hour. Among those with whom I will be working are women who have no literacy, have never worked and whose children are never in school; those who have escaped appalling violence

in their home countries; those who are homeless, who have been and still are addicted to drugs; those with mental health issues; who have been abused; who steal to make ends meet. And yet I know I will have a thoroughly joyful time. These after all are the people Jesus came to seek and to save. Not the religiously smug and monetarily wealthy, but the poor, the oppressed, the captives - to quote Isaiah 61.

For my residency we are focusing on the Jesus's story of the Mustard Tree, which starts as a tiny seed but eventually grows to be such a big plant that the birds come from far and wide to nest in its branches. In the same way SHINE and the church have created a welcoming place of faith where anyone can come and feel safe. Over my 8 weeks there we will be making a flock of birds, a mustard tree mosaic and wooden birds to go in the trees outside. I will also invite everyone to be part of The Swallow Project, which is a Yorkshire wide project I am delivering through Christian Aid and Bradford City of Sanctuary. Each participant can bring a square of fabric, maybe something of significance, and print a swallow onto it. These plus all the other squares collected from across the region will be made into a huge quilt which will go on show in June. Unlike other migratory birds, swallows travel with no preparation, feeding and resting along the way as and when they can. For this reason, they have a higher death rate too. They travel between Western Europe and Africa. In the past, sailors had a swallow tattoo to represent a journey of over 1000 nautical miles at sea, which in those days was a dangerous and uncertain voyage: the parallels with the current refugee crisis are obvious.

I will also be making a piece called Murmur. We will make Starlings prints which will be displayed like a mobile alongside a video piece depicting the murmurations of Starlings. In winter starlings collect together in their thousands and create astonishing flight patterns known as 'murmurations'. The most beautiful murmurations happen when they are being hunted by predators such as falcons. Starlings are seen traditionally as common bird, the 'bovver boy' of the bird world, a bit rough round the edges and with a tendency to bully. In the same way, I think the people of West Bowling are rather like starlings: a little rough round the edges, often hunted or predated upon by those with more power, but beautiful especially when they come together to create community. Like a murmur, what is happening in their church and at SHINE is beginning to whisper another story to the city and the world.

Please email me at shaeroncr@virignmedia.com or Katherine Hogg at leeds@christian-aid.org if you would like to know more about the Swallow Project.

For more about SHINE visit <http://shinewestbowling.org.uk/>

CR

Lady Day 2016

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The Consumerist Devil

I have never studied economics; I have never worked in the market place. What I know is based simply on light reading of newspapers, a few articles and some conversations. So what follows will be naïve, simplistic and inadequate. But I believe it poses questions that need to be asked and demands that answers begin to be found.

1. The Problem.

- i. In *Laudato Si'* Pope Francis identifies consumerism as one of the main culprits in the destruction of this world, and of its people. He says: “A minority believes it has the right to consume in a way which can never be universalised since the planet could not even contain the waste products of such consumption.” (n.50) All modern economics assumes that growth is the ultimate good. Growth means more money, more jobs, more things to buy and sell. The trouble is that growth of one sector damages another. Eating more meat in America means large amounts of land in Brazil gets turned into cattle pastures depriving poor people of land on which to grow crops. Even if growth could be universalised the world cannot sustain it. In 10 years, 50 years or 500 years the resources would dry up and then humanity would die. Endless economic growth cannot be sustained. The present levels of economic growth are already destroying the world and pushing millions of poor people into greater poverty. How can we responsibly aim for more?
- ii. Yet if we wind back consumerism and aim for negative growth we will get economic decline; businesses will grow smaller, or shut. Jobs will be lost. International trade will be greatly reduced. Poverty will spread. One sees this in Zimbabwe where, for other reasons, the economy is in decline and the results for the people are not good. Is the alternative to a world destroyed by consumerism one where everyone lives in poverty? It is not easy to present this as Good News for the poor.

2. The Answer.

- i. I do not have the answer; no one does yet. But that is not a reason for not looking for one. If consumerism as it stands is going to destroy the world it has to be changed. What are the changes?
- ii. First we have to break the problem down. Consumerism is actually a multiplicity of different factors. It feeds on people’s need to have more and

more. So society and its advertisers teach people to want more and more. Can people be taught to want less? If they could they will be satisfied with fewer jobs, lower salaries and less choice. Clever advertising teaches people to desire things that they never wanted before. Could clever advertising get people wanting a new kind of life with less ‘stuff’ and more meaning?

- iii. Wars are bad things and not to be encouraged, yet most people who have lived through war have spoken of the community spirit, the mutual support, the sense of sharing which keeps people going and makes sure that all do actually have what they need. Why do we need a war to discover this quality of human living? Consumerism destroys communities both in UK and in poor parts of the world. Rewinding consumerism may mean we rediscover community because we have to. This is the Christian message. People matter more than things. It is not the latest lap top, iPhone or designer clothes which give happiness. It is people we like and who like us. And despite what advertising tells us, such relationships cannot be bought.

3. What does the Gospel tell us?

The kingdom of God is as if a man should scatter seed upon the ground, and should sleep and rise night and day, and the seed should sprout and grow, he knows not how. The earth produces of itself, first the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear.

We talk of nature as if it were a person, or a god controlling things. It is not. It is a complex range of forces, instincts, habits and interlocking processes. But we Christians (and other people of faith) believe God is there in it, behind it or over it. God did not create the world as a functioning machine and then leave it to keep ticking. He is involved in it all the time. If he ceased to pay attention to it for a moment it would cease to exist. So as we embark on the process of saving the earth we have God on our side. That is hugely encouraging. Pope Francis reminds us that human beings have amazing skills, knowledge and technology. We have used these wrongly in the past. Can we use them now to serve the purpose for which God gave them: to be real stewards of his creation?

And he said, “With what can we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable shall we use for it? It is like a grain of mustard seed, which, when sown upon the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth; yet when it is sown it grows up and becomes the greatest of all shrubs, and puts forth large branches, so that the birds of the air can make nests in its shade.”

It is so easy to get overwhelmed by the size of the problem, or the sheer range of problems. Yet the Kingdom of God never started big. Christianity started with a handful of men and women in a small, poor country no one knew about. Within a few hundred years it had taken over Europe and North Africa. Later

it spread over most of the world. Every one of us has a contribution to make to change the way we as a people think about our world. Some insights will seem incredibly small and insignificant but, like the mustard seed, they will grow. None of us will see the completed article, but in 20 years we may be surprised by the change.

Life is more than food, and the body more than clothing. (Lk 12:23) Add new furniture, overseas holidays, new laptop and you get the picture. If we as Christians cannot find true meaning to life without these ‘things’, what do we have to tell the world? Perhaps we should “*seek first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness*”. We will find then we do not need to destroy the world in order to live a full life!

Nicolas Stebbing CR

Well ...

“**N**o. I’m not staying there; it might not be clean. I’ll stay in the Travelodge,” I opined as my vicar enquired as to the arrangements for the next in a steady stream of ‘vocations conference’ events I had fixed up to go to. It was then the autumn of 2009, and I had my heart set on becoming a parochial priest with a stipend and swathes of vision for pastoral ministry between a couple or three churches whose PCCs I would chair and negotiate with tactful aplomb. Well...

In theory, I had been given the green light for a Bishop’s Advisory Panel at the start of that year, though it all seemed very slow going. I had talked with the Diocesan Director of Ordinands who was not keen on the parish ministry proposition, but was encouraging me to look at communities, “not to put all your eggs ...”. But I had found expression within myself of a desire for sacramental priesthood, was able to articulate this sense of call to a bishop convinced enough to agree to sponsor me. Eventually I would be recommended for, and begin, training. Well....

In December of ’09, keen to immerse myself in everything ‘vocation’, I found myself entering the new refectory of the College of the Resurrection. This was a conference on ‘Vocations to Ordained Ministry’ (and yes, I had indeed stayed in the Travelodge the previous night!). The Archdeacon of Canterbury preached the sermon, and Archbishop Desmond Tutu laid a foundation stone for the Community’s new monastery. My abiding memory of that Saturday, however, was being captivated on sight by a sense of order and tradition embodied in the

be-cassocked ordinands I encountered upon arrival. It was ... just *me*. This is where I am coming to train, I told myself. Well...

Come back I have, albeit not under the auspices of the college and an Advisory Panel's 'recommendation for training.' I felt for and wanted a priestly ministry, and I believe God wants that of me too, although it became clear it was not going to be how I had envisaged it. Sound familiar? I was spending time on retreats, in this place, in this church, with these monks and God was doing something. I came back and I came back, and well...

The community thing simmered away until it reached a point of clear-sightedness. At last I recognised that there was a definite call to live this thing out ... community had overtaken me, was choosing me. I think I first realised this when, after thanking the novice guardian of the Society of Saint Francis for their hospitable care during an enquiry visit there, I promptly told him, "I think I'll go back to Mirfield." He seemed unsurprised.

The coming and going has happened over a steady period of four or five years. I felt disingenuous at first. "I'm taking advantage of good nature; I can't keep this to-ing and fro-ing up." Yet it seemed the right course of action; it seemed expected. I was told I was welcome and not to bother about how it seemed. I was being encouraged to let God do God's stuff, I suppose.

Eventually it 'seemed' right to transfer my spiritual direction to CR. Fr. Simon CR was happy to act as a spiritual director for me. It felt all very natural and fluid. By the time Easter Day 2015 came around, I felt it was a door waiting for me to push. So, I think, did others! "Why don't you just go?" was the question of a long-standing friend; a work-colleague told me, "It's obvious you want to live there!" I told myself that I could go back to schools work or read for a PhD if it didn't work out ... I could do anything. *God* asked different questions, What if it *does* work out? What if it *is* a success? Well...

Here I am five months in, and three and a half weeks after having been made a novice. Doing well with some things, with many things; finding others awkward and mystifying. Broadly no different from if I had carried on working in a school or pursued higher qualifications. Except that God asked this of me, and I chose to say 'yes'. I find myself needing to trust him more and more every minute of every day in order to "go in the paths of [his] commandments". (Ps. 119. 35) Except for the seventeen brothers I have inherited who help me because they have been there before and are in the boat with me. And apart from the crowning love of the personal Jesus who resurrects my frail efforts every day by his ceaseless power to beautify them and bring forth my best out of nothing. Apart from that, it is just life a day at a time. It is life lived by grace; it is the life that really is life. And I am so glad to be here giving it a go.

Marc Voase NovCR



Celebrating Marc becoming a Novice, 7th February 2016

Prodigal Son

“I will get up and go to my father and say to him, Father I have sinned against heaven and in your sight and am no longer worthy to be called your son. Treat me as one of your hired servants”. It is a fine little speech. It is deeply touching. It seems to show penitence, humility and a willingness to make amends but it is really quite bogus. It is the kind of speech you find in a nineteenth century novel. No Son ever spoke to his Father like that if he really meant what he was saying.

Is he sorry about the way he hurt his Father by walking out as he did? Is he sorry about leaving his Brother to do all the farm work? Is he sorry about wasting half the family fortune? Is he sorry about the sins he committed while wasting his money with prostitutes and drunkards in the town? There is no sign of it. He seems to have forgotten the specific things he has done wrong, the people he has hurt, the harm he has done to himself. In fact, it is only himself he is interested in. The story tells us he has only come to this radical point of change because he could not bear to go on living on pig food. He is not concerned about how his Father might be feeling. He just wants to get some decent food and a place to sleep. He was always a self-centred young man and hardship has not changed that.

Also, he has never understood his Father. He has not noticed how much his Father loves him. Or, if he has, he assumes it is because he is such a lovable person and he has used his Father's love to get what he wants, like the half share in the family estate. Does he really think his Father will treat him as a hired servant? If he does, he has seriously misunderstood his father. If he does not, he is cynically using him, trying to impress him with a speech he does not mean so that once again he will get what he wants.

We know what happens. His Father doesn't wait to hear his carefully prepared speech of penitence. He rushes out and flings his arms around him. When he finally gets his chance to make his speech the Father ignores it and sends for a ring, the best robe and a great feast. I wonder if he realises then just how much his Father loves him. One would like to think so but, human nature being what it is, I fear he has not. Maybe there is just a little crack in his self-centredness. Maybe he recognises just a little what being loved can mean. Maybe a process has started which will lead him away from that focus on himself and begin to acknowledge his father's love. If he does, he may finally realise just how much his Father was hurt by his departure and why. Maybe he himself will start to love.

You may think I am being hard on the young man. He may have had better motives than I give him, but in looking at this parable we must be clear about what we are looking at. It is not a parable about a young man's repentance. It is a story of a Father's love. The love of this Father cannot be bought. It is simply there. You do not need to ask for it, plead for it, wheedle it out of him or anything like that. It is there in its fullness from the moment you appear. It is not just love, if there can be such a thing as 'just love'. It is love which is also mercy and is therefore also forgiveness. It is, of course, the love of God. Unlike human love, that can never be finite; it can never have boundaries. There are no limits. Most often we approach God with a sense that we have to earn his love, get it in small bits and pieces. In fact the problem we have is how to receive it, or even a tiny part of the great love which is offered. One way we can do that is to believe in his forgiveness.

This story has an obvious significance in the middle of Lent. Easter is a time when most of us will be going to confession. Perhaps we are nervous of that, wondering if we can dare say the things we know we should say. Or perhaps we are wondering how we can make a really good confession. We need God's forgiveness and grace. Can we really make our confession good enough to get it? Would it be better to put it off until we have more time, time for a retreat perhaps, time for more reflection, time to get it right? Perhaps out of respect for God and for this truly wonderful sacrament we should wait until we can do it really well. That, I am afraid, would be pride. We do not want to offer a poor quality, incomplete confession to God. So we offer nothing at all.

For all my criticism of this young man there are two things he got absolutely right. He swallowed his pride: he decided to go home and throw himself on his Father's mercy. That is the first thing and probably the hardest. True, he was starving. True, he was living with pigs but many people would rather die than swallow their pride. He had more sense than they. The second thing was that he simply went; he went home. His penitence may have been bogus; he may have misunderstood most of what his Father was about but he went home and that was enough to gain him the complete and utter forgiveness which only that Father could give.

One of the mistakes we make in our Christian life is to try and see things always in a neatly lineal way; a pattern of cause and effect. We feel sorry for our sin; we know we have damaged our relationship with God; we prepare carefully for confession. We make our confession, receive absolution and go on our way rejoicing. Of course, it often does happen like that but sometimes it gets all muddled up. We know we must go to confession but we do not really want to. That probably means we are not at this point loving God, or knowing God enough to feel the horrible nature of our sin; we are sorry for our sins because we have to confess things we really wish we did not have to say, not because they are offensive to God. Perhaps that is the point we decide not to go; it is obviously better to wait until we have got things into better perspective. Or else we go because it is Easter and we know we must. Duty drives us forward, not love, or sorrow or contrition. It is a most inadequate way of going to this meeting place with Christ and receiving from him the limitless forgiveness of God. So we stumble through our confession, leaving things out, expressing ourselves badly, feeling only a kind of grubbiness and inadequacy and afterwards, after the absolution, we suddenly realise it has worked. Now that our sins have been forgiven we can see God as he is; we can see his love, know his mercy, feel his compassion. Now we know real sorrow and contrition; now we long not to sin again because the message has finally got through to us. God in a sense really does not mind what we have done, or how we express it, or what we say. He simply wants us to come home.

Rabbi Lionel Blue tells a story of how, when he was studying for the Rabbinate, he got sick of it all, ran away and ended up in a sleazy part of Amsterdam, where, some weeks later his tutor found him. Lionel was determined to show this Rabbi the awful truth about himself, so he took him round all the sleaziest dives he had found in that city. At the end of a long evening they came home and sat down and the rabbi began to laugh and laugh. "Lionel," he said; "Judaism is not a prison. It's a home." So the prodigal son came home. That was enough for him to gain entry to his Father's heart. It is enough for us to do the same.

Nicolas Stebbing CR

When we were still far off



When I began my auction campaign in October 2010 one of the hardest things I faced was trying to get my Brethren to take it seriously or even to show an interest. The only time anyone became really animated was if I suggested that we sell something that they really loved. Otherwise their attitude was one of frenzied apathy. The Superior would put on a hunted look whenever I approached to tell him I had received WWI medals or the shrunken head of some cannibal tribe. Somehow no-one, except Jacob my novice assistant, shared my enthusiasms – that is until the painting arrived.

The Revd Mother of a convent in the south of England donated what became one of our star items – a landscape by Yorkshire artist Simon Palmer. It took a long time for it to arrive at Mirfield because it proved too big for each of the cars that Fr Peter took to collect it. Fortunately the College needed to hire a van to collect an altar from Germany and he was able to collect the picture on the return journey.

It arrived during the Community retreat when everyone was in silence. With some help I got it into the bookshop and removed the bubble wrap. What I looked on entered into my soul. For some urgent reason the Superior broke the retreat silence and called me into his office. When we had finished our conversation I said to him, “Come and see the painting”. He followed me and stood in silence before it gazing at it. Eventually he whispered “Could we not keep it?” And that was the effect that it had on the rest of the Community, myself included. I found it heart-achingly beautiful and sometimes stood in front of it almost feeling as if I had gone into it. It arrived in July and the auction was in October so rather than put it in the store with the other auction items I arranged to have it hung on the chimney wall in the Community’s entrance hall. This was good because it allowed ourselves and our guests to enjoy its beauty for four months. This was bad because it increased the desire among brethren that we might keep it for the Community’s use. I had to be very firm. The picture was a donation for the auction and for the appeal and to keep it would be the equivalent of taking a cash donation for the building fund and buying armchairs for the brethren.

So what was it, this painting that had such an effect on all who looked on it? Photographs do not do it justice. This was a watercolour but in its frame it was bigger than me – about 5’6”X 4’6”. At first sight the artist has painted a rather bleak woodland scene through which a group of women in dull clothing snake in single file along a path which leads away from a broken gateway. To the right of the path on the outside of the wood there are fields bathed in sunshine and glowing with golden corn. On a hilltop stands a sturdy church building.

At first sight it looks like a very accomplished picture of a woodland scene – quite lovely but that is all. But it is not all for, as you look closer, you can see the artist’s talent for being able to turn the ordinary into something supernatural. When we look at his trees with their long graceful trunks we notice how as they bend towards each other and meet at the top they form an arch resembling the gothic east window of a church.

The women too. They might be convent schoolgirls or orphanage children or they may be nuns, for their common clothing and the line they move in suggest organisation. There is a fence with a line of posts dividing the woodland from the field and on these posts there are little rectangular cards. Examination of the card closest to us reveals the Roman numeral iv recalling the Stations of the Cross where the fourth Station is ‘Jesus meets his mother’. All of this falls into place when I remind you that this picture not only hung in a convent but

was commissioned for it by the mother of the artist. This is a painting about relationships and meetings. When we received it the picture had slipped in its mounting and it was only when I had it remounted that I was able to read the title which the artist had written in the margin: 'When we were yet far off...'

Those of you familiar with the old Alternative Service Book may remember these words as part of the post communion prayer:

Father of all, we give you thanks and praise, that when we were still far off you met us in your Son and brought us home. Dying and living, he declared your love, gave us grace, and opened the gate of glory. May we who share Christ's body live his risen life; we who drink his cup bring life to others; we whom the Spirit lights give light to the world. Keep us firm in the hope you have set before us, so we and all your children shall be free, and the whole earth live to praise your name; through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Here indeed is the richness of the Gospel of the incarnation.

In this prayer we are reminded that we are God's child and that he loves us and just as the father in the parable sees his son far off and runs to meet him so our Father comes to meet us. But left to ourselves we were never going to make the prodigal's journey. Something had to happen first and that something was the Incarnation. Jesus comes to us and becomes like us so that humanity has the strength to say, "I want to go home". Christ brings us into a human relationship with God so that we can call him Our Father.

Jesus did not come to found a religion; he came to bring us into relationship – relationship with God, with the world and with each other. Throughout his ministry we find him forming relationships, and not just for the purpose of teaching or making disciples but warm, loving, intimate relationships for their own sake. So in the Passion story we find him at Bethany, the last homely house before he sets out on the way to crucifixion. He is relaxed and happy. Here we have a picture which speaks more boldly than any parable *the kingdom of heaven is like this*. The kingdom of heaven is like people being in love, laughing and enjoying each other's company round a dinner table. It is perhaps because of this intimacy, this personal relationship that Mary has the courage to perform a task that becomes one of the great signs that the Kingdom of Heaven has drawn near.

Perhaps it was a family treasure stored away, waiting for the right occasion. At any rate Mary takes down the precious box and pours its soothing and sweet smelling contents over Jesus' feet. At one level, and at that moment perhaps the



most important level, this is an act of love, of friendship of hospitality. Mary welcomes Jesus, tired after his journeys and about to set out on the long Journey to Jerusalem. She bathes those beautiful feet with soothing sweet smelling ointment. But on another level and seen from the perspective of post-Resurrection disciples, this is preparation for the passion and it is acknowledging the authority of Christ the King – ‘thou hast anointed me with oil and my cup runneth over’.

Soon Christ will kneel in the Garden, soon he will ask ‘that this cup pass’, soon he will be crowned with thorns, soon he will be enthroned on the cross, king of the Jews, he will enter paradise, harrow hell and rise from the dead. Mary could not know the significance of breaking the seal on that little flask any more than you or I could know the significance of that little sign at baptism when water was poured and a cross was made on our forehead. I will close with the words of my late brother Samuel as he began his last journey. The vicar told me that when he came to anoint Samuel as he was about to make the sign of the cross on him Samuel said, “Sixty-seven years ago they put that sign on my forehead. I’ve spent most of the intervening years trying to erase it but now I think it is there to stay.”

When we were still far off...

John Gribben CR

Etched and engraved screens, Reconciliation Chapel Mirfield

(Installed 25th September 2015)

The new Reconciliation Chapel has been glazed to create an intimate and soundproofed space for confessions, prayer and one-to-one or small-group counselling. And the engraving on the screen shows the central place of reconciliation in the story of salvation.

Mary Magdalene

In the *Western* Church Mary Magdalene is a composite figure bringing together various Marys, the woman who anoints Christ's feet, and so on. For the *Eastern* Church she is the Myrrh-bearer, chosen above all others to be the first to encounter the Risen Lord and bear the news to the other disciples. The two screens depict these two different identities of Mary Magdalene.

The scene by the church's entrance depicts three stages in the process of Mary Magdalene's transformation. It sets the stage for the work of encounter and transformation taking place within the Chapel. The three panels are a triptych combining three incidents to suggest a process of acceptance, staying-with pain and resurrection to new life.

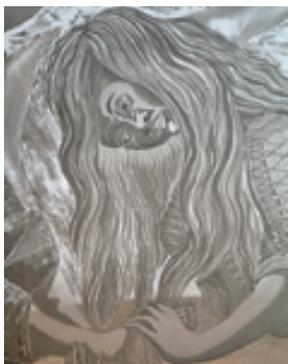
In the left-hand panel Mary washes and anoints Christ's feet his feet. This is the tender moment not only of intimate homage but also of acceptance (in the face of criticism) and represents our baptism and reception into the Church.

The *central* panel is the door to the chapel and depicts Mary grieving at the sealed mouth of the tomb. She waits on Easter Saturday overlooked by the soldiers, evoking our calling to identify with those who grieve or are in torment. She also evokes Keats' sense of 'negative capability': the importance of staying with the discomfort of uncertainty, fear and the unresolved, because it is in that place that we reach the borders of what we are and find what we could become. She weeps at the liminal threshold of transformation where there are no easy answers or quick fixes but again she offers us a model of faith and hope.

The *third* panel is the more familiar Easter Sunday scene in the garden - the instant of recognition, when the unknown becomes the face of the beloved, and all comes back into focus. I have always liked the element of the resurrected Christ being busy gardening, sowing and tending as the first things he is concerned with. The work of a gardener speaks of order, fruitfulness and the seasons' cyclical change.



The West Screen



The screen in the Resurrection Chapel to the left shows Mary Magdalene on her way to the tomb with the Myrrh. The container may, for the sharp-eyed viewer, be familiar from the Deposition painting in the opposite arch. Mary has taken off her shoes and walks into a second garden where two old apple trees are in fruit. In one she encounters a pair of angels who indicate that she keep on



The North Screen





towards the tomb. The location of the screen means they point to the Resurrection altar/tomb at the east end of the church.

Within the Reconciliation Chapel the illusion of a deep space is created in the drawing of a formal arcaded garden with a fountain, seen against the pillars of the arch-support. From the Resurrection Chapel only the figures of the angels and Mary are clearly visible.

Mark Cazalet



Tariro Kids

It would be really nice if young people worked hard always and gave no trouble! That was one of my thoughts during the past few weeks in Zimbabwe, but life is not as simple as that. So we began with problems: I had only just arrived at one centre when we heard that one of our boys had been taken off to the police station accused of a crime. We rushed down there and found him already released along with some friends. It turned out not to be as serious as feared and with some persuasion the school co-operated in helping us sort out his life.

Then the O level results came out and two of our young people failed almost every subject. It was not entirely surprising to us but devastating for them. They are good youngsters and did the best they could in difficult times. They have learned a lot despite their failures and we will now try and find them something else to do.

Moving up a bit there was Gift and Lucky, pictured here with Addreck:

Both these lads we almost despaired of in primary school; they seemed to have no interest in anything but playing football. But slowly they have woken up. They did well enough (just!) to go on to secondary school. Both have troubled backgrounds but they have reached an age when they can begin to talk about them. When I got Addreck to talk with Lucky to find out why he so often looked so miserable he said, "Because I'm hungry." This is going to be a hungry year with a catastrophic failure of crops.



We can feed our own youngsters. We are going to try and feed a lot more. We also need to work harder on supporting the boys in their studies with books, teaching and encouragement. Addreck and his brother Walter are going to help us with that in return for the help we give them.

Some of our visits were sheer delight: Rejoice, Munashe and Tinotenda have got into St Matthias Tsonzo, an Anglican school in the Eastern districts, and are thrilled to be there. Boarding school takes them away from the chores and trials of home and they can concentrate on their studies and their sport.

Then Memory, from the desperately poor area of Shurugwi, did well enough to get into Daramombe School. She met us with such a big



You can help them, you know. Schooling is expensive, especially boarding schools which our hard working kids really deserve and need. It costs about £400 to keep one of them there for a term and we have 11 in boarding schools alone. Can you help us to support them?

smile on her face I did not have to ask if she was happy.

Behind all this the troubles of the country rumble on. In our face was the worst drought the country has had since records were kept. Somehow they need to find more than a million tons of grain to feed the people. The economy goes on declining as ZANU-PF politicians concentrate their efforts on looting it while they can. Joyce Mujuru has founded a new party which may finally displace ZANU-PF when Mugabe dies, though probably not before. No one really knows what will happen next but we pray for good. And we hope that, by the time these kids are ready to leave school, there will be an exciting world for them to move into.

Nicolas Stebbing CR

Companions CR

Dear Friends and Companions,
It is at this time of the year that we are called to take stock of our keeping of the Christian precepts. Are we being true to Christ? How do we love our neighbour? Is our conscience troubling us? The Christian life should not be one that is guilt-ridden or gloomy and it is less likely to be so if we joyfully play our part as disciples of the Risen Lord. As Companions of the Community of the Resurrection we consider the Rule that we have chosen to follow and at this time of the year we send in our cards signifying that we want to remain within this fellowship.

It is a moving moment when the cards of Companions are placed on the altar. Please remember that the Rule is not a set of regulations to be checked and ticked off. It is a sign of our desire to love God and to serve his world and we do that to the best of our ability. Nobody is thrown out of the Companions for being unable to keep all of the Rule. If age, infirmity or circumstance means that you have to limit your obligations don't feel that you have ceased to be a Companion – go on praying for us and we will go on praying for you.

I want to pay tribute to Linda and Denise in the CCR office without whom I would be quite lost. Many of you are more familiar with their correspondence than with mine. For the past few weeks Linda has been ill and for a while in hospital. In her usual cheerful way she has made light of it and reports that she is ready to start back. I want to say a big thank you on your behalf for all that she has done for CR as a Companion since 1963 and to wish her the best of health in the future.

There is one significant occasion to be celebrated. Edith Pearce, a Companion from Lanchester will be 100 years old on 28th March so by the time this is published we wish her well for her second century.

Also by the time that you read this Easter Day will have passed and even the Auction will be over. What will I do with my time?

Alleluia, Ta an Tiarna Aiseiri!

John Gribben CR

New Companions:

Margaret Warner

RIP:

Otto Fisher



SEEKING GOD IN WORSHIP AND PRAYER

10.30am 'Our Common Home' – A Talk considering *Laudato Si'*

12 noon Festival Mass – Preacher: Nicolas Stebbing CR

Afternoon Activities:

Stations of Salvation Pilgrimage
Talk by Simon Holden CR:
'Relationships and reconciliation'
Prayer before the Blessed Sacrament
Confessions
Prayer of Healing and Anointing
Book Stall and Plant Stall
Treasure Hunt for young and old
Benediction

5.00pm Solemn Evensong

Refreshments available throughout the day



CR 9th JULY 2016 **FESTIVAL DAY**

**Let us know if you are coming! Parish groups especially welcome.
Pre-booked cooked lunches available - help us to be able to cater
on the day by booking through the website:**

<http://www.mirfieldcommunity.org.uk/festival2016>

or contact the Festival Organiser directly:

email: enquiries@mirfield.org.uk tel: 01924 483346

CR Companions' and Friends' Southern Regional Festival

**Saturday 17th September 2016, 10am to 3-30pm
at Southwark Cathedral
with the Rev'd. Iain McKillop, Priest and Artist**

TRUSTING THE UNSEEN

Using our creative imagination to develop our relationship with God



**1st Lecture: 'GOD'S IMAGERY':
'The Invisible Reveals Himself Through Metaphors'**

**EUCCHARIST in the Cathedral at Noon,
Celebrant and Preacher: the Rev'd. Canon Michael Rawson**

**2nd Lecture: 'SACRED IMAGES':
'Opening Our Eyes, Minds, Souls and Hearts'**

Charge £20, including a £10 non-refundable deposit. For further details and to book your place please contact: Vanessa Dixon, Secretary, CR Companions' London Group:

vanessa.m.dixon@btinternet.com or telephone 01689 851767

All are welcome!

Friday July 8th
Joint Study Day Companions CR and Mirfield Centre

~ Faith in Church Music ~

10.00am to 3.30pm
includes lunch

For Bookings contact:
Beth Harper at the Mirfield Centre:
bharper@mirfield.org.uk 01924 481920

Holy Week 2015. Photos: Robert Hammond



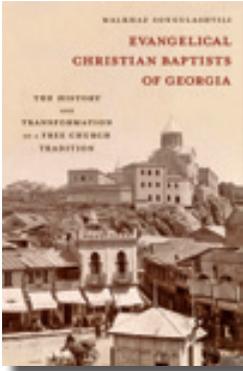
Visit to the former Hostel of the Resurrection, Leeds

21st January 2016



Review Article

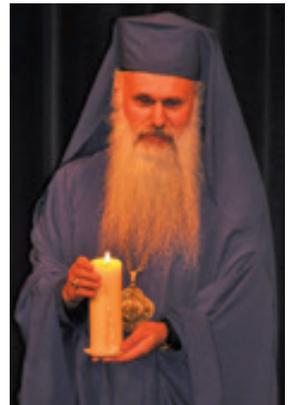
Evangelical Christian Baptists of Georgia



Both Mirfield and the former Diocese of Wakefield have strong links with my friend Bishop Malkhaz Songulashvili which gives this book a strong interest to West Yorkshire church people and readers of the *Mirfield Quarterly*. In the past two decades, Bishop Malkhaz has had an extraordinary impact upon the shape and missiological effectiveness of the Evangelical Baptist Church of Georgia. The tradition of that church, which owes as much to the local Orthodox tradition as it does to western Reformed Christianity, now has very close resonances to the Anglican tradition; indeed there

have already been conversations to explore whether some form of ecclesial unity might be achieved within the life of the two contemporary churches. Both the power of +Malkhaz's personality and the creativity of his intellect could lead the cynic to see Georgian Baptist polity as simply the creature of their most talented contemporary apostle. This history of the Georgian Baptist tradition, however, by +Malkhaz himself, makes it abundantly clear how superficial such a judgement would be.

The book begins with a moving autobiographical preface which acts as an apologetic for what follows, which is but a mildly edited version of a doctoral thesis recently awarded a D.Phil by the University of Oxford. Following this preface, the book broadens out immediately into an analytical history of Georgian Protestantism and notably the Georgian Baptist tradition which can only loosely be categorised as 'Protestant'; it is Protestant inasmuch as it has a prophetic base which counters the Caesaro-Byzantine shape of much Chalcedonian Orthodoxy, including that of Georgian-Orthodoxy itself. The five chapters which precede the final conclusion start with a remarkably concise yet also compelling history of the Baptist tradition. First this is set within the radical sector of the English Reformation and then as that tradition was exported to mainland Europe, notably in Germany, and through that process across into Russia from whence came the roots of Georgian Baptist polity, albeit in a form now radically revised. The exiling of certain Christian Slavic groups to Georgia during the reign of Tsar Alexander I, in the



+Malkhaz

early nineteenth century, notably the so-called Molokans and Dukhobors, was the source of a mixed tradition of Baptists and other Protestant or ‘essentialist’ groups within Georgia. Essentialism refers to preserving only the ‘essentials’ of the Christian message and so describing various patterns of Reformed Christianity.



+Malkhaz in Wakefield

The history here is fairly complex and the inter-weaving of Baptists with other essentialist Christian groups is charted with clarity by +Malkhaz in his first main chapter. That same chapter also adverts to the significance of Russian hegemony in the Trans-Caucasus, not least within Georgia itself, whose

most famous nineteenth-twentieth century son, Josef Djugashvili, became one of the most brutal hammerers of Georgia in the person of Josef Stalin, as his adopted name described him. Russian hegemony, however, stretched back well into the Tsarist period, although Georgian culture remained unique and resilient, and its poets and novelists shaped the culture throughout these centuries. That same culture lent character to the Baptist tradition, as it developed.

In the next three chapters we see the history and development of the Georgian Baptist Church in the context of both the prevailing Orthodox Christian culture and also the hostile atmosphere of the Soviet Union; as one of the founding republics of the Soviet state, Georgia endured seventy years of atheist Marxist-Leninism. Out of this trial by ordeal resulted a unique example of culturally contextualised Christianity. A pioneer figure was Ilia Kandelaki who was martyred in 1927. Kandelaki worked for a translation of the Bible into modern Georgian, a process which was not completed until the last decade of the twentieth century. Kandelaki and others were keen that the liturgy should also reflect modern Georgian language and culture. In the 1950s and 1960s both Theodore Kocharadze and Ekaterina Kutateladze continued this tradition. All three were also committed to a wider cultural contextualisation within a pattern of what might be described as ‘Reformed Orthodoxy,’ rather in the same manner that Anglicanism is often described

as ‘Reformed Catholicism’. The later stages of this process are described in +Malkhaz’s third and fourth chapters.

The fifth chapter describes reforms in the life of the Evangelical Baptist Church of Georgia in the 1990s and the first decade of the twenty-first century. These reforms were driven forward by those of the present generation and the generation above. They were, however, a clear development, not only from what had gone before in the twentieth century, but also from traces of both a strong liturgical tradition and cultural adjustment within the Baptist Church of Europe in earlier centuries; even the advent of a clear threefold ministry of bishop, priest and deacon has precedents within the Baptist tradition.

+Malkhaz’s book is more than simply a narrow history of the Baptist Church in Georgia. It is one of the clearest and most concise accounts of the impact of the 1917 Bolshevik revolution upon the Christian churches in the twentieth century. Each decade of that century had its own specific history. Restrictions on the churches, for example, were relaxed somewhat in the Second World War by Stalin, when he was keen to use religion as a force for patriotism.



Georgian Baptists

The developing argument of the book is elegantly brought to its consummation in the relatively brief conclusion. The dynamic relationship between the Baptist Church and the Georgian Orthodox and ‘essentialist’ traditions is clear. Three key elements are noted (p. 336) – a unique convergence of cultures, a consistent aim to embed mission in Georgian culture, and a twin concern for the mission apostolates of liturgy and beauty: it is a liturgical church and icons are esteemed. The appendices are of great value – many are the first translations into English of key documents. +Malkhaz’s book has much to teach western catholic Christianity as it seeks to develop a new apologetic. It is to be hoped that the book will be made available in a financially more accessible paperback edition. Only one quibble might be noted: before such an edition is published a new, more comprehensive index should be included; the present index is the only inadequate element within the book.

+Stephen Platten, Cornhill, London

Evangelical Christian Baptists of Georgia, Malkhaz Songulashvili.

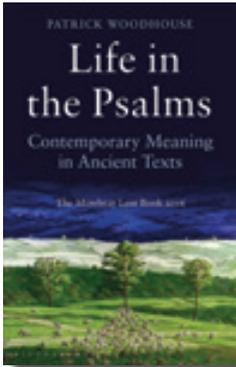
Baylor University Press, Waco, Texas, 2015. 521pp, hbk., \$79.95.

ISBN 978-1-4813-0110-7

Book Reviews

Life in the Psalms: Contemporary meaning in Ancient Texts.

Patrick Woodhouse. Bloomsbury 2015 Pbk £12.99



The Psalms are widely recognised as some of the most powerful and varied religious literature in the world. They contain praise, lament, triumph, joy, sorrow, anger and almost every emotion that human beings experience. At their centre, though, is God in his transcendence. However angry, critical or sorrowful the psalm writers may be, they do not forget that God is God, that he is powerful and can help; and on the whole they believe he will help. The psalms of praise witness to precisely that.

So psalms have been at the centre of Christian worship since the earliest times as they were at the centre of Jewish worship in the time of Jesus. They are the mainstay of the daily offices which all clergy and some laity say. If the singing of psalms at Mattins and Evensong in parish churches has largely died out, at least in our Cathedrals and other places where they sing, they are sung superbly in a tradition of music which is entirely English.

And yet we probably all have problems relating to the psalms. If we know them well we probably know single verses that have made a great impact on us, verses that have carried us through times of trouble or expressed our joy when our own words failed us. Occasionally we may know a whole psalm. But when we ask, “What does this psalm mean?” more often than not it is hard to tell. That, says Patrick Woodhouse, is not surprising; they were written more than 2,000 years ago in a language very different from ours and a culture even more different. Despite the best efforts of fine scholars it is most often impossible to be sure of the context in which a psalm was composed or the exact meaning intended by its author. In a way that does not matter, except for those concerned with scholarly accuracy. The wonder of the psalms is that they can carry our feelings (good and bad!) to God. And in an uncompromising way they present God to us, loving, compassionate, angry, mysterious, creating, faithful and confusing.

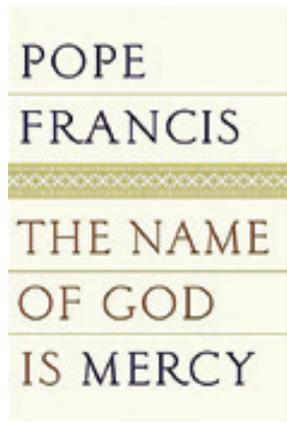
So in this excellent book Woodhouse spends just a few chapters outlining the background and nature of the psalms and then presents 30 psalms divided into 6 weeks (clearly with Lent in mind) in which he offers his own experience of how these psalms can lead one to a deepening experience of God in the often strange ways that our Christian pilgrimage can take. His ‘worked examples’ are well handled without too much subjectivity; he remains rooted in the text yet

interprets the psalms as God may be guiding us now in this century. One would hope this will lead readers to do the same themselves with these and other psalms, once they have learned his method.

Nicolas Stebbing CR

The Name of God is Mercy *Pope Francis*

Bluebird Books for Life £14.99 ISBN 978-1-5098-2493-9



This is a remarkable book for it is a translation of a recorded conversation between Pope Francis and Andrea Torielli who is very much a Vatican Insider.

Pope Francis comes across as a very wise guardian of souls and sees the Sacrament of Reconciliation as the supreme way in which the mercy of God is revealed in action. Two stories from the scriptures illuminate his answers, both more than once. They are the account of the woman found in adultery and presented to Jesus who asks those without sin to cast the first stone, when the crowd has slunk away the woman is left. “Has anyone condemned you?” Says Jesus “No man Lord” she replies, “Neither do I condemn you, go in peace.” “Mercy” we are to understand, forgives, it does not condemn, but neither does it condone and the Scribes and Pharisees are not given an easy time, nor are their successors who still pollute the divine message of mercy.

The second passage of scripture is the familiar one of the two brothers; the one demands and receives his share of the family capital and the other stays at home working. We know the story of the young man filled with guilt and remorse walking slowly home, it is the only place he can go to, but what will his reception be? However the old Father has been watching out, sees the young man coming and runs out to meet him, any words of apology are drowned out with the welcome, embracing and kissing, the other brother looks on, sick. This is not the way the “best families” behave even today. There is no punishment for the young man, there is a party. Later the father explains to the other Son that he hasn’t stopped loving him and all that he had would ultimately go to him.

In both these incidents “Mercy” is the key God forgives, again and again.

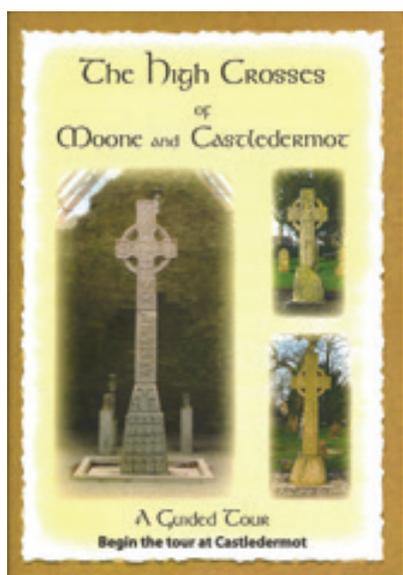
This is a long way away from the old idea of “tickbox” confessions which, so it is said, caused a young penitent to admit to having been “compiled by a priest and published by Mowbray’s!”

Pope Francis deals with this and a great deal more out of his considerable experience making this shortish book very helpful to both penitents and confessors and giving the background to the conversion of the Chapel of St. Mary Magdalen in our Community Church where there is no box with a grill but a gentle opportunity for a conversation, it is a place for dialogue and forgiveness enclosed in beautiful glass screens upon which are engraved scenes from the life of the woman who “Loved much for she had been forgiven much.

Do get hold of this book, it cannot but help.

Aidan Mayoss CR

The High Crosses of Moone and Castledermot *Oain de Bhaldrathie O.Cist and the brethren of Bolton Abbey, Moone, Co. Kildare 2015. €8.00*
Tel: 00353 (0) 598624102 Email: boltonabbeymoone@eir.com.net



Subtitled ‘A journey back to the Early Church’ this book is brilliant in that it shines a torch which illuminates some of the Early Christian History of Ireland. What is remarkable about the book is that it really breaks new ground and excavates a new understanding of High Crosses, religious communities and baptisteries in Ireland from the earliest days. Its explanations of the purpose and the understanding of the Crosses changes the whole idea of a quaint Celtic Church isolated to the coasts and islands of the British Isles. It demonstrates with ample evidence that the Irish Church followed the practices of the Jerusalem Church both in liturgy and in the design of the High

Crosses. Extra evidence supporting this theory comes from the Venerable Bede who reported that at the Council of Whitby the Irish delegation stated that the Roman Party followed St Peter whereas the Irish followed St John. It was reported that the Irish delegation left without accepting the verdict of the Synod over Roman practices. This raises the question of 'When did Ireland become Roman Catholic?'. The book neatly answers this. It is with the invasion of the Normans into Ireland in 1167 and their capture of Dublin in 1170. Chapter 4 records the installation of the Roman Catholic Religious

Communities from 1142. Another question which the book answers is 'Are the Holy Wells of Ireland and of the 'Celtic Church' of the British Isles actually early Baptism sites or Baptisteries?' Five years after the Norman takeover a law was passed that all fonts or Baptisteries must be moved into churches.

The opening chapter is startling. Titled 'What the Crosses were for', the author gives the answer. The High Crosses were for celebrating Evening Prayer in communion with the central church in Jerusalem. It describes a service in Jerusalem about 400 AD. It was called the Service of Light. Starting in the Church of the Resurrection the second part of the service was held at the place of Golgotha. There a large ornamental metal cross was set on a rock. A section of the service was held in front of the cross and a part at the back of the cross.

Quoting from page 6,

It was in imitation of this arrangement in Jerusalem that it became common in early Christian Ireland for almost every church to have a cross near it on the outside. From references in the native monastic Rules we know that some of the office was performed at the cross, so it must have been very similar to Jerusalem. You will find these texts in the Appendix.

This conclusion adds a second view to the common view that the High Crosses of Britain and Ireland with their Biblical and Christian pictures were solely teaching crosses. They were used weekly on a Saturday evening for a form of Vespers in communion with Jerusalem.

Another main point made in the book is that the High Cross with its ring is a symbol of the Risen Christ and the ring is in fact a halo. These crosses with halo rings were common throughout Ireland and the British Isles. The emphasis in Roman practice on the Crucified Christ during the last millennium was preceded in the previous millennium by the emphasis on the crosses of the Risen Christ summing up the scriptures. This difference still persists in churches between the Roman Catholic West and the Orthodox East.

There is an appeal in the book for this early Jerusalem Service of Light to become a service of reconciliation between Catholics and Protestants in Ireland, as a standard celebration for all the faithful.

There are four and a half pages of back-up bibliography and an excellent index.

The book is formatted as a walking talk and guide to the High Crosses of Moone and Castledermot but it deserves international attention as a guide to the real history of the Early Church in Ireland. To reach that international market the book needs an ISBN number and a bar-code. Buy it!

Gordon Roxby



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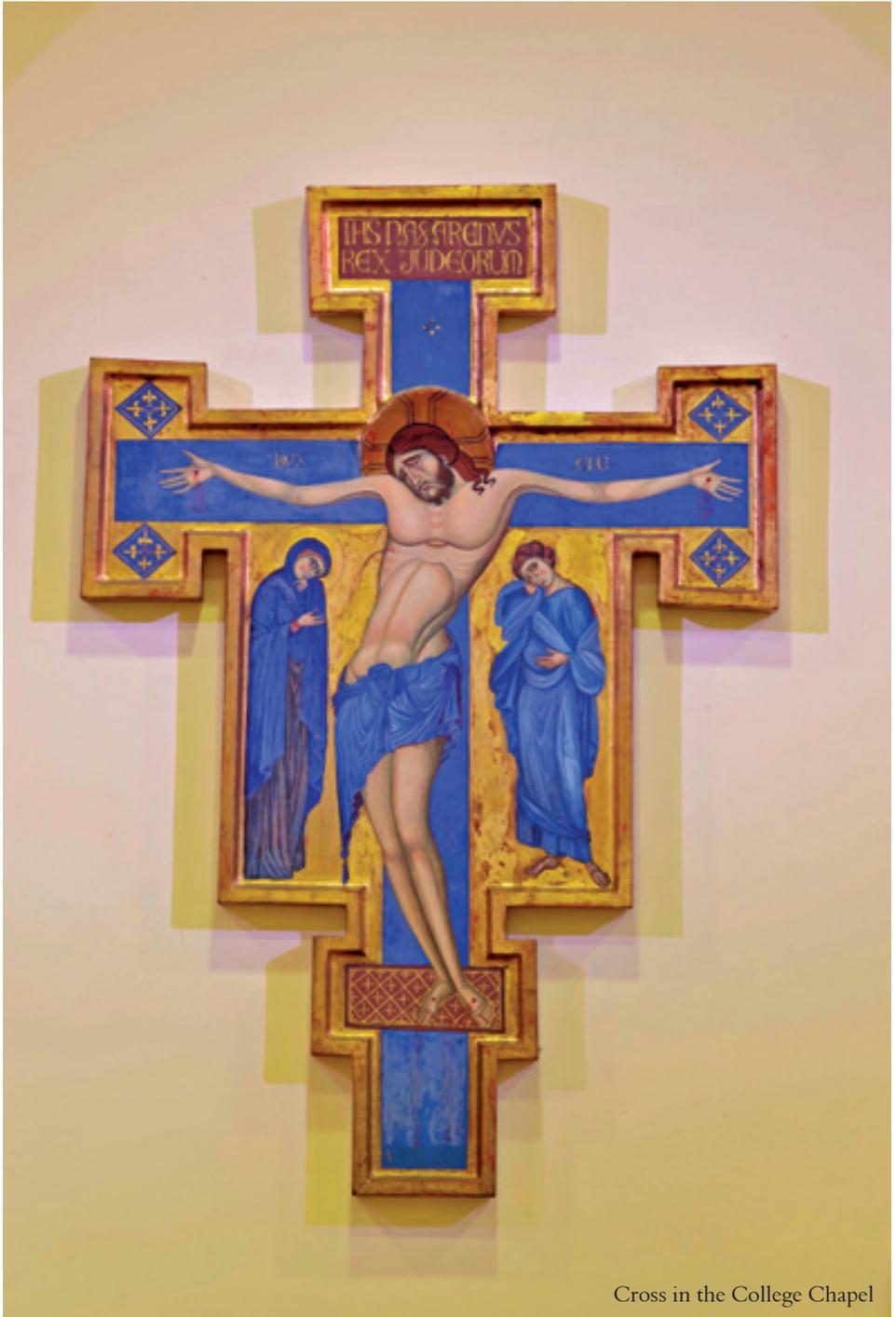
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Cross in the College Chapel

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College

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01924 481901 aspeight@mirfield.org.uk

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