

The Liberal Catholic Church

IN THE BRITISH ISLES



NEWSLETTER No. 4



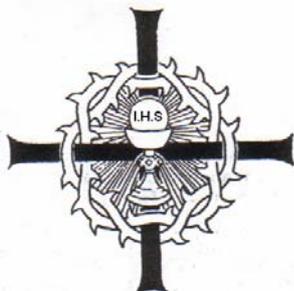
CONTENTS

Editorial	1
Official News	2
The Parting of the Ways (3).....	3
Holy Land Poems	3
Thoughts on Easter Eggs & Bunnies	5
Benediction of the Most Holy Sacrament	7
April Weekend Programme	10



CHURCH REGISTER

22 Feb 2006 — Cremation
John Arthur George Johnson



EASTER GREETINGS



EDITORIAL

A Very Happy Easter to everyone

We are sending this Easter Newsletter out a little early to coincide with our Palm Sunday Church Weekend.

OUR CONTENTS

As in previous issues, we have tried to offer a mix of stimulating articles, and interesting pictures. Items on the Liberal Catholic as usual have also been included, since a number of readers are fairly new to our important ethical and esoteric reasons for existence as a separate group.

We have the constraint of limiting the Newsletter to ten pages to keep it within the standard postage rates. Hopefully, this has the advantage of ensuring that we do not bore you with overlong articles!

In this issue we conclude the collection of lovely Holy Land Poems submitted by Liz Parker, and a

and a contemporary article of the new and exciting attitude to and a contemporary article of the new and exciting attitude to possibly more controversially a very old article by Bishop Wedgwood on Solemn Benediction. He was not a captivating writer and the attitude that he puts forward might seem a little Victorian for today, but nevertheless, it is hoped that it will bring out some interesting points and convey an idea of our Church background.



ORATORIES

Under the Episcopal Vicar General
The Rt. Rev. Allan Barns

ORATORY OF SAINT RAPHAEL
Paradise Now, Mow Hill, Witnesham, Ipswich,
Suffolk. IP6 9EH
Holy Eucharist: 1st Sunday in month at 11:00 am
Other Services: Please call.
Clergy: The Rev. Charles Mugleston,
Priest-in-charge
Telephone: 01473 785672

ORATORY OF SAINT RAPHAEL
37 Tufton Rd, Rainham, Gillingham, Kent, ME8 7LF
Holy Eucharist: Usually on third Sundays -
Please call
Other Services: Please call.
Clergy: The Rev. Robert Harbour,
Priest-in-charge
Deacon The Rev. Carol Harbour
Telephone: 01634 232673

ORATORY OF OUR LADY OF THE STARLIGHT
Jasmine Cottage, Apperley, Glos. GL19 4DE
Holy Eucharist: - Please telephone for details.
Complin, Healing/Benediction: As arranged.
Clergy: The Rev. Christopher Parker,
Priest-in-charge
Telephone: 01452 780277

ORATORY OF OUR LADY OF COMPASSION
6 Tudor Court, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN2 5QH
Services as arranged
Clergy: The Rt. Rev. Allan Barns,
Priest-in-Charge
Telephone:- 01892 689420

CENTRE OF OUR LADY, SEAT OF WISDOM
4, Patten St., Birkenhead, Merseyside CH41 8DN
Services: as arranged.
Telephone: 0151 201 9179 (Colin Stebbing)



THE TRADITION CONTINUES

The Joint Church Weekend of the Parishes of Our Lady of the Starlight and Our Lady of Compassion at Horne Farm, Crowborough,

Ed.



THE PARTING OF THE WAYS

by
The Rt. Rev.F.W.Pigott, MA
Part Three
Of a précis by
Colin Stubbing

3.The Doctrine of God

In fact, there is much in common in the views held by both traditional and also Liberal Catholics on this subject.

The Creeds teach that

- there is one God,
- who manifests as a Trinity,
- which comprises three distinct persons,
- having but one substance (essence is perhaps an easier word) and who are co-equal and co-eternal.

There is thus a huge distinction between God and creation.

This description of God is a description of God transcendent, that is to say a description of God as the Absolute.

There never was a time, then, when God was not.

However, God is also generally regarded as being omnipresent, as being everywhere.

On that basis, God is immanent, or present within each person.

These are two apparently irreconcilable views of God.

How is the gap between the Absolute on the one hand, and God immanent within each of us, on the other, to be bridged?

It may be filled partly by the Trinity.

Others would go further and say that the God in whom we believe is the God or Logos (Word) of the solar system to which we belong, and that there are Logoi of other solar systems, behind and beyond all of whom stands the Absolute.

Such a view would certainly represent a parting of the ways from traditional teachings.



Further Poems

from

Introduction to A Pilgrimage to the Holy Land in Poems.

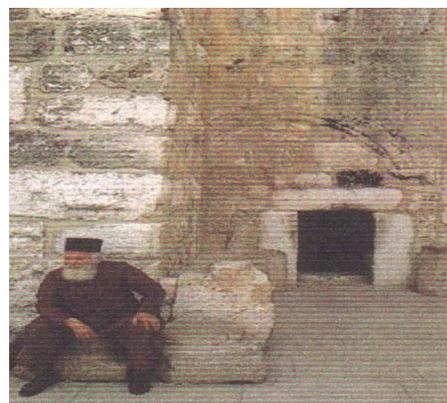
by

Elizabeth Parker

The Prologue was stimulated by watching a current production of The Canterbury Tales at Stratford-upon-Avon and it seemed there was just as much purpose in pilgrimage in the twenty first century as in the Middle ages, even if the distances are longer and the mode of transport different.

The Prologue (with apologies to Chaucer)

April in England and gentle showers nurturing
the ground
After the winds of March and winter fog turned
round
The rising sap new blood to the veins does
bring
Springing forth daffodil and all other flowers
that sing
Of the risen Lord who brings an eternal peace
Around the world, across valley and heath
Crops shoot vulnerable stems in the increas-
ing sun
By now half its journey northwards has done.
Hibernating creatures do open their eyes wide
Awoken from sleep, nature being their guide
The spirit in people awakens to pilgrimage
abroad
They long to show their dedication to the Lord
By visiting holy shrines in distant lands
In and around the country they join hands
From England to the Holy Land they make the
flight
Packed their bags and flew overnight.
The land of the Christian, Arab and Jew
Hoping to make all things new!





The Mount of Olives and Gethsemane is a poem that speaks of waiting. We were unable to go onto Temple Mount that day as the authorities were expecting the Israeli settlers to try and take the Dome back from the Muslims, so all the appropriate roads were closed and people gathered at the bottom of the hill to storm the Mount. From the Church of Dominus Fleuit we could see the crowds gathered and had a clear view of the Golden Gate, through barbed wire along the top of the wall. We had to wait until the next day before we could ascend to the Dome, unlike the buried Jews on the side of the Mount of Olives. awaiting the final call to return through the Golden Gate.

The Mount of Olives and Gethsemane

The hill sublime containing expectant
 graves of promise
 Life eternal waiting to burst forth and pierce
 the golden gate
 In redemption sweet, at the last trump,
 heaven on earth
 The reality of today is also for us to wait
 Sitting also beneath that golden gate
 At the human entrance the crowds gather
 In their own way devoted to their father
 The Holy ground a battle place for the Ego
 bold
 All seeking a place beneath the dome of
 gold
 The temple a sign of man's love for God
 Centuries old...continues on.

'**Gloria** Gloria in excelsis deo' the Catholics
 sing!
 In the Church of All Nations the Gloria did
 ring
 So full and heartfelt a comfort and a balm
 Outside Arab, Jew, militia and a dubious
 calm.
 With bent and twisted trunks the Olive trees
 see all
 They seem to know the power of the call
 To face the long, hard and winding road
 home
 Planted here, in agony, beneath the dome
 They share our Saviour's resolve and grist
 Meanwhile in the desert there is a mist-

A fog that clouds the issues here in this Holy
 land
 Where peace belongs, let us give it a hand
 Praying to the lord through spiralling barbed
 wire
 Raising the heart of longing, the inner fire
 Thy will be done...

Catholic Worship The Living Christ

The Liberal Catholic Church
 draws the central inspiration of
 its work from an intense faith in
 the Living Christ who lives
 ever as a mighty spiritual Presence
 in the world, guiding and sustain-
 ing his people. It accepts in the
 plain and literal sense the marvel-
 ous promise of Christ when on
 earth: "Lo, I am with you alway,
 even unto the consummation of
 the age' (Matt. 28:20); and 'Where
 two or three are gathered together
 in my name, there am I in the
 midst of them' (Matt. 18:20)." -
 SP.

E.P.

THOUGHTS ON EASTER EGGS & BUNNIES

by
The Rt. Rev. Allan B. Barns



I ALWAYS used to be given a large chocolate Bunny for Easter when I was young. Nowadays they seem to be hard to find in the shops, and I have to keep my eyes open to buy them for my grandchildren as more and more elaborate filled Eggs are in fashion, the contents being more important than the egg itself.

It is interesting that these pagan pre-Christian fertility Spring symbols still survive, even if their meaning is unrecognised in this day and age. The Easter Rabbit is, of course, a hang-over from the old Festival of the Goddess Eastre, one of whose symbols it was said to have been-- A symbol of fecundity; of the future and growth of nature. The Egg is also pre-Christian and obviously again a symbol of the spring, new growth, the development of life into the future. There are also obvious analogies in other religions.

We are told that the Easter Festival was not adopted by Christianity until the Second Century, when, like a number of other Christian Festivals, missionaries found it worth while to supplely take over the past and give it an up-to-date Christian connotation.

So it is that The Resurrection, The Easter Festival, enshrines a universal truth and promise; that the future of all things; of mankind is secure. Old things must die that new growth can flourish. 'As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive' as we sing in our uplifting Easter Gradual. Each year the Easter Egg is a reminder of that promise.

No wonder this is the most important Festival in the Churches Year. Its message very much enshrines the ideas put into modern idiom by Theosophical Teaching, the continual development and advancement of mankind over many lives.

We echo this idea in our Act of Faith when we affirm that 'all God's children shall one day reach His feet'.

To understand what is happening in today's world we need to rethink the old idea of a patrician God of Father, Son and Holy Ghost and look to the reality of the future, in a God in His three-fold aspect of Life, Love and Action. – Our Act of Faith puts this rather differently as Love, Power, Truth and Light; Power, and Truth resulting in Right Action.

The signs are all around us. The battles of prejudice, of argument, of hatred, of bigotry, of Intolerance is rampant today; Jews and Arabs; Muslims and Christians, men and women; in the Church: in the family; in the work place. What a time to live. This is setting to one side the active participation of mother earth, with tornadoes, floods, earthquakes, global warming and other disasters. It is almost like being on a world-wide building Site, with old property being drastically demolished, with a lot of swearing and disagreement, while in the background, small lorries come trundling in with the blocks and girders for a new beginning. The Architect, calmly looks on, for he knows that in Gods' good time eventually will come 'ordo ab chao' – Order out of Chaos; or to put another way, 'Lux e Tenebris' – Light out of Darkness. Two well known tags, which nevertheless encapsulate a great and encouraging truth.

We sincerely believe, despite all the troubles that are going on around us, that one of our tasks is to bring forward those re-fashioned building blocks, designed by our Master, which will start to form the Christian Church of the future.

No doubt, very different from that of the past.

This is surely one of the most important up-to-date messages of the perennial Feast of Easter. Out of the efforts of the past, Christ has risen. He is portrayed for us as ‘the first fruits of them that slept.’

So it is that the Easter Egg carries with it the promise of this future; a new beginning; the coming forth of the next generation. But what of the ancient Easter Bunny? Surely it is that our future has no bounds; growth and the spreading of Christ’s kingdom is assured.

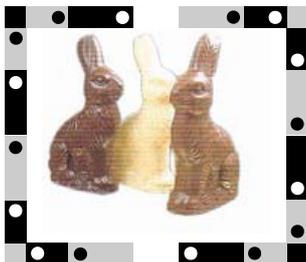
Despite all that is going on around us, it is our duty to take that the broader view. Christ’s Plan is still in place. ‘All manner of things shall be well’, but in God’s good time, not ours.

As a final thought. Some of you may remember Bishop James’s sermon at the Church Congress many years ago in Nightingale Hall, Nottingham, when he took as his text –Lk 12:32. ‘Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.’ How quickly this will come about is up to all men of goodwill.

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Easter 2006



The Revs. Robert & Carol Harbour
ORATORY OF SAINT RAPHAEL
Gillingham, Kent



BENEDICTION OF THE MOST HOLY SACRAMENT

Reprinted from The Liberal Catholic April 1925. Vol.1 No.7

By the Rt. Rev. J. I. Wedgwood

Docteur es Sciences de l'Univcrse de Paris.

STUDENTS of the hidden side of Christianity know that when the Consecration of the Bread and Wine takes place in the Mass, the substance-**sub-stans**, that which stands beneath or behind that bread and wine-is changed by the Angel of the Presence who comes from the Christ, and that there flows through the Sacred Elements a direct ray of light, a line of living fire, from Our Blessed Lord, and through Him, we are told, even from the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity Himself. That is what is meant when it is said that the Bread is the Body of the Lord; for a body is that which is a vehicle of life or consciousness or power, that which expresses the life. Our physical bodies are the instruments that we use in this physical world for expressing ourselves, and so also in this Sacrament the Bread is the Body of Christ in the sense that the life and the blessing of Christ pour through that Bread as their vehicle on the physical plane. Whenever that Consecration takes place a great stream of influence pours forth from the Church over the surrounding neighbourhood, and there is a second manifestation of power when anyone who is present at the Service sends a thought of aspiration, of devotion, of worship to the Christ. A ray of living light connects him with the Sacrament upon the Altar. The adoration that he outpours calls forth from the Consecrated Host a great response, greater far, of course, than the effort he puts out. That wondrous manifestation occurs whenever a thought of aspiration is sent up to the Throne of God in the Presence of the Blessed Sacrament, and upon that great fact in nature the Service of Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament is based.

There are Catholic countries where this worship is allowed to take place publicly, and on certain great Festivals of the Church the Host, the Consecrated Wafer, is carried through the streets in a magnificent procession with all the pomp and splendor that the resources of the place can command, in the presence of thousands of people on bended knee offering worship and adoration. The power called forth in that way is tremendous. In non-Catholic countries such processions are very seldom seen, but in Sydney, for example, there is a Procession of the Blessed Sacrament which takes place on the Sunday after the Feast of Corpus Christi in the College grounds of the Roman Catholic Seminary at Manly. I remember going there myself on one occasion; there were hundreds of people gathered together and the power called forth from the Blessed Sacrament as It was carried in procession was very great indeed. After the procession. Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament is given. In Catholic countries the Benediction is often given several times in the course of the procession, occasionally they give it from some old ruined church, and it is altogether an exceedingly beautiful and awe-commanding ceremony.

This outpouring of the power of the Christ over thousands of people, the kindling of the spiritual principle within them, the fanning of the spirit into flame, is really a very wonderful thing; and in this Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament we have one especial feature which causes it to differ from other benedic-

tions. When a priest is ordained, he is ordained more along the line of the Holy Spirit than along either the line of the Father or of the Son. At the Second Imposition the Bishop's hands are laid upon his head with the words, "Receive the Holy Ghost for the office and work of a Priest in the Church of God." He is opened up as a channel more along the line of either of the other two great Streams of Influence in nature. The blessing, therefore, that he gives personally draws more along that line; but in this Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament we have a different working altogether. That draws upon the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, upon the Wisdom Aspect of God rather than upon His Aspect as Creative Activity. An Angel comes from the Christ Himself in this Service, and it is through that Angel, as well as through the Sacred Host, that the Blessing is given to the people.

When the Blessed Sacrament is exposed upon the Altar, every thought of devotion that we send out brings to us response a hundredfold. That is literally true, and so in this Service we have an opportunity of enormously quickening our spiritual growth. We have this tremendous power available for our use, and in proportion to the effort that we make, to the force that we send out, to the lifting up of our hearts and minds in devotion to the Christ, so will be this response that flows from Him towards us. That is one reason why in this Service we have a somewhat lengthy, though very beautiful Litany of twenty-one verses, in addition to the two other hymns that are used, the "O Salutaris Hostia" and the "Tantum Ergo." That is arranged so that all those present may gain the greatest benefit possible from the Service. Various sentiments are expressed in the course of the Litany; sometimes it is one Aspect of the Blessed Trinity, sometimes another Aspect that is invoked. Various ideas are placed before the people: different conceptions are brought before their minds. Every thing is done that can be done to rouse and enkindle the fire of their devotion, in order that every person in the congregation in some way or another, through one sentiment or another that is expressed, may have his devotion stirred and enflamed, and so may gain the full benefit of this quickening Life that is outpoured upon us, the Blessing from the Christ Himself.

All who join in these Services should put forth all the effort that they can. In Roman Catholic Churches we find many people who are full of deep devotion, but their devotion is individual rather than congregational. During the Mass, for instance, they are mainly occupied with their own private devotions, except at certain great moments in the Service. What we are trying to do in the Liberal Catholic Movement is somewhat different. In the first place, we have the Liturgy in the vernacular, in our own English tongue, in order that everybody may understand what is being said. It is quite true that many people in the Roman Catholic Church do understand what is being said, because the English is written alongside the Latin, but in actual practice not so much attention is given to the Service as might be. For that reason amongst others, with us the Service is put into English. It is quite true, too, that where the Latin language is used we have a greater sonority of sound, so that more power flows out from the sound of the words than in the English. "**Dominus vobiscum**" is certainly a more powerful sound than the English, "The Lord be with you." But much greater power is gained; if we can have the mental cooperation of the people who are taking part in the worship. What we desire to ensure in this particular Movement is that the people shall understand what is being done and shall be able themselves to co-operate intelligently with it as a Body Corporate. Our people are expected to take every sentence that is sung in the Liturgy and to try to mean that sentence with their whole heart, with the full power of their understanding; and if we pour out the irresistible power of the will into what

we are doing, we shall feel the tremendous response that will come from above. We must try to mean with the whole of the power that we can summon to our assistance every word that we say in the Service. In order that that may be done we have inserted such sentences only as can under normal circumstances conscientiously be said by any member of the congregation. Perhaps it is too much to hope that every sentence shall be entirely acceptable to everyone. But we have done our best to ensure that. We do not ask the obviously impossible of our people, nor do we require them to express exaggerated sentiments to which they cannot live up; it is all made as straightforward as it can be in order that we may in this way have the full power of the co-operation of the congregation in what is taking place. In this Service of Benediction we approach the living Presence of the Christ. Let us make our offering to Him a worthy one. In the Roman Catholic Church a number of people show the utmost reverence and devotion. They kneel when they enter the church, where the Host is ever reserved. We may know where It is kept in a church by the light before or on the side of the Altar. They genuflect in adoration and worship. Where the Blessed Sacrament is exposed, as it is during Benediction, they go down on both knees in adoration, and that which they do with their body is done also with the heart and the mind. When they go to communion they always genuflect before the Blessed Sacrament before they receive It, and before they depart. I would like our people to do the same, so that it might never be said that we were behind hand in devotion and reverence.

We who have studied more deeply the hidden side of Christianity ought to show even greater devotion than those who live more upon faith perhaps than upon knowledge. Let us strive to enkindle the same deep enthusiasm in our hearts for these holy things that those in other churches have, so that we may offer to Our Lord in this Blessed Sacrament of His Love an offering which is worthy, a great stream of love and of devotion ascending before Him which can be used by Him for the helping and uplifting of those in the world who are in sorrow or distress. That is one great object of our worship, that the power which flows out from us to Him in our Services of praise and thanksgiving (for we serve not only by action but also by the use of our feelings and thoughts), may be such as can be used by Him for pouring out upon those who need help, who need power, thus bringing into their lives the spiritual benediction that flows from Him, and which is augmented and distributed by our own cooperation with His mighty purpose.

Let us try, then, to mean every sentence in the Liturgy with the whole of the power, the whole of the will, the whole of the thought, the whole intensity of devotion and feeling that we can summon. Many Christian people have an untrue view of the Master Jesus, the Master of the Christian Church. They do not realize that His main characteristic is not so much gentleness as burning power, ardent devotion, that the mighty power which streams forth from Him burns up all the impurities, the dross of our lower nature, and kindles an intense response in our spiritual nature.

That is the kind of devotion that we should offer to the Christ, a devotion that is strong and fiery and burning, a devotion that can be usefully employed for the uplifting and helping of our brethren.

The Rt. Rev. J. I. Wedgwood

The Liberal Catholic Church
IN THE BRITISH ISLES

CHURCH WEEKEND

Apperley

Friday 7th April to Sunday 9th April, 2006

PROGRAMME

Friday 7th

6.00 pm Welcome
7 00 pm Solemn Benediction
Refreshments
9 00 pm Complin

Saturday 8th

10/10.30am Arrivals & Tea/coffee
11.00 am High Mass & Ordination to the Diaconate
In the Village Hall, Norton
Buffet Lunch
2.30 pm Discussion/Talk 'Looking to the Future'
Tea/Coffee
4.30 pm Discussion Groups and Training
6 00 pm Healing Service and Solemn Benediction
7.00 pm Supper (Restaurant)

Sunday 9th

PALM SUNDAY

10.00 am Tea/Coffee
10.45 am Blessing of the Palms
11.00 am High Mass and Ordination to Minor Orders
1.00 pm Buffet Lunch
2.30 pm Closing of the Weekend

**This is a copy of the Programme for your permanent reference.
The actual Invitation and Programme are enclosed with this Newsletter**

Editor

