



The Liberal Catholic Church

IN THE BRITISH ISLES



NEWSLETTER No.17



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CHURCH REGISTER

7 March 2009

Minor Order, Cleric

Jonathan Chapman



THE CHRISTIAN SACRED KEY

But what is it for and how should we use it?

See our Web Site



CHRIST IS RISEN

A very Happy Easter to everyone

We are in strange times in this country. Traditional Christianity seems almost to be a dirty word and is treated as offensive. School Prayers, wearing a cross, offering prayers may be frowned upon as they might be offensive to other religions. So much for being a Christian state!

Thank goodness that C of E Bishops and the Catholic Church have at last spoken out and pleading for tolerance and understanding. Even Cherie Blair, a Catholic, put in a Television plea for more respect for our faith.

It is interesting that the situation in America and Africa is quite the opposite where the church, (including ours) is growing very rapidly. Liberal Catholics in the British Isles have a great opportunity; an important part to play; in developing the special attitude and ideas that we have inherited. We build on our past but remain forward looking.

to the needs of today. Humanity is one under the Christ, by whatever name you call him. Women are, as in the early days of the Church, equal and we ordain them as such. We accept that there are many ideas of other religions worthy of thought, although not treating them as demanding belief. For example, reincarnation. We are Liberal Catholics. Something which is so needed in today's Church climate.

If we can but promote our thought-provoking Act of Faith and look to the future rather than the past, surely we will be doing the work of our Master. We, as do many others, hold the Christian Key to help mankind once again move forward out of the shadows that seem to cloud this country at present and help all towards the promise of our Statement of Faith. The Brotherhood of Man.

Please read our **Statement of Intent** on our Web Site which surely highlights the Sacred Christian Key that is our heritage.

While our contents are Easter ones, more details on our Training Day can be found on the Web Site

+Allan, Editor

THE FOLLOWING ORATORIES ARE IN INTERCOMMUNION WITH US:

Oratory of Our Lady Theotokos

Brookdale, Quarry Lane, Heavitree, Exeter. EX2 5JR

Holy Eucharist, & Healing Services

Clergy: The Rt. Rev. John Wheaton

Telephone: 01392 275878 for details

Oratory of Our Lady of Compassion

Flat 2, Abbeyfield Court, Station Road, Sidmouth. EX10 8NW

Services: Regular Holy Eucharist, Benediction & Healing

Clergy: Rev. Albertha Meyer

Telephone: 01395 577164 for details



ORATORIES

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



ORATORY OF SAINT RAPHAEL

37 Tufton Rd, Rainham, Gillingham, Kent. ME8 7LF

Holy Eucharist: Usually on third Sundays

Other Services: Please call.

Clergy: The Rev. Robert Harbour,
Priest-in-charge
The Rev. Carol Harbour
Deacon

Telephone: 01634 232673

ORATORY OF OUR LADY OF THE STAR-LIGHT

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
The Rev. Elizabeth Parker
Assistant Priest

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

EALING:

21 Hollingbourne Gardens. Ealing. W13 8EN

Services as arranged

Clergy: Rev. John McGlashan,

Telephone:- 02089 979449

**VISIT OUR WEB SITE
www.lccinbi.org**

Or the Main Church Site
<http://TheLiberalCatholicChurch.org>
For useful literature and details of the
World-wide church

or our Clergy can supply leaflets

**Excerpt taken from a Sermon
given on the 'Thirteenth Sun-
day after Trinity'**

Intent: Good Works

In this morning's Gospel, Jesus states quite clearly that "every man shall be known by his fruits". For a good man, abiding by God's laws has a purity of heart that manifests in everything he does. He generates love and peace all around him because he does not have the capacity to do wrong. Whereas, a corrupt man who interprets God's laws to suit his own ends will contribute nothing of any value to mankind, but instead leave behind a legacy of misery, and a trail of destruction. In all honesty, I don't know anyone personally who fits either of these descriptions. If you can picture a ladder rising up from the earth towards Heaven, with many rungs in between, most of us I imagine sit some way in the middle; and how hard we must work upon ourselves in order to move up that ladder.

One of the pitfalls we may fall into is the disillusionment of our true worth, as described in the Gospel when the 'many' try to justify themselves to Jesus by boasting of their 'prophesying' and 'wonderful works'. He rebukes them by saying, "I never knew you". It is not enough to make a show of doing 'good works' if they are performed out of a sense of duty, to impress other people, or to earn a reward in Heaven. Neither should we give, in order to receive, for if we do life will be full of hurt and disappointment, and lead us nowhere in our spiritual growth. If we give in the right spirit we must not expect anything in return, not even gratitude. To live by God's laws is the only protection we have against hurts and fears, and only a 'selfless' act is carried out in God's name.

... "There are those who give with joy, and that joy is their reward.

And there are those who give with pain, and that pain is their baptism.

And there are those who give and know not pain in giving, nor do they seek joy, nor give with mindfulness of virtue;

They give as in yonder valley the myrtle breathes it's fragrance into space.

Through the hands of such as these God speaks, and from behind their eyes He smiles upon the earth" K.G.

Rev. Carol Harbour

**TRAINING DAY
7th March 2009**

St. Francis Church, Tekels Park, Camberley, was again the venue for our Training Day, attended by Rt. Rev. Allan Barns; Vicar General Chris Parker; Rev. Liz Parker; Rev. John McGlashan and Revs. Robert & Carol Harbour, together with Jonathan Chapman, a new server from the Apperley Parish. It was also a pleasure to have Rev. Martin Sheppard join us and see that he is making steady progress from his earlier health problems. We wish him a full and speedy recovery.

We started with a practice for serving. We then had a con-celebration of the High Mass with the Revs. Chris and Robert as the con-Celebrants, and Revs. Carol, and Liz acting as Sub Deacon and Deacon, respectively. All under the eye of our M.C. Rev. John, who also instructed our new server Jonathan. Bishop Allan Pontificated and bestowed the Order of Cleric on Jonathan. We wish him well with his studies.

After lunch we held our Synod meeting, which raised several useful points.

The day concluded with a Service of Healing conducted by Rev. Liz together with + Allan.. Jonathan acted as Server.

A special thank you to Rev. Richard Bayly for making us so welcome at St. Francis. We must start planning for the next one!



Clergy Training 7th March 2009

EASTER SUNDAY
RESURRECTION TO NEW LIFE
Rev. John McGlashan
1987

Worship is an extra-ordinary phenomenon, and liturgy, as the vehicle through which we express our need to worship, is even more remarkable because of the mysterious and subtle influences which it exerts on the human psyche.

In its ritual and drama, liturgy provokes a sympathetic resonance from several, simultaneous levels of perception and awareness. We find ourselves responding to it emotionally, psychologically, and spiritually, and possibly too, at even profounder levels of involvement.

The Eucharist, which is the supreme act of Christian worship, ritualizes and sacramentalises the recurring central themes of Christianity, the Incarnation, Death, and Resurrection of Christ. It does this, not only because they form the essential core teaching of Christianity, but also because they are recognisably the universal recurring themes in life.

All life is born, dies, and is raised up, in some guise or other, to anew and more vigorous state of being. These are the basic, inescapable facts of life, at the universal and cosmic level, and also at the earthly and human. They are central to our understanding of ourselves and of our relationship with the mysterious, unfathomable, and seemingly un-related swirl of events in which we are caught up.

It is to this basic trio of themes which we respond in worship, because we intuitively recognise them as symbolically marking the emotional, psychological, and spiritual boundaries of our own existence. We are all too well aware that birth

and death are the twin poles which span the extremities of earthly existence, They are the two guaranteed, and unavoidable, experiences which we commonly share, and we all have our own, very private, set of responses to them.

If we are to accept a cyclic pattern of life, then we have already experienced birth and death many times before as part of the unfolding pattern of spiritual evolution. Hence, at some unfathomable level of awareness we respond to these mysteries of birth and death with a familiar recognition of something previously known and experienced,

We are not strangers to them, nor do they strike us as necessarily alien to & vision of earthly life lived fully and fullfillingly, We know them as essential ingredients of life itself.

However, it is the illusive third area of experience which we find so difficult to equate with life as we know it, and that is that mysterious process of so-called resurrection which Christianity assures us, is also to be experienced as an extension of the total life process. "If Christ be not raised from the dead, then is our religion in vain", St. Paul assures us, and he is adamant that we too will undergo this same rising from death to a state of renewed spiritual life in Christ. Theology has endeavored to interpret resurrection in terms of an after-death re-constitution of the whole person, including the physical body; a true rising from the tomb, for after all, are not the Gospels perfectly explicit in their description of what happened to Jesus? But the Gospels are more subtle documents than are generally realised, containing profounder allusions to the mystery of life, and to the nature of the Christ, than may be immediately apparent in the su-

perificial context of the narratives

For throughout the history of the Christian Church, there has run, parallel to the main body of official doctrine, another teaching which has been largely un-recognised and neglected by the mainstream theologies,

This "underground", or "alternative" Church, was the Church of the Mystics, those who intuited and experienced a deeper, more genuinely contemplative Christianity, in which they discerned the life of Christ as being the pattern of all committed spiritual living. Thus the events which Christ experienced and suffered, according to the Gospel records, were also to be lived-through interiorly and spiritually by all who would sincerely follow in the Master's steps.

This alternative theology lifted the reality of Christ out of its culturally and spiritually restricted Middle Eastern context and projected it into a more genuinely universal frame of reference. For the mystic discovered through personal insight that Christ was in him, and that St. Paul's words, "Christ in you, the hope and the glory", made perfect sense.

The mystery of resurrection came to be recognised, not so much as an anticipated after-death, end-of-the-age phenomenon, as theologically defined, but was able to be experienced in the here and now as an awakening to renewed life in the Spirit,

For the mystic of old, and for later mystically-inspired Christians, resurrection came to be appreciated within the context of the total life-process of the universe in which all created things are seen to suffer death, yet are raised to new and vigorous life within the Divine

Within this all-embracing,

and obviously loving context, human life economy of creation and re-creation. loses its apparent futility, death loses its feared sting, and resurrection gives certain hope

It is to these archetypal ideas that we find ourselves responding at appropriate key times of the year.

At Christmas, we respond to the myth of the Incarnation of Christ, not just because we recognise this festival as commemorating the event in human history, but because we know, deep down, that it is a dramatised episode of our own life-story..

And at Easter, in celebrating the Resurrection of the Christ, we have the strangest feeling, that this too, is an event which is going to have meaning for us.

Perhaps this is the real reason why many church congregations mysteriously swell at Christmas and Easter! Obligation and a sense of duty may actually have little to do with it, for there are far deeper motivating impulses at work.

Certainly, at this season of the year, we are aware of the immense labour of renewal which is happening in the natural world. We sense it happening all around us, and ache to be a part of it,

Each year everything is renewed, everything that is, except us humans, who remain the same, slogging on in the closed circle of our lives. We long for release from the thralldom of spiritual blindness which seems to frustrate our hopes and highest intentions, and we protest that we don't know what to do about it. The mystics have an answer to that. They tell us, that we must be willing to die; an extreme measure we may think, but somehow, deep down, we know that is

what is expected of us. But it is not the death of the physical body, which for most of us will be an effortless and involuntary process, but a more subtle, difficult, and voluntary form of death which is called for. It is the death of ourselves which we are required to suffer; that is the death of the little self, the personal ego, and all the limiting, persona-enhancing, and spiritually inhibiting tendencies which accompany.

When we voluntarily put this to death, crucify and bury it for good, then our true Self, the Incarnated, indwelling Christ who awaits his Resurrection in the tomb of our humanity, will be freed to take us with him into a new, conscious, and spiritually renewed life, not in some vague future, end-of-the-world-time, but right now. Our Church, being in the mystical tradition is concerned with newness, and it preaches a gospel of the NOW.

The call of Easter is, therefore, a call to recognise that the Resurrection of Christ is less to do with what happened in a musty tomb of long ago, and more to do with what is possible within the tomb we continue to make of our own selves. That is the distilled essence of the Easter message.

The Church is well aware that the liturgies of Holy Week and Easter have the power to communicate this urgency, this potential of the spiritual present-moment, in ways which may trigger subtle, perhaps even immediate response, And it knows too, that every time it celebrates the mystery-rite of the Eucharist, in which the Resurrection of the eternal Christ is symbolically enacted, it is calling us into an ever-deepening, and evermore committed relationship with the inner Christ who awaits his Resurrec-

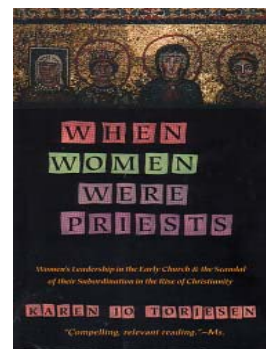
tion of the eternal Christ is symbolically enacted, it is calling us into an ever-deepening, and evermore committed relationship with the inner Christ who awaits his Resurrection in us, but, at the same time, knowing our weakness and spiritual lassitude, it acknowledges that we tend to take our time over such delicate and personal matters of the spirit! This despite the urgency of the message, we postpone our spiritual good intentions for another day.

In its loving wisdom, the Church (not for nothing is it sometimes known as Holy Mother Church!) provides us with the cycle of liturgy, its feasts and festivals, attuned with the natural cycles and rhythms of the universe, to hammer away at our continued, willful reluctance to take final and irrevocable responsibility for our own spiritual estate.

Let us pray that the Easter message may bring us closer to that moment of realisation when we know that our own spiritual resurrection is at last at hand.

BOOK REVIEW

Women's Leadership in the Early Church & the Scandal of their Subordination in the Rise of Christianity.



Is the sub-title of the book

PUBLISHED by Harper San Francisco. 1993

An unusual and interesting

book raising fresh ideas about women's place in the early church.

Dr Rowan Williams says:-"An entirely fresh approach to a vexed and uncertain question"

Well worth a read **+A**

AN EASTER SERMON

Rt. Rev. Allan Barns

In our Collect we are told that Easter gives us 'the sure and certain witness that good shall finally triumph over ill'.

Looking out of my window I can see fluffy clouds drifting across a blue sky. God's world is certainly beautiful. Turning to the television I can see bombs and knives, guns and pedophiles and feel 'that only man is vile.'

But God's world also has a truly terrible frightening beauty about it. Floods and storms and quakes. With all this contrast going on around us today it is difficult to feel that the Bible's promise that good will finally triumph when it seems at the present moment rather the other way round.

This symbolism very aptly applies to the Church today. The inspiring vision of Bishops Wedgwood, Leadbeater and King seem to have been almost hidden under the cloak of more and more little breakaway groups trying (to be charitable) in their different ways to adapt our Founders' ideals to modern-day life on the one hand or trying to live in the past of last century hanging on every word of our early Bishops. Do we think that In our Church, in fact, in most Christian Churches and communities, good is finally triumphing over ill. We all seem to be in a bit of a divided mess, with ill winning every time.

I think that there are two important points that need to be kept at the forefront of our prayers, thoughts and, definitely, actions.

Firstly, as stressed in our Act of Faith - we must continue to believe 'that all His sons; and daughters will one day reach His feet'. That God's time is not our time. The Revelations about the size and time scale of the Universe surely bear this out.

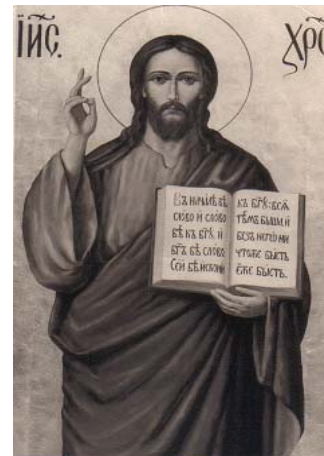
Secondly, that we should not

live in the past, but move onwards out into our promised future. It is just too easy to repeat the ideas and literature of our Founders as I fear some groups tend to do. Scientific knowledge and needs have changed since their time. Remember that Bishops Wedgwood and Leadbeater admitted at the time that they were organizing our Liturgy and ideals that they were the best that they could conceive at the time and not set in stone.

What an opportunity is presented to us. If we do not take it up we will not be fulfilling the wishes of our forward-looking Founders. Yes, such action needs tolerance, tact, understanding of others points of view. It needs us to carry out in heart and mind and action the opening sentences of our Statement of Principles. To feed Christ's flock. It needs us to work for our Master Christ, not our own limited perceptions.

Surely this is worth serious thought. Our esoteric past is showing us the way to the light of an exoteric future. Our churches are feeling their way ahead, often blindly. We have the unique heritage of being a forward looking Church.

This must be our Easter message.



High Altar. Tekels Park

OUR EASTER QUIZ

1. The beginning of the Bible.
2. Where the Ark rested?
3. Who sold his wife for a pair of shoes?
4. Who started the Liberal Catholic Church?
5. Who fought the Battle of Jericho?
6. The evening before All Saints Day.
7. The First English Protomartyr. *Bet that you do not get this one.*
8. Priests square cap.
9. The composer of the Messiah.
10. Founder of the Salvation Army.
11. Moses assistant.
12. Who had a ladder?

QUIZ ANSWERS

1. GENESIS 2. ARARAT 3. NEBUCHADNEZZAR
4. WEDGWOOD
5. JOSHUA 6. HALLOWEEN 7. ALBAN 8. BIRETTA
9. HANDEL 10. BOOTH 11. ARYON 12. JACOB

A PRAYER

ALMIGHTY GOD, Creator and Preserver of mankind, who orderest all things upon earth: give us grace to trust in Thy Wisdom and Love, that we, obeying only Thy laws, may prosper in all that Thou givest us to do. Through Christ Our Lord. Amen.

