

LITTLE S. MARY'S, CAMBRIDGE

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NEWSLETTER



This newsletter contains: Melchizedek; Music Update: The Writing of Dorothy L. Sayers; Prison Visiting; Papua New Guinea report; H is for Hallelujah; Garden News plus the usual Vicar's letter, daily intentions for prayer and more.

From the Vicar

Seventh Sunday after Trinity, 2020

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

It's been lovely to see so many of you – over sixty today when I write this – back in church. Offering the Mass on my own is in some ways good for my prayer life (when there's no visible congregation you really do have to concentrate on what you're saying) and the offering of praise to God and the fruits that come from celebrating the memorial of the Lord's Passion are still vital – but it's so much better when some of the Church Militant is there with me!

I know many of you are still shielding or are away on holiday (quite right too!) but I do urge you to come back if you can. Those who have made it back to church have almost uniformly found it to be a good or even wonderful (to quote one correspondent) experience. God's grace can of course reach us in other ways but once we've made absence from the Eucharist a choice rather than a reluctant necessity we shouldn't be surprised if we're feeling a bit spiritually depleted. The absence of the chalice, the sharing of the sign of the Peace, of music and of socialising afterwards are very sad, certainly, but the essentials are still there. Yes, LSM is presently not at her prettiest, but a moment's consideration of the circumstances and conditions under which our brothers and sisters in Christ have to worship in other parts of the world and at other times in history will cause us to put that objection to one side.

While on the subject of the church building, let me update you with our progress: all old wiring has been removed; all the walls and window traceries have been brushed down; the top half of the church walls have been given their three coats of limewash and the bottom half their first coat; the ceiling has been brushed and vacuumed down; old wall safes have been removed, and damaged stone and plaster repaired; some of the north-facing windows have been washed. To do: the bottom half of the walls need their two additional limewash coats; the cracked windows need repairing and the rest cleaning; the monuments their conservation clean; the floor its clean and repair; the carved and dressed stonework its conservation; the wiring its testing; the radiators need shelves above them. We're getting there – and it'll look fabulous once it's done. I'm very grateful to Lodge & Sons, our builders, who have worked fast and with commitment during lockdown and beyond.

From stone stones to living stones – and two more thanks: to Rosanna Moseley Gore and Mary Ward. Rosanna has done wonderful work with our weekly Newsheet, keeping people connected and indeed connecting people for the first time. I'm grateful to point to this as one straightforward benefit of the Covid lockdown. Mary has been phoning round on my and the parish's behalf checking people are OK and organising shopping and prescriptions for those who need it. I have a third thank-you too: to all of you who have called on neighbours, done shopping for strangers, and kept faithful in prayer and generous in almsgiving. The angels rejoice over you.

We might think that this is simple common sense and 'anyone would do the same'. Well, evidence shows that they don't, and while of course non-Christians can be moral (and often are) they can give no final reason why – for that they need Christianity. It is far from empirically obvious that everyone is equal and that the sick and dying need love rather than euthanasia. Christian witness is vital in these times and into the future, that the post-Covid society is built on values of compassion and care, especially for the vulnerable (and that now includes our planet too).

No-one knows how the coming months will unfold and we pray, of course, for a vaccine; yet we are those who have at least a little practice at living by faith rather than sight and in exercising and developing the virtue of hope. Combined with the love I described above, this threefold chord is invincible and is much-needed in our country and world. Let us then be generous with our faith, hope and love and so trust that it will bring us rejoicing through this hard season to a time of renewed community and joy.

With my love & prayers, I am, yours ever
Fr Robert.

Melchizedek

An article about a shadowy Biblical character who appears surprisingly often in our liturgies and hymns.



Melchizedek can be translated from *melek*, meaning ‘king’ and *sedeq* meaning ‘righteousness’: thus ‘king of righteousness.’ He was King of Salem (Jerusalem) and priest of God the Most High. He appears twice in the Old Testament (Genesis 14.18–20 and Psalm 110.4), then in the Dead Sea Scrolls, and in the Letter to the Hebrews in the New Testament. He has caught the imagination of both Jews and Christians.

“Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine. (He was priest of God Most High). And he blessed him and said, 'Blessed be Abram by God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth, and blessed be God Most

High, who has delivered your enemies into your hand!' And Abram gave a tenth of everything.” (Genesis 14.18–20).

“The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind, 'You are a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek' “ (Psalm 110:4).

St. Augustine said that this psalm was ‘brief but weighty’. David is king by divine appointment and also priest, not of the hereditary line of Aaron, but again by special divine appointment. Priesthood and kingship are united in Melchizedek. First-century Christians built on Jewish tradition regarding the Messiah. The discovery of scroll fragments from the Jewish Essene community of the first century BC in Cave 11 at Qumran in 1956, in which the chief character is Melchizedek, has given further information. Melchizedek appears as an eschatological (end times) judge who will descend from heaven on the last day, the Day of Atonement on the tenth Jubilee, to destroy the Devil. Melchizedek, then, can be equated with S. Michael, the leader of the heavenly hosts against the powers of evil – or even as a messianic figure who comes to save his people. It is thought to have influenced the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews in the New Testament. The Qumran community liked to elevate early Biblical characters to possess heavenly properties, including Melchizedek who sits with God in His divine council as a divine eschatological priest who rules over the judgement of the good and the evil. The Qumran texts give new insight into worship in Palestine in the first centuries BC and AD. The roles of priest and temple are now seen in some senses more clearly and perhaps idealistically. This theme is alluded to in the Epistle to the Hebrews (the High Priest is named as Jesus) and continues in the Book of Revelation.

The writers Philo and Josephus are contemporary with the Qumran community but were not Essenes and saw Melchizedek as a worthy man but only human. Philo develops both literal and allegorical concepts of Melchizedek, who is referred to as “the great priest of the greatest God.” Jewish opinions (except the Qumran Essenes) disagree with the New Testament Epistle to the Hebrews that Melchizedek was greater than the Levitical priesthood. The Second Temple Period was a flourishing time for extra-Biblical traditions which extended into the early Christian

world. Melchizedek's role as a priest-king allowed his character to become highly adaptable. With the demise of the Levitical priesthood at the fall of the Temple Melchizedek became an attractive alternative. Melchizedek is mentioned in Hellenistic synagogue prayers, for example.

The Epistle to the Hebrews (written 60–90 AD) was probably addressed to a group of Judaeo-Christians of an Essene background to address their lingering attachment to the Levitical priesthood. They were encouraged to see Jesus as High Priest despite His non-Levitical ancestry. Both the texts of Genesis 14 and Psalm 110 were available to the writer of the Epistle and he made an inspired connection between Melchizedek and Our Lord. Melchizedek is first mentioned in the Epistle to the Hebrews (5.5; 5.10) stating that Christ is our high priest designated by God as after the order of Melchizedek (rather than Aaron). The text of Chapter 7 also deserves close study as it tells us important facts about Melchizedek in a closely constructed argument.

S. Clement of Alexandria (c.150–215) was the first to suggest that the bread and the wine Melchizedek offered to Abraham was some type of Communion. Both S. Augustine and S. Jerome agreed with this view, which was to dominate the Middle Ages. Thus the prevailing view at the time was that Melchizedek was an archetype of Our Lord.

Pope Gelasius (492–496) drew attention to the fact that before Our Lord Jesus Christ, Melchizedek was both priest and king, but after Christ emperors or kings could not assume the title of priest, nor did a priest assume royal dignity. The idea was that secular and spiritual authority were to remain separate. This did not stop Emperor Constantine II trying to settle a dispute over the Arian controversy with an imperial edict at the Council of Nicaea in 325, even though he was not yet baptized! He later also took it upon himself to banish Bishop Athanasius in 336. Subsequently Pope Innocent III at the beginning of the 13th century became one of the most powerful popes with claims of temporal power over kings and emperors. A Jewish fellowship meal, of which the Last Supper was an example, has both historical and typological context. The Eucharist may be thought of as a fulfilment of the Old Testament typology, and this was how the concept of Melchizedek found its way

into the Roman Catholic Eucharistic Prayer. The beginnings of the Latin Mass are in almost total darkness and we should note that Melchizedek does not appear in the Anaphora of Hippolytus in the 3rd century. It was during this period that liturgy was changing from Greek to Latin, and also from improvisation based on a structure to a fixed form of liturgical words, during the pontificate of Pope Damasus (366–384). Melchizedek certainly had a place in the Ambrosian Rite by the end of the fourth century with the words *Summus sacerdos Tuus Melchisedech* (“Thy high priest Melchizedek”). There is further testimony from the *Liber Pontificalis* that Pope Leo the Great (440–461) added the words *sanctum sacrificium, immaculatam hostiam* (“a holy sacrifice and spotless victim”). The name of Melchizedek was added to that of Abel and Abraham to emphasise the sacrificial nature of the Eucharist. The old Roman Catholic Eucharistic Prayer has been retained as Prayer I of the modern Roman Rite along with the mention of Melchizedek.

S. Thomas Aquinas is responsible for the liturgical music for the feast of Corpus Christi, which he wrote at the request of Pope Urban IV. It appears he made an evaluation of the role of Melchizedek in the context of the feast. The Christian view of Melchizedek as an Old Testament archetype of Christ is developed for the Feast of Corpus Christi.

Celebration of the feast starts with First Vespers the day before the feast. At the time of Aquinas this started with an antiphon to the psalm *Dixit Dominus: Sacerdos in aeternum Christus Dominus secundum ordinem Melchisedech panem et vinum obtulit* (“Christ the Lord, priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek, offered bread and wine”). So Melchizedek liturgically leads the procession into the feast. Melchizedek was probably not far from the mind of Aquinas when he wrote the sequence *Lauda Sion Salvatorem* and his other eucharistic hymns.

Some Eastern Orthodox Churches make saints of Old Testament heroes. There are icons of Melchizedek which can be on the inside (altar side) of the Royal Doors in an Orthodox church. Melchizedek can be commemorated on 22 May (26 July in the Armenian Church) and the Sunday of the Forefathers, which is two Sundays before Christmas. Biblical scholarship and imagination meet in artistic depictions of

Melchizedek – of which there are many. Some of the oldest depictions of Melchizedek are in the form of mosaics. There are illuminations in the margins of psalters especially related to Psalm 110. In both Greek and Russian Orthodox churches there are a number of icons depicting Melchizedek. Flemish artists from the 16th and 17th centuries painted several pictures of Melchizedek. There are a number of stained glass windows from the 19th and 20th centuries in churches in the United Kingdom and on the Continent that depict Melchizedek.

Thus Melchizedek has been subject to a long, careful study and has fascinated diverse people. From a Christian perspective our main source of information about Melchizedek must be from the New Testament Epistle to the Hebrews but most of us need some help with interpretation. Early liturgical history reveals his introduction into the Canon of the Latin Mass. Melchizedek becomes the mystic icon of priesthood and tries to emulate Our Lord Jesus Christ, our perfect priest, who carries humanity to the heavenly kingdom for all time. This represents our eternal hope, achieved by Our Lord Jesus Christ in His great work at His incarnation, crucifixion, resurrection and ascension: Jesus, the Most High Son of God is the ultimate High Priest, upon whom all believers stake their hope.

This is an edited version of an article by the Rev'd John Gayford SSC (Honorary Assistant Priest of S. Mary's, East Grinstead) for the November 2019 edition of the magazine *New Directions*.

(Illustration: The Meeting of Abraham and Melchizedek, from *The Story of Abraham*, by Gerard de Jode)

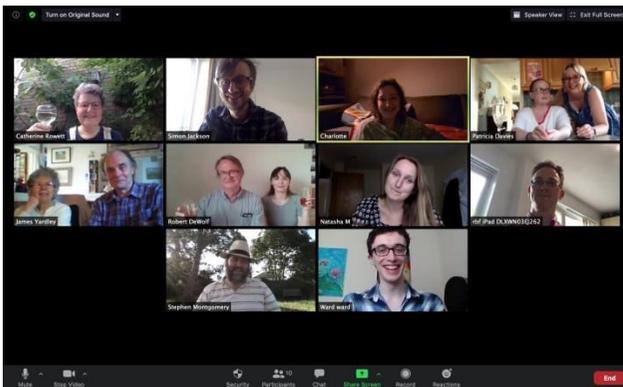
Music Update

by Simon Jackson, Director of Music



It is perhaps the perfect metaphor for the moment: as lockdown restrictions are gradually lifted, and as public worship slowly returns (albeit in a socially-distanced manner, with congregational singing forbidden): glance up to the organ loft, and you will see an instrument shrouded in plastic. My experience of services at LSM at the moment is unlike anything else I've experienced: I play for 'virtual' services, broadcast online, from within a cocoon of polythene, with a priest and a solo cantor in an otherwise empty church filled

with scaffolding. I can see nothing of the church; even the video camera, installed so that the organist can see the conductor, doesn't work. At first I had the ridiculous setup of sitting in the organ loft watching the livestream on Facebook of a service taking place a few feet below me; but the time delay proved too distracting.



The musical life of the church has not, however, gone silent; and throughout lockdown, I've been meeting the Parish Choir and the Choristers on Zoom to run weekly rehearsals.

Strange affairs: again, because of the time delay, singing together is simply not possible, so each of the singers sits at home, their microphones muted, listening to me and the piano and singing along. It's no replacement for singing and breathing together, but it's something. We're the sort of choir who, normally, sing a lot of music on fairly tight rehearsal schedule: so the last few months have proved a good opportunity to work on vocal technique and skills that we don't usually have much time in rehearsal to cover: we've been particularly focusing on sightreading skills, using Solfege (think "Doe, a deer...") which comes with a form of sign language that works well when everyone is on mute but can still be seen on Zoom! Anna, one of our choristers, is also the driving force behind a "virtual choir" recording of a piece called *Syrian Sands*, in aid of the charity Singing for Syrians, to which members of the choir have contributed: when the video is ready I will share it with you all. One of the particular benefits of virtual rehearsals—as with the virtual services—has been the chance to get back in touch with old friends: we've been joined on Zoom by several former members of the choir, living as far abroad as America, Germany, Hong Kong, and Norwich. And the future? Well, as you may be aware, things are slowly returning to something like normal. There has been particular anxiety about singing, an anxiety that perhaps many of you share. I would like to stress that there have been many scare stories in the news, but relatively little scientific knowledge about how well singing helps to transmit this virus. That situation is, thankfully, changing, and important studies are being carried out as I write about how easily Covid-19 is spread by aerosol transmission (aerosols hang around in the air for longer than the larger 'droplets' also produced when we speak or sing), and whether singing exacerbates aerosol production and transmission. The results of these studies should be available in the next few months, and we have to be patient until we know more and can mitigate any risks associated with singing. It is a difficult time for anyone involved in music-making at the moment, not just within the church, but across the performance arts world more generally: please keep us in your prayers as we look for a way to return to performing in the safest way possible. A silenced choir and congregation, a shrouded organ: it can still feel very much like Lent to us at the moment.

Papua New Guinea: The impact of Covid-19

by Richard Chevis

Papua New Guinea's parliament has voted to extend the country's State of Emergency for two weeks. The SoE, enacted by the government in late March to respond to the Covid-19 pandemic, will now expire in mid-June. PNG has only reported eight confirmed cases of the virus so far, but testing efforts have been limited. The Governor for East Sepik, Allan Bird, cautioned that PNG health authorities may be underestimating how many people had been infected by Covid-19 in the country, revealing that doctors who conducted coronavirus antibody testing in his province in four locations revealed that 50 people had tested positive out of 1,153 samples. Research is being conducted by, among others, Chris Hoy, a Research and Policy Fellow at the Development Policy Centre housed in the Crawford School of Public Policy at the Australian National University. Dr Hoy blogs that Covid-19 has had a far greater economic impact than health impact on PNG and the Pacific. There has been extensive commentary about the likely macroeconomic effects of lockdowns and travel bans, but less attention has been given to how damaging the current crisis has been on people's living standards. In this blog, he draws on material to illustrate the potential, short-term country-level impacts of Covid-19 on poverty. Results suggest that the number of people living in extreme poverty in the PNG region could increase by over 40% in the short term.

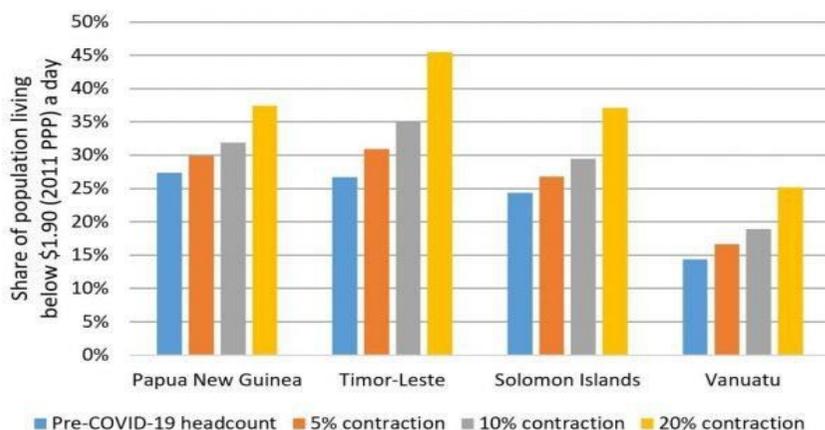
Dr Hoy and his colleagues consider three scenarios – a 5%, 10% and 20% fall in household consumption – to understand how large the potential short-term economic contraction caused by Covid-19 might be, and look at what this means in terms of the number of people living in extreme poverty (that is, living below \$1.90 2011 purchasing power parity a day). These three scenarios correspond with a range of forecasts produced by international organisations (including the International Monetary Fund, Asian Development Bank and Organisation for Economic Co-operation & Development). However, at this stage no one knows for sure how large the negative economic impact of Covid-19 will be, as it depends when restrictions are lifted and how long it takes for economic activity to resume as normal.

To estimate the effect of these contraction scenarios on poverty, they draw on the World Bank's online database of poverty statistics. They explain their methodology as similar to the approach used by researchers at the World Bank who produce global estimates of the potential short-term increase in poverty from Covid-19.

They focus discussion of the potential short-term increase in poverty from the pandemic on the four countries with the highest number of people living below \$1.90 (2011 PPP) a day in the region – PNG, Timor-Leste (East Timor), Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. Prior to the coronavirus, around a quarter of the population in PNG, Timor-Leste and the Solomon Islands, and 14% of the population in Vanuatu, lived in extreme poverty. These rates of extreme poverty are already higher than any other country in Asia, and are around half the average for sub-Saharan Africa.

The scenarios they present in the figure below suggest that the number of people living in extreme poverty in these four countries may increase rapidly owing to the economic impact of Covid-19. Even in their most conservative scenario of a 5% contraction in household consumption, the rate of extreme poverty may increase to over 30% of the population in PNG and Timor-Leste, 27% in the Solomon Islands, and 17% in Vanuatu.

Their severe scenario of a 20% contraction would result in an additional 1.2 million people in the region being pushed into extreme poverty, an increase of over 40% on pre-Covid levels. The impact will be especially sizable in PNG where hundreds of thousands of people would be pushed into extreme poverty and in Timor-Leste where a large share of the population were living just above the \$1.90 (2011 PPP) line prior to the outset of Covid19. Dr Hoy suggests that these estimates point to the fact that there are large shares of the population who live just above the extreme poverty line in the region and that they are vulnerable to falling below it. The scenarios they present are based on potential contractions in household consumption brought about by Covid-19. However, any shock, such as a natural disaster, could have a similar impact.



The blog suggests that these increases in poverty are likely to occur in the absence of government or community transfers. Policymakers have a crucial role to play in ensuring these dramatic short-term increases in poverty do not eventuate, and the most straightforward way to achieve this is through the provision of direct consumption support to households. While such an approach has been adopted by governments throughout the world including Australia, the limited existence of formal social protection systems in PNG and the Pacific makes it much harder to provide transfers to poorer households quickly. Timor-Leste is an exception as in response to Covid-19 the government has provided cash transfers to all households that live on less than \$500 a month.

Dr Hoy's research team suggests there is encouraging evidence that in the few instances where governments in the Pacific have provided emergency support directly to households in response to natural disasters it has helped to mitigate the negative economic consequences. A key lesson from the current crisis for policymakers in the region is that establishing social protection systems that reach the poorest households will ensure that when the next economic shock hits, large segments of the population don't fall back into extreme poverty.

Sources:

PNG Government: www.parliament.gov.pg

Blog: <https://devpolicy.org/author/chris-hoy>

The latest newsletter from the Anglican Church in Papua New Guinea is available on the LSM Website under LSM Global. If you do not have internet access and would like a copy, please contact Richard via the LSM Office and he will send you a colour copy.



Calendar and Intentions

for

August 2020

The list of Thanksgivings and Intercessions offers a focus for our daily prayer, both at the Offices and Mass, and in our personal times of prayer.

The Vicar would be glad of suggestions or additions to the list of daily intentions.

Calendar for August

SAT	1st	S. Peter's Chains, Lammas Day
SUN	2nd	8th SUNDAY after TRINITY
MON	3 rd	
TUE	4th	S. John Vianney, Curé d'Ars
WED	5th	S. Oswald, king & martyr
THU	6th	The Transfiguration of Our Lord
FRI	7th	<i>John Mason Neale, priest</i>
SAT	8th	S. Dominic, religious
SUN	9th	9th SUNDAY after TRINITY
MON	10th	S. Laurence. deacon & martyr
TUE	11th	S. Clare of Assisi, religious
WED	12th	
THU	13th	Jeremy Taylor, bishop & doctor
FRI	14th	<i>S. Maximillian Kolbe, religious & martyr</i>
SAT	15th	
SUN	16th	ASSUMPTION OF THE BVM Patronal Festival
MON	17th	
TUE	18th	of Requiem
WED	19th	
THU	20th	S. Bernard, abbot & doctor
FRI	21 st	<i>Richard Crashaw, priest</i>
SAT	22nd	
SUN	23rd	11th SUNDAY after TRINITY
MON	24th	S. Bartholomew, apostle
TUE	25th	
WED	26th	
THU	27 th	S. Monica
FRI	28th	S. Augustine of Hippo, bishop & doctor
SAT	29th	Beheading of S. John the Baptist
SUN	30th	12th SUNDAY after TRINITY
MON	31 st	S. Aidan, bishop & missionary

Daily Intentions & Anniversaries of death

S. Cyprian's, Sharpeville

1st

Our Parish & People	<i>Vera Harman</i> 2 nd
Those researching Covid-19 vaccines	<i>Roma Gill</i> 3 rd
Parish Priests	4 th
HM the Queen	<i>Geoffrey Lampe, pr.</i> 5 th
That we may be given a vision of glory	6 th
Poets & hymn writers	<i>Olive Robinson</i> 7 th
The Order of Preachers	8 th

Our Parish & People	<i>Irene Morris, Michael Cook</i> 9 th
Deacons	<i>Eric Hindley, pr., Mary Hindley, Norman Clift, pr.</i> 10 th
Female Religious	<i>Arthur Dex, pr., Geoffry Smith</i> 11 th
The sick	<i>Peter Chamier, pr., Susan Yealland</i> 12 th
Anglican theologians	<i>Gwen Woolfenden</i> 13 th
Those persecuted for the Faith	<i>David Paton, Adrian Martinez</i> 14 th
Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham,	15 th

Our Parish & People	<i>Ella Cassell</i> 16 th
Friends of Fulbourn Hospital	<i>Richard Wardill, Geoffrey Smart</i> 17 th
Faithful Departed	18 th
Calcutta Cathedral Relief Service	<i>Eric Loinsworth, Blanche Poulter,</i> <i>Maurice Fretten, Edwin Windeatt</i> 19 th
Vocations to the religious life	20 th
Anglican-Roman Catholic relations	<i>Richard Crashaw, pr.</i> 21 st
Hospitals & Hospices	<i>John Robinson</i> 22 nd

Our Parish & People	23 rd
Stephen our Bishop	<i>Margaret Hutchinson, Elizabeth Wyngard</i> 24 th
S. Cyprian's Sharpeville	<i>William Sanders</i> 25 th
Those unable to have a holiday	26 th
Mothers	<i>Thomas Haynes, Robin Bishop</i> 27 th
Evangelism	<i>Sybil Fleet, Patricia Fleet, Ione Spalding</i> 28 th
Integrity in public life	29 th

Our Parish & People	<i>Helen Culverwell, Tom Chalmers, David Hume</i> 30 th
Papua New Guinea Church Partnership	31 st



Kings, Creeds and Creation: The Writing of Dorothy L Sayers

by Edmund Racher

Dorothy L. Sayers (1893-1957) will be best known for her detective stories written during the 1920s and 1930s, most notably Lord Peter Wimsey. Equally well known (though perhaps not generally linked to Sayers) will be the slogan ‘Guinness is good for you’, which she created whilst working in the London advertising agency S.H. Benson’s. However, her later works mark her as a lay theologian and Christian writer of note, and deserve our attention.

Lord Peter is not himself a Christian – though Sayers has him, rightly enough for his time, interacting with Christian people (*Strong Poison* stars among his allies an elderly lady with ‘a militant High-Church conscience of remarkable staying power’ and the born-again safecracker Bill Rumm) or in Christian places (see the Fenland church in *The Nine Tailors*). Even if we may detect a Christian virtue or its opposing vice in her characters, Lord Peter himself is not a Christian hero. In *The Mind of the Maker* (on which more later), Sayers describes him as an 18th-century Whig and unlikely to end up as a convinced Christian outside the canonical end of her stories, no matter the nature of her own views. I must also mention Sayers’ work as a translator: her versions of *The Song of Roland* and *The Divine Comedy* were both published by Penguin Books. Neither could be taken as her theology in themselves, though her choices in translation and interest in the religion of the Middle Ages do point us towards her chosen interests.

The bulk of her Christian writings came after the late 1930s, well into her literary career. I am dividing these for ease of discussion into fiction and non-fiction. It is her non-fiction I shall discuss first. I think there are two topics to be teased out through this, the first of which being work. Her address *Why Work?*, delivered in April 1942, is a good place to start. Sayers’ Christian writing had begun before the outbreak of war, but war does seem to have spurred her to write ‘in the public interest’ to a greater extent. Indeed, she found in wartime conditions a seam of argument: to

compare the waste of prewar consumption with the conservation required by rationing, and to register the difference between goods produced for profit and arms in wartime ‘None of them is valued for what it will fetch, but only for what is worth in itself ... A war consumer does not buy shoddy. He does not buy to sell again’.

This is not to say that corners were not cut or that no profit was derived from wartime production – Sayers notes that the waste of consumption has been replaced by the waste of the battlefield – but to note that ‘war forces the consumer into a right attitude to the work’. Likewise, part of her 1940 essay *Creed or Chaos?* describes the satisfaction that resulted from men joining the armed forces – asked, for the first time to work not for profit but for the sake of the work.

This was not only a wartime preoccupation. Her 1938 address *Are women human?* (worth reading for her condemnation of men’s braces alone) deals a lot with the frustrations of being forced into the wrong role in life. Unlike her near contemporary C.S. Lewis, who could return to Oxford and become a tutor after frontline service in the First World War, Sayers would go out to earn her living in London after her time at Somerville College; the opulent life of Wimsey was an explicit escape from her own reduced budgets. The address itself is a pointed attack on ‘women’s work’ or ‘the female point of view’; including laying out quite what the scale of women’s work might be if medieval standards were applied.

However, aside from social concerns, it is in 1941’s *The Mind of the Maker* where the nature of work enters most onto theological ground. It concerns itself with the business of creation, both from the human creator and the Divine. Sayers holds that the business of creation has a likeness to the Holy Trinity: the Book-as-Thought, the Book-as-Written and the Book-as-Read, passing between the minds of its readers. Sayers also renders this as ‘Idea, Energy and Power’. Sayers has it that worthwhile creative work is a desirable end for a Christian, but a worthwhile work will not necessarily be explicitly Christian (hence Wimsey above) – nor is it necessary, for instance, that the actors playing angels in *The Zeal of*

Thy House (see below) are especially virtuous. The work itself comes first.

The second category I have chosen to address in her non-fiction is Education. Although Sayers had briefly been a teacher, she wrote about education itself rarely, most notably in the essay *The Lost Tools of Learning*. This lays out the medieval *trivium* of Grammar, Dialectic and Rhetoric and their uses in establishing a system of education that would be rather more adaptable than an individual approach to each subject. Though soberly approached, this was not quite intended as a serious proposal – I understand that at least one school in the United States has taken it up, though I cannot say with what success.

The essay *Creed or Chaos?* however is an education of a different kind. It is an outline of Christian orthodoxy devoted to impressing on the reader the importance of theology - that the Creeds are not ill-made, nor irrelevant to the layman, nor dull. Another essay, *The Dogma is the Drama*, encapsulates this in its title! Sayers writes in response to ignorance and as a spur to further reading. The essay may be called a shorter, denser *Mere Christianity* – though Sayers’ opinion is rather more on display.

The educational aspect of her non-fiction takes us onto the prospect of perhaps her greatest work of Christian fiction, in which the promise of *The Dogma is the Drama* to ‘drag the Divine Drama from under the dreadful accumulation of slipshod thinking and trashy sentiment heaped upon it’ is realised: *The Man born to be King*.

The Man born to be King was not Sayers’ first religious play. That would have been *The Zeal of Thy House*, written for the Canterbury Festival of 1937. Unlike her predecessors (T.S. Eliot’s *Murder in the Cathedral* or Charles Williams’ *Thomas Cranmer*) this deals with the relatively unknown architect William of Sens, who rebuilt the Cathedral choir in 1174. The play is about work and creation and the proper attitude of man towards work and creation, all themes that Sayers would later get the chance to write about more thoroughly. At any rate, it set her on the path of Christian literature.

1942 saw, among other things, the ignominious surrender of Singapore to the Japanese. It is a mark of just what strength of feeling a play can produce that *The Man born to be King* was blamed for this. To tell you just why anyone would make this accusation, I must tell you quite what *The Man born to be King* was. Sayers was commissioned to write a series of radio dramas of the life of Jesus. She took about a year to write these, apparently wearing out at least one copy of the Greek New Testament in the process. Twelve plays were produced, covering the Birth of Christ to the Resurrection. These were broadcast on the BBC Home Service during 1941-2, originally during Children's Hour, but attracting quite a wide audience.

Their controversy came from the fact that they used colloquial language rather than the English of the King James Bible. Even if the words of Jesus are fairly measured, slang – even American slang – drips fairly freely from the lips of the disciples. The plays were condemned by the Protestant Truth Society (among others), rather adding to their publicity – although there was a great deal of positive feedback as well. It is also worth remembering that plays of this kind were a rarity. The depiction of religious figures was banned on stage (though I do not believe this extended to grey-eyed Athena or Odin the Allfather!), with a few exceptions for Church dramas, and all plays were subject to review by the Lord Chamberlain. Radio was not covered by this – though the scripts were still carefully reviewed by the relevant committee of the BBC. The modern language of the plays may have helped in making them popular, but this was not an ‘updating’ of the Gospel narrative. The relationships of 1st-century Judaea are rendered into mid-20th-century English language. Matthew the tax collector is by Sayers’ introduction a ‘contemptible little quisling official’ with a far broader Cockney accent than we might venture to employ in any modern play. The attitude of a Roman centurion to Jewish religious practices is compared to the careful tolerance of a British veteran in India.

These contemporary references may have helped, but other elements cemented the worth of these plays. Among other things, the presence of a few ‘tie-rod’ characters unite elements of the drama, so that the centurion at the Crucifixion appears as a young man in the court of Herod the

Great, serving as an outsider and as a reminder of ‘perpetual menace, the power and prestige of Caesar’. Speaking of Herod, that ‘savage but capable autocrat’. he is put in proper context by Sayers, who seems to have had a copy of Josephus’ *Jewish History* open by her side. The political position of Herod the Great and his successors is far clearer to the audience than it might be simply from an isolated reading of the Gospels. Likewise, the listener attends frequent meetings of the Chief Priest and Elders (including Jesus’ sympathisers) before the events of Holy Week. This is not to suggest them as recurring villains for each episode, but to allow us a sight of their thoughts on the escalating situation.

Other roles have been expanded. Judas Iscariot is present throughout, rather than appearing almost from nowhere at Holy Week, and we get to see his journey from disciple to traitor. As Sayers puts it in her introduction, ‘To choose an obvious crook as one’s follower ... would be the act of a fool; and Jesus of Nazareth was no fool.’ Judas’ betrayal is connected with his pride and with his politics. He is first seen as a follower of John the Baptist, as a hard-minded activist, and he is later approached by the zealot Baruch (who functions as another aspect of Jewish politics). All the Twelve Apostles are seen with human foibles, but his pride is quite the worst of these.

The scale of the drama is constantly human. Miraculous events like the Wedding of Cana or the Feeding of the Five Thousand are depicted, but the Descent of the Holy Spirit at Jesus’ Baptism, or the Transfiguration at the Feast of Tabernacles, are referred to as events that have passed. Peter, James and John discuss the Transfiguration among themselves. Part of this is due to the limits of the medium. It is difficult to depict any kind of action, let alone shining lights from Heaven, on the radio without some sort of artificial-sounding running commentary. We do not get the direct presence of God the Father, the Holy Spirit or the multitude of the Heavenly Host – though Angels do appear, in dreams or in the flesh. This may have been an authorial choice, but I suspect it also lessened the possibility of editorial intervention.

Recordings do exist of most of the original broadcast, and later productions have been made (they are occasionally on BBC Radio 4 Extra). The scripts, published together with Sayers' episode notes, are available. These plays function somewhat like a sermon: the events of the Gospel are told, contextualised, discussed, and a series of principles drawn out from them, though this is all conducted through a drama. Earlier I hopefully established education as a theme of Dorothy L. Sayers' religious writing. This was perhaps the greatest of her didactic efforts, and is still both ornament and use.

Prison Visiting

by Steve Siddall



While reflecting on the plight of a friend in prison, I wondered about the difference between being 'locked up' and 'locked down'. 'Up' is thought to be superior to 'down', but can we say that in this case? Visiting him has been an odd but illuminating experience. For a start, the other visitors, i.e. the friends and families of prisoners, were immensely kind and helpful to first-timers like me, though their ubiquitous tattoos might have led me to a different and false conclusion. I suppose it's the modern version of 'the Blitz spirit': we'd rather not be here, but since we are, we must help each other to make the best of it.

Then there was the Kenyan prisoner working towards an OU degree. My friend had lied that a Cambridge professor of literature was to visit him, so I was able to help this very gentle Kenyan in his interpretation of a poem about war and crime and violence.

Shakespeare tells us that 'there's no art to find the mind's construction in the face', but if there were such an art, I might have wondered that the gentle and kindly prisoners might have been appropriately exchanged with their warders, who generally appeared to be rather hard. Now for a more contentious point: suppose my friend is correct in stating, as he does, that he didn't do it, and that in his case there was a miscarriage of justice? I should add that I have no evidence, one way or the other, to

come to a fair conclusion about this. But the question still remains – what does this possibility do to the process of rehabilitation? As I understand it, no rehabilitation is possible until after the admission of guilt. All sorts of thoughts arise from this predicament.

Prison-visiting is good, but visiting a friend who happens to be in prison is not specially virtuous. The friendship has survived, despite life's vicissitudes, for all those reasons which brought it to life in the first place. We both enjoy meeting each other and there's lots to talk about, as there always was, from books and academic history to Tottenham Hotspur, the team he supports. Nonetheless, I generally visit with an academic former pupil of his, just in case we need to pass the baton of conversation. David is a top Cambridge historian, who knows a lot about politics, but nothing about football. We find that three people meeting is less like an interview and more like a convivial evening in the pub.

Has prison-visiting taught me anything as a Christian? Hard to tell. I've been reinforced in my view that we should all keep our friendships in good order and that it's easy to admire someone who is often suffering a great deal but doesn't want to inflict any distress on his visitors. Even in times of hardship, a lot doesn't change: he still retains his sardonic wit, which helps in the way he responds to the system. He's supported by his intellectual interests of reading and writing, and he's learned how to become good as a water-colorist. I used to take him novels, so that we could have a two-man book club, but now he wants books about God and the Church, having become a Quaker after years of finding most religion to be gibberish. I'm very impressed by his stories of the Anglican chaplain, who spends much time with non-Anglicans and often brings gifts to all and sundry. That sort of visiting is far more virtuous than what I do.

The Shrine of Walsingham

by Daphne Foreman

Four hundred years of silence lay o'er the holy fane,
Yet angels watched and whispered that she should rise again,
And the thousands of souls that long ago had worshipped and adored,
Must have rejoiced to see once more the holy shrine restored.

Here amid green meadows, far from the city's brawl,
Is the replica of the cottage, the house that is home to all;
And the peace of its sanctuary lies softly all around,
And none tread there who can but feel that this is holy ground.

And here the pilgrim finds his God is very real and near,
And falls upon his knees in ecstasy of love and fear:
The stillness of Eternity falls upon him like a balm;
No sense or sound of discord can rise beneath her calm.

And here the restless heart finds peace and empty hearts are filled,
And the throbbing fears of a God-sick world are suddenly,
wonderfully stilled.
Far from the fast-despairing world of suffering and of loss,
She weaves around her precincts the story of the Cross:

The world seems very distant, like a tangled, troubled dream,
And time is lost in timelessness and sight in things unseen:
And here a thousand candles breathe on the holy air
A constant adoration of voiceless, wordless prayer;

And once more men may speak with pride, as in an earlier age,
That they have been to Walsingham, and made their pilgrimage.

An A-Z of Interesting Things

H is for Hallelujah

Hallelujah derives from the classical Hebrew *hallelu* (praise!) and *Jah* (God). It appears, also in its Greek form of *Alleluia*, in hymns, prayers and Psalms; and as an exclamation of joy and gratitude.

Garden News

Some serious clearing work has helped the garden this month. Care was taken not to cut down our rare Asiatic teasel (*Dipsacus strigosus*) thought to be from Asia Minor, the Ukraine or Iran. How it arrived here is a mystery. Some say that it came back with returning crusaders. More likely, its presence has something to do with John Stevens Henslow. Henslow is best remembered as friend and mentor to his pupil Charles Darwin and for inspiring him with a passion for natural history. After ordination, he became Assistant Curate at LSM in 1824 and then Professor of Botany in 1827, reflecting his great ability which came with a passionate interest in collecting plants from far and wide.



More restoration needs to be done before it is time for some autumn planting so let us hope we shall be able to meet in the garden before too long.

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