

# PARISH Magazine

 Croydon  
**Minster** and St George's, Waddon

June / July 2020



*The Eucharist: 'Though we are many, we are One Body'*

**The Virtual Church**

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**Personal Reflections on the Eucharist**

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**Jacopo Tintoretto's 'The Last Supper'**

**What is it like to serve at the Eucharist?**

**Book Review: 'On Priesthood'**

**£1.00**

Note – a suggested price



‘duty and joy’ that represents. Unobtrusive, devoted and well drilled serving really aids the celebration for the whole Church. The standard of serving is something many people commented on having seen Midnight Mass from the Minster, and it’s something all the servers, coordinated by Denise Mead, work hard on and give their all to.

Elaine Cooper also helps us consider what it means to have a role in the Eucharist from her perspective as a Reader (Licensed Lay Minister) and what it has been like to participate in worship remotely.

It was such a painful thing that this year we could not gather to celebrate the Mass of the Last Supper on Maundy Thursday and undertake the Watch in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament. Derry-Anne Hammond presents us with a most vibrant painting of the Last Supper by Tintoretto, which really brings out the activity of that meal, as well as representing heaven touching earth and earth meeting heaven – ‘therefore with angels and archangels’.

So this Corpus Christi we will still be out of church, but the Liturgy will be offered and live-streamed, and though we are many – and spatially dispersed – we are all One Body. Corpus Christi is on a Thursday mirroring the Last Supper (Maundy Thursday), and so we have a chance afresh to ponder the Eucharist and Jesus Christ, the Bread of Life, for which we hunger and are now spiritually, and physically, ravenous.

Although she thought last month’s article was her last one (but we still have her, as the lockdown meant she was not able to move house to begin her retirement), Mother Pat writes about the Feast of Corpus Christi and the vivid language of receiving Christ’s body and blood. It really is though the valedictory article from Terry Drummond, having written book reviews for the magazine for many years. Terry, thank you for your massive contribution (and I hope I don’t drop the baton with my review of Bishop Stephen Cottrell’s new book *On Priesthood*).

I hope this magazine edition both satisfies your hunger in part and whets your appetite for when we can celebrate the Eucharist, in person, together. It is a cracking edition, and thanks, as ever, go to our magazine team for their work.

### ‘DO THIS IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME’

‘Was ever another command so obeyed? For century after century, spreading slowly to every continent and country and among every race on earth, this action has been done, in every conceivable human circumstance, for every conceivable human need from infancy and before it to extreme old age and after it, from the pinnacle of earthly greatness to the refuge of fugitives in the caves and dens of the earth. Men have found no better thing than this to do for kings at their crowning and for criminals going to the scaffold; for armies in triumph or for a bride and bridegroom in a little country church; for the proclamation of a dogma or for a good crop of wheat; for the wisdom of the Parliament of a mighty nation or for a sick old woman afraid to die; for a schoolboy sitting an examination or for Columbus setting out to discover America; for the famine of whole provinces or for the soul of a dead lover; in thankfulness because my father did not die of pneumonia; for a village headman much tempted to return to fetich because the yams had failed; because the Turk was at the gates of Vienna; for the repentance of Margaret; for the settlement of a strike; for a son for a barren woman; for Captain so-and-so wounded and prisoner of war; while the lions roared in the nearby amphitheatre; on the beach at Dunkirk; while the hiss of scythes in the thick June grass came faintly through the windows of the church; tremulously, by an old monk on the fiftieth anniversary of his vows; furtively, by an exiled bishop who had hewn timber all day in a prison camp near Murmansk; gorgeously, for the canonisation of S. Joan of Arc – one could fill many pages with the reasons why men have done this, and not tell a hundredth part of them. And best of all, week by week and month by month, on a hundred thousand successive Sundays, faithfully, unflinchingly, across all the parishes of Christendom, the pastors have done this just to make the *plebs sancta Dei* – the holy common people of God.’

(Dom Gregory Dix, *The Shape of the Liturgy*, 1945)

Fr Andrew

## *The Virtual Church*

When the announcement came that all churches and places of worship were to be closed for the foreseeable future, there was a widespread sense of shock, loss and maybe even despair. In a time of worldwide crisis, the very places we would turn to for support and prayer were suddenly unavailable. How would we cope? Fairly soon an answer emerged in the form of The Virtual Church.

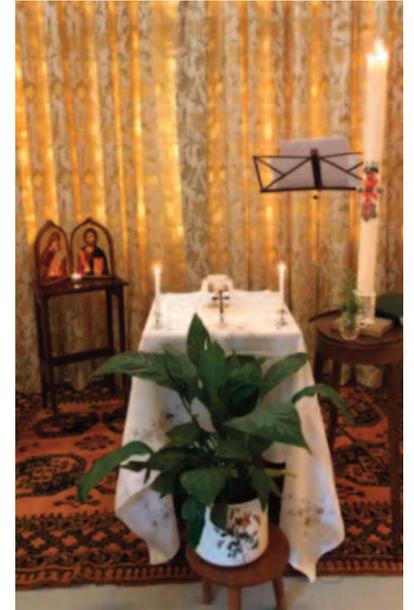
Soon after we moved to Croydon our first son was born and proved to be a bundle of energy. To settle him in the evening, we went for circular walks around the town. One rainy night we passed Croydon Parish Church, as it was then known, and with the lights on and beautiful singing taking place we went in for the first time. Today the church buildings are strangely shuttered and silent as this dreadful virus sweeps through the world.

Living now in the north of the borough where there are very few fellow parishioners, the physical entity of the church buildings has been very important to us over the last twenty years. We regard the Minster as our spiritual home and the church family has supported us through many difficult times.

At the beginning of the lockdown when we all had to cope with separation from our family and friends, the sense of pain and isolation was compounded when it was announced that all church buildings were to be locked down too.

However, despite the physical restrictions, modern technology and the willingness of the clergy and the entire Minster team to continue to minister pastorally and spiritually to us has been a wonderful support in these difficult times. Throughout Lent and Passiontide we have been able to participate fully via the internet in all the regular services from the safety of our own home, and we owe a huge debt of gratitude to everyone involved, especially Fr Andrew and his family.

During Holy Week, for example, all services were streamed live via Facebook and on the Minster website. These included Stations of the Cross, Blessing of the Palms from Fr Andrew's home, Maundy Thursday and Good Friday services, and of course the Easter Vigil and the very special dawn Service of the New Light from Fr Andrew's garden. Ronny and the choir must have worked so hard to synchronise their performances via the Zoom app, because each chorister was in their own home. These are still available on YouTube and well worth listening to. Fr Joe, Fr Alan and Fr John all contributed with homilies, Compline and talks for the younger people. These are all still available on Facebook. If you want to know how to make an Easter Garden with pasta and a coffee mug, that is there too.



Currently midweek and Sunday Eucharists are still streaming live, and if we cannot watch live they can be seen later on in the day. When Morning Prayer, Evening Prayer or Compline are streamed, it is possible to participate at home with the Daily Prayer app available free from your app store. This app can be used to support your own daily prayer life.

How sustaining this has been for us throughout this trial. We very much hope that some form of streamed services can continue to support those who cannot attend the Minster directly. It is also important to remember that while we have always enjoyed freedom to worship, many people in other countries are persecuted for their faith and risk being attacked or killed; Virtual Church can support them too.

**Liz and Laurence Gough**

## Letter from St George's

Hi, I didn't think I'd be writing this again, but 'hey ho', life has changed and I'm still retiring on 31st May. But, from 1st June, I'm a pensioner with House for Duty for 20 hours work (not actually possible with someone like me!); still I'm going to work part-timeish, which means I will have two days off, instead of one, to begin with anyway.

**Corpus Christi** is one of my favourite festivals, but I don't expect that we can all gather together for this celebration; but wouldn't it be really extraordinary if we could, and break this Eucharistic fast we are on?

Pope Pius X, elected 1903, said: 'Holy Communion is the shortest and safest way to heaven.' He said that to encourage the faithful to make frequent attendance at Holy Communion, every day if possible.

In St John 6:51 we read: 'I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, they will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.'

In Genesis 14:18–20 we also have the first mention of bread and wine, in the beginning of the scriptures and therefore part of the history of God's relationship with his people. Jesus gives us a spiritual insight into the idea of Bread and Life, Sacrifice and Blessing. For example, Emmanuel means 'God with us' – in Bread and Wine. A very special bread and wine, which after prayer becomes the body and blood of Jesus, what we call the 'real presence'. Confirmed by St John reporting what Jesus told his listeners – 'Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in them.'

At this present time, so many faithful Christians are unable to be present at the Eucharist in person, and certainly can't receive the Sacrament, either. How painful this must be for so many of our brothers and sisters. This spiritual

deprivation is very hard, especially if one feels that in times of crisis, being present and receiving the Sacrament helps us cope with pain.

I do however realise that it's hard for many Christians to understand that this is a spiritual act of eating flesh and drinking blood. For I and I hope you, too, believe that we are taking Jesus into ourselves every time we receive this sacrament. You see, I don't have any difficulty in saying and believing that once the prayers have been said, the bread and wine has taken on a spiritual identity of Jesus' own flesh and his blood, taken, blessed, broken and given.

Rudolf Otto's expression 'the fascination and mystery of our faith' is encompassed in this whole image of Jesus, 'the Lamb of God that takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those who are called to his supper.' Then we have those wonderful words, 'Lord, I am not worthy to receive you, but only say the word, and I shall be healed.'

Holy Communion is a healing service par excellence.

I was quite shocked when an evangelical Christian accused me of being a cannibal, because I invited them to join us for Holy Communion, and then to share what it meant to each of us, in that for us we believe bread and wine become the body and blood of Christ, so we receive Christ himself into our bodies, which is a vital part of the deepening of our spiritual selves, because of this most precious free gift.

It just shows how we read and understand scripture, we also use tradition and theology in order to understand the spiritual significance of Emmanuel – God with us in flesh and blood – bread and wine.

God made a covenant with his people, the children of Israel; we, too, have this special covenantal relationship with God. Jesus talks of the new covenant – not a contract, but a form of 'living Will'.

A covenant is God's agreement with us where he pledges to bless those who accept and commit themselves to him. The later change to that covenant is to accept Jesus as the Lamb of God, as the final and ultimate sacrifice for our sins.

So we should receive the sacrament as often as possible – at least on Sunday. Those who go through periods of refusing to receive the sacrament because of some inner 'sin' won't get better by refusing this free gift of bread and wine. It's similar to deciding not to eat food anymore because we feel we don't deserve it. Actually they will find themselves more isolated and spiritually ill. It's much better to talk it over with someone you trust. Otherwise we begin to believe that we know better than God by saying that he can't love us because we have sinned. We have all sinned, that's why God loves us, and wants us not to be ashamed to confess our failings and share in his banquet.

The New Covenant is sealed forever by Jesus' sacrifice on the cross, there isn't any other greater way of sealing this very special binding contract. God's love is unconditional, available to every one of us, yes, even the murderer (there must be justice and repentance).

We need to be fed spiritually; without this very special act of love (*agape*) we deprive ourselves of the spiritual nourishment we need for the challenges and experiences that our faith demands. So let's make the most of every opportunity, as the body of Christ in our churches, to eat and drink of the loving sacrifice who takes away the sins of the world.

### ***The Church Times***

Price **£2.50** (of which £1.25 goes to the church)

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*Contact Denise for further details*

Let us pray:

Lord Jesus Christ, we come to this table because you commanded us to do it in remembrance of you.

Not to share in a meaningless ritual, nor to repeat empty words and actions, not to indulge in shallow sentiment do we do it, but because you gave us this memorial for our good.

Lord, we cannot take the bread and wine without remembering that you came to seek and to save the lost, that you gave your life a ransom to many, that you loved us and gave yourself for us.

We cannot take the bread and wine without realising how appalling all our sinfulness is, how it grieved the heart of God, how it cost your very life, your body broken and your blood shed.

We cannot take the bread and wine without seeing that your self-giving is a rebuke to our self-seeking, that your compassion is a reproof to our self-interest, that your love so freely given challenges our self-concern.

Risen Lord, by your spirit you are with us still to challenge, to inspire, to strengthen, to support and to guide.

So by our Communion today, swell within us the springs of pity and compassion, to feel with others in their need. Inspire us to follow your example of humble and patient service, so that you may work in us and through us.

For your love's sake,

Amen

*Mother Pat*

## *What the Eucharist Means to Me*

The Eucharist is celebrated in so many different styles and so many different places. For me it is both a personal and a communal act of worship, a deep connection with my Lord and with my Christian family. It is my commitment to sharing in the body and blood of Jesus Christ – to being wine outpoured and bread broken for others, through His grace to becoming what we receive – the Body of Christ.

As Reader (Lay Minister) on most Sundays I would usually have an active role at the 10am Eucharist – taking my turn on the rota to read the Scriptures, preach, or lead intercessions; preparing the Table with the bread and wine, and regularly assisting with the giving of Communion.



*Photograph: Randall Murrow*

Although this does not stop my personal devotion, it does mean that I have a responsibility to be aware of the action of the liturgy and my ‘cues’, rather like an actor on a stage. It emphasises the communal action – we may be individuals, each bringing our own unique presence and contribution, but each celebration is a group activity. But it can mean that individuals get lost or overlooked in a crowd.

When I attended the weekday services, particularly on a Saturday morning, with a much less active role I felt freed to focus more specifically on the worship with fewer distractions, more silence, to contemplate the awe and mystery. It is still a communal situation, but a more intimate and personal one.

Before the lockdown I had been taking Home Communion to some of the members of our congregation who were housebound and unable to attend the Minster, using already consecrated bread and wine and a special order of worship. This can be an especially humbling and moving occasion – a deep connection with each other in the presence of the Lord in an act of worship which emphasises their continued belonging to the ‘Body of Christ’.

Although the online Eucharist has been excellent and vital, it has felt strange not having that active role. This has given more time and space for personal worship but can make me feel like a passive viewer. So I make sure I participate by adding text responses like ‘Amen’ or ‘Alleluia’ at the appropriate points. For me, seeing the names and responses of others who are also participating, links us together.

I am missing, like all of us, the special ‘holy space’ of our Minster Church, also the chapels at Whitgift Almshouses and Whitgift House, and all the people with whom I have worshipped, and long for the day when we can join together again. Online worship at home, good as it is in the circumstances, just does not have the same feel and atmosphere!

**Elaine Cooper**

# Minster Bible Study Group

The Bible Study Group has been meeting weekly on Wednesday evenings at 7.30pm during the lockdown period using the online platform 8x8, which is similar to Zoom but allows you to have longer meetings. We are a group of 6–8 people who have been studying the Bible together now since the middle of March when lockdown began. Before that we were meeting as a Lent Group at our house in Haling Park Road. We decided to carry on meeting as an online group and have found it very effective.

We began in Lent by studying a course from Churches Together called 'Opening the Scriptures – setting our hearts on fire', which encourages us to identify those passages of Scripture that have inspired us on our spiritual journey and have set our hearts on fire with love for God.

Several of the passages were taken from the Old Testament, beginning with the revelation of God's name to Moses in a burning bush. There was a clear theme throughout the course of being on a journey through the Scriptures of encounter with the God who sets our hearts on fire, culminating with the encounter of the two disciples walking away from Jerusalem on the Emmaus Road with the Risen Lord Jesus who was eventually made known to them in the breaking of the bread:

'Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the Scriptures to us?' (Luke 24:32)

We have developed a particular pattern to our evening which works well as we seek to engage with Scripture with our hearts, our minds and our spirits. We normally begin by lighting a candle in our different homes and using some opening responses. Each week we are encouraged to bring along a different object to use as a focus for the study. We began by thinking about God in creation and used a flower or plant to remind us of the beauty of God that is revealed to us in nature. Later on in the course, when we were studying the passage in St John's

Gospel of Mary at the foot of the cross, we had two bowls of water, one containing salt to represent the tears and the clear water to represent the new life that flows from the foot of the cross.

We use the ancient method of Lectio Divina to reflect on the passage together, where the passage is read out slowly and we then spend time in prayer waiting for a word or phrase to emerge that the Spirit is bringing into our hearts at that time. We then explore what we believe God might be saying to us through this passage and how it speaks to us now in our current situation, as well as trying to understand more of its original context.

To aid us in our reflection we usually listen to a piece of music or song that has been inspired by the passage and use a work of art. For example, when we studied the Emmaus Road passage we used the painting by Caravaggio of the scene where Jesus and the two disciples are gathered around a table and Jesus is breaking bread with them. The utter astonishment on the faces of the two disciples as they realise that Jesus is with them is wonderfully portrayed by the artist in this remarkable painting. We usually end with a poem or prayer that is based on our Scripture passage which again gives us a fresh insight into its meaning.

We have recently been considering, during Eastertide, the 'I am' statements in St John's Gospel and have been following a different course with a similar format. If anyone else would like to join us, we can accommodate a couple more people. Please get in touch with me and I can send you the link to our online platform along with the study pack for the week that I normally email out beforehand.

I hope that you will be inspired to 'read, mark, learn and inwardly digest' the Scriptures and will find them a source of great comfort and strength during these difficult times.

Every Blessing,

*Fr Alan*

## ‘Do This in Memory of Me’



*The Last Supper: Ethiopian Orthodox icon*

When I was growing up, the typical main Sunday service at a Church of England church would be Mattins at 11am, more often than not without a trained choir. The church my parents took me to after I was confirmed (which they had not attended previously) had a Holy Communion service with hymns once a month at 9.30am, and it was here I received communion for the first time on the Easter Day after my confirmation. (The confirmation service had not included communion.)

I found taking communion the most intense experience of my life so far. I was not aware of any reason for that, but I regularly came back from the altar rails weeping. I can now see how this could be explained in a non-religious way – it was a result of my loneliness and timidity, but it was also a gift from God, giving me a sense that there was a larger, more exciting world than the one I knew.

Before I started university, I did not spend time away but stayed at home going through my reading list. I would not have had the confidence to spend time away on my own. During this period I had a terrifying sense of the futility of life which I could not talk to anyone about. Instead of any sense of God, I had an overwhelming sense that without God, life was meaningless and pointless, and the fear that any belief in God was mere wishful thinking implanted in us by biology. However, I had learnt that Christian faith is not dependent on our feelings and I continued to attend church and receive communion.

When I got to university my depression left as I was interacting with lots of people of my own age and having my mind and experience stretched. The college evangelical Christian Union tried to enrol me, but I suspected their approach was very trite, not taking account of my experience of utter nihilism. In time I attended a chaplaincy in the catholic tradition. I had been very wary of catholic worship, suspecting that fascination with the beauty of worship was a frivolous distraction. For a similar reason I have never sought to attend a church because of the standard of the music or architecture, although I very much appreciate both.

At this chaplaincy I saw for the first time mass celebrated with considerable austerity. There were incense, lights and vestments, but there was a central altar and the ceremonial was not fussy. It was the first time I came across the greeting of peace. I had wanted to sink through the floor when I first heard of this, but in practice this helped me out of my shell, no longer self-conscious about physical relationship. The sermons there were by a whole number of often distinguished preachers who engaged intelligently with both contemporary issues and Christian orthodoxy. I remained committed to this place for the rest of my time at university.

There was no kneeling in that chapel, which at first must have disconcerted me given the intense emotion associated with communion. Instead we stood for the prayers as we took part in the central act of Christian worship. I no longer felt so intense and I haven't for a long time.

I began to see that the service was not primarily about communion, although that is its climax. It is an action by the people of God, bringing their prayer and worship to God together with the bread and wine which they receive back as a gift from God. The action is Christ's own action at the Last Supper, taking bread and wine, giving thanks, breaking the bread and distributing the gifts. The service is far better described as the Eucharist, which means thanksgiving, rather than Holy Communion, as communion is only one element in the action. Unfortunately, the word 'eucharist' is a bit of a mouthful and has never really caught on in popular usage. It is a pity that many cannot use without self-consciousness the basic four-letter Anglo-Saxon word which was the earliest usage in the English language, the mass.

The word 'communion' here does not just mean communion of the individual with God, but communion with all our fellow communicants, not just those with whom we have something in common, but all those from very different backgrounds to ourselves. It is not just communion with those present at the altar with us, but all those throughout the world and throughout time, "so that we in the company of all your saints may praise and glorify you for ever".

I could now see that the communion is not a piece of magic worked on the bread and wine by a priest with supernatural powers. Instead it is taking part in Christ's eternal offering of himself, in the Last Supper, on the cross and eternally interceding for us in heaven. The Eucharist is offered by the whole church – lay people do not need to take on special roles – they are exercising their priesthood by participating attentively and prayerfully and joining in the appropriate actions. Furthermore the Eucharist is not just the action of a local congregation but of the whole Church throughout the world and history. The local congregation is connected with the wider church by the priest ordained by the bishop.

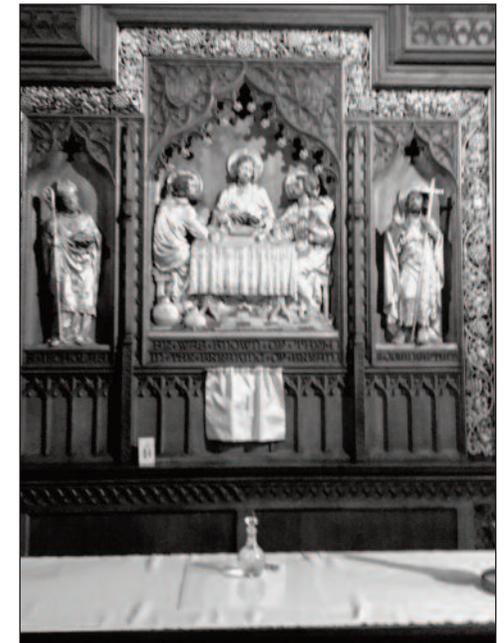
Christ told us to "Do this in memory of me." Unfortunately in the English language now the word 'memory' has a much weaker sense than in Greek or Hebrew. It

means remembering something past and gone. In the Biblical language it is much more than that and rather bringing back into the present – past and present are one. When Jews celebrate the Passover, which is closely related to the Christian Eucharist, it begins by a child asking, "Why is this night different from other nights?" The story of the liberation from Egypt is then recited, saying over again, "This is the night when..." The Exodus is not something that happened a long time ago, but something present now. It is not that an historic event is celebrated, so much as God's saving action now. Christ's saving death and resurrection are not so much represented in the Eucharist, as re-presented and made real for us.

But I have known something of the intensity of my early experience of communion in another way. The sacrament is reserved in churches for giving communion to the sick. At the Minster this is directly behind the altar in the St Nicholas Chapel (*right*), with a light burning near it. The reserved sacrament is also a very suitable and powerful focus for prayer, praying in the presence of the body of Christ as he has promised.

For a time I attended a church in the East End of London. It was not at all well attended on Sunday, but on Maundy Thursday, when the sacrament was placed on a side altar for communion on Good Friday, we

managed to keep a vigil before the sacrament all night. I found this an overwhelming experience. There have been a number of times visiting strange churches when I was anxious, yet coming across the reserved sacrament I felt hope



and happiness. This is in no way related to the beauty or antiquity of the church building.

In the Middle Ages the feast of Corpus Christi, meaning the Body of Christ, was celebrated on the first available Thursday after the Easter season, Thursday being the day of the Last Supper. The main celebration was a procession outside the church with the priest carrying the sacrament. This is a powerful symbol of how Christ is in the midst of his pilgrim people, who in turn are the Body of Christ, as St Paul continually reminds. Devotion to the reserved sacrament is powerful but it is a serious misunderstanding not to relate it to the action of the entire Eucharist.

The scholarly Anglican monk Gregory Dix wrote a very influential book called *The Shape of the Liturgy*. Towards the end of the book he has a famous and beautiful passage writing about the words “Do this in memory of me”. It is based on the identification of the Body of Christ as both the Church and the sacrament.

“Was ever another commandment so obeyed? For century after century, spreading slowly to every continent and country and among every race on earth, this action has been done in every conceivable human circumstance for every conceivable human need from infancy and before to extreme old age and after it, from the pinnacles of earthly greatness to the refuge of fugitives in the caves and dens of earth. ... And best of all, week by week and month by month, on a hundred thousand successive Sundays, faithfully, unflinching, across all the parishes of Christendom, the pastors have done this just to *make* the holy common people of God.”

**Jon Blanchard**

## **‘Though we are many, we are one body, because we all share in one bread.’**

As members of Croydon Minster, we remember being taught this quote in communion practice: ‘Though we are many, we are one body, because we all share in one bread.’ This meant that since there is one loaf of bread, we who are many are one body because we all share the one loaf of bread.

The lockdown has given us all the opportunity to spend more time with our loved ones and maybe do things we never really had time to do. But what the lockdown hasn’t changed is the strength of our community and the kindness we all share with our neighbours and friends at this tough time. The power of being apart has brought us all together in a weird but wonderful way, and technology has made it all so simple and fun.

For many years, the Eucharist has taught us to come together as one in the body of Christ (the body being the church) and celebrate his never-ending love, at a time when it is not entirely wise to gather in the church. But it is possible for us to demonstrate God’s love to those in our community and to those we love and care about. Although we may not be together at mass, we are brought together by Father Andrew and his family’s fantastic Facebook live Eucharist, which has allowed us to not only to be part of the Easter celebration but also to continue our journey with Christ.

Coming from a Christian family, the lockdown hasn’t entirely changed our attitude to our commitment to Christ, in fact it has brought us together and permitted us to find new ways in which we can continue to manifest our love for Christ. As a family, we have thought of different ways in which we can expand our religious activity and we have had many ideas, including broadcasting our own mass, this idea is still something we are considering. My siblings and I have discussed how the lockdown may have affected our faith and that of many Christians all over the world, and we have concluded that it must be hard for those who rely on being

part of a church community to get on in life now that they can't be part of a congregation. The lockdown has prevented us from things we were able to do such as meeting our friends and hugging our loved ones. In fact, through it all we are beginning to see the different benefits that the isolation can bring. We know that it is especially difficult for families in flats, as they don't have access to private gardens like some of us do.

Another problem that the lockdown has brought is the difficulty of home-schooling, especially for those important year groups who had exams to take this summer. The stress and anxiety this has caused both the students and their parents cannot be overestimated. In our home we are having mini lessons in order to remember important topics and be one step ahead when the academic year begins again. We must continue praying that the lockdown ends soon so we can all be together once again and begin to live our relatively normal lives.

Matthew 19:6 says, 'So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore, what God has joined together let no one separate.' This can be interpreted in many ways, but for us this means: although we may not all be together and present in the house of God, let no one separate the bond and fellowship we all share as brothers and sisters in Christ. This message is predominant especially as we are all in the same situation of battling the Coronavirus. As we stand outside our homes every Thursday and clap (while Dad plays his African drum) for the NHS and all those who are risking their lives to fight and win this battle against the Coronavirus, we are reminded that the distance between us doesn't decrease our faith and commitment to Christ and our commitment to one another. In fact, it gives us an opportunity to exhibit our faith and at the same time be role models to those who may not have the same chances to display their belief. Before the communion is given, we all declare, 'Though we are many, we are one body, because we all share in one bread.' The lockdown demonstrates that. Therefore, we must all stay connected as a community and have faith in the Lord, for he works in mysterious ways.

**Vannessa, Villas and Vera Atigla**

## **Parish Magazine Committee**

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**Deadline for the August / September issue: Thursday 23 July 2020**

**Please note:** The views in the articles of the magazine reflect the opinions of the writers and not necessarily those of the editorial board.

**Editor's Note:** Until this year, each issue of the magazine has been produced by a single editor. Rodney Vaughn, Frank Ip and I have taken turns to produce the bimonthly issues. However, Rodney and Frank have both recently decided to step down from the editing role after many years of dedicated service.

These changes have led to a restructuring of the magazine production process, with responsibilities being allocated in a different way. Rodney is staying on the team to work with Fr Andrew on commissioning articles, and I shall be responsible for the editing and layout of every issue. We welcome Alice Bishop and Craig Holmes to our team as proofreaders. Rodney is also continuing to liaise with local businesses which advertise their services in the magazine.

We would love to extend our pool of magazine contributors, so if you are interested in writing for the magazine, please get in touch with me, Rodney or Fr Andrew for a chat.

**Liz Watkins**



***The Last Supper, Jacopo Tintoretto, 1594*** (365cm x 568cm)

When most people think of depictions of the Last Supper, many will picture Leonardo da Vinci's late 15th-century mural in Milan, however the image I have chosen is *The Last Supper* by Jacopo Tintoretto. This large oil painting is displayed in the sanctuary of the Basilica di San Giorgio Maggiore, Venice, a pristine white building, solemn and peaceful, where this dark, energetic and almost mysterious scene can have maximum impact.

Tintoretto painted the Last Supper several times during his artistic career. His earlier works depict the scene from a frontal perspective, with the figures seated at a table drawn horizontally to the viewer, Christ at the centre of the painting, following the convention observed in most paintings of the Last Supper, including Leonardo da Vinci's masterpiece. This version, one of Tintoretto's final works, departs drastically from this setting, giving us an untraditional version of the

subject. Here there is no symmetry. Tintoretto has set the event as though taking place in a Venetian Inn, making the scene possibly more naturalistic to the viewer.

However, whilst in some ways making it more naturalistic, Tintoretto has added elements of the divine, using light as central to the understanding of this painting. Whereas Leonardo uses natural light, with Christ framed by a window, here Jesus is seen glowing from beneath a brightly shining halo. Tintoretto has used only two light sources in an otherwise very dark painting. In addition to Christ's halo, to the upper left is a lantern, lighting the room with flames and smoke. But look carefully – something else is coming from this lantern. Angels are illuminated and can be seen floating all over the ceiling, a symbol of divine revelation. There is a spiritual symbolism apparent, as though the scene is lit by the Holy Spirit.

Whilst Leonardo showed only Christ and his disciples, in a calm and almost serene setting, Tintoretto has produced a scene full of energy and drama. Rather than the disciples directing their attention to Christ as the central figure, here they are reacting and talking to each other. We see them celebrating that they are able to share a meal with their friend Jesus after his forty days in the wilderness, completely ignorant of what the following week may bring. Whilst at the same time, Tintoretto has captured the literal enactment of the Eucharist. Christ has blessed the bread and broken it, and has now stood up and turned to offer it to his disciples.

In his *Last Supper*, Tintoretto has provided an active, human occasion. If we look away from the main event, we can see servants serving food and taking dishes from the table, a woman in the foreground reaching into a basket, and to the left of her a cat also looking into the basket hoping for a tasty morsel. Whilst the title of the painting indicates the very solemn event taking place, at the same time, it is surrounded by elements simply not important to the story, but which make it more real than the simple, balanced image Leonardo gives us.

**Derry-Anne Hammond**

## What is it like to serve at the Eucharist?

*We invited our serving team to share their thoughts...*

I was in my early twenties when I eventually joined the serving team at the Minster, fulfilling an ambition that started when I was seven, being told I couldn't be a server because I was a girl! Even now, standing at the West door, waiting for the organ to play, I still get a lump in my throat and a rush of adrenaline as I start to walk down the aisle with the procession. The movements are like second nature to me now, but I still get nervous and anxious that I may do something wrong, or be in the wrong place. (First rule of serving: never be conspicuous or draw attention to yourself!) But it is serving at a Eucharist that is such an honour and privilege.



*Photograph: Randall Murrow*

Assisting the priest to prepare the altar for the communion can have a very profound meaning when you are personally involved in the preparation. I particularly feel this when acting as a single server with a priest at a quiet said service in the chapel. There is a special bond between you as you prepare together. Each time I serve at the Eucharist I use the act of preparation to pray that I may become part of the body of Christ, broken in service to Him, that I may become a chalice, filled with God's love to share with others. I never feel this as strongly as a passive observer in the congregation. When I am standing so close

to the altar with nothing to do but hold a candle, I let the familiar words of the Prayer of Consecration... 'It is our duty and our joy at all times'... envelop me, and I become part of the prayer and it becomes part of me and who I am.

I've been serving at the Minster now for over 40 years and I know I'm getting on a bit. This little grey-haired old lady must look very out of place among all the young teenagers, but I would like to think that one or two of them may grow up with a lifelong love of serving that I have enjoyed. I love working as a team with the youngsters, and feel proud to see them grow in stature and confidence. I absolutely dread the day when I can no longer carry out my duties and I have to finally hang up that familiar, precious white alb that means so much.

**Susan Williams**

I have been serving for about four years, since I was eight. I used to carry the incense boat, but recently I have started to train as a First Candle. I feel proud to be doing a duty for God in ways like preparing the altar. I enjoy helping to get the bread and wine ready for communion. I am not confirmed yet so I do not take communion myself, but I hope I can be confirmed when the church is open again. I like standing close to the altar holding a candle during the Eucharistic prayer, I feel calm and peaceful.

At Christmas I had a special serving job to do at Midnight Mass, which was broadcast on BBC 1 live. I had to light the Christmas candle on the Advent wreath. Although it was tiring to stay up until after midnight, which I would not normally do, I felt excited to have this special job to mark the day when Jesus was born.

**Toby Watkins**

I remember the day when Denise came into our Kingfisher meeting to tell us about serving and invited us to join the serving team. I would have been about eight, and I liked the idea of being part of the service with other children my age. All my friends

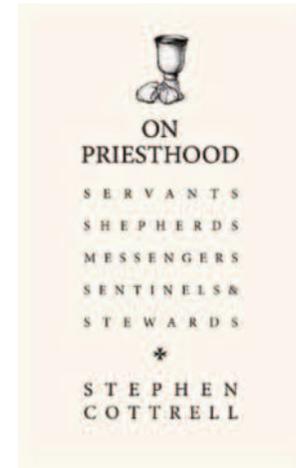
were beginning to join groups, either becoming part of the Choir or the serving team. Although I enjoyed singing, I couldn't join the Choir because the weekday rehearsals clashed with some of my other activities, so I decided to become a server.

At first I carried the incense boat, then after a few years I trained for Second Candle duties, becoming an acolyte. (This was in the days when we had more people in the serving team than we have now, so we used to have two pairs of acolytes serving in the Sunday 10am Eucharist.) More recently I have trained for First Candle duties. For me our serving team is like a family of different generations. The youngest members are training to be acolytes, and sometimes also carry the incense boat; my generation (the teenagers) are acolytes and are also learning other roles such as thurifer and crucifer; and the adults, who know all the roles very well, look after us all, teaching us and reassuring us if we are not sure what to do.

As I have grown older, I have found that the way I think about my role as a server at the Eucharist has changed. When I was little, I used to worry a lot about getting the movements right and not making a mistake that could interrupt the service, and I probably thought more about learning the routine than about what it meant to me as a Christian. I am still very aware of the importance of getting things right so that the service runs smoothly, but I feel as if I am closer to God when I play a more active part in the service. I especially enjoy the preparation of the altar, being close to the bread and wine which are central to the whole Eucharist service.

At our televised Midnight Mass I was given a special role that I had not had before, similar to being a subdeacon, assisting the priests at the altar. It was a great honour to be chosen, but I was quite nervous. The BBC producer was very particular about how I should hold the book and turn the pages, and at times it felt like taking part in a performance rather than a service. Fr Andrew told us all to remember that although the filming was important, the service wasn't all about that, it was about worshipping God. I try always to remember that this is what my role as a server is about.

**Charlie Watkins**



## Book Review

*On Priesthood: Servants, Shepherds, Messengers, Sentinels and Stewards*

Stephen Cottrell

(Hodder and Stoughton, 2020)

This new book on priesthood gives a clear and refreshing account of aspects of what it means to be a Christian priest today. In particular it reflects on key concepts from the Ordinal (the form of service for ordaining priests) that are distinctive to the Church of England.

Stephen Cottrell is Bishop of Chelmsford and soon to be the next Archbishop of York. His reputation is as one of the most gifted Christian communicators of our times. I have had the privilege, whilst I was training as a priest, of being on a week-long mission with him in Sunderland. I witnessed his communication skills first hand. I also saw just how deep his own priestly spirituality is, with the Eucharist and Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession) at its heart. (It was one of the most moving sights of my life to see around a dozen priests, at the close of an evening in which Bishop Stephen had spoken on the Christian life, hearing confessions as men and women queued up to turn afresh to Christ having been estranged from the Church.)

You might suppose that a book called *On Priesthood* is for the 'professionals', those 'in the Church'. Well, it certainly is for those 'in the Church' if we understand that – as we should – as meaning all the baptised. To be baptised is the prior and fundamental calling for all Christians, some of whom may be called to be priests or any variety of different callings. We are reminded that scripture calls the Church a 'royal priesthood' and that we are a 'priestly people'. This

reminds us that we can have as high a doctrine of the priesthood as we like, as long as our doctrine of baptism is higher. As St Augustine put it, 'I am a Christian *with you and a bishop for you*'.

Unfortunately, the book's message is somewhat undermined by the blurb on the back, which suggests that 'it is written for those considering ordination as well as those already in ministry'. Bishop Stephen's position is that priesthood is for the whole church and understanding it matters to us all, not just the ordained. This point is captured by Bishop Philip North, Bishop of Burnley, who comments, 'In a Church that is losing confidence in the language of priesthood, it is a pure pleasure to find a book that is so clear and joyful about the priestly life and yet upholds the centrality of the ministry of the baptised'.

The heart of the book is a series of addresses given to those to be ordained priest in the days before their ordination. These addresses reflect on the biblical images of servant, shepherd, messenger, sentinel and steward (the last three of which were innovations introduced into the Ordinal by Archbishop Thomas Cranmer in 1550). Otherwise Anglican priesthood stands in the catholic notion of priesthood effected by the laying on of hands by the bishop and commissioned to preside at the Eucharist, to absolve the penitent of their sins, to bless and to lead and guide the church. Priesthood should never be individualistic but profoundly rooted in the whole, the church catholic.

Part Three of this relatively short, but richly packed book ends with two very powerful chapters on 'Carrying the Cross' and 'Guarding the Heart'. These chapters remind us that the priest, like Simon of Cyrene, who helped carry Christ's cross, also bears the pains of the people of God, and that in the breaking of bread we are taken to Christ's sacrifice for us all. It also reminds us that the priest must pay attention to the interior life as much as anyone in the Christian family, not least so as to be a good model of receiving the refreshment that comes from our God who gives us the Sabbath rest, so that we find value in our resting as much as in our doing.

As well as seeing priesthood as bubbling up from the life of the baptised, Bishop Stephen also reflects finally on episcopal ministry, the role of the bishop. The bishop, he reminds us, oversees the life of the whole church, laity and clergy, but ultimately is someone who is led too: 'O God, give the church leaders who know how to be led, and then following in Christ's footsteps, we will find our way to joy'.

This book is a great one for personal reading and reflection and also group study. This book gives a vibrant, refreshing vision for the whole church, seen through the lens of priesthood. And who knows, it might even help someone – you?! – to discern their own vocation more deeply, and possibly even as a priest.

*Fr Andrew*

## PARISH RECORDS

### **Croydon Minster**

**R.I.P.**

June Hawke, Paul Mead, Harold Blaquiére,  
Jane Davey, George Mitchell, Brian Lown, Rosina Hutchings

### **St George's**

**R.I.P.**

Brian Thorpe

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Information is also available from our website – **[www.eldonhousing.org](http://www.eldonhousing.org)**

## Thanks, and goodbye

At a staff meeting at what was then Croydon Parish Church in the early 1990s, a discussion took place on the possibility of a Parish magazine. The outcome, of course, is known to all who are regular readers of what is now the Minster magazine. At the meeting I offered to submit a book review and occasional articles; the rest, as they might say, is history.

I have contributed at least a book review to 98% of the issues published over the years since the first edition. I've no idea how many books this constitutes, all I can say is that it is a lot. I have always tried to find a book that may be of interest to the readers, mainly theological/religious, with an occasional novel such as J.K. Rowling; the intention being to share insights that might be of interest to the reader, with the proviso that it was a book that I'd enjoyed.

It's hard to gauge how reviews were received, apart from the occasional comment from individuals that the reviews were enjoyed. A review can have the occasional spin-off, such as the instance of a review (in a different magazine) when I was asked if a copy of the review could be given to the author. The book was by a Sri Lankan author, not someone I was likely to meet. The request was made by a Sri Lankan whose family live in the UK, who was a member of the governing body of the Church at home and who knew the author well.

All things must come to an end, and after what must be over 25 years, I am standing down from submitting reviews. After just over 30 years in Croydon, my wife and I are hoping to move to a new home in early 2021. We are currently hoping this might be in Yorkshire.

The first 15 years were spent on linking the Church to public policy, at first in Croydon and later across the Episcopal area. Throughout this time, CPC (as it was known) was my spiritual base as an honorary member of staff. Subsequently I went on to be Bishop Tom's chaplain, followed by policy advisor to Bishop Christopher, who ordained me as a Distinctive Deacon in 2016.



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# Times of Services

**\*ALL PUBLIC WORSHIP IS CURRENTLY SUSPENDED\***

## **Croydon Minster**

Morning Prayer, weekdays (excluding Tuesday), 8.30am

### **Sunday**

8.00am - Eucharist

10.00am - Sung Eucharist;

Creche (ages 0 – 4), Kingfishers (4–10) and Blue Door Group (11+)

6.30pm - Choral Evensong

### **Monday**

11.00am - Eucharist

### **Tuesday**

8.30am - Eucharist

9.00am - Morning Prayer

11.00am - Eucharist

5.30pm - Choral Evensong sung by the Boy Choristers \*

### **Wednesday**

11.00am - Eucharist (Book of Common Prayer)

5.30pm - Choral Evensong sung by the Girl Choristers \*

### **Thursday**

7.00pm - Choral Evensong (men's voices) \*

### **Friday**

11.00am - Eucharist

### **Saturday**

10.00am - Eucharist

\* Term time only

## **St George's, Waddon**

### **Sunday**

10.00am - Parish Eucharist, Noah's Ark (ages 5–11)

### **Thursday**

10.00am - Eucharist with Discussion (Traditional Language)