

Society for Ecumenical Studies

Catholic Learning: Explorations in Receptive Ecumenism

Part One of a Report on the International Colloquium, 12-17 January 2006, Ushaw College. University of Durham

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Twelve members of the Society took part in the University of Durham's five day international colloquium for 150 invited ecumenical theologians, practitioners and ecclesiastics. *Catholic Learning: Explorations in Receptive Ecumenism*. The report which follows is very much a personal impression rather than a formal account. I apologise if comments or interpretations prove unfaithful or unfair. I hope they do not. It was an exhilarating and ground-breaking conference to which every speaker contributed imaginatively and generously. I am grateful to Dr Paul Murray, our member who convened the colloquium, for allowing me to prepare this report for members of the Society. A collection of essays will be published later in 2006 as the official record of proceedings. Later in 2007 or early in 2008 there will be a follow up conference to take the ideas further forward.

Introduction

Durham's Theology Department, with its historic strengths in the study of Biblical theology, Reformation divinity, Classic Anglicanism, Patristics and modern Eastern Orthodoxy, and the philosophy of religion, has traditionally remained close to the life of the worshipping and witnessing Church. Unlike some British Theology Departments, it has maintained its sense of service for the body of the Church, both in the formation of ordinands and lay vocations, notably through the Church of England's Cranmer Hall and the Methodist Church's Wesley Study Centre, both at St John's College; the North East Institute for Theological Education at St Chad's College (itself a former Anglican theological college); and the Roman catholic seminary at Ushaw. Traditionally, too, faculty members have been active in pastoral care, in Church life and in teaching ministry. There has always been a formal link as well between the Department and the Cathedral Chapter. This body of study specialisms, reflecting the variety and character of the mainstream historic Christian traditions in contemporary Europe, has grown to constitute informally a genuinely ecumenical theology study centre. This has become more complete recently with the addition of a Centre for Catholic Studies to bring together the Catholic strands in the Church History courses, Catholic theological teaching (in association with Ushaw especially) and a focus on issues currently facing the Catholic Church, not least in questions of ecclesiology and the place of the Church in the modern world. Dr Paul Murray, our member who is director of the new Centre, organised the colloquium which was very much its inaugural event.

The Colloquium was principally convened, however, to mark the University's conferral of a degree of Doctor of Divinity on Walter Cardinal Kasper, President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, in recognition of his lifelong achievement in advancing the ecumenical movement from the starting point of Catholic theological principles; in enabling greater awareness of Catholic ideas, terms, categories and movements as they affect the work for unity; and in developing

a refreshed, apologetical and consultative method not only for official discussions – especially at crisis points – but also for how the Catholic Church might receive from other Christians in declaring its own faith and even learn how to meet them half way, by doing some of the spade work needed to help them to understand Catholics in return.

These themes not only attracted the presence of Kasper for the opening sessions, but also the active engagement throughout of three Catholic diocesan bishops, two of them from England, Bishop Kevin Dunn of Hexham & Newcastle and Bishop Michael Evans of East Anglia at Norwich (to give his full title). Bishop Tom Wright, Anglican Bishop of Durham, declared towards the end of the conference his wonder at the initiative of a genuine listening exercise by Catholics, intent on learning both from the drawbacks in Church governance systems in other traditions and features of potential improvement in the future. Over the five days, we looked at what could thus be recovered or re-received from ancient models; or drawn from the implicit apostolicity of post-Reformation systems which may look ‘non-Catholic’ in form but which could preserve essential principles less outwardly apparent in modern Roman Catholic structure, no thanks to each side’s mutual separation; or learned from the life of the Church in all so many of its groupings and traditions in the face of the demanding circumstances of contemporary, secularising society and the shift of Christianity’s strength away from the first and new worlds.

The participants – Roman Catholics

Most participants were Roman Catholics, representing a wide range of approaches from Canon Law (e.g. Dr Ladislav Örsy SJ), through Church History (Professor Eamon Duffy), Ecclesiology (Dr Paul McPartlan, Catholic University of America; Professor Joseph Famerée SCJ, Louvain-la-Neuve), Spirituality (Fr Philip Endean SJ), Pastoral Theology (Dr Ruth Reardon, Association of Interchurch Families; Dr Clare Watkins, Margaret Beaufort Institute), Systematic Theology (Professor Nicholas Lash), those charged with official functions in dialogue (Bishop Michael Putney, Co-chairman of the International RC-Methodist Dialogue; Mgr Donald Bolen, Pontifical Council; Sr Cecily Boulding OP; Sr Lorelei Fuchs SA; Professor Hervé Legrand OP) and mission, to Catholic journalism (John Wilkins, The Tablet; Thomas Reese SJ). Archbishop Mario Conti of Glasgow and Bishop Tom Williamson, auxiliary bishop from Liverpool, were also participants. A media criticism was that by and large the Catholic participants were ‘left of centre’. I did not think this was entirely accurate at the time, not least as I heard very little that was not in direct accord with the letter or spirit of official teaching (as far as that goes), or (going further into the future, or back into the tradition for the purpose of re-reception) argued on demonstrably catholic, orthodox principles. My personal feeling is that those who one might describe as ‘right of centre’ (or further), those who perhaps perpetuate the *intégriste* view of the Catholic Church, taking Vatican I out of context and its proper place in Church history and doctrine, are those who have the looser contact with Catholic ecumenical and ecclesiological theory. Besides, the colloquium was not meant to be an exposition of conservative interpretations of Catholic order. The reason that it was not held in public was precisely to allow explorations by Catholics – many experts, all committed, as loyal Catholic ecumenists - with the help of penetrating reflections back from ecumenical friends and partners. I was forcefully reminded that Paul Couturier prayed to Christ for unity ‘according to your will, according to your means’, indicating that, however ecumenically advanced we become, there is something beyond our current formulations and confessions which both more authentically defines them in their respectiveness and completely reveals their essential and inevitable (because Christ has prayed for it) unity. So, for the Catholics anyway, it would not be about negotiating a schematic for reconciling currently incompatible systems, but identifying what essential and distinctive of (for

instance) Methodism or Orthodoxy can or should also be true of Catholicism, but is not sufficiently to the fore in it; and so consciously and gratefully appropriating it. In the same spirit it is about identifying what essential and distinctive of Catholicism can or should also be true of (for instance) Anglicanism or Reformed Churches, but is not sufficiently to the fore in them, and so in humility and fraternally offering it as a free gift. This ecumenical tradition is neither recent to Church history nor is it a threat to the rightful teaching authority of any Church body; it neither subverts principles, nor deflects the development that is true to them. Couturier proposed a spirit of mutual 'spiritual emulation' between different Christians inseparably bound together on a course ('*élan*') of '*parallélaboration*' towards unity. These concepts lie directly behind that of spiritual ecumenism with which he re-invented the Week of Prayer in 1933 and which was expressly commended in *Unitatis Redintegratio* at Vatican II. Perhaps, as has been argued, these categories belong to the aspirations of a different age and are less relevant given the completely changed conditions and different challenges both for the Churches and society globally and in Europe over 70 years later. However, the idea of Catholic learning is surely true to the same spirit and receptive ecumenism perhaps better explains the nature of the tasks we need to set ourselves in all Church traditions and communions if we are to experience *élan* into a Unity which is not only true to the entirety of Christianity in our hands under Providence, but which is spiritual in motivation as well as in the eschatological objective it would reveal and realise.

The participants – Eastern Christians

The dialogue with Eastern Churches was strongly represented by many Catholic experts, as well as the distinguished contributions of the Orthodox priests, Archimandrite Ephrem Lash and Professor Andrew Louth. There were only two Eastern-rite Catholics (including Dom Thaddée Barnas OSB, editor of *Irénikon*, from Chevetogne). It was perhaps to be regretted that to the Eastern aspect of the exploration were not added the voices of native Eastern Christians.

The participants – Anglican Christians

Anglicanism was powerfully represented by the Bishop of Durham, Dr Nicholas Sagovsky, Professor Stephen Sykes, Dr Mary Tanner, Dean John Arnold, Prebendary Paul Avis and many others, including Bishop John Flack of the Anglican Centre in Rome. Interestingly, while among these figured those positively yet not uncritically disposed to the Roman Catholic Church - or at least to progressive dialogue with the Roman Catholic Church - from liberal, Evangelical and Catholic Anglican quarters of different shadings, it was interesting to hear no one from that small but historically influential tradition within Anglicanism which commends a corporate growth into closer communion with the Roman See, but which is currently feeling isolated and in weakened communion within its Anglican home over such issues as women's ordination and aspects of moral theology. There are thus, in the mosaic of ecclesiological learning and receptive ecumenism between Anglicans and Roman Catholics, Anglicans who look more to the Roman side of the Anglican-Roman Catholic dialogue rather than to their own. Perhaps it would have been good for an exploration of Catholic learning to hear a reasoned ecumenical argument not so much calling for the adoption of other traditions' structures and theological bearings as, in surveying their own shortcomings, advocating the benefits of what Papal Catholicism as it has evolved offers most Roman Catholics – largely to their satisfaction – and can thus offer other kinds of Christians: by how much would the sacrifices be outweighed by these benefits? This case was not put, although speakers from all sides praised the strengths of Catholic cohesiveness and the international structures able to withstand local, transitory or cultural conditions for the sake of the universal into in the future. Perhaps it goes back to most of the Catholic participants' being versed in ecclesiological principles which call for a return to

sources, re-reception of beliefs in the Tradition recently neglected but now needed again, and the inevitable need therefore to face changes as a result. The aspiration for 'reconciled diversity' as a pattern for all churches' unity, echoing Beauduin's famous proposal for an Anglican church 'united, not absorbed', one trusts is no more wishful thinking than it would be a compromise acceptance of the most that can be achieved; after all, it presents a tough challenge to a 'multiplicity in unity' that Anglicans in England and across the world are really struggling either to retain or to achieve. There are some vital lessons to be drawn from this as Anglicans of all shades of belief seek a resolution that is not merely about the integrity of internal structures or preserving the unity of the Anglican communion, but that dynamically serves the wider unity of the Church as a whole. Recognising how difficult these burdens are for Anglican friends of different opinions, still the experience of strains placed on an existing and historic model of reconciled diversity for a 'beloved sister' warrants thoughtful consideration as Catholics learn how to encompass complementary opposites. More on this later.

The participants – Free Church Christians

There were only three or four representatives of the Reformed Churches, which meant that less weight was given to insights from congregational and Presbyterian patterns of governance and structure or of pastoral and sacramental ministry. The importance of lay eldership and of diaconate in these traditions, of lay responsibility for Church authority and of the nature of the ordained ministry and its relationship with *episkope* figured regrettably rarely. Although, however, the Methodist Church is not strictly speaking a church of the Reformation, its strong representation at the colloquium (David Carter, David Chapman, Kenneth Wilson, not to mention many Catholics and Anglicans involved in official conversations with Methodists) in some way provided the most potent reference points for realising a vision of Catholicism which can deliver a hierarchical Church not merely structured as top-down authority but is ordered authentically by mutual obedience and co-responsibility in the connexion (how strikingly this resembled the Benedictine conception of the relationship between the abbot and the monks), true both to the active consultation and consent of the people, and the teaching authority of the pastoral ministry (especially that of the Pope) - the *magisterium* served by the *ministerium* and *vice versa*.

Context

Part of the background against which the colloquium was convened was the firm commitment of Pope Benedict to the work for Christian unity. Coming from someone who in his former role as Cardinal Ratzinger was seen as having exacting expectations both of Catholic theologians and the formulation of doctrine by other churches, especially those of the West, this has been interpreted as a fresh initiative to proceed toward unity on firm footings, with greater theological clarity and hence with profounder mutual awareness. We also heard how the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity is currently collating the many – and generous – responses of Christian leaders and ecumenical partners to Pope John Paul's invitation in *Ut Unum Sint* to suggest how the Petrine ministry of the papal office might be exercised for 'strengthening the brethren' in other churches and traditions, all towards the cause of unity. There was thus reason to sense that these responses will be taken very seriously by a Pope who has set Christian Unity as the priority of his papacy. Whether that will mean offering a different aspect of Petrine ministry, a suitable form of papal service, for Christians who are not Roman Catholics – something which is not jurisdictional so much as adjudicational; or something less like an absolute Czar than a Holy Roman Emperor (under whose leading role, local monarchs had religious freedom: *cuius regio, eius religio*) – while retaining the present system of ordinary universal jurisdiction for those within the Roman Catholic sphere itself, remains to be

seen. Leaving aside Orthodox sensitivities over so-called Uniatism, the increasingly consolidated autonomy of the eastern churches in communion with Rome, which are of course explicitly not Roman Catholic, perhaps provides a model. Longer shots, I take it, would be a reform to the exercise of the papacy universally, with consultative roles for non-curial figures drawn from the worldwide Church – perhaps even with ecumenical observers – and enhancements to the competence and permanent standing of the Synod of Bishops, to supra-national conferences of bishops, or to leading archbishops representing the universal *magisterium* more prominently regionally and nationally within the Catholic Church across the world, while at the same time becoming the organs for the local churches to be represented to the centre. Indeed many of these themes came up in the discussions looking at faith and order in other traditions and what structures and procedures the Catholic Church could usefully receive and learn from them.

Another part of the background, voiced perhaps more strongly by self-critical Catholics in the colloquium than by ecumenical partners, was the way in which the Catholic Church had lent itself to being misunderstood and resented by friends in other parts of the Christian Church by statements such as those in *Dominus Iesus*, which seem to deny the status of Church – and thence apostolic tradition, ministerial authenticity and sacramental activity – to much of the Western Church not in communion with Rome. Causes of disaffection could also be found in other communications on issues of personal morality, bio-ethics, family matters and the role and status of women. The official Catholic tendency could be said to rely – doubtless for reasons of consistency and nuanced terminological accuracy – on turns of Latin phrase and historically recognised terms which are carefully and objectively understood in a theoretical way in the Roman setting but which, in other circles in which they do not form part of the process of disputation, appear emotive or even offensive. For instance, ‘ecclesial body’ looks very much a poor relation to ‘a particular Church’ (e.g. a diocese or a patriarchal jurisdiction), unless you use ‘Church’ adjectivally in the former term to produce ‘Church body’, so that both terms use a word in English with the same root, in the same way as Latin does. The current translation using words with different roots infers more than the nuanced distinction calls for. ‘Church body’ would still translate *Unitatis Redintegratio* without loss of the appropriate differentiation from ‘Church’, and without severing the former from the Universal Church or lessening the Catholic affirmation that it is in the Catholic Church that that Universal Church subsists. *Dominus Iesus* famously compounded this apparent demotion of other Christian bodies (and let us not forget that this last term is itself derived from arguably the highest definition of the Church by St Paul as the very Body of Christ which is necessarily indivisible) by referring to other ecclesial bodies (that is, other Church bodies) as ‘not churches in the proper sense’. As Kasper has been at pains to point out, ‘the proper’ here means ‘our own’ (i.e. Roman Catholic) sense. After all, most of the Christian Church bodies of the West have explicitly defined that their ecclesial structures, Eucharistic belief and ordained ministry are not to be understood in the (then) Roman Catholic sense, or at least not exactly so, and that therefore this conclusion simply takes friends and ecumenical partners at their word in order then to face the work of dialogue and ecumenical learning the more honestly and constructively. The question thus shifts from

How do we cope with yet another rebuff in which we are made to understand that, despite all the years of friendly and mutually enlightening discussion and practical and spiritual collaboration, we still do not make the grade; and, unless we change in order to conform, we are never likely to?

to

How do we locate within our respective traditions, which emanate from the undivided Church historically and in union with Christ, the truth about the

Church's apostolic faith, order and unity, to which severally we bear witness through faithfulness to traditions which for the moment are separate but which must at some points – theological, structural, temporal or eschatological – must be reconcilable? What is embraceable from other traditions which can enrich and even perfect the tradition of the one Church (and this is not the same as mutual enrichment of distinctive groups within Christianity)? What can we dispense with as merely human accretion or distortion, the result of so many years of separation? What can we and should we change in the life of our own church to reveal more authentically the unity of Christians?

For Catholics, it could therefore be not so much, 'It's not what you say, but the way that you say it', as 'It's not what you say, but the way you cause us to hear you'.

Conference Proceedings

The colloquium was held at Ushaw College, with our worship in the magnificent Pugin chapel. Particularly valuable input to the colloquium was the ongoing life of the seminary and the active participation of its two dozen or so staff and students. They provided not only a social welcome but a spiritual resource for the conduct of the worship according to different traditions each day. With the rush of so many different theological ideas and even unfamiliar impressions, many found the constant provided by Fr Philip Endean SJ from Campion Hall, Oxford, in his daily reflections at Morning Prayer a reassuring centre.

Receptive Ecumenism is needed, but does not threaten integrity

After welcomes from Bishop Dunn, Fr Terry Drainey as Rector of the Seminary, Professor John Barclay as Head of the Durham Theology Department, from Sir Kenneth Calman as Vice-Chancellor of the University, from Bishop Tom Wright of Durham and from Cardinal Kasper himself, Dr Paul Murray as convenor set out the rationale for the colloquium. This address was a careful examination of the exercise of authority in service of the truth, and of putting the truth into practice, as exercised in the Catholic Church and especially by the papacy in the last two centuries. Murray sharply poses before us a problem this leaves us with:

Whilst papal infallibility itself has only been... exceptionally invoked since its promulgation..., there has been a more widespread tendency to view all papal teaching as equally binding and so closed to criticism, rather than as significant punctuation marks with broader processes of deliberation that will properly continue until they be capable of being brought to genuine closure, as distinct from being declared closed prematurely. Catholicism currently lacks both the habitual ethos and the necessary structures to address this point.

This problem is especially disturbing in the post-modern setting where notions of absolute truth and binding authority, both covering all angles and everything to be known, are just not accepted or feasible in many disciplines. Even if, however, still 'the Church is not a democracy', can the Catholic appeal to standards of truth, and the organs which reliably make that appeal authentically and authoritatively, benefit from being something *more* than mere democracy, avoiding its limitations but 'resituating and reconfiguring' its strengths of consultation, participation and stakeholding within the Body of Christ? After all, modern democracy for all its recent and forgetful secularisation is a child of the Church and hence the life of Christ. Can this child be brought home and to maturity in Christ, 'so that it can help with the ecclesial task of discerning together the truth in love'.

Catholicism needs, too, to recall that, bespeaking 'a vision of all as being gathered in intensely differentiated yet configured communion, so that something of the infinite richness of God might be seen in kaleidoscopic vision...', it is a project to be lived, desiring ever greater conversion to the truth, seeking what is true in the other's position for oneself and assembling itself for the voices of all to be heard, not moving to closure (definition) without transparency and accountability in decision making or before the time when all have deliberated. Even closure opens the next process of deliberation and further conversion to truth. This thus offers an ethic for communication within the Body of Christ and on the part of individual Christians within it. It would be vital to a rich Catholicity demonstrating the value of truth in its practice.

Murray believes this process need not be a drawn out and enervating procedure, but a 'centrifugal dynamic' to Catholic life, indeed 'intrinsic to the people who are Catholic'. So in addition to the above ethic of communication, there needs to be an ethic of constant receptivity to what Catholicism can learn with integrity. This 'receptive ecumenism' goes beyond the individual's deepened affective communion of 'spiritual ecumenism', transposing it the institutional level of the practice and understanding of the Church itself – and not simply a structure of governance but a pervasive governing ethos. If Catholicism's 'default ethos' of hierarchical authoritarianism is no longer completely fit for purpose, what could be embraced from the way Anglicanism preserves the role of the episcopate while allowing laity and clergy a role in decision making; or the way in Methodist connexionalism lives out for people at all levels a certain 'co-responsibility? Though what of the lack outside Catholicism of sufficiently robust international structures of communion and unified witness in faith and morals?

Dr Margaret O'Gara of the University of St Michael's College, Toronto, discussed receptive ecumenism as a gift exchange according to the precepts of *Lumen Gentium*. It is more than an exchange of ideas; but what is needed so that we can learn to receive gifts as well as offer them in such a way as does not compromise integrity? After all, '...Some people mistakenly think of ecumenical dialogue as a kind of melting pot.....this could lead to a weakening of distinctive traditions.....a loss of identity, not an enrichment.'

As divisions and false attempts to overcome them make it more difficult for the Church 'to express in actual life her full catholicity in all its aspects' (*Unitatis Redintegratio*), a gift the churches can offer each other in dialogue is serious criticism. This refuses to equate scholarship with competition, so that research in ecumenism conforms to the ideal of a college together, rather than of disputation between institutions. It is this common study that aids the purification of memories called for by John Paul II in *Ut Unum Sint* and changes the way different Christians look at things and become able to recognise in each other (cf. Jean-Marie Tillard) the same faith given to the apostolic community and preserved across time and through different formulations from culture to culture. Beyond this 'shock of recognition' comes the realisation that gift exchange and dialogue arise from the same love of God and his Church, which require a higher obedience than allegiance to anything sectarian. For the serious ecumenist there is an even higher requirement than exchanging gifts and constructive criticism – personal asceticism. This includes acceptance of no tangible success during one's lifetime; fasting from the Eucharist when full communion is not in place; lengthy study and only gradual understanding; embarrassment and being under suspicion not only among other Christian churches but also in one's own. On the other hand, the ecumenists pioneer for their fellow church-members a secondary home in another church as well as the primary home in their own. They also make a hospitable place for other Christians within their own

church. O’Gara noted that the large body of fresh innovative theological reflection to be found in the ecumenical agreements of recent years was vetted by the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith, hence by Cardinal Ratzinger before he became Pope Benedict. Thus he has already created a ‘hospitable place’ and we can go there to re-receive what he himself has expressly approved in the light of his declared intention as pope to work for unity and catholicity for all Christians.

Professor Philip Sheldrake (interestingly as a Catholic who has been in a constructive dialogue with a significant distinctive strand within the contemporary Anglican scene, that of (Liberal Catholic) Affirming Catholicism – just as Aidan Nichols OP has been in dialogue with the conservative Anglican Catholics) asked us to remember that Catholic learning was about more than what Roman Catholicism can learn with integrity from other traditions, as being Catholic is something learned more progressively as premature certainty and ‘purification by ... exclusion’ are resisted. He presented Catholicity as a religious perspective offering a way to approach the nature of God, in other words the life of holiness within the Christian community and in the ‘inner dynamism’ of each person. Thus Catholicity is about telling the whole truth – in the way the Christian lives and in relation to the person of Jesus Christ. Without this holiness there is no substantial participation in the life of the Trinity, God’s catholicity, or in the life of the Church whose catholicity derives from God’s. Catholicity involves therefore participation in God with the whole truth of Christ embodied in our particular life, and being part of his people (all our particular lives as a ‘universality’) and living in the stream of tradition which practises this holiness and is shaped by the history of the whole truth about Christ which it tells. Telling this whole story of the truth of Jesus Christ points up our imperfection as we continually ‘become Catholic’. The prospect of transformation towards holiness and wholeness is the foundation for receptive learning, the whole story of Christ and of us all being brought together in him. Becoming Catholic is thus hoping, as St Ignatius Loyola said, for the *semper maior*, reaching for the ‘always more’, the ‘greater glory’. For an idea of where this ‘more’ might be, Sheldrake took us to the Rule of St Benedict and the injunction to receive the stranger. This is not mere hospitality as the visitor is envisaged as someone who turns up out of the blue, who come as a surprise to us. Catholic Christians are thus not to be choosy about the company they keep are the ‘guests’ that are sent to them. Again, St Francis in embracing the leper was not merely exhibiting charity to the suffering but deliberately embracing the excluded ‘other’, especially if they are sensed to be dangerous or scandalous. So ‘the process of becoming Catholic may be profoundly uncomfortable.....the catholicity of God revealed in Jesus Christ embraced precisely those who saw themselves as spiritually pure and preferred to exclude and reject’.

Catholic Learning and Anglicanism

Friday began with a debate between Cardinal Kasper and Professor Nicholas Sagovsky of Westminster Abbey on the relation between Catholic and Protestant principles and on foundation ecclesiology for Anglicans. As Kasper set down the philosophy and precedents by which Catholic receptive ecumenism can properly proceed, and as Sagovsky, in a meeting of minds, examined not Anglican reluctance to exchange gifts but the conditions holding them back, it is worth dwelling on what they said.

Kasper’s position is well known from his 2004 book, *That they may all be one*. He sees the opposition of the Catholic principle of a visible sacramental communion and the Protestant prophetic principle of a community proclaiming the Scriptures and responding in personal faith as essentially false. He contrasted Anglicanism, where comprehensiveness tries to balance the principles (and by implication never succeeds), with Catholicism, which has shown it can learn to integrate them.

Sagovsky, in a fascinating review of Richard Hooker's ecclesiology, proposed that the essential Anglican idea was not after all comprehensiveness, but participation (probably, he said, the best English translation of *koinonia*); and Anglicanism too was an exercise in integrating the two principles. Comprehensiveness is thus an eirenic and helpful product but that it is under serious threat means that insufficient attention has been given to the unfinished and continually needful work of building 'participation' upon which it rests. As comprehensiveness is not working as an exemplar of receptive ecumenism in practice, so Cardinal Edward Cassidy could see that it was not a method in its own right; and that the endeavour somehow to achieve a harmonious balance between the Catholic and the Protestant – where 'somehow' is the operative word – by not integrating them as complementary opposites leaves us with something even more difficult: trying to harness them together. Sagovsky was frank about the resulting problems placing huge strains upon the self-identity of the Anglican Communion, let alone that of the Church of England; Kasper about developments in the current state of the global Church. Between the 1960s and 2000 (the ARCIC process and then the Mississauga meeting establishing the International Anglican & Roman Catholic Commission on Unity and Mission), 'unification seemed to have progressed so far that ... significant steps towards unity were within our grasp'. But now,

At the beginning of the 21st century we are confronted once more by the problematic constellation of the 19th and early 20th centuries: Catholicism versus Protestantism... It is understandable that the Anglican Communion, which hopes somehow to hold the two together, suffers particularly under this polarisation.

Essentially the analysis of Kasper and that of Sagovsky were the same. Kasper presented Congar's vision of a Church apostolically founded for all time yet also unfinished. Dynamically it grows - internally as it strives for its own unity; and externally as it realises the unity of the world. So its mission and proclamation are impeded if its unity is too; hence the need for the Catholic sense of the Church's visible and sacramental continuity and the Protestant sense of the Church as an 'ever new spiritual event', as personal faith responds to the initiative of the Word of God, to inform each other. The groundwork of Congar and de Lubac to reconsider Catholicity, involving all individuals, offices, and bodies as contributing gifts from, by and towards Christ, as a dynamic unity in diversity enabled Catholicism to unite the two principles with integrity and so to embrace the ecumenical movement with Protestants after Vatican II and the 1968 Fourth WCC General Assembly in Uppsala.

Since those days, after a period of convergence, Kasper felt that the worldwide ecumenical situation now runs counter to unity. In the south, Pentecostal renewal movements seeking personalised spirituality even if it means separation from the wider Church. In the north, a growing unity with Protestant that was formerly unquestioned has undergone fragmentation owing to conflicting verdicts on ethical and doctrinal problems. Protestants are 'defining' divergent new standards of faith and morality in contra-distinction to Catholicism, long after we had thought we made progress beyond that. In both north and south, the preference is to place individual feeling and opinion in a context of post-modern pluralism, ahead of the formerly more pressing matter of establishing the visible unity of the Church. The direct consequence is to declare in contrast the specifically Catholic, hence the much misunderstood declaration of the CDF in *Dominus Iesus* about where the fullness of ecclesiality – the Catholic principle of the Church's visible continuity – is to be found to 'subsist' (see pp. 64 ff. of Kasper's book for a helpful exploration of this), hence the assertion that 'Church bodies' (i.e. those which exemplify the Protestant principle without the full integration of the Catholic principle) are 'not churches' in 'the proper

sense', that is in the sense in which the Catholic Church understands it, a sense in any case not always shared by the Protestant church bodies concerned.

Kasper here hints that the disintegration of the Catholic and Protestant principles in the ecumenical movement in the West leads Catholicism to converge more closely with the East in search of a corrective principle of dynamic renewal where it is already integral to a Catholic understanding of the Church, in order to avoid polarisation. But in breathing together again with the lung of the East, what about persistent bronchial problems in the West?

Healing is to be found in the rich and diverse pursuit of holiness. Ecumenical unity is not established by corporate mergers, or by collaborative efforts, but in the *communio sanctorum*, not so much the 'communion of saints' as 'participation in holy things', the gifts of God. So the one Church does not produce itself but draws its life from participation in the holy, the life of God. And this is precisely the point at which the Catholic principle is open to the 'more profound' prophetic Protestant principle, the Word calling us to renewed personal conversion of life and faith.

Only as a holy Church can it be a prophetic sign ... The dividing lines ... on ethical issues ... are therefore not secondary ...; in touching on holiness, they touch on the essential nature of the Church itself.

So the Catholic tradition has come to heed the prophetic principle towards unity, not by being the *ecclesia semper reformanda*, reforming and drawing itself together by its own responses of faith and discipleship, but by being *ecclesia semper purificanda*, the Church which is becoming more and more the one holy Church of Jesus Christ. The former hopes for an unachievable middle way (balanced comprehensiveness?), whereas the latter calls for the internal fusion, or mediation, of both Catholic and Protestant principles. Their current divergence threatens unity in the Church, unity for the churches and the unity of humanity.

For re-convergence, Kasper commends the 2004 Anglican Windsor Report's rejection of the self-sufficient and unilateralist local church in favour of an inter-connectedness reinforced with institutions of unity. Indeed he draws attention to Johann Adam Möhler's analysis (1825) of unity in which the communion of the local bishop with the bishop of Rome means that the local church is at once the instance of the Universal Church and the Universal Church is never other than the particular churches of which it is the communion. For Anglicans the task of unification it is facing has no option but to deal with the question of Rome's ministry of unity. For Catholics with a core belief in the indispensability of that ministry, the question is how the relationship between papal primacy, episcopal collegiality and synods can be realised more positively to meet Protestant concerns. This, he says, is fundamental to the reconciliation of the principles, as is the liberation of all our traditions from the blindness caused by watching merely contemporary concerns and our attachment only to past formulations as normative. For instance, '*sola Scriptura*', or only the first four General Councils, or the Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral. The important thing is that tradition is living: what is true now was not less true then, or *vice versa*. If we restrict tradition to the part we have defined as distinctive for ourselves, we fail to discern the many traditions in the whole Church, borne by the same Holy Spirit across places, cultures and time; nor ecumenically can we encompass or receive them. So it is not we, but the Spirit, who can create unity. In isolation, we become one-sided and even heretical. In reconciling the 'complementary opposites' of the Catholic and Protestant principles, we are all spiritually renewed:

The Church in its concrete form becomes to the fullest degree that which in its undeveloped nature it always has been.

Over and above horizontal unity in the world and along history, there is the transcending vertical unity in God-in-Christ to which all things tend. That historically for Anglicans belief and unity are expressed in the liturgy (e.g. the Book of Common Prayer) – that the *lex orandi* determines the *lex credendi* - is a fundamental point on which nearly everyone in East and West can agree. Catholic learning by doxology is therefore more than an exchange of the cultural traditions inherited by other Christians, as it points to the shared celebration of the one Eucharist as the goal of ecumenism.

Kasper was not asking the Anglican Churches to decide finally whether they were Catholic or Protestant in nature, as that bespeaks a past and false distinction. But he was asking churches with the Protestant principle to the fore both to integrate the Catholic principle fully (and not just 'somehow' balance it) and to keep the Catholic Church to its unfinished work of integrating the prophetic principle of reform and renewal towards the reconciled unity of the future, lest it become one-sided again in its assertion of the specifically Catholic.

Interestingly, when Kasper was pressed by a questioner on precisely this question of whether the Church of England should ordain women to the episcopate, he was careful not to call for what is known to be the Roman Catholic Church's preferred option. Instead, he said that the decision was fundamentally about the Church of England's self-identity. Whether the consciously unresolved Catholic-Protestant ecclesiological model (whereby it claims to be both Catholic and Reformed) is preserved as the key to its sense of comprehensiveness (internal ecumenism) or polyvalency (both internally and for external ecumenical relations), or whether it takes a path in the same direction as that of the Roman Catholic Church, or else one that leads to a change, none but the Church of England can decide. It would be a matter of Anglicans deciding what it is they themselves truly want and how they see themselves – it is not the place of other Christians to try to determine this, however much they want unity. Kasper recognised, in a brief discussion with Bishop Tom Wright of Durham, that many Anglicans desiring the ordination of women to the episcopate did not see it as driven by a 'Protestant' impulse towards the 'ever new' and reform regardless of Church unity, present and future, but as a legitimate development to Catholic faith and order. So to characterise the choice Anglicans face as between the Catholic and Protestant principles would be an over-simplification. Nevertheless, choosing one way would set back the realisation of full communion between Anglicans and Roman Catholics – there were clearly internal divisions, perhaps irreconcilable, within Anglicanism too that needed to be faced. On the other hand, closer unity with Reformed and Evangelical churches could thus be achieved, extending the effect of the Porvoo and Leuenberg agreements and moving on the Anglican-Methodist discussions. Obviously, the Catholic Church hoped there would be no new impediments to the restoration of communion between Anglicans and Roman Catholics. However Anglicans in England decided to resolve this particular question, it will also help it to discern its own sense of identity, its sense of its Catholicity, its sense of its prophetic vocation, whether this points to a future course that is more or less that which the Catholic Church takes, or that is more or less that which the Churches arising from the Protestant Reformation take. Once this is discerned, through the decision on the future character of the Anglican episcopate one way or the other, progress towards unity will actually be aided, as it will be finally be clear where everyone stands. Then an unequivocal and realistic dialogue can begin for the future.

(This discussion was to be of further interest later in 2006, as Kasper returned to England at the invitation of the Archbishop of Canterbury to contribute his analysis of the position of the Catholic Church should the Church of England ordain women as bishops. Its frankness, while saying nothing previously unknown, touched a nerve as it explored consequences for Anglican catholicity and ecclesial character. The Anglican Bishops of Durham and Salisbury issued a robust response, questioning both the papacy's sense of its authority and Marian doctrinal definitions as innovations with much less warrant than the Anglican plans.)

Nicholas Sagovsky was frank about the current crisis within the Anglican Communion and its ecumenical relations: the selection of openly homosexual men to the episcopate and the 2003 approval in Canada of a rite of blessing for same-sex unions.

Homosexuality is one issue that has tested the unity of the Anglican Communion severely. There are two others: the ordination of women as priests and bishops; and lay presidency at the eucharist.

One a question of ethical conduct, the others questions of the nature and purpose of the Church's order, each has revealed how divisive they are, if pressed by any single province. In the light of the present discussion of what divided Christian churches can receive from each other with integrity, it is interesting that the Church of England has been experimenting with a provision for pastoral oversight (episcopally led but just short of being a particular church in its own right and power) for those opposed to women's ordination which allows the Church of England to proceed, while enabling those who do not wish to separate completely to preserve the integrity of their Anglican tradition without receiving the new developments: one Anglican Church, two Church integrities. Some proponents of women bishops see a separate integrity for those opposed as a compromise of that of the main body. But is it a working model of what people commend to other churches as 'reconciled diversity'? Or does that concept actually fall short of a completely reconciled unity, and compromise the future-orientation of every integrity? It could be true of arrangements on the other issues too: 'it is [hard] to see how ... provision could be made whilst maintaining what can truly be seen as communion'.

So the Eames Commission (1989) recognised that what Kasper would call the internal mediation of the Catholic and Protestant principles, the completeness of Anglicanism's Communion, has been lost. The unfinished process of mutual integration had faltered at some point, the participation is no longer complete and the comprehensiveness strained. Eames therefore called for 'the maintenance of the highest degree of communion' in a complex crisis touching on the autonomy of local dioceses, the status of provinces in relation to dioceses and the international Lambeth Conference, the authority of the bishop, a primate, the Archbishop of Canterbury, lay people in the synodical structures, tradition and the Bible. And the external dimension of the crisis is that the tradition to which Anglicans seek to be faithful is primarily that of the whole Church, not just their part of it - 'hence an abiding concern ... with ecumenism and a sense of the Anglican tradition's incompleteness without the complementary insights and experience of other Christian traditions'. Indeed the famous Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral which originated as a basis for Anglicans to find unity with other Christians, is now serving as a basis for Anglicans to recover unity among themselves.

Sagovsky pointed out that each element – living and believing by the rule of the Scriptures; the profession of the creeds; the sacraments of Baptism and of the Eucharist; and the episcopate – are the means by which Anglicans *participate* in the

life of the Church and they therefore constitute the primary instruments of communion in Christ. Looking to Richard Hooker (1554-1600), Sagovsky asks how legitimate it is for the Anglican Church to order itself (cf. Kasper's concern at the unintegrated Protestant principle renewing the church but at the price of its continuity of *communio*). For Hooker (and here the 'Catholic principle' intrinsic to Anglican ecclesiology or polity asserts itself), it is not a human institution but a society sustained by communion in the life of the Trinity, a fit instrument for drawing people into 'deeper participation in the working and being of God'. Hooker's analysis distinguishes the Church of England from the Geneva and the Rome between which it is placed, not as a *via media* or a synthesis of two 'extremes' but as a divine society whose 'instruments' (including those identified in the Quadrilateral) are sacramental of a Church of England which is a 'valid extrapolation' of the Church of the scriptures and the early Church in which they, along with core doctrine and order, were definitively formulated, and thus constitutes a 'following of God's law, a participation in God's reason and a communion in God's Spirit'. So the Anglican 'appeal to reason', far from being leave for the Church to order itself, is a mark of the participation of Anglicans with the Incarnate Logos in the mystical Trinitarian fellowship which he instituted and, as the Church, continues to embody his presence in the world. This incarnational focus in Anglicanism, to interpret Sagovsky, marks it out from Churches with 'a Protestant principle' and medieval Catholicism alike (with their emphasis on the atonement) and aligns it more closely to Eastern Orthodoxy's integrated prophetic and 'Catholic principle', because its life and ordering serve the goal not just of making believers but of 'making believers partakers of Christ'.

It is this vision of participatory, co-operative life, in which ecclesiological principles are not in conflict and which 'comprehensiveness' can exemplify without reaching crisis point, that Sagovsky offers to Catholicism. Anglicanism may currently have its problems but what is essential to its distinctive tradition (not so very different from what Kasper discerns as truest of Catholic ecclesiology), if it can be held to, can offer a model of genuine episcopal governance as a ministry of the whole Church jointly exercised, with the consent and participation of the laity, and to the exclusion of one particular, national or local Church making decisions that bind or exclude the others. Although there are resonances with Möhler and Congar here, what Hooker describes is the Church of England, a 'particular church'; hence the problems that have grown out of the looser association of the Anglican Communion, with its reduced coherence of participation, and the lack of a positive role (or mention) for instruments of the *universal* Church, let alone papal primacy as a servant of unity.

When, by 1930, the Lambeth Conference came to describe authority in the Anglican Communion, it eschewed a central executive in preference for a 'natural loyalty' sustained by the bishops' 'common counsel'. In 1948 Lambeth more positively located the Church's authority 'dispersed' among Scripture, Tradition, Creeds, the Ministry (n.b. not explicitly the episcopal office), the witness of the saints and the *consensus fidelium*. The problem is, as Sagovsky point out, that 'natural loyalty' can no longer be taken for granted and there is no 'common counsel of the bishops', as individual bishops and even whole provinces are prepared to go against it. 'Dispersed authority' is now insufficient to sustain unity and the levels of consensus and 'participation' may be so low that whether it can be truly called a Communion is a moot point.

Sagovsky examines the 1998 Virginia Report, as the most sustained exploration of Anglican understanding of authority and communion. Whilst it is in continuity with the various Lambeth descriptions and owes much to Hooker, when it explores the 'personal, collegial and communal' dimensions of episcopacy it fails to address the lack of an effective *magisterium*. Thus, while tolerance has been seen as an Anglican

virtue, as long as the *lex orandi* is observed in common, no one is called to account or corrected for breaching the *lex credendi*. So efforts to consolidate the outward comprehensiveness fail without instruments that achieve complete 'participation' in common faith and discipleship. Such instruments as are in place, apart from the pivotal office of Archbishop of Canterbury, are no more than consultative. Even the Archbishop has no executive or jurisdictional role outside England, other than appellate in certain circumstances. So while the 2004 Windsor Report still rejected the accumulation of power to a central body, it proposed that the Archbishop should have a Council of Advice so he can 'speak directly to any provincial situation on behalf of the Communion when ... advisable'. It further recommends a 'Communion Law' to govern relations in one province with the others, and a Covenant - a mechanism for conforming to 'common counsel' and 'dispersed authority'. Later in the colloquium we heard proposals that the Roman primacy should become for non-Catholic churches appellate, and that to the Petrine ministry should be attached a permanent, non-curial consultative body representing supra-national 'patriarchates' from around the world, to assist the Pope in making his decisions. The proposed Anglican model hardly inspires confidence - either as a counterweight to the perceived over-concentration of jurisdiction in one primate, or as a workable solution to the unravelling of authority and communion - when introducing it in the Catholic Church could undermine what the universal pastorate needs to be, rather than broaden the local legitimacy of its exercise.

While the ecclesiological principles of Cardinal Kasper and Dr Sagovsky were in symphony, possibly the two were even more convergent in anxiety. As things stand, the Anglican Communion's appealing model of integrating participation is not strong enough and the lack of instruments of unity are perhaps irrevocably wounding its fundamental identity, even threatening a formal split. Its continued resilience even to those sorely needed benefits offered by a universal dimension to *episkope* make it difficult for Catholics to learn and receive from Anglicanism in the crisis that is currently transforming it. And, seeing what is happening in a fellowship of episcopally ordered provinces without papal ministry or even patriarchal jurisdiction to support them, Kasper fears Catholics may regress into the 'unfinished' specifically Catholic pathway which distances itself from the prophetic principle – and the churches which bear it – even though it is meant ultimately to lead to renewal and reconciled unity. An impasse in which, however, 'heart speaks to heart'?

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