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- 16 Bede Griffiths, 'Your Church is Too Western', *The Tablet*, 7 February, 1987, p. 138. (Letter)
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- 18 Leo XIII, *Rerum Novarum*, in *The Papal Encyclicals*, Anne Freemantle, ed., N.Y., 1963, pp. 184–5.
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- 27 Cardinal Hume, Christmas Message 1986, *The Tablet*, 22/27 December, 1986, p. 1396.
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The Church and the Trinity II: The Church of the Son

Geoffrey Preston OP

The second part of the trilogy which we are publishing to mark the tenth anniversary of Geoffrey Preston's death.

'In one Spirit we were all baptised into one body' (1 Cor. 12 : 13a). Repentance and faith give a man *koinōnia*—participation—with the Holy Spirit and by virtue of that partaking he has *koinōnia* too with all his fellow-Christians who are partakers with him of the same Spirit. He belongs to and within the communion of holy people, of the holy people who share holy things, the sacraments and mysteries of the Church. But the body into which we were all baptised by the one Spirit is itself the body of the Son, the body of Jesus of Nazareth, the Word of God made man. The Church, the body of the Messiah, the messianic community, is *koinōnia* with Jesus Christ as well as *koinōnia* with the Holy Spirit.

True, it is through the *koinōnia* of the Spirit that the Church becomes the *koinōnia* of the Son, but nevertheless it does really become that. Paul writes to Corinth:

God is faithful, through whom you were called into the *koinōnia* of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. (2 Cor. 1 : 9)

The author of the Hebrews writes that 'we have become *koinōnoi* of Christ' (3 : 14a), and St John affirms, 'Our *koinōnia* is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ' (1 Jn. 1 : 3b). But there is a typical difference between the *koinōnia* we have with the Spirit and that we enjoy with the Son. The fellowship is structured, it is truly Trinitarian in form and not at all unitary, Unitarian.

The rôle of the Holy Spirit is a unifying rôle; according to the Christian understanding, in the Godhead the Holy Spirit unites in his person the Father and the Son. The Father is distinct from the Son but they are two who become one in a third 'person', the Holy Spirit, and not just in the divine essence which they share. The Holy Spirit is the personal love of the Father for the Son, and the Son for the Father, the One in whom Father and Son each finds himself again in a total manner. As Jesus prays that Christians may be one as he and the Father are one, he prays for them to enjoy the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, the fellowship which *is* the Holy Spirit and the fellowship which the Spirit will produce amongst them. The Spirit, then, is the unifying force in the Godhead, and the Church as a unifying force is herself the epiphany of the Holy Spirit. The *koinōnia* of the Son, on the other hand, is the Church precisely as unified, the Church as the body of Christ, the Church as the revelation of the Father's love for us.

In the Letter to the Romans Paul speaks of the 'mystery' which has been

kept in silence through times eternal but now is manifested and through the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal God, is made known to all the nations unto obedience to the faith. (16 : 25—26)

Elsewhere he specifies the content of the mystery: it is 'the mystery of God's will' which was

to be put into effect when the time was ripe: namely, that the universe, all in heaven and all on earth, might be brought into a unity in Christ. (Eph. 1 : 10)

This is somewhat more explicit, but later on in the same Letter to the Ephesians he has yet more to say about

the mystery of Christ, which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men as it has now been revealed to God's holy apostles and prophets through the Spirit: namely that the Gentiles are fellow-heirs and fellow-members of the body and fellow-partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus

through the Gospel. (3 : 46—6)

Paul claims for himself the task to make all men see what is the dispensation of the mystery which from all ages has been hid in God who created all things, to the extent that now to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places there might be known through the Church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord.
(3 : 9—11)

So the mystery is a mystery of unity, visible in the Church as the *koinōnia* of Christ. The mystery hidden from all ages is manifested in the unity that was experienced in the New Testament Church as the barrier between Jew and Gentile came crumbling down. The Church-body of Jesus is the epiphany of the mystery by virtue of overcoming divisions, of reconciling what would otherwise be at variance. Its distinctive mark is that

if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or if one member is honoured, all the members rejoice with it.
(1 Cor. 12 : 26)

The *koinōnia* of the body of Christ is not simply a matter of faith: it is possible to point to ways in which that fellowship is realised. There are ways in which Christians stand together, share a common experience and a common hope, and so mutually sustain each other. So it is that Paul wants the Christians in Rome to strive together with him in their prayers to God for him, that he may find rest together with them (cf. Rms. 15 : 30—32); he wants to be comforted in them, each of them by the other's faith, theirs and his. Likewise, he desires the Christians at Colossae to be:

knit together in love, to all riches of the fullness of understanding, that they may know the mystery of God, Christ, in whom are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hidden. (2 : 2—3)

All of these texts are concerned with *koinōnia* in terms of the body and its unity. But the overcoming of oppositions and divergences in the *koinōnia* of the Son is rooted in a *koinōnia* with the Son himself, the Word Incarnate who is Jesus of Nazareth. Just as, when we talked about the *koinōnia* of the Holy Spirit, we saw that the fellowship between Christians was subsequent to the fellowship which each enjoys with the Holy Spirit, so now the fellowship between Christians understood in terms of the body is a fellowship subsequent to that which the members of that body enjoy with its Head.

Doing the truth in love, may we grow up in all things unto him who is the Head, Christ, from whom all the body, fitly framed and knit together through that which every joint

supplies, according to the working in due measure of each several part, makes the increase of the body unto the building up of itself in love. (Eph. 4 : 15—16)

Words like these ('joints', 'ligaments') are borrowed from the medical science of Hippocrates and Galen, who had maintained that the sensitive and motor nerves of the entire body derived from the head. The head was thought to hold the whole body in unity, and all the body to tend towards the head. So the head would be the standard of existence and life for the body, whose growth would take place according to the structures centred and held together in the head. Thus there is only one work of the Holy Spirit, namely the whole Christ, a work that was first enfleshed in the individual human existent Jesus of Nazareth and then continues to take flesh through Jesus as head in terms of the pattern found in him, 'the mind which was his'. Christians share in the pattern of the historical Jesus who is no other than the glorified Christ.

They share more particularly in what we have come to call the 'paschal mystery' of Jesus, his death and glorification. The New Testament letters speak so often of our dying with Christ, suffering with him and being crucified with him. They talk not only of our being conformed with his death but even of our being buried with him. And finally they tell us of our being quickened together with him, being raised up with him and being seated with him in the heavenly places. From this there issues a language about how we may expect that we will also reign with him, being manifested together with him in glory, when the body of our humiliation will be conformed to the body of his glory so that we may be with him for ever. As we sing in the Liturgy: 'Christ has died, Christ is risen. Christ will come again'. In this way we are conformed to him and enter into a common history and destiny. As Paul writes to Corinth:

As the sufferings of Christ overflow to us, even so our consolation overflows through the Christ. If we are afflicted, it is for your consolation, which works in the patient endurance of the same sufferings which we also suffer. And our hope for you is firmly grounded, for we know that as you are partakers(*koinōnoi*) of the sufferings, so you are also of the consolation. (2 Cor. 1 : 5—7)

The sufferings of the Messiah overflow to Paul, as does the consolation that comes from the Messiah's victory. And through Paul's work of preaching all the Christians to whom he is writing may share in that victory as they also share those sufferings. Not by some sort of masochistic adding to the sum total of the world's pain by inflicting pain on oneself, but because there is simply no way to separate the Messiah from the messianic community. Though the Messiah is indeed Jesus of Nazareth he is in such solidarity with his community that his brethren

will inevitably share his fate and his destiny. And, as the historical career of Jesus shows, this will involve suffering, the kind of suffering that follows on a collision-course with the principalities and powers, the present world order. It is for this reason that the sufferings of the martyrs are traditionally described in terms of the passion of Jesus. As Pascal puts it, 'Jesus will be in agony until the end of the world' (*Pensées* 919, Lafuma enumeration). These words do no more than echo a homily of Pope Leo the Great centuries before:

The passion of the Lord is prolonged until the end of the world. He it is who suffers in and with all who bear adversity for the sake of justice. (Cf. M.B. de Soos, *Le Mystère liturgique d'après s. Léon le Grand* Münster 1958, pp. 59—60.)

This too is part of the mystery, the divine plan. Jesus says to the travellers on the road to Emmaus:

O foolish men and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! Was it not necessary for the Messiah to suffer these things and to enter into his glory?' And beginning from Moses and from all the Prophets he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself. (Lk 24 : 25—27)

So too in the synagogue at Thessalonica Paul

as his custom was, went in unto them, and for three sabbath days reasoned with them from the Scriptures, opining and alleging that it was necessary for the Messiah to suffer and to rise again from the dead, and that 'This Jesus whom I proclaim to you is the Messiah'. (Acts 17 : 2—3)

It is not, however, simply that 'the passion of the Lord is prolonged until the end of time in all who bear adversity for the sake of justice'. There is a specifically ecclesial dimension in all this.

I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and fill up on my part what is lacking in the birth-pangs of the Messiah in my flesh, for the sake of his body, which is the Church.

(Col. 1 : 24)

Paul suffers in his apostolic work in a way consistent with the ending of that work in martyrdom. He will bear witness by his death to what he has borne witness to in his life. This suffering is a necessary part of the coming to be of the Church-body of the Messiah. Paul in his own body, his whole existence, shares in the life pattern of the Messiah. And this pattern, given the world as it is, entails suffering, for there is a vast distance between the structures of this world and the kingdom of God which the Messiah both inaugurates and is. The sufferings and death of the Messiah are the sufferings and death of his community:

For the love which the Messiah has for us controls us,

convinced as we are that as one died for all, therefore all died; and he died for all, so that those who live should no longer live to themselves but to him who for their sakes died and rose again. (2 Cor. 4 : 14—15)

In some way, everyone who would believe in Jesus, being prepared to accept a common destiny with his, was identified with him on the Cross. He and they formed one single organism which has died already, once and for all. As we express this ritually in baptism, when we become members of the body, the funeral is over.

All we who were baptised into Christ Jesus were baptised into his death. We were baptised with him through baptism into death ... We have become united with him by the likeness of his death ... Our old nature was crucified with him, that the body of sin might be done away, that we should no longer be in bondage to sin for he who has died is justified from sin ... The death that he died, he died to sin once and for all ... Even so reckon yourselves to be dead to sin.

(Rms. 6 : 3—11, abbreviated)

It is by a ritual expression of the identity of the death of Jesus under Pontius Pilate with what is now happening to the convert that a man becomes a Christian. And the subsequent sufferings that come his way as a member of the messianic community belong intrinsically to the death of Jesus under Pontius Pilate *and* to the ritual enactment of that death in the convert's baptism.

But the Christ who has died is also the Christ who is risen. The resurrection is God's reversal of the crucifixion, man's attempt to put an end to the Messiah, to close mankind off from the intervention of God, to keep things as they were. But the resurrection is also the acceptance of the crucifixion as a death which the Messiah freely accepted. It is God's affirmation of the way of life of the Messiah, which brought him to his death at the hands of other people. The resurrection is not to be understood as a somewhat belated succumbing to the temptation to come down from the Cross. Contrariwise, the New Testament, regarding the resurrection as the divine affirmation of the permanent validity of the Cross, expresses this in those appearance narratives where the focus of attention is the wounds of Jesus, wounds which were not healed but glorified. And so the believer shares sacramentally and morally in the dying of Jesus. He bears about in his body the dying of Jesus just as Jesus still bears about in *his* body the marks of the nails. *Koinōnia* with the Messiah means that we participate now both in the humility and suffering of Jesus and also in his resurrection and glorification.

Our share in the resurrection of the Messiah is also meant to be a matter of experience in the Church. It is found in the common life of the Christian people and in their freedom, *vis-à-vis* God and *vis-à-vis* the

world. Resurrection life is life together, a life in *koinōnia* which needs to be expressed visibly and tangibly. In the Acts of the Apostles the members of the Jerusalem Church expressed their *koinōnia* in the resurrection of Christ by sharing their material goods, declaring that they already shared in the victory of Christ because they no longer needed to establish their individual identities by way of private possessions. So, too, martyrdom is a way of sharing in the resurrection, or rather of making visible the fact that Christians do already share its triumph. Again, virginity, living without the hope of children, is another traditional way of demonstrating *koinōnia* in the resurrection of the Lord. Some of these ways of expressing resurrection are less accessible to us, perhaps, for they have been institutionalised so often and lost something of their 'bite'. W.A. Williams can even speak of 'our evident immunity to the threatening glory of resurrection' (*The Resurrection*, London 1972, p. 7).

Nevertheless, the Church can never altogether lose her hope. 'Christ will come again!' we proclaim in the Great Prayer of the Mass. There is a future for the body of Jesus, the messianic community, the *koinōnia* of the Son. It is true that, very often, New Testament passages which speak of our being raised up with Jesus and seated with him in glory in the heavenly places are not particularly future-orientated: instead, they are meant as a statement of present fact. Where Jesus is, there is his people—already in 'heaven', already sharing the life of God. But, despite this, there is always a hope for the final epiphany, the resurrection of the body, the definitive appearing of a reality which now genuinely *is*, but only under the conditions appropriate to this present age. As Paul tells the Philippians:

Our citizenship is in heaven, from where also we await for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, conformed to the body of his glory according to the working by which he is able even to subject all things to himself. (3 : 20—21)

What is expected is the abolition of the final distance between the Messiah and the messianic community, between the present of Jesus and our present. The Church of the Parousia will remain the Church of the Son. Indeed, it will be more truly the Church of the Son than it is now.

And all this *koinōnia* in him is expressed and effected sacramentally in the Eucharist; the *koinōnia* is Christ's body and blood. The one loaf and the one cup, at the deepest level of their reality, the *res tantum*, is the unity of the Church, the unity which is Christ's body, Christ's life. It was in one spirit that we were baptised into that one body. It is a community that has been baptised, that already has *koinōnia* in the Spirit, which celebrates the *koinōnia* of the Lord's body and enters into that fellowship. We see this in the order of Christian initiation, wherein the

celebration and sharing of the sacrament of the body and blood follows baptism and confirmation in the one Spirit. Even so, the *koinōnia* of the body and blood is not the last word in the process. Christianity is not a Jesus religion any more than it is a Spirit religion. Christianity is the religion of the Holy and Undivided Trinity. We have *koinōnia* not only with the Spirit but also, in a different mode, with the Son, and we have *koinōnia*, in a different mode again, with the Father. It is to that we must return in our last essay.

Into the mainstream with Cardinal Hinsley

Peter Hebblethwaite

It is a commentary on the *insouciance* of English Catholicism that so far the material on the history of the 1930s has consisted of sundry memoirs, a brilliant essay by Adrian Hastings (in *Bishops and Writers*) and a novel by Bernard Bergonzi (*The Roman Persuasion*). With the aid of the Westminster Archives and the Public Records Office in Kew, Thomas Moloney has put the study of the period on a scientific basis.¹ Even the dullish title of his book—*Westminster, Whitehall and the Vatican. The Role of Cardinal Hinsley 1935-43* — gets it about right: there were subterranean links between Westminster and Whitehall that no one, least of all the Catholic press, suspected. The Southern Desk of the Foreign Office had a keen and abiding interest in Catholic and Vatican affairs.

It was particularly intrigued by the appointment in 1935 of Mgr. Arthur Hinsley as fifth Archbishop of Westminster. He was now sixty-nine. He had not lived in England since 1917, when he became Rector of the Venerable in Rome. Further back lay the foundation and headmastership of St. Bede's Grammar School in Leeds, and a quarrel with the local Bishop, the eccentric and irascible William Gordon. The young Fr. Hinsley fled Leeds and was incardinated in the diocese of Southwark. While a curate in South London (Sutton Park and Sydenham) from 1904—1917 he maintained his academic sharpness