

Ministers-at-Work

The Journal for Christians in
secular ministry

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To help ourselves and others to celebrate the presence of God and the holiness of life in our work, and to see and tell the Christian story there.

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Editorial

Over the past year or so 'Ministers-at-Work' has been described as an "excellent little Journal" and praised by three bishops to my knowledge. This is no time to rest on laurels though. The Committee regularly looks at what the Journal exists for, what it sets out to do, and how well it does it.

A question that regularly arises is whether it is primarily a means of networking between MSEs or a learned Journal. It certainly started as the former. Michael Ranken's original letter to the band of early MSEs asked them if they wanted a Newsletter (as it was called until the mid-1990s) as a means of keeping in touch with one another. The happy response was yes, and Michael diligently edited it from 1982.

Over the next decade several MSEs (including Michael himself and Anthony Hurst) made significant contributions to the development of MSE theology and praxis through articles in such heavy-weight and influential Journals as 'Theology'. When CHRISM was established in 1993, as the 'operational arm' of the charity CHRISSET (Christians in Secular Employment Trust), the decision was taken to venture into this field as an organisation and CHRISM has since produced a number of Occasional Papers (available from the website). Several CHRISM members have continued to contribute to other Journals and Papers, not least those produced by CIPL (Christians In Public Life). At the same time the last three editors in particular have sought to regularly include more theologically developed and reflective articles in the 'Ministers-at-Work'.

It seems to me that the two most important features in the Journal's identity are:

- What you, the members, want from it;
- What you, the members, contribute to it.

As Editor I do go out to members and others and ask them to write or develop articles on themes they have an interest and expertise in. And I receive a regular flow of items – but there is no such thing as too many, so do keep them coming! I can also go out and

find what is going on in the field of MSE in the various churches and organisations, reporting on what is happening – and I'm always keen to receive reports from your good selves.

As I have said before: this is *your* Journal. Let me know what you think of it. What do we do well (and why)? What could we do better (and how)? Have we got the format right? Is there anything you would like to see more or less of? My mailboxes are always open.

The gestation period of each edition of MaW is about 8 months. As one edition is finished the next is already taking shape with items on events or advertising forthcoming events, and the one after already has an e-folder into which memos of what needs to appear and advance articles are deposited. Despite this I sometimes wonder how 32, 36, 40 or even more pages are going to be filled with the interesting, challenging and informative. The Lord, and a wide range of contributors, always seem to come up trumps. In this edition Catherine Binns walks us through some of the issues she has encountered developing MSE as a Nurse Practitioner, Dorrie Johnson shows yet again her skills as theologian and wit. I suspected reprinting John Mantle's 1989 article on worker-priests would draw a response and was not disappointed. From her new home in France Dierdre Palk gives an excellent insight into the continued work of the Mission de France.

Finally, an apology to anyone who has been trying to e-mail me up to the end of February. Our computer came under sustained attack from a variety of viruses during that month and although we saved nearly all data on hard disk we had to uninstall and reinstall Windows, so all e-mail records were lost, along with any attachments I hadn't copied to hard disk already. If therefore you sent me anything in the three months to the end of February, were expecting a reply or acknowledgement and haven't had one, please let me know. The antivirus software and firewall now installed have done an excellent job in keeping out the gremlins! The next edition may go out a couple of weeks into August as family hols. are likely to be in July this year – but keep the contributions coming!

Rob

And the real 'Vicar of Dibley' is ...

... none other than pioneer MSE and founder member of the Wardrobe Group, Paul Nicholson! All was revealed in a BBC programme as part of the series to find 'Britain's favourite sitcom'. One of the reasons given by Carol Vorderman for voting for 'The Vicar of Dibley' was the location. Cue Paul to tell to camera how his church was approached by the BBC. He didn't reveal how much they paid – but the grin said it all!

(Several churches in my area have done rather well from TV companies: a church wedding in 'Coronation Street' is more likely in Dukinfield than Salford. Having had an NSM in 'Neighbours' (yes, really!), when will we see the first TV MSE? Ed.)

MSE Sermon Notes

Margaret Joachim

John 2, 1-11

(Revised Standard Lectionary Gospel for Epiphany 2, year C)

Any experienced project manager reads the story of the wedding in Cana as a textbook example of a dry run or pre-production test.

The proposed activity takes place unobtrusively, out of public view and away from the live environment. The people involved (servants, friends and relatives) can easily be persuaded not to say anything if it all goes embarrassingly wrong. The materials used are cheap. The potential beneficiaries of the process have no idea that anything is happening. The principal customer, very sensibly, is not told that the test is taking place. If it fails, few will know and no-one will suffer – the consequences of failure are minimal.

Quite properly, an independent observer is in place to assess the results. But at this point the story departs from our day-to-day experience. Called upon to comment, he says: "Look, mate – we ordered a bicycle and you've delivered a Rolls Royce – isn't this a bit over the top?"

If only all our tests turned out that way.

re specialist nurse as MSE

The specialist nurse as MSE

Catherine Binns, Manchester

As a specialist nurse practitioner (neonatal) I am currently exploring the development of my role as a spiritual care provider within this clinical environment. I am also to shortly commence ordination training within the Church of England, as a minister in secular employment (MSE). In this article I discuss how I see my role developing as an ordained minister/specialist nurse practitioner within the workplace, what it means to be an MSE, and how it will effect the clinical environment, staff, patients, family and chaplaincy team.

Developing the role of a MSE in this way necessitates addressing clinical practice in relation to the specialist practitioner outcome 17: 'initiate and lead practice developments to enhance the nursing contribution and quality of care' (UKCC, 1998). As I am actually in the process developing practice, I experience at first hand the difficulties involved with change, the conflict and resistance that can arise. As part of developing as an MSE, I reflect on those experiences, frustrations and how to deal with some of the negative attitudes encountered.

Reflection has the potential to be a valuable tool in improving patient care and for changing nursing practice. It is the process of turning thoughtful practice into a potential learning situation and aims to change behaviours, perspectives or practices (Mackintosh, 1998). As the role of the MSE is not widely understood I have struggled to find relevant literature within the field of nursing and have therefore had to draw on literature from other sources, and also on the knowledge of various people who specialise within this form of ministry.

The 'Specialist Nurse Practitioner' (S.P.) according to the UKCC (1994) is required to exercise higher levels of judgement and discretion in clinical care. As such they are expected to undertake more complex decision-making than some other professional practitioners and to improve standards of care through supervision of practice, clinical nursing audit, developing and leading practice, contributing to research, teaching and supporting professional colleagues. In order to achieve this level of practice the individual is required to

concentrate on a particular field and undergo appropriate education, which must be attained at degree level, (UKCC, 1998).

So how does being a Minister in Secular Employment relate to this? Fundamentally, an MSE has the opportunities to bridge the gap between the church and the secular world, by integrating faith with their working life. An MSE will make themselves available pastorally and confidentially, to stand alongside those people that need support, and help to ease burdens, enabling others to realise joys. This form of ministry complements the ministry of all Christians at work, the work of the stipendiary minister or visiting chaplains in industry, hospitals, colleges and other spheres, (CHRISM, 2003).

What does the term spirituality mean? Reed (1992) suggests that spirituality is concerned with an individual's past, present and future, especially when facing illness or the prospect of death. It demonstrates how all aspects of life, physical, psychological and social, are interrelated and interconnected.

The spiritual aspect of nursing care is often neglected by nurses today. McSherry (2000) suggests that the preoccupation with the technological and material elements of care have replaced the notion of holistic and individualised care, at the centre, which rests spirituality. In addition, Ellis (1980) suggested that as nursing has become so biologically orientated, spiritual matters are a source of discomfort and embarrassment for the nurses. This is my experience within the field of neonatal intensive care. The biological needs of the baby come first and foremost, but by the time a child reaches intensive care their condition may have deteriorated so much that the baby may be dying. It is often only then that staff will consider broaching, as symbol of the spiritual, asking the parents if they want their baby baptised.

Birth and death represent two of the most significant events in human experience and these two poignant happenings converge in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) in a unique way. With the advances in knowledge and expertise more infants are surviving but the deaths of the sickest and smallest babies have assumed different proportions now that so much is possible. This has meant

an increased exposure to the world of ethics and moral decision-making, involving fragile human beings, often at the edge of viability, (Boxwell, 2000, McHaffie and Fowlie, 1996).

Granstrom (1985) proposed that fear may be a reason for a nurse's reluctance to incorporate spiritual care into nursing practice: fear of getting into a situation they cannot handle, fear of intruding on a person's privacy and fear of being converted or confused in their own belief system. McHaffie and Fowlie (1996) discovered in their work on the decision to discontinue treatment that it was rare for nurses to spontaneously mention the chaplain or minister at this point even though, when questioned they thought the role of the minister was very important. However, my experience is that there may be a reluctance to involve the chaplaincy team as medical staff are unfamiliar with the chaplains. This was an important point raised by a colleague of mine during a recent conversation.

Considering the neglect of the spiritual in the clinical environment, I have considered a number of issues to help develop the role of the MSE / nurse. Good communication - regular information through meetings (informal as well as formal) and newsletters, and an atmosphere of trust - is essential if smooth and anxiety-free changes are to be made. Change is also likely to be implemented most successfully when people improve their own knowledge and when they feel part of the changes taking place; this will hopefully prevent any resistance to change (Parrish, 1996). As MSE is a concept that is not widely understood within the Churches, resistance, in my experience, has been more marked amongst Chaplaincy staff than fellow nursing staff.

On a personal level I feel that becoming an ordained minister within the workplace will enable me to develop my own spiritual ministry, which will enhance my role as a nurse. By developing as an MSE, this will open up a new aspect of care within the clinical environment. Ordination will affirm and, in the eye's of the Church, authorise this ministry, and would provide me with an authority to perform the sacramental elements of spiritual care, e.g. baptism/blessing's and funerals, (Francis, 2001). This would assure the parents that if I were to baptise their baby it would be performed 'properly' by an

ordained minister. In addition, although the NHS Trust has an excellent chaplaincy team, the families are often unfamiliar with them. This 'gap' could be bridged by having a specialist nurse who, as a minister, is able to perform the sacramental elements, is already familiar and who knows their baby. An important issue to mention at this point is that I aim to work alongside the chaplaincy team, which will continue to be as integral to the daily life of the NICU as to any other aspect of the hospital's life. Furthermore, my role remains that of a nurse and I would only be able to provide such formal ministerial functions as my workload and workplace allowed.

A feature of the road towards MSE has been situations where I have become frustrated at not being able to promote aspects of spiritual care because as a nurse it is not seen as relevant to express your own beliefs. Recently, for example, I was involved with the care of a baby about to undergo surgery. Although the parents enquired about having their baby baptised, they decided not to. Their reason was, 'We don't want to tempt fate!' As a Christian I felt this was a situation that could have been discussed further, however, as a nurse this was not possible, (NMC, 2002). As an ordained MSE, I anticipate having more opportunity to influence an individual's thinking on the spiritual aspects of care. Spiritual care ought to be a positive aspect of care, not seen as a negative element - which is often the case. In this case, that by having their baby baptised/blessed is about asking for God's protection and guidance on the situation and it is not 'tempting fate.' I realise that this would have to be developed in a way that is not imposing, and ways need to be developed of making parents aware of the presence of an MSE in the unit and how they might use this.

McHaffie and Fowlie (1996) ascertained that where a baby does die, if staff introduce parents to the hospital chaplain, who is familiar with the life in the NICU and who has seen their baby, this enables them to approach their baby's funeral more confidently and the ceremony becomes more personal. I realise that for a parish priest to conduct a baby's funeral must be one of the hardest services they will have to undertake, especially when they do not know the family. The presence in the hospital of an MSE / nurse

again potentially acts as a bridge, helping provide a more personal service during a time of emotional stress.

Unusually in my situation it is external factors that are influencing the development of practice. Shortly after I started exploring the path towards ordained MSE, I approached the senior hospital chaplain. I felt it was important to involve him at this stage in the process, to minimise resistance to change, to ensure that he felt part of what was being developed and to enable him to contribute to the process. (Bennis, 1998, Marquis, Huston, 2000, Parrish, 1996). Despite involving him at this early stage, encouraging him to be part of this development in clinical practice, and completing a 6-month placement with the chaplaincy team to develop a mutual trust and gain some experience of the role of the chaplain, I continue to meet with resistance, (Marquis, Huston, 2000).

McHaffie and Fowlie (1996) suggest that it is the role of the chaplain to offer spiritual support, as they are in a position to answer deep questions on life, offer a moral view, and give hope in difficult situations. An ordained minister gives an authentic air to proceedings in the NICU which can be reassuring to staff and parents. McHaffie and Fowlie (1996) found that parents need something to cling on to at traumatic points of their lives, even those who are not at all religious. Upon reflection I feel that this may be why there has been some resistance by the senior chaplain; he perhaps feels that I would encroach upon the chaplain's role. However, I feel that I will be promoting the spiritual aspect of care and therefore complement the service of the chaplaincy team. This has been frustrating and disheartening. However, despite this resistance I continue to keep him informed. On reflection I feel the resistance to this type of ministry is due to the lack of understanding which in turn has led to the chaplain feeling threatened by a nurse wanting to become ordained, (Francis, 2001).

Although I have had frustrations with trying to develop practice, I have found my nursing colleagues far more supportive towards this aspect of specialist nursing being introduced into the clinical environment. I have the support of the lead nurse and several members of the nursing team, with whom she I confide. The lead nurse has ex-

pressed her support and has stated she will assist with the various aspects needed to set up this service. For example: approaching management, contracts, and liaising with the senior chaplain and the church.

A specialist nurse as an ordained minister would benefit the staff by providing a confidential, familiar and friendly support network. In a church congregation the minister is a confidant, someone to trust, to share problems with but who is also a vital friend. When things become tense and hard questions are being asked, ministers can act as confidants whose discretion can be relied upon, (McHaffie and Fowlie, 1996). I recognise that I already provide this to some extent, as some of the staff have sought me out to ask advice and to discuss problems confidentially. Ordination would enable the staff to recognise a formal authority to minister as well as one of 'being there'. I could also use this role to develop clinical supervision on the unit. This is a process that promotes personal and professional development within a supportive relationship. It aims to promote high clinical standards and develop expertise by supporting staff, helping to prevent problems in busy, stressful practice settings, (Faugier and Butterworth, 1994).

However, the matter of confidentiality may become an issue, if a member of staff came to speak to me as a minister and not as a nurse. As a nurse I am bound by the 'The Code of Professional conduct' on issues such as confidentiality, (NMC, 2002). The Church of England has recently issued guidelines for conduct of clergy, which on confidentiality correspond closely to the professional code. Furthermore, there has always been an understanding that conversations between the priest and those to whom they minister are confidential. However, as far as sacramental confession is concerned there is absolute confidentiality. This would be an area needing careful consideration if a person wished to talk in confidence. Perhaps certain rules would need to be discussed before a confidential conversation took place, for example by stating that if the conversation was to break the nursing professional code of conduct then as a nurse I would have no choice but to break confidentiality.

The assignment on which this article is based has enabled me to reflect upon my current situation in developing clinical practice. The three years of ordination training, alongside continuing to work as a specialist nurse practitioner, will take this further. It has been an interesting journey so far, with many loose ends still to tie up, but worth it.

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“Ministers-at-Work” gains new reader – Catherine’s budgie!

Mission de France: 'Cause célèbre'

Deirdre Palk, Auxerre, February 2004

Two years ago, I retired from work in England and came to live in France - in Auxerre (only if you are football crazy will the name of this lovely little city in Burgundy, about 150 kilometres from Paris, mean anything to you). The purpose of this great change in my life was to live an experiment - is it possible to cope with, even enjoy, the challenge of living in another language, another culture and particularly in another social and administrative system? (It will be a while yet before I can answer the question!)

Perhaps it was more than mere chance that brought us to Auxerre, a few kilometres from Pontigny, the spiritual home of the Mission de France, and to a diocese where the bishop (Archbishop of Sens-Auxerre), Georges Gilson, is the 'prelat', or responsible bishop, of the Mission - a man deeply committed to this way of 'being Church' - who even knows about UK MSEs! So, the reprint of John Mantle's article 'Worker Priests - Lost Cause or Cause Célèbre?' in the MAW Journal no. 88 caused me to reflect on what I have understood of the work of the Mission de France since I have been living here.

I can't answer the question of Mantle's article title. As with my own personal questions, it will take time to work out. France is such a different country from the countries of the UK, politically, culturally, and especially religiously. The separation of church and state enshrined in the French constitution is an ever present, constantly discussed marker, which is difficult to grasp and to assess. The primacy of 'laicity' is refreshing, but extremely challenging. It is perhaps this heartfelt and seriously pursued concept of laicity which may mean that the model of the Mission de France is not appropriate for the UK, rather than the issues suggested by Ted Wickham in 1961 - time, particularly the emergence from the dark years of the 1940s and early 1950s, has altered the picture. However, the dynamism of the Mission is a phenomenon which is worth study, particularly by the Church of England.

This year, the Community of the Mission de France has decided on

its 'cause célèbre': "1954-2004, 50 years of 'Priests at Work". This struck me as strange. We know that the Mission de France seminary was set up in Lisieux in 1941 to train priests to be ready to 'break down the wall, separating the Church from the mass of the people and to give Christ back to all those who have lost him'. This they were to do by working in the factories and workshops of the country; some priests from Paris were also authorised to go and work in factories from 1943. But in 1953, Rome announced an imminent ban on worker priests, forced the seminary to close, and by 1st March 1954, all worker priests had to leave their factories. The following year, Rome forbade any priest from 'work', even part-time.

The Mission de France, however, sees 1954 as a new starting point in the story of the worker-priest, and one to be celebrated. It appears to be the point at which the way of being a missionary church changed. The political, social and economic life of France was changing, coming out of the dreadful aftermath of war. No longer were priests to be trained to go alone to industrial situations, where they were isolated and unsupported - the team was the essential ingredient. I believe it has been the team structure which has allowed the Mission to grow and flourish particularly since the mid-1960s, and is the basis for its current dynamism. In 1954, the Mission obtained from the Pope a 'statute' which enabled it to open a seminary at Pontigny (in the buildings of a superb former Cistercian monastery) and here it started to train priests to work in teams in Algeria, where they publicly took up a position of support for the Algerian people in the struggle for independence from France - some priests of the mission still work in Algeria.

So, by 1965, the Mission was in a position to take advantage of the breath of hope offered at the end of the Second Vatican Council by Pope Paul VI who again authorised worker-priests. In 1980, the bishops of France gave accreditation to the Mission, requesting that priests worked in socially and culturally deprived areas of France, either at the request of a local diocese, or because they already worked professionally in a particular area and could join an existing team or be the focus of a new team.

1986 saw what appears to have been the crucial growth point - when the bishops ratified the creation of Mission teams which henceforth were to consist of priests, deacons and lay people, married or single; the permanent diaconate of the French Church was to be developed to play a crucial role in the Mission. Now, virtually all deacons and lay people of the Mission are in 'secular' work or are parents bringing up a family. At least half of the priests under the age of 60 are in a wide variety of paid 'secular' professions - the recent newsletters of the Mission have printed the stories of priests, deacons and lay people - and included a university teacher, a motorway construction worker, a nurse, other workers in the health services, a bus driver, various agricultural workers, people 'in computers', a chef, a ski instructor. All live in the areas where they have their mission, many living in the 'cités' - the densely populated post-1950 tower-blocks and 'barres' to be found on the edges of all largish French towns. Now there are more than 500 lay and ordained ministers of the Mission de France, grouped round at least one priest or deacon. Their commitment is to live and work among the poorest and the most deprived in this country. The Mission did not envisage a team without a priest; this now has been modified to say without a priest or a deacon. The priests of the French Church are of a very high average age, there are few new vocations to priesthood (though many more to the permanent diaconate - for good and bad reasons) and the Mission is in great need of younger priests who are already in professional secular employment.

About four years ago, the Mission - now called the Communauté de la Mission de France - created a support group - les Amis de la Communauté de la Mission de France - who engage to pray for the Mission and to give spiritual support, to support events and discussions held near us, and to give financial support for such things as renovating the house at Pontigny where young people often stay to engage in dialogue and discussion of current political and social issues. There are now well over 1,000 people in this network.

The feedback from the Mission itself gives cause for celebration - its work is impressive - but I would be unrealistic if I failed to ask the sort of questions that MSEs often ask. What is the standing of the Mission within the Catholic Church in France? What does the

'ordinary' churchgoer think of the Mission? How well is it understood and supported? I avoid answering my own questions, needing more immersion in the strangeness of life here! But, thus far I would say that, since the numbers trained for this mission are now quite significant, and since it is perfectly clear what the priests and deacons are being ordained to do, the French Church is investing a good deal in the work of the Mission. Its current bishop, Mgr Gilson, is a remarkable standard bearer - but, sadly, he is not far off retirement. What then? As for the ordinary church-goer, even here, close to where it started, our own bishop intimately involved, frequently ordaining men for the Mission: well, they don't seem to have heard of it! (And I am sure that it's not just my developing French with its English accent that draws the puzzled response!) No prayer is ever said at the Eucharist in the cathedral, no sermon preached that touches on 'work' or the work of the Mission, no contact point for the Mission is printed in the diocesan handbook. All familiar stuff.

If any reader is interested and can cope with a bit of French, I strongly recommend a visit to <http://www.mission-de-france.com> and a subscription to 'Lettre d'Information de la Communauté Mission de France' - particularly if you find experiential material to your liking. Every month in this 4 sheet A4 production there are brief stories from and interviews with members of the Mission teams, in which MSEs will find resonance with their own stories, as well as many significant differences which derive from a country and a Church with a different history, existing in a different culture.

Work prayer

From "A Promise of Presence", Bridget Meehan and Regina Oliver, ACTA Publications (USA), 1999.

God, I am grateful for my job.

Even though you listen to a lot of complaints from me, I know how blessed I am to have work that challenges me and pays the bills.

Stir up my creative energies that I might make a worthwhile contribution to this endeavor.

May my boss and co-workers experience my support and teamwork.

When they look at me, may they see you. Amen.

The Theology of Mouse.

*Dorrie Johnson
Retired Health Professional, Warwickshire*

This paper was written in direct response to a Christmas card received from a friend. Aware of its less than clear seasonal message she challenged me, in less than 2000 words, to find a theology of mouse. In so doing I wish to apologise to any whom I may have inadvertently offended. It is not my wish to trivialise belief or make fun of tradition and neither do I wish to belittle strongly held convictions or the doctrine of the church. This paper is intended to be a little bit of enjoyment and no more than that. I also believe that God created humour.

The Theology of Mouse - The background

This has been a most enjoyable piece of research and well worth the time spent on it. Interest in the development of a theology of mouse has been relatively recent, despite the heritage of chronicles which exist, and few theologians are yet persuaded of its validity. Despite this lack of certainty there is a growing body of opinion supporting this erudition.

To throw some light onto the history of this evolving branch of theology, exploring the cultural framework and consciousness of mouse, one can turn to the Mouse Chronicles. Few of the Mouse Writings survive but the challenge of the early movements of mouse and its hole-istic history has been discovered and passed down to us. Many of the laws of purification and atonement as described in ancient writings are now questioned, recognised as being part of the culture of the time and from which we have now moved away. Unfortunately Mouse has not been so freed.

You shall regard as unclean all four-footed wild animals that go on flat paws – you shall regard these as unclean among animals that teem on the ground. (Lev. 11:27, 28)

Today's people are unsympathetic to the idea of sacrificial offerings

and to the throwing of blood. Mouse was not so sacrificed, maybe because of its diminutive stature, but Isaiah tells us that it was commonplace to eat of the animals of the fields:

those who eat of the flesh of pigs and rodents and all vile vermin shall meet their end, one and all. (Isaiah 66:17)

Edible mouse was of course introduced into this country by the Romans, but this practice was not widely followed. It is unlikely to hinder ecumenical conversations. Indeed it was dying out when Chaucer wrote:

*And every deyntee that it is in that house
Swich appetite hath he to ete a mous.*

Tradition

Mouse as a creature of God was brought before Adam for naming. 'Mus Musculus', said Adam, because when he named the species he always used Latin. This naming should – and indeed did – convey status upon Mouse but it was largely lost (and only now is it being recognised in the movement for animal rights).

This small creature has held an enduring place in history. Its tradition is long. Its early records, however, were less illustrious. Horace in the century before the birth of Christ, reported 'Parturient montes nascetur ridiculus mus'. (Mountains will heave in childbirth and a silly little mouse will be born). Despite this many relics and fossilised remains are kept in the buildings allegedly originally named after Mouse, Mus-eums (although with the change in pronunciation over the years the meaning has been lost).

There is a proposition, though vehemently, and I am sure quite rightly, widely discounted by later followers, that Didymus the Blind in the 4th century was of mouse. His works were not, after all, copied in the middle ages and only fragments of writings ascribed to him survive. Briefly, a similar myth arose some centuries later at the end of the 15th century and after his death, around Erasmus Desiderius. This owed much to the title of his work – *In Praise of*

Folly and to the fact that both Pope Paul IV and Sixtus V banned his writings – as you will be only too well aware.

It was, of course, from the early crusade of Mouse and its bid for leadership that we received the wise epithet, now usually used of Bishops or even Popes, *Pri-mus inter Pares*.

It has not been possible, incidentally, despite a long held supposition to confirm that Mouse once conveyed its truth through squeaking in metrical psalmody. Many believe it to be fact that Mus formed the greater part of the word *Mus-sic* and it was not until later centuries that mussical instruments were used and the pronunciation changed to musical, when polyphony was introduced in the middle ages.

The Age of Enlightenment, in the 18th century, was particularly traumatic for Mouse with its conviction that truth could only be reached through reason, dissertation and experiment. Mouse of course, was challenged linguistically and found this period very difficult, especially the element of experiment. It was almost catastrophic (a concept initiated by Mouse to describe something very bad).

The Doctrine of Mouse

The Doctrine of Mouse has been difficult historically to separate from that of creation. Some variations in doctrine gave rise to, or arose from, the differing evolutionary perspectives of House Mouse, Field Mouse, Harvest Mouse and Dormouse. (We will not enter here into the scholastic argument surrounding creation and evolution).

The House Mouse lives in Community, often in poverty and overcrowding. There is a degree of criminality, not surprisingly, associated with this level of deprivation. Particularly common is theft of consumables and gnawing and entering into larders. This petty thieving is one of the factors which triggers the ambivalence in the relationship between humanity and Mouse. It makes Mouse an out-cast.

It has long been known that Rat frequented ships. The fact that Mouse was also called to cross the seas is not so well known. The

evidence, illustrating its sense of community and call to its own to gather together, is found, however, in the term still used – Mus-ter stations.

Attention given to the Harvest Mouse and Field Mouse, appreciates the experience and needs of rural areas – isolation, scattered communities, lack of transport, dependence on the weather and seasons. Here again there is the ambivalence, so often noted, between humanity and Mouse. Although Harvest and Field Mouse families are isolated, separated from people, yet they are greatly affected by humanity's ecological practices. Their very lifestyle is threatened.

The Dormouse experiences a similar threat. With its home made from stripped papery bark of honeysuckle, it would imply a life of simplicity. Indeed, it does seek solitude. It is a more meditative, contemplative Mouse. Yet at every season of reaping, as the last straw is gleaned, humanity's greed forces the Mouse from its final environment, out into the stubbled fields – a wilderness experience of immense proportion.

The Spirituality of Mouse

There are many examples of Mouse and musty-cal experience, indeed Mouse musty-cism has not infrequently been remarked by those with a more sensitive nose. Mouse can often be found in a state of ecstasy when under the influence of profound emotion. It has an appearance of being in a trance, in suspense, apparent paralysis, trembling in its intensity.

The Dormouse has a quiet spirituality. It is not unknown for it to lose itself in an experience of being entirely in something else. House Mouse of course, has a spirituality discerned in the everyday, the busyness of life and, perhaps oddly, this is where its musty-cism is most obvious.

Mouse as Victim

Mouse, naturally, as small and vulnerable, is frequently victim.

There is a deep theological truth in power lying in weakness. Mouse is unaware of the relative power which it holds (it frightens, it disturbs, causes panic and hatred, notwithstanding its size). Many people are misogynist. Women scream, men kill. You will not be surprised to learn that in the early 1600s retribution followed swiftly after mouse was killed. Braithwaite immortalised this for us when he wrote:

*To Banbury, came I, O profane one!
Where I saw a Puritane one.
hanging of his cat on Monday
for killing of a Mouse on Sunday.*

Now we think nothing of it! Yet the paradox of strength in weakness and Mouse as victim has been illustrated, as have David and Goliath, in parable and fairy tale. The three blind mice, the crooked Mouse caught by the crooked cat, the pie made of mouse, the elephant and the mouse ... one could go on. Only children play happily alongside and accept Mouse. We would do well to remember that unless we become as little children ...

Mouse as outcast through deprivation has been considered previously, but notice should be given to the Orders of Mouse. These deliberately embrace poverty. Indeed you will know the expression 'as poor as a church Mouse', though few realise this derivation. The Church Mouse was later romanticised by a poet Laureate and though these Orders are now extinct, the church Mouse does live on in the craftsmanship of carpenters and wood carvers and furniture makers. Examples can be seen in churches in Allesley in Coventry and in Kilburn in the Yorkshire Dales. It is said that Robert Thompson was working with fellow craftsman Charlie Barker in the roof of a church.



"I and another carver were carving a huge cornice for a screen and he happened to say something about being as poor as a church mouse," Thompson wrote almost 30 years later, in 1949:

"I said I'll carve a mouse here." and he did. The development of the image is a direct response to this victimisation of Mouse.

Mouse as offering departs from the idea of Martyrdom as understood by men and women. Mouse rarely, if indeed ever, offers itself. It is seldom a willing victim. The theology of suffering of Mouse has not been developed and would perhaps, merit further attention not only at paw of cat, but as experimental victim for scientific hypothesis. It is difficult to identify the redemptive nature of Mouse as offering unless seen in this light. Mouse, however, has a real sense that 'in life we are in death'. This form of awareness of mortality is very real. The relationship between Mouse and bird such as owl, or between Mouse and animal such a cat, is forged out of avoidance and fear. It is one of hunter and hunter, of oppression. Mouse has no sense of liberation theology.

Mouse has struggled through the ages. It has, as far as is known, no concept of original sin or Metanoia in the sense of turning and repentance, although rapid changes of direction are far from unknown. Mouse is, a priori, living only by faith – no works ever having been observed. That faith is strongly identified with being and an instinct for survival. House Mouse of course implicitly understands Koinonia and has a strong sense of Community.

Conclusion

Incarnational theology brings a belief in God active still in creation, God's will is for the perfection of his creation, the expectation of the kingdom here – but it is not yet. All creation, says the chorus, is straining on tiptoe for to see. Mouse, even on tiptoe, can see little but continues to live as if the moment is its last and yet as if it were going to live for ever - Carpe diem could be its call. It takes no thought for the morrow. It accepts its place and goes forth to be fruitful. Yet, Mouse, these days, is a scattered tribe, indeed often just a remnant, sometimes found left on a doorstep. Its language fails to convey its thinking – yet its place is distinct.

Musmissiology, from Mus - mouse, mission – to send, logos – to study, as a branch of theology, studying the principles and prac-

tices of Mouse mission, make a fascinating subject, more important these days with the increased interest in situation ethics. There is, once again, a threat to mouse as the experimentation, particularly into Mus-cular potential, is perpetrated upon it. Mouse has long defended its renunciation of birth control but, as it becomes more and more involved in the field of medical research and genetic engineering, Mouse is wondering whether there is more to the meaning of life than to be used in a laboratory. Is this what it can hope for should it hope? Is a higher meaning never to be known or can there be a recognition of Mouse as Mouse. Mouse believes it must happen.

© Dorrie Johnson. Feb 2004

The 11th Commandment competition!

'Ship of Fools' recently ran a competition to find the most amusing 11th Commandment (see www.ship-of-fools.com). Not to be out-done, 'Ministers-at-Work' announces it's own competition to find suitable Commandments for MSEs!

Entries must be pithy, legal, decent, not libellous, printable, and not more than 30 words long. I haven't thought of a prize yet, but will come up with something suitably mischievous!

Please submit your entries to the Editor by 30 June, 2004, for the July edition – and my decision is final! *Rob*

To start the ball rolling, the following has already come in from Margaret Joachim:

Thou shalt always remember that thy carefully-honed secular skills are as anathema and an abomination to the church, and shalt exclude them conscientiously from any contact therewith.

Making a Difference

Two reflections on CHRISM's February Retreat:

Is ministry at work about bringing God to work or recognizing God at work?

Some reflections at and following the weekend.

Mike Rayner, Oxford

There seem to be two ways of viewing ministry in the workplace. At one extreme the workplace can be regarded as 'the world' and John exhorts us not to 'love the world or anything in the world' (1 John 2:13) and at the other extreme it can be seen as part of God's creation which Paul tells us will eventually be 'liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God (Romans 8: 21).

With the former perspective the task of the minister in the workplace is to be like a light set on a stand so that those who come in can see the light. With the latter perspective it is to be like a fisherman who lets down a net and when it is full with fish collects the good fish in baskets and throws the bad away.

Of course the two perspectives are not really mutually exclusive and we can at least aspire to be both pure light and discerning fisherman, even if in reality our efforts fall far short of the mark. But I guess many ministers at work struggle to decide which to concentrate on – particularly as a fulfilling our call to one may interfere, or at least interact in unpredictable ways, with our call to the other. But what does it mean to be 'light' or 'fisherman' and which do we focus on? Here are some of my dilemmas.

I know I cannot really 'bring God to work', merely rather feebly reflect God at work. Perhaps it's better to talk about bringing church to work. Doing some churchy things at work – I think it's called. I co-ordinate a small research group within a University department where there are few Christians but lots of people seeking God. Should I hold services for people looking to meet God at work?

Perhaps I could hold a carol service. In the end I decide to hold four meditation sessions: two run by me, one by a person who'd recently been on a Buddhist retreat and one by a person who owned and regularly listened to a meditation tape. Quite a few came. Did people see the light at these sessions? I hope that at least two or three did.

Several of Jesus' parables – such as the parable of the wheat and tares - suggest that the Kingdom of God is difficult to discern. The parable of the net suggests that the final decision about who does or does not belong to the Kingdom is up to God or at least his angels. So 'recognizing God at work' is hard too. My work involves research but also lobbying. At the moment I am involved in a big campaign – on the part of Sustain: the alliance for better food and farming – to ban the advertising of junk food to children. Does God want me involved in this campaign? The first chapter of Rowan Williams's *Lost Icons* reassures me but still: would Michael Ranken approve? Discerning God at work seems much easier when looking for him in ways of working rather than in the object of work itself.

Does the process of shining interfere with discerning? I suspect that many ministers at work may feel that it does even if they think it shouldn't. My holding of meditation sessions at work does nothing to improve my 'image' as a serious academic (though to be honest neither does my involvement in overtly partisan lobbying since academics are supposed to sit on fences) but more importantly they take up time and energy which might be devoted to more important stuff – such as changing the world - or at least the way foods advertised to children. Conversely what can be more important than providing opportunities for people (and I include myself here) to meet God at work? Views welcome.

As I lay lazily in bed,

Catherine Binns

.... listening to the wind gusting around my house, ideas began tossing around my mind in answer to Jean's (*Skinner*) request for me to write a reflection on the weekend as a new-comer. What should I write?

I approached the weekend with a little excitement but with trepidation not really knowing what to expect. Excitement at meeting others who are experienced MSE's, who know where I am coming from, have been on the journey for a long time, have experienced the frustrations and despair I have experienced so far along my short journey towards ordination training, and to meet people who understand my ministry without explanation.

I have to admit the silent part of the retreat filled me with some anxiety, having never experienced enforced silence, and this was a valuable experience for me. I especially found looking at myself through the eyes of others very challenging. The silence allowed me space to reflect on the difficult situations at work I and others are facing at the moment and allowed me the chance to hand the situation over to God.

The weekend was a chance for me to reflect, share and listen with others and to relax. I arrived feeling very tired, stressed and downhearted with the low morale and other problems at work. I came away, God-filled, relaxed and full of enthusiasm for my future ministry. Although I was soon brought back down to earth when I went back to work. I valued my companion as it gave me the chance to share fears of my future ministry and problems I am already facing, as my ministry unfolds, as a neonatal intensive care nurse.

The answer to the question do I make a difference at work? It was received in the form of a card from a fairly new member of staff. She was grateful that I took her for who she was and thought no less of her.

Friends Like You

Friends like you are rare indeed
They shine just like a star
And words alone can hardly say
How wonderful you are
For when the world turns cold
And life is difficult to bear

It's comforting to know
That I can always find you there
To share each heavy burden
To give hope and consolation
But also in the happy times
To share the celebration
And when I think of what we have
The bond we both embrace
I realise that nobody
Could really take your place
I couldn't put a value
Or price on all this
But I know if it wasn't there
It's something I would miss....
Your faith and understanding
And your loyalty, so true
Just tells me I am lucky
To have such a friend as you.

Editor's note:

The excellent reflective sessions during the weekend were led by Peter Johnson, whose notes I am working on at the moment with a view to these becoming the basis for the next CHRISM Paper.

If you have any thoughts on the weekend that you would like to share, please do let me know.

MSEs and Chaplains

Rob Fox

Many thanks to those who responded to the appeal last year about relations between MSEs and Chaplains in our various workplaces. As the numbers were small (a handful) it is unwise to draw any conclusions. Why so few? I suspect that it is because, looking at the range of occupations of CHRISM members that the great majority simply never encounter a Chaplain. Even in a University the ratio of

Chaplains to students and staff is likely to be considerably lower than among local church based clergy.

Two things did stand out however. Firstly, everything said about Industrial Chaplains was positive. It seems those encountered value the presence and work of MSEs, who value Industrial Chaplains highly in return. Conversely the experience of other Chaplains, particularly in Health, is largely negative. MSEs tend to be seen as a threat to 'their' role and as encroaching on 'their' territory.

There is no easy explanation for this (at least that I can see!), but may I offer this thought for comment. Industrial Chaplains have been used to operating on (or beyond) the churches' institutional margins for over a century and are, perhaps, more open to the contributions of others as a result. Chaplains in Health and Education tend to lead a more dualistic existence, often employed by the secular institution but feeling themselves part of the church institution as well, and wanting to be accepted by each. Anything that suggests an alternative, even if it might complement their role and acceptance in it, is therefore a potential threat. What do you think?

Subscriptions

As with any membership organisation, CHRISM depends on the subscriptions and donations of its' members to continue the work of championing the cause of MSE. The main cost incurred is printing and distributing the Journal, taking up over two thirds of the annual £25 subscription. We exchange publications with other organisations in the UK and outside, and provide complimentary copies to training institutions and some key persons within the Churches.

If you receive the Journal and are a subscriber but think these may not be up to date, please contact the Treasurer, Richard Dobell. If you receive the Journal and think you should not, or know of someone else who you think should, please let the Editor know.

Book Review:

“90,000 Hours: Managing the World of Work”

***Rodney Green, Scripture Union, 2002, 146pp,
ISBN 1 85999 594 2.***

Rob Fox

90,000 hours is the approximate time someone will work over 40 years, based on a 45-50 hours a week (including commuting). As Rodney Green repeatedly points out, this is substantial in terms of relationships as well as time and therefore deserves much more attention as an area of ministry for Christians than has historically been the case. The author draws widely on his own experience of work, faith and ministry, in a career that has led him to Chief Executive of Leicester City Council, and he has also had the benefit of a ‘focus group’ that meets around a pint at the local pub. Although he never uses the phrase, the book comes across as an ‘MSE’ work.

So what does it cover? There are four main chapters, titled:

- Creativity
- Rest
- Harmony
- Perseverance

Each chapter builds up a case covering several aspects of each topic, ending with a summary drawing together the conclusions drawn.

‘Creativity’ takes as central our sharing with and in the Creativity of God, carefully identifying how and why our creativity, especially in work, differs. Three motives commonly given by Christians for work are identified: to earn money (noting the secondary motive of supporting ‘churchy’ activities), an opportunity for evangelism, and as a result of the curse at the Fall. These are not so much dismissed as put firmly in their place: “they will only lead us up a cul-de-sac, because they seek to define work by referring to factors that are outside the work itself” (p.22). Rather we should work because:

- God created us for work and we do it in obedience to Him;
- God works, and by doing so we reflect His image;
- God delights in us sharing in His creativity.

In this context, work is therefore defined as: *“the daily exertion, paid*

or unpaid, in contrast to rest and leisure, which is consistent with God's will, image and design" (p.23, author's italics). While useful, this definition does unfortunately still refer to "factors that are outside the work itself", and does not take in what the author himself says later in the book about the value of the work and those with whom we work.

What this first chapter does though is firmly establish work as an important area of ministry, no less worthy – and often more so – than church-based activities. "If we lose the battle against the false divide between the sacred and the secular, we lose track of the value of secular work as a worthy occupation" (p.26). Within this arena we are called to reflect five moral qualities "we can ascribe to the Creator". He is rational, righteous, responsible, restful and relational. Each is clearly and thoughtfully examined, the last particularly so.

The chapter on Rest further develops the moral quality identified earlier, focussing on stress: how it arises, manifests itself and can be addressed. Emotional suppression, timidity, workaholism, and Type A personality increase susceptibility to stress, which arises from conflict, pain, alienation, long hours, inadequate rest ("rest is a human right, not a religious rite" p.76), and poor leisure. There is a bit too much about the effects of the Fall here, which tends to obscure some otherwise perceptive observations about how to identify and manage stress. The arrangement of sections within the chapter is somewhat 'bitty' too and there is more on stress in the fourth chapter - a pity that this was not included at this point.

Harmony focuses on the relationships within the workplace: employer and employee, and the latter with each other. This is a strong chapter in that the author draws on his and friends' experience authentically and effectively. He sees four distinctive features of the Christian employee: approach to the work itself (in a co-operative spirit), attitude to work ("willing to listen and ready to act" p. 100), "loyalty to Christ and his employer", and expectation "that he will reap what he has sown" (p.99). The last goes beyond 'fair day's wage for a fair day's work' to look at the consequences of investing our time and commitment in the work we do and those

with whom we do it. There is also a useful discussion of the mutual expectations and obligations of employer and employee. It would be easy to get the balance wrong here but for me Rodney Green has struck it right.

So far as Christian distinctiveness goes, the difference between the Christian employee and a conscientious non-Christian is exactly what he identifies: the former has a loyalty to Christ, serving Him as well as our employer in our work. "Christian distinctiveness at work is not just a matter of being predisposed towards certain occupations. Our work, whatever it may be, is an intrinsic part of our duty and calling to follow Christ" (p.110).

The fourth chapter, Perseverance, is (as mentioned earlier) partly a return to stress. The main theme appears to be, in fact, suffering, with perseverance as a response. It opens with a well-developed section on anger, implicitly linking this to stress and examining when and how anger can be productive and destructive. The analysis is at its most useful when it uses life situations as its starting point, least so when it starts from a Biblical passage. The final section, on responses to suffering, uses entirely Biblical examples – none at all from the workplace – so while they are topical they are not exactly contextual.

Throughout the book there is a concern to balance illustrations from the author's own or friends experience of work and Biblical examples. By and large this works, and most of the latter are used perceptively and applied well. There is some reversal too, where a 'life' example is applied back to a Biblical context, for example when asking whether prayer or pain, privation or pleasure are more 'sanctified' for the Christian (pp24-5). At times the Biblical analogies are stretched too far, and the author is at his strongest when using illustrations from his own experience. I suspect that some readers may find parts of Rodney Green's church background (Calvinist, Evangelical, Anglican?) as it comes through implicitly (never explicitly), uncomfortable. It would be a loss not to read and appreciate this book though: it is thoughtful, arises out of the author's own experience and reflection, and genuinely about being an MSE. Even if you don't like the colour of the bath water, don't ditch the baby!

“Supporting Christians at Work”

... is a new booklet written by Mark Greene, author of *Thank God its Monday, Supporting Christians at Work (without going insane)* , and published by the London Institute for Christianity. The promotional information says:

“Work in Britain is getting tougher with record levels of stress, anxiety and low morale. However research reveals that most Christians in the workplace get little or no support from their church communities. To remedy that, business professionals, individuals and trusts have funded a new resource to be made available to every minister in Britain.”

It is intended as a resource to help ministers encourage and envision the workers in their congregation, offering a simple refocusing of Church mission strategy by:

- Making the case for workplace ministry;
- Providing Pastors and Ministers with a discussion of the theological issues which have blocked workplace ministry;
- Including a large number of ideas on how they and their communities can *practically* support the workers.
-

It is available by sending a cheque (payable to LICC for £6 (£4 for pastors) with your name and address, to SCAW, LICC, St Peter's, Vere St, London, W1G 0DQ.

For more information, contact:

Paula Cummings, The London Institute for Contemporary Christianity

(t) 020 7399 9567 (e) paula.cummings@licc.org.uk

o r :

John G Ellis, Methodist Church House

(t) 020 7467 5297 (e) ellisj@methodistchurch.org.uk

Also new from LICC and Mark Greene is *Imagine - How we can reach the UK*, a report published in partnership with the Evangelical Alliance.

It “challenges Christians to think beyond ‘church’ and to see faith as touching every aspect of their lives. It also identifies areas where the Church needs to expand its vision and mission if Christianity is to be seen as relevant to society. It challenges church leaders and members to ensure that faith isn’t confined to churchgoing and encourages them to think about 24/7 Christianity. It has already been sent out to approximately 50,000 Christians in the UK.”

Special-edition copies of *Imagine* are now available from LICC, priced at £3 plus 50p p&p, from:
Imagine, LICC, St Peter's, Vere St, London, W1G 0DQ.

(If anyone can write a review, please let me know. Ed.)

Diary

CABE (Christian Association of Business Executives) continues its series of lectures on 11 May, when the Bishop of Bradwell, Rt. Revd. Dr. Laurie Green, is the speaker. The annual **Hugh Kay Memorial Lecture** has been booked for 22 November, speaker: Rt. Revd. James Jones, Bishop of Liverpool.

Christians at Work holds its annual conference at the usual venue of Rugby Baptist Church on 12 June. Titled '***Commendably Contagious***', the main speaker is Mark Greene, Director of the London Institute for Contemporary Christianity (LICC) and author of '*God on Monday*'. Cost is £16 to members, otherwise £20. Contact:

E-mail: office@christiansatwork.org.uk

Website: www.christiansatwork.org.uk

LICC itself continues its CEO series of talks at St. Peter's, Vere Street, London, 6.30 for 7.00, with three addresses by Prabhu Gup-tara:

- May 17: *Why the West grew rich: the Bible or Colonialism?*
- May 18: *Globalisation: How to transform a relative curse into a greater blessing*
- May 19: *Why some parts of the world remain poor – and what we can do about it*

CHRISM SUMMER CONFERENCE 2004
30th July – 1st August, at the Royal Foundation of
St. Katharine, Limehouse, East London

Celebrating MSE—The Church Inside Out

- Telling our story : - The story of MSE and CHRISM
- Our personal stories
- Visits to various workplaces in central and east London
- How God looks if you don't start in Church
- Uncovering the Church of the future

The weekend includes the inauguration of the Michael Ranken Memorial Library for Christians in Secular Ministry, and the CHRISM AGM.

Partners welcome – why not make this part of a longer break?

St. Katharine's is 3 minutes' walk from Limehouse station on the Docklands Light Railway. There is ample off-street parking and the venue is outside the Congestion Charge zone.

Cost, from dinner on Friday evening to lunch on Sunday, inclusive:
£110 (members); £120 (non-members)

Book your place with: Jean Skinner, 32 Easdale Avenue, Melton Park, Gosforth, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, NE3 5TB

Church Watch

The ***Canadian Tentmaker Network***, website: www.tentmaking.org, is developing an on-line course in Tentmaker ministry. The course outline consists of 25 sessions (!) from Thursday lunchtime to the following Monday lunchtime.

The topics covered include:

- Course overview & Tentmaker Story
- Biblical Basis for Tentmaking
- Biblical view of work
- Workplace Evangelism
- Personal non churchy witness plan
- 12 steps to Tentmaking – your plan

There is more than a hint here of starting from the Church and moving outwards, but it will be interesting to see what MSEs can learn from the material as it takes shape.

The Diocese of Derby ...

... publication entitled "A Better Way: a Ministry Strategy for Derby Diocese" sets out a useful way to see how new understandings of ministry fit into traditional structures.

NON-STIPENDIARY MINISTERS - both lay and ordained, hold a license from the bishop for their ministry, but whose main financial income comes from sources other than the Church. Most NSMs see the primary focus of their ministry as being in the parish, but would also acknowledge the importance of their ministry in the workplace.

MINISTERS IN SECULAR EMPLOYMENT - a development within non-stipendiary ministry. Because of their commitment to a public ministry in the workplace, MSEs can become an enabling and encouraging resource for the ministry of other committed Christians in that place. MSEs are themselves supported and encouraged nationally through an organization called CHRISM (Christians in Secular Ministry).

LOCAL ORDAINED MINISTRY - This picks up the ordained element within the more popular term, Local Non Stipendiary Ministry, which embraces both clergy and lay people. LOM is another development within non-stipendiary ministry. A locally ordained deacon and priest are trained within the diocese to serve exclusively in their home parish; their ordination is as usual, but their license confines their ordained ministry to the home base. An imperative for the introduction of this form of ministry is typically the provision of worship in areas where there is a shortage of priests or readers.

Notice is hereby given that the

2004 Annual General meeting of CHRISM

will take place on Sunday 1st August, 2004, at 11 a.m. at:
The Royal Foundation of St Katharine, Limehouse, London.

Agenda:

- 1 Apologies for absence
- 2 Minutes of AGM held on 13th July 2003
- 3 Matters Arising
- 4 Presiding Moderator's report
- 5 Memorial to Michael Ranken
- 6 Hon. Secretary's Report
- 7 Membership Report
- 8 CHRISSET Financial Report
 - Adoption of Accounts for 2003
 - Motion to continue the arrangement with the CHRISSET trustees
- 1 Subscription for 2005
- 2 Election of Officers and Committee members
- 3 CHRISM Nomination of a CHRISSET Trustee
- 4 Date and Place of next Annual General Meeting
- 5 Remarks by the in-coming Presiding Moderator

Details of the current Committee and it's members are shown on the inside rear cover of the Journal.

If you would like:

- to nominate someone to the Committee,
 - further information on what being a Committee member involves (with a view to standing for election), or
 - to send apologies,
- please contact the Secretary.

CHRISM

CHRistians In Secular Ministry

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*Our faith imposes on us a right and a duty to throw ourselves
into the things of the earth*

Teilhard de Chardin