

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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Please email contributions to: Mike.Rayner@dphpc.ox.ac.uk

Editorial

Well, you've finally got rid of me! This will be my last edition of "Ministers-at-Work" as Editor before handing the red pen over to Mike Rayner, who has contributed an introduction to himself and some invaluable proof-reading to this one. I will be around to give ant help or advice that Mike asks for so he isn't being dropped in it, and I will no doubt be contributing articles to future editions.

The handover comes at an opportune time as just before Christmas I was recruited by the States of Jersey on a two-year secondment to help implement Goods and Services Tax. For those not *au fait* with tax terminology, GST is the description normally given to VAT using the IMF rather than EU model. Now, before you start thinking that Jersey will suddenly become expensive, the rate of GST, when it launches on 1 May is 3%. But as you'd imagine it has caused a furore and I fully expect to be the most unpopular person on the island! It is going to be an interesting time, not least as I won't be moving there but weekly commuting. I've already had one useful Church contact in Jersey given me and welcome any others. I suspect MSE may be a rather new concept on the island.

It is a pleasure to carry article from a former Editor in this edition. Nicholas von Benzon has moved on from his parish stint in rural Worcestershire and is now working as a family mediator in Cheltenham, once again an MSE.

Phil Aspinall, who seems to do more international travelling than the UN Secretary General, has written with his customary lucidity about two gatherings of MSEs last October, in Oregon and Germany. CHRISM benefits enormously from our international contacts, with different experiences of MSE and different church traditions, and Phil's reports are well worth dwelling on. He also looks forward to the meeting of European Worker Priests in France at Pentecost, a meeting a contingent from CHRISM attends. If you are interested in going to this, or may be able to take in other international gatherings if you travel much with work, please do speak to Phil.

To reinforce the point that MSEs come in all shapes and sizes, “MSEs with a difference” picks up an item from Bridget Wilson Hall, one of the growing band in North East England, about a Dutch policeman ordained priest last summer. His story will bring smiles of recognition! It meant a lot to me as one of the Trainers I manage recently confided that he is training for the Roman Catholic Diaconate. We exchanged experiences and is definitely an MSE! I also noted an MSE in the New Year’s Honours a couple of weeks ago – a bus driver in Sunderland who is pastor of the city’s Church of the Nazarene. (If you are lucky enough to have a congregation of Nazarenes near you, do get to know them, I’ve always found them a faith-filled bunch). Felicity Smith also reports on a meeting in Coventry in the autumn, part of their MSE group’s campaign to raise awareness in the area.

Two organisations we have strong links with, Mission in London’s Economy and the Christian Association of Business Executives, are particularly active at the moment and this edition carries plenty of information about what they are up to. As often seems to be the case many events of interest to MSEs take place in or around London, but most groups are making reports and materials available on the internet these days so the benefits can go out to a wider audience.

Speaking of resources, Richard Spence, down in New Zealand, has assembled an excellent on-line library, which now includes all book reviews published in MaW from 2001. We intend to work with Richard to get earlier reviews on-line too, so if you have an electronic version it would be most welcome! More details in the ‘Resources’ section.

I can’t sign off without saying a big thank you to all who contributed to this journal, particularly over the last seven years of my incumbency as Editor. It has often been hard work, and at times it has been difficult to see how the next edition might appear, but it has been a real pleasure to contribute to CHRISM in this way. It has also been a pleasure to receive so much feedback from you the readers, which is very important as otherwise the Editor doesn’t know if they are meeting your needs. I know you’ll give Mike every bit as much support. Keep the contributions coming in.

All that's left for me to do is wish all our readers every blessing in your ministry, and a very Happy New Year!

Rob

Introducing the New Editor – Mike Rayner

A couple of months ago Rob asked me to write a few words to introduce myself as the new editor of Ministers-at-Work. I guess I should start by saying something about myself and go on to say something of my 'vision' for the journal.

So who am I? Well, I'm a recently ordained Minister in Secular Employment within the Church of England and the Director of a research group in the Department of Public Health of the University of Oxford. We are about ten in number, including doctoral students, researchers and an administrator, and we research into and advocate for policies in relation to the promotion of healthy eating and physical activity - such as traffic light labelling for food, a 9 o'clock watershed for junk food advertising on TV, so called 'fat-taxes' for unhealthy foods, more cycle paths, etc. We are mainly funded by the British Heart Foundation. For the moment I see my ministry as carrying on this work - at least for the next few years.

I've been a member of CHRISM for about five years now. I have been an avid reader of the journal and have attended four of the last five reflective weekends. Over the last five years - while exploring my vocation to be an MSE - I've found the journal and the reflective weekends extraordinarily helpful and this is why I volunteered to be a member of the committee and 'help' edit the journal.

My vision for the journal? Basically I think it is great as it is - providing the right mixture of news and reflection - not too long, not too short. So I see my task as maintaining the high standards attained by previous editors if I possibly can! But of course the journal is for all its readers - not just me - so I am open to any suggestions. Just let me know.

Tax and the Tax Authority's Responsibility

Rob Fox

In the July 2007 edition I wrote an article based on a conference I attended last summer entitled 'Tax and Corporate Responsibility'. I concluded that this would be followed up with two further enquiries, into the responsibilities of the taxing authority and of the individual taxpayer. This is the first, and it comes at an interesting time for me, as when this edition is published I shall be on secondment to the States of Jersey helping it implement Goods and Services Tax (GST), a form of VAT. I have used this as one case study as the questions it has posed and the responses of the tax authority highlight some of the key issues rather well. I have also drawn on my own experience of HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC).

A pre-consideration point here is that the tax authority, as a corporate body, is subject to the same obligations to corporate responsibility as any other such body. What was said in the first article holds good here too and I do not propose to re-visit, for example, obligations to suppliers, employees and neighbours. There is important common ground with commercial businesses, but there are also important differences, not least in the stakeholders and the authorities' relationship with them.

Until fairly recently HMRC's avowed commitment to corporate responsibility extended to the following 'internal' areas: equal opportunities, no discrimination on the basis of colour, creed, gender or sexual orientation, trying to limit waste of any form, and Investors in People (IIP). Regrettably it has been decided not to renew accreditation for IIP, partly on the grounds of cost. With the exception of IIP, all these areas are a matter of legal compliance, and while HMRC went beyond simple compliance in most respects the view of corporate responsibility was distinctly inward looking. Recently however this has been added to and elaborated by linking corporate responsibility more closely with corporate governance and in the past couple of years there has been an increasing emphasis on customer focus, putting "our customers first". At present HMRC is the only Whitehall Department to appear in the Sunday Times Top 100 Corporate Responsibility Index.

A recent re-ordering of the approach to corporate responsibility within HMRC has led to three critical areas being identified by the Corporate Responsibility Steering Group:

- the efficiency/staff relocation programmes;
- tax on the boardroom agenda; and
- marginalised customers.

An Action Plan is being developed and the Tax Credits Office chosen as the pilot area. In it there are seen to be four strands to Corporate Responsibility:

- understanding our customers and adapting to their needs
- protecting the environment for future generations
- managing the impact of our operations, products and services on society
- treating employees fairly.

The above helps identify groups of stakeholders, however an important distinction between a tax authority and a commercial organisation is that many key stakeholders are different, as are the priorities that arise from this. So who are the stakeholders? First and most important: the Government of the day. Jesus held up a coin and asked whose likeness it bore, the reply was "Caesar's". "Well then, pay to Caesar what is due to Caesar, and pay to God what is due to God." Implicit here is that it is government that sets the forms, scope and rates of taxation. The responsibility of the tax authority towards the Government is firstly then to implement and administer the tax in the prescribed way. There is here of course the debate of how the funds raised are spent, but this too is a matter for government and therefore outside the scope of this article. The tax authority is likely to have a great deal of influence over the design and interaction of taxes, but it is the Government that ordains what taxes are levied at what rates.

A good example of this is the decision to introduce GST in Jersey, which came about as a result of a decision to reduce company tax. Half of Jersey's Gross National Income is derived from financial services companies which have chosen to locate there to take advantage of the relatively low company taxation. In recent years other 'offshore' countries have sought to attract some of this business and to remain competitive Jersey has reduced company tax from

20% to zero and 10% (see <http://www.gov.je/TaxMoney/> for fuller details). The resulting hole in the State's income has to be met from other measures, the chief of which is the introduction of GST from 1 May, 2008. GST will be simpler than VAT in the UK, with far fewer exceptions and exemptions, being imposed at 3% on the supply of most goods and services, including: education, medical services, food, and children's clothing. In practice it will be slightly regressive, those on lower incomes are likely to find the price increases a higher proportion of what they spend than the better off.

Two responses by the tax authority demonstrate how it has taken its corporate responsibility towards taxpayers seriously. Detailed modelling was carried out to estimate the effect of GST at different rates and on different household incomes. Using this data the authority recommended that a 3% rate coupled with an income support scheme for those on lowest incomes would both produce the required tax yield, net of the cost of income support and administration costs, and result in nil net income loss for those taxpayers. It is a good example of the duty of care being taken seriously and driving a workable solution. The second example is of charities, which are numerous, active and vital to Jersey life. As largely voluntary bodies they are unlikely to have the expertise or resources in house to administer GST, and the tax would normally fall as a cost on them, reducing their ability to undertake charitable work. A system of exemption is therefore to be introduced, whereby the Comptroller of Income Tax will, on application, issue a certificate to a bona fide charity so that suppliers do not have to charge it GST. The idea is that the certificates will only be issued for socially useful bodies (there is no legal definition of a 'charity' in Jersey), so the fun will start if, for example, sports clubs find their applications refused!

The second priority group of stakeholders are the tax collectors, and no – I don't mean me! It is a feature of modern taxation that taxes are predominantly collected by businesses and employers on behalf of the tax authority, and paid over on a periodic basis. Anyone who is whose tax and National Insurance is collected through Pay As You Earn (PAYE) will know this. Jersey GST is just such a tax, with the registered business able to offset the GST it pays out to its suppliers against the tax it collects on what it supplies to others. There is an

important principle arising from corporate responsibility here: proportionality. This manifests itself in two ways. Firstly the administrative burden on the business should be the least possible consistent with efficient administration of the tax. The costs of tax administration and compliance – PAYE, VAT, Corporation Tax returns for example – are a cost to the business and reduce profits. Yes, Corporation Tax is a (arguably over-complicated in the UK) tax only on profits, but businesses cannot set the *costs* of collecting, reporting and paying taxes such as employees income tax, Insurance Premium Tax or VAT against the taxes so collected. And the law of diminishing costs applies to businesses reporting these taxes: the cost of calculating, deducting and paying over Income Tax and National Insurance for its employees is not a hundred times greater for a company with 500 staff than it is for one man employing five others.

One of the things that has disappointed me (and there have been several!) in the brave new world of HMRC since it was formed in 2005 is how little colleagues working in one tax head understand of how other taxes impact on businesses. And it is not just across the two former departments either: in a recent programme of Cross Tax Awareness seminars I helped organise I was struck by how little debate there was about the impact on the example business of the various taxes involved. In the dozen or so events I sat in on only once did someone remark that the business would have to go into liquidation. At least there has been some progress from the scene that occasionally greeted me a few years ago, of arriving at a premises to find a couple of Excise officers already at work at the other end of factory and a team of Employer Compliance staff burrowing through the PAYE records. Businesses much prefer to deal through one point of contact and know that their tax affairs are being viewed in totality.

Then there is the burden of penalties and sanctions for getting it wrong. That there should be a regime of powers and penalties for errors and misdemeanours I think is uncontroversial. In recent years HMRC has viewed compliance with tax responsibilities as a spectrum, ranging from keen to get it right and put all the necessary systems in place to ensure it is, through accidental error or

omission to carelessness, recklessness and eventually suppression with concealment. Those who cannot be encouraged and educated into compliant behaviours need to be penalised for two very good reasons: it protects the integrity of the tax, and it supports equity of treatment. Why should the reckless or dishonest be able to compete against the careful and compliant? Here the tax authority has a great deal of influence, firstly in advising the Government on the powers and penalties regime then in ensuring it is used equitably and in proportion to the mischief done. Most taxpayers will never have heard of the Revenue Information Powers Act 2000, but it is an important piece of legislation, being a clear statement of how the principles set out in the Human Rights Act apply to how tax is collected. It is not – yet – an integral part of the training received by all HMRC tax officials, but will be soon.

Finally here there is the obligation of the tax authority to ensure that the information collected about taxpayers – individuals and corporate bodies – is only used for legitimate purposes and not divulged to a third party with has no right to it. Commercial confidentiality is only one aspect of this, unless there is a legally established and regulated gateway, information must not be exchanged between government departments. Although it concerned Child Benefit, not tax, the recent loss of data on 25m women and children in the UK by an arm of HMRC was a serious breach of this obligation and in my view the Chairman, Paul Gray, did 'the right thing' by resigning. It is all too easy to forget that the subject of the data in that file is a real person, to whom is owed an absolute duty of care.

There is one more primary group of stakeholders, those who work for the tax authority. Here its responsibilities are the same as any other large employer: for their health and safety, clear guidance and support on how to undertake their tasks, appropriate and timely training, consistent and reasonable management. Within any large organisation it is easy for an individual employee to lose sight of the overall purpose of the 'company', if they ever knew it in the first place. Thus training needs to be not only functional but also contextual, and not only one-off, 'box ticking', but continuous and supported. There has been some good progress here in HMRC, with a major re-structuring of technical training currently under way, clearly

linked to career paths (both of which I've made significant contributions to – this is not time for false modesty!), and a top level commitment to Continuous Professional Development. If it is still falling short this is in my experience for two reasons: pressure on managers lower down the chain to deliver business results at the expense of training, and a lack of initiative on the part of staff themselves in seeking out opportunities.

One area affecting staff is having particular impact at present: technology. As so much more can be done on-line there is less of a need for local offices and paper files, thus staff numbers are being reduced – largely as far fewer processing posts are needed – and a programme of office closure and re-organisation is under way. From the organisation's point of view the moves are a reasonable response to changing business environment. For those affected they are made 'surplus' by their post and/or office disappearing, made to travel much longer to a new office – disrupting childcare arrangements for example. Here the tax authority has a responsibility to minimise or mitigate the impact of changes on its employees. Yet it is not, contrary to some views, in the business of job creation and some casualties are inevitable. And it is here that the MSE has a crucial role to play, not simply in the obvious pastoral role of binding the wounds but in pointing up opportunities for minimising and mitigating, in helping colleagues put together cogent cases for an action being taken in a different way or at another time, and raising a prophetic voice that points to a better way.

Perhaps more so than a commercial organisation, a tax authority is faced with maintaining a delicate balance between the often-competing demands of stakeholders. At least with the former most folk know that it is primarily in the business of making a profit for its shareholders by supplying X, Y or Z. A tax authority is too often seen as simply taking away the fruits of others' labour. First and foremost it is there to see that what is due to Caesar is paid to Caesar, as painlessly as possible. If Caesar's demands are unjust, that is not the fault of the collectors. Zachaeus, you will recall, was unjust not because he collected taxes but because he exceeded his authority. And in a democracy Caesar can be voted out.

In the final part of this trilogy rather more use will be made of biblical material in looking at the responsibility of the individual taxpayer. This is not to say that what we can glean (social security measure for the poor?) from scripture has nothing to say to the corporate, rather that the individual and the corporate are simply different sizes. But more of that next time.....

Ministry Where You Work?

Felicity Smith

On Sunday October 7th 2007, the Coventry Diocese MSE group (five members) held a workshop starting to explore ministry at work with seven others from around the diocese – six of whom were Readers.

Our initial flyer sent out with the diocesan mailing was an open invitation to anyone interested in exploring the possibility of their ministry at work. This was followed up by a direct individual invitation to all the readers (220), OLMs and NSMs (about 30 in all). Eight readers applied to come whilst four readers were unable to attend but were positive in expressing an interest in an alternative date. Two NSMs and one OLM applied thanking us for the invitation but were too occupied (church-wise) at present.

Our 'workshop' was held from 2pm to 5pm in a comfy sitting room at our diocesan retreat house with tea and coffee on arrival. After introductions, members of the MSE group described their everyday work. (I described my pre-retirement job as a doctor.) We then broke up into small groups of three or four people, each having one MSE and the invited people described their work and its value for them. This was very interesting and valuable for all of us as most felt that it was a rarity for anyone to ask what they did in their life outside of church; to be listened to attentively was a bonus!

We reconvened and presented a summary of the occupations to the whole group. The MSEs then talked about "How might this be ministry", relating examples in our own work and defining them in theological terms.

We returned to our small groups and the invited participants were

asked to reflect for a while on their own occupations and then try to define some aspects of their work theologically. This as always proved quite a challenging task but also an enjoyable and constructive exercise as was shown when the resulting thoughts and reflections were shared with the whole group.

We also pooled ideas on “what next?” Several people suggested a further similar session and others would like to attend the two monthly diocesan M.S.E. meetings when possible. After a tea and cake break we completed the session with prayers for our work, for all of our ministry and for guidance on our plans for the future.

The whole afternoon finished on a positive note and it was felt that the ‘sharing’ of life at work had been very helpful. One reader of many years standing had never been asked what he did at work (!). Bearing all the comments in mind and the general positive response, we are organising a further similar meeting at the end of February 2008. The people who came to the October meeting are being invited to attend a planning meeting in January

Personal Reflection

I think it was the comfortable surroundings, the simplicity of the format, the feeling of sharing all together and acceptance of each other's experience that gave comfortable space to talk and reflect, then think about the reality of our ministry at work. The positive response of readers and the lack of it from NSMs said something important about how the two groups see their whole ministry. I believe there is a very real need for MSE input and support here; the participants also voiced this need.

Roly Bain, Holy Fool

Roly was Ordained in the Church of England in 1978 and co-founded Holy Fools 1982. He attended Circus school 1990-91 and has been clowning around in God's service ever since, in a full-time, free-lance, worldwide clown ministry. The Faith and Foolishness Trust supports Roly's ministry, paying for visits to prisons especially, and schools and churches that can't afford it. Intrigued? Find out more at: <http://www.rolybain.co.uk/>

Back Again!

Nicholas von Benzon

Nearly thirty years ago, when I first began to think about ministry at work, I spent time and effort searching for words and theories to explain this undervalued aspect of Christian life. One approach which appealed to me, involved considering our work in terms of the great biblical themes. As we explore a particular theme, we are challenged by it. How well does the work we do express the biblical principles of, for example, justice and integrity, expounded in scripture?

There are of course many themes to choose from, but it may be helpful to focus on those that seem to resonate with the work in which we are personally engaged. The builder might for example wish to reflect on Creation; the doctor or nurse on Healing, and the journalist on the Word. As a solicitor then engaged in civil litigation, I found myself reflecting on the themes of Justice and Reconciliation. How did the work which occupied me at that time contribute to God's desire for Justice and Reconciliation in the world?

Perhaps the biblical challenge was too great, but ten years after ordination, I left the very successful legal practice, of which I was a partner, and became a stipendiary priest: team vicar of two rural parishes in Wiltshire. My move was motivated in part by a desire to spend more time with those who were interested in exploring faith. After twelve years in rural ministry, six in Wiltshire and six in Worcestershire, I am not sure to what extent stipendiary ministry offered me that opportunity. I sometimes wonder whether the true explorers had not abandoned the institution some years before I climbed on board. Parish ministry did however offer the huge privilege of allowing me to work in a wide variety of situations: with the very young and very old, and to share times of celebration and sadness. It also gave me the freedom to set my own agenda in a way that work in secular employment can never do.

Twelve years on, and frustrated by the systemic inertia of the Church, I have returned to secular employment, this time to work as a family mediator, drawing together my varied experiences as a fam-

ily lawyer, family mediator and counsellor, with the insights that I gained from my time in parish ministry.

Family Mediation offers a way of sorting out the questions which arise about children and finance that follow a couple's decision to separate. Hopefully the process avoids the bitterness, cost, delay and uncertainty of prolonged negotiation between solicitors, or of Court proceedings. It offers couples the chance of making a more civilised ending, and a better start on the next stage of their lives. Those with children are helped to make the difficult transition from relating primarily as partners, to relating only as parents. Here in this work those great themes of justice, reconciliation and compassion sometimes emerge.

Like a number of MSEs I have decided to set up my own business rather than seek employment in a larger organisation. There are few employed positions for family mediators, and a number of small independent services like my own exist around the country. Time will tell how Christian faith, which has played such a major part in my life, will be expressed in this new work. A living faith changes with time, and the passage of time has led me from a liberal to a more radical theological perspective. As a liberal, I strived to find ways to re-express ancient "truths" in contemporary forms. Now I find myself freed to abandon those tenets of faith which leave me uncomfortable.

One question which the reader might ask, is: "Then, what are you left with?" Just at this moment, I am not entirely sure, but Jesus' invitation to "Come and See", has a resonance for me that is worth exploring.

I hope that as time passes those who do "come and see" will observe in my work something of the faith that has so far shaped my life. Now here is the twist. They may see better than I do, perceive what I cannot. They will see weaknesses I would rather they did not, my shadow side, and see the good things my anxieties obscure.

What they see may be a truer reflection, in all its ambiguity and

ambivalence, of the Christ in me. Here may be an expression of the indwelling nature of Christian faith, something welling up from my subconscious, visible to others, but like my face, largely invisible to me. After all it is not what I say or think, but the person I am that marks me out as a reflection, albeit a very weak reflection, of God's image. If that glimmer of light shines out in and through my work, then there is perhaps an offering and a witness that is beyond my words and my knowing.

Now that is scary, because it both depends on me (or God in me), and may witness to a faith, or lack of it, which differs from the faith, I think, I may believe and have struggled to discover. Perhaps this is just another way of saying that the ministry we each offer through our work is firstly what others see and experience in us, and then only long after that, what we think and choose to tell about it.

Cheltenham Family Mediation
www.familymediator.org.uk

MSEs with a difference!

Cop turns priest

Bridget Wilson Hall

A fascinating example of MSE that I found on a yahoo group I belong to, reported in the newspapers: De Standaard, Het Nieuwsblad, and Het Volk, under the headline: 'Cop turns priest'.

RUDDERVOORDE - Deacon Wim van Overbeke (42) was ordained priest in Rudderveorde yesterday. At the same time he works as chief inspector of the federal police. For him it doesn't make any difference: 'I'm always working on the same creation', he says.

Chief inspector of the federal police Wim van Overbeke (42) underwent his ordination as priest yesterday in the Community of the Good Shepherd, an open catholic community which amongst other things also blessed the wedding of Kim Clijsters. About two hundred of his friends, family members and colleagues attended the emo-

tional celebration. "I have received two callings", Van Overbeke tells us. "One from God and one from the corps" Both have the same goal: clearing the path for greater justice and peace - with, through and for the people. The combination of both these professions was written in the stars from my youth."

A priest who hunts criminals on weekdays, isn't that just a little bit strange?

Wim van Overbeke: "Not necessarily. The good of man is always at the fore: All things work together. It's never quite so black and white. A police job is not by definition cruel or hard, a priest doesn't only come in touch with "devout" people. We priests are here for the people who have been ousted, who live in the gutter, who are marginalised and for naughty people. For who was Jesus there? To the murderer on the cross he said, "Today you shall be with me in paradise." God's love is endless.'

Do you remain of that opinion when confronted with a terrible family drama?

'Yes. The justice of God is for God Himself to work out. Our human understanding is so limited. What do we know, really. Extremely little. We can only try to detect what God has in mind for us and one thing is for certain: He has the good in mind for us.'

And yet sometimes you carry a gun ...

'If the job demands it, I carry a gun. As a policeman it is my job to find out the truth behind a crime. And in order to achieve that, I will use every police technique available, that seems to be the right one at that time. I can indeed play the bad cop if that is necessary, no problem. (laughs) But those "strange" people do not interest me. Why don't they count? Because for God everybody counts. Murderers as well.'

What do your colleagues of the national detective school think about your calling?

'Well, they did show up at my consecration as priest, so I take that

as a good sign. (laughs) I also got the OK from the commissioner general. In France there has been a tradition of prêtres-ouvriers for some time already: priests who, just like everybody else have to work in normal jobs in order to make ends meet. And that is also what I want to do: to understand what makes people tick. I refuse to lock myself away in my function as a priest.

Shouldn't a priest actually be focused on God alone, without any distractions?

'That is the opinion of a society that needs to pigeonhole everything. But in our spirituality it is so that everything should happen with the same inner poise- whether you are holding the chalice during the celebration of the eucharist or conducting an interrogation, are mowing the lawn or washing your dishes in the kitchen of a restaurant, it doesn't matter. This is also part of the rule of Benedict. We all work on the same creation. In everything you encounter one and the same God. Why then would you need to splice yourself up? Praying during my working hours for instance makes me more alert. Praying is a form of concentration, through which I am much more receptive. It is not so otherworldly as some people might think.'

The bus now arriving...

The Rev **David Hands**, pastor of the Church of the Nazarene in Millfield, Sunderland, was awarded the MBE in the Queen's New Year Honours List, is a driver with Stagecoach in the city. David, 63, who provides his passengers with a running commentary on the history of the city and anniversaries of historic events, received the award for services to public transport. "I am absolutely thrilled. "It is really about the people on the bus who encourage me. One little lad said: 'I wish you were my grandad.' You can't get a better recommendation than that."

"Before I was a bus driver I was a minister for three churches in the North East of England. Now I am still a minister, but it's not my full-time job. I never wanted to be a bus driver. I only did it because I'd moved to a new town and I needed to make ends meet. That was eight years ago. Since then I've met the young and old, poor and

wealthy. I've driven through every street of Sunderland from the rundown council estates to the seaside cottages on the coast. It's not a job that is often appreciated, so when it was revealed yesterday that I'd been given an MBE, I was delighted."

David's boss at Stagecoach Buses, John Conroy, put him forward. He and operations manager, David Wakefield, who put together the proposal had emails, letters and phone calls supporting the proposal and praising David, who observed, "It's a recognition not just of me but the job that I do. A job that I didn't expect to particularly like but which I've loved from the moment I started."

"I believe in nailing your colours to the mast. We should all say what we believe in. I have three main loves in my life. I love the Lord – I'm not frightened to tell people I'm a Christian – I love my wife and I love being a bus driver. It's the servant role in me. I've always been a people person. We used to be PSV drivers – public service vehicle drivers. They changed it to PCV driver, people-carrying vehicle driver. It's a subtle change but an important one. People aren't commodities. We're there to talk and share; to understand and appreciate the common bond of humanity. That is what happens each day on my bus. And that's why, for all the wars, disasters and pessimism, I look forward to 2008 and another year driving buses."

Work Prayer

"How beautiful will be the day when all the baptized understand that their work, their job is a priestly work. That just as I celebrate Mass at this altar, so each carpenter celebrates Mass at his workbench, and each metalworker, each professional, each doctor with a scalpel, a market woman at her stand is performing priestly office! Cab drivers, listen to this message: You are a priest at the wheel, my friend, if you work with honesty, consecrating that taxi of yours to God, bearing a message of peace and love to the passengers who ride with you."

Archbishop Oscar Romero (1917-1980) of El Salvador

Book Review:

"The Political Animal", Jeremy Paxman

Penguin, 2003; 340 pages; ISBN 0-140-28847-3; £9.99, or currently £6.99 on Amazon.

Rob Fox

Sometimes reading a book on impulse pays off – no time to form expectations. This was one such an occasion, and the book is an absolute gem. Paxman poses the question: "just what sort of people are these who enter politics and govern us, and what makes them do it?"

As watchers of UK television will know, Paxman the interviewer has been the scourge of British politicians for many a year. That so many nevertheless hold him in high regard is evidenced by the formidable list of the great, the good, the infamous and the 'never weres' who provided insights and information in abundance, usually in exchange for a decent lunch.

This is firstly a very readable book, with an engaging and witty style that leaves the reader expectant for the next instalment. The deep and thorough research is clear throughout: extensive reading of political biographies and memoirs as well as talking with politicians, party officials, spin doctors and civil servants. Paxman shows an excellent command of historical perspective and detail, showing how the nature and role of politicians has changed over 200 years. He is also a master of quotations, both one-liners and paragraphs, using them to make his points for him.

There is a great deal of analysis here of where we are now. But to understand where we are Paxman rightly decides we need to know how we got here, and in his comparisons of politicians and political processes across two centuries he draws out striking differences and similarities with precision and lucidity. He also uses parallels to good effect, including the comparison between politicians and clergy. If he understood the latter as thoroughly as the former he would know they have even more in common than he sees. He particularly draws out how clubbable both are, how they often share a belief of being a 'special one' - where leadership and service become indistin-

guishable, and how easily both become cut off from the reality that those outside the respective goldfish bowls experience.

The structure of the book works well in support of its purpose, taking the reader through the life cycle of a politician, from youthful - often idealistic - hopeful seeking the attention of party managers, through prospective candidate, fresh-faced new MP, keen PPS or junior Whip, aspiring cabinet minister, to the top job, losing office and finally leaving the House of Commons. In the books one weakness, the House of Lords does not get much of a look in, save in its roles as a reward for loyal ex-MPs or to put a rival out to pasture.

Love him or loath him, Paxman has produced an incisive and entertaining read that is well worth delving into.

American Tentmakers' Conference *October 2007*

Phil Aspinall

It seemed rather incongruous – meeting with a group of Presbyterians at the National Shrine of Our Lady of Sorrows, known as The Grotto, run by a community of Servite monks. But the conference centre was very well appointed and the food excellent.

The conference was held over a weekend in Portland Oregon, a very pleasant city in the Pacific North West. The total of 25 participants included three Methodists, one Lutheran, one UCC, and five Episcopalians (one of whom had been sent by her Church to find an MSE to work in the parish), as well as the bulk of the Presbyterians. And, significantly, I met my first American Roman Catholic worker priest. There were many of the usual faces, including some who have attended CHRISM conferences, although surprisingly none of the original Episcopalian NASSAM group.

The challenge thrown down last year to find new tentmakers from immigrant fellowships and to have 200 participating by 2009, had born some fruit: one pastor from a Kenyan Church and another from a Puerto Rican community. This year's representative from the

General Assembly in Louisville, Phil Tom, expressed an interest in coming over for a CHRISM event.

The theme “Tentmaking in the Public Arena” gave the whole weekend a focus on the world of work. The keynote speaker, Alcena Boozer, a Priest and former school principal school, led a morning session on her experience in the public schools system: being a prophetic voice in the public arena, recognising and responding to opportunities to work for better communities in and out of school, and challenging the church on these issues. The output from group work was a declaration by Tentmakers for release to the local media. In the evening she led a more reflective session on meditation in daily life: discovering the oasis in the city.

On Saturday afternoon, a Panel Session brought together: Jonathan, the person in the local Episcopalian diocese responsible for vocations and clergy placement; Steve, the Director of the United Farmworkers’ Union; and Kris, a Presbyterian minister and teacher. I also contributed something on the Birmingham-based “Christians in Public Life” organisation.

The worship, based on Iona services, was led by a couple from the United Methodists. The final communion service took as its theme Reformation Sunday and All Saints – the litany presented an interesting collection of people and in marked contrast to the Latin litany of the saints playing over the loud-speakers at The Grotto.

The Business meeting of the Association of Presbyterian Tentmakers had a very positive feel to it, and maybe offers some possible suggestions for CHRISM:

- The Nominating Committee (of past Moderators) had done its work well and the elections went very smoothly indeed.
- APT now has a website, and is working towards setting on a debating forum and moving onto a server under the PCUSA. The General Assembly has given them a \$750 grant.
- They are looking for a new editor for “Tent-talk”, and discussing whether to go all-electronic.
- They have received a \$2000 grant from the General Assembly in order to visit Church Seminaries.

The date for the 2008 conference will depend on them finding a venue, but is expected to be sometime in October and probably near Chicago, or in South Carolina. This group offers another perspective on MSE, and has the advantage of being in English, so I would encourage you to go over and join them in 2008.

MSEs of the Old Catholic Church of Germany
October 2007

Phil Aspinall

MSEs comprise some 25% of the clergy of the Old Catholic Church of Germany (AKD), as I have noted on previous visits, although there is still discussion about whether they are Ministers with or in Secular Employment. The 26 participants included Joachim Vobbe, the Bishop of Germany, and a mixture of mainly male priests and deacons of the Old Catholic Church, some accompanied by their partners. There were, as always, several newcomers to the group, but many are becoming old friends. The weekend was chaired by Nico Bachtler, who came to our conference in 2006; but Franz Segbers, was unable to attend.

The meeting was held in the same venue as last year - the Diocesan house of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Speyer, set right in the heart of the city centre, close to the famous Romanesque Cathedral, and remarkably cheap.

Friday evening gave an opportunity for us to introduce ourselves and catch up on recent news, since the similar meeting last year. We then adjourned to the huge cellar bar to continue the process. The social atmosphere continued on the Saturday evening, when we relocated to a local restaurant for a very festive evening, and varied conversations, including with Bishop Joachim.

But there was serious work too - Saturday morning was filled with the annual "Bishop's Report". There had been a Synod of the Church in September, so this was the report he had presented there, and summarised the events of 3½ years – the period since the previous synod. It included the International Old Catholic conference in 2006, the number of ordinations, updates on AKD groups

and societies, the church newspaper, the other OC churches, ecumenical relations and a vision of the unity of the Catholic churches (Old Catholic, Anglican, Swedish Lutherans and Philippine Church). There was much about financial problems in the different regions and the Finance Reform !

The report on the Synod was given by the 5 MSEs who were elected to attend by the conference last year. (They also took on the role of organising committee for the MSE group so, as I noted last year, this is equivalent to the CHRISM committee being given places by right at General Synod). The first day had been occupied by a demoralising debate on finances; but this was offset by a day-long Eucharist involving travelling around different cities, and a second day devoted to creative activities. They left feeling more optimistic - "The church has begun to sing !"

Sunday morning commenced with very relaxed Eucharist led by Christopher Weber, one of my first contacts from Frankfurt, who hopes to join us at a UK conference. There was also worship each morning – one using a translation of an Iona morning prayer.

Their conference next year will take place in conjunction with a conference of all the clergy of the AKD from 5th – 8th June 2008 in the Pfalz. The theme for the MSE part is yet to be decided. The theme for 2009 was also discussed: the development of MSE, Spirituality, Partnerships – the decision was left to the committee.

At last year's meeting we did a significant amount of work to set out a programme for the development of MSE, at the levels of the Group, the Church and in work. But no further discussion of these topics had taken place during the year.

The overall focus of this weekend was very much the inner workings of the Church and, in particular the financial situation – there was little formal discussion of work. But there were still interesting side conversations with those who do want to talk about MSE, and a desire among some to continue developing the link with CHRISM, to see what they can learn from us, and others are hoping be able to attend CHRISM events.

***International Worker Priest Conference –
Pentecost 2008***

The end of Capitalism?

Phil Aspinall

This year, the annual conference of European Worker Priests will be different. It will coincide with a National Conference of the French Worker Priests, and so there will be 300 – 400 participants over the course of the weekend.

The Conference traditionally takes place at Pentecost. The meeting of the international delegates will run from Thursday 8th May until midday on Saturday 10th May and then be followed by the French National Conference, which continues until Whit Monday 12th May. The venue will be Valpré in Ecully, near to Lyon.

You are invited to join the delegates who will be attending the conference, for both events. It is an opportunity to meet with our European colleagues and to learn more of their experiences, struggles and successes. It is a chance to understand ways of Christian engagement in the world of work and politics.

The themes for the conference were agreed at the end of last year's conference in England:

In our countries, work is becoming more and more insecure and the economy is dominated by market forces.

It is a world of complete and rapid change.....

The end of a world marked by Capitalism?

The construction of another possible world?

– society which is multicultural, multiethnic, inter-religious.....

Questions:

What images of humanity are appearing?

How to live within it as disciples of Jesus?

We are asked to discuss these questions among ourselves and prepare a short summary paper for the UK delegation to present to the conference. So, even if you are not able to attend the conference, I should be very grateful if you would send me your thoughts on any or all of these topics by the end of February, so we can send our paper by Easter. We would particularly welcome any personal stories of experiences prompted by these questions – even the smallest contribution can be incorporated in our presentation.

But the conference is not just about working on a theme. It is an opportunity to meet a stimulating group of people with diverse backgrounds, challenging views on the realities of our societies, dedicated Christian commitment, and their own fascinating stories. It's also very enjoyable.

We hope you will want to join us – please do contact me if you would like more details.

Mission in London's Economy

Mission in London's Economy (MiLE, www.mile.org.uk) was started in 2005 as an independent ecumenical Christian organisation covering the 32 London Boroughs and the City of London.

It has set itself the following objectives:

1. To co-ordinate the churches' interventions in discussion of London's economy.
2. To respond on behalf of the churches to consultation exercises on London's economy.
3. To support workplace chaplains ministering within London's economy.
4. To support Christians working in the institutions of London's economy.

5. To educate churches in the issues facing London's economy so that they might be able to respond appropriately.
6. To work with other faith communities in order to create co-ordinated faith community responses to the issues facing London's economy.

Practitioner groups have been set up to further these objectives, the first two being covered by a single group.

MiLE were conscious right from the very beginning that their website was an essential tool in resourcing individuals Christians seeking to relate Christian faith to daily work, as well as making contact with other groups and organisations with a particular interest in this area, and of course with the churches.

They would like to draw our attention to a new venture which will appear very soon on their website. This is a weekly reflection on the Sunday Gospel reading read in many churches which use the Common Lectionary. The reflection will be written from a work perspective, particularly suitable for a Monday morning following the weekend.

They would be enormously grateful if we could let people know about this new initiative including churches with which we are in contact. They would be very pleased to receive responses how the weekly reflections could be improved in the future.

You can contact MiLE through the Executive Officer: David Driscoll, at The Royal Foundation of St Katharine, 2 Butcher Row, London E14 8DS. ☎ 020 7790 3540 * info@mile.org.uk

Christian Association of Business Executives (CABE)

In November CABE started a cycle of Network evenings in London. Lasting from 18.30 to 21.00 the first featured a talk by Eddie Donaldson, Head of UK HR, KPMG, followed by discussion and accompanied by food. Future meetings planned are:

- **16 January from 6.30pm CABA NETWORK: "Christian Leadership: Why should anyone follow YOU?"** by Herta von Stiegel, Executive Chairman, Stargate Capital Investment Group, a London based corporate finance and investment management firm. A great opportunity to meet and discuss issues over a drink. Food will be available. To be held at the **City Tavern - 29, Lawrence Lane, London EC2V 8DP**, located off King Street (between Cheapside and Gresham Street). Tube: Mansion House/Bank. Map: <http://www.streetmap.co.uk/newmap.srf?x=532432&y=181212&z=0&arY>
- **13 February CABA Network with Joshua Rey, Executive Director, London Employer Coalition**
- **12 March CABA Network with Matthew Frost, Chief Executive, Tearfund**
- **2 April CABA Collaboration conference with speakers from Goldman Sachs, LICC, and the Work Net Partnership**
- **13 May CABA Paper and AGM with Christina Rees, Director the Churchfield Trust, Chair of WATCH, Archbishop's Council**
- **11 June CABA Network with Sheryl Haw, Consultant and Trainer, Humanitarian Aid Work Training and Consulting**

If you missed the first CABA Network with Eddie Donaldson you can read some of the highlights on <http://www.principlesforbusiness.com/resources.php>

Details of all CABA's events and many others too are on our website: <http://www.principlesforbusiness.com/events.php>

If you missed Brian Griffiths' **Hugh Kay Lecture** in November, or want to hear it again, you can listen to it or download it from the Principles website: <http://www.principlesforbusiness.com/resources.php>.

You can also contribute to an online forum on the subject of **Religion in the Workplace** via the **Transform Work UK homepage**: www.transformworkuk.org, and click under 'Home' on 'Forum'. Share your experiences and make suggestions on how to tackle the issues.

CABE has also drawn attention to the **Level Seven forum**, "the place for challenging discussions about relevant contemporary issues from a Christian perspective and for networking and fellowship with people who want to make a difference in society." The Forum runs open discussions and some of the past topics can be viewed in the "Archive" section of the website:

<http://www.levelseven.org.uk/events.asp>, which also includes an online forum and a chat room.

Next event is on 31 January, 18.30, at St. Bride's, Fleet Street, London, asking "Is Religion good for women?" The speakers are, Baroness Flather, Canon Lucy Winkett (St. Paul's Cathedral) and Baroness Uddin.

Resources

Mind and Soul is a organisation exploring Christianity and Mental Health. It runs a very good website at: <http://www.mindandsoul.info/> which list conferences, groups, resources and podcasts. It will be of particular interest to anyone working in the NHS or any aspect of mental health but clearly has a wider relevance and is well worth exploring. The Directors are: Dr Rob Waller - Mental Health Lead, and Revd Will Van Der Hart - Spirituality Lead.

Always worth a visit is the website of ***The National Center for the Laity***, www.catholiclabor.org/NCL.htm (case sensitive!). Based in Chicago the NCL is entering its fourth decade of campaigning and raising the profile of ministry in the workplace. The six-weekly newsletter, 'Initiatives', is packed with useful information and can be downloaded from the site.

The Christian gospel of work, says Pope Benedict XVI, draws upon each worker's talents and uses them for the common good "in a spirit of justice and solidarity...Today more than ever it urgent and necessary" to live as Christians in the workplace and to be "apostles among workers."

MODEM has recently launched a new website. The new address is: www.modem-uk.org MODEM, with CHRISM a member of the 'Collaboration Group', is a national ecumenical Christian network, which encourages authentic dialogue between exponents of leadership, organisation, spirituality and ministry to aid the development of better disciples, community, society and world. The website is attractive and easy to use.

Book reviews published in Ministers-at-Work are now available on-line!

I recently sent all those published from 2001 onwards to **Richard Spence**, our New Zealand outpost, who has posted them, along with many other excellent resources for MSEs at:

<http://www.tekauri.com/fishing/fishrefs.asp>

The next phase will be to put them into the seven categories that the material is arranged in. This really is a labour of love on Richard's part, and an invaluable resource.

Ken Costa's book '**God at Work**' has spawned a great deal more, which you can learn on the website, [http://](http://www.godatwork.org.uk/)

www.godatwork.org.uk/

You can listen to a talk Ken gave at Holy Trinity Brompton and find out about the 'God at Work' course, which is in development.

New books

If you would like to contribute a review, please do!

Through the Eye of a Needle: Theological conversations over political economy by John Atherton & Hannah Skinner, eds, Published Epworth Press, 2007, pp274, ISBN: 9780716206262, £19.99

Louder than Words - Action for the 21st Century Church by Andrew Bradstock. Published by Darton, Longman & Todd Ltd, pp144. ISBN 978-0232526103 £9.95

Is there life after retirement is available for £2.50 from Eric directly at: 47 Aldrich Drive, Willen, Milton Keynes MK15 9HP. Tel: 01908 608524

Faith and Politics: The Church as a movement for Anarchy by Jonathan Bartley. Pub Paternoster/ Authentic Media, pp176, ISBN 1842273485, £9.99

More Diary Dates:

Benedict for Today

What can the founder of Western monasticism teach us about...

- ...work/life balance
- ...prayer & spirituality
- ...building community?

A study day with Fr Dermot Tredget (Benedictine monk at Douai Abbey), at The Royal Foundation of St Katharine, Limehouse, London, on Saturday 2nd February 2008, 10am to 4pm.

Cost (including lunch): £15

Discounts available for unwaged & pensioners.

To book, please contact Maureen Toms on 020 7791 9782 or MToms@stkatharine.org.uk by Friday 25th January.

Fr Dermot Tredget OSB has been a member of the English Benedictine community based at Douai Abbey, near Reading for 23 years. Before becoming a monk he held management positions in the Hotel and Catering Industry. He has extensive experience of teaching at university level, and is engaged in doctoral research at Oxford University on the theology and spirituality of work and leisure. Fr Dermot runs a program of retreat workshops focused on the spiritual dimension in the workplace. These have been featured in the Financial Times and other business publications. He has also been called upon to give lectures and present seminars to international corporations and associations.

The Ridley Hall Foundation, Cambridge, is hosting a residential Conference entitled *Wholeness at Work* over the weekend of 11-13 April. "This conference is intended for anyone concerned with the quality of life experienced in organisations today. It has been planned by the Christian Consultants Group and is likely to be of special interest to people who work in consultancy, but others are warmly welcome." The cost of attending the conference residentially is £225, with a reduced "early bird" price of £195 for delegates who book by January 18 2008. Non-residential rates are £175 and £145 respectively. An booking form can be downloaded from the Foundation website at:

<http://www.ridley.cam.ac.uk/rhfprogramme.html>

Also available on the website are reports from previous years' Conferences.

Christians at Work holds its 2008 Annual Conference on Saturday 28 June at Rugby Evangelical Free Church, starting at 11.00. Entitled 'You shall be Witnesses', the Speaker is Roger Carswell. Session themes are:

Sowing and Reaping

Christian Lifestyle – a Witness?

The Art of Personal Witness

Understanding the Issues.

Cost is £20 for members, otherwise £25, booking forms available to download from the website:

<http://www.christiansatwork.org.uk/>

The website has recently been extended, with a range of resources available to download.

Congratulations...

... to *Ship of Fools* (<http://ship-of-fools.com/>), the e-zine of Christian unrest, about to celebrate its 10th anniversary since re-launch in its current format. If you have not yet sampled its wealth of the cookie and hilarious, a mine of useful and useless information, do visit the site!

Website reviews

Pauline Pearson

www.transformingworship.org.uk

This is 'a website of the Liturgical Commission of the Church of England'. Along with road shows and 'a carnival of different events', it forms an initiative aimed at seeking to engage Christians across 'parishes, deaneries, dioceses and indeed the Church of England as a whole' in the task of 'transforming worship to change peoples' lives'. The site is simply constructed in three main sections.

It has efficient links to partner organisations – official bodies such as PRAXIS and the Royal School of Church Music as well as others including Godly Play UK, the College of Preachers and the Prayer Book Society. Most of these organisations provide useful material for people planning worship, though most are geared to church based worship.

The second section provides information about events and answers to 'frequently asked questions'. A key part of the Transforming Worship initiative is, apparently, its road shows, the first of which is concerned with 'Leading Worship'. This is intended, apparently, for 'those recently ordained and their training incumbents', but since all the dates and times are midweek day time, they will be difficult to access for most MSEs, even if the content is or could be made relevant. The frequently asked questions' section at present looks at Baptism and at the Calendar and Lectionary. On Baptism, the site asks 'Does the Church of England have a separate baptism service for adult candidates?' and about the 'public affirmation of faith by adults who, though baptized as infants, have come to profess their Christian faith later in life'. The answers given are helpful, and provide links to details of relevant liturgical material. Details of the church's calendar are given, with potentially downloadable pdf documents which however did not work for me (4/1/08). There is also a very detailed section setting out all the lectionary transfers for Epiphany 08 – not, I thought, a good use of the web, nor really of much use in MSE!

The resources section gives links to a range of 'Liturgical Texts and Resources', ranging from Anglican texts (with a helpful link to *An Anglican Liturgical Library* at <http://www.oremus.org/liturgy/>), through Methodist, Church of Scotland and Roman Catholic, links to musical resources such as 'HymnQuest' and 'Sunday by Sunday' (both of which require expenditure to work other than at a demo level) a few sample orders of service (though again I had problems with pdf downloads) and links to some other material such as 'Roots' all age and children's worship resources. Of the material provided, there appears to be little or nothing other than the Roots material directly designed for small informal acts of worship, and nothing at all suitable for more formal worship related to a work context. The authors of the web site appear keen to receive examples and ideas for improvement, so perhaps we should provide them with some 'examples of how, in the spirit of *Common Worship*, certain services might be done '...?'

<http://www.sharetheguide.org/>

This website is designed to be 'a resource for people leading and supporting fresh expressions of church'. The site includes a blog (I'm out of my depth with this terminology, but it's what they say!) which includes 'posts' on 'what is a church' and 'helping others to pray', both of which are thoughtful. The second ends: 'Make it one of your resolutions for 2008 to find out how people outside your church community say their prayers and how you can help and support them in their journey' – which seems to be encouraging more people to take up a ministry in their everyday work or other secular environments. 'The Guide' contains 'how-to-do-it advice on starting, developing and sustaining fresh expressions of church based on shared experiences.'

One of the questions which it looks at is as follows: 'Are you considering a fresh expression among friends or at work?' It goes on to look at practicalities – working with others in the same setting; listening to what those around you want; thinking through ethical boundaries.. Much of this could be very helpful to any MSE – but perhaps we would want to question the underlying model (see below)



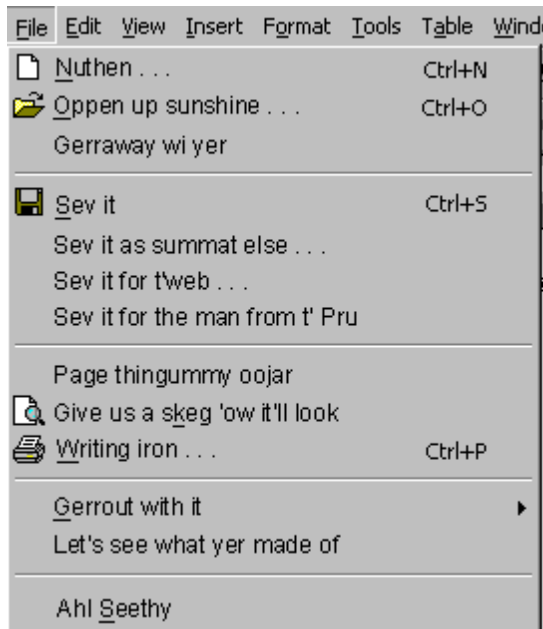
A fresh expressions journey

with its somewhat linear emphasis on creating an independent community from non-churchgoers which will become a church.. My own experience (admittedly in a university) suggests that there are many people out there who inhabit the fringes of ordinary churches, as well as many who are estranged or actively dubious about them, who nonetheless value the reality that people from 'the church' are there in their workplace alongside them, and might sometimes also want to talk to colleagues about faith or ethical issues, or to share in Christian worship to mark particular times and events, but more often want remain part of a very loose network. However, despite this caveat, I think that this website provides some thought provoking material for anyone engaging with people outside the mainstream church in secular environments. It is well worth a visit!

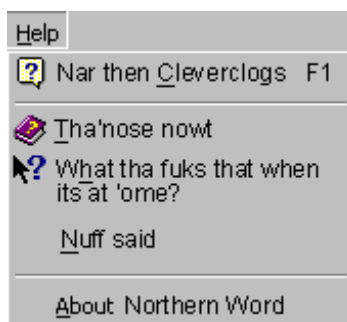
Word for t'North!

In preparation for the CHRISM Reflective weekend in Leeds, you are invited to become familiar with a specially adapted version of the well-known software package that will help you understand English like wot we spick proper oop 'ere. The installation process automatically modifies the Windows start button.

All the usual Word menu options are there, but in proper Northern language:



Even the warning messages have changed:



And if all else fails, there is a help facility that even folk from Barnsley and Bradford can understand:

Ministry beyond...secular employment

An exploration of opportunities for incarnational ministry wherever and whatever our circumstances.

**CHRISM Reflective Weekend
at Hinsley Hall,
62 Headlingly Lane, Leeds LS6 2SX
15th -17th February, 2008**

Cost, from dinner on Friday evening to lunch on Sunday, inclusive: £140 (members); £150 (non-members).

Grants should be available from your Church to cover all or part of the cost – apply now to get their support!
Please ask CHRISM for a receipt, if required.

In the usual format of a relaxing weekend there will be time for both reflective silence and companionship and to enjoy this

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