

Ministers-at-Work

*The Journal for Christians in secular
ministry*

*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.*

CHRISM

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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

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Editorial

4 July, and it has not been a good week. Not surprisingly the UK media has been focussing on the events in Sousse, and today the last of the British dead were flown home. The minute silence was well observed yesterday, and I'm pleased that Manchester Central Mosque reminded us to remember the dead of the other IS-inspired killings, in Lyons and Kuwait. We Brits can be too parochial.

The killings reminded us, if we needed to be, of the power of intolerance. It isn't easy to define, but one that I think informative is the inability to co-exist with that which is different. At the extreme, the responses to this are fight or flight. In the case of IS it is the former, destroying that which is different, including readings of the Quran that do not fit with its views. The same response drove the Nazis in their intolerance of Jews (and others), Pol Pot in his bid to eradicate the 'cancer' of Westernism from Cambodia, and Pope Innocent III in his quest to eliminate the Cathars of the Languedoc 800 years ago. The list of examples is long indeed. Flight took the Pilgrim Fathers (and many others) to the New World across the Atlantic.

We often too easily forget the effects of home grown extremism that have periodically blighted our society in living memory: various Nationalist and Loyalist terrorism in and spilling over from Northern Ireland, the Angry Brigade, Meibion Glyndŵr (some readers will remember its arson inspiring the spoof on an advert for solid fuel, "Come home to a real fire, buy a cottage in Wales"). It is often said that in Britain we do all things in moderation, including extremism. Indeed Billy Bragg wrote in his most famous song: 'Sweet moderation, heart of this nation; Desert us not, we are between the wars.'

Yet intolerance is intolerance, in moderation or not, and I venture to say that 'moderate' intolerance is a characteristic of Britishness, arguably most so of Englishness. Intolerance of 'immigrants' (most of our ancestors were, at some point), of 'benefit scroungers' (we cling to belief that some poor are 'deserving', others not), of anyone who will not support us in what we demand as a right. Are we

really, as many, particularly politicians, a more tolerant society than a generation ago?

99 years ago the extraordinary director D W Griffith's film *Intolerance* was released. It was in part a riposte to critics of his previous film, *Birth of a Nation*, which some said reinforced racial stereotypes and glorified the Ku Klux Klan. The new film ran four stories in parallel, a contemporary melodrama of crime and redemption, a Judaeon story - Christ's mission and death, a French story - the events surrounding the St. Bartholomew's Day massacre in 1572, and a story about the fall of the Babylonian Empire to Persia in 539 BC. The scenes are linked by shots of a figure representing Eternal Motherhood, rocking a cradle. Griffith's point was that his previous film posed question, is it right that we do not treat members of this new nation equally? In his new film he demonstrated what intolerance can lead to. It is in equally valid question today, in every nation.

Rant over, what's in this edition of the journal? Well plenty on the SSM consultation hosted by Ministry Division of the CoFE (which CHRISM helped organise) in May. The PowerPoint presentations and data we saw on the day are now available on MinDiv's website so please do take a look. The shape of ordained ministry is changing with increasing rapidity; MSEs need to be in there showing what we can bring to the party.

There are also three reports from this year's Pentecost gathering of European Worker Priests. I'm encouraged by a proposal reported, made by the German representatives, that next year one of the working groups might use English. (About time I went to one of these; it is always inspiring to meet the W-Ps who come to the UK; I expect it will be even more so on their home turf).

There is also the usual round up of events and resources, showing that there is plenty going on around faith at work at the moment. I'm also pleased to include two items of correspondence. If you feel inspired to write in please do, all contributions are welcome (I try to be tolerant).

Rob Fox

Self-Supporting Ministry

A consultation hosted by the Church of England's Ministry Division

About 70 representatives, from over half the CofE's dioceses, plus two reps from CHRISM, gathered at Prospero House, Southwark, on 16 May for a welcome follow up event to the Whitsuntide consultation in 2013. Several of the diocesan reps were also CHRISM members, so we were well represented. The accounts that follow were written for different purposes, so may emphasise different perspectives, however together they should give a balanced version of what was said, which is of significant import for the future patterns of ministry on the Church of England. Approximately half the participants also attended 2013 day

I'm sure that what follows will be relevant to our colleagues in other parts of the Anglican Communion, and other Churches. The issues we face are far from Anglican! Ed.

Ministry Division has published its own account of the day, along with the PowerPoint presentations and other data presented on the day, which is available at:

http://www.ministrydevelopment.org.uk/2_15_ssm_consultation

The first report is an edited version of the contemporaneous notes taken with remarkable dexterity by Pauline Pearson, which gives an accurate account of what was said and discussed.

Julian Hubbard from Ministry Division outlined the purpose of the day:

- To affirm the ministry of SSM across the church - valuing, weighing and assessing its contribution.
- To resource conversations and development of SSM for the next 5 years - sharing insights.
- To reflect on recent research on SSM ministry, surfacing implications, expectations and challenges for the future, building on learning from the 2013 Consultation.

Two main relevant impacts were highlighted at the outset:

- Resourcing the future.
- Training and ministerial education and formation.

In the first session, each of us was asked to consider:

- What is the range of interests that you represent?
- How do you attend to, and partake in the Mission of God in your area of ministry?

The answers broadly being: listening, walking alongside others, looking for Gods action where we are.

Tim Ling was next speaker, highlighting two recent articles in the Church Times relating to work carried out by **Charles Sutton**, initially in his home diocese of Bristol but now being taken up by five others. Tim outlined the work and its value and limitations. The outcomes of Charles' work are available on line at <http://www.bristol.anglican.org/2014/the-changing-patterns-of-ministry/>. (A summary of the findings across these dioceses is provided as a note at the end of this report).

Attention was also drawn to the 'Experiences of Ministry' survey 2015, undertaken by a team from Kings College led by Mike Clinton. (See <http://www.ministrydevelopment.org.uk/emsurvey>). The survey is in its third iteration and has is aimed at identifying what flourishing ministry looks like. The responses indicate that clergy are highly engaged - vigour, absorption and dedication to their roles. In their analysis the researchers have compared SSM with stipendiary incumbents and found no significant differences on procedural justice or feelings of diocesan value; attendance and growth are similar across both.

In time use, incumbents report administration as the biggest part, whilst for MSEs prayer is biggest.

Recommendations for Stipendiary Ministry are greatest for males under forty, whereas for SSM they are greatest for women over forty. Emotional exhaustion is significantly greater among stipendiary clergy than SSMs, possibly as stipendiaries work 'full time' on church activities, usually work alone, and are younger.

We next undertook a Bible study in table groups, on Luke 10:1-12. The points that were raised included:

- What about Lay ministry?
- The strengths in going out in pairs?
- Not being distracted on the way.
- Sticking around to give it time, eating what is set before you.
- Do we actually think any of us has that much authority (to judge)?

Following this there was further discussion around the experiences of SSM in practice, which raised the following questions:

- Which of the dioceses provides hospitality for SSMs? It was clear from the responses that experience varies widely, with some dioceses appointing and resourcing SSM officers and networks, while others make no provision outside 'normal' structures such as Chapter.
- SSM was seen as missional in nature, not just keeping show on the road, but actively embedded in areas of society seldom touched by the churches as institutions. In this sense SSMs are representatives of Christ ahead of the Church.
- Effectiveness in ministry and mission means being prepared to receive things from others, as well as sharing peace in this place, wherever we are, finding ourselves in our places of employment, where we are sent
- The challenge should not be underestimated and we should allow ourselves to be vulnerable.

The Bishop of Germans, Chris Goldsmith, who himself had been an SSM, next asked: what is our value added? In the context of mission what is it that an SSM brings?

Historically - tent making ministries were there from the beginning, going to where the missional opportunity was, itinerant and missional. MSE, he noted, has a distinctive contribution to make: Christian ministry presence in secular world - subverting the binary secular/ church divide. MSEs have credibility in the community where they live or work, ordained back into the communities from which they were identified - one of us - understanding what it is like

in the world. SSM also offers stability, often longer in a place / community than a stipendiary minister. How does this fit to the pastoral model of church? For SSMs there is freedom to be missional where you are, among everybody with whom you interact. The Church of England is still very parish focused and finds models outside this difficult to work with. However mission is about all Christians; our role is about enabling and facilitating, breaking out of a purely parish focus, being a bridge with whole church of God - seeing work in week as all Christian mission and a challenge to the church against comfortable stability, crossing boundaries of local and pastoral.

The gifts of MSE to the church are independence, being a critical friend - not just filling in cracks in the rota, complementing the nature of ministry.

Bishop Chris, like many of us, is struggling with language and asking critical questions: What is ministry, what is leadership? What is ordination about? What is the Economic and practical benefit of SSM? The work in Bristol diocese has estimated the value of work undertaken by SSMs there at about £2 million, enabling the diocese to sustain ordained ministry in places that might not otherwise have it. SSM has also facilitated vocations later in life, providing an outlet for gifting and calling, bringing in a range of expertise and skills and experience. The Church can learn enormously from the secular world, for example about teamwork, accountability, performance management, not to replicate but to learn from.

MSEs can also help church to see itself as others see it, and to see what the gospel is for the people who are outside: for the financiers who struggle with ethics and the others who don't see the church as relevant. The Church often seen as judging; MSEs are in a place to see and hear and communicate the one gospel for everyone, including the 95% of the populations not active members of Church of England. It was observed that people who have had difficult experiences with church can connect with MSE.

Bishop Chris also noted the self-sufficiency of SSMs, describing them as entrepreneurial people. But at the same time SSMs cannot be

detached from the Church, so how does it make best use of what SSMs have to offer? There are deep questions here for ontological and functional understandings of priesthood itself. Within the Church a clerical mind-set permeates, for example in undervaluing or valuing the laity?

In response attendees offered up the following comments. Later vocations can be celebrated, and involve less administration! SSMs need to avoid being pulled into competition with stipendiary colleagues: we complement each other. However many diocese don't know who their SSMs are and what skills and expertise they have to offer; there are few 'skills registers'. There is a danger in 'status' – the church needs to value everyone and what they bring to and in ministry. Clergy do need to be held to account, and don't want ways of world imposed on them. Performance management is about more than numbers – the reach of the kingdom is not just about bums on pews.

Bishop Chris sees the future as collaboration. At its best there already is, but there certainly will need to be more real team working and collaboration in the church. Ministry in the future is likely to become even more diverse: lay people paid, 'full time' clergy not paid, and so on. Ministry will continue to diversify where this fits the missional needs of church. SSM will become increasingly missional. Movement between forms of ministry will likely grow, with greater movement between SSM and stipendiary and vice versa.

After lunch there was an observed discussion on **Challenge and Gift among SSMs.**

Gift. For the Church to effectively use SSMs it needs to know about skills, expertise of SSMs - what are people are good at? What expertise do they have and how could we use this? Why haven't we felt the need to? A gift is meaningless if it is still wrapped, so how do you capture it? The capacity to receive gifts is also essential, but what do you do with gifts you don't want to receive? And how do you deploy gifts? Ministerial Development Reviews can help, but is the process open to looking outside the box? Do we understand the diversity of gifts that exist? How do we find ways of making them

work? Does the church recognise the gift? Or see it as criticism? Does the Church communicate what it needs? Has it identified what it needs and how does this compare with what it *thinks* it needs? SSMs should have confidence to offer what they have and that it will be received.

Change management becomes an important factor. There is a grace of relinquishment, but sometimes we feel threatened by people who are better at something than we are, seeing this as a challenge. Here therefore there needs to be appropriate offering, in a non-threatening way, while not just waiting to be discovered. SSMs sometimes don't think that they are able to offer; some have great gifts but don't feel worthy. Some fear that an offer may be seen negatively and don't bother asking. Sometimes we don't recognise the value of our gifts and need mentoring and discerning how to share effectively. There was discussion around how the Minster model for local ministry could help ministry teams to recognise, value and use a range of diverse experience, talents and time availability. For SSMs we need to balance what we can offer with time available.

So where is SSM ministry? Firstly in building relationships, where we are. Do we see where we are as mission? Of the range of opportunities, what can I do that might not get done otherwise, or that I would be best able to contribute to? How and where can we make a difference?

The other side of the coin is ministry within the Church structure, usually a parish. What are the implications of an increasing proportion of ordained clergy being SSM for how the Church organises itself? One model suggested is creating deanery ministry teams, resourcing first by appointing as Dean a skilled team builder. The second post would be a Deanery administrator, dealing with the admin and legal work generated. After this appoint a balanced team of stipendiary, SSM and lay ministers to meet the perceived needs across the Deanery. As teamwork and collaboration is increasingly important to effective ministry, this begs the question of how much time is devoted in ordination training to upskilling?



Several people mentioned that completion of the post-ordination IME portfolio can be difficult for SSMs, especially in those dioceses who use a narrow parochial interpretation of the guidelines. (*CHRISM has published – on the website – a comprehensive guide to how SSMs can use examples from secular contexts to demonstrate learning outcomes. This will be updated later this year*). Some dioceses, for example Chester are changing the way in which they look at learning outcomes for SSMs.

We were then asked: What is the problem we are trying to solve?
What is ministry going to look like in the future and how will we fit?

Certainly the proportion of clergy who are SSM will continue to increase. Two issues that the recent reorganisation of training has not addressed are:

- The Durham standards are seen by some courses as too academic and some are opting not to follow them, which

means the avowed aim of standardising training has already broken down.

- The average age of an ordinand is now 52. This effectively means that the average time in ordained ministry is now about 15 years, so, compared with a generation ago, the Church needs to train twice as many ordinands just to maintain the same numbers of clergy, which isn't happening.

How are dioceses responding? One is trying to increase the numbers of SSMs three-fold. The question was raised from the floor: where are SSMs in senior posts in the church? Is there a glass ceiling? The problem of incumbent burn out was noted earlier, but here a further aspect was noted, of SSMs losing a sense of who they are because they found their identity only within church. SSMs stand back from that and are much more likely to have a widely rooted identity. It was again observed that there is so much talent in the SSM population. How do we release it, who do we communicate it to?

If SSMs are constrained by existing structures, in a church that knows it is failing to reach people, the answer is probably there. Critical is identifying what it is we can offer - why was I called? If we can articulate this, people will listen.

We were also reminded that priesthood and ministry are not just for the ordained. There is a need for more effective communication of SSMs across dioceses - talking to each other about frustrations and joys. The existing structures have limitations and there is a need for flexibility. How can we use the gifts if we don't know who has them and what they are?

Now that there is a greater diversity of models in ministry – how do we best select and train for those models? And how identify people who will model them for others? Is training geared to the needs of mission, but admitting non-parochial examples? Returning to IME outcomes, 80% can be met outside parish ministry but sometimes people don't want to use them.

We discussed how gifts might be used. We need to be strategic, to plan, for example as in mission action planning. Where gaps and

vacancies are identified, seeking skills and gifts needed rather than hole-filling.

Training for ministry often has been seen as destroying and denying skills. Do we know lay peoples skills and gifts sufficiently? In ministry planning it is important to engage and involve SSMs, making use of the experience they can offer. Critical questions here are:

- Seeking to identify how we can grow and extend the mission of the whole people of God?
- Are we the right people to ask this question?
- Are we approaching the time when we should just talk about ministry?

Several were critical of the clergy formation process, which often seems designed to deny the validity of our earlier experience of ministry. As one put it, where does the joy and passion go? While serving our title - people feel battered. The secular world offers a more rewarding experience of collaboration, motivation, is more fulfilled and better outputs. The experience during IME 4-7 is often one of demotivation. While the diocese is rightly concerned with providing for parochial posts, and deployability, is it just about pins in maps? Are SSMs seen as there to maintain a parish model? Or working with a deanery or diocese, using our skill set? (We were told that Ministry Division has researched how dioceses see using SSMs. We were told that half want SSMs to plug gaps in SM parish provision, while half see SSMs as offering more besides).

What does SSM look like in the future - and what does SM look like? As noted, collaboration is essential, including between ordained and lay, building on whatever community is there.

Julian Hubbard took us on a survey of the wider landscape, **Resourcing the Future.**

Consultants went to dioceses on behalf of MinDiv, asking about future ministerial requirements for the next decade - numbers and more qualitative. The Experiences of Ministry project builds on this, informing how resources should be allocated.

A key question was: where is the best place for resource to be invested for the church? Generally dioceses want up to a 50% increase in SM ordinands to resource parochial ministry, therefore questions of resource were geared to that. Dioceses also want increased numbers for new forms of ministry, such as fresh expressions and lay ministry. Consultants are currently re-visiting dioceses to discuss the responses in the context of Resourcing Ministerial Education.

Dioceses are very varied in capacity to get to grips with this – the questions raised about forms of ministry are very diverse. In relation to lay ministry and SSM, they see a need for more articulacy, more intelligence related to data and facts, the future and priorities. The responses do vary, but are not related to level of wealth in the diocese.

For SSMs what does all this mean? Dioceses want action quickly; the rate of retirement is increasing, so they want greater numbers now, which could be both a blessing and a curse for SSMs.

Blessing - larger units for mission and ministry and greater emphasis on shared ministry. Given the level of resource stretch the way forward seems to be to gather people in larger groupings, more sharing of skills and gifts, a larger canvas for exercise of ministry. Stipends in some dioceses, not all, are going to become rarer, creating more opportunities for SSMs of all kinds, including those roles where SSMs take on oversight. Moving on from house for duty, which raises a justice issue about how jobs are offered. Increasingly, dioceses are more focused on discipleship, lay expertise, lay ministry, than they used to be; sheer economics is making this more valued. And lay people are speaking up more, are more confident.

Curse - in some dioceses, SSM are seen as a free alternative to SM and a soft landing; not valued as distinct but only as supplementary parochial ministry. It will take a quite principled bishop or archdeacon to realise vision and avoid exploitation. The increased interest in lay leadership means that those in ordained and lay ministry, especially Readers, need to be prepared to accept and affirm that leadership in the church.

We agreed it is important for SSMs to go for blessing and not curse. Some senior leaders in the Church understand this, but others do not. It is up to SSMs to ensure that all of them do understand. If a diocese doesn't understand the language, we are translators.

Other questions raised included:

- SSM licensing - public or not? Should it include our workplace? Some SSMs have such licenses.
- Should SSMs be involved in appointments of incumbents?
- Readers face very similar issues to SSMs, so should we be working more closely?
- Could / should the church have (some) paid lay leaders?

What is next? For you as an individual? For us as a group (as SSMs)? For them - whoever they are? Who are you going back to have a conversation with? And: what is your next step?

Reflection and action

- Continue these conversations between diocesan reps and SSMs on what SSMs can offer; on what God is calling the church to do with this ministry.
- Speak to dioceses about models and contributions and implications.
- We need a report to the House of Bishops and action on it.

We also noted that it was good to have 3 bishops here.

Editor's note

In addition to the official record of the 2015 Consultation, Ministry Division's website also carries historical and current data. Of particular interest is a map showing the proportion of ordained ministers who are Self-Supporting, by diocese, available at http://www.ministrydevelopment.org.uk/a_new_pattern_of_priesthood

Surveys of SSMs – summary

A total of 296 SSMs in Bristol, Gloucester, Lichfield, and Worcester dioceses responded to the survey, conducted by the diocesan officers for SSM; a response rate of 72 per cent.

Bristol has published its own report (available on the diocesan website) showing that 30 per cent believed that being self-supporting would have a negative impact on applying for posts in the diocese. Just 16 per cent felt that they had "a voice" within the diocese.

Across the four dioceses, 69 per cent of respondents believe that SSMs should be considered for senior posts, such as assistant bishop, archdeacon, or cathedral canon.

A briefing note by the researchers is critical of the lack of SSMs in senior posts, describing it as "wrong and unfair. While canon law currently prevents SSMs from becoming bishops (and why couldn't this be changed?), there is nothing to stop self-supporting ministers from being made archdeacons."

A theme across the responses from the four dioceses is the belief that SSMs' experience from "outside the Church" is not harnessed by dioceses.

Seventy per cent of Bristol respondents say that ministerial reviews and professional development (65 per cent) do not include SSMs. The diocese has committed itself to several initiatives, including one to "accelerate the process of cultural change to create a real sense of 'one ministry'".

Margaret Yates attended as one of the reps for the ***Diocese of Oxford*** and gave the following report to her fellow SSMs there.

Acting as one of the representatives of the diocese of Oxford I attended the national consultation on Self Supporting Ministry at Southwark. This was a follow-on to the day held in 2012 that I had attended and so I had hoped to see evidence of movement in Ministry Division's thinking on the role played by SSMs in the life of the Church. I encountered evidence of some listening to us, but not

change. The following are my personal reflections on the day that I would like to share.

The aims of the day were:

- To affirm the ministry of SSMs across the Church of England;
- To resource conversations and development of SSM for the next 5 years;
- To reflect upon recent research on SSM ministry, surfacing implications, expectations and challenges for the future, building on learning from the 2013 consultation;
- To think strategically;
- To inspire.

However, given that this was a day of consultation, there was very little time allocated for discussion and feedback and so it will be interesting to read the report on the day when it is published. (*Now available on the MinDiv website, Ed.*)

Throughout the day our thinking and deliberations were held and guided by prayer and I found this a particularly helpful and reassuring approach. We hadn't lost sight of what we are here for!

The format of the day was led by bishop Chris of St Germans and began with a review of the historical contribution of SSMs followed by an examination of the situation today. This was achieved through a presentation of some of the results of the research of the *Experiences of Ministry Project* (SM and SSM) which can be found at www.ministrydevelopment.org.uk/emproject. I was struck by the differences in the use of time between the two groups. By far the greatest proportion of time spent by SMs was in administration; whereas SSM's clustered around preaching, liturgical duties and participation in corporate and individual prayer. And there was far less burn out experienced by SSMs.

The diversity of SSMs was fully acknowledged during the day: the types of people we are, the gifts we bring, but united as a group in being highly committed and engaged in the work of God. However we do need to make sure that our value is fully recognised and added to the whole.

The final section concentrated on the way forward and ended with a presentation by Julian Hubbard challenging us to live out our various vocations to SSM and lead fulfilled and flourishing lives. If we find that this is not happening, then, he said, we need to ensure the leaders in our diocese engage with us.

Did I feel they had achieved their aims for the day? In part, as I had a better understanding of the diversity of Self Supporting Ministry across the different dioceses as a result of the research. However, in terms of thinking strategically about the future, my impression was that this had been left up to us.

Oxford diocese is taking forward the issues discussed at an SSM day on 11 October. Please contact Margaret for further details.

Ian Anthony, SSM Officer for the Diocese of Manchester, reported back (on behalf also of Catherine Binns and Rob Fox) as follows.

There were several speakers at the consultation including Tim Ling and Julian Hubbard (Ministry Division), Stuart Burn (Leicester Diocese) and the Bishop of St. Germans. Candidates came from across the country and there was a good representation of SSM experience.

At the opening of the conference we were informed that the day was planned so that ministry division could hear our opinions and so be better able to resource and develop self-supporting ministry for the future.

Dr. Tim Ling spoke about the recent surveys of SSM. He presented several statistics which showed generally that SSMs were engaged and absorbed in their work and were flourishing.

We then took part in a bible study (Luke 10: 1-12) – the sending out of the disciples by Jesus – and reflected on this from our own individual standpoint.

The Bishop of St. Germans spoke and outlined the history of SSM, assessing its current situation and suggesting what the future for SSM in the church might look like. He spoke of the difficulty of our title 'SSM' in that it related to whether we were paid or not and suggested that ministry should not be defined in these terms. He outlined how a specific ordained presence in the workplace is valued. He commented that collaborative ministry certainly benefits from the inclusion of SSMs in teams etc.. He spoke of how SSM ministry is essentially 'missional'. He suggested that in the future there should be more movement between SSM and stipendiary ministry. He felt it important to examine 'deployability' so that the ministry of a particular individual is best expressed.

He covered other issues which included:

- The economic value of SSMs. It was estimated in the Bristol Diocese that if the work undertaken in the churches by SSMs was paid it would cost about £2.3m a year.
- Having SSMs has facilitated many worthwhile late vocations.
- SSMs bring a range of expertise to ordained ministry.
- SSMs bring to the church the accountability experienced in the world of work.
- SSMs often help the church to see itself as others see it.

Julian Hubbard (Ministry Division) spoke appreciatively about the SSM ministry and how vital it was for the church. Looking at the wider perspective with regard to ministry in general, he drew attention to the implications for diocesan finances, resourcing dioceses and the issue of ministerial education and formation. He pointed out that a fifty percent increase in ordinands would be needed to support the current levels of parochial ministry, due to the shorter periods clergy are now active.

However, not all SSMs see their ministry as parochially based. Together with this goes a consideration of any experimental ministries, lay ministries and how we perceive leadership in the church.

Throughout these talks, comments from the floor were welcomed and this added to a fruitful discussion.

One session centred around 'The Challenge and Gifts of SSM' in which people were invited to contribute their views. They covered issues such as:

- Bishops are not always aware of the skills SSMs have and the MDR process should give more opportunity for SSMs to outline what they do at work. This would also give senior leadership some idea of the skills and talents available in the SSM pool.
- Linked to this was the capacity of the church to receive the gifts offered by SSMs.
- Communication between the SSM and the senior leadership in the diocese is essential.
- People putting themselves forward for particular tasks and their skills being recognised.
- 'The Grace of relinquishment' was mentioned in terms of people being ready to give up one particular calling to focus on another.
- Management of time.
- SSMs can fit satisfactorily in larger mission units offering more scope for particular forms of ministry.
- As stipendiary clergy become rarer, there are more opportunities for SSMs to flourish, even having oversight of a parish.

It was pointed out that dioceses differ in how they come to terms with these issues and the diverse circumstances of each diocese are factors in all this. However, it was felt that there is generally a greater need for planning and a greater degree of articulation on all sides of the planning process.

The final word to us all was 'Make sure those in leadership understand us!' It was suggested that the House of Bishops should know what has gone on at this consultation.

The general tone of the conference was friendly, good natured and optimistic with people taking part and making their contribution in a measured and helpful way. Discussion centred around the tables at which we were seated and in the hall when the main speakers were

leading the discussion, so people had plenty of opportunity to let their views be heard.

I am glad I went. I learnt a lot. The diocese was well represented – as well as myself being there we had Catherine Binns and Rob Fox (as a CHRISM representative) present. Rob made a particularly significant contribution to the discussions. *(Yes, I did think about editing out the last sentence, but then it does add to the account of the day. No time for false modesty ...)*

Barcelona 2015 - The Annual Meeting of the European Worker Priests

Stan Frost

3rd June (at time of writing) - it's now a full week since I returned from the meeting and well time to try and compile a reflection.

Phil Aspinall and Susan Cooper were fellow representatives of CHRISM and the UK at the meeting. We had travelled separately and my own journey was organised by my younger daughter, who is a frequent traveller. She recommended going early to avoid the holiday weekend crowds so she had booked me to fly on the Thursday before the meeting, which started on Friday the 22nd May. Even so the plane was full - both ways. Coming back it was so full that I my single hand baggage was sent into the hold as the passenger compartment was full before I had time to show the barcode which confirmed my reservation - including that I had paid for insurance and for privileged boarding and that I had already booked in - this happened some weeks before the trip and it was remarkable to be able to have done this both in Derby and Barcelona remotely, from home.

My wife, Eileen had decided at the outset that she would prefer to stay at home whilst I attended the meeting. This was a wise decision as the security system at both ends of the journey was rigorous though bearable because the passenger numbers enabled a smooth flow through the process. Removing belts was entertaining, though I only nearly lost my trousers on the way out! Shoes were

checked one way and passed inspection; fortunately there were chairs to sit on whilst refastening them.

Arrival at Terminal 2 in Barcelona was eye opening. A building which seemed to extend indefinitely eventually led to the arrivals hall where there was a tall man bearing a sign about POs (*prêtre-ouvrier – worker priest*) - so I suspected that he was there to meet me. His details confirmed I was the only name on his list from my flight East Midlands. We had a long walk to the extensive car park and located his large Citroen which he drove to a Salesian Seminary - it took about half an hour to drive from the airport (?20 kilometres). The driver was a PO named 'Angel' so I felt well blessed - relieved to arrive at the right place in time for lunch.

The Seminary is set in an extensive and exotic garden with palms and ferns and several ponds - one of which had about 25 turtles of assorted sizes - up to that of a dinner plate. It seems that the gardens had contained a zoo and these reptiles are the remnants of what used to be. We had to walk from the residential part of the centre across the garden to get to the dining facilities, so turtle watching was a regular activity.

The food was excellent and plentiful, and the kitchen staff were well able to deal with non-Catalan speakers and smile! Sleeping accommodation was in a modern building and en-suite - comfortable but IKEA-like. A lift in the building was a good point. Overall the Catalan team are to be congratulated on how they had organised the whole weekend, making it a very satisfying experience. Next year it is the turn of the Belgian POs and it would be good if more of CHRISM Members could be available to attend.

The meetings were well organised and started and finished when they should have. Simultaneous translation was provided (Catalan to Spanish and then Spanish to Catalan and to French). Not much help to the British but my colleagues seemed to cope very well with the language and I will rely on them to give the detail of the discussions. Papers in French were prepared, as usual, by each national group and we each had these copied in a folder. This reflected the care taken by the organisers to keep everyone informed and involved.

On Saturday we were allocated into small groups to visit different local projects - a la CHRISM. I was in the group visiting the Mine which is a part of Barcelona with a tragic history – see, for example, <http://geographyfieldwork.com/La%20Mina.htm>

We walked through an area which is pristine - and has huge new buildings, including a Science Museum adjacent to multi storey housing. Local displays showed what it had been up until about the 1950s -squalid housing and piles of rubble - legacy of the Civil War - and used for retaining 'undesirables'. There is a lot of history there of which the group was largely ignorant – we needed to do a lot of reading needed to catch up with what was happening there. We were then taken to a new centre named the Mine which is an office that is locked up like a shop might be. The Mine has become the focus of the local drugs community dealing with addicts - treating, advising, in a situation where thousands tend to congregate, disposing of record numbers of used syringes in the streets! Added to this there is more stress due to immigrant communities who have moved into the area and add to the local tensions. We were there on a Saturday afternoon - the place was quiet and the people at the Mine showed no signs of stress when they were telling us about what happens there.

Later we were able to reflect on the contrast between this situation, just a mile or so from the busy central area of the city, after we had visited the Familia Sagrada Church on the Sunday afternoon. Thousands of tourists, money flowing freely, and visitors enjoying the magnificence of the building and its history. We came away with much to think about! So - an inspiring weekend and we shared with our European colleagues in some great Pentecostal moments.

PS: (If you do a Firefox search for Mina Barcelona - you will find pictures and several paragraphs explaining the issues and what is being done to resolve them).

***International Worker Priest Conference
Barcelona, Pentecost 2015***

Phil Aspinall

This Economy – It kills

The letter of welcome from the Catalans promised that they would show us the two faces of the city of Barcelona, described by the Catalan poet Maragall: "one a friendly and open face, the other of suffering and rejection". They achieved this and more ! And accompanied us "to see that face of suffering with which we, as Worker Priests, have lived most of our lives". The Olympic games of 1992 transformed the city, but, the Catalans say, exacerbated the differences. It is no longer a city of industry and workers (which has left behind much unemployment and the relics of factories), but has become a city of service industries and the showcase of tourism.

My introduction to the weekend began when, Tony, who had collected me from the airport, took me for lunch in a local restaurant near the conference centre, on the ground floor of large development of residential apartments. These were, I supposed, some of the accommodation that had been built for the Olympics, as we were in the midst of the Olympic tennis complex, now looking rather dilapidated with its concrete shuttering peeling away. The lunch was wonderful - and cheap! From there I negotiated the metro, a bus and a funicular railway to reach the top of the mountain behind Barcelona, Tibidabo. Perhaps you know the story – this is indeed the mountain where the devil brought Jesus to say to him "this I will give you". The view over the city is very dramatic and very tempting – and a useful way of reminding myself of the layout of the city and its landmarks.

We were the usual mixture of some 25 delegates from some 7 European countries, but with many more Catalans who joined us at different stages of the weekend. And we shared together in much pan-European friendship and hospitality - my favourite, an unlabelled bottle of what we were told was Normandy Calvados 62°. There were many other visitors, including two Bishops (the Cardinal and the Auxiliary), leaders of Trade Unions and representatives for a union fighting for those faced with eviction for defaulting on

mortgages after the 2008 crash. The language of the conference was, as always, French which requires a great deal of concentration! And this year there was continuous translation between Catalan and French, by the very enthusiastic Sister Marie-Rose – this at least gave a chance to hear things a second time. I found that, after three days, I was waking up with dreams in a buzz of something sounding like Catalan!

The programme focussed on the theme “This Economy - it kills”, some words of Pope Francis. The papers each delegation had prepared before the conference provided a rich and detailed resource on the economic reality of each of the countries represented, many including statistics on employment, and unemployment. (If you would like to read the papers, please contact me and I shall send you the set).

After introductions and many opening presentations we began work on the theme, using the method which has become our custom. Each participant selects just one phrase from all the papers which particularly strikes them, and we then present these to the whole group. It then fell to me (as in previous years) to assemble these selected phrases into topics for the workshops session – this involves pieces of paper stuck onto a wall, and repeatedly rearranged until we arrive at some sort of consensus, an exercise as complicated as any negotiation in the EU commission. We spent the Sunday morning working in our small groups on the topics:

- The Mosquito – Living in this world, where are the points I can sting?
- The Global perspective – the world is with us; we must care for the whole world.
- Social Support – the excluded, how can they be included and no longer passive?
- Consumption – our participation and our resistance. “Consummo ergo sum”.
- Alternative forms of work – putting the human at the centre, collective action.

These topics had already narrowed down the vast scope of the theme, and inevitably these different groups went off in very

different directions. So whilst each group had interesting and provocative thoughts, there was no sense of consensus at the end of it, especially difficult when the Italians, as in previous years, requested a statement from the conference to send to politicians and leaders.

I joined the visit on the Saturday afternoon to Raval, an inner city area immediately adjacent to the tourist magnet of La Rambla. Indeed, if an unsuspecting tourist took a turn down a side street away from the bars and restaurants, they would within a few metres, find themselves in an area of immigrants, workshops and local shops (many of which now appeared closed up). We visited a centre for the homeless located in a former car garage, which opened during the day to provide facilities for showering and washing, a change of clothes from their extensive clothes bank, food and a space in which to sit, relax and play cards. Run by a charity originally founded by Jesuits, it now has 50 paid staff and some 200 volunteers. It aims to accompany those who find themselves on the streets (for a wide variety of reasons) to help them regain their dignity and rebuild their lives – simply to be with them to help them recover energy and motivation. We walked further to a hostel for the homeless with beds for 30 relatively long-term residents, each with their own comfortably furnished room. It was named after one of the first residents who had stayed only 2 nights before he died. It seemed quite quiet – until we discovered all the residents watching a film on the television in the communal lounge.

The Sunday visit to the church of the Sagrada Família was a total contrast. In the heart of the tourist circuit, the church was packed as we were given a private tour led by a retired priest. The building has been transformed since my last visit, some 10 years ago, and is now substantially complete. It is a splendid building and the decoration and architectural concepts are spectacular. But there was much disquiet among the PO ! The construction has been financed entirely by public donations, and the question was asked would not this money have been better spent to help alleviate the poverty in the parts of the city around the building.

During the final evaluation session there was much praise for our colleagues from Catalunya for organising an excellent conference and

splendid accommodation. But, as I suggested above, there was some feeling that the theme had become too diffuse and therefore lost its focus on tangible issues for action. Also, with so many invited guests and interventions, there was little time available to work on the theme. It was suggested that we should consider different ways of working, and there was also a call for making it more inclusive. One of the Germans suggested that one of the small groups should work in English. Some of us asked for an opportunity, as Worker Priests, to visit a place of work. But we agreed to meet again next year, and the Preparation Group were charged with agreeing the arrangements.

We had also been told that we were visiting at a time of great change for Barcelona and for Catalunya. This was borne out by the municipal elections taking place across Spain on the Sunday – the party which took control of Barcelona is led by the leader of the protest movement against mortgage exploitation. There was much rejoicing!

I stayed on for a couple of days and had the opportunity to explore the city, the other mountain of Barcelona, Montjuic, and the architecture of Gaudi around the city and on the principal street Passeig de Gràcia. I looked down from the fort on to the huge port area along the Mediterranean coast, and watched the operators handling containers and transferring them from ships to trains – and wondered again why, in a conference of Worker Priests, we had not been taken to meet any of these workers!

May I add my own encouragement to that in Stan's article (above), to invite you to join us both at next year's International Worker Priest Conference over the Pentecost weekend (13th - 16th May 2016), and also at the 50th Anniversary celebrations to mark the re-inauguration of the Worker Priests after Vatican Council II. This will take place as a University Colloquium in Paris over the 5th and 6th December 2015. For more details, and to register, please see the enclosed flyer, or contact Phil Aspinall.

Worker Priests conference in Barcelona

Susan Cooper

What can be better than a few days in Barcelona at Pentecost? Any worries that I had about not knowing any Spanish were quickly allayed. Barcelona is the capital of Catalonia and the preferred language of the locals is Catalan. On menus in restaurants Catalan appears first. Anywhere aimed at international trade, English and French often appear before Spanish. That said, the language of the conference was French and my French is not much better and I was very out of practice.

Language issues predominated for me. I could often pick up the odd word but often fail to get the context, except that you quickly pick up if the issue is contentious but not always understand why it is. Some of the time, we were in smaller groups and there was a lot of effort to include those struggling with the language. I was not the only one, some of the Germans did not speak much French, but that those who did seem to speak every other language as well. I was often beholden to Albert (who spoke at a CHRISM conference a few years ago) from Düsseldorf to keep me on the straight and narrow. The situation was made worse, as there was a very efficient person translating into Catalan and she would jump in very fast at the end of every other sentence. It meant that one never got familiar with the metre of the French before hearing the metre of Catalan. I was unable to memorise the sounds that may have allowed me to work out what was being said. Phil helped me catch up in the breaks.

The weekend started with my flight being late and discovering that the legroom and space between seats was the least that I had ever come across before. The man sitting beside me was tall and with very long legs and did not fit in. On reaching Barcelona, I discovered that although I had arrived my suitcase had not. Happily it caught up with me by lunchtime the next day and I was able to change my socks and clean my teeth. A kind local worker priest transported me from the airport.

We stayed on a beautiful site belonging to the Salesians. The dining room was in an old building, although the accommodation and

conference space was in 1960's type buildings perfectly adequate - all bedrooms were ensuite. The gardens through which we wandered when moving between buildings were beautiful and my small discussion group chose to work outside.

There were two excursions. On Saturday afternoon in three groups, we visited different parts of the city. The metro proved very easy to use. We went to Lyceps and stepped out on the La Rambla, the main pedestrian thoroughfare in the city. We soon disappeared into side streets wound our way to the Migrates Studium - a Jesuit establishment where Isidre, our host worked with a colleague teaching immigrants plumbing and electrical skills. The organisation also provided information for migrants and provided Catalan classes for them (although the Catalan teaching was funded and resourced by the state government). Once the migrants had a trade they would be able to find a job. We then visited a religious sister who provided accommodation and therefore provided an address for the migrants - who needed an address as well as a trade to apply for residency. Whilst we were there enjoying the Cornettoes that we had been offered, some of the young men who were staying there in. They were from West Africa: Ghana, Benin and Gambia. I could have probably spoken with some in English but we didn't stay long enough for me to find out. Although it was probably easier to get residency in Spain if one had an address and a job, the residency was not permanent and was dependent on having employment. Whereas in the countries from which the rest of us came, residency was more difficult to establish but was less likely to be removed if you lost your job.

The Sunday afternoon excursion was in a coach and we all went together to the Basilica of Sagrada Familia, the life work of Antonia Gaudi. The outside was with its many towers and spires and facades looks (as Giles Fraser wrote recently in the Guardian) has touch of the theme park about it. It is amazing but is still work in progress expected to be complete around 2026. When you step inside you catch your breathe. The light is amazing - the mixture of the eye being directed upwards by the inside views of the many spires and of the light coming through the many stained glass windows can only send ones thoughts towards the numinous. God is surely in that

space. The retired priest who was showing us round kept trying to encourage us to pray - in one way prayer came automatically, in another the confusion of the building made me feel that if I took myself away to sit quietly, I would lose the rest of the group. One of the doorways had words from the Lord's Prayer in every language – well, more than I could count. The crypt contains a museum and demonstrating the ways in which Gaudi experimented with parabolas to work out how to support the roof. I cannot begin to describe the wonders of this building, you need to visit it yourself - probably many times.

Worship over the weekend took place mainly in French but various attempts were made to include as many of our mother tongues as possible. The Germans got us joining in a psalm - the first verse was repeated in each language and subsequent verses were each in a different language and we read the parts in our own language. Of course, we always said the Lord's Prayer in our own languages - a real babel of voices for Pentecost. The main Eucharist for Pentecost was on Saturday evening and in Catalan, although we were given a translation in French.

Despite my personal linguistic inadequacies, I was able to discover from Alberto that many English people living in his native Valencia did not bother to learn to speak Spanish and had English speaking schools for their children. Philippe from Le Mans, unbelievably, will be 75 this year and will have to give up his chaplaincy work at the local prison, which he regrets very much, because it has enabled him to keep in touch with young people.

Next year we are invited to Belgium to enjoy the hospitality of Jaak, Nieve, Jef, Ulrich and their colleagues. Will I go? Of course, if I am able. The welcome that I receive from the regular attenders is terrific. This year I have already enrolled in a course at the Institut Francais to try and improve my participation in the plenary part of the conference. The group educates me in the way life is for the most marginalised people with whom I rarely come into contact.

And do visit Barcelona, if you can, the legacy of Gaudi and the vibrancy of the city make it an interesting and warm destination.

Pretre ouvrier – articles

As readers will have noted from the reports about the Barcelona gathering, business is generally conducted in French as the Worker Priest movement started there. (There are several books in the CHRISM library, at the Royal Foundation of St Katharine, Limehouse, that explain the history).

The following article is in French, but rewards patience and appropriate use of an on-line translation tool:

<http://www.jesuites.com/2015/06/pretre-et-ouvrier-un-sacerdoce-collectif/>

The papers from the national groups discussed in Barcelona are available at:

http://pretres-ouvriers.fr/index.php?action=actualite_po&&article=117

And the French Worker Priest site is a useful source of what is going on there and elsewhere in Europe:

<http://pretres-ouvriers.fr/index.php>

Another of CHRISM's contacts in Europe is the German ***Old Catholics***, several of whom we have welcomed to events in the UK over that past few years. Many of the clergy are Worker Priests and the website, <http://www.oldromancatholicseurope.com/ministry>, summarises them in familiar terms.

"Some of the clergy are engaged in secular employment to sustain their lives and their ministry. Our clergy are non-stipendiary (unpaid) and therefore need to work just as any other person does for economic survival! All clergy so employed do not however "turn off" their clerical status when at work. Many are recognised as "unofficial" chaplains in their working environment, colleagues naturally turning to someone they know will listen or give advice in times of need.

Exactly because some of our clergy are themselves employed they more fully appreciate the stresses and strains of daily life for most people. The constant weighing up of priorities, home and work life

balance and the constant struggle to "find time" for oneself or family or friends. However, despite this our clergy employ their spare time to facilitate their first vocation in life, the service of Christ and of His Church and to serve the servants of God.

ORC clergy by virtue of their being or having been "worker priests," possess various professional qualifications and experience gained in the world of work. Some are trained health professionals, others social workers, some teachers and others small business owners, some have even been publicans, military service personnel or funeral directors! An individual priest may then be just as comfortable discussing the spiritual as the material problems of life providing a unique perspective on ministry that other mainstream clergy don't always possess.

Again because some of our clergy work full time, their ministry to local congregations and the work of the Church locally is assisted by Lay Ministers. These may themselves be employed or retired but give of their time to assist the pastoral ministry of the church. Lay Ministry within the diocese is Licensed or Certificated depending on the extent of its support of the priest's ministry and the nature of the work."

Events

***50th Anniversary of the Reinstatement of the Worker Priests.
University Colloquium - Saturday 5th and Sunday 6th
December 2015, at Labour Exchange St-Denis, 9/11 rue
Grenin, 93200 Saint Denis, Paris***

Worker-Priests: a history, a future

The Worker Priests after 1965: Issue of the social and religious history. Challenge for social and religious history.

Under the direction of **Tangi Cavalin** and **Nathalie Viet-Depaule**, a day to attempt to reflect on the issues of the religious, social and

cultural history which aroused the presence of priests in factories during the second half of the 1960s. Followed by a Festival Evening

“Witness and Struggles”

A round table discussion chaired by Bernard Stephan, director of Editions de l’Atelier, with contributions from Trade Unionists and Worker Priests in Employment: **“Today – work and the workers”**.

With the participation of the theologians and philosophers: Jean Louis Souletie, Jean Francois Petit, Marcel Annequin and Gerard Meunier: **“Worker Priests – a ministry of the present”**.

If you would like to attend, please return enclosed flyer, or contact Phil Aspinall (details inside rear cover) for further information.

The **United Reformed Church** is holding a weekend conference for NSMs, 18th – 20th September, 2015, at The Windermere Centre, Lake Road, Windermere. The title is **Stepping out of the Traffic** – a chance to reflect on NSM ministry, using Psalm 46. Further details from Bernard Fidler, 126 Ridgeway, Pembury, Tunbridge Wells, Kent; 07534 361514 / bernard@fidder.co.uk, or Sue Cossey (details in rear inside cover).

CABE event - Weds 3 September Christian Women in Leadership, led by Nola Leach, CARE

Details of breakfast and lunchtime meetings in London can be found at <http://www.cabe-online.org/events/>

CABE also publishes a number of useful articles and other resources, at <http://www.cabe-online.org/resources/>

Third North West SSM Regional Conference ...

... will be held from Friday evening 25th September 2015 to late afternoon on Saturday 26th at Luther King House, Manchester. The conference theme is 'Communicating the Gospel'. Two speakers booked:

- Bishop Cyril Ashton (formerly Blackburn Diocesan Training Officer and now Hon. Asst. Bishop there), and
- the Revd Richard Coles, probably best known formerly as half of the pop duo The Communards, and now as presenter of Radio 4's 'Saturday Live' and Vicar of Finedon, in Northants.

Conference fee (£95 for the overnight, including all meals; £40 for the Saturday only, including lunch); booking through your diocesan SSM Officer.

Shared Ministry Network – 2015 conference: ‘God’s Call – Our Response: Making Mission-Shaped Shared Ministry Work’

Formerly the Local Ministry Network, the name has recently been changed as above. The website is well worth visiting:
<http://www.shared-ministry.net/>

Lunchtime Thursday 19th to lunchtime Saturday 21st November, at Britannia Country Hotel, Manchester. Full Board for £185.
 Contact: Revd Dr Colin McCarty, 1 Seymour Close, Newmarket, CB8 8EL. test_and_eval@btinternet.com

Christians at Work Annual Conference 2015, Saturday, 26th September 2015, at Rugby Evangelical Church, Railway Terrace, Rugby. ***ME, WORK & GRACE – Do I radiate something of Christ at work?***

Speakers: Charles Hipsley (Director LICC WORK FORUM), Trevor Payne (Transform Work UK). Cost: £25.

Christian Vision for Men Scotland is holding a day conference on Workplace Integrity, with Mark Greene (LICC) as Keynote Speaker, tackling the topics 'Does Work Matter to God?' and 'The Folly of the Sacred/Secular Divide'.

Seminars on the day:

- Transforming structures - ***Stuart Weir, CARE for Scotland National Director***

- Sexual purity in the workplace - **Stephen McGuire, CVM Scotland Director**
- How to grow an effective Christian workplace group - **Ros Turner, Transform Work UK**
- Praying into your workplace - **Mission Scotland**

Date: Saturday 19 September 2015

Time: 10am - 4pm **Cost:** £7 (excl. lunch)

Location: Letham St Mark's Church of Scotland, Rannoch Road, Letham, Perth PH1 2HH

Money Matters - Building a more inclusive financial system - Church Urban Fund National Conference 2015

Thursday 5th November 2015, 10.00am – 4.00 pm, at King's House Conference Centre, Manchester M1 7HB.

Financial exclusion is one of the most pressing public policy issues of our time. The Archbishop of Canterbury has spoken passionately about the importance of this issue for our national life. His initiative has sparked widespread interest across the Church of England and other denominations to address the issue of financial exclusion at both a local and a national level.

This conference seeks to build understanding of financial exclusion, reflect theologically and explore a variety of projects and efforts to build financial inclusion in local communities.

Keynote speakers: Sir Hector Sants, Professor Karen Rowlingson and Canon Dr Angus Ritchie. (<http://www.cuf.org.uk/>)

Registration fee is £12 per person (lunch and refreshments provided)

Save the date – 2016 CHRISM Reflective Weekend

26th to 28th February, at Abbey House Retreat House, Glastonbury. Booking details with October edition.

Details in a future edition, but see the House's website at: <http://abbeyhouse.org/>

Resources

The ***2015 Experiences of Ministry Survey*** is now live, and you may have received an invitation to participate in this. CHRISM encourages you to do so, as insights gained will play a part on both forming future policy, and in gathering a wider understanding of the reality of ministry in 2015. For more information see <http://www.ministrydevelopment.org.uk/emsurvey>

Ministry2Business ...

... is a joint venture between the Diocese of Manchester and a growing network of local Christian professionals and business owners. (Website: <http://www.ministry2business.co.uk/>) Its vision is to see increasing numbers of Manchester's professionals developing a faith that is utterly relevant to their daily lives, inspiring and equipping them to make a truly transformative and vibrant contribution to their workplaces and the wider business community.

It is led by, Revd Pete Horlock, Manchester Diocese's Vicar to the Business Community. He is personally committed to supporting local business leaders in their everyday working lives and connecting Jesus Christ's good news with our work.

Ministry2Business activities are focused on three main areas:

- Engaging – building supportive relationships with local professionals and business leaders and providing assistance where possible with some of the key issues they face on a day to day basis.
- Encouraging – people to make a difference through their work and help Christians see their faith as integral to their professional lives.
- Exploring – creating accessible opportunities for people to investigate the bigger questions of life and consider the dynamic connection between God, faith and their work

There is a regular programme of events and the talks are recorded and available in the Resources section of the website.

The **Diocese of Newcastle** website has a useful section on **The Ministry of the Whole People of God** that includes resources on workplace ministry, with links to **This Time Tomorrow** and the website of **After Sunday**, itself an excellent source of resources and courses about faith and work (<http://www.aftersunday.org.uk/>).

The Newbiggin Centre, launched this month, is the newest Centre set up by Ridley College, Cambridge. Named in memory of Bishop Lesslie Newbiggin, a pioneer in thinking through the missionary challenge facing churches in the contemporary West. Under the Direction of Paul Weston it aims to attract research students for MPhil and PhD degrees on themes relating the gospel and Western culture, and to develop resources for the wider church through occasional conferences and seminars, as well as online and research materials.

The centre focuses on the rising challenges of urban poverty and mission, aiming to mobilise, form and equip Christian leaders for our new urban world. The website, at <http://newbiggincentre.org/>, is worth exploring.

Podcasts from the latest **Westminster Faith Debate**, Social Cohesion – Lessons from the Pennines, held on 10th June in Bradford, are now available on its website, together with earlier debates, at <http://faithdebates.org.uk/debates/religion-social-cohesion-lessons-from-the-pennines/>

LICC has been busy of late. **Transforming Work** is an 8 session workplace programme, designed to be used over a year. Each session includes:

- Core-content films on vital workplace issues
- Reading the Bible with workers' eyes
- Developing skills
- Prayer
- Lively conversation
- Good humour

The Leaders' Pack is available at a cost of £15, along with more and very useful information, at <http://www.licc.org.uk/TW/image-bg/index.html#whatistw>

There is also an App to support Transforming Work for your smartphone or tablet, available at:

<http://tinyurl.com/ojvph82> #TransformingWork

There is even a livestream, at www.ustream.tv/channel/licc-ltd #TransformingWork

Citizens for Public Justice, mentioned in an earlier edition, is a Christian lobby organisation in Canada, keeping public justice on the political agenda as a Christian witness. An organisation like this is sadly lacking in the UK and we could learn much from CLJ. Take a look at its Facebook pages, at:

<https://www.facebook.com/citizensforpublicjustice/info?tab=overview>

Diary of a Worker Priest is a blog by a Canadian Anglican priest whose identity isn't exactly obvious! Stream of consciousness that, nevertheless, many of us can identify with. See <https://workerpriest.wordpress.com/>

The website ***Archbishop Cranmer*** describes itself as about God and Politics; Christianity and Conservatism. It includes a number of interesting articles, including one by Jonathan Sacks, former Chief Rabbi, 'Not in God's Name, on the Sanctity of the Other, that is well worth reading and bears comparison with the writings of Miroslav Wolf on the same subject. The site is edited by Adrian Hilton, described as Theologian, educationalist, researcher in social science at Oxford University, occasional theatre director and former politician. Worth visiting.

God's Agents - Biblical Publicity in Contemporary England, Matthew Engelke, ISBN 9780520280472, British and Foreign Bible Society, 320 pages, £24.95. This is a study of how religion goes public in today's world. Based on over three years of anthropological research, Matthew Engelke traces how a small group of socially committed Christians tackle the challenge of publicity within what they understand to be a largely secular culture. In the process of telling their story, he offers an insightful new way to think about the relationships between secular and religious formations: our current

understanding of religion needs to be complemented by greater attention to the process of generating publicity. Engelke argues that we are witnessing the dynamics of religious publicity, which allows us to see the ways in which conceptual divides such as public/private, religious/secular, and faith/knowledge are challenged and redefined by social actors on the ground.

Germinate Leadership is a programme run by The Arthur Rank Centre on creative leadership in the rural church (previously known as CLIRC). The programme aims to develop creative and entrepreneurial skills in lay and ordained leaders from the rural church. It is a subsidised 18 month programme which includes 360 degree appraisal, a residential event, input and peer days, mentoring and work shadowing. A blend of learning styles is used, incorporating wisdom and experience from both secular and church leadership spheres. As a result it is practical, relevant, and tailored to the person and context.

The programme builds on the findings of The Effective Christian Presence and Enterprise Project (Churches Regional Commission for Yorkshire & the Humber, Faithworks, 2008). This project conducted two years of research with 19 innovative Christian groups in the Yorkshire and Humber region. It aimed to identify, learn from, encourage and sustain enterprising forms of Christian presence.

One of the project's recommendations was that lay and ordained church leaders should be trained to develop the 'entrepreneurial leadership style', including project development and management skills. They should be supported and encouraged to start new community initiatives and social enterprise projects, and in helping Christian presences to be more effective in engaging with their communities.

For full information see <http://www.arthurrankcentre.org.uk/>

CPAS Resource Sheet 9, MSE remains extant and is still a decent summary of what an MSE is. It can be downloaded from: http://www.cpas.org.uk/download/1204/web_upload%252F9%2BSe%2BcularEmployment%2BRS09-single-1268750864.pdf

Bible dude ...

Your Editor has been known to 'get down wiv da yoof' from time to time. If this is your bag try looking at <http://biblede.net/the-pastor-and-the-secular-job/>, just one of a number of articles on breaking down the divide we too often create.

Correspondence

Bill Dodge writes, from New York State:

There is a quote from George MacLeod in his book, "Only One Way Left", on pages 159-160 of the copy I have, which I thought may speak to the ministry of CHRISM members.

"It is the primacy of God as Now that we must recover in Christian mysticism, as starting point in the new holiness. When in the morning we get to our desk . . . that list of meetings, the whole design of the day's life as it builds up from this or that telephone call, the person we like whom we are to meet at four, the person more difficult to like who will come at five ... such is the Bren-gun rapidity of our warfare.

How apt we are to wonder where God comes in! Get through the grey, we are apt to say, and then perhaps at nine o'clock tonight, or nearer perhaps to eleven, we can have our time with God!

But 'whatever wakes my heart and mind, Thy presence is, my Lord'. The great contribution of the Hebrew to religion, let us recall, is that he did away with it. Our innumerable and pedestrian 'nows' are our points of contact with God in the highest, the apex of whose majesty is in His most glorious humanity.

You may be asking, 'Is the author hinting that there need be no prayer time at all? Is he suggesting that life is sufficient prayer?' I am not. What debilitates our prayer life, I suggest, is our presupposition that the pressures of life are on one side while God is on some other side. With this presupposition, when evening comes

with an ending to our pressures, we are apt to go eagerly to God - disconcertingly to find a vacuum. We seek to fill the vacuum with 'spiritual thoughts'. The more we try the more desperate does the situation become, 'til in effect we say that we are not really the praying type. Thus we begin to lean perilously to one side of the knife-edge."

Marcus Thompson McCausland writes, from Shropshire

I picked up a valuable truth in a sermon by a local Benedictine, which I will pass on. A lot of Christians (he said) will say that we are human beings learning to be spiritual. But that is the wrong way around; we are spiritual beings learning to be human!

Unravelling that, I would call myself an evolutionary creationist – i.e. my inward electronics have evolved from something in a warm lagoon which began as a plant aeons ago, developed the gift of animation, including the miracle of mobility, and can be traced genetically to the amazingly recent appearance of humankind, the Adam-event. Ah yes, in all that science can disclose! But I am a creationist in believing that Adam was a new creation, designed to grow in the Spirit and the Image of God. Because God is love, so must we learn to love each other and all God's creation. It is this purpose that defines us as human. Whereas the flora (plant life) is a 'grab ecology' by God's intention, and the same applies largely to fauna, the new creation (Adam) must grow in love, which is a 'give ecology'.

A human must grow in love because that is God's eternal ecology and we (Adam) must plod on in the same ecology or cease to be human. Moreover, if we renounce God's image we regress to the level of the beast, which is hideously below the fauna and even the flora (the acorn is instantly competing with its parent, the oak tree, but by God's design for trees).

Back to our learning to be human. The authentic human now re-sits at the Father's right hand, but post-Ascension he now longs for Adam to arrive there also, and as soon as possible. I love the Collect of Ascension!

CHRISM is the National Association of CHRistians In Secular Ministry

**for all Christians who see their secular employment as their primary
Christian ministry,
and for those who support that vision.**

To further this aim, CHRISM publishes a quarterly Journal,
releases occasional papers and organises an annual retreat.

Conferences are held regularly and worldwide links pursued.
CHRISM welcomes members, both lay and ordained,
from all Christian denominations, encourages them to be active within
their own faith communities and to champion ministry in and through
secular employment.

If you would like confidential support as an MSE, please contact any
member of the Committee (see below).

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