

FINAL QUESTIONS AND GROUP DISCUSSION

THE CHAIRMAN: You will be glad to know that there are quite a lot of questions. I do not think we will get through all of them, and I will not ask all six speakers to answer them all; but if any of you want to follow up on the questions or responses, then please wave a hand and we will come to you.

The first question is this: **‘Is one aspect of Liberalism today the hyper-privileging of individual experience, identity and outlook? Should Catholicity now be highlighting the question “How do I fit in” rather than “How do I stand out”?’**

There are a number of questions in this area which to relate to the doctrine of the Church, and the way in which, although every doctrine of the Church may be defective, there are plenty of areas of our Church life where people have a very clear relationship with Jesus or an experience of the Holy Spirit, but a very low understanding of the Church as an institution. I have noticed even Catholics talking about the Church dying out, as if the angels and saints could all disappear, and the church triumphant did not exist. So ‘Is one aspect of Liberalism now the hyper-privileging of individual experience, identity and outlook? Should Catholicity now be asking “How do I fit in” rather than “How do I stand out”?’ Who am I going to look to first? Peter! Because, if you are a religious, of course, there is no individuality at all, and you just watch Netflix all the time!

THE REVD FR PETER ALLAN: I have a real difficulty with the way that the question is posed. Let me go back a step or two. There is writing about the individual of the kind that Charles Taylor [Footnote: Chares Taylor, *Sources of the Self*, Harvard University Press 1989] has done so significantly. There is writing about the individual of the kind that Larry Siedentop [Footnote: Larry Siedentop, *Inventing the Individual: The Origins of Western Liberalism*, Allen Lane 2014] has done, taking the roots right back to St Paul – a very fine book, but one that does not entirely take into account all the needs of the present day. But I have to say I think the present experience is not connected with Liberalism. I think it excludes Liberalism. Liberalism classically required a different kind of recognition of society. So I want to say that what we are being challenged by is the tension between *koinonia* and *episcopate* and the New Testament, between the corporate and the significance of particular persons, and how that is actually life-giving in a way we seem to have lost sight of. We need to recover a sense of the fulfilment of the individual through immersion in the community, and the fulfilment of community through recognition of the gifts of the individual. That seems to me to be at the core of it.

THE REVD DR ANDREW DAVISON: Working in theology and science, the implication of experience rings in my ears because, if you look at what people write about in that field, you might think there was nothing to religion except for religious experience. Of course, that is important for some people and not for others, but it is certainly part of the picture. So there is in certain fields, I think, too much attention to experience. But I also want to say, with Fr Peter, that we have to be really careful about how we contrast these two categories of the individual and the social for all sorts of reasons. I will give you a couple of examples. At this time, when we are supposed to be putting such emphasis on the individual, do we really live in a culture where the inherent dignity of each person made in the image of God is being upheld? I do not think it is. So one might need a communal formation to recognise the dignity of each individual. These things are just so paradoxically interwoven. The fact that everybody wants to express their individuality by, if you are a man, sporting a beard and

getting tattooed, just shows that the relation between individuality and expression of individuality and communality is interesting and complex; and the Church, I am sure, has plenty to say about it.

THE REVD DR CAROLYN HAMMOND: One of my particular bugbears is the kind of language sometimes used in these discussions is the very common assumption in the Church that the word ‘liberal’ is a bad word, when it seems to me that it stands for everything which is potentially most noble about our Anglican-Catholic heritage. This is something I often encounter with students: a desire to express their religious feelings in individual terms which are sometimes quite at odds with the institution.

As it happens, at the moment I am seeing a student who is exploring a vocation to confirmation, and possibly later to ministry, but for whom the problem involved is having to become part of an institution he does not always agree with. I am having to explain to him the compromises and difficulties common to all of us, and that, if this were not being worked out for him in the terms of his vocation, it would be in something else, such as the profession he chose. Every time we make a choice in our human existence, we open up one path in front of ourselves only to close down others; and it is not helpful to think of submission to a particular tradition as a loss or a deprivation of other paths, but simply the best way we can go on to flourish. I hope I will manage to persuade him, but we will see.

THE REVD CANON DR ROBIN WARD: I think we should remember also that there was once a very thriving school of Anglo-Catholic sociology, the Christendom Group and people like that, that moved towards the Jubilee Group later on. The people associated with this report were also meeting on an annual basis to think about social issues, to think about what a Christian theology of work and of living might be – something very much associated with the creation of the New Jerusalem of post-war Britain, if you like. That is another thing that has faded out of the tradition.

I was very fortunate to have met David Nicholls, probably the last representative of this strand of Anglican sociology: the poncho-wearing, macaw-owning vicar of Littlemore, whose library is not in an Anglican institution in Oxford, but at Regent’s Park College. There are two halves to the library. He was an expert consulted by the Foreign Office on the politics of Haiti, but he also had at his fingertips also a very comprehensive knowledge of the Anglo-Catholic sociological tradition, the Figgis tradition, if you will. That scholarship does not really fit in with university syllabuses, and so tends not to be very well represented amongst academics working in universities. We have not really found a way of making sure that this sort of thought is incorporated into how the Church thinks about its social mission.

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THE CHAIRMAN: Let us move on to something rather different in relation to authority. This is a question: **‘Has the general decline in respect for authority weakened our confidence in proclaiming and witnessing to tradition?’** I am very conscious that when I am with Evangelicals, I find that their faith in the authority of the Word runs counter to culture. We do not give much authority to words these days; but it is no different in relation to the authority of all institutions and tradition. I want to ask Bishop Martin how we speak of tradition in a society which does not recognise that any tradition has authority.

THE RT REVD DR MARTIN WARNER: I think it's about finding how something can become attractive which has been presented as damaging. Institutions are generally presented as being damaging, and therefore we have to find something about them which is life-enhancing and attractive. I think the problem with authority is similar. It has become a commodity which is regarded as potentially damaging, which is generally badly used – and, of course, is closely associated with institutions. I think we see this particularly now in the light of issues about sexual harassment: the whole business of 'Who is credible any more?' – how people have misused authority and power in really amazing ways. I think the reverse to that is about self-knowledge, which is a challenge to us spiritually: the recovery of something authentic to what we say we are.

In the context of ministry in Brighton, we say that we are about love and dignity for all people; but the people of Brighton, with a massive LGBTIQ community, say: 'We think you really mean God hates us because we don't conform to what you actually want'. It seems to me that it is a classic stand-off where we have to recover the demonstrable qualities of what we say, in order to find the authenticity of how we say it, and begin to recover trust – and then some authority – attaching to our words.

THE CHAIRMAN: Andrew, can I look to you in terms of an understanding of tradition in contemporary society?

DR ANDREW CHANDLER: I think it is a very difficult thing to discuss, because it is such an obvious invitation to generalisations of various kinds. I think that within the fabric of public culture in Britain over the last fifty years there have been enormous shifts in the language, the reflexes and the methods of public authorities of all kinds. One of the things that I find most distinctive – and one of the things, incidentally, to which the Church in its various organisational forms has not been immune – is the decline of Empiricism and its replacing by a fairly sharp assessment of whatever serves the corporate interest in a public context. Quite frankly, I think many people do see through that. The replacing of clear, cool, rational, analytical language in high places with all kinds of generally self-serving jargon has produced a very different sense of public authority, secular and religious. We have lost a sense of authority as it was practised, acknowledged and accepted in the past. This has been replaced by something that looks far more like a marketplace of various competing interests. I think there is a need to recognise the complexities at work, not simply within the public mind – if we can understand that in any way – but within the realms of authority we have inherited as well.

The final thing I would say is that those who hold public office, whether ecclesiastical or secular, must recognise that, if Empiricism is a fundamental basis of credible authority of any kind, authority may be found across society in many different forms, many of them actually quite disempowered. The ability of the Church to recognise the authority of intellectual experience and understanding is, to my mind, a primary danger at this present moment. Those who might have very real authority through their learning and all kinds of things that come from that may, by virtue of the fact that they are lay people rather than clergy, or people of different faiths or of none, bring into doubt at some point the real credible authority claimed by those in high places. I think it is very easy to nominate examples of that. I will leave you to do that for yourselves.

THE REVD FR PETER ALLAN: I would like to come back, after Andrew's very important remarks about the dismissing of that careful, learnt, wise reflection, to Bishop Martin's

comment about commodification. I remember John Muddiman [Footnote: The Revd John Muddiman, G B Caird Fellow in New Testament Theology at Mansfield College Oxford, 1990 – 2012.] years ago talking about the importance of truth and the scriptural tradition as coming essentially from the Hebrew understanding, where truth is personal, and that authority is something which we recognise in a person. That can only be the fruit of careful life together. Again, it is that attending to one another. A former Superior of Mirflied said: ‘The trouble with being the superior of this community is you have no sanctions’. Well, that may be true, but it did not mean he had no authority.

MR ANDY MACQUEEN: I have an observation on the subject of the authority of Tradition (with a capital ‘T’). I have found it helpful to talk to people about tradition in the sense of solidarity with the past, and the historic tradition (with a small ‘t’) of the Church. We do not have to do all of this stuff for the first time. That sense of solidarity and inheritance sometimes helps with the question of the authority of tradition.

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THE CHAIRMAN: Let me go on to what is, I think, a related question, that perhaps Cally might want to pick up first. It is this question: **‘Do the speakers agree that there is a split between university theology and the life of dioceses and parishes? If so, how do we correct this?’** We might expand that to a split between theology itself and the life of dioceses and parishes.

THE REVD DR CAROLYN HAMMOND: I will give it a go. I suppose one of the advantages of working in the university, but also having been a parish priest first, is that being a parish priest gives you a really powerful training in being intelligible – because if you’re not, your church will empty. I was talking to my old doctoral supervisor, Chris Pelling, when they were appointing a new Dean for Christ Church in Oxford. He was saying that some people said it was time to make the job lay, but others were not so sure. One of the reasons they were not sure was because, at least if you are appointing a clergy person, your chances are quite good that it is somebody who is trained and experienced in the art of talking to everybody. I think one of the key things about good theology of any kind is that it is comprehensible.

This makes me think about Jane Austen’s line: ‘I can’t speak well enough to be unintelligible’. I am quite keen on theology that makes sense and has clear parameters, rather than collapsing everything into category of the numinous. The sort of thing that makes my heart sink is when I hear, ‘Well, everything is theology’ – which is the same thing as saying that nothing is. I am quite keen on the idea that theology is a rigorous academic discipline taught in our universities – obviously in lots of universities, not just Oxbridge – but is also something that everybody in the Church ought to be educated to do.

I said earlier that the students that I encounter start with almost no theology. They are quite likely to know what they are against, because they have been taught to be against things as well as for them, just as they have politically; but they are not very likely to have a developed idea of their understanding of God, or the relationship of God the Father to God the Son, never mind the Holy Spirit. You can teach people that; but the most important thing is to teach it in a way which, if they are training for an academic life, enhances their ability to teach others and to understand a thing in its own terms. From the point of view of coming to chapel or something like that, you ought to be able to communicate the deeper truths of

theology in a way that makes a difference to how people live as Christians. Otherwise, it is just pointless. What is it for if it does not make us better disciples? So I think that, whatever else theology is, it has to be comprehensible, and able to be put into practice. It has to issue in a life that is more Christ-like.

I personally am a bit allergic to theology where you have to read a sentence ten times to understand it, and even after ten goes you think, ‘Well, I’m not quite sure what we’ve got here,’ – and then the same thing happens in the next sentence, and you lose heart after half a page. I find that demoralising. I would like to think I am quite clever; but if I cannot read more than a page of that stuff there comes a point when I think, ‘You know what....’ It is like those books you buy and you think to yourself, ‘Well, I only paid £3 for this. If I don’t like it I’m not going to finish it.’ You give it back to the next jumble sale, like the one you got it from.

So I think theology has to be a thing of clarity and simplicity that stands or falls in its own right, academically and intellectually – but also not just be about publishing books and training up future generations of academics. It has to issue in a fuller life in Christ. Otherwise it is worthless.

THE RT REVD DR MARTIN WARNER: At our last clergy conference a couple of years ago, Stuart Townend came with his band to play, actually very beautifully, the music for one of the Eucharists. He gave us a big lecture beforehand, saying that if we did not like all the words in all his hymns, we were not to change them because ‘That is the theology that I wrote in that hymn.’ He also made a very strong case that the things we sing actually teach us our theology. He was being critical about the sort of worship songs where you say, ‘O Jesus, you’re lovely,’ and all of that, but there is nothing of theological depth. I think the things we sing and the words we say are formative of the theology and understanding of people in all sorts of contexts, people for whom words are not their first or easiest way of articulating their deepest feelings, people who need other outlets. It is important to see that formative processes are not only courses run by the diocese. They are also the processes of prayer – or should be.

THE REVD DR ANDREW DAVISON: Although there have been some expressions of disappointment about the relationship between theology and the Church, I think it is a multi-dimensional picture. I have ample evidence that there are plenty of people and clergy across parishes who are desperately into theology, and for whom it is the wellspring of their faith. I have fantastic conversations with people when I go around preaching. Furthermore, I would say is that, in my own faculty – despite the fact they are almost all lay appointments now, whereas they would once have been Canons of Ely – there is still passionate concern for the Church and the needs of the Church and for people out there preaching. In both of those ways, I think the connection is perhaps more healthy than we might think.

In a way, the Research Excellence Framework of the Government does not help. You ask yourself, ‘How many of the works of Barth or Hans Urs von Balthasar would pass muster in the Research Excellence Framework?’ It creates pressure to publish a certain kind of very guild-like book – and popular things do not count. On the other hand, what it takes away with one hand it gives with the other – this ever-increasing interest in impact – so the handful of people in the faculty every year/every cycle, who are put forward as having had an impact with their theology in liturgical practice or public understanding or politics, are praised to the rafters. In that way, the Government, I think, pushes it both ways.

I suppose we might be disappointed is the role of theology in the corridors of power. The Templeton Foundation sponsored somebody whose role it was to represent theology and science in Church House for a three-year period. It looked for a while as if the theology and science resourcing in that building was more supportive than all the rest of theology put together. That is not a happy observation. One of the prominent people who has a theological role in Church House was preaching at a service – I was not there, but had friends there – and he described himself as ‘a church bureaucrat’.

The Green Report [*Talent Management for Future Leaders and Leadership Development for Bishops and Deans: A New Approach* – Report of the Lord Green Steering Group, September 2014]: I think what this eventually produced – the learning community – is probably much better than what many of us feared; but the Wizard of Oz curtain was pulled back when that document was leaked and we saw the kind of argument that carried weight. If that had been put forward as a master’s level piece of work, I would have failed it. There were even such comments as: ‘Well, of course this won’t pass muster, but we’ll come up with some way of describing it when it goes public.’ I found that deeply depressing.

In the parishes, and also in the life of academics, there is a lot that is really helpful; but in what sets the tone from the centre, which I must always remind myself is not the Church – the Church is at the coalface: the parishes, the chaplaincies and all the rest – that, I think, is in a perilous state.

THE REVD CANON DR ROBIN WARD: I want to follow up what Andrew has already expressed about the guild characteristic of much that is written in academic theology just now. What is privileged in a commodified world of humanities research, which earns money, is monographs no one can afford, and journal articles that no one reads. Neither of those things really fits with the way parish clergy want to encounter and keep up their reading in theology. I think there is a crisis about that in terms of how universities teach and learn the humanities, and study the humanities, as much as there is a disconnect between universities and the Church. I think one of the ways in which there is need for reform is the way in which universities produce so much stuff that is read by so few people.

THE REVD FR PETER ALLAN: I would like to add one word. One of the consequences of the way our attention to the academic sphere of theology has changed has been a downplaying of the theological articulacy of the lay people of the Church. It has been for me quite shocking to hear senior members of the Church’s councils saying: ‘I’m not a theologian.’ It is clear that it is something that we have gradually lost. In the 1950s, you could expect Anglicans to have the elements of a systematic theology which was coherent, and which sustained them. This was not academic theology, but it was itself supported by, and in conversation with, academic theology. It is that loss and that breakdown that most troubles me.

DR ANDREW CHANDLER: I think what has happened within university theology and religious studies departments is rather a story in its own right. I think most of them have lost that sense of historical basis which gave them the coherence they once enjoyed, and made them more easily recognisable to people elsewhere. This is something that needs to be borne in mind. One never really quite knows today what a theology or religious studies department is going to have as its substance.

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I think the idea that we are caught up in a publishing culture, which is constructed around all kinds of objects which are valued by research assessment exercises, is entirely right. I think Robin said it absolutely clearly. There is no question of it. But I think it is also very important to acknowledge that those of us who have tried to write for a wider public have found it increasingly difficult to find a publisher who can make a living out of selling such books to such a general public. There has been, I think quite clearly, a tragic decline in the wide public culture of reading that existed across the churches only thirty or forty years ago. Think of all the publishing houses that have simply disappeared over the last thirty years, and you will realise that a great deal of ground has shifted, and that it's very, very hard to reach it.

The final thing that I would say is that, as a lay person, I find it hard to accept that clergy have an ability to talk comprehensively to the public in a way that the laity do not. I wish I could say that there was far more in my experience to contradict that apprehension; but, frankly, there is not. We need to acknowledge that the public, whether it is in church on a Sunday morning or not, does have an appetite for ideas, does wish to be fed, and that the homiletic tradition of Anglicanism is, frankly, by and large pretty poor. The decline of sermons within British Christianity today is quite palpable. We need to recognise that many people who go to church, maybe for the first time, still find that it is the sermon that gives them their essential point of contact with what is going on, whereas they may find the liturgical formulations obscure, if not altogether difficult. So I am absolutely democratic. I think people are ready for ideas, they are interested in ideas, and that ideas can be articulated clearly for a wide public by anybody. That is something that must be borne in mind.

THE RT REVD CHRISTOPHER CHESSUN: I would like to follow up on something that Fr Peter said, but which I think relates very much to each contribution. It is the lack of confidence today in transmitting the faith. I think it is very disturbing that we see vast numbers of parents who are disinclined and frightened and loath to try to teach the simple truths about the Christian faith to their children. This is actually part of this wider problem. I think it is very telling that when Karl Barth was asked if he could sum up his *Church Dogmatics*, he said: 'Jesus loves me. This I know, because the Bible tells me so.' I think some of the means by which we encourage people to find confidence to share the transmission of the faith, moving out of exclusive academic theological circles, moving beyond church leaders feeling they have to be the principal sources of articulation, will be very telling. Bishop Martin was saying earlier about joyfully sharing the fullness of the Catholic faith. We should see this as a crucial task.

THE REVD STEPHEN TUCKER: I wonder whether it is ever likely to be possible that the Church will create posts in parishes and dioceses for lay people or clergy who have an interest in doing theology for the parish or the diocese, who are not called to specific theological research but have a sort of broad or general theological and Biblical interest, as displayed by many of the contributors to that *Catholicity* report. Many of them are generalists, such that you would not find in universities these days, I suspect, because of increasing specialisation; but if you could create posts in parishes, deaneries, dioceses or wherever for people to pursue this specific vocation of doing theology for the Church, where they could be in contact with universities, yes, but where these kinds of issues could begin to be resolved – is that ever likely to be possible?

THE CHAIRMAN: Actually, may I answer that? Because I think it is possible, even now. I have had four clergy in the last four years who have done doctorates in parishes in the

diocese of Norwich. None of these are theological. They are mostly historical or related to music. These are things which feed them, I think, as human beings and academics. It is quasi-theological, but it is very interesting that nobody has asked me to do something like that theologically from a parish. I wonder what this is about.... So it is possible now, really.

MS MADELEINE DAVIES: I am just thinking that one of the places where ideas are discussed and shared, particularly amongst younger people, is the internet. It is generally free. It is democratic. It is where young people debate ideas. I think it has had a huge impact on the Church in terms of where people discover – or potentially lose – their faith.

I was at Holy Cross, Cromer Street, the other week, where a number of men in their twenties were getting confirmed. They had had no contact with the Church previously, but they had been drawn in by the Twitter account of a guy on the PCC there, who is around 25 years old, where he discusses Christianity and faith. I am just wondering how you harness this. I think it has huge potential. You do not have to pay.

On the point about words: I had to write an article for a political magazine this week on the Reformation. It was for a non-Christian audience, and I was not sure that people would understand many of the words I wanted to use. I do not think people know what grace is, what sin is, what salvation means. I was really struck with even how to use those words can be problematic. Maybe Cally could comment on students from a non-church background and whether, even if we can use those words on the internet, people even know what they mean.

THE REVD DR CAROLYN HAMMOND: Just to pick up on some of the threads that are now starting to emerge, I think there is a big problem simply with the word ‘theology’. For me, it goes right back to the first time I encountered my chaplain at Oxford as an undergraduate. The first question he asked me was: ‘What is your theology?’ I said: ‘I haven’t got a theology. I’m a Christian. What does that mean?’ I still struggle with it to some extent, because it seems to me we are at a point in the life of this nation now where the word ‘theology’ has almost come to mean sophisticated and incomprehensible. When people say, ‘Oh, that’s too theological,’ what they really mean is: ‘That makes no sense at all.’ The first job, therefore, is going to be recovering a positive meaning of the word ‘theology’. I do not think we can do that by defining it better – see previous discussions about words. I think we have to do it by *doing* it better.

For me, that means the kind of theology Andrew was referring to just now, which people are hungry for – probably not sitting around, like the early Christian Fathers did, trying to work out exactly how the Father related to the Son. In other words, in a pre-scientific society, trying to use the best intellectual criteria, they had to define a problem which is fundamentally a problem about physics, about matter. They did not have the intellectual tools for this, and therefore went up fifty blind alleys at the same time and made us all afraid of doing theology. Theology has to be things that answer the questions people you are talking to are interested in, such as ‘Why am I here?’ and ‘If God exists, does he give a damn about me?’ I think those are questions that proper theologians can help us all to answer.

I am a bit scared of the internet generation stuff, because I find the whole business of social media quite stressful and intimidating. The thought of somebody saying to me, ‘Will you be my friend?’ and me pressing a button that says, ‘No, I don’t want to be’ – I just can’t go there. It is too hard. So I am not even on Facebook; but I am jolly glad that other people are. I probably pick up some of the results of what other people are doing on the internet.

I often find – it is true for me and I am sure is true for many of us here on the panel – that we come into most people’s Christian vocation a few steps down the line. Somebody else has done the hard work, somebody else has had the initial conversation, so that, by the time they get to university or theological college, they are ready to ask that big next question that is really on their minds. I think it is quite important not to feel too personally responsible for other people’s development in the faith, but just to play the part that God sticks in front of us and to trust him. I think that kind of works.

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THE CHAIRMAN: Can I move us on? There is another question, which I think is well related to theological education within the Church generally, which someone has asked. The question is: **‘Do we need a new and adequate catechism for lay people in the Church of England more generally and, if so, how might Anglican-Catholics help in that enterprise?’** Andrew, would you like to have a go at that to start us off?

THE REVD DR ANDREW DAVISON: I have lost count of the number of copies I have given away of the Catechism of the Catholic Church. I give it to people and say, ‘I think this is about ninety-five per cent right, and the five per cent that I don’t agree with is so obvious that I’ll trust you,’ although I think that five per cent is shrinking the longer I live. I say that seriously. This is a truly extraordinary document. It is a gift to the whole Church. We do not push the catechism that we have, so it is partly a matter of culture. When the Renewal and Reform thing was put forward, catechism and apologetics were part of the picture. It seems to have dropped completely off of the radar. Maybe we do need a new initiative. It would be interesting to think what sort of shape it would take and whether, today – for some people – videos, podcasts, that sort of thing, would be more useful than a document. To be honest, I think if we tried at the moment to write something that we agreed on, it would be lowest common denominator stuff and would not be very impressive. So I think I will carry on giving out the Catechism of the Catholic Church.

THE REVD DR CAROLYN HAMMOND: I want to say one brief thing about the Catechism of the Catholic Church, which I, too, think is absolutely splendid. I think it is incredibly useful in all kinds of teaching contexts, but I have one caveat. If you go to the back of the edition that I have and look up the word ‘Women’, the index says: ‘See Men’.

THE REVD CANON DR ROBIN WARD: My understanding of why the process of revising the Catechism that came out of Reform and Renewal has not got anywhere is because the lawyers said that, because there is a Catechism in the Prayer Book, it has to be treated as liturgical business. This means it has sunk without trace. I think this is rather indicative of some of the problems that we face in these matters. But I agree with you wholeheartedly. *Compendium of the Catechism*, the little book, which I think is really excellent as well – that, and the Catechism, have almost obviated the need for anything else. All you need to do is say, ‘These bits you need to treat in a more nuanced way if you want to have a happy life in the Church of England,’ but the rest I just take straightaway.

THE REVD FR PETER ALLAN: One rather dreads finding a student essay that puts the Catechism of the Catholic Church in the bibliography. It happens not infrequently. But it is an excellent document. There is a parallel, of course, between a catechism and the rule of a religious community, which is to say that both are a distillation of a life lived. There is a

sense in which you earn your right to a rule out of the experience of living it, so it is important to know what it is that we want the catechism *for*. It cannot be created in order to try to put a new lively church in place. It is a good kind of trellis to help you grow, once you have had some experience of living.

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THE CHAIRMAN: Can I go on to another? This is an interesting question: **‘What we need is a fresh appraisal of reformed Catholicism’**. This was Eric Abbott’s response to not getting an answer out of Michael Marshall to the question, ‘What is Catholic renewal?’ Any comments? ‘A fresh appraisal of reformed Catholicism’. Does anybody on the panel believe in that?

THE RT REVD DR MARTIN WARNER: I think that was yesterday. This is today. The capacity for navel-gazing is enormous really, speaking to ourselves and thinking we are doing something important. There is a world which has not heard the good news of Jesus Christ. I think we do not need to worry about some of these details, frankly.

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THE CHAIRMAN: In which case, let me go on to another question that has been asked, **‘How might the explored Charismatic experience of Roman Catholics and Anglicans in the 1970s, and indeed much later, relate now to *Catholicity*?’** There is no doubt that Charismatic renewal does bring together different traditions. St Stephen’s House is full of it.

THE REVD CANON DR ROBIN WARD: Bishop Martin mentioned earlier *Chemin Neuf*. I am *chemin vieux* really! I am the ‘before’ in the ‘before-and-after’ illustration of being touched by Charismatic renewal. I served my second curacy, which is itself an old-fashioned thing, under a person who was very involved with the Anglo-Catholic Charismatic movement as it then existed. Particularly in London, one thinks of churches like St Joseph the Worker, Northolt, which had a long tradition of that. I would say it is almost vanishingly marginal amongst those now coming to train at St Stephen’s House, not through any sort of reverence for me, but I think because most people are more interested now in a theology of retrieval. As Andrew said earlier, there is a sense of wanting to recover the liturgical and theological inheritance of the Church in its fullness; and that Charismatic renewal, although useful for a time in breaking out of what had been a rather sort of hidebound 1950s Integrisim, is perhaps less necessary and less potent now than it was then.

THE RT REVD DR MARTIN WARNER: I think one of the interesting things about the Charismatic movement is that it can be shown to be a response to a deficit of our attention to the work of the Holy Spirit. I would be more interested in looking at a fresh understanding of pneumatology and the role of the Spirit in the life of the Church. One of the frustrating things about the recent death of Bishop Geoffrey Rowell is that he was exploring the pneumatology of Manning in his sermons through his Anglican phase and into his Roman Catholic phase, and how that shaped his subsequent theology. I think we in the West are generally a bit weak on the doctrine of the Holy Spirit and pneumatology, and I would be interested to see more theological work done on how the Spirit lives in the church – which is not necessarily the same as the affective and ‘signs-and-wonders’ aspect of Charismatic renewal. I think it could be a decent follow-on from that revival.

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THE CHAIRMAN: **‘How do we engage with the significant doubts of a large proportion of the population without seeming condescending or triumphalist?’** The significant doubts of a large proportion of the population.

THE REVD DR CAROLYN HAMMOND: I will give it a go if nobody else is talking! ‘With humility’ is a good start. One of the things I say to students when they come to Caius is: ‘This community of Christians is a place where there is no question that cannot be asked, and that includes questions about God’s existence and whether he cares and all the kinds of doubt that most of us live with and few of us admit to.’ I think if Christians are going to engage with people who have doubts and disbelief – and this is speaking generally – they should begin by saying, ‘Well, me too,’ unless they are very rare and very lucky; but most of us are not. Just as we all know about people like Mother Teresa, who – whilst they were alive looked like they had a totally unshakeable faith and then turned out to have been wracked by doubt all through their lives but without their essential vocation and discipleship failing – so it is also true that one encounters a lot of supposedly dyed-in-the-wool non-believers who have a secret, shameful temptation towards the Church that they do not want anyone to find out about. Really, it is a classic case of a little bit of honesty going a long way.

DR ANDREW CHANDLER: I think in some ways the vocabulary gives the game away, because to regard another person’s way of thinking as doubtful is perhaps already condescending in the first place. What we may be looking at is very different ways of thinking about many things all together, not necessarily one clearly, coherent, identifiable capacity for doubting what is obvious or held by us. So things may have gone a good deal further in that sense than we may wish to acknowledge. I think the thing that often seems to me to be fundamental in this sense – and it refers a little to the last two questions as well – is the priority we give the system, whether we call it theological, intellectual or whatever, in all of these things, and our present weakness in citing human example. I think it is at least arguable that something we might call Christian humanism has been declining in the Church, alongside many other things.

The reason I mention this is that, if we were to ask where some sense of belief in all of this really comes from, it is often found in the way people experience somebody else who may not even talk about religion, who may not even talk about faith or doubt, or use that kind of vocabulary at all, but who seems to embody, to make manifest, something that is recognisably interesting and important. I suspect everybody in this room has seen examples of people known to them moving to various conditions and states of faith in quite unacknowledged ways, ways that are not verbally communicable at all, because of the example of someone who has been dear to them, someone who has in various ways impressed them. I therefore think that, whether we are talking about the possibilities of technology, rewriting catechisms, or anything else, we have to recognise the tremendous fragility of language, the vulnerability of any kind of systematising scheme of knowledge, and the ongoing eloquence – often of a surprising nature – of human example as we might encounter it in any context at all.

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THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Andrew. We are coming to the end, but there is one final question I want to give space to: **‘If we were to have more symposia, what would our speakers like to see discussed?’** The Society of the Faith seems to have so much cash that we could have endless symposia! What would you like to see discussed, to follow this up with?

THE REVD FR PETER ALLAN: You will not be surprised from what I said this morning that I would very much welcome an engagement from a Catholic perspective with theological anthropology, and an engagement with social anthropology as we are experiencing it at the moment – and doing that in tandem with a recovery of our appreciation of the sacramental economy. I think those two things would be enormously important, and we would find ourselves very quickly having to engage with a classic bit of Anglican concern – the doctrine of the Incarnation – because I think our relationship to the Incarnate Lord is necessarily changing as we experience the withering of the significance of the human being.

THE REVD DR ANDREW DAVISON: I spoke at the end of my talk about the importance of extending the Catholic tradition to those who would be open to it, especially amongst our Evangelical brothers and sisters. Whether that would involve in the first instance a discussion amongst ourselves about how that could be done, or something that was a showcase – ‘Everything you always wanted to know about Anglo-Catholicism but were afraid to ask’ That would be a good angle.

Then there’s this thing about lay knowledge of the faith. At the end of the day, it is the people in offices and going about their daily life who are the ones who are asked difficult questions about the faith. I think that we are in a bad state in terms of people being able to feel confident. ‘Richard Dawkins says such-and-such. What do you think?’ Responding to that stuff is actually like shooting fish in a barrel, I think, but people are on the back foot. There is no substitute for a confident, engaged and open sense of the faith as a whole. Confidence is so important

THE RT REVD DR MARTIN WARNER: I would like something on Mary, because I think this opens up something about the nature of the Incarnation and also something about grace and salvation. It opens up questions about human identity, gender differentiation and the power that is held by people in terms of how we actually inhabit this embodied existence.

THE REVD DR CAROLYN HAMMOND: I agree with that. I would make it both more specific and more general, and say that what we need is to extend the debate into ‘What is the point of Christian worship?’ I think that is where many people are most mystified. They know they want to do it, they know they enjoy it when they get there, but they have no idea what the point is and how they can make sense of it to themselves and to other people. It is almost impossible to explain to people what you get out of worship unless they have experienced it for themselves. I think that is possibly because we do not always understand how it touches and affects us, which makes us quite bad at advertising its wonders to people who are really quite hungry for it, but perhaps without realising that.

THE REVD CANON DR ROBIN WARD: I think it would be very beneficial to have a symposium on pneumatology, from three points of view. First, I think we are in grave danger of selling our inheritance for a mess of pottage. In ecumenical conversations we are adopting anti-Filioquist agreements with churches on a very unsound theological basis. Second, I think that the very rich doctrine of the gifts of the Holy Spirit in the Western tradition is being

overlooked. When people talk about pneumatology, they always think: ‘Oh, well that means Eastern people. We’ll go and talk to them about it. They ‘do’ the Holy Spirit, not us.’ We have an extremely rich teaching which is overlooked, which plays into the discipleship agenda in terms of the ascetics of the Christian life, and growth in the Christian life and the moral life. Third, I think a pneumatological symposium would also consider how the Church is guided by the Holy Spirit. What do we mean when we say our decisions are guided or guaranteed by the Holy Spirit? Perhaps we also need some discussion about infallibility, because what we have not touched on today is how we see the teaching of the Church as reliable. Can we see some sense in which the visible church teaches with authority?

DR ANDREW CHANDLER: Of course I work in a university, so I am an incorrigible specialist, although I recently saw a job advertised for a part-time lectureship in the history of the Universe, which gave me some hope! Actually, for me, perhaps the best way of thinking about it is to think about *Catholicity*. I was actually very hesitant about accepting the very kind invitation to this Symposium, but I realised that one needs such invitations. Something that makes you think about things you do not think about all the time, or have to think about as part of your work, is a very good intellectual discipline in itself. It is a very good human thing, too. So my starting point would be basically something that can turn us all in a different direction. This is always to be valued, because of course there is always the danger that without this we will end up talking about ourselves.

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THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. I am going to draw us to a close and, on your behalf, express enormous gratitude to our six speakers, not least for this last hour. One of the things I will take away from today I was pondering when Andrew was speaking to us about the plenitude of God, which I think is a wonderful phrase. As he was exploring the whole idea of participation in the life of God, it struck me that one difference between myself and other Christians – and many other people in society – is that I see God as expanding my mind, my heart, my soul, making me a bigger person than I think I am. Often, when I am in secondary schools and have a sort of ‘Grill the Bishop’ session with the Sixth Form – which is really pretty frightening – they see the God they do not believe in as narrowing down life, creating a set of rules you have to live within. Actually trying to communicate a sense that God is as amazing and as large as He is, is very difficult.

It strikes me that this is the glory of the Catholic tradition: that you are continuously expanded in your mind, your heart, your soul, exploring the tradition as we have received it, which of course enables you to become more speculative in your theology, because your base is so sound in terms of worship and prayer and belief in the Church. So I think what we have done today – I hope – will be immensely worthwhile, not just for those of us who have had the privilege of participating, but in relation to what may come from it.

We have had a really hard worker. I do not what that disease you get when you are in front of a screen and type all day long, but I just hope you do not suffer from it. You have been the deacon to us today and we are very grateful to you.

SHORTHAND WRITER: Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: I am very grateful to all of you for participating in this Symposium. We will ponder whether this is the first of others, but we do hope something valuable will come from today.

THE REVD STEPHEN TUCKER: You have thanked all participants; but can I, on behalf of the organising group, thank you, Bishop Graham, for the way in which you have introduced the day and summed it up. Whilst speaking personally, rather than on behalf of the group, I do hope that if we have other symposia, or a symposium, that you will come and be our chair. It has been an enormously fruitful day. Can I also just thank Robert Gage, who has been chair of the organising group and who has done an immense amount of practical organisation, together with Margery Roberts, the Secretary of the society of the Faith. Without them, this day would not have happened, and so our thanks should be expressed to them as well. (Applause).

THE CHAIRMAN: To close, we have the Bishop of Southwark with us. Bishop Christopher, if you would come and give us God's blessing, we would appreciate that enormously.