

Ministers-at-Work

The Journal for Christians in
secular ministry

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

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 inside rear cover).

Further information about CHRISM may be obtained from the Secretary or the Journal Editor.

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Editorial

Rob Fox

The next few months promise to be rather busy, especially the weekend of Pentecost. As detailed below, there are no less than five events running over the weekend, with CHRISM heavily involved. Phil Aspinall and Margaret Joachim are the CHRISM hosts at the annual celebration of European Worker Priests, taking place this year at the Royal Foundation of St. Katharine, Limehouse. An organising group set the agenda, and the event lasts from Friday to Monday. There is an opportunity to meet the delegates on the Saturday evening. If you would like to help at other times over the weekend, please contact Margaret Joachim.

Also on the Saturday are events at Southwark Cathedral, including a consultation organised by the Church of England's Ministry Division on Self-Supporting Ministry. Each diocese has been asked to send two representatives (I'm one of them for Manchester). If you are attending this consultation, please let me know.

We have also been busy organising this year's CHRISM Conference and AGM, a day event in Birmingham on 14th September. Our speaker will be Teresa Morgan, whom readers will know from here recent report on the training, deployment and support of Self-Supporting Ministers. The enclosed flyer gives more details.

As always, there are some excellent articles in this edition. There are several items on the Reflective weekend, which was a great success. Ruth Brothwell was inspired by Caroline Dover's challenging piece in the last edition to write a thoughtful response that takes us further into considering who the gatekeepers of culture are. Ruth focusses particularly on those who decide on other's access to services, for example in health provision. There is much scope for further work around this, and in identifying the gates!

Ruth also found time to review the small but perfectly formed second edition on MSE stories published by the Diocese of Worcester. It is an informative and at times amusing collection that is a valuable resource; I can especially imagine using it to help explain what ministry at work is to those who just don't 'get it'.

Also reviewed is an excellent new book on Industrial Mission (IM), 'Engaging Mission', which I'm currently reading. The review does this important book justice and I thoroughly recommend it, not least as the inductive theology typical of (IM) sits well with MSEs. I think we share a great deal with industrial missionaries, not least in being outside the churches' main stream and therefore often misunderstood. The following passage, about the report 'Industrial Mission – an Appraisal' (Peter Selby) caught my attention:

'IM's marginal status in the church meant that these issues [IM's theology of mission] were seldom effectively raised with the churches, nor did they influence the church's main missionary force in the world, the laity.'

Applying this to the Southwark SSM consultation, I see that as an opportunity to highlight the role of SSMs in mission, not just as hole-pluggers to keep local church services ticking over.

MSE stories are always welcome, and Kate Brookbank gives us a great example of ministry in the workplace, writing about her faith her role as a local authority licensing officer. Not what you'd think of as a 'caring profession', but as Kate observes, there is a great deal of care for others involved.

Now a look ahead. Some readers will remember the Conference at which CHRISM (as the operating arm of the charity CHRISET) was constituted, at Salford University in summer 1993, organised by the venerable Stan Frost. To mark this, I'm planning that the October edition will be a celebration of all that we've achieved, and invite you to contribute your memories of CHRISM – the weekends, the papers, the journal, and – above all – the people. I will be descending on particular folk to contribute, but all items are most welcome.

Yes, I was there, and having been cajoled into every possible CHRISM role over the intervening years, I don't regret a single moment. It has been a joy to serve you, and always entertaining to meet you!

CHRISM Reflective weekend

Some of the most rewarding Reflective weekends are those where we lead it ourselves, and this year various members of CHRISM led reflections on the eight components of the Eucharist. Not surprisingly, we got our hands nice and sticky as we made the bread we later broke together!

What follows are some of the contributions of those who led each element.

The Word

Sue Cossey and Wendy White

For our session on The Word, it seemed appropriate to look at 1 Corinthians 11:17 – 34, where Paul writes about the Lord’s Supper – the only time he does so in any of the Epistles.

There were 3 sections to our passage:

- Abuses – verses 17 – 22
- Institution – verses 23 – 26
- Partaking – verses 27 - 34

Abuses

The Christians at Corinth came from a cross section of society – both rich and poor, and living as a community was difficult, as it went against the social norms of the time.

The Lord’s Supper had become part of a larger meal, which followed the local pattern of the richer and higher status guests having extra portions and special dishes. So some ate lots; while others went without. The people of Corinth had not put aside their secular lives and were not honouring Jesus’ commands, or his ministry that all were equal before God.

Institution

The words are very familiar to us, repeated at most communion services. Perhaps they deserve a closer look.

Partaking

'Eating the bread and drinking the cup 'in an unworthy manner' makes you answerable for the body and blood of the Lord' (v27).

In small groups we considered a number of questions about this passage. Some groups stayed with discussion of the Eucharist, while others attempted to relate the passage to our workplaces and the life of an MSE.

The questions discussed included a discussion of how much we follow social norms (like the Corinthians with their unequal meals) rather than honouring God by sticking to our Christian principles.

We also discussed the use of memory – 'do this in remembrance of me' in building and maintaining Christian communities.

Finally we looked at our preparation for Eucharist, the invitation, preparation, confession and how we 'proclaim the Lord's death until he comes'

Towards the end of the session we came back together and shared our findings, though further discussion was curtailed by lunch, where I am glad to report that all were offered equal portions and no-one was left hungry!

Break bread? Make bread!

with thanks to Mike Rayner

We happily offer God "bread human hands have made" as we celebrate the Lord's Supper, but rarely do we know whether, and if so whose, human hands were involved. There is something deeply meaningful and rewarding when we have had a hand (pun intended) in making the bread we break together. Many thanks to Mike Rayner for giving us the opportunity – and excuse – to get our hands sticky!

Firstly, bread in the Bible. This is not an exhaustive list by any means, but Mike selected these readings as they seem to him to have important things to say about bread and its importance for Christian faith, but you may have favourites of your own.

God supplies manna to the Israelites: Deuteronomy 8:1-10

Elisha fore-shadows Jesus: 2 Kings 4:42-44

Jesus is tempted to turn stones into bread: Matthew 4:1-4

The feeding of the 5,000: John 6:1-14

Jesus' sermon on the bread of life: John 6:22-71

Jesus breaks bread at the Last Supper: 1 Corinthians 11:23-26

Bread in the Lord's Prayer: Matthew 6:11

Bread – the recipe

Ingredients:

300g strong white bread flour, 2.5g sea salt, 200ml warm (about blood heat) tap water, 4g yeast (preferably fresh)

Method:

Add the salt to the flour and mix. Crumble the yeast and add it to the flour, mixing it in. Add most of the water and mix – get your hands in! Add the rest of the water little by little. When the mixture has formed a cohesive lump of dough, move on to a work surface that's been lightly dusted with flour. Knead the dough well for about 10 minutes, using the 'heel' and palm of the hand; pick it up and whack it down on to the work surface from time to time.

Put the kneaded dough back into the bowl, cover, and leave it for at least an hour to 'prove'.

When you come back to the dough it will have risen; a light punch on the top will release the gas that has built up. Take the dough from the bowl and knead again for about half a minute.

Shape the dough into a loaf, place it on a baking sheet, cover with a damp cloth and leave it to prove again for about half an hour.

Bake in a pre-heated oven for 25 minutes at gas mark 7 / 220 degrees Celsius.

Place on a raised tray to cool, resisting the temptation to eat warm slices, dripping with butter

Try it at your church(es), for example as part of an away-day. Baking the bread we break puts it in a different light.



Right. Who'd like to be Paul Hollywood?

Dismissal

Rob Fox

Since Ambrose, Bishop of Milan, in the late 4th century, the Roman rite mass has ended with the words: '*Ite, missa est*', 'go, the Mass is [ended]'. Something has ended, for which we thank God.

However, *missa* is a late form of *missio* – mission. We are sent out, rather than dismissed. Without this sending the fellowship that has been enjoyed together and with the Lord means nothing outside the act itself. Something has begun, in which we serve God and share

His mission. This is reflected in the sending used in many English language services today is: 'Go in peace, to love and serve the Lord.'

But do we understand it? In her article in January's journal, Caroline Dover observed:

We may find that our church cultures send out subliminal messages that contradict the very shift we are attempting to bring about. This is illustrated with the story of a church pastor who spent some months encouraging her congregation to take Christ into their workplace, but found the message wasn't being well received. After a while she realised that her message was being contradicted by the church systems and structures which were shouting 'Come' when she was saying, 'Go.'

There is no more fitting way to end our gathered worship than to remind ourselves of Jesus' sending of the disciples, in Matthew 28:

18 And Jesus came and said to them, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.

19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

20 and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.'

Therefore let us go, in peace, to **do** loving and serving the Lord!

Reflections on the weekend

Stan Frost – Giving thanks and breaking bread together

Launde Abbey has been transformed by recent refurbishments and is now a much more cheerful place with lighter decoration integrated with the older wood panelling providing a unique ambience. The stable block has been made into a charming building for bedroom accommodation mixed with meeting rooms and relaxing spaces it was good to be able to eat and share refreshments in the same building where we met. However the breakfasts, evening meals and lunches were served in the main house and this meant traversing the

car park in wet weather – although this was inconvenient it was worth making the effort to enjoy meals which were of a particularly high standard throughout.

In addition to the enjoyment of sharing the same space with people of diverse interests and concerns we were encouraged to dissect the liturgy of the Eucharist and consider its separate parts from fresh angles. The themes were well worked out – seeds, bread, wine and we enjoyed the practical and symbolic aspects of seed planting, bread and wine making (though we didn't actually tread the grapes!). Mike coordinated the bread making session and led us through the process – each with our own bowl and flour mixture to prepare, knead and then prove the dough before he negotiated use of the kitchen oven to bake the loaves. This happened quite seamlessly and no doubt inspired each of us to continue baking when we returned to our respective homes.

The Friday evening Gathering Space was led by Felicity who encouraged each of us to introduce our neighbour. We were asked to discover where we each came from and a little of what we did – also to find out if there was something for which each of us particularly wanted to give thanks. There wasn't time for entire life histories but by the end of the session all the information had been shared and we felt that we knew something about everyone in the group and this no doubt formed a basis for continuing conversations throughout the weekend.

Mike had spent much time preparing the worship sessions – including the bread making -and he could perhaps have shared more of the readings which had been printed out.

Sunday evening was dedicated to Intercession and Margaret Yates helped us explore what things were prayed for by MSEs. Separating this from the liturgical intercessory format in Church proved a challenge for some but we identified specific concerns for work colleagues, the systems in which people were working, decision makers and those facing redundancy and other changes at work. Those of us who were unemployed or retired had concerns which stretched globally to include the role of America in the World and the

significance of President Obama's second presidential term. The items were listed and shared during the Eucharist on the Sunday morning. Margaret Joachim had earlier encouraged us to be positive about confessions – and to admit more the things which we did well or enjoyed doing rather than be lumbered with all those things which we might have done or forgot to do!

Lyn and Ruth developed this positive thinking with regard to things which we could offer; Lyn proposed that we should concentrate more on sharing and cited the story of St Martin who shared his cloak with someone who had nothing. In this way we move on from benevolence into a different way of thinking and doing. For some of us this resonated with the current movement to establish food banks which rely upon means testing and subsequent assessments which govern who should receive what and how much.

There was also a brief assessment of Street Pastors' work which has been widely regarded in many places but which raises questions about sustainability in the context of 'as much as you do it unto the least.... (Matt 25:45) 'and support costs – a topic which could provoke wide ranging discussion in the future (1).

The Eucharist was the finale of the weekend (Mike celebrated using the newly baked bread) and Rob closed the service with an exhortation to GO and DO (Matt 28:19-20).

Aidan Greenwood (Captain, Church Army)

'You cannot be serious??!!'

As I am sure you will recall those were the immortalised words of American tennis star, John McEnroe! They were also the words spoken in my head when I was asked by Rob Fox to write a reflective piece for the Journal on this year's Reflective Weekend!

But instead, I heard myself say, 'Yes, Rob. I'd love to!' (*I have ways of persuading people! Ed.*)

So, what made a manic 'do'er and 'non-reflector' - and a 'non-Chrism member' for that matter - go on a Reflective Weekend in the first place?! Good question!

Well, up until a few months ago, I hadn't even come across CHRISM at all, and I had met Rob Fox at 'Living Stones' (a Vocations Fayre) in the Manchester Diocese, where he was representing MSE's, and I was representing the Church Army. We had a very pleasant chat, and then I thought nothing more about it.

Fast forward a year, and I was now seriously exploring major issues of vocation, and how I saw my ministry unfolding into the future. I had been a Church Army Evangelist, serving in various Parishes, for nearly nineteen years, and had reached a bit of a 'crossroads' . . .

My wife, Caroline, was training for the ordained stipendiary ministry in the Church of England, and there didn't seem to be the same incentive to be 'breadwinner' to my young family any more. Which way should I go? Things had got so desperate, I'd even considered teaching!

A friendly Assistant Director of Ordinands in Manchester suggested I go away and seek God's prompting. She'd heard about a 'retreat' organised by CHRISM and wondered if I might be interested. I tentatively enquired, and had a very nice and affirming response from CHRISM Secretary, Margaret Joachim, encouraging me to come along, and so I did!

The setting was beautiful; the food, *with wine*, was excellent; the accommodation, great, and *even the beds were comfortable!* 'Wait! *This is no retreat!*' I'd been conned!! And when I asked for my money back they just made me join CHRISM instead!!

No. Seriously now! This was a truly brilliant weekend away for me, because it made me face up to some of my anxieties and fears about the future, and begin, with the help of the CHRISM team who led the weekend, to talk to God about them. It also helped me to see that it's *actually okay to step out into the unknown, God being my helper.* . . .

On the Saturday morning, the Prayers were based around some scriptures from John 8:24, amongst others, and we were given a little pot with soil and a few seeds to plant in it, which happened to be wheat and grape to fit with the overall theme of the weekend!

'For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will save it.' And, 'Unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies it remains alone . . .' (I was forced to admit at this point that I *have* felt quite alone and vulnerable in the place of not knowing and to yearn for the intimacy of knowing where God is in the midst of it all).

'Yet, if it dies, it bears much fruit.'

This picture of the seed helped me to see that, if I dare to go into the darkest places, *where God is*, then I will not be alone, because I will find him there, because 'even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,' (*and there are many little deaths in life, as well as the big one we will all eventually face*) '***You are with me!***'

I also found Psalm 139 verses 11 & 12 speaking to me about the divine perspective on light and shade:

'If I say, 'Surely the darkness shall cover me,
and the light around me become night',
even the darkness is not dark to you;
the night is as bright as the day,
for darkness is as light to you.'

So; actually, for me, ***that makes it okay to be in the darkness of unknowing, because I am there with Him!***

I don't know where God will lead me in the future, but I know that there are a 'great cloud of witnesses' cheering me on and some of them are the dear folk I met on the CHRISM weekend at Launde Abbey!

Thanks you so much for letting me be part of this wonderful weekend, and it's great to now be a part of CHRISM too!

Watch this space!

Margaret Trivasse

On my window sill is a small plant pot. Out of it are sticking four green shoots. It is wheat, and was planted at Launde Abbey on the Reflective Weekend in February. Planting seeds in earth was one of the steps in a series of meditations led by Mike Rayner which wove their way through the theme of the weekend. These reflections were integral to the weekend, and reminded us how much we depend on one another.



Mike began by giving us a pot which we filled with soil. What a potent image that is! This brown stuff in which plants grow bears the same name as our planet itself. Earth is both the world we have been given, and the very substance in which much of life is nurtured. The other word we often use for the brown stuff is "soil", a word with connotations of dirt and uncleanness (we sing, "Anoint and cheer our soiled face/With the abundance of Thy grace"). This dirt is composed of rotted down material which provides the conditions and nutrients for new life. That which on the outside may look unpromising or messy nurtures growth. A further connection is that earth – compost – is also known as "humus", which is related to "human"; earth to earth, dust to dust. We are intimately bound up with our environment.

Into the soil went our wheat seeds, to grow in secret. We then skipped a few stages in the growth and harvesting process (and also reflected on wine), and spent an enjoyable time prayerfully making bread together. As we did so, Mike reminded us of the vast network of people involved in preparing the ingredients, transporting and selling them, and making them into bread. Our own loaves rose, and we used one of them in our Eucharist.

The bread and wine focus of our prayers undergirded the main theme of the weekend, led by Felicity, Margaret J, Sue, Margaret Y, Lyn, Ruth and Rob, who took us through the various elements of the Eucharist as they relate to us in secular ministry. For me, this connected with the MSE being the seed in the soil, often hidden, but playing a role in a frequently complex environment, which can be seen as both dirt (bad) and compost (good). I hope we can also be the yeast in the dough, helping to influence and transform, but only when working alongside others.

I found particularly helpful Felicity's linking of the Gathering at the beginning of the Eucharist with the coming together of many people with different roles in the work place. Margaret J helped us to reflect on what we brought to our work, while Sue started us off on a lively discussion of 1 Corinthians 11.17 onwards, which led to some advocating individual acts of helpfulness, while others felt that only changing unjust systems would do as the way forward. Further sessions helped us relate intercession, offertory and dismissal to our own situations.

And, of course, punctuating the praying and discussing, was excellent food and, for some, a brisk, muddy walk before the rain came. Many thanks to the Committee for organizing a thoroughly enjoyable weekend. What will I take away? Our inter-dependence on one another in order to survive, and the idea of Eucharist not as something confined to church but a sacramental act which is celebrated in our whole lives. It is always refreshing to meet with others whose main focus for ministry is the workplace, without having to explain or justify it!

Richard Higginson

This was the first time that I had attended a CHRISM event. Although I am not technically a Minister in Secular Employment, working as I do in a theological college, I very much identify with its concerns, so I was glad to have the opportunity to take part. As Director of Faith in Business at Ridley Hall I am passionately keen to encourage Christians to apply their faith in the workplace, and I seek to cultivate positive links with as many 'faith and work' organisations as possible.

Having been to Launde Abbey before I felt very much at home there, and enjoyed the improved facilities, especially when it came to eating. But more important, I appreciated the friendly welcome from all the CHRISM members. It was good to get to know better one or two of you that I already knew slightly (mainly through email contact) but also to meet most of you for the first time.

The programme left plenty of time for quiet and reflection, which was what I needed in the midst of a busy term. I particularly appreciated Mike Rayner's meditation sessions and the way he had put together apt liturgical readings so sensitively. A highlight was his teaching us all how to bake bread: I am no cook but I was pleasantly surprised how tasty my loaf was when I got home! I liked the way that Margaret Joachim got us to confess what we are good at rather than what we've done wrong (a refreshing change!) and Margaret Yates involved us all in discerning what to pray for.

Perhaps I might end with a mild word of warning. It is good that MSEs have clear sense of their own identity. However, I would urge you not to get so preoccupied with this that it makes you introspective. MSEs must carry on looking outwards to the two groups of people of which you are a part: the great body of Christian laypeople active in the workplace, and the substantial body of ordained clergy whose focus of ministry lies elsewhere.

Pentecost 2013

Over the weekend of 18-19 May there are no less than five events in London in which CHRISM is involved in some way.

At 11.00 on Saturday, 18 May, there is a eucharist in Southwark Cathedral, organised by the Cathedral, SEITE, and Ministry Division of the Church of England, to celebrate 50 years since the ordination of the first self-supporting ministers from the Southwark Ordination Course. Further details and a booking form at:

<http://www.seite.co.uk/contact.html>.

In the afternoon, this is followed by:

- a formal consultation, with invited delegates, led by Ministry Division and engaging with current challenges for ministry policy at national and diocesan level (each diocese has been invited to send two delegates);
- a reception for all SOC and SEITE alumni, with opportunities to hear from current students, staff and members of the governing body;
- an ecumenical forum on self-supporting ministry, hosted by CHRISM, under the theme “Hearing our Voices”, to explore and share experiences of work as ministry.

Southwark events

The Southwark events are under the banner ‘A New Pattern of Priesthood’. This phrase was used by Bishop Mervyn Stockwood in his address to the Diocesan Conference in 1959 introducing the SOC project. He explained that:

‘When they have reached ordination level, these men may become curates in the ordinary way, or they may feel that they can be of greater use if they remain where they are and discover their way to a new pattern of priesthood.’

While there had been a number of important experiments in self-supporting ministry prior to 1963, including people inspired by the

worker-priest movement in continental Roman Catholicism, the ordination of clergy to self-supporting title posts with full support and recognition from the institutional church was a very significant development for the Church of England. By 2011, close to half of all clergy ordained in the Church of England were ordained to self-supporting posts (240 out of 504). Many of them see their situation in paid work as a major focus for their Christian ministry alongside involvement in the life of a local parish, and it is increasingly common for clergy to move between stipendiary, sector ministry and self-supporting posts.

European Worker Priests - Limehouse

On the evening of 18 May, anyone who would like to come is invited to join the annual Pentecost Celebration with European Worker Priests, which is taking place over the weekend at the Royal Foundation of St. Katharine, Limehouse, hosted by CHRISM.

The delegates to the conference come from Belgium, Catalunya, France, Germany, Italy, as well as the UK. Some 30 people are expected. The conference venue moves around each of the participating countries and is hosted by each in turn.

Worker Priests arose out of the intention of the French Church in the 1940s to send priests in to the large industries of manual labour, such as the docks, mining, steel making, and manufacturing industry. The tradition has been carried forward by those who have followed, and many choose intentionally to take the lowest paid jobs, to be alongside the most excluded in society. This continues in their social engagements in the poorest quarters of large cities, with those who are unemployed or homeless and with immigrant communities. The group no longer includes just those who are ordained, but many lay and members of religious communities who share this same ethos of being with the marginalised.

The conference runs from Friday to Monday and includes, among other things, discussion on the papers prepared by each national delegation before the conference, visits to activities, businesses and projects related to the theme, and often input from outside contributors.

If you would like to join us at St. Katharine's for dinner and meet the European Worker Priests, please let Margaret Joachim know (details in rear cover). The cost is £25 per head.

As a taster, Phil Aspinall's report on the 2012 gathering of German Worker Priests follows below.

40 years of the Worker Brothers and Sisters

The Celebration at Ilbenstadt, Germany, 11th – 13th May 2012

Fritz Stahl

*(Summary in French for the International worker priest conference.
Translated by Phil Aspinall, with additional notes)*

48 people joined together to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the conference of Worker Priests in Germany, which has become, over the course of the years, the Group of Worker Brothers and Sisters ("Arbeitergeschwister"). The festive gathering comprised 12 women and 36 men; 18 were retired and 30 in secular employment. The international perspective showed with 3 people from France, 4 from Switzerland, 2 Belgians and one each from England, the Netherlands and Austria. 8 were protestant theologians, one Anglican and the remainder Roman Catholic, so the ecumenical aspect was strongly present. Many former members were with us. Sadly, the founder Richard Mayer was not able to come because of a grave illness (and has subsequently died).

The meeting room contained a poster exhibition on the life of Horst Symanowski, who had paid an important role for the Protestant church in the formation of ministers for the Monde Ouvrier [this is best left untranslated as it implies more than "the world of work" and includes all the emphasis of the worker priests in working with the marginalised and excluded]. On the opposite wall were a multitude of footprints set on a time plan of the 40 years, with which everyone had marked the important dates for themselves in the history of the group. A small orchestra (cello, flute and piano) accompanied the different activities during the weekend.

Saturday

Morning prayer (based on the burning bush and the Sunday psalm 31) set us on our way for an ultra-rich exchange of ideas. The morning began with a round table – everyone had a “few” minutes to give elements of their biography and particularly their experiences around and in the group of Arbeitergeschwister. Above all, the older members recounted many important things at risk of being forgotten. The general sense: the group, with its two meetings a year, has been a huge support for entering into the Monde Ouvrière, to take up our responsibilities there and above all to remain there with courage and hope. This exchange took until 4.30 in the afternoon, interrupted each hour by a song and, of course, by the midday meal.

After this exchange, a friend and participant, Paul Schobel, from the Industrial Chaplaincy, gave us some lines of theological reflection, beginning with what he had heard during the day and drawing on the experiences he had gained over the years of participation in the group. Four biblical strands characterised the spirit of the group and are, at the same time, the challenges for the future:

1. The hymn in the letter to the Philippians (Ch 2 vv 6-11). Christ who does not cling to the divine condition but emptied himself..... Like him, the Arbeitergeschwister make the decision for a “Career towards the lowest”. In decisions that were not always easy, they have confirmed their baptism.
2. In Jesus Christ, God is made human – the incarnation is the programme. To look for closeness to people – those who are the most lost, the furthest away, without power. To root themselves in this world which becomes more and more precarious, in a society more and more divided between rich and poor. “The sick have need of a doctor”
3. “With you everything will be otherwise”. To act politically in the manner of Jesus: a preference for those who are the lowest, with a witness to do, and a faithfulness to, this position in the capitalist system with its nature of sinfulness. Through an analysis from below we have laid bare this system of egomania and greed and acted personally in many different ways. It is

perhaps necessary to add to our political action as a group – more prophetic action!!

4. Apocalyptic Vision. "A new earth ! A new heaven ! A new humanity !" Here is our vision which motivates us to hope that everything can develop in other ways.

In addition, two other witnesses:

Alfred Delp SJ, killed by the Nazis, spoke of the Diaconal Way as the only chance to become a different church. And Karl Rahner called for a mystical church. The more one is mystical, the more one is political.

Self-emptying, Incarnation, Political action, Fidelity to the Vision

The Eucharistic celebration took place in different places in the house, under the theme "Remembering for the Present". It commenced in a baroque hall over a gatehouse with songs and a reading (Ex 3. 1-8). Then a walk through the garden and up the stairs with the proclamation of the Gospel (Luke 10, 1-7) leading us to the main meeting room. It was all a symbol of the 40 years of our journey as a community. The Eucharistic prayer, the sharing of the peace, the breaking of bread and the sharing of wine, accompanied by the orchestra and with [many] songs. A truly joyous celebration !

During the evening, a festive meal, entitled and organised as a "Republican Banquet" with very good things to eat and drink, and more very beautiful music and several cultural and political contributions (including a magician and a dramatic presentation of a story). One of our number (Thomas Schmidt) was able to tell us of what was currently happening in the company where he is chief delegate to the works council. They want to make most of the people redundant – 1,350 salaried staff will be on the streets. Negotiations have not been successful up to now - many forms of protest. The evening gave a very good opportunity for communicating ideas and experiences.

Sunday Morning (the usual order for the day)

News from the different counties present:

Switzerland: new referenda – this time, among others, on an unconditional minimum income. The group of Worker Priests meet twice each year, a group of about a dozen people, men and women. The theme for their next meeting: 50 years since Vatican II and 25 years since the Synod in Switzerland.

Austria: initiatives for plebiscites often come from the extreme right. Difficulties in a Jewish quarter with the neo-Nazis. Two of these people have been in prison for a year.

Holland: new elections in September. The previous government, which had been supported by a party of the extreme right, has fallen. More and more churches close – in one region only 1 in 10 remain. Theological reflection on work continues – and some German worker priests join these discussions.

Britain: in the last local elections the Labour party made many gains. CHRISM held a good conference in the summer on the theme: "What work is acceptable for us ?" (work in armament factories, for example). Everyone was invited to the July 2012 conference.

France: at the end of March, an assembly at Lourdes on the occasion of the opening of Vatican II with 2500 people, mainly laity. The recent elections with the victory of the socialist Hollande. His slogan "justice first". We will see. Also important parliamentary elections in June 2012. Of the 350 Worker Priests who are members of the national organisation, only 25 are in professional activity. At the start of the year, two Arbeitergeschwister joined the conference of the latter. 200 have subscribed to the Pentecost 2012 conference at Lourdes.

Practical issues:

- A brochure is being made to mark the 40th anniversary. It can serve as a "calling card" for the group. Several texts have already arrived with the editorial team. They wait for others before the summer holidays.

- From 18th to 21st October there was a large Council Assembly in Frankfurt with many seminars and workshops. Several Arbeitergeschwister actively participated to present the fundamental ideas of the group.
- The autumn meeting took place the 26th – 28th October. The theme was developed, by the preparation group, using the three headings: Work – its theological interpretation – its political implications.

We finished the conference with expressions of great contentment and great thanks to the preparation group who had made it a true celebration with much imagination.

Footnotes from Phil:

Richard Mayer died on 21st June and his funeral was taken by Thomas Schmidt on 13th July in Daun.

My first foot print on the timeline was in the year the group was celebrating its first 20 years, and with occasional exceptions I have attended each spring conference since then.

The next meetings will be held as usual at Haus St Gottfried in Ilbenstadt, just outside Frankfurt am Main, 19th – 21st April and 25th – 27th October 2013. Do come and join them - you will be made very welcome!

Engaging missionally with workplace institutions – a response

Ruth Brothwell

Caroline Dover produced an excellent article in the last edition of 'Ministry at Work' and it certainly helped me to crystallise some thoughts that have been racing through my head and conscience for some time now. Among a number of issues addressed in her article in the last journal, Caroline takes a challenging look at tolerance. Quoting Don Carson, she speaks of tolerance being redefined; I can only agree. It seems to me that we tolerate – with some apathy – the gatekeepers of our culture whereas the church is very well

placed to take seriously the issues of mission within our society. Training and affirming priests within our workplace culture can only contribute to the transformation of that society.

I work in the area of 'equalities'. Equality and inclusion of all was a stated policy of a government department I worked for and my own remit within the team created for this purpose was to ensure that all six strands of what is called 'equality' (ethnicity, gender, disability, age, faith and sexuality) were present and identified in the working practices of everyone.

With hindsight it certainly does feel that it was a matter of saying that all things are good, and right and that all ideas and people are equally right, and that no-one should disagree. Equality certainly has been hijacked by secularism and now appears as a must-have policy in all major institutions, both for their own PR and because it is deemed good for advertising and the accumulation of more business. I don't wholly disagree with this tenet, but surely it is here that there exists the opportunity for questioning the 'why?' and encouraging the discourse which should engage us with the gospel preached afresh to this generation. I do not advocate extreme proselytising, but, as many an MSE will testify, a day does not pass without some conversation about matters of faith, conversations that only happen because people know I am a priest. My ministry 'reaches the parts other ministries cannot reach.' I like to think of it as part of the calling to be salt and light. It provides the chance to speak and to behave from within the gatekeepers of culture and hopefully to fulfil the role of watchman with the ability to speak back to the church about what is happening.

Caroline does not fully elucidate her meaning of cultural gatekeepers, but a couple of examples come to my own mind. Many of my congregation work in the financial sector. This sector is strong in the UK and certainly does shape ways in which our society behaves. We are expected to put our money into the banks. Indeed, most workplaces will insist on salaries being paid directly into a person's bank account. The absence of one creates difficulties. So, our lives are dominated by the existence and resulting behaviour of the financial institutions. We live or die; we certainly live freely or very stressfully, on whether we can meet the requirements of this sector

within our lifestyles. We are encouraged to buy property, and then we worry about the interest payments dictated to us by the banks and loan organisations to which we find ourselves indebted.

Where is the conversation about values and human 'being' and the effects of the financial policies on society? Surely this is what is meant by our Christian missional activity and what as Christians we should be saying to the gatekeepers? But who will say it?

We hear more about the current rate of interest, the growth or slide in profits, the fines imposed, the bale-outs and what they might mean to the greater populace in taxes. I had first-hand experience of seeing my elderly parents persuaded to take out a special kind of bank account which offered all sorts of benefits - providing they kept their balance at a certain level. The benefits were entirely inappropriate to such elderly folk. But in my mind I saw a business manager with weekly targets to fulfil and the accompanying job security stress that went with not achieving these, and so morality issues went by the wall. The actual needs of the client were not relevant. The needs of the institutional gatekeepers were paramount because these represented security for the individual, who had no doubt been told that the security of the institution itself was at stake. It is an insidious example of what happens when a society loses sight of its values in the face of greed.

Supposing she were in church next Sunday? Is there a message being given to instil Christian values to support her in her work?

Another gatekeeping example is the NHS. It is the fifth largest employer on the planet and these days provides huge employment opportunities to many people both in primary healthcare and in its ancillary care services. My mother's generation worships the NHS as a god. I suppose I can see her point, given her own upbringing: no NHS in the time of her own parents struggle to bring up a family in the industrial north-west. The 'company paid' midwife was in attendance at my mother's birth and all the rules of life were dictated by the employer.

Now, every physical need is taken to a doctor and whatever he says goes. He dictates what is wrong, what will make it better and

provides the medical solutions accordingly, although unbeknown and not understood by her, according to his budgetary constraints set by another gatekeeper. His rules must be, and are, obeyed. After all, it is likely that he will perform any last rites and the final place of death will be in his temple of healing. My mother would never question his judgement or disobey his ruling. God in his heaven must laugh! The next generation are being taught to self-diagnose online before troubling the costly gatekeepers and are far more likely to query a judgement, make a complaint or attend a surgery complete with diagnosis, simply to get the prescription!

The gatekeepers have become rather used to this attitude though, of having the big say in peoples' lives. But the potential to control people is increasingly insidious. We might recognise that it was through the great heartedness and missionary call of many Christian people that we have an NHS at all, so why are we abandoning it to our secular culture and not holding it fast as an intrinsic part of the mission of God in healing his people? I know of at least one Christian priest working in the NHS alongside many secular folk who are happy to see her there. But what a struggle she had *within the church*, to remain in her workplace in a priestly role! It was not understood. The church surely has roles of chaplains who 'do' the gospel – what has nursing to do with sacramental ministry? Shame on us for such short-sightedness.

The medical practitioners in our pews have much to say to us about healing and health and how our health systems should be managed, funded and operated each day. But do we hear them? As Caroline proposes: 'surely such demonstrations of kingdom faith, values and wisdom are worth supporting, encouraging and enhancing?'

It is important to recognise that God continues to call his people to minister to others, from places within the framework of society as well as at the shrines of worship. From those who work within the institutions that frame and shape our society – whose voice can be heard from the centre. Their training should encompass a proper understanding of the values which are needed to maintain and encourage a Christian society. A society where we listen and hear and learn from those of every faith and persuasion, but where we engage with the Misso Dei of being there in the very thick of it.

David Heywood ('Reimagining Ministry', SCM Press, 2011, ISBN 978-0-334-04367-6) says that 'mission is relational because God is relational. It is the overflow of God's love to the world, the passion of God to bring the whole of creation into right relationship with himself and through him to right relationship with itself.' He goes on to talk about the true meaning of the 'shalom' as the description of good relationships, 'but it is the link between shalom and two other key words, *mishpat* and *tsedaqah*, justice and righteousness that show us the basis and indicate the content of such good relationships'. (Heywood, p78, quoting Jeremiah 20:10)

One way for us to fully engage missionally would be to ordain and affirm our priests not just to parish work alone but to working within the world, within the institutions where they can truly be salt and light, yeast in the bread of business and culture, bringing the love of God to the people and declaring his *mishpat* and *tsedaqah* from inside the gatekeeping organisations.

We allow the cultural institutions to shape the very society in which we live. But I wonder if we get what we deserve? I am constantly amazed and ask myself often, 'where are the populace in this democratic 'free' society? Where is the Church's voice when it comes to how a country should be governed?'

The government comprises a leadership elected by the civilians of the country, to lead them and provide for them. They are elected through free voting, a system envied and longed for in many other worldwide societies. How dare we then be so lukewarm, which our voting turnout figures suggest we are?

Caroline quotes Tom J Wilson as saying that 'Society needs to recognise that Christianity has played a major and for the most part extremely positive role, in forming our nation's history and national identity. To lose such an influence for good would surely leave our society the poorer'.

Yet as a people and as a church we collude by sitting back and allowing secular institutions, often created or supported by our elected leaders, to take over the agenda and tell society how it

should be run. And if this advice contravenes our Christian societal values? Then it seems that we sit back and let them get on with it.

The churches should surely be the voice of the spiritual nature of humankind, ensuring that our leaders are supported and encouraged to do their best for the peoples who elected them. We hear that to be 'comforted' by the rod and staff is very much the role of the shepherds with the sheep. Our churches should be the comforters as the holders of truth and spiritual light.

The people of God who come to regular worship also come with an expectation that they will receive good advice and support for their daily living. As David Heywood states, there is a recognition now that evangelism is a task for the whole church. No longer ... to be left to a few with special gifts'. For the whole church to include the presence of priests in their midst is surely to affirm this. In fact, as Archbishop Michael Ramsay said, 'to be signposts.....' Heywood talks about the congregation who will include people at many different stages of a journey to faith and states that 'the fortress church which restricts membership to those willing and able to make a doctrinal commitment, is increasingly out of step in an age of prevailing uncertainty ..'.

Ann Morisey (in 'Journeying out') suggests that 'it is through engagement with society at its point of need that we encounter and properly learn the seriousness of sin.' Ann is particularly concerned with social deprivation, yet I believe her words also hold good for working alongside the many who do so within our institutions or indeed in any secular place. It is the people themselves who have the needs, often exacerbated by the rules of the gatekeepers, and it is here that we will better understand the nature of sin in our world. If we are to preach about it, against it; if we are to pray, to reach out in healing, to express the gospel truths to this generation, do we not need to know about it by being in the thick of it ourselves, as Christian people, in tune with truth?

Heywood maintains that 'a key element of the enacted theology of community mission, is the realization that God is active outside the boundaries of the church.....it is possible to discern God at work in a person's life well before they encounter the Christian community'.

As an MSE I would say that it is a delight and a privilege to watch the Holy Spirit at her work in people's lives as I live right there beside them, and to be perhaps the one person in this world that prays for that person as they walk towards a full blossoming of faith. The priest who stays standing at his altar alone will never know about this work and never enter into this particular mission of God in this new and exciting time.

The examples provided by Caroline of many people in our church structures who have struggled to influence the gatekeepers with the Christian message in their works and actions could be multiplied many times over through asking for a handful of examples from the many MSEs in the Church of England and across all the Christian churches.

Certainly we have the responsibility as ordained priests to support those in our congregations who go into our institutions, and into life itself, after divine service on the Sabbath. They need our prayers. They need to know how valued they are by God and the people who call upon his name. At the same time, do we hear and understand their needs? When John does not turn up to a PCC meeting, are we more concerned about his non-attendance, or with praying for him a paramedic who may be out on call to people in an emergency?

Christian and Licensing Officer – Any difference?

Kate Brookbank

Following a talk to the local Mothers Union based on 'My Personal Experiences and The Life of a Licensing Officer', I feel very honoured to have been invited to write a piece for this publication about my faith and how I relate my faith to the working environment and the people I encounter.

I sit in Church on a Sunday morning as a Christian, worshipping and praising Jesus Christ. I listen to the readings, the Gospel and sermon and continue to learn what all these stories and teachings of Jesus mean. I am therefore continually learning and changing as a person and experience many challenges as I serve God.

It seems a strange thing to say, but do I love myself and care for myself as a person and as a Christian? This is an important issue as how can you love others and love the Lord our God, and allow God and others to love you, if you don't love yourself.

A saying that helps me to pray or allow me to rest in quiet meditation is: "Be kind to yourself and simply rest gently and comfortably in the love of God. You have nothing to prove, for Almighty God loves you for who you are".

We share our lives with others, members of the congregation, members of the community, family and friends. We are taught to respect and understand each other, to be honest and to be there for others in times of joy and sorrow. As a Christian I try to say the right words, and take the right action. I am truly sorry for the times when I have said the wrong words, or done something wrong. We all learn through our own experiences and challenges, whether good or bad, enjoyable or difficult.

I would hope that as I sit at my desk on a Monday morning in my role as a Licensing Officer for the local Council that I continue to live by my Christian beliefs and values.

I enjoy my job and am enthusiastic in my attitude towards both work and colleagues. My enthusiasm allows me to develop within the working environment and help develop others.

My main duties as a Licensing Officer are to administer and regulate the Taxi Drivers, the Licensing Act and the Gambling Act within the existing legislation. Forms are often very involved and difficult to complete so I spend my time with the applicant going through, explaining each step of the process and how they need to complete the necessary forms so they can submit them according to the current law and legislation.

If an applicant struggles with understanding the legislation or the process, then I can show my compassion as a human being, not just as a Christian, to ensure that I can guide and assist the individual or organisation to complete their application within the existing legislation to the best of their ability.

There are occasions when incidents have occurred where an individual or organisation has not complied with legislation or Policy of the Council. At these times I continue to treat the person with the utmost respect and I explain what they have done and whether this can be rectified. In my view taking legal or enforcement action is not always the appropriate response. Helping them to realise what they have done and to explain to them how they can comply may be more appropriate, so that they can learn how to do things correctly in the future. Understanding their situation and giving them time to learn builds up a working relationship between me and them, and may allow me to be more approachable in the future, so if further problems arise they may be more likely to contact me for advice.

I give them time and listen to their explanation of what happened. I do not judge. I obtain all the facts, information and evidence before I decide on what action (if any) to take. I have to work within the existing legislation so sometimes I have no choice but to take enforcement or legal action. I liaise with the other party and guide them through the necessary process.

In the hustle and bustle of the busy working world it is very difficult to take a break, but it is very important to take refreshment, stretch those legs, talk and laugh with colleagues, listen to their stories of family life, weekend experiences, and generally spend time to be with them and to be there for them in times of trouble and sorrow.

In summary, I would say that being a Christian isn't part of the Job Description for a Licensing Officer but I feel that both these areas of my life complement one another, which is why I love my job and love being a Christian.

Book Reviews

'You do What?' MSE stories from Worcester (reviewed by Ruth Brothwell)

Following the initial article on this book in MaW (January 2013 edition) I read it with interest. A collection of stories of the lives of NSMs (including Readers) in the Diocese of Worcester during 2012, it is their second collection of this type. As the Bishop of Worcester

says in the introduction, 'it is a matter of great thanksgiving that God continues to call people to this ministry alongside that of stipendiary clergy, both in parochial settings and as ministers in secular employment.' Thanksgiving indeed, but as many an NSM/MSE will testify, there is scarcely a day when we do not despair and pray about this ministry as we continue to seek God's purposes in his calling. I certainly count myself in this cry. This little book then arrives at a very welcome time as we think about changes to the face of ministry in our church.

It is a 'comfort' book, as my mother would say. A book that despite all its celebrations provides welcome advice and empathy to the NSM/MSE wondering about their day to day work for God. Forty-one ministers tell their stories briefly and succinctly.

As the epilogue to the book says, 'anyone reading these stories will be struck by the immense variety of our ministries'. Beryl talks about her ministry as a Reader, which followed an active career as a teacher. Bringing her skills to bear she was able to invigorate the local school ministry and form a valuable link within the community.

But as Sally (also a teacher) says, 'from the selection process onwards I have been asked to explain to people what being an MSE in a school might look like and I was never able to predict anything beyond the very obvious.' But people came to see that the school was Sally's 'parish' and the people there engaged with her much as local people in a geographical setting would engage with their parish priest. She sometimes wore her 'dog-collar' and people became used to seeing her both in class and at the school gate. She provided a very helpful link in the community between the school and the church. As Sally says, 'for me, being an MSE is about taking the faith to the people rather than expecting people to turn up on Sunday to meet the faith.' And with 50 teenagers turning up to her school based communion services she led.

Eric testified that during his searching and praying he realised that he had to be alongside people in the place where they worked, or didn't work. 'I came to understand', he says, 'it was important that they felt God cared enough to be alongside them. This is what the incarnation meant.'

Rita helpfully provides a diary of a typical day – something perhaps many of us have tried to do in an effort to better understand where God is using us, our talents and skills to be alongside and praying for those we meet. It was obvious that she struggled, just as I struggle, so I drew comfort and succour from her words.

Jane Fraser says helpfully ‘there’s no blue print – no ground map to follow. It can be very lonely and a scary path to tread ...’.

This little collection explores and emphasises feelings that will be common to most MSEs and many NSMs. Trying to juggle work and ministry and at the same time explaining it to the stipendiary clergy among us is a hard task. But one we all feel called to do. So, when the going gets tough, pick up this little book and remember that there are many, many, others also called by God and all in the same boat as it were, wondering and praying both within our vocation but also for the many hundreds of people who experience our ministries without ever having come into a church! Well done diocese of Worcester. The production of this small collection is a ministry in itself.

Copies can be obtained from Mrs Liz Yapp, The Diocesan Office, The Old Palace, Deansway, Worcester WR1 2JE (Phone 01905 20537, email: lyapp@cofed-worcester.org.uk) at £5 per copy or, for orders of 5 or more, £2 per copy.

Engaging Mission: the lasting value of Industrial Mission for today

Peter Cope and Mike West (reviewed by Phil Jones)
Grosvenor House Publishing, 2012. 169 pages. £10.

Chaplaincy as part of the Chruch's work is said to be growing. It doesn't necessarily feel like that to some of us who are practitioners. What is very clear is that chaplaincy is changing and any growth in numbers is in volunteers. In many fields the number of paid chaplains has been declining at least as quickly as other clergy or ministers. Despite the welcome increase in volunteers there is consequently a real danger that the depth of experience and knowledge built up and passed on over the years will ebb away. This book is an attempt to preserve that knowledge and make it

available for a new generation of chaplains to take forward and adapt for their future work.

There is a growing interest in studying chaplaincy as an overarching phenomenon, looking for the commonalities and attempting to get chaplains to come out of their silos. Undoubtedly there is a benefit in that, but it is also important that the skills and knowledge of particular areas of work are not diluted. The authors, both of whom spent almost their entire careers as Industrial Missioners and taught on the Industrial Mission Association's induction course, chart not just the history of industrial mission but its theological roots and commitment. This distinguished the book from Malcolm Torry's 'The Bridgebuilders' (Canterbury Press, 2010), which is a history of workplace chaplaincy. It may seem to be semantics, but the use of the term industrial mission rather than chaplaincy is also seen by the authors (and many practitioners in what is claimed to be a movement) to signify an area of Christian engagement with a deeper rationale than simply chaplaincy visiting.

Industrial Mission (IM) began during the Second World War out of a concern for a disconnection of working men from the Church. Cope and West differentiate between the more pastoral model of the early days of South London, which was based on the vicar visiting people at work in factories in his parish, to Ted Wickham, acknowledged as the first chaplain, beginning in Sheffield's steel mills in 1944, who sought to engage in conversations with a purpose. Initially these would be in the 'snap-break' but there were other meetings, often in the back room of a pub, to which workers and managers were invited to talk at more depth. This was an attempt to wrestle theologically with issues important to people in the workplace.

As IM developed this attempt to connect up issues was reflected in some of the networks that were set up within industries and internationally. As well as being advocates where they felt it was necessary to speak out, chaplains tried to develop a deeper understanding of the issues they were facing and the theological principles that would help them respond. And, although IM and the Church have at times had a mutually ambivalent relationship,

attempts have been made to communicate what has been learned, not least through both lay and ministerial training.

This way of doing theology was about beginning with the experience shared with people at work, but it was also connected to the theological foundations and the wider theological debate that was happening in the formative times of IM. Among the theological thinkers who were influential were Richard Niebuhr, Peter Berger and also Tillich, Bonhoeffer and others. It was part of the development of inductive theology although IM was also an early adopter of the hermeneutical or pastoral cycle. Another back-drop of the age but also of the task of industrial missionaries was the search for ways of speaking of the Kingdom of God to secular people.

This gives a flavour of the story that the authors are trying to preserve. Their final chapter seeks to draw out some important theological strands that might continue as learning points for the future. The question is whether the Kingdom theology that the book seeks to set out is still sufficient for the task. Is it, as Bishop Mike Bourke says in his introduction, that the hope of the Kingdom realised at least partially here on earth can morph into something that is always just beyond our grasp in this life, or that the world, and theological thinking, is moving on? The challenge to present-day practitioners, to whom this book seeks to pass the baton, is to read the signs of the times knowing enough of the heritage which has been bequeathed to them, recognising where God is at work in less optimistic times and being sufficiently reflective about the role they have within the Church's changing theological thinking.

Phil Jones is Mission Development Officer – Economy for the Diocese of Worcester and Team Leader, Faith at Work, Worcestershire. This review first appeared in the July-September edition of 'Crucible' and is reproduced by kind permission.

Profile: Northumbrian Industrial Mission

Rob Fox

NIM is an ecumenical organisation that has been operating across Tyneside and Durham for the past 45 years. This has been a time of great economic change in the region, with the decline of heavy industry (coal mining, ship repair and building) only partially mirrored in the growth of new industries (such as Nissan).

Its chaplains are mainly volunteers and come from a range of professional backgrounds (including some early retired who want to 'put something back into the community'); they are male and female, lay and ordained. A Management Committee, Executive Group and Team Leader (Fiona Usher) oversee the work of NIM. For those familiar with patterns of industrial mission, NIM follows the 'Sheffield' model.

Chaplains are available to everyone – of all faiths and of none. However their work helps to inform Christian understanding and action about the effects of economic activity on individuals, and on communities. Each chaplain spends a certain amount of time 'walking the floor' in factories, offices or shopping centres; seeing and being seen, building relationships with both management and work-force, and developing specialist knowledge.

The range of NIM's ministry teams is impressive. Not surprisingly there is a whole team working at that temple of modern consumerism (first developed by the Church Commissioners!), the Metro Centre, in Gateshead. There are retail chaplains at other shopping centres, such as Cramlington, Peterlee, Durham, and in Newcastle City Centre. It appears from the website that ASDA has been the most receptive retailer to having chaplains in their stores.

As is happening in other parts of the UK, NIM encompasses 'non-traditional' areas too, such as the Tyne and Wear Metro, Newcastle Airport, Gateshead Arts, the Fire and Rescue Service and the large HMRC site in Newcastle. Traditional industrial mission stamping grounds are represented by chaplaincies at Nissan, the Port of Sunderland, and several major engineering firms.

The website (<http://www.northumbrianindustrialmission.org>) is informative about what NIM does and is user-friendly. There is very little currently in the section 'Resources for churches' (hopefully soon to be populated?). The section titled 'Spirituality of Work' reproduces the 2008 General Synod resolution, and perhaps could do with adding links to useful resources too.

A question for readers: do you know if an industrial mission operates in your area / industry? It is well worth finding out and making contact. Industrial Missioners / Chaplains are always keen to make new contacts, and often share an inductive approach to theology with MSEs. We have much in common and can only gain from working and ministering together.

Resources

LICC Work Forum

London Institute for Contemporary Christianity's Work Forum is a valuable resource for all working Christians (see <http://www.licc.org.uk/work-forum/>). It takes as its motto Lesslie Newbigin's reminder that 'The primary action of the church in the world is the action of its members in their daily work.'

The website includes recommended introductory reading, a wide-ranging resources section, stories of God at work, and prayer cycles. 'Toolbox' is a five day course to help Christians minister effectively in their work (there is also an 'Executive' version), and the Forum has a list of speakers who can be asked to address workplace discussion groups.

While many of the events are in London, LICC is spreading its wings to other parts of the country, and the resources available are of value anywhere.

Events

Prophetic Ministry in an Age of Change

A Conference for SSM/NSMs, to be held at Waddow Hall, nr Clitheroe, Lancashire, Friday 11th – Sat 12th October 2013.

The SS/NSM Officers of the Dioceses of Blackburn, Bradford, Carlisle, Chester, Liverpool, Manchester, and Ripon & Leeds invite SSMs in these areas to join them for fellowship, reflection and discussion. The Saturday afternoon session will explore current 'SSM issues'.

The Guest Speaker will be the **Revd Dr Jules Gomes**, Canon Theologian of St German Cathedral (Peel), Diocese of Sodor and Man. Jules recently held the same office at Liverpool Cathedral and had previously served in parishes in Bangalore and London. He earned his Doctorate in Hebrew Bible and Ancient Near Eastern History at Cambridge, and was MA Course Director at the London School of Theology. He is an excellent communicator of the Gospel. For more, visit www.journeyingwithjules.com.

Waddow Hall is a 17th Century Manor House (HQ of Girl Guiding UK), set in 178 acre grounds overlooking the River Ribble; all accommodation is en-suite, and will have been recently refurbished. To find out more go to www.waddow.org.uk.

The full cost of £95 (arrivals from 5.30pm Friday; depart Saturday at 4.00pm) includes Friday evening meal, bed, breakfast, lunch and refreshments. Please note that overnight accommodation may be limited. If you would prefer to attend on the Saturday only (lunch, refreshments) the cost is £30. The first session on Saturday is at 9.15am. It is likely that Diocesan training grants will be available (contact your appropriate officer).

If you would like to attend, please contact:

The Revd David Simon, 3 Kents Bank House, Kentsford Rd, Grange over Sands, Cumbria, LA11 7BB – your application must arrive, at the very latest, by Saturday 8th June.

Events at Pentecost – 18th May

'A New Pattern of Priesthood'

A celebration and consultation on Self-Supporting Ministry
At Southwark Cathedral, from 11.00

Marking 50 years since the first ordinations of self-supporting clergy in the Church of England from the Southwark Ordination Course (SOC).

Come and join us for:

- a thanksgiving Eucharist at 11.00, with reflections on self-supporting ministry;
- an opportunity for everyone attending to meet over lunch (£25);
- an ecumenical forum on Self Supporting Ministry, hosted by CHRISM, under the theme "Hearing our Voices", to explore and share our experiences of our work as our ministry (£15).

Please book directly with SEITE (South East Institute for Theological Education) at: <http://www.seite.co.uk/contact.html>.

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**Pentecost Celebration with European Worker Priests
At The Royal Foundation of St Katherine, Limehouse,
from 18.00**

Evening Celebration with Worker Priests: £25, including dinner and 'soirée festive'!

We hope you will want to come and join us

And we still welcome anyone who would like to join the whole International Weekend.

Faith and Faithfulness in Life and Work

CHRISM Conference and AGM, Carrs Lane URC, Birmingham,
Saturday, 14 September.

Guest speaker: Revd Dr Teresa Morgan

Faith is traditionally divided into 'the faith we believe in' (a body of doctrine) or 'the faith by which we believe' (in our hearts and minds). But in the world of the New Testament, *pistis* or *fides*, which we translate 'faith', is above all a relationship which creates a community.

In these sessions, we shall reflect on the distinctive shape of the communities which are created by Christian faith. In the morning, we shall look at some New Testament communities; in the afternoon, we shall reflect on the communities we create through faith today, in our lives and work.

Teresa will present some ideas based on a forthcoming book, offering some new ways of thinking about faith which I hope are especially relevant to contemporary secular ministry.

The day begins at 11.00 (tea and coffee on arrival from 10.30) and will finish at 17.00. A buffet lunch is provided, with mid-afternoon refreshments.

Carrs Lane URC is located in the heart of Birmingham, a 10 minute walk from both New Street and Moor Street rail stations. Detailed information can be found on the website, at
<http://www.carrslane.co.uk>.

Cost: £30 (members); £35 (non-members).

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

And finally ...

Readers may recall that my interest in Christian Chartists – who influenced Charles Kingsley and F D Maurice among others – occasionally surfaces in this journal. There follows a Chartist hymn that is both powerful and familiar (but I'll let you figure out why!)

*When wilt Thou save the people? O God of mercy, when?
Not kings and lords, but nations, Not thrones and crowns, but men!
Flowers of Thy heart, O God, are they; Let them not pass, like
weeds, away;
Their heritage a sunless day:
O God, save the people!*

*Shall crime bring crime forever, Strength aiding still the strong?
Is it Thy will, O Father, That man shall toil for wrong?
"No," say Thy mountains; "No," Thy skies;
Man's clouded sun shall brightly rise,
And songs ascend, instead of sighs:
O God, save the people!*

*When wilt Thou save the people? O God of mercy, when?
The people, Lord, the people, Not thrones and crowns, but men!
God save the people; Thine they are,
Thy children, as Thine angels fair:
From vice, oppression, and despair,
O God, save the people*

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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