

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE EARLY YEARS OF THE SOCIETY OF THE HOLY CROSS

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INTRODUCTION

This is a paper presented to the SSC Chapter of Our Lady of Walshingham in 1999. It is shamelessly stolen and copied from other sources, both old and new. It is not footnoted or documented in any way. (That has been started but will probably never be actually accomplished.) I therefore apologize to the authors of the material, those in the Church Militant and the Church Triumphant, for not recognizing their work.

One of the things that impressed me over the years with the early years of the SSC and its leaders is the parallels with our own day. They taught and fought for the truth of Eucharist. By their ceremonial, they pointed a people who lived in a time of confusion and relativity, to the very presence of our Lord in an immediate and accessible form. They revived confession as the certain means of restoring a right relationship to God in circumstances of moral decay and depravity. For their efforts, they were despised and persecuted. They were refused advancement in the Church and threatened and persecuted in the courts. In a time of overwhelming social and economic change, in a day when religion was under critical attack by moral and theological relativism, the SSC stood firm for the truth of the Catholic Faith.

And they boldly took this message into a place of alienation and despair. At this time, poverty so isolated each person and the poor as a class from society at large, that loneliness and despair was the norm. Into this drab and hopeless situation, the members of the SSC brought beauty, order, and hope. And through the ministries of the individual priests and parishes, human contact was made and human dignity restored.

We too, exist in a time of theological confusion. The sacraments we are called to defend are marriage and orders. We also live in a time of persecution, a time when some of our own friends have been warned about associating with those of our kind. And in a time of increasing technological growth, when we grow complacent and confident in our own abilities to overcome all obstacles, we need to be reminded of the Transcendence of Almighty God. By our witness, we must teach the truth of the power and the otherness of God, as well as his intimacy and closeness.

And technology carries with it another danger. We grow isolated from each other through email and fax. And the personal contact that every human needs is missing from our lives.

CONTEXT AND OVERVIEW

John Henry Newman's sermon, 'A Parting of Friends', preached in St. Mary's, Littlemore, and his subsequent conversion to Rome in 1845 was part of the split of an Oxford Movement which was then a dozen years old. While many notable individuals became Catholics, a majority of the "Tractarians" remained within the Anglican Church and in time had a significant effect on its beliefs and practices.

Tractarianism did not at first have much to do with liturgy but with the recovery of the theological roots of the ancient faith, not only the biblical Christianity to which evangelicals were faithful but the Church Fathers as well. It was a doctrinal movement primarily, concerned with the authentic apostolic faith and with the bases for distinguishing orthodoxy from heresy.

But, beginning in the 1850's, groups within the Tractarian movement quite logically began to restore liturgical beliefs and practices the abandonment of which over the centuries had been the natural concomitant of having lost the fullness of the apostolic faith. The sacraments were once again placed at the center of worshipping life, to be celebrated with due reverence and solemnity. The richness of Christian symbolism, including the liturgical calendar, was recovered.

Anglican "ritualists" encountered such opposition that some of them had to practice a heroism nothing short of saintly, braving both mob violence and sustained legal attacks mounted by hostile Low Churchmen. Although their ritualism had its effete elements, it also included serious and devout priests who nursed the sick under appalling conditions, priests who went to the heart of the urban slums and attempted to combine social conscience with a vital liturgical piety.

By the 1880's the ritualists were gaining a measure of toleration, to the point where previously forbidden practices were becoming fairly common. As even relatively Low Church parishes adopted surpliced choirs, altar candles, and priestly stoles, more "advanced" congregations began celebrating the liturgy in ways scarcely distinguishable, to the untutored eye, from those of Rome. By the turn of the century there were openly Anglo-Catholic bishops within the Anglican Communion. Indeed, so successful was the movement that by the 1950's most Anglo-Catholic practices were no longer controversial, and even bishops not considered especially "Catholic" began to wear miters and copes.

The SSC was in the forefront of these struggles in the second half of the nineteenth century and their witness for the centrality of the Sacraments, for the truth of the Catholic Faith, and their ministry to the poor and to the rich of their time can serve as an inspiration for us today.

CHURCH AND SOCIETY

"This was the age when the Church was dominated by the high three-decker pulpit which was occupied by the clergyman, who leaned his arms on a huge cushion while he addressed himself to the gallery, or to those in the high box pews beneath him. Behind the pulpit was the communion table, covered with a wine-stained, moth-eaten cloth. The clergyman who officiated at the holy table three times a year, and might on occasion preach a sermon of two and one-half hours, was rarely seen in his parish except on Sunday. His coming and going was so casual that often there was no set time for the service - the church bell being rung when the minister came into sight." (from E.B. Ellman, RECOLLECTIONS OF A SUSSEX PARSON (1912) P. 155-6)

An example of the almost total lack of spirituality that existed among many of the clergy at this time is given by C. Keagan Paul, one of the seceders from the Church later in the century. When he was a young curate at Bloxham near Banbury, he had a ninety-year old vicar, who had been in the parish for fifty years. It was customary in the parish to have the Eucharist celebrated the required minimum of three times a year. In one celebration Kegan Paul remembers, upon the altar, which was covered by a dirty wine-stained cloth, there stood a loaf of bread and a dusty black bottle of wine which were to serve as the elements for the communion. When the prayer of consecration was reached, to the horror of this pious curate, the vicar turned to the congregation to ask if anyone present had a corkscrew. (C. K. Paul, CONFESSIO VIATORIS, (1891) p. 14)

"But what a place he had to work in - a cold, damp church mouldy and ruinous, with a font under the gallery full of rubbish, a mean table for an altar, with a threadbare altar-cloth, though of red velvet, thus bearing witness to the Old Sarum colors; box pews lined some with green, or red or blue baize, according to the taste or liveries of the various squires. A few texts on the whitewashed walls, which could be read by small eyes from the bottom of the pew, helping to check the wandering thoughts which were always started anew by some incident, or look, among the occupants of the family pew. A gallery occupied by irreverent, noisy singers, with their own tunes to Tate and Brady, and a clerk who gave out from over the King's arms the amount of poor-rate to be levied in the parish. No frequent communions, no baptisms in the church, no saint's-day services;" ...(THE CHURCH QUARTERLY REVIEW, Vol. VI. April 1878, p. 190)

Hannah More gives an account of the usual state of things.... "The vicarage of Cheddar is in the gift of the Dean of Wells. ... The incumbent is Mr. R. who has something to do, but I cannot find out what, in the University of Oxford, where he resides. The curate lives in Wells, twelve miles distant. They have only service once a week, and there is scarcely an instance of a poor person being visited or prayed with. The living of Axbridge-annual value about fifty pounds. The incumbent is about sixty years of age. Mr. G. is intoxicated about six times a week, and very frequently is prevented from preaching by two black eyes, honestly earned by fighting. We have in this

neighborhood thirteen adjoining parishes without so much as even a resident curate. No clergyman has resided in this parish for forty years. One rode over three miles from Wells to preach once on a Sunday, but no weekly duty was done or sick persons visited, and children were often buried without any funeral service. Eight people in the morning and twenty people in the afternoon was a good congregation." THE CHURCH REVIVAL, S. Baring-Gould, p. 129

At St. Paul's Cathedral, London, "No clergyman wore a cassock; there was little or no order in entering the Cathedral at service time. ... the choir was wretched; it consisted of six or eight boys and two, three, or four men, just as they happened to turn up. ... At the Celebration of Holy Communion there was no credence table for the Elements, but all were placed on the Altar just as they would have been in a Dissenting Chapel ... the choir men read letters and talked during the service, and it was never known for more than one member of the Chapter to be present at a service except on very special occasions. At that time, confirmations were quick, perfunctory affairs with little or no connection to the great doctrine of Apostolic Succession."

And so my first parallel is made. We live in a time in which the worship and teachings of the Church are seen as increasingly irrelevant to human life. The Church is seen as a holdover from other days or as a controlling element to prevent people from having fun. Marx and his old bromide, "the Opium of the Masses" has been tossed at us from all quarters, from Jesse Ventura and Madonna to the Movies and TV shows. "Every body is living together and having sex, why do we have to get married." Or even worse, "we are living together, and we don't intend to come to Church, so will you do the ceremony."

ECONOMIC SITUATION

The living conditions for many people of the lower class was horrible. Poverty, unemployment, drunkenness, abuse, and disease were so common as to be unremarkable. Sanitation was imaginary. During an epidemic, medical care was non-existent. The death rate for adults was high, the life expectancy for children and infants was horrendously low.

This account is given, "A poor woman lies dying on the floor, huddled into a corner on a bag of straw, covered for the sake of warmth with all the rags which constitute the property of the place. One is half-stifled with the intolerable smell. At a glance we take in the awful poverty, for literally, there is not a stick of furniture, save the crazy-looking table and one broken chair. The children-well I have seen them quite naked like

savages. Perhaps even in the depth of winter no fire in the grate. We are told, and we could have guessed it from their faces, that they have not tasted food that day." (from Maria Trench, Charles Lowder: A Biography. 1883. page 109)

EMERGENCE OF THE SECOND GENERATION

These early fifties of the nineteenth century were gloomy years for the Catholic Movement. Many were growing faint at heart by the apparent course of events. But it was also true that the seeming collapse of the Oxford Movement, by the catastrophe of 1845, when Newman and others seceded, had not been as disastrous as the Movement's enemies had hoped. It still went on and, what was more to the purpose, in a practical rather than an academic way. It moved from the University of Oxford, where it had been a theory and impulse of history and theology, to the towns and cities to become a real energy applied to the dull and toilsome lives of ordinary men and women. The 'Tracts' became acts.

During the twelve years of its success, 1833 to 1845, Tractarianism had broadened its base as each year its recruits left Oxford for cures elsewhere. Not only, therefore, did the movement as a whole survive after the Oxford Movement itself collapsed, but it became with each year more and more what it had always claimed to be: a movement whose essence was not academic but pastoral. As it became more parochial it acquired a heightened pragmatic interest in the externals of worship with which to disseminate Tractarian teachings.

The Oxford Movement had revealed that the Prayer Book had never had a fair chance. It had shown that the Elizabethan Settlement, as far as the Book of Common Prayer was concerned, had never been adhered to. And so there began another movement, carried out not so much by scholars and writers as by workers. The catholicity of the English Church should be proved, not by literature and logic but by carrying out in strict teaching and practice the Church's system, as indicated by the Prayer Book.

The consecration of St. Barnabas', Pimlico, on June 11th, 1850, marked "the time of the first-ripe grapes." It was noted with joy "that the Holy Communion was administered at this Consecration." It was this parish that Lowder and two other founders of the SSC served at the point they formed the SSC. St Barnabas, which was called of the most beautiful churches in London in its day, was consecrated in 1850. It was arguably the first Oxford Movement (Anglo-Catholic) church built in London and was accused of being a "Puseyite" stronghold which gave rise to the "St Barnabas riots" within 5 months of its opening.

Originally it served "a deplorable slum" and within a few years had a dozen priests working in two churches, St John the Baptist was a chapel built in Pimlico Road to cope with the overcrowding in St Barnabas. As its web site proclaims, it serves a more elegant Parish and its Sunday morning congregation enjoy Anglican Catholic worship with good hymns and a fine organ. St Barnabas is full of pre-Raphaelite decoration with exquisite ceilings and a wonderful reredos behind the High Altar. There are some very fine mosaics on the walls above the Stations of the Cross and a number of colorful Kempe windows. Unlike so many churches of its kind, St Barnabas has never been refitted in the Baroque style, and over the generations it has been progressively enriched but never "restored" in the interests of modernity.

It was this new Church, taking the sacramental teachings of the Oxford Movement and translating them into concrete sight and action, that can be said to mark the beginnings of the Ritualist movement. And it was this church, and its rector, the Rev. Bennett, that became the scene of the first of the Anti-ritualist riots and court case.

The Rev. W.J. Bennett and those who worked with him at St. Barnabas' were animated with a love of souls so deep and ardent that it soon resulted in an abundant harvest of revived church life and conversion. ... Bishop Blomfield ... sacrificed Mr. Bennett to Protestant clamor and church rioters, and that in such a way did not add luster to the Episcopal credit.

The departure of Mr. Bennett at the Bishop's insistence did not bring peace. For the next five years, under his successor, -the Rev. R. Liddell,. assisted by the Rev. James Skinner and the Rev C. F. Lowder, - storms raged around St.Barnabas' which reached their outcome in what became known as the "Judgement of Westerton vs.Liddell," in 1855.

Westerton vs. Liddell, the story of the first ritualist case to be tried in the courts is well known. Liddell was vicar of St. Barnabas and St. Paul's, Knightsbridge, following the resignation of Bennett's resignation. Westerton was warden of St. Barnabas, Pimlico. He sued for the removal of the gilt Altar, the altar cross and cloths, the candlesticks and the credence table and from St. Barnabas' of the stone altar, the rood screen with its gates and cross, the candlesticks and the credence table. Also objected to were the jeweled decorations of the Altar cross, the embroidered Communion linen, and the lack of tablets bearing the TenCommandments. [The judgment was] notorious for its many inaccuracies, both historical and ecclesiastical, and its vulgar denunciation of the symbol of salvation. Later reversed by an Appeal, it drew forth a 'pungent letter from Bp. Phillpotts of Exeter. He ... made his letter an occasion for declaring the true interpretation of the "Ornaments rubric" with its retention of the eucharistic vestments, and pointed out the emphatic force of the emphatic term "holy table" as implying "a far more solemn doctrine" of the Sacrifice event than "altar".

At this point we should introduce the Rev. Charles Lowder. Charles Fuge Lowder (1820-80) vicar of St. Peter's, London Docks. Educated at Exeter College, Oxford, he was ordained priest in 1844 and in 1851 became curate at the parish of St. Barnabas, Pimlico. In 1856 he joined the staff of St. George's in the East, where he took a leading part in the first regular mission work in East London, with Alexander H. Mackonochie as his colleague from 1858. His mission work expanded and he built the church of St. Peter's London Docks (1860-6). Fr. Lowder, as he was affectionately known, was instrumental in reviving a high degree of ritualism in worship, inspiring a renewed depth of spirituality among high church clergy, and was the primary founder of the Society of the Holy Cross. The 19-century Church of England was lifted from a state of lethargy and irreverence through the untiring labors of Charles Lowder.

LOWDER AND THE WESTERTON EVENT

[in April, 1854] Lowder's zeal resulted in a more offence. Westerton, [the instigator of the law suit against the Rev. Liddel,] was a candidate for the office of churchwarden [of St. Barnabas], and as part of his campaign for the post, he hired a placard bearer, one John Ledwich, to parade the streets of the parish with a sign which read 'Vote for Westerton'. Lowder's eleven-year old cousin, J. F. Lowder, together with some boys from the St. Barnabas' choir, besought Lowder's permission to attack. Lowder forbade (it would appear unsuccessfully) their throwing stones or dirt, but "in a moment of indiscretion and want of reflection" gave the boys sixpence to buy rotten eggs with which to bespatter the sandwich-man as he walked along Elbury Street. Ledwich reported the assault to his employers, a committee to re-elect Westerton, and Lowder, who had admitted his responsibility, was summoned to appear before the Westminster magistrate's court, where he apologized for his behavior and paid Ledwich two pounds in reparation. The case was dropped but the anti-Tractarian press drew the moral: "... as straws thrown up show which way the wind blows, so eggs and stones flung at a man's head from the instigation of a Puseyite curate, indicate the animus of Tractarianism." The bishop, who regarded Lowder as a conscientious clergyman who might profit from a lesson, treated the matter severely, and on 6 May 1854 suspended him for six weeks,

In the late spring of 1854 Lowder absented himself from his chaplaincy and all other parochial work during his six-week suspension. He left on 16 May for France. ... He stayed at the Petit Seminaire, a school for boys under the direction of Monsieur Labbe.

There he began reading Louis Abelly's *Vie de Saint Vincent de Paul*, which he finished on his return to St. Barnabas'.

As he read Abelly's life of St. Vincent, Lowder was struck by the resemblances between aspects of the contemporary English Church and the Church in France at the end of the sixteenth century in which, Abelly wrote, the clergy were worldly and undisciplined and the people, in consequence, neither instructed nor assisted in their spiritual duties. The success and blessing which had attended the work done on strictly church lines among the poor of St. Barnabas', Pimlico, brought an inspiration to the mind of Father Charles Lowder. "Vote for Westerton" offered an opportunity for Fr. Lowder to take a short holiday in France. A missionary desire possessed his mind that finally worked itself out into two conclusions. The first was that the system followed at St. Barnabas' was the only one that could remedy and uplift the other poor of London, and the second that it could only be achieved by those who carried out the spirit of St. Vincent and realized the supernatural power of their priesthood. And so, persuaded that the remedies which St. Vincent adopted in seventeenth-century rural France might be applied to England two hundred years later, Lowder determined to form a secular body of priests, roughly corresponding to St. Vincent's *Pretrés de la Congregation de la Mission*. To this end Lowder consulted five other Anglo-Catholic London clergy - Charles Maurice Davies, curate of St. Matthew's, City Road; David Nicols, curate of Christ Church, St. Pancras; Alfred Poole and Joseph Smith, fellow curates with Lowder at St. Barnabas' and St. Paul's; and Henry Augustus Rawes, Warden of the House of Charity, Soho - and with them, on 28 February 1855, founded the Society of the Holy Cross, or S.S.C. as the Society was known from its Latin initials.

With a membership of clergy and ordinances, the Society set itself three objects, in principle identical to those of the Vincentian priests: the promotion of a stricter rule of life amongst the clergy, the establishment of home missions to preach the Gospel to the poor (in nineteenth-century England, "the masses of our working population"), and the publication of tracts and pamphlets to defend and extend Catholic faith and practice. In pursuit of its initial aim, the S.S.C. first drafted a set of rules to apply to all members, enforcing daily prayer for the Church and Society, mutual aid and encouragement, attendance at S.S.C. synods in May.

FORMATION, GOALS, AND PRINCIPLES

The year 1855, as already outlined, was momentous with church events and most of them troublous to the hearts of churchmen, but 'the kingdom of heaven cometh not with observation.' There were many outward manifestations of activity taking place

both for the cause of truth and the cause of threatenings against it, but there was one little bit of leaven hidden in the measures of six ardent priestly hearts which would leaven the whole of the Catholic Movement. On February 28, 1855, being the Wednesday in the Lent Ember Week, "the Society of the Holy Cross" was devised and entered upon probation. The six zealous priests who had met together realized that it was only the setting up of the Holy Cross in all its fullness that could win and save the masses, and they solemnly resolved, first by the sanctifying of priestly lives according to Catholic rule and discipline, and then by faithful priestly action, to do what they could towards its accomplishment. ... Their work, as presented itself to the, was well expressed by Fr. Mackonochie in a pregnant phrase some years later, - "We must dig the pit for the Cross."

When these "six priests met in private, at the House of Charity, Rose Street, Soho, to found a small fraternal band for their own advancement in personal sanctification and mutual edification," they had no idea what was to come. "They were ... convinced that if the missionary zeal which inflamed their hearts was to bear fruit, it must rest on a disciplined priestly life fashioned after a definite spiritual rule. As an indication and a reminder of this, they resolved to call themselves "the Society of the Holy Cross". Being but a few, they promised each other solemnly to keep silent concerning it, and promised equally to put themselves on probation until the Feast of the Invention of the Cross (May 3).

The founding members were Charles Maurice Davies, curate of St. Matthew's, City Road; David Nicols, curate of Christ Church, St. Pancras; Alfred Poole and Joseph Newton Smith, fellow curates with Lowder at St. Barnabas' and St. Paul's; and Henry Augustus Rawes, Warden of the House of Charity, Soho.

At this time, St. Paul's, Knightsbridge, and St. Barnabas' Pimlico, were under one incumbent. [And there remained an intimate relationship between the two even after separation in 1866.] Occupying the front place, as these Churches did at the time, in Catholic life, controversies, battles and problems, no surprise can be felt at the fact that three of the founders came from this intimate relationship. And these three of the original six remained true to the Church of England. They were the Rev. C.F. Lowder, the Rev. A. Poole, and the Rev. J. Newton Smith. Of the nucleus three left it for Rome, Davies, Nicols, and Rawes.

There can be little doubt that Fr. Lowder was the real Founder of SSC. In 1856 he wrote, "It was so ordered also, by God's good providence, that a society of priests had lately been founded in London, called the Society of the Holy Cross. Its objects are to defend and strengthen the spiritual life of the clergy, to defend the faith of the Church,

and to carry on and aid Mission work both at home and abroad." The members of this society, meeting together as they did in prayer and conference were deeply impressed with the evils in the Church, and saw also, in the remedies adopted by St. Vincent de Paul, the hope of lessening them. They all felt that the ordinary parochial equipment of a rector and curate, or perhaps a solitary incumbent, provided for thousands of perishing souls, was most sadly inadequate; that, in the presence of such utter destitution, it was simply childish to act as if the Church were recognized as the mother of the people. "She must assume a missionary character and by religious association and a new adaptation of Catholic practice to the altered circumstances of the nineteenth century and the peculiar wants of the English character, endeavor, with fresh life and energy, to stem the prevailing tide of sin and indifference." (Life of Charles Lowder, p 74-5)

Lowder was first Master of the society and in The Roll, his name stood first. These six were joined immediately by the Rev. Boucher, headmaster of St. Paul's Grammar School, Knightsbridge and by G.C. White, who succeeded Skinner at St. Barnabas, and also by F.H. Murray, Rector of Chiselhurst.

At the inauguration of the Society, the six said together, in the Chapel of the House of Charity, the office. ... They then made their promises, which were marked by simplicity and distinctness. The First was to observe solemnly the confidences of the Society; the second was a promise of faith and was simply the Nicene Creed, the third concerned mutual help, both temporal and spiritual, after the manner of brotherhood.

From the beginning, they determined to keep the society secret. "Secret" is an unhappy word. The reason for the secrecy is explainable when the times are recalled. The disgraceful scenes which were enacted both at St. Barnabas', Pimlico, and later at St. George's in the east, with lesser evils arising from prejudice, suspicion, malice and ignorant gossip, made the use of much caution necessary. It must not be forgotten that the aim of SSC was a personal and brotherly one, for the sanctification of their own lives, and to form a spiritual bond of union in their special work. ... They simply wanted to be unmolested for mutual edification and growth in holiness.

The objects of the Society were declared to be, "to resist the enemies of the Church and to spread the reign of Christ by a) mutual sympathy and aid, b) constant prayer, c) counsel in difficulties, d) works of charity." Annual attendance at Synod and Annual Subscription were also specified obligations.

The Rule of the Society, which was headed "Rule until May 3rd" was as follows —

1. Every Brother is to pray daily for the Church and Society using either the Office or the Collects in the Office.

2. Every Brother is to make on Sundays an offering to the Society [to be used for the relief of the poor, the remainder given to the Society.

3. Every Brother is to inform another Brother any report he may hear either to his advantage or disadvantage.

4. When two brothers meet, the elder is to salute the younger with the 'Pax tibi' etc.

5. Every Brother is to attend all the meetings ... and positively the Great Meeting on May 3rd.

6. Every member is to pay ... 20 shillings a year.

During these early years, between 1856 and 1859, there were two special good works to which the Society devoted all its heart and all its soul. One of the first acts of the SSC, was an approach to the Rev. Bryan King, rector of St. George's in the East. One was the foundation of St. George's Mission, and the other the Revival of retreats. [The society made itself totally responsible financially and in management until it could survive on it's own.]

From the Minute Book of the Society we read, "on Feb. 27th, a change of place [for the mission] was made from 49 1/2 St. George's Street, to Lower Well Alley. In this most destitute place much opposition was made, the mob resorted to the throwing of missiles and mud at the clergy, in addition to blasphemy and violent language. The opposition had subsided at last, but it was generally felt that to do any lasting good there must be a resident Priest on the spot."

Bp. Tait had written a letter refusing to come to the mission and gave as his reasons the reception of a letter outlining certain practices. In a letter of Lowder to Bp. Tait, written on 13 May 1857, Lowder responds with these words. "Here, my Lord, are a few clergy undertaking a work of acknowledged importance and vast difficulty requiring self-denial, patience, faith and hopefulness. Those principles I have already set before your Lordship, they are the principles of the Catholic Faith taught in the Creeds, Liturgy and Ritual of the Church of England. Our system is a consistent one, to preach the whole Gospel of Jesus Christ as the Church has ever received it, not only in sermons but in the visible teaching of Sacraments and ritual observances. To narrow our liberty in working out this system is to mutilate it in points which your Lordship may deem unimportant but which to us are most important; is to weaken and abridge where we so much need strength and elasticity; is to deprive those who have the work to do of that spring and energy which results from confidence in the truth and consistency of their teachings."

THE IMPORTANCE OF RITUAL

The Holy Eucharist, four of the six points, found in Purchas, Directorum Anglicanum from 1865) The ceremonial and decorative changes that came to be known as 'Ritualism' appear to have been virtually inseparable from Anglo-Catholic doctrine. "...wherever Tractarianism was in any degree accepted, some alteration in the mode of performing the service marked the adoption of its opinions by the officiating clergyman" [THOUGHTS ON QUESTIONS OF THE DAY,]

Most arguments for what came to be known as ritual 'advance' were variations on the theme that certain ornaments and practices were symbolically important, that they stood for 'Catholic' beliefs and thus were not merely matters of taste or preference. And I think our second lesson emerges here. We live in a nation that is becoming less Christian as time goes past. The Church is under attack from government agencies, from societal attitudes, and from forces within its own ranks. Yet this should not be seen as a circumstance of despair but of opportunity. We have a rare chance to teach the vital necessity of Christ in life, a chance that may be matched only a few times before this age was inaugurated. What tools are at our disposal? What forms can we use to reach out and touch the lives of those who come to us searching for meaning, for something greater than their own desires? Most arguments for what came to be known as ritual 'advance' were variations on the theme that certain ornaments and practices were symbolically important, that they stood for 'Catholic' beliefs and thus were not merely matters of taste or preference.

Lowder ended his book, *Twenty-one Years in St. George's Mission* with these words: "It is well known that the ritual of St. Peter's is not a mere aesthetic embellishment but the outward expression of a great reality. It exactly meets the wants of those who have been taught to value their Lord's Sacramental Presence; they rejoice to see His Throne made glorious, His priests ordering themselves as His representatives, and the whole arrangement of the service typical of its heavenly counterpart. The poor and uneducated are thus taught by the eye and ear, as well as by the understanding; and when they find that those who set these great truths before them in the ritual of the Church are at the same time commending their priestly office in the daily sacrifice of their lives, they acknowledge the truth and consistency of the doctrine. Surely those who know the trials and hardships of the working classes, the dreariness of their homes, the dark and cheerless surroundings of their work, and the few innocent pleasures which are within their reach, cannot deny them the gratification to be derived from the one bright spot in their neighborhood. To many the church is their only quiet retreat, the daily sacrifice or service the one happy occupation; all that they have to soothe and cheer them in the privations of a hard life. ... Festival seasons duly observed; vestments, processions, lights, incense, choral services, flowers, pictures; music-grand, hearty, and inspiring; the details of ceremonial carried out carefully and reverently; -- these accessories of worship are the rightful claim of the clergy and people of such a

church as St. Peter's. The people love and glory their church. It is their home-it is God's, but it is also theirs-and they feel a just pride in its adornment....

But their love goes far deeper than this. They have found by experience that the whole system and teaching of the church meet the special wants of their spiritual life. Its reality, its heartiness, its outward manifestation, are a constant witness to themselves and others of the continual sacrifice which they should offer of their lives to the service of God. They feel its influence on themselves; they see it in their families; they carry it with them into the streets, and courts, and alleys in which they live."

Let me pause here, for a little sidetrack into the future. One of the things that has always impressed me about the leaders of the SSC, Lowder, Mackonochie, Carter and the others, was their absolute commitment to evangelism and the Catholic Church. If we are to remain true to the ideals of the founding fathers, we must embrace that missionary zeal that marked their ministry. And it was a zeal for conversion to the truth of the Catholic faith, not to a shallow or popular expression that leaves a soul hungering for more, but to an embracing of the Catholic Faith that confronts us with the person of Christ and changes lives forever.

I guess we should end this segment with the following story. Previous Bishops of London had refused to visit St. Alban's for Confirmation, but Bishop Temple felt it was his duty to come, despite his disapproval of its ceremonial practices. After the service he is said to have remarked, "I like your work here, but I don't like your incense," to which Father Stanton replied, "Well, my Lord, at eight shillings a pound its the best we can get."

RETREATS

At the same time as the mission, the idea of Retreats sprang up in the Society. [At first the idea was to provide annual retreats for members] 'and it was some time before Conferences on all manner of spiritual and practical subjects gave place to silence in retreat and, under the instruction and advice of Fr. R. Benson, the practice of sitting instead of kneeling through the whole of the Meditations was adopted.

At the first of these Retreats, which was held at Chislehurst, on July 18, 1856, there was no silence and no meditations. There was held a 'Spiritual Conference' after Nones, and special subjects were chosen for Prayer and Intercession at Mass, and all the Day Office was said.

The first of the true retreats, with rules of silence and other commonly accepted practices, was held in July 1858, at Chislehurst. [Bishop Forbes of Brechin gives the

following statement on about these retreats.] "The picturesque old rectory at Chislehurst has the honor of inaugurating a species of devotion, which, whether under the name of Retreats or Quiet Days, have become so universally prevalent since, as to be a thing of annual or more frequent occurrence, not only in towns but often in remote villages."

The Society's early years were chiefly devotional and the attitude of the Brethren, in their relationship of the Society, one of Passive endurance. They were years of probation and of discipleship, --"We have dedicated ourselves to Him under the Invocation of His Cross, and may venture to see in each fresh trouble, a token that He has accepted our offering. It is hard for us to realize the full meaning of this dedication. The title of our Society -'The Society of the Holy Cross,' or the still shorter and more common form, 'SSC'- is so quickly said, that we easily forget its application to our own lives. Clearly it is to the thing, not to the name, that we pledge ourselves; to the consecrating of each thought and feeling to the Cross and to Him Who hung thereon."

RIOTS

"When the scenes during the celebration of evening service were perfectly unparalleled for their atrocity. The whole service was interrupted by hissing, whistling, and shouting. Several songs were roared out by many united voices during the reading of the Lessons and the preaching of the sermon; hassocks were thrown down from the galleries; and after the service, cushions, hassocks, and books were hurled at the altar and its furniture." From Bryan King, SACRILEGE AND ITS ENCOURAGEMENT, p. 23
 From J.S. Reynolds, THE EVANGELICALS AT OXFORD. (One of the Night School boys told the following to a missionary) "It's all a question of beer, sir, and what else they can get. We know them. They're blackguards, like ourselves here. Religion ain't anything more to them than it is to us. They gets paid for what they do, - and they does it, like they'd do any other job."

In the book, The Church Revival, Baring-Gould, p. 234, Lowder is quoted as offering this touching story. "When the mission clergy assisted the rector in his time of need, and were themselves in considerable danger from the mob, while returning from the church to the Mission-house, we generally found on our way home a little girl from the school, trotting close by our side, as though to protect us from the violence of the people, who were pressing and shouting around us. She would take up her position near the church and often wait a long time until we appeared; and if we did not recognize her before, we soon heard a little voice by our side, addressing us by name to show that she was near. The child, a wild little thing, living in an unfavorable

atmosphere at home, was afterwards taken into St Stephen's House and sent out to service and is now married."

And here, I am confronted with the call of Christ for personal holiness on the part of his priests. We need to remember that the aim of SSC was a personal and brotherly one, for the sanctification of their own lives, and to form a spiritual bond of union in their special work. They simply wanted to be unmolested for mutual edification and growth in holiness. We may well emulate their quest for holiness through an ordered life of prayer and service to God through their ministry at the Altar.

PERSECUTION

In 1858, a suit was filed in court against the Rev. Poole, curate of St. Barnabas for having heard a woman's confession. His license was suspended by Bp. of London. He appealed to the Archbishop of Canterbury and lost. He was subsequently refused reinstatement. John Keble finally took him as a curate.

The Church Association had begun a prosecution against Bennett, vicar of Fromme, and first vicar of St. Barnabas', Pimlico for false teachings on the Eucharist.

The case against Bennett involved three aspects of eucharistic doctrine: the Real Presence, the eucharistic sacrifice, and eucharistical adoration. He wrote in a pamphlet, 'A Plea for Toleration in the Church of England'] "I am one of those ... who myself adore, and teach the people to adore, the consecrated elements, believing Christ to be in them - that under their veil is the sacred Body and Blood of my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ..." Bennett refused to acknowledge the citation summoning him to court. By declining to recognize the courts jurisdiction he refused to heed its decision, nullifying in advance any pronouncements on eucharistic doctrine it might make. The case was overturned on a technicality.

John Purchase of St. James, Brighton was first editor of the Directorium Anglicanum. A suit was brought against him for the use of incense, candles, and other catholic practices. The judgment finally outlawed Eucharistic Vestments, wafer bread, the mixed chalice, and the eastward position. This decision again solidified the committed opposition of the Ritualist. "The SSC at its May synod resolved to defy the Privy Council by drawing up a list of priests willing to adhere to whatever Catholic practices they had already begun, and by compiling a second list of those who would, on the occasion of any more ritual prosecutions, begin to wear the eucharistic vestments."

THE PUBLIC WORSHIP REGULATION ACT

The SSC was in the forefront of the Catholic movement and was therefore the main target of the Church Association and the anti-ritualist lawsuits. The first to be prosecuted under the new Act was at the time a Brother of the Society, the Rev. R.J. Ridsdale, Vicar of St. Peter's, Folkestone. Of those who went to prison, the Rev. A. Tooth, the Rev. T.P. Dale and the Rev. R.W. Enraght were at the time members of the Society, while the last imprisoned priest under the Act, the Rev. J. Bell Cox, although he had retired some time before his prosecution, had been for many years a very senior brother of the Society.

The Act came into force on 1 July 1875. By the end of August the Church Association had begun proceedings against C.J. Ridsdale, Vicar of Folkstone, an S.S.C. member. On 3 February 1876, in what the Church Association called 'one of the most absolute condemnations of ritualistic practices that has yet been delivered', Lord Penzance ruled against Ridsdale on the twelve points complained of, including the eastward position, vestments, wafer bread, commixture, altar lights, the Agnus Dei, processions, the stations of the cross, and the erection of a crucifix on the rood screen. After the judgment, Ridsdale announced that he would retain the mixed chalice, altar lights, and vestments in obedience to the Ornaments Rubric and in defiance of the courts, unless granted a dispensation by his diocesan. This Tait readily gave and Ridsdale, deferring to the bishop rather than the law, dropped the offending practices.

Among the sixteen other C.A. sponsored prosecutions for ritual in process during the summer of 1876 was one against Thomas Pelham Dale, Rector of St. Vedast's, Foster Lane, son of the Dean of Rochester, and another S.S.C. member. He refused to recognize the court or its summonses, monitions and inhibitions. He was therefore pronounced contumacious, arrested and imprisoned in Holloway Gaol where he remained from October 1880 until January 1881.

Charles Bodington of Wolverhampton was another S.S.C. member whom the Church Association prosecuted under the P.W.R. Act. Bodington agreed to abide by his bishop and very little sacrifice was required under the agreement. Tait squashed the prosecution. When Bp. Selwyn died, a new suit was pressed but again Tait refused to allow it to go further.

Two other Brethren of the Society attacked in the early operations of the Act were the Rev. C. Bodington, Vicar of St. Andrew's, Wolverhampton, and the Rev. T.T. Carter, Rector of Clewer. The respective bishops however, stopped both of these persecutions.

Another brother of the Society, the Rev. J.L. Fish, who waged a courageous fight at St. Margaret Pattens, faced a Vestry which passed a resolution to prosecute him under the provisions of the Public Worship Regulation Act, on the day it came into force. Fr. Mackonochie had once compared it to a hawk poised in the air, waiting to pounce, and no one knowing on whom it would pounce next. The Society, all through this trying period, made it quite clear that it was impossible to address the bishops as Spiritual Fathers and State Officers at the same time.

CONFESSION AND THE ATTACK

Many of the early Catholic priests involved in the parish ministry realized the value of Sacramental confession in dealing with the moral depravity and temptation that surrounded their parishioners. The clergy of St. Saviour's, Leeds, led the way as early as 1848. The clergy of St. Alban's Holborn began by hearing confessions in the vestry, but by 1859, were hearing them openly in the Church.

The use of auricular confession created a firestorm of response. St. Peter's, Plymouth, the Rev. George Prynne, was charged for hearing confessions. Bp. Phillpotts exonerated Prynne. In 1858, the Rev. Alfred Pole, of St. Barnabas, Pimlico, was suspended by Bp. Tait of London that set off a four-year series of appeals that ended inconclusively. The Rev. A.D. Wagner was brutally beaten in the streets of Brighton after newspapers reported that he had refused in court to answer questions that would reveal the content of a confession.

As early as January 1859, of the need for a priest's manual on Confession, and in May 1862 the subject was referred to a committee made up of Chambers, G.C. White, Benson, Lowder, Mackonochie, R.F. Littledale and Carter. In March 1865 the committee proposed printing all of the Neo-Confessarius, an 18th century manual of moral theology by Jean Reuter, S.J. with portions of the Abbe Gaume's *Manual des Confesseurs*, of which Chambers had made a translation. At the May Synod of 1866, the committee places the manual in Chamber's hands for him to bring out in two parts and on his own responsibility, under the title, *The Priest in Absolution*.

A storm of controversy broke in 1877, when Lord Redesdale gave notice that he intended to bring the work to the notice of the House of Lord's. In the House of Lord's, numerous passages were taken out of context and appeared to indicate that the priest questioned women and young children in an indelicate manner. Newspapers took up the charge and condemned the book as indecent. As a result of the publicity and outrage, an old form of subtle pressure was renewed. The official pressure of

advancement and ordination had always been a subtle undercurrent, now it moved more strongly.

Queen Victoria wrote to the Prime Minister, Lord John Russell, on 25 October 1850, 'It would be very wrong as the Bishop of Oxford proposes, to confer the patronage of the Crown on any of the Tractarians.' In 1853, the Prince Consort recommended to Lord Aberdeen, who was then Prime Minister, 'that a system of marked disfavor should be adopted and steadily persevered in towards those who promulgated "principles likely to disturb the peace of the Church"; and he observed that even the most active, ambitious, and talented of the High Church party were not likely long to hold principles which permanently excluded them from preferment.

From the May Synod of 1866, comes the following sad statement. 'It has pleased Almighty God -I believe for the first time since the foundation of the Society-to call to Himself the soul of one of our Brethern (A.W. Carver, Durham) ... But it seemed good to his Lord to visit him with the withering blast of a Superior's disapproval of his efforts for preserving the Church of his Baptism. Being for this cause refused ordination at the last moment, his heart sunk within him.'

Arthur Stanton serves as a prime example of the treatment a member of SSC might expect to receive. Arthur Stanton met Mackonochie [during the riots at St. George's-in-the-east] and at the suggestion of Liddon decided to go to St. Alban's when he completed his theological training at Cuddesdon. When he told Bishop Tait of his wish, he was bluntly told: 'If you go to Mackonochie of St. Alban's, you must never expect any Church preferment. Stanton's problems with bishops continued. He was inhibited from preaching anywhere but at St. Alban's. Tait was Archbishop of Canterbury by 1875, but at that time he told Stanton: "I should not be candid with you if I did not say that, were St. Alban's in my Diocese and were you really to preach the sermons which are attributed to you in the public newspapers, I should very seriously consider whether it was not my duty to withdraw your license."

And now In many Dioceses at this time the bad custom arose of holding an uncanonical examination, which consisted of one question only, -- this question being relative to the Society. If the would-be curate answered the question in the affirmative, it meant that he would not be licensed in that particular diocese. It was commonly reported that the only bishops willing to license brethren of the SSC were Winchester, Oxford and Worcester. Even a Bishop such as Harvey Goodwin who had stood by the Society a few years earlier, now refused to license the Rev. H. Holloway to St. George's, Farrow-in-Furness, 'except on the condition of your secession from that Society. Other bishops were refusing to license curates on the ground of the Societies statues.

EXAMPLES OF PERSECUTION, THE CASES OF MACKONCHIE AND TOOTH

Arthur Tooth was born at Swifts Park, Cranbrook, in Kent, on June 17, 1839, and was educated at Tonbridge School, and Trinity College, Cambridge. After several short ministries he accepted the derelict living of St. James's, Hatcham. He repaired and furnished the church and began to draw a congregation. He founded a Community of Sisters and an orphanage, which served as the choir school of the church. His teaching was simple, lucid and definite, and he introduced, within a few years, most of the customs and usages that are normal in moderate churches to-day, but were then considered to be of the essence of Popery. He founded, also, the Guild of All Souls, which lives to this day. Late in 1875, the Church Association moved against Tooth, now a thirty six year old priest and an S.S.C. member for illegal ceremonial. Lord Penzance heard the case and monished Tooth to cease the illegal practices. Tooth ignored the monition as he had ignored the court and declined to obey the three-month inhibition that Penzance announced in December. On 22 January 1877 Tooth was arrested and imprisoned in Horsemonger Gaol for contempt of court | practices.

Before his imprisonment, Father Tooth read the following charge to his people, in consequence of which the Rev. Randall Davidson, the Archbishop's chaplain, who was sent to take services, was refused admission to the choir by the churchwardens "In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen. I, Arthur Tooth, Priest of the Church of England, Vicar of this Parish, desire, in the present distress, to make profession, in the face of God and of my people, of my willing obedience to all lawful authority, as binding every Christian by the Word of God and the law of his Church.

It has become my duty, in consequence of certain proceedings taken against me in a Secular Court, in respect of the manner of worship of the Church of England, to enter at this time my Solemn Protest against the exercise of Secular Authority in matters Spiritual.

And further, in full reliance upon the Christian intelligence of my people, and upon their loving readiness to suffer for the truth's sake, I hereby call upon them to recognize no Ministrations in public Congregation, nor any discharge among them of the Office and Duty of Cure of Souls either in the immediate present or in the future, other than my own, or of those acting in my behalf under my authority.

I make this call upon my people as the lawfully and canonically instituted Priest of the Parish, not inhibited therein, nor deprived thereof by any lawful and canonical authority. And I implore them, and if need be, require and charge them to beat steadfastly in mind that all ministrations and discharge other than my own are schismatical, and are

an invasion and a robbery of the rights of the Church of England. Witness my hand this third day of December, being Advent Sunday, in the Year of Our Lord, 1876."

On the next Sunday there were 700 people present at High Mass, the clergy and congregations of St. Alban's, Holborn, and St. Peter's, London Docks, having gone to St. James's, Hatcham, to support it by a visible token of sympathy. In the New Year the riots broke out, arranged by the Protestant underworld. And here, both as regards the imprisonment that was soon to rob St. James's of its Confessor's presence and the frightful scenes that took place Sunday by Sunday, when windows were smashed, worshippers assaulted and the Mass was disturbed by blasphemous yelling, I prefer to record Father Tooth's own words, fifty years after.

"I had a fine, united congregation at St. James's, Hatcham," he said. "Sunday by Sunday I had to say Mass with booing and hooting for response. Hooligans were sent down by the Church Association to disturb us, and, if possible, break up the service. They were paid half a crown each, while boys got a shilling. They would keep their hats on throughout the service, and often there were fights between loyal members of the congregation and the toughs. Then a charge was brought against me, and I wouldn't appear. They could find me nowhere, and thought I had slipped through their fingers." "I went to Maidstone," he continued, "to await arrest, but nothing happened, so I came back to London, and there they took me.

Horsemonger Lane Gaol doesn't exist now, and what do you think they've done with its bricks?" "Built a church with them. But the gaol was a shocking place for draughts." "I didn't mind, and I always was obedient. I expected to be there for years, and I must say they treated me fairly well. The warders didn't know what to make of me. I felt uncomfortable only when I exercised in the yard. There I was seen by the women, who used to wonder what the gay old dog in it clerical collar had been up to. They let me keep my clothes." "One day," [17 February 1877] "they told me to [get ready to leave], and, being always obedient, I went. I got back to Hatcham and found my church bolted and barred. I broke in by a window, and said Mass in the usual way, as it's now said in thousands of churches, with altar lights and vestments. But it could not go on for long, and the congregation was broken up. My opponents bought the advowson, and put their own man in."

Alexander Heriot Mackonochie (1825-87) Educated at Wadham College, Oxford, he was ordained in 1849, and served in Westbury and Wantage, before assisting Charles Lowder at St. George's in the East (London). By 1862 when he was put in charge of the newly built church of St. Alban's Holborn, he was recognized as a Ritualist and from 1867 onwards he was constantly persecuted for his ceremonial practices. He eventually resigned in 1882, though he continued to work in the parish until his sudden death in the Highlands in Dec. 1887. Fr. Mackonochie, though the most persecuted priest of the

19th century, filled St. Alban's with enthusiastic converts to Christ within the heathen district of Holborn.

Complaints against his high church form of worship were never made by those within his church, but only by those outside who could not see the value of advanced ceremony accompanying the preaching of the Gospel and administration of the Sacraments. His efforts to secure frequent Communion and deeper spiritual devotion among the poor of St. Alban's under a great degree of persecution has left a memory of Fr. Mackonochie as "the martyr of St. Alban's." He served as the Master of the Society of the Holy Cross during many of these difficult years.

Mackonochie's case is so well known that we can simply hit the high points. He was persecuted from 1867 until 1883, and the famous case of *Martin vs. Mackonochie* was instituted at the behest of the Church Association. After a long delay and appeals, the courts forbade the St. Alban's clergy to elevate, use incense, and mix the chalice. Mackonochie communicated to Bishop Tait that he intended to obey the ruling on all three points but then urged his congregation to greater acts of reverence: to genuflect before the Sacrament, the use of the sign of the cross, etc. In fact, he simply modified his ceremonial and therefore complied with the letter of the ruling. Mackonochie thought he must submit in some particulars. Arthur Stanton, one of St. Alban's curates, did not. "In the name of the God of justice," Stanton said, "let us resist this tyranny tooth and nail." Mackonochie gave up lighting the candles, and Stanton bought seven lamps to burn instead. "Following the example," he writes, "of Mr. Richards of All Saints', Margaret Street, we shall be more explicit in future in teaching the doctrine of the Mass."

In 1869, Mackonochie was again brought before the courts. After this decision, Mackonochie refused to obey and was suspended for three months in November 1870. The Church Association instituted a new suit in 1874. As a result, Mackonochie was suspended again.

The parish and his curates supported him as recorded in the *Church Quarterly Review*, Jan. 1876. p. 515. "On June 8, Mr. Mackonochie having withdrawn his appeal, was suspended for six weeks, according to the sentence of the Arches Court in December. A complication of difficulties ensued, the curates in charge, with the support of the whole congregation, declining to accept the ruling of the Purchas Judgment, and the Bishop of London forbidding them to celebrate according to the wonted ritual. The celebrations were for some weeks altogether discontinued at St. Alban's. Finally the Vicar determined to resume the celebrations with the same rites which had been used at St. Alban's previous to the various indictments, subjected to certain modifications." He went abroad, and the Bishop of London told Stanton that he was to celebrate next Sunday in a surplice only, not even a stole, and must use common household bread.

Stanton put up a notice: "N.B. There will be no celebration of Holy Communion in this church until further notice. All other services as usual." And next Sunday he marched the whole congregation off to St. Vedast's, Foster Lane, where Father Hogg, a curate of St. Alban's, said Mass in the usual way. The Bishop stopped this by prohibiting the clergy of St. Alban's to officiate in any church where the vestments were used, but the congregation continued to go off to St. Vedast's once Stanton's sermon was finished, until Mackonochie came back. When Mackonochie returned Missa Cantata was resumed at St. Alban's.

But Mackonochie had not pacified his opponents, because he would not give up the adoration of our Lord in the Holy Sacrament. He was summoned before the courts again, and this time suspended for three months. On the first Sunday he sat in his stall unable to say Mass or to preach, while Stanton thundered on the subject from the pulpit. Not long after this the courts in Mr. Bennet's case decided that the doctrine of the Objective Presence in the Blessed Sacrament was, after all, permissible in the Church of England. On which Stanton wrote, "I see Mr. Bennet's case is given for him. I am glad only because if people prosecute they should pay for it. It does not matter in the least to me whether the law says Christ is in the Sacrament or not. He is, and that is all I care about."

The Church Association continued to pursue Mackonochie. And as we all remember, Archbishop Tait, on his deathbed, asked Mackonochie to resign and exchange livings with Lowder's successor at St. Peter's. Mackonochie obeyed and the switch was accomplished in 1883 but this did not protect him. In April of that year, the Church Association applied once more through the complainant, Martin, for Mackonochie's deprivation. He resigned and returned to St. Alban's where he served as a curate until his tragic death four years later in a snowstorm on the moors of Scotland.

It would be superfluous to dwell at length on the attitude of the Society to the Public Worship Regulation Act. To all Catholics, its origin, its objectionable clauses, the entire absence of any spiritual authority whatsoever in its provisions, made the Bill simply abhorrent. On the practical side of its opposition, the Society formed a Committee, which drew up a valuable Report and resolved to communicate with the President of the English Church Union with a view to co-operation between the two Societies.

There is no necessity to follow the bad odors of the P.W.R. Act. In the history of the SSC it was an occasion of silent suffering, not of debate. The act failed ignominiously in its purpose. That it has failed in its fell and blundering purpose owes chiefly to the faithful priests, who fought 'both bravely and wisely.'

The parallels to our own time are striking. But the lesson we extract from their troubles may be the response they made. Quiet and dignified resistance was their course of action. They simply refused to accept the judgment. Mackonochie, when told to remove the cross from the wall, did so-and put it on a stand. When ordered to cease kneeling in front of the Blessed Sacrament, he genuflected, when told to stop

genuflecting, he made a profound bow, when he refused to stop that, he was suspended. We too may be called to resist various decisions and judgments that are wrongly ordered in spite of the cost.

PASTORAL MINISTRY

From Saint Alban the Martyr, Holborn: a history of fifty years, by George W. E. Russell. Milwaukee, Young Churchman Co., 1913. In the days when "the Better Housing of the Poor" was little accounted of, Mr. [A. H.] Mackonochie [first Vicar of St. Alban's] labored, amid numerous discouragements, to abolish slums and rookeries, and to promote morality by a crusade against overcrowding. Again, the provision of cheap and wholesome food has been only a small part of the ministry to the body; yet a most real service, and too often contemned. Education, with all the possibilities which it opens up for the humblest and the poorest, has claimed a full share of attention . . . and, in brief, there has been a sustained and many-sided effort to make the lives of the poor brighter, sweeter, and more humane.

A Cholera Epidemic broke out in the summer of 1866. In St. George's parish, with its lack of sanitation and extreme crowding, the chances of survival among cholera patients were less than fifty-fifty. The greatest burden was borne by the clergy, who, called on to deal with both the bodies and souls of the victims, were baffled in each ministrations by the speed and nature of the disease. They were frequently the first to be summoned to a new case, and on reaching the home of the sufferer were responsible for chafing limbs, administering stimulants, carrying the sick to hospital - in short, for trying to save the life of one whom they needed also to prepare for death. It was also the clergy whose authority was most often invoked to ensure that the sick be removed to hospital when they fell ill in the midst of a densely packed family, that the dead be quickly removed from houses or rooms, that the bedclothes of the victims be burnt. In this they risked incurring the wrath of those whose feelings were outraged by the enforcement of sanitary measures or whose poverty was enhanced by the destruction of clothes and bedding which there was no guarantee of replacing. But any unpopularity of the moment was outweighed by the lasting good will and gratitude won for the clergy and Sisters by their ministrations, while at the same time the common effort of all parochial authorities - clergy from St. John's, Wapping and St. George's, mission priests and sisters, vestrymen and medical officers - led to a better understanding between them and a more charitable interpretation of each other's motives than had been the case before.

The struggle for sanitation reform and against the sweatshops where over-worked men, women, and children struggled to earn a meager pittance was part and parcel of the Anglo-Catholic mission, inseparable from the Eucharistic Faith they practiced. They lived out in action their conviction that "the bodies of our neighbors are the temples of the Holy Spirit and are therefore to be fed, clothed, and housed adequately." At the root of much of the rioting against "ritualism" in places like St. George's in the East could be found the violent reaction of landlords and sweatshop owners threatened by their Catholic social teaching.

TRIUMPH AND MINISTRY

Lowder of course, was an obvious target and one at which the anti-ritualist soon took aim. But his position in 1867 was far stronger than it had been even a year earlier. The impact of years of parochial service, visibly witnessed by St. Peter's, had eroded much of the wall of opposition that the Mission had first met. The remainder crumbled under the impression made by the clergy and sisters during the cholera. From the end of that epidemic, Lowder was known in Wapping simply as "the Father" and any outsiders rash enough to threaten him or his work risked the filial outrage of his people. Lowder and others refused to obey the rulings and continued the use of all ceremonies. Proceedings were instituted several times but Bp. Jackson, now Bp. of London, refused to back the proceedings and stopped the suit.

Meanwhile, the Church Association continued to look for an aggrieved parishioner by whom it could prosecute Lowder. It was, however, unsuccessful in its search, and a year after the original Mackonochie judgment the ritual at St. Peter's remained unreformed. I will end this portion of the paper with an event from July, 1883, when 'a resolution was passed by the Society which was the first of its kind and which brought a solemn joy to the hearts of the Brethren. It was as follows: "That the Brethren of SSC in Chapter assembled desire to express their great thankfulness to Almighty God for the election of their Brother, the Rev. A. Chinnery-Haldane, as Bishop of Argyll and the Isles, accepting it as a mark of the Divine favor that this Society should have been called to give one of its Brethren to the Episcopate."

This didn't end the persecutions, for in 1885, the Rev. J. Bell Cox, Vicar of St. Margaret's, Liverpool, which led after a lengthy trial, to his imprisonment. Yet the tide had turned, and Cox's along with Bryan King's imprisonment spelled the death toll of the legal battle. From that point on, the Catholic Movement was free to expand its teaching and ministry.

Mackonochie's address in 1876, as he vacated the office of Master.

“ By the goodness of God the Society today completes its twenty-first year. Born at a time when the Church of England was still suffering from the effects of the 'Durham Letter', and of the leakage towards Rome which had followed it, she has lived, and grown, and strengthened, under the influence of continued blessings from God, amidst an almost unceasing succession of perplexities.”

The Society sprung out of the necessity, manifest to its founders, of meeting the unbelief of the day, and the increasing opposition to Catholic life, by a combined action, no however small a scale, of greater personal mortification, more entire corporate unity, and a supreme sense of Brotherhood, for Christ's sake, in a Society.

LESSONS TO BE LEARNED?

CATHOLIC TRUTH AND SACRAMENT Modern Relativity

The Victorian age was a time of Litudinarianism. Darwin, the Enlightenment and increasing industrialization led to the idea that truth was relative. The SSC fought to uphold the Church's teachings on the Eucharist and Confession and they were attacked by the ecclesiastical and public establishment. They used ritual, ceremonial and sermons to bring the magnificence of these great truths and the comfort that they offer to people who had neither knowledge of God nor even of their need to know God. We live in a time of relativity where the phrase, “I feel” is given the status of eternal truth. Scripture is seen as unsophisticated and unscientific and liable to the judgment of our Culture, rather than as eternal and judging our culture. Cultural Diversity and alternative lifestyles fill the pages of magazines and books, and dominate our movies and TV shows. In our day, the greatest sin is not bad taste, but intolerance and a phobia of some 'ism'.

We live in time in which the boundaries of acceptable behavior move faster and faster away from the center. What lesson can we learn from the early history of the SSC but that a few, committed and faithful to eternal principles, can through quiet teachings and resistance, recall the church to the centrality of the cross and the grace of absolution and the presence of Christ in the Eucharist.

By insisting on the sacrament of marriage in our own parishes, regardless of what society and even the General Convention may choose to hold up and bless, we encourage the presence of Christ in that most intimate of human bonds. By stressing

the sanctity of that relationship, we can offer a stable, loving, and enduring experience of the love of Christ for his Church.

And by insisting on eternal truth, we can clear away the cobwebs of confusion and instability that result from a relative world where there is no certainty.

CATHOLIC WORSHIP Modern Technology

In a time of increased industrial growth and expansion, with pollution and decay affecting the very existence of the growing and crowded cities, life was dull, dark and gray. The brothers of the SSC seized the use of ritual to accomplish two things. One, they brought reverence and a sense of God's presence into the Church, and with that sense of the presence of God, they restored awe and wonder to the service. And they brought color and movement into a gray existence and therefore allowed the congregation to participate and become involved in a physical and spiritual way. Ellsworth, one of Lowder's biographers, stated, '... ceremonial and ritual observances, clubs, guilds, and confraternities, services and sermons were all subservient - instruments of no intrinsic worth. But for their usefulness in promoting 'God's glory and the salvation of soul's' Lowder prized them.'

The ceremonial was used as a school for spirituality, a method to teach the truths and comfort of faith to an unlettered and uncultured population. That this captured the imagination of other classes was a benefit. But the purpose of the ceremonial enrichment was to honor the sacraments and evangelize the people. And it made an impact. In 1867, when the Holy Communion was still infrequently celebrated, there were no less than 17,392 communions in St. Alban's, Holburn-this in a parish that had not been open five years.

In our day, we rely on technology. There is a real sense that we can conquer anything. And when we discover those myriad arenas where technology is helpless, we become confused and adrift. If science can't help us, if medical technology can't keep us looking young and attractive and functioning as if we were twenty, if the growth of the stock market can't keep us employed, then what is the meaning of our life. As children grow and dreams of success fade, where do we turn for answers, and how can the True answer be communicated? In this materialistic and shortsighted world, how can we incorporate the ideals and principles and experience of the SSC's founders to reach out into our world and culture and bring the knowledge of eternal life to a frightened and confused world that is looking for meaning in all the wrong places?

We must develop a ceremonial and a reverence that is not merely historically correct but that truly places the worshipping congregation in direct contact with God. Every possible shred of gesture and movement must be employed to enable the assembled worshippers to realize the presence of God in mind and heart. That was the genius of the SSC and the principle upon which it stood.

As Mackonochie wrote in his first parish magazine in 1868, 'For nearly two hundred years after [the 1662 Prayer Book] people cared very little for the Church or her Services. But when in these days God was pleased to make us think more of him and ourselves, and his sacraments, a wish was felt for things which might set these Great Realities more plainly before us. Hence, when the time seemed to have come for me to do so I was glad to assent to your wishes in the matter, and give you a service as befitted those who love the Lord whom they worship.' Vestments, incense, candles and the like were introduced because they were attractive and exciting and because they were demonstrations of what the Catholic faith is all about, because they pointed to the reality of the presence of God.

CATHOLIC MINISTRY Modern Alienation

Finally, it was the ministry of the individual members of the SSC that won their congregations over and led to their ultimate acceptance. Poverty, social structure, and cultural mores combined to create a wall between individuals and classes. It was difficult to break through these great divides and deal with another person on the level of basic humanity.

A non-Christian contemporary wrote the following about Mackonochie: "To say that Mr. Mackonochie is popular with the poor amongst whom he lives is not to use the right word. It is not so much admiration or reverence they feel for him, as personal affection.... Mr. Mackonochie's parishioners know that he is among them to do his duty by them thoroughly and conscientiously, and they feel that they can rely upon it being done. That was what Mr. Mackonochie's Ritualism meant for the poor. ... This enthusiasm for humanity was the essence of Mr. Mackonochie's ritualism." Their ministry to their people in times of sickness and death, in times of poverty and hunger, and in times of repentance and seeking, was ultimately the point at which the Catholic faith and its insistence on the presence of Christ took effect.

At a time when little was being done to alleviate either material or spiritual poverty in the slums, Lowder, Mackonochie, and the brothers of the SSC, pioneered an effective method of ministry in which both evils received attention. Our society suffers from an even greater sense of individual isolation. Telephone, fax, and e-mail, fences and air-

conditioning, fear of crime and long commutes by car combine to limit basic human contact with other human beings. In spite of the communication revolution, a revolution in which we know who some athlete or movie star is sleeping with, and what they were arrested for last night, we remain so isolated that we do not know the name of our next door neighbor and have never seen the people who live two doors down. We are hungry for real human contact, basic human interaction that allows us to share our fears and hopes, our burdens and joy, and to give and receive help and assurance. For us, the truth of the matter is that no one in the congregation really cares how many signs of the cross are made in the Mass by the Celebrant. What they long for is the same things that the SSC fought to offer. We desire contact, contact with God and contact with each other. This may be the overriding task for us as their successors, to bring our world into the reality of the presence of God through ceremonial and beauty that speaks to them and to provide venues such as guilds, clubs, confraternities and Bible studies, prayers groups and others avenues for people to encounter each other in a real way, centered on God.

SUMMARY AND REVIEW

SSC stands for Societas Sanctae Crucis - the Society of the Holy Cross. The Society was founded in London in 1855 by a small group of Anglo-Catholic priests led by Father Charles Lowder. At a time when the Catholic Revival in the Church of England was threatened by persecution and misunderstanding, these priests came together for support, mutual prayer and encouragement. Fr Lowder spelled out the objects of SSC: "To defend and strengthen the spiritual life of the clergy, to defend the faith of the Church, and to carry on and aid Mission work both at home and abroad. The members of this society, meeting together as they did in prayer and conference, were deeply impressed with the evils existing in the Church, and saw also, in the remedies adopted by St Vincent de Paul, the hope of lessening them."

The Society has now spread throughout the world and is organized in autonomous Provinces under Provincial Masters elected by their Brethren. We live under a common Rule and meet together in local SSC Chapters on a regular basis for prayer, Mass and some kind of study or conversation. Presiding over the Society worldwide is a Master-General who has a special responsibility to ensure an on-going fidelity among the Brethren to the spirit of the Society.

SSC is not really a devotional guild, but shares a common vision of "a disciplined priestly life fashioned after a definite spiritual rule." It is this Rule of Life which unites the Brethren in their various priestly ministries and lives. They are required to "consider

their obligation to the Society as a close spiritual bond...which takes precedence to that of any other voluntary society." This obligation includes a commitment to attend local SSC Chapter meetings and annual Regional and Provincial Synods. The life of the Society is experienced primarily through the local Chapter, and attendance at Chapter is of obligation unless prevented by genuine pastoral duties.

The fortunes of the Society have waxed and waned since the early days of the Catholic Revival, but for its members it has always been an important source of priestly formation, discipline and fraternity. Many of the best-known and best-loved priests of our Anglo-Catholic tradition have been brethren of SSC. Priests of the Society can be recognized by the small gold lapel cross that they generally wear. On it is inscribed the motto of the Society - *in hoc signo vinces* - in this sign, conquer!