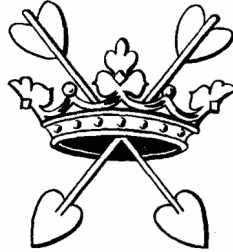


The Parish of St. Edmund, King and Martyr

(Kitchener, Waterloo, Cambridge, and Guelph)



The Anglican Catholic Church of Canada

UPDATE

December 17, 2002 - St. Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch

January Schedule

January 1	Wednesday	-	Octave Day of Christmas / The Circumcision of Our Lord
January 5	Sunday	-	The Second Sunday after Christmas
January 6	Monday	-	The Epiphany of Our Lord
January 12	Sunday	-	The First Sunday after The Epiphany
January 19	Sunday	-	The Second Sunday after The Epiphany
January 24	Friday	-	Conversion of St. Paul - transferred
January 26	Sunday	-	The Third Sunday after The Epiphany

Service Times and Location

(1) All Services are held in the Chapel at Luther Village on the Park - 139 Father David Bauer Drive in Waterloo.

(2) On Sundays, **Matins** is said at **10:00 a.m.** (The **Litany** on the first Sunday

of the month), and the **Holy Eucharist** is celebrated at **10:30 a.m.**

(3) On weekdays - **Holy Days** and **Days of Obligation** (Diocesan Ordo) - the **Holy Eucharist** is *usually* celebrated at **7:00 p.m.** when the Chapel is available - please phone to confirm.

The Bishop's Bit

Day of Wrath

(A sermon preached in St John's, Victoria, at a celebration on the 25th anniversary of the founding of the parish.)

My texts are two:

"I AM the Lord thy God. Thou shalt have none other gods. For I am a jealous God" (*Exodus 20,1 - 5*).

"To the church in Ephesus write: I have this against thee, thou didst leave thy first Love" (*Revelation 2,1 - 4*).

Old Testament prophets interpreted events. In their prophecies they explained the history of Israel, they interpreted current events in Israel, and to some extent they predicted the future of Israel. Now I am not a prophet. There were more false prophets in the Old Testament than there were true. I also may be false. But, no doubt like many of you, I have had my stab at interpreting current events within Christendom, particularly current events within Anglicanism.

It seems to me that the wrath of God has fallen upon us. Why? Because we have worshipped an idol. And the idol which Anglicans have worshipped for many a long century, has many faces. These faces are called compromise, culture, establishment, good taste, influence, respectability, wealth.

God has been good to us. Beverley Minster, Durham cathedral, St Cyprian's, Clarence Gate, exist because Jesus is Lord (*I Corinthians 12,2*). Orlando Gibbons, Henry Purcell, Thomas Tallis, exist because Jesus is Lord. John Donne, George Herbert, Robert Herrick, exist because Jesus is Lord. C S Lewis, Dorothy L Sayers, Charles Williams, exist because Jesus is Lord. The art of England, the architecture of England, and therefore also the landscape and the cities of England, the history of England, its drama, music, poetry and prose, are what

they are, because Jesus is Lord. Even the sport of England: does not "*The Church Times*" sponsor an interdiocesan cricket competition each year? Is not the game played against the friendly backdrop of a village church, or against the magnificent backdrop of Worcester Cathedral, beside which swans languidly glide.

As with Orthodoxy in Greece, or with Roman Catholicism in Poland, or with Calvinism in South Africa, so with Anglicanism in England. A nation and its culture are inseparable from an expression of the Christian faith. We may be Anglican by inheritance or by conversion. We may be Anglican socially or psychologically. But we are also Anglican culturally. Agnostics who can neither deny nor affirm Jesus as Lord, may nevertheless love the Church of England. Dame Rose Macaulay said that through her wilderness years she was Anglo - agnostic. Atheists who deny Jesus as Lord, may nevertheless love the C of E. That TV character, Morse of the Oxford police, sang in the choir of a college chapel. Agnostics and atheists rush to defend the Book of Common Prayer and the King James Bible.

God has been good to us. So many blessings have been showered down upon us. And we wish to continue this living tradition of which we are part. In Australia one of our number wavered on the brink of Orthodoxy. But at the last moment he drew back. He said to the Greek priest, "Anglicanism is not some notions to which I assent in my head. It is like a living organism of which I am a member. I can no more join another tradition than I can turn myself into a Mexican."

But we have come to idolize His blessings instead of God, to worship the gifts instead of the Giver. For with all these treasures there has come a place in national life, a word in the Prime Minister's ear, a stroll through the corridors of power. We became part of the establishment. We were respectable, sometimes even wealthy. And so, the wrath of God is upon us. We must be stripped of status as Anglicans. The issue

is not cultured good taste. The issue is Jesus. Do we give ourselves to Him, come what may, or do we not?

A jealous God does not put up with idols. We may have loved Jesus long ago, but He complains that we have abandoned Him for another. Idols are therefore torn from us. And we are left only with Jesus. And we are left with those four ministrations which bind us to Jesus. The two Testaments. The three creeds. The threefold ministry. The seven sacraments. We relearn that the church is not an institution. The church is Jesus and believers united with Him through baptism.

Begotten not made. God out of God. Light out of Light. True God out of True God. Through Him were all things made. He shall come again. Therefore to Him, the Beginning and the End, with His Father in the unity of Their Spirit be thanks for evermore.

+Robert Mercer, CR

By the **Bishop Ordinary - The Anglican Catholic Church of Canada**

Advent and Relativity

One of my heroes is Albert Einstein. He was a Jew, and a deeply religious one, although as an adult he did not practice Judaism. Friedrich Dürrenmatt once said, "Einstein used to speak of God so often that I almost looked upon him as a disguised theologian." Einstein had a deep religious awe that he cultivated and retained throughout his life - an unabated wonder at the immensity, unity, rational harmony, and mathematical beauty of the universe. When asked whether he accepted the historical Jesus he replied, "Unquestionably! No one can read the Gospels without feeling the actual presence of Jesus. His personality pulsates in every word. No myth is filled with such life." Whatever else Einstein was, he certainly was not an atheist, and was deeply hurt whenever anyone

accused him of being such. He simply did not fit into any of the categories into which most of us can be slotted. He was a theist, but of a very original and deeply thinking kind. He believed passionately in God, but not in a God whom he considered to be limited and constrained by being a "personal" God. His God was sublimely super-personal, whom he was unable to grasp or express in any intellectual way but before whom he stood in unbounded awe and wonder. His grasp of God was intuitive rather than rational, and so Einstein could say in complete sincerity: "Science without religion is lame, religion without science is blind." I think we Christians have a lot to learn from Albert Einstein. Very few of us know what it means to be overwhelmed with awe and reverence. For most of us, our God can only be described as trivial. That is the point where we could well begin Advent.

For most of us, the name of Einstein is linked with "relativity", and "relativity" is an esoteric and ethereal concept beyond the comprehension of ordinary mortals. Well, yes, but not entirely. A mathematician once explained to me that although Einstein's mathematics are way beyond the understanding of most of us illiterati, they are not impossibly difficult. Einstein's genius lay not in his maths but in his audacity and imagination. His mind thought thoughts that no one had ever thought before. A major part of physical science is concerned with measuring things and forces in the universe around us. Three of the fundamental measurements we make are time and length and mass. The units are of course entirely arbitrary - seconds, metres, kilograms, whatever. They were the standards by which other things were measured. So light had a velocity of 186 000 miles per second. That had been known for a couple of centuries or so before Einstein, and it needed only simple instruments and simple maths to reach that conclusion. But also before Einstein there were other measurements which did not fit in with this. Ah well, these inconsistencies happen, so no one was particularly worried. Except Einstein.

Even as a teenager Einstein had a vivid imagination about light. As he himself said, he used to keep on "wondering especially what things might look like if someone went along for the ride with a light wave, keeping pace with it as it traveled through space". Not many teenagers think those kind of thoughts. Anyway, Einstein was still only a teenager when the results of the famous Michelson-Morley experiment were published, and then the shattering thought occurred to him. "What if we make light and its velocity our standard, and make our measurements of time and length and mass fit in with that rather than the other way round?" So was born Einstein's theory of special relativity. For years Einstein's theory was unacceptable to the majority of physicists and the reason was basically their emotional prejudice against having their comfortable Newtonian world upset. It was not until some fifteen years later that Einstein was awarded the Nobel prize, and even then it was not for his work on special relativity. Nowadays there are few if any physicists who do not accept Einstein's relativity theories, but how blind the scientists of the time were to the importance of Light.

The Advent message is clear. We need Advent to jolt us back to sanity, to restore to us, once again, our sense of proportion and perspective. "The people which walked in darkness have seen a great Light; they which dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the Light shined". So said the prophet Isaiah (Is 9.2). We have been measuring ourselves and our world, and living our lives, by standards that are not absolute ones. There is only one standard that is absolute, and that is the standard of The Light. The piece of the jig-saw that didn't fit is the piece with which we have to start, and then build everything around it, and then it all fits with nothing left over. They didn't have jig-saw puzzles in Biblical days, but they had something very similar. Our Lord said, "The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner".

And what a blinding light it was that came

into the world on that first Christmas Day - so blinding, in fact, that we people of earth had to tie blindfolds over our eyes because we didn't want to see it. "The light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not" says St John. How right he was - and is. On the first Christmas day something happened which changed the whole universe so that it would never be the same again. Just try to think of it. The Creator of the universe stepped into the universe which he had created. Thanks to Einstein and others like him we in our time know much better than St John how huge that universe is. We should know, even better than St John, how infinitely more huge is the God who created it. And keep this in mind. Why did God do this unbelievable thing? He did it out of sheer love for his creation which had gone so terribly, terribly wrong. That is the basic Christian understanding about which Advent says, Think, and think deeply, on these things. Where is our ultimate reality now? Is our ultimate reality our ordinary everyday lives of eating, sleeping, working, making money, enjoying ourselves, grasping for ever more power and control over the people and things around us? Or is the ultimate reality the fact that "The Word that was made flesh and dwelt amongst us; and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth".

If God exists at all - if Jesus of Nazareth was indeed the Son of God - then he is the most ultimate of all ultimate realities of all time. We must build our lives around him - or, for many of us, re-build our lives around him. If we don't, then we are living in a comfortable mechanistic Newtonian world which, no matter how real it may seem, is largely a fantasy-world, a fictional world, a world of make-believe.

By **Fr. Roy H. Bowler**

Comments by Jack Keene

A good post by Fr Bowler. Referencing Fr Bowler's discussion via Einstein for the necessity of awe and wonder in religion, I

wholeheartedly concur. Even though I came into the Christian fold via the charismatic, evangelical, movement, I eventually felt it put too much personal control over an Almighty God. God indeed loves us but fails repeatedly to stay in boxes we construct.

The construction of a 'health and wealth' 'gospel' is perhaps the most patent attempt to construct God in our image. Such, also is the emphasis in Protestantism on the individual.

The emphasis on individual revelation and interpretation is what has led this country [the U.S. for Jack] down the road to perdition. Abortion and sexual license destroy the Community, but are the 'rights' of individuals in our culture. In every country in South America where Evangelicals gain a large following contraception and abortion follow along, as it is a religion oriented to self rather than to receiving the deposit of Faith lovingly preserved for two millennia.

In Catholicism/Orthodoxy a sense of awe and wonder is maintained and nurtured. We celebrate the 'Sacred Mysteries'. We are a people and a Community encompassed of generations through the ages. In my discussions with evangelicals, I cannot understand the wilful ignorance and arrogance of simply dispensing with 2000 years of Christian belief, in favor of one's personal 'revelations and opinions'.

God comes to each of us through His Son, yet he comes through the Community and through the Sacraments, channels of His grace.

Certainly Charismatics are well-meaning and many good people, but I find it much more appropriate to bow before the majesty of a holy and loving God.

As Chesterton said, "The sad thing about an atheist, is that when he sees a new born baby's face or beholds a sunset, he has no one to thank."

We thank God, and we join the people of

God in their endless hymn of praise. We join the living and the dead, as He has conquered death. We employ His gifts to help others and not for selfish gain.

Father Roy and **Jack** are both 'members' of TTMBO, an internet forum run by **Charles Moore**, an ACCCer who lives in Nova Scotia.

To a Dear Friend

Father Edward Goodwin

A gentle man who was truly a gentleman. That is the way I will always remember Father Goodwin who died on December 2nd, 2002. His kindness and sincerity will always be remembered. We had so much in common. He came from Portsmouth, Hampshire, in the south of England. I came from the N.E. corner of Dorset, almost adjoining the border of Hampshire. We considered ourselves neighbours. We had trodden many places in common, and shared the beauty of the countryside. Our histories intermingled, for way back there were no boundaries. The inflections in his speech, and some of the idioms purposely put on for my benefit in his own whimsical way with a twinkle in his eye, took me way back in time. We both loved the English language, and he was as great an orator as a writer. Many times have I recalled one of his sermons. He was pointing out that The Lord's Prayer oft repeated may lose its impact, and suggested that we try emphasizing the pronouns. Try it! That means thought to recognize the pronouns, and definitely makes the words more meaningful.

Dear Father Goodwin, it was a privilege to have known you, and to have walked and talked with you. Rest in peace.

By **Helen E. Glover**

What has The Trinity to do with Christmas?

A Meditation for Advent

First of all, we note that neither the expression "The Trinity" nor the word "Christmas" is found in the biblical narratives concerning the birth of Jesus who was called the Christ. This is true both of the New Testament (Matthew 1, Luke 1, John 1) and of the passages in the Old Testament regarded as prophetic of this birth (e.g., Isaiah 8:14).

"Christmas" is a noun used in the Church to speak of the festival of the birth of Jesus, son of Mary and Son of God the Father, who is the Christ [Christ-Mess]; while "The Trinity" is the Name given by the Church to the One God, who by self-revelation has made it known that He exists eternally as Three Persons [the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost].

This said, The Trinity (as the Christian word for Deity) has much to do with that which is celebrated in the festival of Christmas. Let me explain.

In the Gospel accounts of the birth of Jesus and its meaning we certainly read of "God the Lord" [Jehovah/Yahweh], of the presence of "the Holy Ghost/Spirit" of and from this God [who is the God of Moses, David and the Prophets], and of Jesus who is called "Emmanuel" [God with us]. Further, "God the Lord" is also called "the Father" and Jesus is called "the Word made flesh" and "the Father's only [begotten] Son."

We may say that what we have in the New Testament are doctrines about God as the Father, about Jesus as his Son, about the Holy Ghost as the Spirit of the Father and the Spirit of the Son. In the narratives and the doctrines of the N.T. are examples of how each of the Three acts in human redemption in relation to the Others and in relation to mankind. So the Father loves the Son and the Son obeys the Father. The Holy Ghost causes the conception in Mary's womb which is also simultaneously the assumption by the eternal Son of human nature/flesh. And so on. Yet in the N.T. we have not reached any fixed or settled way of stating the unique equality and unity of

the Three and of how they are a plurality in unity so that there is only one God.

From this teaching and evidence, and through her ongoing experience of God as One yet Three, the Church by the 4th century created what we call the dogma of the Holy Trinity [Nicene Creed]. This is first of all a statement about God as God is in and unto Himself - He is a Trinity in Unity and a Unity in Trinity: One God and three Persons. There are not three gods but there is One God (one Godhead, divine nature/substance) who eternally exists as three Persons [the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost]. For Western Christians the fullness of this dogma is declared most succinctly and powerfully in the Creed we know as the Athanasian Creed [the Quincunque Vult].

Then from this dogma of The Trinity (known to theologians as the doctrine of "the immanent Trinity") the Church created what is called the doctrine of the Economic Trinity [God the Trinity acting in relation to the world and to the human race]. That is, with the insights from the dogma of the immanent Trinity, and using the biblical material, the Church spoke of the action of God in space/time and especially in the economy or action of salvation/redemption. This sophisticated talk of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost (the Economic Trinity) engaged in the creation and redemption of the world is found in sermons and liturgies from the Early Church and is the most basic level of the language in the classic liturgies of the Church through time. For example, it underlies all statements in the Anglican Book of Common Prayer (first edition 1549). In the historic Divine Liturgy of the Orthodox Churches we have marvelous presentations of both the Dogma of the [immanent] Holy Trinity (one Substance/three Persons) and of the doctrine of the Economic Trinity based upon that Dogma and interpreting the biblical doctrines and narratives for the purpose of doxology.

Thus what occurred in the original historical actions that we commemorate in the Festival of Christmas is, we may

say, an Event of the Holy Trinity. The Father sends His Only Son, the Word, into space and time, and in that coming the Holy Ghost causes Him to assume human nature and flesh in the womb of the Virgin Mary and to be born from her. Though there are specific actions of each of the Three [the Father, Jesus the Son and the Holy Ghost], in and through all these actions is the action of the One Godhead, the One Deity. Thus we celebrate the action of a Trinity in Unity and a Unity in Trinity as the essential background to the very human story of a young woman giving birth to her first child, a son, and giving him a name, Jesus [the Lord our salvation]. By and through this son who is also the incarnate, enfleshed Son of God the Father, the Trinity has devised and will accomplish the salvation of the world.

To continue this meditation - we see in all the great saving events of the life of Jesus the revelation of the Holy Trinity - e.g. in his baptism at the Jordan, in his Transfiguration on the Mountain, in his death on the Cross and in his Resurrection from the dead. The Incarnate Son is never alone for he is in Communion with the Father; and the Holy Ghost rests upon him and indwells his human nature. Further, at the deepest level He is the Second Person of the Holy Trinity and shares the one and identical divine nature with the Father and the Holy Ghost.

The LOVE that came down at Christmas is movement from the Love of the Father for the Son in the Holy Ghost, the inter-Trinitarian love, focused upon human sinners and their need in space and time.

By **The Rev. Dr. Peter Toon**

Edward Charles Goodwin,
Priest

(The sermon preached by The Bishop at Father Goodwin's Requiem Mass on Saturday, December 7, 2002.)

John 21,21 - 22. "Peter asked Jesus, What shall this other man do? Jesus answered, "What is that to you? Follow me yourself".

I Corinthians 12,11. "All these gifts are the work of the same Spirit, Who divides them up among men as He chooses".

Ephesians 4,11 "The ascended Lord Jesus gave some to be evangelists and some to be teachers."

If Ed had had his druthers, to use a Canadian word, I suspect he would have chosen to be an effective evangelist. Ed knows and loves the Lord Jesus Christ. He longed to bring others to a living faith in Jesus. A modest man, he might not have wanted to be an evangelist on the scale of a Billy Graham, but an evangelist nevertheless.

But it is God Who dishes out the jobs for His servants to do. If Peter is destined for martyrdom in Rome, John is destined for old age somewhere in Asia Minor. And it is God Who dishes out gifts and talents to His servants. If one man has what it takes to convert unbelievers, another man has what it takes to teach the faith.

So far as I can tell, Ed's calling was to teach. His sermons were gracefully constructed, carefully listened to. He wrote for the parish magazine, for diocesan papers, for the Convent Society. He even wrote an outline of the Christian faith, called "*A Sparrow on the Housetop*". Unfortunately the Convent Society was in its early days, and the printing of that paperback was less than satisfactory, did less than justice to Ed's work.

A good teacher is a good learner. Ed loved to study theology. Right up until the end he was perusing the big books. It goes without saying that he never gave up on Bible study.

A good teacher has a wide experience of life, so that he can illustrate his themes, so that he can sympathize with his listeners. Edward Goodwin loved and lived in two countries. He knew many parishes. He worked with engineers and atomic scientists. During the Second World War he was in a job that attracted the attention of the Luftwaffe. He was

influenced by the charismatic movement and by the mystical theology of St John of the Cross. He tried to serve God by being a husband, a father and an engineer. He came late to the ordained ministry of deacon and of priest, though several of us thought he should have been ordained decades sooner. He loved every minute of being a priest and took great pains over ministering at the altar. All this breadth of experience made Ed an ideal conversationalist for commending and teaching the faith, one on one.

But of course no evangelist, no teacher, no Christian, can survive without the gift of faith. I think of Ed as a man of faith even more than I think of Ed as teacher. Through all the ups and downs of life, through all his apparent failure to bring large numbers of unbelievers to Jesus, Ed adhered to Jesus in trust. St Paul tells the Corinthians, "Be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, because ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord" (*I Corinthians* 15,58).

And that is how I remember Father Goodwin: stedfast, unmoveable, abounding in the work of the Lord.

By **+Robert Mercer CR**

The Church, False Teaching and the Church Leader - II

(Text of the talk given at St Helen's Bishopsgate on Sunday 13 October, outlining the response of the clergy at St Helen's to the appointment of Dr Rowan Williams as Archbishop of Canterbury.)

I want now to move from a general point about the place of the Bible and the role of the Christian leader to the position of Dr Williams himself.

So secondly, the teachings of Dr Williams.

Let me say before I start that I have taken great care to try to understand what Dr Williams is saying. I have read his writings. I have enjoyed speaking with him and with his chaplain. I have told Dr

Williams that I shall take special care to represent what he has to say fairly. He has been sent a copy of this sermon.

Having spoken with him I recognise the intense pressure that he and his family currently find themselves under and as a church we need to be praying for them all in what must be a time of enormous stress.

In addition, this public statement to the church family at St Helen's doesn't come without prior personal communication and reasoning. He has been approached individually and jointly both by myself and by a number of others. It is only following these discreet and entirely amicable pleadings that we make this public statement. It is with great regret and a heavy heart that one has to speak openly and publicly against a man like Dr Williams.

Dr Williams wishes to draw a distinction between what he believes as an individual and private theologian and the way in which he will act in public. As an individual he insists that his writings still stand. He believes what he has to say is a valid interpretation of scripture. And he is not prepared to make a public statement renouncing his writings and teaching.

As a public figure he says he will act 'in role' and seek to uphold the teaching of the church.

I shall tackle his private views first.

The biblical view of gender and marriage are set out in the early chapters of Genesis. These are the passages that Jesus, and the rest of the New Testament, use to discuss marriage and sex.

The key passages are Genesis 1:27 and Genesis 2:24.

Turn back to Genesis 1:27

'So God created man in His own image,

In the image of God He created him;

Male and Female He created

them.'

You can see there that God made humankind equal but different.

He makes us male and female in His image, so that the image of God is seen in two equal but different complementary people.

It is then these two equal, but different and complementary partners who are brought together in chapter two to form a public, permanent, physical union.

It's there in Genesis 2:24

'Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.'

This is the only place in the bible for godly sexual activity to take place. The rest of the bible then describes this covenant relationship between two complementary parties as modelled on and a mirror of God's relationship with His people. God is described as husband, His church as bride. In Ephesians 5:31-32 Paul quotes Genesis 2:24 and then says, "This is a profound mystery but I am speaking about Christ and the church". And within that relationship the different roles of husband and wife are likened in 1 Corinthians 11 to the different roles of the Trinity.

Dr Williams believes that some individuals, through genetic and other circumstances, are 'naturally homosexual.' That is, they are born with a tendency to experience homosexual desire.

He does not consider that the biblical passages which speak against homosexual practice are addressed to people who find themselves to be 'naturally homosexual.' His argument would be that those passages speak against homosexual practice that is coercive or predatory in a society where male prostitution was common place.

Nor does he believe that the only place for genital sexual relations is within life-long

heterosexual marriage.

His argument is that the Genesis passages which form the foundation for Jesus' view of marriage are relevant primarily to procreative sex. That is, sex in order to have babies. And that since sexual intercourse is designed for more than simply having babies, sexual intercourse need not be confined purely to heterosexual marriage.

For this reason Dr Williams is keen to argue for what he calls a Biblical Ethic, that is a Christian way, for people who find themselves to be naturally homosexual to order their relationships. In other words 'homosexual marriage.'

His arguments can be found in an old essay entitled The Body's Grace. They are the fairly well-worn arguments of part of the Christian Feminist Movement. Dr Williams tells me that his views have been formed 'both from his study of scripture and from his speaking to people within the homosexual community.'

He does his theology both from looking at Scripture and Christian humanity: so that our understanding of who Jesus is - quote - "must be grasped in the light of what Christian humanity is".

Dr Williams argues that this 'should not be a defining issue for Christians because it is only a matter of personal and private interpretation of scripture and has to do with personal sexuality.'

In response we need to say the following things.

Firstly, just because someone has an instinctive desire it does not necessarily mean that this instinctive desire is a good or right thing.

Thieves have instinctive desires. Greed is an instinctive desire to some. Slander, gossip, heterosexual temptation . . . all these things are instinctive desires, corruptions in a fallen world, of our God-given desires. Were we to spend a long time speaking to those of us who are

tempted to be greedy or to steal we would find that these desires come very instinctively. But that does not mean that we ought to develop a biblical way of thieving. Or a biblical way of being adulterous.

Secondly, in the biblical passages concerned Paul addresses both the active and the passive partner in same sex activity. He condemns both activities. So he cannot be speaking purely about coercive or predatory sex. Furthermore, it is now clear that theories about some people being born naturally homosexual were around in the first century. Yet Paul still condemns same sex activity.

Thirdly, we must not be taken in by the suggestion that same sex activity is natural. You ask your doctor and he or she will tell you about some of the damage and distress caused to the anal tissue when it is penetrated in anal sex. The medics know full well that the tissue on the walls of the anus is not designed for penetration and friction. That's why such pain and abrasion is so frequently associated with anal sex. But the tissue of the vagina is designed for penetrative sex. It is much thicker and tougher.

Fourthly, the bible recognises full well that sex is about more than simply having babies.

The idea of one flesh has to do with far more than mere physical union designed to produce babies. It is physical and that is part of its joy. But the joy of sexual union extends from the physical to the emotional, and spiritual. And it is designed to cement the whole relationship.

That's why, in 1 Corinthians, Paul argues against sex outside of marriage. Not because sex outside of marriage might produce an unwanted baby. He argues against sex outside of marriage because he does not want us to become one flesh with one person, then one flesh with another person, then one flesh with

another person.

Finally, this issue is far, far bigger than an issue purely to do with me and my individual personal sexual preferences. For marriage in the bible is an institution that is modelled on and mirrors the relationship between God and His people. Two people in a life-long union with different roles. And the roles of the partners in marriage in the bible are described in terms of the relationship between God the Father and God the Son. (1 Corinthians 11:3).

So that when we start to suggest an alternative to two equal but different individuals coming together in marriage we begin to suggest a completely different picture of God. That's why Paul argues that same sex activity, and same sex relationships are idolatrous.

There then are the personal views of Dr Williams.

By **William Taylor**, Rector of St Helen's - the second of three parts.

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The Diocesan Circular
The Annunciator
Agnus Dei