

# Effeta—Open up !

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Whenever we talk of the missions we must begin with the mission of Christ: As the Father has sent me, so I send you. And we must recognise at the start that the missionary is not a public relations officer for any system, or government, or way of life, but a man sent by God, a man who is to be himself a true imitation of Christ. Writing to the Philippians, Paul described the nature of the mission of Christ, what it meant for Christ:

who though he was in the form of God  
did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped  
but emptied himself  
taking the form of a servant.

The Christian missionary, and more and more it becomes obvious that this means any Christian anywhere, must see his mission as the continuation of the work of Christ, making all times and all places Christian, making them years of our Lord, and Holy Lands, pushing back the bramble and the weed in the garden of God until all men live in his Paradise. When the Pharisees wanted to know what doctrine Christ was preaching he told them he was re-establishing the world and men as they had been at creation:

It was to suit your hard hearts that Moses allowed you to put your wives away; it was not so at the beginning, and it is not so now. The whole of creation that fell in Adam is risen anew in Christ. We have now to make his glory manifest.

Once we have come to have faith in Christ we can see him as he is, and seeing him we want to go forward proclaiming him to all men. This is the meaning of the Transfiguration as it is described in St Mark's gospel. For the first seven chapters and more Mark has shewn us disciples who do not see who Christ is, they are ever asking one another: Who is this who is obeyed even by the winds and the sea? They see that something is happening but they do not see it clearly. They are like the man at Bethsaida who saw men as trees walking. The blind man came to see men as men and the disciples come to see Christ as Christ. Other men may think him Elias, or John the Baptist, or some other of the prophets, but they at last understand, 'Thou art the Christ'. Knowing

who he is they see him as he is. After the recognition at Caesarea Philippi he is transfigured before them and they are sharers in this glory. They want to proclaim him at once but the time is not yet:

As they were coming down from the mountain he warned them not to tell anyone what they had seen, until after the Son of Man had risen from the dead

Now Christ is risen and we are men who have a great secret, the secret of the kingdom of God, the knowledge of who Christ is, and it is our mission to proclaim him:

It is his will that all men should be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth

We are to go out and teach all nations, making all men sons of God in baptism. This is our responsibility:

Everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved. Only how are they to call upon him until they have learned to believe in him? And how are they to believe in him, until they listen to him?

And how can they listen without a preacher to listen to? And how can there be preachers unless the preachers are sent on their errand?

The glory of God in the new heaven and new earth is to be announced by the men whom he has chosen in baptism and commissioned in confirmation. Men are to bring men to Christ. And the differences between men and men require differences in the bringing to the one Christ. We must be all things to all men and shew them Christ who is the same yesterday, today and forever. This is not easy of solution. How is it to be done?

If we look at the work of Paul we see how a man totally committed to the announcement of salvation through the one mediator was able to adapt his presentation to his hearers. He did not do this all at once. At first he was more successful in the synagogues than in the market-places—the Athenian episode is a reminder that St Paul had no infused gift of how to conduct a mission—but he learnt how to shew Christ as the answer to all men's different questions. As he travelled he seems to have responded to the varying ethos of the liturgy in various towns and when he wrote to a community predominantly of Jews his manner of presenting the one truth of Christ differed from the one he employed when talking to Greeks. Though there was neither Jew nor Gentile, no wall of partition, in the Christian Church, in the sense of class distinction or value in the eye of God, there yet remained differences in the culture and civilisation of men. Two examples from the epistles may make this point. For the Jews their relationship to God was dominated by two

realities, God's revelation of himself through the scripture and man's rebellion in sin. If they were to be shewn the reality of Christ's work and majesty they would have first to be shewn that he was a fulfilment of God's word about himself and that he had set aright the relation of God and man destroyed by sin. So Paul writes to the Jews of Corinth of the tradition he has received, the credal statement he has discovered in the liturgy:

I deliver to you as of first importance what I also received:  
 that Christ died for our sins  
 in accordance with the scriptures  
 that he was buried and has been raised on the third day  
 in accordance with the scriptures

The reign of sin has been ended in full accord with the revelation they have already been given in their history, and in their realisation of the meaning of their history. For the Greeks of the decadent Hellenistic period the world was a prison, a menacing machine which with relentless determination ground out the destined lives of men. The stars on their courses were fixed and they in turn fixed the actions of men. They wanted to escape from the universe of unalterable law, they wanted to get out of the machine and to break down the inevitability of action, they wanted to be free. But the principalities and powers were too strong for them, the angels were too secure in their hold on events. They wanted too to be reassured that the world of Forms and Ideas did not remove all value from common everyday events, to be confident that the things of the flesh were not worthless. So their liturgy proclaimed and Paul trumpeted to them that all was well:

He who was manifested in the flesh  
 vindicated in the spirit  
 seen by angels  
 preached among the nations  
 believed on in the world  
 taken up in glory

is the Lord we worship. He has smashed the spheres and destroyed the power of the angels, he has been accepted by the Gentiles, and made a way for all men to ascend to God through the universe—and he has done all this in the flesh.

These two little credal hymns shew the one Christ in differing ways—ways which would be understood and joyfully accepted by the differing peoples to whom they were presented. Paul has made himself one with his hearers, he has seen their needs, he has understood what

questions they are asking, and he has shewn Christ as their answer, as he is the answer to all the questions of men. This is the mission of the incarnate Christ put into happy practice through his men. This is the way in which the breaking down of the barriers is to be achieved, for men become one with each other through each being one with Christ. It is not a selling of the pass, not a betrayal of all that is holy in Judaism, it is simply an affirmation that Christ has died for all men and that all men must be taught that he is their Way. Paul realises that to teach one must adapt oneself to those being taught and must present that being taught in a way related to their particular needs.

That this lesson is never learnt once for all is plain not only in the attitude of the Judaisers but also in the activities of the zealous supporters of Christianity yesterday and today described in Rachel Attwater's *Adam Schall*<sup>1</sup> and Joseph McCoy's *Advice from the Field*<sup>2</sup>.

Adam Schall was a Jesuit of the generation after Matteo Ricci and was wholly sympathetic towards the methods and aims of his great predecessor. He followed Ricci's example in dress and manners and won a similar place in the respect of the Chinese court, and the same distrust among more conservative missionaries. He deserves a book comparable to the exciting work that Mr Vincent Cronin wrote about Ricci. Rachel Attwater's adaptation of Joseph Duhr's small work on Schall may well be, as Fr Brodrick so curiously remarks in his preface, 'true historical in almost every detail' but it lacks the essential sense of time and place. Of time much might have been made; the book is about a man whose main claim to mandarin respect was his perfection of the Chinese calendar, and its paragraphs frequently begin with such a phrase as 'At the end of May. . . ' or 'After three long years of waiting. . . ' or 'Shun-chih reigned for ten years. . . ' But the importance of the calendar is nowhere properly presented, and the chronology of Schall's life is rendered unclear by an odd inversion of events. The entrances and exists of other characters are equally muddled—the death of the Christian mandarin Paul Hsu Kuang-ch'i is announced on page 56 but not until page 69 are we given the immediate detail that when he was dying it was difficult to obtain medicines for the great official because he had given so much of his wealth to the poor. Equally lacking is a

<sup>1</sup>ADAM SCHALL, A JESUIT AT THE COURT OF CHINA, 1592-1666, by Rachel Attwater: Geoffrey Chapman, 18s.

<sup>2</sup>ADVICE FROM THE FIELD, by Joseph A. McCoy, S.M.; Helicon, 30s.

communication of what it meant to be living in China at this time. Mr Cronin has been able to make us aware of the China, and India too, of the period, he has a 'feel' for time which he helps us to share. This book conveys nothing of the there and then. Similarly there is an absence of the sense of place. It is not demanded that exotic descriptions of strange customs and fantastic dress be given, the romance of the land beyond the Great Wall is not our concern, but the reality is. Schall is worthy of attention because he was a missionary who peculiarly took note of the place in which he worked, because he had a sense of the appropriate. It is particularly irksome to find this man who learnt to be of China treated in so vague a manner. A fanciful map with no provinces marked and pretty sketches of hills tastefully positioned is no substitute for vital description of concrete situation.

Newman once remarked that if his biography were to be written it should consist mainly of his letters with so much of commentary as might be necessary to connect them. This biography of Schall is written on totally the reverse principle. There are references to letters and to an autobiographical memoir but these in the main are paraphrased or relegated to footnotes, in order, it might seem, that the main print should be decked in modest anecdotes about Umbrian smut and the *Agnus Dei*, or some conjecture as to what our hero might or might not have thought or felt. Much is made, for example, in the early part of the book where the lack of material makes the narrative a thing of shreds and patches, of sodalities and German princelings, of the fact that it was in Cologne that Schall was born 1 May, 1592. He possessed, we are told, 'the inexhaustible supply of laughter and jests of the true man of Cologne' but on occasion his 'shining exuberant personality' could be 'boiling over into some pungent outburst or assailed by languour and melancholy' which was doubtless due to 'the influence of neither family nor city but of country: Schall was a Rhinelander'.

Yet the man does come through. Adam Schall was devoted to his patron and he set about the Christian task of making the world again the ordered garden of God. He realised the goodness and truth to be welcomed in the Chinese way of life, he had no exclusive idea of the merits of western European civilisation, and he understood that 'to preach Christ to the Chinese the man of the West must himself become a Chinese', he dressed, as Ricci had dressed, in the silk robes of the scholar, and he took a new name, T'ang Jo-wang, and thus he emptied himself of all that Europe had given him. Then he entered fully the life of China, he took service with the Emperor in the civilian Board of

Rites and the overseeing of the calendar, and in the military matter of the design and manufacture of cannon. At one point in his career others thought him too much of the Chinese world, too much of the court and the observatory and the prison, too little of the European enclave and the mission house, and calmly he replied to such a criticism:

I have never been ashamed of the Gospel, before the Emperor or anyone else. I used every opportunity to make it known.

Dominicans and Franciscans as well as Jesuits proclaimed Christ in freedom because of his influence. 'We all preach the Gospel in the beneficent shadow of Schall's reputation', wrote the Polish Father Smogulechi in 1652. All the time he worked for the Emperor Schall was winning men to the attractive Christian Church, attractive because of its likeness to Christ. The ladies of the imperial household formed themselves into a community for prayer, cut off from the sacraments since no man might visit them unless one of the palace eunuchs, yet growing towards God by their reading of the scriptures Schall had sent. Among the poor of the city the number of Christians grew from 2870 in 1634, to 4824 in 1643, to 140,000 in 1663. So Schall worked for Christ in Peking and other cities, at the Board of Rites and in the gun-foundry, counselling the last of the Ming and the first of the Manchu dynasty, admired and hated by Chinese rivals to his place of astronomical influence, visiting prisons and pleading for the life of fallen nobles. And at the end he was the victim of a fickle change of favourites and the opposition aroused by less courteous missionaries among the mandarins, hauled before the magistrates, condemned to death by slow torture and rescued only by the effect of an earthquake upon the Emperor who was at that moment signing his death warrant, at last dying paralysed from a stroke and broken by the heavy prison chains, dying not aware that Rome had finally approved his way of life, his total engagement with the civilisation of his people. He died when men had not learnt the lesson of his life, when petty jealousy and simple incomprehension were powerful enough to stultify his work in a series of measures leading up to the famous decree of Benedict XIV, *Ex quo singulari*, 1742, which put a stop to the missionary attempt to be Chinese of the Chinese and effectually made it impossible for there to be again a Christian mandarin, whether by heredity like Paul Hsu Kuang-ch'i, or by imperial decree like Adam Schall. The lesson has to be learnt all over again.

In a well-known passage of his *World and the West*, Professor Toynebee describes with admiration the work of the Jesuit missionaries in India and China in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries:

Instead of trying, as we have been trying since their day, to disengage a secular version of the Western Civilisation from Christianity, the Jesuits tried to disengage Christianity from the non-Christian ingredients in the Western civilisation and to present Christianity to the Hindus and to the Chinese, not as the local religion of the West, but as the universal religion with a message for all mankind. The Jesuits stripped Christianity of its accidental and irrelevant Western accessories and offered the essence of it to China in a Chinese, and to India in a Hindu, intellectual and literary dress in which there was no incongruous Western embroidery to jar on Asian sensibilities.

It is evident from reading his *Advice from the Field* that Fr McCoy has fully realised the importance of this experiment and its exemplary force in modern missionary activity. He has written a very exciting book which consists of the answers that some hundreds of missionaries gave to his questionnaire, and his expert and incisive comments upon the kind of missionary situation which the answers evidence.

In almost all his voluminous writings and reports of speeches on the work of the missionaries all over the world Pope Pius XII stressed as the essential preface to effectual proclamation of Christ to men of other nations and cultures the self-identification of the missionary with his people, saying for example in 1953 that the country in which they work must be 'a second homeland, to which they have given their hearts', and writing in 1955 to Cardinal Piazza who was presiding over a meeting of Latin-American bishops that 'all Catholic priests who truly answer their vocation feel themselves native sons wherever they work'. The missionary must adapt himself totally to the civilisation of his people, must accept that civilisation as his. Père Daniélou has written that in Western civilisation there are elements which are simply human and wise and which although Occidental in discovery are yet universal in application. We may agree with this and yet not cease to ask Chinese and Hindu philosophy and religion for human and wise answers to questions that the West still finds puzzling. As Fr McCoy writes:

The ascetical ideal of India, the sacramental tendency of China, which finds spiritual force in the good earth, and the rich ritual of Indonesia, are all elements which truly belong to the Church. It is almost true to say that the Church needs the whole world as much as the whole world needs the Church.

This is certainly a view that does justice to the inheritance we have received from the early Church, from Paul, and Justin and Augustine. Paul wrote of his participation in the culture and outlook of the people he met:

With the Jews I lived like a Jew, to win the Jews. . . with those who are free of the law, like one free of the law, to win those who were free of the law. With the scrupulous, I have behaved myself like one who is scrupulous, to win the scrupulous. I have been everything by turns to everybody, to bring everybody salvation.

The one salvation is proclaimed in many tongues, the one Christ is saviour of many peoples.

Paul had a world-wide mission to the Gentiles, he had to be by turns all things to all men, and he had the gifts for such an enormous labour. The missionary is not often called upon to present Christ to such varied peoples in juxtaposition, he is not sent out to all nations, he is sent to one people with a culture of their own, a culture differentiating them from other men. It is to this culture that he must present himself as a servant, willing to learn, anxious for the dignity of a citizen. The great missionaries of modern times have not been many things, but one thing perfectly. Charles de Foucauld in his hut at Tamanrasset, Vincent Lebbe, leading his army of stretcher bearers over the hills of Shansi, were not simply sensitive to the brotherhood of men but committed to a certain people, a particular culture. Christ came to men not as a man bereft of history and civilisation, he was a Jew, he came unto his own. So the missionary shews the incarnation in a particular setting. Of Fr Lebbe men remarked 'He became all things to all Chinese' and of de Foucauld 'He devoted a great deal of effort to understanding everything he might of the language, lore and customs of his people'. All this may seem obvious to any intelligent man, especially anyone who has ever had to teach anything. But not every missionary priest, brother or nun has admitted this essential principle. One of the virtues of Fr McCoy's book is that he reminds us that there are still men like the priest who had been nine years in Japan and had never in that time been inside a Japanese home, nor could see any reason why he should learn anything of the customs of 'his people', or like the nun who remarked that since her congregation had native sisters it was not necessary for foreign sisters to know anything about the culture of the people, or that sad group of missionaries who when asked to put down on the questionnaire their answer to 'Will you please tell us how you personally arrived at an esteem for the practices and



customs of the people with whom you work?' replied simply that they did not esteem them. This is a forcible reminder of the Jesuits of Macao who would not change their missionary methods and aroused merely suspicion and misunderstanding among the Chinese, and who by a common human process, as Matteo Ricci remarked, developed an abhorrence of this stiff-necked people.

This is far from what Mersch once called 'a sort of anguish and torture and ardent pressure that impels the Church to attain its true size and to become in fact all mankind'; far from the vital concern of Paul:

My little children, how am I in labour until Christ be born again in you! When Paul reached Jerusalem again after his third great missionary journey he went to see James the Bishop recounting 'point by point all that God had done among the Gentiles'. James was not even yet used to the idea of an universal Christianity and he emphasised that while his converts were all 'zealous supporters of the law' there were ugly rumours that Paul had encouraged his converts in the notion of the freedom of the sons of God, and he insisted on Paul shewing his commitment to Judaism by paying for the ritual shaving of four men. This demand ironically enough brought about, under the providence of God, the end of the influence of Jerusalem as the great church of Christ. At the beginning of Acts Luke records Christ's will for his community:

you are to be my witnesses in Jerusalem and throughout Judaea, in Samaria, yes, and to the ends of the earth.

Jerusalem was the centre of the Jewish world and from this centre they were to preach Christ to Jews, Samaritans and Gentiles, to orthodox, heretics and pagans, ever widening the circle of God's friends until they came to the end of the earth, to the furthest that the Jews of the Diaspora had travelled, to Rome. And once Peter had made this city his field, once Paul had been caught up in the rush of events from the ritual shaving to the interview with the Jewish leaders in Rome, it became inevitable that Christianity should change its geographical centre. The Christians established themselves not in the closed Holy City but in the great secular, political, luxurious open city. They made themselves Roman as a sign that they were Catholic.

And we must be Roman Catholics in this sense. We all of us have a mission, we all of us must work in order to say in imitation of Christ when we stand at the gates of the Paradise garden:

I have glorified thee on earth; I have accomplished the work that thou hast given me to do.

And particularly today we must understand that this is not simply a clerical mission. If we are to understand the priesthood of the laity in any real sense it must be as a priesthood of responsibility as well as of privilege. Of the servant of the Lord Isaiah wrote:

their iniquities he shall bear

*Therefore* will I assign him the many for his portion

And the numberless shall be his spoil

and in his description of the work of Christ Paul echoes this very construction:

he became obedient unto death

even death on the cross

*Therefore* God has highly exalted him

We must all go out and work for Christ in harvest-field, and vineyard and garden, wherever he has brought us, doing whatever is needed for his glory to be made known. And in his will is our peace and in his work is our reward. Only we cannot choose what must be done or where it must be done. We cannot say that one thing has been successful once therefore God means us to use it always. We must live in the real world that is God's world, not in our own world of illusions, images and shadows. We must see how people are now and learn their language before we can speak to them of God in Christ.

Behold I make all things new, says the Lord. Pope John's *aggiornamento* was not only for the missions in far-away places among pre-Christian natives. It is for us here and now. It is at least obvious from the general reception of the Bishop of Woolwich's book that many men are ready enough to listen to what a Christian can say if only some attempt is made to put it in terms which he here and now can understand. We do not have to agree with what Dr Robinson has said to admire the precise way in which he has known how to get into contact with so many who have not felt themselves to be the concern of the Christian church. If we do not like what he has said we had better say something equally relevant. On August 18 Pope Paul spoke to the community and congregation at the Abbey of Grottaferrata of the divisions between Christians of East and West, and what he said is pertinent to all our divisions, to all our hesitations when we consider what we must do so that the earth may be filled with the glory of God as the waters cover the sea:

The gospel of today, as we Latins and Romans read it, contains a remarkable word, one of the very rare words—three, I think, there were—which the evangelists have preserved in the original manner

used by Christ. This word is *effeta* which mean *Open up!* The Lord gave power of hearing and power of speech to him who was deaf and dumb and who, in the interpretation of the Fathers, represents mankind. We are all a little short of hearing, we are all a little dumb. May the Lord enable us to hear the voices of history, the voices of the spirits, his own voice, the echo of the gospel, still our law and power.

May he give us strength and grace to hear the word of God and the ability to say unanimously, *una voce dicentes: Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus*: Holy God, Holy Christ, Holy Spirit. When that happens we shall have anticipated our paradise on earth.

## War, Love and Justice

G. A. WINDASS

Justice and charity often seem to us to be opposites. Charity means generosity without calculation—'Greater love hath no man than this'...; unending patience—'Charity is patient and kind'; the forgiveness of injuries, and the renunciation of self-regarding rights. Justice, on the other hand, seems to make opposite claims. It requires us to regulate our generosity by reasonable calculation; it puts an end to patience when rights are threatened; it balances crime against punishment. Above all, it seems to be concerned with the assertion of rights, which is foreign to the spirit of charity.

The opposition of these two 'public images' has led, among ordinary people with some concern for Christian ideals, to two apparently irreconcilable kinds of moral thinking; and yet it is evident that neither way of thinking is much use without the other. If some money has to be shared, the fact that everybody is extremely generous does not begin to solve the problem of how to share it; it will only lead to the disorder of conflicting generousities—the 'after you',—'no, after *you*' sort of argument, or the kind that results in the last piece of cake being left on the plate. How is the money to be shared then? The answer is simple;