

# The Lion

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## Cranmer's Ambiguous Legacy

By Diarmaid MacCulloch | Published in *History Today*

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These are the concluding paragraphs of a most astute Essay. All the publications of *History Today* are available by subscription both to the print version and to the online resources.

THE WIDEST AFTERMATH of [Archbishop Thomas] Cranmer's life and work is to be found in the realms of language and cultural identity. It was the happiest of accidents that this ecclesiastical functionary, propelled into high office by the accidents of politics, had a natural feel for English prose. His genius was limited to prose, and we can be grateful that, ever-practical, Cranmer knew that he could not write poetry. Cranmer's prose, however, has done much to guide the direction of the English language. He was a connoisseur of English who was not ashamed to borrow what he liked from other people's efforts, so what we think of as Cranmer's Prayer Book English is in fact a patchwork of his adaptations of other writers like Miles Coverdale, George Joye and Richard Taverner. If he were writing liturgy today, he would face crippling lawsuits for breach of copyright. However, his motive was not sinister; it was an expression of his natural modesty and practicality, and his alterations of existing texts were almost invariably improvements. And it came at a crucial time, for Cranmer was doing his work at a time when English, like all Western European languages, faced a double challenge: the effect of the universities' enthusiasm for humanist Latin, and the standardisation and centralisation caused by printing. Every Western European

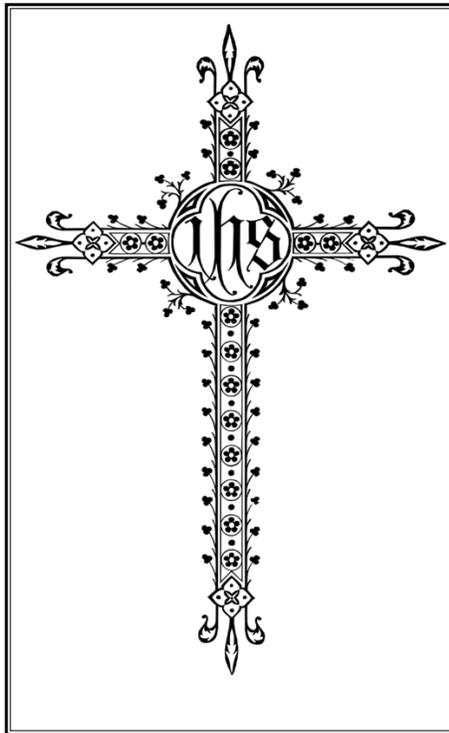
language has certain key texts of literature from this era and for English-speakers one of that handful of texts is the Book of Common Prayer. Millions who have never heard of Cranmer or of the muddled heroism of his death have echoes of his words in their minds.

The Prayer Book inevitably had a key role in deciding what was good English: it was one of the most frequently-printed and often most heard texts in the language. Whatever its content, it would have become decisive. For this reason, Cranmer deserves the gratitude not merely of the Church of England, but of all English speakers throughout the world. Through his connoisseurship, he created a prose which was self-consciously formal and highly-crafted, intended for repeated use until it was polished as smooth as a pebble on the beach. Yet he spared the users of the Prayer Book the worst compositities of humanism

and the sprawling sentence constructions which are only too common in the English prose writers of the sixteenth century. He stands prominently amid a select band of Tudor writers from Tyndale to Shakespeare who set English on its future course.

In an ecumenical age, which honours honest doubt and hesitancy as a lesser evil than clear-eyed ideological certainty, Cranmer may win admirers and sympathisers and take his due place in Anglican history. He would not have known what Anglicanism meant, and would probably not have approved if

the meaning had been explained to him, but without his contribution, the unending dialogue of Protestantism and Catholicism which forms Anglican identity would not have been possible. Beyond the concerns of Christianity, for all those who criticise his politics, or find his theology alien, Cranmer's language remains as the most enduring monument to Henry VIII's and Edward VI's most faithful servant. Twentieth-century scholarship has reminded us just how fundamental is the structure of language to the way in which we construct our lives and our culture. Cranmer's language lies at the heart of our own English-speaking culture, which has now become so central to the destiny of the world. §



COMMON PRAYER

LANCLOT ANDREWS  
PRESS

# Quinquagesima

Or, the Sunday next before Lent

Or, Forgiveness Sunday, in the Russian Church

From the Epistle. 1 Corinthians xiii. 1-13

*A Sermon offered by the Rev'd Deacon Vladimir McDonald  
at St. Mark's Church, Denver*

**“And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity”.**

In the Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Amen.

ALL THE PROPERS, the Epistle and the Gospel, today talk of positioning ourselves to receive the Grace of God through His Son, and the death and resurrection of same.

I feel that the Gospel veils this a little, but the Epistle is very straight forward, as we would expect of Paul. I am not negating the message of the Gospel, but I like things spelt out for me at times, and at this most pivotal time in the Church year, and possibly our faith, I like to follow the KISS principle, i.e. keep it simple!

We are faced with challenges to our faith on a daily, if not minute by minute, basis, all the time, but the periods that the Church have set aside for reflection and re-newal, the “lents” of the Church year, pale in comparison to that of Great Lent. This is the time that is upon us now.

The Church and tradition hold that this is a period of fast so that we can better prepare ourselves for Pashca, both its physical horrors and spiritual rebirth. We are admonished to give up things or behaviors that are pleasurable and/or important to us. Whilst this would seem to be in line with the idea that our Lord will give of His life, and therefore for us to give up something that is important in our lives--something that we will miss--will somehow help us to better understand that sacrifice seems to me to be close to insulting! How can we honestly compare ourselves to Christ in this way? How can we truly understand that overwhelming sacrifice in mere “things”? I would contend that we cannot. Please understand that I am not trying to re-write the history or teachings of the Church; I am trying to find a way to better honor those teachings and history that come from Christ himself.

He knows our weaknesses, our failings in our lives and beliefs: we sinfully present them to Him on a daily basis; so to struggle to give up chocolate or beer for a few weeks in the name of fasting and suffering, to show we understand; I do not think so.

Fasting has its place, if approached with a good heart, and a true desire to help concentrate the mind and body on the ultimate sacrifice to come, all well and good. But it always seems that we are looking at the negative rather than the positive. Now this does, as I said, have a lot to do with the approach we take to this endeavor. But what if we look at this time as one in which we can add, rather than subtract?

What more can we do in our lives that will add value to the lives and living of our fellow travelers on this roller-

coaster of our journey through humanity?

As St. Paul so rightly says, “Faith, Hope and Charity” should be the corner stone of our existence, and figure in all our interactions with our fellow human beings, and most assuredly in our dealings with Christ. Faith in the Love of God; Hope in the Resurrection; and the loving charity that our Lord shows in His daily dealings with our faults and missteps.

Paul goes on to say, “the greatest of these is Charity.”

Now we get to the heart of where I am trying to go with this homily. What does he, Paul, what does Our Lord Jesus mean, by charity?

When we think of charity, I feel we are inclined to look only at external manifestations of this very important component of our Faith. That doesn't mean the giving of Charity to the poor and dispossessed in the form of goods and services; the donation of money to individuals and/or organizations is not of paramount importance to the daily practice of that faith. But I feel we may be missing a key component of our relationship with God and His Son: that of Charity of the Heart.

This I feel was what Paul was really saying: that charity of heart and soul are most important, and without this, the other factors within the faith we espouse, are in some way very probably diminished, and in fact we are less if we do not recognize this truth.

This “charity” of heart is what drives forgiveness, what drives compassion, what motivates understanding of our fellow man, especially if they do not follow our known truth in the Love of God for His Children through the ultimate sacrifice of His Son on the Cross.

Forgiveness, one of the most difficult acts we have to perform if we are to say our faith in God is in fact true and enduring. Forgiveness of those who would persecute us and treat us roughly; Forgiveness of those who, by their lack of thought or understanding, harm us or our loved ones; and probably the most difficult of all, forgiveness of our own failings and inadequacies.

This may seem to be rather selfish; we have been talking of forgiveness of others, but in fact we cannot forgive others if we have not got out our shortcomings and faults and looked at them in the Light of Christ, and dealt with them within our faith, and cleared our heart and soul of the pain and anger at ourselves for those said shortcomings. They are baggage that we all carry, and they diminish us and weaken our resolve to do what our Lord needs for us to do with our lives and faith.

So we should take this time of Great Lent to look deep into our core, resolve those demons that assault us from within, then look outward with a good heart and a joyful optimism, to show and practice Charity of Heart towards our fellows, and know that this will please God, and as a side benefit, make us feel good also.

“And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.”

In the Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.  
Amen. §

## What to Do About the English Language Next?

A few observations for private devotion  
and Common Prayer

from the perspective and prosperity of Lancelot Andrewes Press  
V. Rev'd John Charles Connely

**T**HREE OF OUR YOUNG SCHOLARS from St. Mark's Parish have recently spent months travelling and teaching and studying in China. Katherine, Drue, and Andrew experienced widespread attempts at use of the English language. There is a surprising and novel claim that China is the largest English-speaking country in the world. Does this portend that the largest selling book in the English speaking world, the Authorised Version Bible (King James Version in the USA) will suddenly find an hundred million or more new readers in China?

What about 200 million orders for our much improved version of the *Book of Common Prayer*? Then whole cargo ships, having off-loaded their massive cargos of Apple™ iPads, iPhones, iPods, iMacs, and other toys, will be refilled for return to China with giant cartons of the *Collected Plays* of William Shakespeare, *The Oxford English Dictionary*, Theodore Buckley's *Treatise on Rhetoric* by Aristotle "in a literal translation" and *The Oxford Book of English Verse* by Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch?

Honestly, the Chinese use of English is to sell boatloads of factory goods produced cheaply by low-paid workers in overtime and in quantity. The widespread use of English throughout the world is for commerce, not for literature. It is for getting jobs, moving to Britain, moving to Canada, or to the USA for economic advancement. It is not likely that many of those millions eagerly studying "English" in China or anywhere outside or inside the old Empire really give a tossed iPad for the literature or art or science or Civilization as realized in the English speaking world. The cargo ships returning to China will be refilled with corn and bananas,

not Coverdale, Cranmer, Andrewes, Newman, and Neale.

So where do we, who publish many titles in English for the Church, aim our efforts towards the market for "contemporary" English usages? There appear to be some markets for modern English that are currently being served: The markets for gender-neutered and politically dogmatic consumers, mostly Episcopalians, Lutherans, and Catholics, have their Missalettes and various "Scripture" versions in print. The pop-Protestant "community church" big boxes consume the *New International Version* and worse. All the sacerdotal and hieratic language of the original texts is suppressed in favor of a Reformed world view. *The New English Bible* is essentially Calvinist in its prejudices. Ever look at the Epistle to the Hebrews, Chapter 3 and wonder

where the "holy brethren" went? Calvinists do not believe human beings can be "holy" and so the saints have disappeared from the texts from Genesis to the Apocalypse. Saints become "dedicated ones" and holy brethren become "family of God." The versions that began as translations, like the *Jerusalem Bible*, have become "revised" agencies of contemporary political and editorial policy. So, you pay your money and take your choice amongst the distortions, frauds, and agendas of the Big publishers. Some Bible makers avoid

### THE THIRD DAY. MORNING PRAYER.

#### Psalm 15 (14) *Domine, quis habitabit?* Tone III A 5



**L**ORD who shall • sojourn in your tent? \* Who shall dwell on your ho • ly mountain?

2 He who walks blamelessly and • does what is right, \* and speaks truth • from his heart;

3 Who does not slander with his tongue, † and does no • evil to his friend, \* nor takes up a reproach against • his neighbor;

4 In whose eyes a • reprobate is despised, \* but who honors those who • fear the LORD;

5 Who swears to his own • hurt and does not change; \* who does not put out his money • at interest,

6 And does not take a bribe a • gainst the innocent. \* He who does these things shall nev • er be moved.

7 Glory be to the • Father and to the Son \* and to • the Holy Ghost;

8 As it was in the beginning, † is now and • ever shall be, \* world with • out end. Amen.

the prophetic books of the Old Testament Apocrypha, the Intertestamental Books (The period from the book of Malachi at the end of our Old Testament to the opening of Matthew) so rich in Messianic expectation.

So, where to go for a "contemporary" English translation of the Sacred Scriptures that is not an obvious tool for creative contemporary propaganda? Where to go for Psalm texts that do not begin the first Psalm with "Happy are they" and never quite tell us who "they" were or are? Whoever they were, they were not expecting "the Man" who is most evidently the Messiah that King David and a multitude of faithful confessed before and during and after his Appearing.

“Blessed is the man” begins the whole of the Psalter on the Messianic theme that illuminates the whole. See the Rev’d John Mason Neale’s *Commentary on the Psalms* for a broad and generous application of this principle. The *Commentary* is back in print and available at [www.andrewespress.com](http://www.andrewespress.com) as well as several book sellers.

*The Revised Standard Version Bible* (1946, 1952, 1957) as realized in the second Catholic Edition of 2006 (Ignatius Press) would seem to solve most of the problems. Various Orthodox jurisdictions, including the Antiochian Orthodox Archdiocese of New York, have approved the RSV for public recitation of the Scriptures in English. A particular problem with the Ignatius edition is the suppression of what Ignatius Press call “archaic language.” What they mean is the use of the intimate second person... thee, thou, thine. Again the Chinese have no need of the “intimate” forms in the use of English because they are not normally talking to God, to a lover, or to children in English, and so simply employ the “formal” business and objective form of address (you, your, yours) as appropriate to buying and selling. It would be interesting to see Ignatius Press try to take the “du” form away from German speaking people. It would be interesting to see Ignatius Press take away the language of friends and lovers and prayer from Italian and replace it with the “formal” only usages. The English language alone can be treated as a utility, like water and sewage service, like gasoline or plastic tableware or cheap shoes, just because it has become the international language of selling bulk goods and pop science and pop entertainment and pop religion.

Foreigners in ghetto populations in the West also eschew the use of English as a primary or literary or poetic or religious language. This was, however, not the case in the early period of English translations of the Liturgy. A most elegant translation of the Russian Service Book(s) was produced by the collaboration of Archbishop (Saint) Tikhon Belavin and the remarkable Isabel Florence Hapgood (1850-1928) while the Archbishop was yet serving in North America. This book is available in print from the Antiochian Archdiocese bookstore at Englewood, New Jersey. The YMCA, back when it had Christian purposes, actually funded the translation and publication.

Lancelot Andrewes Press, in response to a specific request, have begun work on a “contemporary” English version of the Psalms and Canticles based on (not always slavishly copied) the Ignatius Press RSV texts and set to simple plainchant melodies. This project promises to provide a relatively less elegant rendering of the sacred text while satisfying a request for a more contemporary English expression. The RSV texts are surprisingly practical and, given the alternatives, not so bad as they might be. Translation, with the art of not sounding like a translation, is a rare gift. Holy Jerome, pray for us. Bishop Andrewes, where ever you are, *Ora pro nobis*. §

## - Palm Sunday, 8 April -

Plainsong Matins 7:30

Palm Blessing and distribution and Mass

8:00 o'clock

Anglican Chant Matins 9:45 o'clock

Palm Blessing and distribution and Mass

10:00 o'clock

(the Old Holy Week according to the Knott English Missal, 4th Edition of 1940 and the American Missal 2010)

Monday Mass 12 noon

Tuesday Mass 12 noon

Wednesday Mass 12 noon

Maundy Thursday: Mass at 7:00 PM

- Good Friday Liturgy -

12 noon: Liturgy & Veneration 6 PM

- Holy Saturday -

Vigil 9:00 with Vigil Mass

- Easter Day, 15 April -

Aurora Mass 8:00 o'clock

Solemn Mass 10:00 o'clock

THE LION

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address correction requested

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