



# CENTRO PRO UNIONE

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## LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

▶ James F. Puglisi, SA

**W**elcome to our Spring issue!

This issue of the *Bulletin-Centro Pro Unione* opens with the presentations for the study day honoring “The Heritage of Geoffrey Wainwright as Liturgist, Theologian, and Ecumenist”. Geoffrey was a frequent lecturer here at the Centro in his capacity as liturgist, theologian and ecumenist and he was a dear friend. We invited specialists in their own right who were also colleagues of Geoffrey.

The opening lecture was given by Bryan Spinks, well known liturgist. He laid out for us the work of Geoffrey which had a three-fold focus: liturgy, doctrine, ecumenism. Spinks contained his exposé to the principle works of Wainwright found in his articles in *Studia Liturgica*, and his books entitled *Christian Initiation*, 1969; *Eucharist and Eschatology*, 1971; and *Doxology*, 1980; together with those papers published in *Worship with one Accord*, 1997. In his exploration of these major works, Spinks asked the question whether or not Geoffrey was indeed a liturgist. His answer was that he had an aptitude for summarizing in a systematic fashion what he understood to be the current state of liturgical scholarship, and extrapolate from the cumulative narrative some theological observations, and use them to make broad suggestions for an ecumenical audience.

The second presentation by Richard Clutterbuck attempt to summarize the value of Wainwright as theologian with 10 observations.



These observations focussed on how Wainwright did theology: it is marked by a conservative nature and dogmatic since it focusses on the core beliefs of the Christian community.

Therefore it needs to be systematic for its own coherence, but should not be shaped – or distorted – through conformity to extra-theological criteria. For Wainwright theology needs to be rooted in a living Christian tradition, but need not be confessional since it is at its best when it is Creatively Catholic as well as eirenicly ecumenical. Christian Theology is at the same time doxological and eschatological. Finally for Wainwright Christian Theology serves the Church’s mission as messenger of the Kingdom of God.

The third lecture treated Geoffrey as ecumenist and was given by an outstanding ecumenist, William Rusch. Rusch noted that one of Geoffrey’s gifts, and by no means not the only one, was that he combined in one person both ecumenist and theologian, namely an “ecumenist” is a person of deep commitment to the visible unity of the Church of Jesus Christ and takes with utmost seriousness, the biblical imperative and indicative about the unity of the Church. Rusch meant respectively by those two terms that the essential unity of the Church must be lived and made visible and that the essential unity of the Church is presupposed in every effort for unity. Geoffrey was highly respected and trusted by his colleagues both as a theologian and

### CENTRO PRO UNIONE BULLETIN

The Centro Pro Unione in Rome, founded and directed by the Franciscan Friars of the Atonement, is an ecumenical research and action center. Its purpose is to give space for dialogue, to be a place for study, research and formation in ecumenism: theological, pastoral, social and spiritual. The Bulletin has been published since 1968 and is released in Spring and Fall.

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an ecumenist. This is manifested by Wainwright's involvement in the Faith and Order projects for many years. In addition his leadership as co-chair of the Catholic-Methodist International Dialogue and the role he played in promoting the Methodist's joining the Lutheran-Catholic declaration on the doctrine of justification.

The study day concluded with three reflections on their personal relationship with Geoffrey. These were given by Gillian Kingston, Bernhard Eckerstofer and Donald Bolen. All three spoke warmly and with humor about the human and Christian qualities of Geoffrey as colleague, mentor and collaborator.

The last of the articles in this number of the *Bulletin-Centro Pro Unione* is by our dear friend, Rabbi Jack Bemporad. Rabbi Jack laid out for us some of the philosophical and ethical considerations found in the Book of Proverbs. His talk "The Decisive Significance of the Book of Amos for Understanding the Literary Prophets in the Hebrew Bible" was given to complete the picture of the trilogy of wisdom literature since he already spoke at the Centro on Job: "A New Look at the Book of Job" and on "Ecclesiastes," (in Hebrew, Kohelet), called "Some Philosophical Aspects of Kohelet." He explains that the Book of Proverbs is not a simple writing. It is vast and has a great deal of controversy, as to what it really means. It's not the kind of a book that was written in extreme times, where, for example, there is crisis, there is danger, and life is in turmoil. It may seem that nothing will continue. It is when you find things happening that seem so irregular that you don't really understand what's going on. "Proverbs" is a relatively normal kind of ongoing existence, where people can plan and decide how they want to live their lives and go about doing it. The Book of Proverbs is a book that is founded on the concept of choice, that people have control over their lives. That it's not fate, or the gods, or anything of that nature that actually is in control. You are in control of your destiny! So as Rabbi Jack says, it is all about choice. It's through our choices that we determine what we become.

In other words, it isn't already determined what you will be. It isn't already determined how you will live. We are, in fact, incomplete, and the very way we live our lives completes us through the choices

we make, so that one's life is really open. It isn't something determined and we have freedom to go in different directions. According to Bemporad's theory, the motto (so to speak) for the "Book of Proverbs" is found in Deuteronomy 30: 15 - "I've set before you life and death. The blessing and the curse. Choose life so that you and your children may live." The Book of Proverbs is a book that is founded on the concept of choice, that people have control over their lives. Basically, Proverbs says that at the end of one's life, if you have chosen folly, have chosen vices, have chosen basically the exploitation of others and doing evil, "at the end of your life you groan when your flesh and body are consumed." Bemporad ends with the observation cited by his teacher Hans Jonas who said to him, "Live your life in such a way that God doesn't repent that he made you."

The remainder of the Fall included the twenty-fifth annual lecture in honor of the Founders of the Society of the Atonement, Servant of God, Paul Wattson, sa and Mother Lurana White, sa. This year's lecture: "(In Case You Missed It). The Ecumenical Winter is Over" was given by the former director of the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches, Dr. Thomas F. Best. Together with the Lay Centre at Foyer Unitas, the Centro hosted an afternoon of study and prayer for Christian Unity. The lecture given by Dr. Dirk G. Lange, deputy general secretary for ecumenical relations of the Lutheran World Federation, dealt with the recent Lutheran-Catholic International Commission on Unity's study document, "Baptism and Growth in Communion". Together with the directors of the Methodist Ecumenical Office Rome and the Anglican Centre, the Centro's Director celebrated a vigil of prayer in preparation of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity in the chapel of the Anglican Centre.

We proudly announce the publication of the substantial E-book containing *M.A.D. 2*, the second module focusing on Baptism of *M.A.D. for Ecumenism - Mutual Accountability Desk*. Download it from our website

 — [bit.ly/DWL-Logbook-MAD-for-Ecumenism-v2](https://bit.ly/DWL-Logbook-MAD-for-Ecumenism-v2)

*M.A.D. 3*, was launched in the Fall and had several meetings, including the ecumenical

consultants meeting on February 8<sup>th</sup>. Their role was to receive the work done in the parishes. The importance of this module is found in the implementation of a synodal and ecumenical methodology, which witnesses the people of God involved in dialogue and in synergy in its multiform ministries and charisms, in order to carry out a shared reflection on the greatest challenges that the post-postmodern era poses to the churches today.

We are proud to include the next installment of the Bibliography of Interchurch and Interconfessional Theological Dialogues compiled by our librarian, Dr. Loredana Nepi. It is the thirty-eighth supplement. As a remainder you can always have realtime updates to the bibliography by accessing our website at

 — [www.prounione.it/en/library/search](http://www.prounione.it/en/library/search)

And realtime access to all of the dialogues at

 — [www.prounione.it/dialogues](http://www.prounione.it/dialogues)

In addition, the Centro is organizing the presentation of an important ecclesiological study: *Ecclesial Boundaries and National Identity in the Orthodox Church* (Notre Dame Press, 2023) by Dr. Tamara Grzelidze.

Since the Orthodox Church has not sufficiently addressed the pressing problem of religious nationalism and the problems arriving because of it, this work will be of interest to scholars. Rabbi Jack Bemporad will speak on "The Decisive Significance of the Book of Amos for Understanding the Literary Prophets in the Hebrew Bible" on Wednesday, May 17, 2023. Look for details on our website.

The Centro staff welcomed the international student body from the Ecumenical Institute at Bossey, Switzerland. Besides presenting the historical and beautiful setting of the Collegio Innocenziano, the staff presented the work and ministry of the Friars of the Atonement carried out at the Centro Pro Unione and led a conversation on the modern ecumenical movement and the issues which challenge all the churches.

On Wednesday March 22, 2023, the World Council of Churches' General Secretary, Rev. Prof. Dr. Jerry Pillay and Prof. Dr. Vasile-Octavian Mihoc, Programme Executive for Ecumenical Relations and Faith and Order paid a visit to the Centro Pro Unione. This was Dr. Pillay's first visit to Rome after his installation as General Secretary and the Centro's staff is honored that he would request to meet us and learn more of how the Centro could be engaged in some of the future projects being planned by the Faith and Order commission. Dr. Pillay was very impressed by the important documentation housed in the Centro's Library concerning the international and regional theological dialogues and the fact that materials are present in many languages. The delegation also expressed appreciation for the formation projects of the Centro Pro Unione (specifically Mutual Accountability Desk for Ecumenism and annual Summer Course) and for the attention paid to the heuristic aspect of these projects oriented towards a constant meta-reflection on the dynamics of reception and ecumenical formation that the Centro has always activated. The Director and staff were able to speak about the on-going programs of the Centro as well as to describe future programs in development. Particular interest was shown in the proposed Nicaea 2025 project. Drs. Pillay and Mihoc assured the Centro staff that we would maintain important collaborative relations in the immediate future.

It is never too early to book for your Rome Summer School experience in June 26 - July 14, 2023 at the Centro. See the web for registration for the Summer Course "Introduction to the Ecumenical and Interreligious Movements from a Catholic Perspective".

We invite our readers to always check our web site for dates and events as well as the up-dating of our data base on the international theological dialogues and, of course, our two libraries: pro and dialogo.

This *Bulletin* is indexed in the *ATLA Religion Database*, published by the American Theological Library Association, 250 S. Wacker Drive, 16<sup>th</sup> Floor, Chicago, IL 60606 ([www.atla.com](http://www.atla.com)).

James F. Puglisi, sa · Director

*James F. Puglisi, sa*

## BRYAN D. SPINKS



Conference given at the Centro Pro Unione

Bishop F. Percy Goddard Professor Emeritus of Liturgical Studies and Pastoral Theology, Thursday · 20 October 2022  
Yale Institute of Sacred Music and Yale Divinity School

### Geoffrey Wainwright as Liturgist

The *Quicumque Vult*, or so-called Creed of Saint Athanasius, states that “we worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity, neither confounding the Persons, nor dividing the Substance.” Geoffrey Wainwright was certainly trinitarian in belief. His own academic work, though, was also trinitarian-liturgy, doctrine, and ecumenism, and like the perichoretic mutual indwelling of the divine persons, Geoffrey’s threefold focus was also a form of scholarly perichoresis. To isolate one is rather like dividing the substance. In this presentation, I hope to discuss the liturgical emphases in his work without confounding it too much with doctrine and ecumenism, other than as his perichoretic methodology requires.



 Bryan D. Spinks

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#### MEDIA

#### Lecture video

[www.prounione.it/webtv/live/20-oct-2022](http://www.prounione.it/webtv/live/20-oct-2022)

The 2000 festschrift for Geoffrey listed 203 published books, reviews, and articles, with 5 more forthcoming. There have been some more subsequently. Let me make it clear that I have not read all his published material. My review of his work on liturgy is confined to his articles in *Studia Liturgica*, to his books entitled *Christian Initiation*, 1969; *Eucharist and Eschatology*, 1971; and *Doxology*, 1980; together with those papers published in *Worship with one Accord*, 1997. I believe that these sufficiently illustrate his liturgical interests, his methodology and intentions.

Geoffrey’s own relevant biographical background and his fundamental beliefs about the importance of liturgy for systematic theology and ecumenism were spelled out clearly in the first pages of *Doxology*:

“Born (in 1939) and brought up in British Methodism, I am now a Methodist minister. Having acquired some linguistic, biblical and historical skills at Cambridge, I trained for the ministry under Raymond George, whose twin interests in systematic theology and liturgics appealed to me.”<sup>1</sup>

Raymond George was a committed Ecumenist, was a WCC observer on the Roman Catholic Liturgical 'Consilium' at the Vatican from 1966 onwards, wrote on liturgy and worship, and was a founding member of the Joint Liturgical Group, the ecumenical liturgical body in the UK. In many ways, Geoffrey followed his seminary teacher. Geoffrey saw his own vocation and task as follows:

<sup>1</sup> GEOFFREY WAINWRIGHT, *Doxology: The Praise of God in Worship, Doctrine and Life. A Systematic Theology* (New York : Oxford University, 1980) 10.

“It is the Christian community that transmits the vision which the theologian, as an individual human being, has seen and believed. As a believer, the theologian is committed to serving the Christian community in the transmission and spread of the vision among humanity. *Worship* is the place in which that vision comes into sharp focus, a concentrated expression, and it is here that the vision has often been found to be at its most appealing. The theologian’s thinking therefore properly draws on the worship of the Christian community and is in duty bound to contribute to it. The specific task of the theologian lies in the realm of *doctrine*. He is aiming at a coherent intellectual expression of the Christian vision. He should examine the liturgy from that angle, both in order to learn from it and in order to propose to the worshipping community any corrections or improvements which he judges necessary.”<sup>2</sup>

This method of Geoffrey can be observed in some of his writings on Christian initiation. One of his first academic publications was in *Studia Liturgica* 1965. The journal was founded by the Dutch Reformed ecumenist, Wiebe Vos, in 1961, to be an international ecumenical quarterly for liturgical research and renewal- as it still is today. Geoffrey would become a friend of Wiebe Vos, and a co-editor of the journal. This article had in fact won the Dr. Paton Prize in 1964 from the Free Church Federal Council of Great Britain, and it was prior to Geoffrey gaining his doctorate. The essay was a summary of the evidence for the Baptismal Eucharist before Nicaea. Geoffrey surveyed the findings of liturgical scholars and gave a synthesis of the evidence as it was known and interpreted at that time. The names of R. H. Connolly, E. C. Ratcliff, F. L. Cross and Gregory Dix are frequently cited. The early evidence was listed as Justin Martyr’s *First Apology*, the (so-called) *Apostolic Tradition* of Hippolytus about 215 AD, Tertullian, the *Passio* of Melito of Sardis, the *Didache*, and *Didascalica*. However, he also suggested that the *Mystagogical Catecheses* attributed to Cyril of Jerusalem and the *Euchologion* of Serapion might preserve traditions that ante-date Nicaea.

Geoffrey grouped the evidence under headings: Thus, the time of initiation, the preparation for baptism, the Paschal Vigil, the baptismal rite, and the baptismal Eucharist. These last two had many sub-sections, such as Blessing of the water, the baptism of children, the renunciation and exorcism, the ceremony of baptism, and so on. In the Eucharist Geoffrey wandered far beyond Nicaea to make sense of the evidence as he understood it. The anaphora of Addai and Mari is invoked, but also *Apostolic Constitutions* 8, as well as the occasional reference to the anaphoras of saints *Basil*, *John Chrysostom* and *James*. As with most liturgical scholarship at this time, great weight is placed on the anaphora in *Apostolic Tradition*, and believing it to be 215, and possibly because of his own Methodist background which inherited an Anglican approach, he argued that the institution narrative cited in Justin Martyr’s *First Apology* was probably a reference to its use in the thanksgiving over the bread and wine.

Some of this material, or at least, some of the implications, lie behind the 1969 book on *Christian Initiation* – appearing in the Ecumenical Studies in History Series. As what would become a common approach for Geoffrey, the first chapter surveyed the contested New Testament background, and he drew on the Arland-Jeremias debate over initiation of infants. What of course we notice here is the assumption that the New Testament documents yield answers to all the subsequent questions that arise over baptism as an ecclesial ritual. The second chapter surveys what Geoffrey called Initiation Ancient and Eastern. The *Apostolic Tradition* is discussed along with Justin and Origen, but the treatment of the eastern material is limited to the Byzantine and Coptic rites, with little critical enquiry into them. It seems but a prelude to the chapter on baptism medieval and Western, and a discussion of the enigma of confirmation. Further chapters explored Believer’s baptism, initiation and unity with a plea for mutual recognition between churches of the validity of trinitarian baptism across denominations, and initiation and mission. It should be noted that here Geoffrey was mainly concerned with theology and not liturgy. He never discusses texts from Believer’s Baptismal tradition, even though they existed, and mission is discussed in relation to process, not liturgical

2 *Ibid.*, 3.

rite, such as confession of personal faith, first communion and admission to the catechumenate. The latter is illustrated with what almost seems random material that suits the discussion, with brief references to the *Missale Gothicum* and the *Bobbio Missal*, and then, having had no discussion of the Syrian Orthodox rite, out of the blue a quote from Jacob of Edessa is thrown into the mix.

A review of past developments in the rites of Christian initiation was the subject of Geoffrey's 1974 paper in *Studia Liturgica* – almost 10 years after his initial paper on the subject. He explained that the paper would be occupied with liturgy rather than dogma, and with the past rather than the present. As was his style, he began with the New Testament evidence, though attempted to illuminate some of the vague or ambiguous statements with reference to the so-called *Apostolic Tradition*, John Chrysostom and Theodore of Mopsuestia, which today would be regarded as a strange methodology. As in his 1964 article, Geoffrey proceeded to examine the liturgical past under convenient headings, such as post-baptismal anointing, imposition of hands and consignation, preparatory and explicatory words and ceremonies and so pre-baptismal anointing, oddly, was included in this section, along with crowning, the lighted candle, milk and honey and hair cutting. However, by the end of this article Geoffrey moved into dogma- infant baptism, theologies of baptism, world-view, society, evangelism and unity- some of the very themes discussed in his 1969 book.

I want to suggest that these three writings on Christian Initiation provide us with an excellent insight into the liturgical interests of Geoffrey.

In what way was Geoffrey a liturgist? Was he in fact a liturgist? As far as I can discover, he never himself did any original research into any particular liturgical rite. He was not a liturgist of the Robert Taft hue, with concern for critical editions and copious use of manuscripts. Neither did he do any original research into the history of liturgy, and nor as far as I am aware, did he ever explore in depth the theology of a particular rite. Rather, he had an aptitude for summarizing in a systematic fashion what he understood to be the current state of liturgical scholarship, and extrapolate from the cumulative narrative some theological observations, and use them

to make broad suggestions for an ecumenical audience. Paul Bradshaw has called attention to two approaches to liturgical study which he has called lumpers and splitters. Lumpers are concerned to gather the material together and give a coherent developmental narrative; splitters examine what is unique and special to each text, in its time and place. Geoffrey was the archetypal lumper, weaving together material from different times and places to yield a narrative that he then used to illustrate the theological points he was advancing. This means that for many liturgical scholars today, Geoffrey seems to belong to a past age- which of course, he does. He was an ardent ecumenist, and rejoiced at the WCC Report, BEM, but of course, then witnessed a new age when the ecumenical dream was fading, and denominational distinctions became important. Geoffrey's great contribution was made in the last years of modernity, when the grand narrative was still regarded as a respectable norm. But in postmodernity, the grand narrative is no longer regarded as an acceptable narrative. Now is the time of the splitters, when differences are important. Furthermore, liturgical studies yield more and more information which shows how the narratives Geoffrey adopted are now regarded at best an unhelpful flattening of the evidence, and at worst, a distortion made in the interests of a preconceived theological agenda. This observation should not be read as a negative judgement on Geoffrey. It is simply to remind us of the fact that we are all people of our generation and age, and what are the accepted norms of scholarship in one era, becomes the outdated mode of the next. In a post-modern and post-ecumenical age, the methods and aims of liturgical scholarship are different.

Geoffrey's perichoretic approach, and his use of liturgical method, is illustrated further by his book on the *Eucharist and Eschatology*, and *Doxology*.

Most studies of the Eucharist have and still do focus on the issues that divide the churches, namely how the Eucharist can be described as a sacrifice, and how Christ is present in the sacrament. Geoffrey chose to look at a neglected topic, namely the eschatological dimension of this sacrament. In the introduction to his study he wrote:

My aim in the present study is not only to do more justice to the importance of the neglected biblical texts for a doctrine of the eucharist, but to develop in a systematic way the more or less isolated insights into the eschatological character of the eucharist displayed by the liturgies and the earlier theologians.<sup>3</sup>

The interesting word here is 'displayed'. This became Geoffrey's method, already encountered in his book on Christian initiation, and in his 1974 article. Liturgy was a source for illustrating a doctrine which was identified in Scripture and expounded by earlier theologians, and then illustrated from a variety of liturgical texts.

Geoffrey's fluency in German and French allowed him to draw on a wide variety of studies, and in the first chapter of the book he went straight to the original edition and title of Albert Schweitzer's book of 1906, *Von Reimarus zu Wrede*, in which Schweitzer debunked the hitherto creation of Jesus in the image of nineteenth century writers and presented the Jesus of a strange world of eschatology. He traced the debate about sacred time through Conzelmann's influential work on Luke-Acts, and then surveyed the theme in systematic theology. Exploring first the eucharist as the 'Antepast of Heaven', he noted that the liturgies seem to have gone to excess in disguising the fundamental phenomenological feature of the eucharist.<sup>4</sup> His investigation, so he claimed, would be to show that the sign of the meal is a basis category if the eschatological content and import of the eucharist are to be properly appreciated.<sup>5</sup> One might have thought he would begin here with some liturgical evidence, but instead worked through meals in the Old Testament, noting the future tense of passages such as Zechariah 9:17 and Isaiah 65:13. A similar survey followed of the intertestamental period, and then feasting in the Kingdom of God in the New Testament. Two and half pages were devoted to the words in the Lord's Prayer, the bread of tomorrow. Geoffrey next made reference to ecclesiastical monuments, liturgies and theologians. When he turned to what he called 'the classical liturgies of both East

and West', we find a peppering of citations from a wide range of sources – the *Acts of Thomas*, the Visigothic rite, *Addai and Mari*, the Armenian rite, the Roman Mass of Corpus Christi, the Syriac *anaphora of St. Cyril* as found in Renaudot, Jan Laski's *Forma ac Ratio*, and Wesley's *Hymns on the Lord's Supper*. Geoffrey certainly illustrated that his theme could be found in a variety of liturgical texts, and he never pretended that his survey was exhaustive. However, it was extremely selective, and limited. The statement that 'It was not until the Wesley's Hymns on the Lord's Supper (1745) that the Western church achieved again a rich appreciation of the eucharist as the sign of the future banquet of the heavenly kingdom' simply showed that Geoffrey had not searched out the older hymns of the late seventeenth century of the Independent Richard Davis of Rothwell and Benjamin Keach of the Particular Baptists, both of whom wrote hymns on the Lord's Supper that have some eschatological references. His methodology would also bring forth criticism from exponents of Liturgical Theology. The methodology of the latter by such exponents as Aidan Kavanagh, David Fagerberg and Kevin Irwin would argue that Geoffrey worked out a theology first and then found liturgical quotes to fit his theology, whereas Liturgical Theology started with the particular liturgies and investigated the theology that they articulated.

That Geoffrey could work in the direction of Liturgical Theology was illustrated in the chapter entitled Maratha, where from the Pauline Institution narrative of 1 Cor 11, with the 'you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes' was immediately followed by *Apostolic Constitutions* 8, Syriac *St. James*, Alexandrian *St. Mark*, the Roman Canon, the liturgy of St. John Chrysostom, the Armenian rite, the English Non-jurors. This was followed by a dialogue with systematic theologians and then patristic writers, before turning to the *Didache*. Given the title of the chapter, it might have been more logical to begin with 1 Cor., and then the *Didache*, before looking at other liturgical texts, and then systematic theology. After the *Didache*, Geoffrey discussed the *Benedictus qui venit*, and then he gave illustrations from the *Sursum corda*, Maximus the Confessor, Theodore of Mopsuestia and the Wesleys, before discussing the importance of Sunday as the first and eighth day.

3 GEOFFREY WAINWRIGHT, *Eucharist and Eschatology* (London: Epworth Press, 1971) 3.

4 *Ibid.*, 18.

5 *Ibid.*, 18.

There are of course subsequent chapters, but this is sufficient to illustrate Geoffrey's methodology and the use he makes of liturgy. It is by way of illustration rather than a starting point for historical lessons or a theology expressed in a particular liturgy.

Mention must be made of his other important work, *Doxology*. Here he used the same methodology, but the work was much more concerned to find a theology that would gain some ecumenical support and use. The Introduction explained that worship is best seen as the point of concentration at which the whole of the Christian life comes to ritual focus; into the liturgy the people bring their entire existence so that it may be gathered up in praise. Doctrine both draws on and contributes to worship.<sup>6</sup> It is this last sentence that indicated the difference in approach from Aidan Kavanagh's *On liturgical Theology* which was published 4 years later. Kavanagh would put forward an argument that primary theology was what Mrs Murphy- the typical person in the pew- learned from and how she understood the liturgy she experiences week by week. Secondary theology reflected on this primary source. History shows, I think, that Geoffrey was right and Kavanagh wrong on this issue. It is clear from anthropological studies that cult precedes rational reflection. However, rational reflection then is brought to bear on the cult, and its understanding is changed, and sometimes its verbal expression is changed accordingly. This was the lesson learnt from Bernard Lonergan's reflections on theological method. Lonergan cogently argued that experience ultimately leads to dialectic and judgment, which is then taken to experience which as a result now appears in a new way.<sup>7</sup> Geoffrey noted:

'Synchronically, the difficulty is to decide where, at a given time, the line should be drawn between the diversity of different but symphonic voices and the clash of contradictions which become cacophony. It is a matter of deciding where a unilateral emphasis amounts to a distortion; where

simplification is purification, where truncation. It is a matter of deciding where tentative exploration opens up new vistas and where it misses its way and passes into error or nothingness.'<sup>8</sup>

Whether Geoffrey's perichoretic method was able to demonstrate this logically is a matter for debate. He questioned, for example, the definitions of the Immaculate Conception of Mary (1854) and her bodily assumption (1950) as *de fide*. His comments though seem to draw no distinction between a *de fide* doctrine, and the undefined but obvious antiquity, West and East, of the Feast of the Assumption or Dormition of Mary. As a Methodist, Geoffrey almost certainly did not often if ever observe the Dormition, and it is clear that his own denominational background was at play in his own reasoning as to what was a distortion and what was a truncation. Although, as we have seen, he frequently referred to the hymns of the Wesleys, there was no reason for anyone outside the Methodist tradition to regard the hymns as having the slightest authority, and certainly less authority than the undoubted antiquity of the Marian feast.

*Doxology*, though, was a significant work where Geoffrey used his wide knowledge of liturgy, past and present, in the interests of ecumenism. The chapter entitled 'Revision', though now obviously dated in what was then recent liturgy, remains a useful text for those involved in liturgical revision. A long section on the Reformation contrasts with a very brief section on the Enlightenment period, reflecting the then common view that this period had little to offer liturgically, which is far from the truth. However, the section on Archaeology or ephemerality brought to bear Geoffrey's knowledge of the Liturgical Movement, the Vatican II reforms of the liturgy, ecumenical discussion on the Eucharist, as well as the problem of appeal to an imagined golden age and archaeological reconstruction. He no doubt had in mind the near universal appeal to the so-called *Apostolic Tradition* that was so influential in revisions across the Western Churches. But in this section he drew on the *Table Prayers* of Huub Oosterhuis, the British Methodist *Sunday Service* of 1976, the Church of England's

6 *Doxology*, 8-9.

7 BERNARD J. F. LONERGAN, *Method and Theology* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press: Lonergan Research Institute of Regis College, 1971).

8 *Doxology*, 11.

Series 3 eucharist, the 1976-9 *Book of Common Prayer* of the Episcopal Church in the USA and the *Sunday Worship* for United Methodists USA 1976. Inclusive language was becoming an issue in English-speaking countries, and Geoffrey was able to treat this problem briefly. Another chapter examined the place of culture- revisiting a briefer treatment of this subject in *Studia Liturgica* 1977. Long before it would be the latest topic, already in this 1980 work we find references to neo-colonialism and cultural imperialism.

*Doxology* was written during Geoffrey's formative work with the WCC Faith and Order, and he would be heavily involved in BEM. What he learned from this work in terms of ecumenical consensus fed into his views on liturgy, and his knowledge of liturgy fed into his ecumenical work. Volume 13 numbers 2,3 and 4 of *Studia Liturgica* 1979 was devoted to Ordination Rites, and Geoffrey contributed a final essay which reflected on the theology. He was able to begin his paper with the words, 'One of the chief gifts of the modern liturgical movement to the western churches has been the return of Hippolytus' *Apostolic Tradition*.' Writing in 1979, he believed that to be the case. Reading it in 2022, is to realize once again how quickly liturgical scholarship moves. Today that sentence might be rendered: "One of the greatest errors of the twentieth century liturgical movement was to believe the so-called *Apostolic Tradition* was an authoritative document for liturgical revision'. However, the purpose of his paper was to discuss the theology of ordination, and he did so in a Trinitarian manner, with the theological, christological and pneumatological dimensions of ordination. He also discussed the ecclesiological dimensions, but in his concluding section returned to the biblical basis for office holders in the Church.

This selection from Geoffrey's work illustrates his work as a liturgist, and his work in liturgy. He was first and foremost a systematician. It has become commonplace for systematic theologians to appeal to worship as important, but this is usually in general terms without any deep engagement with actual liturgical texts or celebrations. Geoffrey recognized liturgy as at the centre of the life of the Church and therefore crucial for any serious theological discussion. He thus believed that theologians not only needed to worship, but also should have a working knowledge of liturgical history and the prayers of the various rites across traditions. In that he remains an exemplar, and the liturgical guild is the poorer for not having more systematicians of the caliber of Geoffrey to assist them in their endeavors. He was able to use his own knowledge not only to ground dogma in the reality of the church as lived, but also in the quest for rapprochement between divided communions. Like us all, he was limited by the standards and consensus of the scholarship of his day- and so *Apostolic Tradition* loomed large in his work because it loomed large in the work of many liturgical scholars. Much that he wrote is dated. However, his concern that liturgy should be recognized as a crucial component in theological method and debate is an example that should be his lasting legacy to the Churches, to systematicians and to liturgists- three areas, but united in substance.



**RICHARD CLUTTERBUCK**



Conference given at the Centro Pro Unione

Presbyter of the British Methodist Church, Research Fellow, Wesley House, Cambridge and Formerly Principal of Edgehill College, Belfast

Thursday · 20 October 2022

## Geoffrey Wainwright: A Theological Legacy in Ten Propositions

In a short presentation I cannot do more than to point to the main characteristics of Wainwright's theological vision and legacy, and to offer one of two samples of his distinctive approach. I think it best to do this through a series of theses that sum up the approach to theology bequeathed to us by Geoffrey Wainwright.

### 1. Leaving a Legacy is a prime task for Christian Theology.

'Legacy' seems the appropriate word to describe Geoffrey Wainwright's distinctive contribution to Christian theology. He did not, like so many in twentieth and twenty-first century theology, claim great originality. He offered no new doctrines; he constructed no revisionist account of Christian belief; he developed no philosophical foundation for Christianity; he commended no general account of religion. In this he was very different from his Anglican brother-in-law, Maurice Wiles. Wiles, as Regius Professor of Divinity at Oxford and one of the authors of the 1970s volume, *The Myth of God Incarnate*,<sup>1</sup> challenged the traditional doctrine of the incarnation and argued for a radical re-reading of scripture and tradition. Instead, to quote a phrase he used repeatedly in his writing, Wainwright 'speaks faith to faith'. He saw the task of theology as a handing on of Christian faith. St Paul's statement in I Corinthians 11.23 might serve as a summary of Wainwright's sense of theological vocation: 'For I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you ...' Christian theology is one aspect of the process of sharing across generations, cultures and traditions, the Christian faith. The faith he was called to hand on was the Christian faith in all its historical richness and its ecumenical catholicity, rooted in a worshipping Christian community and expressed in Christian action.

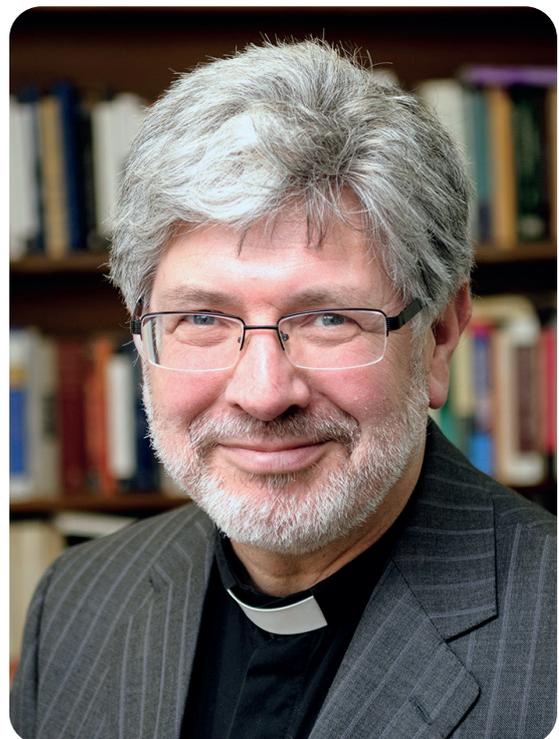
<sup>1</sup> JOHN HICK, (ed.), *The Myth of God Incarnate* (London: SCM, 1977).

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He often remarked that the reason he had such a good relationship with Pope Benedict was that, while Benedict learned his Catholic faith from his Bavarian mother, he was nurtured in the faith by his mother in their Yorkshire Methodist home. As one who was handed on the gift of Christian faith, he ought to hand it on through his vocation as a Christian theologian.



 **Richard Clutterbuck**

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## 2. Christian Theology is necessarily conservative, but need not be defensive and reactionary. It can and should be constructively conservative.

Wainwright's instincts were – as we might expect from what I have just said – essentially conservative. He was not comfortable with many of the developments in contemporary social behaviour, or with the way they were mirrored (as he saw it) in aspects of recent theology. What we might call identity-group theology, whether feminist, black, gay or cultural, was alien to his theological instincts.<sup>2</sup> Partly because he saw in it examples of the rejection of historic Christian belief, partly because he worried about its threat to the catholicity of the Church, separating rather than uniting Christians. But his conservatism was not the defensive pose of the person who resists all change, or who fights for this or that narrow confessional interpretation. It was, I want to suggest, a constructive conservatism, it involved a close reading and engagement with a wide range of contemporary writing. An illustration of this is that, from the mid-70s until 2001, Geoffrey Wainwright, making use of his formidable linguistic skills, provided regular articles for *The Expository Times* which reported on recently-published continental theology, mostly in French and German, but with some from other languages. So, for example, 1977 found him discussing, among others, Schillebeeck's *Christ*, Jüngel's *God as the Mystery of the World* and Rahner's *Foundations of Christian Faith*,<sup>3</sup> while in 2000 he reported on recent French postmodern discussion of religion.<sup>4</sup>

This wide reading meant that Geoffrey Wainwright was sensitive to the need for careful inculturation of theology, providing it did not result in a drift away from orthodoxy. Above all, he wanted theology to be at the service of the worship and mission of the Church, activities that were inevitably shaped by their context,

2 See, for example, the critique of the 1993 feminist 'Re-imagining' conference in, GEOFFREY WAINWRIGHT, *Methodists in Dialogue* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1995) 279f.

3 "Recent Foreign Theology: Historical and Systematic," *The Expository Times* 89, no. 2 (1977).

4 "Recent Continental Theology, Historical and Systematic," *The Expository Times* 112, no. 1 (2000).

but were in essence unchanging. Like the *ressourcement* theologians who paved the way for Vatican II, Wainwright saw the resources of the past facilitating the life and the church in the present. This can be seen clearly in his early project, *Eucharist and Eschatology*, and in all his subsequent works.

## 3. Christian Theology is necessarily, but generously, dogmatic. It is focussed on the core beliefs of the Christian community.

As Stanley Hauerwas once remarked, Geoffrey Wainwright was impatient with those who spent their time working out what they might do if ever they got round to some proper theology.<sup>5</sup> Instead, he much preferred to get straight to the point rather than dwell on methodology and philosophy. He was, after all, an ecclesial theologian, exercising his ministry (and for him it was a ministry) through an engagement with the key doctrines of the faith. Throughout his career, he frequently wrote pieces on eschatology<sup>6</sup> and the doctrine of the Holy Spirit.<sup>7</sup> The doctrine of the Trinity was also key and Geoffrey Wainwright was a champion of this element of Christian belief, even before it became fashionable. So, in *Methodists in Dialogue* there is a chapter on John Wesley's trinitarianism, while some years later he provided an essay on the Trinity in relation to liturgy and preaching for *The Oxford Handbook of the Trinity*.<sup>8</sup>

Few things made him more impatient than the old adage, 'doctrine divides, but service unites'. He argued passionately that the only effective Christian service was based on a proper

5 Based on a remark by STANLEY HAUERWAS in DAVID CUNNINGHAM, RALPH DEL COLLE, and LUCAS LAMADRID, (eds.), *Ecumenical Theology in Worship, Doctrine, and Life: Essays Presented to Geoffrey Wainwright on His Sixtieth Birthday* (New York/Oxford: OUP, 1999) xii.

6 For example, the chapter on "The Last Things," in GEOFFREY WAINWRIGHT, (ed.), *Keeping the Faith: Essays to Mark the Centenary of Lux Mundi* (London: SPCK, 1989) 341-370.

7 For example, the chapter on the Holy Spirit in COLIN GUNTON, (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Christian Doctrine* (Cambridge: CUP, 1997) 273-296.

8 GEOFFREY WAINWRIGHT, "The Trinity in Liturgy and Preaching" in GILLES EMERY, MATTHEW LEVERING, (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of the Trinity* (Oxford: OUP, 2011) 457-471.

foundation of faith in Jesus Christ and on the work of the triune God. In his editor's preface to *Keeping the Faith*,<sup>9</sup> a collection of essays commemorating the centenary of the publication of *Lux Mundi*, he asserts both that "historic Christianity stands or falls with a trinitarian faith"<sup>10</sup> and that "the Christian story or vision offers a comprehensive context or perspective in which particular knowledge can be illuminatingly and effectively pursued and applied".<sup>11</sup> I don't think Geoffrey Wainwright coined the term 'generous orthodoxy' but it certainly expressed his theological stance.

**4. Christian Theology needs to be Systematic for its own coherence, but should not be shaped - or distorted - through conformity to extra-theological criteria.**

Before settling in Duke, Wainwright spent a short time as professor of systematic theology at Union Seminary, New York, following such illustrious predecessors as Paul Tillich<sup>12</sup> and John Macquarrie.<sup>13</sup> He even wrote letters that began, 'as I sit here at Paul Tillich's old desk...' Like Tillich and Macquarrie, he has left us a systematic theology.<sup>14</sup> Unlike them, however, his approach to systematics is not to construct a philosophical (for which - in their case - read 'existentialist') foundation, on to which an interpretation of Christian belief can then be grafted. Instead, he sees the central task of systematic theology as the integration of different aspects of Christian doctrine, woven together with the Church's practice of worship and mission. *Doxology* remains a bold achievement by one who was still, at the time of its writing, a young scholar in his thirties. It displays Geoffrey Wainwright's preference for theological substance over endless debate over methodology and foundations as well as his relentless linking of theology with the believing and worshipping community. It is in *Doxology*

that Geoffrey Wainwright offers his key phrase, 'Worship, doctrine and life'.<sup>15</sup> 'Life' becomes strikingly prominent in the later chapters, where there is a strong emphasis on contextual issues such as ethics, justice and inter-faith relations, while the introduction highlights his concern with issues of diachronic and synchronic Christian identity; his advocacy of 'Christ the transformer of culture' as the middle and best of Niebuhr's options in *Christ and Culture*.<sup>16</sup> Geoffrey Wainwright was alert to, but not unduly troubled by, the challenges of modernity.

It is also worth drawing attention to Geoffrey Wainwright's early work, based on his doctoral dissertation, *Eucharist and Eschatology*.<sup>17</sup> This book, which develops a theology of the eucharist as a 'feast of the kingdom', sets the pattern for Geoffrey Wainwright's life's work. It is an exercise in systematic theology conducted as an inter-disciplinary, inter-confessional, inter-generational activity rooted and expressed in ecclesial practice. Inter-disciplinary in that it brings together biblical and liturgical studies, patristics, historical and contemporary theology. Interconfessional in its curating a conversation between Orthodox, Catholic and Protestant traditions. Intergenerational in its commitment to what Jürgen Moltmann has called 'the ecumenism of time'. Practical in the way it relates eucharistic theology to the practice of Christian worship and the pastoral life of the Church.

**5. Christian Theology needs to be rooted in a living Christian tradition, but need not be confessional.**

Geoffrey Wainwright was proud of his Methodist heritage, and in the introduction to *Doxology* he situates himself (as we would now say) in that tradition. Much of his theological work was in the service of Methodist ecumenical conversations of various kinds, a good deal of it drawn together in his collection of essays: *Methodists in Dialogue*.<sup>18</sup> But there is nothing sectarian about

9 GEOFFREY WAINWRIGHT, *Keeping the Faith...*, *op. cit.*

10 *Ibid.*, xxiii.

11 *Ibid.*, xx.

12 PAUL TILlich, *Systematic Theology* (Combined Volume) (Welwyn, Herts: Nisbet, 1968).

13 JOHN MACQUARRIE, *Principles of Christian Theology* (London: SCM, 1966).

14 GEOFFREY WAINWRIGHT, *Doxology: The Praise of God in Worship, Doctrine and Life* (New York: Oxford, 1980).

15 *Ibid.*, 8.

16 H. RICHARD NIEBUHR, *Christ and Culture* (New York: Harper and Row, 1975).

17 GEOFFREY WAINWRIGHT, *Eucharist and Eschatology* (London: Epworth Press, 1971).

18 GEOFFREY WAINWRIGHT, *Methodists in Dialogue...*, *op. cit.*

Geoffrey Wainwright's Methodism. He does not seek to develop a 'Methodist theology', nor does he pretend that the writings of the Wesleys hold the clue to all the dilemmas currently facing humanity. This means that he is far from being a confessional theologian, constructing his theology as a development of his own tradition. His legacy is that he brings Methodism to the ecumenical theological table as a genuine contributor to the mix that is Christian doctrine, worship and life in all its synchronic and diachronic diversity. He wants his ecumenical partners - especially those drawn from the Catholic and Orthodox traditions - to see Methodism as theologically orthodox, part of the Christian mainstream, yet having distinctive emphases and expressions that can enrich the wider church. He misses no opportunity to express his theology in words from a Charles Wesley hymn. He might have echoed Evelyn Underhill's defence of her allegiance to Anglicanism when challenged by her Roman Catholic friends: 'just because I live in Wimbledon, doesn't mean I not a Londoner!'

At the same time, he opens up his own Methodist tradition to an immense theological enrichment from the two thousand years of Christian reflection and the great spectrum of other Christian traditions. Aware of Methodism's tendency to elevate experience and action at the expense of tradition and doctrine, he would urge it to root itself in the historic creeds and to open itself to other ways of expressing faith. He often, in his teaching, used an ironic ('tongue in cheek', we would say in English) two-minute summary of Church history that concluded with the assertion that Methodism alone was the one true Church.<sup>19</sup> When laughter died down, he would point out that almost everyone has some kind of church history summary like that, one that makes their own tradition normative. The vocation of the ecumenical theologian, for Geoffrey Wainwright, is of someone rooted in a tradition, but living and working in the space between that tradition and the world of the Church catholic.

19 See GEOFFREY WAINWRIGHT, *The Ecumenical Moment: Crisis and Opportunity for the Church* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983) 189.

## 6. Christian Theology is at its best when it is Creatively Catholic as well as Eirenically Ecumenical

It should be clear by now that Geoffrey Wainwright's is a theology that makes connections, that weaves together different confessional emphases.

Geoffrey Wainwright had, as we shall shortly hear, a passionate commitment to the ecumenical project. That project is essentially theological. Doing theology ecumenically and doing ecumenism theologically are two sides of the same coin. I have been in correspondence with Dame Mary Tanner who, along with Geoffrey Wainwright, was one of the drafters of the ground-breaking *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*.<sup>20</sup> She pays tribute to Geoffrey Wainwright's pivotal role in securing an agreed text, and in developing the further ecumenical and theological work that flowed from it. WCC Faith and Order, and the international Methodist-Roman Catholic conversations were perhaps the obvious examples of Geoffrey Wainwright's ecumenical approach to theology. But there were plenty of others. One example would be the chapters on the three-fold office of Christ in *For Our Salvation*,<sup>21</sup> which look at issues that have often divided Reformed Christians from others, an approach echoed in lectures given in Melbourne on the theme of Wesley and Calvin.<sup>22</sup> What I want to highlight here is that Geoffrey Wainwright's ecumenical theology never aimed at discovering a lowest common denominator - bare minimum that all parties can agree to, while ignoring the adiaphora dividing them. Instead, the resources of the catholicity of the Church, its scriptures, its diverse voices and practices, its many confessional manifestations, are brought to bear so that something emerges that is creative in terms of the doctrine, worship and life of all Christians.

20 WCC FAITH AND ORDER, *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*, Faith and Order Paper, 111 (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1982).

21 GEOFFREY WAINWRIGHT, *For Our Salvation: Two Approaches To the Work of Christ* (London: SPCK, 1997).

22 GEOFFREY WAINWRIGHT, *Geoffrey Wainwright on Wesley and Calvin, Sources for Theology, Liturgy and Spirituality* (Melbourne: Uniting Church Press, 1987).

## 7. Christian Theology is Doxological all the way down.

Worship, doctrine and life are inseparable. Others, today, will highlight Geoffrey Wainwright's prowess as a liturgical scholar. He knew his way round an immense amount of material on different aspects of Christian worship. He was the co-editor of *The Oxford History of Christian Worship*,<sup>23</sup> writing its introduction on the nature of Christian worship and its chapter on ecumenical convergence in worship. As a theologian, he reminded us of two things, both perhaps influenced by his early encounter with the orthodox tradition. The first is that theology is always dependent on the Christian worshipping community; however intellectually rigorous, it is never merely an intellectual exercise. For him, the principle, *lex orandi, lex credendi*, was no empty slogan. Not just ancient liturgical texts, but the whole story of Christian encounter with God in worship provided the language and framework of theological reflection. On a personal level I can remember being introduced by Geoffrey Wainwright to the eucharistic hymns of Charles Wesley. It was both a significant moment in my spiritual development, and in my understanding of what it means to do Christian theology. This doxological shaping of Christian theology also finds expression in Geoffrey Wainwright's sense of 'sacramental time',<sup>24</sup> so that the very structures of time and space, of history and hope, are, for the Christian, prefigured and performed through eucharistic worship.

But if it is true that all good theology has its origins in the language and practice of worship, it is even more true that all good Christian theology has its end in worship. Going back to the introduction of *Eucharist and Eschatology*, Geoffrey Wainwright says:

"My own primary concern here will be to show how our understanding of the eucharist may benefit from the rediscovery of eschatology experienced in biblical and systematic theology; secondarily, I shall try

to indicate how the eucharist itself may, in turn contribute towards a sound eschatology in theology as a whole and in the total understanding of and life of the church".<sup>25</sup>

On the very next page, though, he refers to his ultimate aim to draw out the ecclesiological consequences of his research, in the church's liturgical practice, in its mission and in its unity.

## 8. Christian Theology is Eschatological; it finds its meaning and end in God's future.

Perhaps this is the clue to the constructive nature of Geoffrey Wainwright's conservatism. Faithfulness to the historical doctrines of the faith are important, not because of the need to hold onto the past, but because they point us towards God's promised future. This is already evident in *Eucharist and Eschatology*, where he takes the eschatological work of biblical scholars like Schweitzer and contemporary systematic theologians such as Moltmann to help rediscover the eucharist as a forward-looking event. It returns in the closing pages of *Doxology*,<sup>26</sup> with its meditation on the coming kingdom of God, drawing in doctrinal affirmation, liturgical insight and Wesleyan hymnody.

Those looking for a succinct discussion of recent eschatology need look no further than the essay on eschatology in *Keeping the Faith*.<sup>27</sup> This is a tour de force, beginning with a survey of the discussion of Christian eschatology within and since *Lux Mundi*, going on to discuss key theological dilemmas (such as providence and predestination, body and spirit, salvation and damnation, eschatology and apocalyptic, and ending with dogmatic confession of faith, drawing on biblical and patristic foundations, and shaped by reflection on liturgy.

## 9. Christian Theology serves the Church's mission as messenger of the Kingdom of God.

I have to admit that prior to preparing this presentation I had not read Geoffrey Wainwright's

23 *Eucharist and Eschatology*; GEOFFREY WAINWRIGHT and KAREN WESTERFIELD-TUCKER, (eds.), *The Oxford History of Christian Worship* (New York: OUP, 2006).

24 GEOFFREY WAINWRIGHT, *The Ecumenical Moment...*, op. cit., Chapter VII, "Sacramental Time".

25 GEOFFREY WAINWRIGHT, *Eucharist and Eschatology*, op. cit., 5.

26 *Ibid.*, 456-462.

27 GEOFFREY WAINWRIGHT, *Keeping the Faith...*, op. cit., 341-370.

theological biography of Lesslie Newbigin.<sup>28</sup> I knew of his admiration for him, indeed, I have a vivid memory of the two of them sharing in an Ascension Day eucharist in the chapel of Queen's College, Birmingham, while I was a student. But it seemed puzzling that he should give so much of his precious research time to working through Newbigin's papers and preparing what was, after *Doxology*, the most substantial volume he published. Newbigin was the veteran Church of Scotland missionary to India, ordained as one of the first bishops of the Church of South India, a pioneering General Secretary for the International Missionary Council, a popular author on mission and ecumenism and, in later life, an active pastor and theological critic in Birmingham. For all his theological intelligence and prolific authorship, Newbigin was not an academic theologian, nor did he have the leisure for the detailed scholarship that was second-nature to Geoffrey Wainwright.

However, he shared Geoffrey Wainwright's attachment to historic Christian faith, his sense of ecumenical vocation and his delight in worship. And he exemplified something that was clearly vital for Geoffrey Wainwright: a theological life. This says something about his understanding of theology. For all his delight in the academic environment and the kudos of international conferences, he knew that in the final analysis theology was something to be lived out rather than taught and written. It was subservient to the mission in which God is engaged and to the kingdom in which Christ is Lord. The point of ecumenical convergence and its attendant theology is missiological. Theology is to be lived and – for the Christian Church, life is to be theological. That this was a lifelong concern is shown by Geoffrey Wainwright's very early work on Christian initiation.<sup>29</sup> Published as part of the Lutterworth 'Ecumenical History' series, it begins with a patient analysis of New Testament and historical evidence, giving a balanced opportunity for Eastern, Western and Protestant views. The final chapters, though, are on Christian initiation in relation to Unity and Mission. Theology is always missiologically-directed.

It is no coincidence that the *Festschrift* for Geoffrey Wainwright, published in 1999, was titled *Ecumenical Theology in Worship, Doctrine, and Life*, with its final section headed "Church, World, Mission". The book pays tribute to immense range of Geoffrey Wainwright's theological interest, with chapters employing many different approaches to the theological task, including detailed historical analysis and intense doctrinal reflection. But the endpoint is never in doubt. Unity and mission are always the destination.

## 10. No one theologian gives a complete picture of Christian faith and its implications.

This is my own gloss on reading Geoffrey Wainwright – I'm not totally sure he would agree as he was notoriously devoid of any false modesty! Yes, Geoffrey Wainwright leaves us with a wealth of theological insight, an important model of theology put at the service of the wider Christian Church and its mission. It is an important legacy, not least because so many of the things that were central to Geoffrey Wainwright have become marginalised and neglected in recent years. The ecumenical vision, centred on worship and doctrine, expressed in visible unity, has become deeply unfashionable in many quarters. Yet, I believe, Geoffrey Wainwright's approach to theology needs to be further enriched in a number of ways:

### a. Orthodoxy may turn out to be even more generous than Wainwright would allow.

Theology needs to be more open to voices from different cultural contexts and from minorities within our own.

### b. Christian theology needs to be more global and less Eurocentric.

While Geoffrey Wainwright was influenced by his years in Cameroon, his intellectual development was solidly European. Recent theology has been much more global in scope and much less willing to accept European norms.

<sup>28</sup> GEOFFREY WAINWRIGHT, *Lesslie Newbigin: A Theological Life* (Oxford: OUP, 2000).

<sup>29</sup> GEOFFREY WAINWRIGHT, *Christian Initiation, Ecumenical Studies in History* (London: Lutterworth, 1969).

**c. Theology needs to be earthed in the reality of existing churches, rather than in an idealised *ecclesia*.**

Sometimes Geoffrey Wainwright's ecumenical writing seems focussed on an idealistic church that is remote from the reality of the divided and disparate communions that make up the world church.

**d. Christian theology needs to reach out beyond the boundaries of the community of faith.**

While Geoffrey Wainwright was right not to let questions of philosophical foundation or the demands of apologetics distort his theology, there is nonetheless a need to engage with both.

Finally, in the Spirit of Geoffrey Wainwright, we can only pray that theology, like its practitioners will – in the words of Charles Wesley's hymn, be:

*Changed from glory into glory  
Till in heaven we take our place.  
Till we cast our crowns before thee,  
Lost in wonder, love and praise.*



**WILLIAM G. RUSCH**

◀ | ||||| Conference given at the Centro Pro Unione

Lutheran Pastor, Professor of Lutheran Studies at Yale Divinity School

Thursday · 20 October 2022

## The Heritage of Geoffrey Wainwright: Liturgist, Theologian, and Ecumenist Geoffrey Wainwright: A Theological and Ecumenical Nexus – Personal Observations

**Y**ou have graciously invited me to come to this event, “The Heritage of Geoffrey Wainwright: Liturgist, Theologian, and Ecumenist” to address the topic “Geoffrey Wainwright: A Theological and Ecumenical Nexus – Some Personal Observations”.

At the outset of these brief remarks, I want to make two comments. First, I wish to commend those who have put this program together, certainly the Rev. Matthew Laferty and Father Jim Puglisi. I am sure that there are others who should be mentioned, but I do not have that information. I will explain the reason for this commendation in just a moment. Secondly in the course of this presentation, I will offer a theory on why an invitation was extended to me to cross the Atlantic in the midst of an academic term, and why I accepted.

First to the initial approbation. It is always appropriate and almost universal to note and honor distinguished persons. Educational institutions do it; governments do it; social clubs and organizations do it, and even churches as institutions do it. It would be superfluous to give specific examples.

However, it is especially fitting to do so in this context. If the ecumenical movement is a multidimensional movement, whose center is the task and the gift of the visible unity of the Church of Jesus Christ, as I have argued elsewhere and will not repeat here, then this movement does indeed move because several factors. They include insights of the liturgical movement, new understandings of the biblical message, new historical research, and new appreciation of the nature and function of theological language. Yet involved in all of these aspects there is another factor often overlooked.

The ecumenical movement succeeds where it does, and it has had its failures, because behind all those aspects of theology and scholarship just

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indicated are individuals. It is *the commitment and mutual trust of individuals* which enliven that learned achievement and make it possible to challenge the churches to receive, in the technical sense of that term, the results of the ecumenical movement and change their practices and relationships – and even their theology!

I would argue if this is not unique to the ecumenical movement, it is certainly unusual to this movement. Many advances in human endeavors can be quite independent of *commitment and mutual trust*. Such progress in ecumenical relations rarely occurs when they are absent.

The likelihood of such breakthroughs increases exponentially when those characteristics of personal appreciation are present.

Considerable ecumenical progress in the last third of the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries took place because of the presence and activity of one Geoffrey Wainwright. He was not alone in that era, but he was a major figure among giants. Geoffrey trusted, respected, and bonded with his colleagues in the ecumenical movement.

And conversely those features flowed in both directions. If that contention requires documentation, I would suggest anyone listen to the accolades about Geoffrey read on the occasion of his final lecture at Duke's Divinity School on the threshold of his retirement from the Cushman Chair of Christian Theology. There a chorus of non-Methodist voices arose in praise of Geoffrey and his many contributions to the ecumenical movement.

The kind of relationship reflected in those words of praise and appropriation transcended denominational labels. This is often difficult for individuals not engaged in ecumenical activities like dialogues to understand. (A side comment, this phenomenon can contribute to the difficulties in the reception of ecumenical dialogue.) How can a British Methodist who exhibited no hesitation about being ecumenical, feel closer to a Roman Catholic or a Lutheran than to some other Methodists?

There is an ecumenical answer to that question. While Geoffrey favored "organic unity" as a model for the unity of the Church and on at least several occasions registered his discomfort with the "Lutheran proposal of reconciled diversity" at least in my hearing, he also acknowledged that there was a diversity that was a genuine part of the Tradition of the Church. Both "T" and "C" are capitalized in that comment.

Now because of this personal feature of the ecumenical movement, there is a special suitability in honoring one of the "saints" of the ecumenical movement as we are doing today. There is no question about including Geoffrey in that list.

One of his gifts, and by no means not the only one, was that Geoffrey combined in one person both ecumenist and the theologian. What I intend by "ecumenist" is a person of deep commitment to the visible unity of the Church of Jesus Christ. She or he takes with utmost seriousness the biblical imperative and indicative about the unity of the Church. What I mean respectively by those two terms are that the essential unity of the Church must be lived and made visible and that the essential unity of the Church is presupposed in every effort for unity.

What I intend by "theologian" is a person of deep commitment to the study of God's revelation and its attendant religious truth for faith and life.

In a perfect world, ecumenists would be theologians and theologians would be ecumenists. Perhaps in that perfect world there would not be the need for either! Yet as Augustine of Hippo and countless others have reminded us, we do not live in a perfect world. In our situation far too, many ecumenists are not theologians. They think that the ecumenical goal is mere cooperation among divided churches without attention to the theological issues that have separated them. Thus, they ignore the scriptural imperative and indicative.

And equally, far too, many theologians are occupied with their pet interests. They have little or no commitment to or energy for that movement whose goal is the task and gift of the visible unity of Christ's Church. Happily, Geoffrey Wainwright cannot serve as a model for either group.

Clearly throughout his career Geoffrey saw himself and functioned both as an ecumenist and theologian, and perceived no conflict in those two roles. He was not alone in that perception, and others could be named, but he is conspicuous in this regard.

This insight then leads to the question: how did Geoffrey Wainwright exercise these two roles throughout the years?

One prominent way that is often identified is Geoffrey Wainwright as a member of the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches. A little of this history is helpful here as we think of Geoffrey and Faith and Order.

Faith and Order is a movement within the ecumenical movement that predates the founding of the World Council of Churches in 1948. It is a movement serving the churches by leading them into theological dialogue as a means of overcoming obstacles to and opening up ways towards the manifestation of their unity given in Jesus Christ. Its origins go back to the early years of the last century. The first conference on Faith and Order took place in 1927. In 1948 it became a commission within the newly formed World Council of Churches. The Commission has operated through three different means. First world conferences. These happen rarely. For example, between the fourth and fifth conferences there was a space of forty years. Secondly by means of commission meetings. These meet about every three or four years. Finally, meetings of the Standing Committee, which is a smaller group than the Commission, occur once a year.

It is often stated that Geoffrey served on the Faith and Order Commission from 1976 until 1991. This statement is undoubtably true and I am not disputing it in what follows. The challenge is to describe Geoffrey's activities on the Commission.

Let me attempt to explain this challenge. First of all, as far as I can determine Geoffrey was never a member of the Standing Committee. I have done some research here; I cannot claim that it is extensive. If in error, I stand corrected. This means he related formally to Faith and Order only as the Commission met every few years. Secondly, much of the documentation for this period consists of mimeograph reports of the meetings, now on yellowing or deteriorating paper – at least my copies. These reports list the participants, but they say very little about the role of individuals except in some cases where an individual person gave a lecture or presentation. This is a characteristic of Faith and Order documents and ecumenical texts in general.

I wish to highlight a profound paradox here. As I have already indicated the ecumenical movement thrives because of *commitment and mutual trust*. Yet the documentation of the ecumenical movement does not reflect this fact. Almost all of these texts are anonymous I will give you two examples from many possibilities.

If one examines the report of the meeting of the Faith and Order Commission in Lima in 1982, which transmitted the final text of *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* (BEM) to the churches for their consideration, several things become transparent. First, Geoffrey was present at that meeting. Second, he is listed among the members of the Faith and Order Commission. Third, in the report of the Director of the Commission, William H. Lazareth, the process outlining the development of BEM is described. No individual is mentioned by name. Fourth, it is only in the presentation of the text of BEM to the full Commission is Geoffrey indicated by name as the one making the presentation in place of Max Thurian who was too ill to travel to Lima. One week later when official action of transmission of the text occurs is Geoffrey identified with John Zizioulas (Orthodox) and Jean Tillard (Roman Catholic) as a member of a special committee to decide about proposed revisions to the text. I have found no other references in the Lima text of the meeting, but again my research has not been extensive. I would point to the Lima report as evidence of this tendency in Faith and Order documents not to describe the work of individuals.

My second example comes from the *Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement*, about which more in a moment. There is an article in the *Dictionary* on BEM, interestingly it is not by Geoffrey, but by Max Thurian, who as a member of the staff of Faith and Order drew up the first drafts of BEM and later served as the coordinator of the responses from the churches to the text of BEM. Geoffrey is mentioned as a member of an eight-member steering group for BEM. No chairperson is indicated, no first among equals. The members are given in alphabetical order.

My point is simply this: On the basis of the official documentation for the entire Faith and Order process in creating BEM, it is impossible to add more specificity about Geoffrey's role. I believe that there are other areas that can be more fruitful to observe his ecumenical work. I will turn to them briefly.

Yet before I leave Faith and Order, I want to turn to my theory mentioned at the outset of this presentation: why I am here. My hunch is

that I was perceived as one of those individuals who went back to Geoffrey's generation on Faith and Order. Like one of the last of the apostolic generation. I am a link to the past. I do believe at times that I am among a diminishing number of those active in the ecumenical movement from the 1970s onward. I could certainly mention a great number of those worthies who are no longer with us.

Yet, my overlap in Faith and Order with Geoffrey was not lengthy nor deep. He became involved with Faith and Order in 1976. The timeframe is noteworthy. It was a time when by and large a generation of giants in Faith and Order had left or were leaving the scene, names like George Florovsky, Douglas Horton, Paul Minear, John Meyendorff, K.E. Skydsgaard, and Oliver Tomkins. Only some nine or ten years before had the Roman Catholic Church as a result of the Second Vatican Council officially become a member of Faith and Order. It was also a time after years of absence that the names of women began to appear in the lists of participants in Faith and Order meetings. Geoffrey entered Faith and Order at a pivotal moment in the history of the Faith and Order movement. Geoffrey was not at the Commission Louvain meeting in 1971, where there were already texts dealing with baptism, eucharist, and ministry, nor at the Fifth World Conference in Santiago de Compostela in 1993, for he ended his time with Faith and Order in 1991.

I became a member of the Commission in the late 1970s, and after Geoffrey left the Commission. I became a member of Standing Committee until the early years of this century. We were together at the Commission meeting in Lima in 1982 and the meeting of the Commission in Stavanger in 1985. These were large meetings involving about a hundred people or more. Interestingly the two reports on BEM at Stavanger were not given by Geoffrey.

All of which is to say that I knew Geoffrey and his ecumenical work better in other contexts. Settings that today I would argue should not be overshadowed by his Faith and Order chapter, as important as it was.

One of those settings was the International Joint Commission for Dialogue between the World Methodist Council and the Roman Catholic Church, where he served as co-chair between 1986 and 2011. This was a time when the Commission published joint statements on the Church, Apostolic Tradition, Revelation, Teaching Authority. Subjects which in themselves indicate the seriousness of the dialogue's agenda. In the 1990s Geoffrey was a member of the Forum on Bilateral Dialogues. As a Lutheran, I was not personally a participant in these activities, but as a Lutheran with ecumenical interests I followed and became acquainted with the documentation resulting from them. You cannot miss the Wainwright influence in these texts.

A second example is the *Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement*. The first edition was published in 1991 with a second edition in 2002. There were six coeditors of the work. Geoffrey was among those six. He was not only an editor of the volume, but he contributed some 26 articles. Many of these entries, as you would expect, dealt with Methodist ecumenical relations and their dialogues. Still there are articles by Geoffrey on Christmas, Easter, federalism, universalism and *Ut Unum Sint*. As I mentioned earlier, he did not author the entry on *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*.

Another setting was furnished by the events around the development and signing of the text, *A Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification*. This text was the outcome of decades of Lutheran-Roman Catholic dialogue on the most neuralgic theological issue between Lutherans and Roman Catholics since the sixteenth century. In 1999 the Lutheran Churches of the Lutheran World Federation and the Roman Catholic Church on the basis of the concept of differentiating consensus declared that no church-dividing issues on this topic existed today. While the doctrine of justification did not have the same significance in Methodist-Roman Catholic relations, Geoffrey saw at once the importance of this joint declaration for ecumenical relations. He played a key role in the process by which the World Methodist Council in 2006 issued *A Common Affirmation* and a statement of association with the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification*. Those Methodist documents disclosed that Methodists

shared a fundamental doctrinal agreement with the teaching of the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification*.

Another example involves the work of Cardinal Walter Kasper, the former President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, who published in 2009 the volume, *Harvesting the Fruits*. This volume summarized the results of the Roman Catholic Church's official dialogues with the Anglican, Lutheran, Methodist, and Reformed churches. It also sought to furnish a map for a way forward for ecumenism. In the process of producing this book and exploring its future possibilities, a number of ecumenical colleagues were involved. After the publication in 2009 this group met in Rome to discuss the project and its potential. Geoffrey was in the consultation process and the group meeting in Rome.

Last, but not least, in this selective catalogue is Geoffrey's role as a coeditor of *The Oxford Handbook of Ecumenical Studies*. This project was the last time that I had direct contact with Geoffrey. As we all know, he unfortunately did not live to see the publication of this volume. He died the year before its release. The volume is dedicated to him. His coeditor faithfully saw the project through to its completion. As long as he was able, Geoffrey was an active and enthusiastic participant in this project. He wrote appropriately the chapter on Faith and Order.

When we reflect on his ecumenical work, we should not overlook his writings that were not specifically ecumenical yet deeply disclose his ecumenical commitment. An outstanding example is his work on systematic theology, *Doxology: The Praise of God in Worship, Doctrine, and Life*. The commitment to the unity of Christ's Church is apparent throughout its pages. There is a chapter devoted to ecumenism. That was the constant Geoffrey Wainwright.

Geoffrey Wainwright was one of an extraordinary generation. He by example and specific contributions from his remarkable ecumenical, liturgical, theological abilities and commitments left a legacy. It is a heritage which it is fitting not only to honor but to hold up and to challenge still divided churches, so that they may by the aid of the Triune God ponder and overcome their continuing disunity.



**BERNHARD A. ECKERSTOFER, O.S.B.**

Rettore Magnifico, Pontifical Athenaeum Sant'Anselmo

Conference given at the Centro Pro Unione

Thursday · 20 October 2022

## Geoffrey Wainwright – Personal Recollections

When I came to study at Duke University in 1997, I was in the middle of my doctoral studies at Salzburg University in Austria, which I pursued as a layman. Since my topic was American protestant theology, I was advised to ask Geoffrey Wainwright if he would allow me to study under him for some time, use the library at Duke and get a good deal of my dissertation done there. He immediately agreed. The months I could spend in Durham, North Carolina, are most memorable. It turned out that Geoffrey would stay in touch and meet me several times in Europe in the years to come. I want to offer here a few impressions of who he was for me, thereby hopefully shedding light on how he was perceived by students and friends of his.

### 1. What kind of proclamation?

The German Lutheran theologian Dietrich Ritschl in the *Festschrift* on the occasion of Wainwright's Sixtieth Birthday, makes, in an overall positive evaluation, a stunning statement: "In Wainwright's theology I miss an emphasis on proclamation."<sup>1</sup> Looking at Wainwright's entire work and his life, one could make the case that he has a particular focus on proclamation, however in the sense that it naturally evolves from devoting oneself to the richness and beauty of Christian tradition. The *lex orandi* (of which a part is the *lex canendi*) forms and illustrates the *lex credendi* and leads to a corresponding *lex vivendi* and consequently to a *lex agendi*.

Indeed, participating regularly in the liturgy leads to a formation in the Christian ethos that transforms the believer. One receives, so to say, a new identity in God. In liturgy the

<sup>1</sup> DAVID S. CUNNINGHAM / RALPH DEL COLLE / LAMADRID LUCAS (Ed.), *Ecumenical Theology in Worship, Doctrine, and Life: Essays Presented to Geoffrey Wainwright on his Sixtieth Birthday* (New York/Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999) 71.

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intimate and the public bind together, so that the church's life (of which the liturgy is the center) anticipates the fullness of the Kingdom, stretching forward toward its final consummation. For this eschatological grounding one can read his early work *Eucharist and Eschatology*, published in the year of my birth, 1971, a book very dear

to Wainwright himself, according to a personal conversation with me.<sup>2</sup>

Ethics cannot be separated from its ecclesial and pneumatological origin and context. This is developed in depth by the German Lutheran theologian Bernd Wannewetsch in his Habilitationsschrift, after which he consulted Wainwright in person for future projects when I was also at Duke University.<sup>3</sup> Liturgy reaches beyond the cultic act into everyday life which becomes itself liturgical, thereby transforming the world. Thus I would emphatically endorse: Wainwright, the minister and preacher, was himself a prayerful man whose entire life was under the claim of handing on the Good News. This became evident for me at Easter 1997: Well ahead of time he asked me what I would do for Easter Vigil. Since I had no plans yet, he suggested that we go together to a Moravian cemetery. He invited me to stay at his house over night and then he would drive me to this memorable service, explaining to me on the way there and back, its significance and the importance that the doctrine of the resurrection has as a concrete impact on our lives.

## 2. The instructor

Even though I had already done all my course work in Austria, I attended his class on the Trinity while I was at Duke University. Right from the beginning, I was astonished, coming from a State Faculty of Theology and having a rather German mindset about studies at a university, that each class started with a hymn. Students were singing not just one stanza, but four, five, seven stanzas – unbelievable for a Catholic! I can still see in my memory Geoffrey Wainwright’s round face, singing enthusiastically, animating his students to do it alike and then referring in class to the theological significance of these hymns that were lively enacted before.

Wainwright’s theological pedagogy consisted in making students familiar with the classical traditions of Christianity. He made his students read a lot! In an e-mail to me from the year 2011

(looking back at his time as guest professor in the Eternal City), he complained about the Roman system (which is akin to what I experienced in Austria): “Whereas at Duke students have the chance to read a lot, in Rome I wondered: When on earth do students find time to do accompanying readings?” In addition, he made them write, summarizing what one has learned, seeking to creatively digest what has happened in the classroom. And he liked to engage in discussions, during which he knew how to draw mostly American students to the significance of the historic Christian tradition.

## 3. A Theological Life

My studies under Geoffrey Wainwright coincided with his working on the theological biography of Lesslie Newbigin.<sup>4</sup> In fact, I hold that this very book is a key to understanding him. I recall how he was moved by the example and teaching of Lesslie Newbigin. For him, like for Wainwright himself, one could say, his work has to be seen in the light of his life and his life in the light of his work.

In his book on Lesslie Newbigin, Wainwright’s attempt was “a way of doing theology that takes sanctified life and thought seriously as an intrinsic witness to the content and truth of the Gospel”.<sup>5</sup> Wainwright’s whole existence was likewise a theological one. His work cannot be separated from his life and his life cannot be separated from his work. The merit from such a view is to see in Wainwright that ecumenical theology like liturgical studies cannot be restricted to a merely abstract scientific endeavor, but must include the existential side.

On this point I want to narrate yet another striking incident. I had in the meanwhile become a Benedictine monk, a decision that he commented appreciatively. His regular visits to the Vatican which brought him also to Rome at the same time (from 2001 to 2003) that I had pursued postdoctoral studies there with a particular focus on monasticism. He told me that he had never visited so far the two formative places of Benedictine monasticism, i.e. Subiaco

2 GEOFFREY WAINWRIGHT, *Eucharist and Eschatology* (Acron, OH: OSL Publications, 2002).

3 BERND WANNENWETSCH, *Gottesdienst als Lebensform. Ethik für Christenbürger* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1997).

4 GEOFFREY WAINWRIGHT, *Lesslie Newbigin: A Theological Life* (New York/Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

5 *Ibid.*, VI.

and Montecassino. So we went there. When we visited Montecassino, it happened to be a Sunday. He naturally attended Holy Eucharist in the Abbey Church, I was next to him because I was only ordained a priest after my solemn vows. I went to communion, whereas he remained in the pews. On our way back I asked him about this, knowing that his understanding of the Eucharist was very akin to Catholic teaching. He replied: "I accept the rules of your church, and I know that there would have been a basis for me as an individual to go to communion. But really, we are not one! I think not giving in too easily to inter-communion can be a powerful sign that unity is not yet achieved and that this pain should lead us to strive even more fervently to become one!"

To conclude, I claim that Geoffrey Wainwright in his *work and with his life* (in a similar way in which he depicts Newbigin) achieves dogmatic relevance, as do outstanding Christian figures. In this way, his very life and thought make a lively contribution to a theology which opens up to the mystery of faith. The German Jesuit Michael Schneider clarifies the characteristic of biographical theology. "Theology can learn the courage to comprehend the entirety in the fragmentary from liturgy: the celebrations of the liturgical year represent the whole but each time with an individually new slant."<sup>6</sup>

6 MICHAEL SCHNEIDER, *Theologie als Biographie. Eine dogmatische Grundlegung* (St. Ottilien: EOS, 1997) 20.

Wainwright frequently used in his book on Lesslie Newbigin, the word "I", giving extracts from letters written to him from theologians who knew Newbigin personally. He included in this scholarly work, long passages of two of his own students evaluating Newbigin's thought and who questioned an imagined great-granddaughter of Newbigin about what she thinks to be valuable in her great-grandfather's ecumenical program in 2029.

Johann Baptist Metz made this fundamental statement in an article on Karl Rahner: "To include the subject in dogmatics means to elevate - again - the human person and its own history of life and experience to an objective issue of dogmatics; it means to bring - again - doctrine into life and life into doctrine; it means thus to reconcile dogmatics and the individual life, and it means finally to unite theological doxology and mystical biography."<sup>7</sup>

This is, I think, what the study-day at the *Centro Pro Unione* in Rome was about and which helps keeping the memory of this outstanding Christian and theologian alive through this collection of presentations delivered at this very gathering. Geoffrey Wainwright would be pleased.

7 JOHANN BAPTIST METZ, "Karl Rahner - ein theologisches Leben. Theologie als mystische Biographie eines Christenmenschen heute", *Stimmen der Zeit* 99 (1974) 305-316, citation 307.



## GILLIAN KINGSTON

Vice President of the World Methodist Council, Former member of MERCIC,  
First Lay Leader of the Conference of the Methodist Church in Ireland

Conference given at the Centro Pro Unione

Thursday · 20 October 2022

### Geoffrey Wainwright – Personal Recollections

It is a privilege to have been invited to present some rather more personal reflections on Geoffrey Wainwright, theologian, liturgist, ecumenist – and friend.

First and foremost, Geoffrey was a proud son of Yorkshire – ‘I am a Yorkshire man’ – that defined him!

And being the son of a railway man, he never lost his love of trains.

I am given to understand that he was a solitary and somewhat shy child; he had no siblings and no first cousins, so friendship was important to him and he had a wide circle of friends from many parts of the world. I was honoured to be among them.

I met Geoffrey first in Nairobi, Kenya, at the 1986 World Methodist Council (WMC) and Conference at the pre-Conference meeting of the Ecumenics Standing Committee. ‘Those were the days, my friend(s)’ – when it was possible to have two-day satellite gatherings of the WMC committees before the ‘razzmatazz’ (Geoffrey’s term!) of the WM Conference.

Needless to say, I was totally in awe of this man whose works I had had to study – and be examined on – while at the Irish School of Ecumenics (ISE). Geoffrey had himself been a visiting lecturer at ISE, so it became a topic of conversation.

After Nairobi, I was appointed to the Methodist/Roman Catholic International Commission (MERCIC) (on which I served for four quinquennia) and it was during that period that we became friends as well as colleagues.

It was a particular joy to meet Margaret, his lovely wife,<sup>1</sup> and I use that word advisedly. Geoffrey once described Margaret to me as ‘the kindest person I know’ – she is delightful and both hospitable and long-suffering! As you may

<sup>1</sup> And I note others this evening have already referred to Margaret as ‘lovely’.

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#### Gillian Kingston

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know, they have two daughters, Joanna and Catie, and a son, Dominic, along with grandchildren Wesley, Mattaios and Sofia.

#### Art

MRCIC meets, as some of you are aware, in different countries where Methodists and Catholics co-exist – Vienna, Paris, Venice, Lisbon,

Savannah, Jerusalem, Krakow, to name a few. We each believed in what might be termed *'the stewardship of opportunity'* and we contrived to fit in visits to art galleries and historic sights and so on in most locations of the meetings.

Geoffrey was fascinated by art, particularly painting, but he knew (or thought he knew!) what he liked and sometimes had to be persuaded to explore further.

The paintings of the Bruegel family, Flemish painters of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, father and sons, were a challenge, but I got there on that one, and was even thanked for my efforts!

The same obtained with the wonderful tapestries in the Wawel Castle in Kraków, Poland. *'I don't think I like tapestries'* - *'Well, try'* and he did!

**Head gear!**

Those of you who knew Geoffrey will have been familiar with his collection of hats and caps - being follicly challenged, he like to wear a head covering in both summer and winter. And when one of these got lost, it was a major crisis. This happened when we were in Jerusalem in 1999 - so, having more hair than he, I 'lent' him my linen hat. Sadly, though predictably, this got lost too, and in a state of some remorse, he bought me these eilat stones I am wearing.

On another occasion, when he and Margaret were staying with Tom and me in West Cork, another hat disappeared, only to be found later under the sitting table - it was duly posted back to North Carolina. *'One hat, worn'* was a source of wonderment in the local Post Office as I completed the customs declaration!

**Sport**

Cricket was a game he loved. It may completely baffle many of us, but he was determined that his grandson, Wesley, should appreciate it and play it. And birthday cards should always be of a cricket scene!

Tennis: Geoffrey was an enthusiastic - and good - tennis player.

**Photography**

Frequently - **very** frequently - those who accompanied Geoffrey would be prevailed upon to stand beside him and watch out for traffic. Lorries and buses, in particular, have a nasty way of interfering with the composition of a photograph, and whereas that is ok with digital cameras (just delete), it absolutely was not with film! *'Let me know when the coast is clear...'*

And then there was the matter of what Margaret once referred to as the 'human interest' element in a photograph...

- *Sit there, no, THERE!*
- *Stand beside that poster and point at the words...*
- *Look interested...*

And then there was the position of photographer's assistant...

- *Hold that branch back*
- *Could you move that bin, do you think?*

**Ireland**

- he sometimes described himself as a friend of St Patrick's people.
- Dublin - *'one of my favourite cities,'* he used to say.
- Glenstal Ecumenical Conference where he was a key note speaker on several occasions

Margaret - and Joanna, Catie and Dominic,

Thank you for lending us Geoffrey, amazing companion, perceptive art critic, indefatigable walker, brilliant photographer, lover of Charles Wesley's hymns and, from my perspective, friend of St Patrick's people!

*Ar dheis Dé go raibh a anam dilis*

- may his faithful soul be at the right hand of God.



**DONALD J. BOLEN**



Conference given at the Centro Pro Unione

Archbishop of Regina, Canada, Co-Chair of the Joint International Commission for Dialogue between the World Methodist Council and the Catholic Church (2013-16)

Thursday · 20 October 2022

## Geoffrey Wainwright – Personal Recollections

**W**arm greetings to all of you who are gathered for this celebration of the life and work of Professor Geoffrey Wainwright. It is a privilege to offer a few words of tribute.

When I was first interviewed about the prospect of working at the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity (PCPCU) in 2001, to work at the Anglican and Methodist desk and serving those dialogues and relations, I shared that I knew something about Anglicans from my years of doctoral research on ARCIC, but that I really didn't know much at all about Methodists. Cardinal Cassidy, who was one of those interviewing me, said to me, "you are going to love the Methodists!" I learned in a hurry that I loved working with Geoffrey Wainwright.

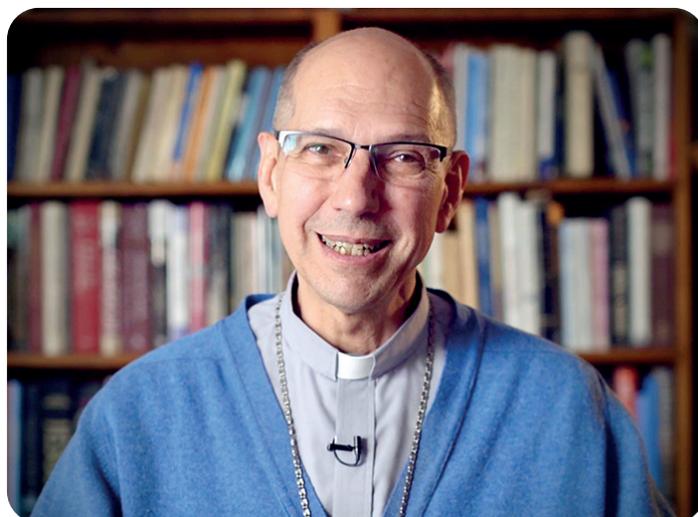
The first initiative where I had the privilege of working with Geoffrey concerned the possibility of Methodist and Reformed Churches becoming officially associated with the Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification (JDDJ) signed by the Catholic Church and the Lutheran World Federation. Geoffrey knew that the joint declaration was the highest level of reception of Western dialogues with the Catholic Church. He also knew that when he read the JDDJ and the differentiated consensus between Lutherans and Catholics recorded in that document, with its common statements of faith and the particular emphases articulated by Lutherans and Catholics, that there was a possibility that Methodists could sign on to the JDDJ so long as they were permitted to identify their own emphases.

Geoffrey took a leading role at a meeting of representatives of each of these Churches to explore the possibility of Methodist and Reformed association with the JDDJ, which took place in the Autumn of 2001 in Columbus, Ohio. Leading up to and following the meeting, Geoffrey tilled the soil within the World Methodist Council for Methodist association with the JDDJ, working closely with Bishop Walter Klaiber.

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 **Donald J. Bolen**

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He also pursued conversations with the PCPCU and the Lutheran World Federation, regarding the wording of specific Methodist emphases that were to be included in the expanded JDDJ. Geoffrey really orchestrated the process by which five years later, in 2006, the World Methodist Council was able to become a signatory to the joint declaration. It was for me an introduction to and indication of the kind of ecumenical work that Geoffrey Wainwright did, looking creatively to discern how to deepen the real but incomplete communion shared by Methodists and other Christian Churches. It will be for others to talk about Geoffrey's significant contribution to the



Lima document on Baptism, Eucharist, and Ministry, where he also played a key role.

My work with Geoffrey was principally in the context of the Methodist-Roman Catholic International Commission (MERCIC). Geoffrey was the co-chair during the entire period that I was privileged to work at the Holy See and to serve as the co-secretary to this dialogue. Geoffrey's leadership as a systematic theologian was the driving force in determining the direction of the dialogue. He identified the topics one theme after another that Methodists and Catholics needed to address in order to grow more closely together.

Geoffrey's Catholic counterpart was Bishop Michael Putney from Australia, and when I first came on board in that dialogue, Michael told me we have the privilege of working with a great ecumenist, with a giant. Geoffrey truly was an ecumenical giant, a great ecumenist at the service of the unity that Christ desires for the Church.

The legacy of Geoffrey Wainwright invites us to ask: what makes a theologian, an ecumenist, particularly effective in leading Christian Churches into deeper relationship, and giving tangible expression to their communion in Christ? In a context where dialogue commissions play a vital role in the ecumenical movement, what fosters the fruitfulness of the great enterprise of ecumenical dialogue? In the reflections that follow, I would offer a few thoughts on what characterized and dynamized Geoffrey's ecumenical work, and on what we can learn from him.

I think Geoffrey would want to say, it begins at home: knowing your own tradition and loving it, loving what God has done through it, while owning its struggles and shortcomings, and not trying to hide them. Geoffrey knew Methodism, inside and out, and loved it, loved the share with others the riches of the Gospel as the Methodist tradition has embraced it.

Geoffrey also appreciated and encouraged Methodist openness to the other, to the dialogue partner, and the humility to listen deeply in order to learn about the work of the Holy Spirit in the other. Inviting a step further, Geoffrey encouraged us to love the work of the Holy Spirit in other Christian communities, not with standing

differences and the struggles and limitations of the dialogue partner. Geoffrey knew the Catholic Church, and he knew it very well. The Catholic Church could be very well represented in any presentation that Geoffrey Wainwright gave about it.

This led Geoffrey to understand that ecumenical dialogue, especially that at an international level, was a privileged place. Members of bilateral dialogue commissions were entrusted with a holy and life-giving task: to bring the riches and challenges of their traditions into an honest, rigorous dialogue in pursuit of the truth, in faithfulness to the Gospel.

Chairpersons have a vital role in creating a space for that dialogue, for fostering a spirit at once faithful to one's tradition and open to the other, and for guiding the dialogue. Under the leadership of Geoffrey Wainwright and Michael Putney, the MERCIC dialogue sessions were a theological banquet. They created an environment where we, as a dialogue commission, working closely together, set out to identify and chart out as much as possible what Methodists and Catholics hold together; where the places of consensus and convergence were; where the differences were; and to identify how we could work on those differences and advance in our relations.

The friendship and constructive working relationship between Geoffrey and Michael, and their ease at addressing points of difference between our communions, set the tone for the dialogue. Geoffrey mentored others in the work of the dialogue, and he and Michael were able to draw out the gifts of each commission member. We understood under Geoffrey and Michael's leadership that the crucified and risen Lord desires deeply that his disciples be one, and that we were entrusted with a work of reconciliation that was empowered by and dear to the Holy Spirit. In sum, they created the most conducive possible atmosphere for us to advance on the steps towards full visible unity. The result of all of that was that the MERCIC was something of an overachiever in dialogues. The areas of consensus convergence that the dialogue was able to register continued to exceed the expectations of the sponsoring churches.

For Geoffrey, a good dialogue report was not an end in itself. As a great ecumenist, he wanted to see what the dialogues and the dialogue documents we produced were bringing to birth. He was preoccupied with the work of reception, and wanted our churches to live into the opportunities which our dialogue created.

One project that Geoffrey and I both were deeply committed to was the preparation of a document which would summarize the achievements of four decades of MERCIC dialogue. In February of 2010, Geoffrey attended a conference sponsored by the PCPCU about the reception of dialogues between the Catholic Church and ecumenical partners in the West. At that meeting, Geoffrey articulated the need for practical steps which would lead to the reception of key elements of the bilateral statements: "I wish to propose that all parties should find ways of formally and officially 'enacting' the results so far of each of the dialogues in which they are engaged."

This was characteristic of Geoffrey's concern, not only with mapping out theological agreement, but through a process of reception, allowing our agreements to have a transformative impact on our churches. On one occasion, Geoffrey went to Pope Benedict and made the proposal that in times of crisis, he might invite the heads of Churches and Christian World Communions in both the West and the East to come together, in order to prayerfully address the world in its greatest needs. He believed that the collective fruits of ecumenical dialogues that had taken place since the Second Vatican Council justified us in taking bold steps together, and that there was a new space for the heads of churches to be speaking together.

He wanted us to do that because we could. He wanted all of our Churches to live up to their lofty calling and to let the Holy Spirit lead us in integrity and truth to take whatever steps were possible as a result of the faith we held in common. Geoffrey was deeply committed to the Lund Principle of the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches that we should do together all things except where deep differences require that we act separately.

He understood that this would take courage and creativity, and he put himself at the service of that task and goal with great energy. Add to that his own faithfulness, his personality, his keen intelligence, his deep commitment. All of that combined to make Geoffrey Wainwright a truly great ecumenist. It was a privilege and a joy to work with him, to be taught by him, and to experience his friendship.

We honour his legacy by committing ourselves to our ecumenical dialogues, and by working hard towards their reception, so that our churches can truly be transformed by this holy work of reconciliation. I would like to conclude by offering a prayer from John Wesley that Geoffrey himself shared with me:

*I come Lord, I believe Lord.*

*I throw myself upon thy Grace and Mercy;  
do not refuse me!*

*I have not whither else to go;*

*Here will I stay, I will not stir from thy door;*

*On thee will I trust, and rest, and venture myself.*

*On thee I lay my hope for pardon, for life, for  
salvation.*

*if I perish, I perish on thy shoulder;*

*if I sink, I sink in thy vessel;*

*if I die, I die at thy door....*

Geoffrey Wainwright died at the Lord's door. Our lives have been enriched by him, our churches have been enriched by him. May he rise in glory to see the face of the risen Lord that he loved and served so well. And may we as churches, as theologians, as ecumenists, as disciples, carry forward the legacy that Geoffrey Wainwright, by the grace of the Holy Spirit, has left us.



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## Wisdom, Virtues, and Vices in the Book of Proverbs: Some Philosophical and Ethical Considerations

One of the reasons that I picked the “Book of Proverbs”<sup>1</sup> is because, as you remember, there are really three major books in the wisdom literature of the Bible. There is, Jōb, Ecclesiastes, and Proverbs. I gave a talk here on Jōb called “A New Look at the Book of Jōb” and on “Ecclesiastes,” (in Hebrew, *Kohelet*), called “Some Philosophical Aspects of Kohelet.” So to complete the picture of the wisdom literature, I wanted to say a few words about the “Book of Proverbs.”

First, let me say to you that the “Book of Proverbs” is not a simple writing. It is vast and has a great deal of, I would say, controversy, as to what it really means, and I will deal with some aspects of that, although, of course, not all. Now one of the things that one has to keep in mind when one reads the “Book of Proverbs,” is that it actually is written from the perspective of a more or less normal existence. Now what do I mean by more or less normal existence? It refers to a certain kind of a society where what takes place and where things take place have a certain consistency, a certain uniformity. It’s not the kind of a book that was written in extreme times, where, for example, there is crisis, there is danger, and life is in turmoil. It may seem that nothing will continue. It is when you find things happening that seem so irregular that you don’t really understand what’s going on. Just let me give you two examples of such a time.

Look at the “Book of Amos.” Now Amos was a prophet who wrote at a time of extreme danger, and he says in the Fourth Chapter, the Sixth Verse,

“I gave you cleanness of teeth in all your cities and lack of bread in all your places. Yet you did not return to me. And I also withheld the rain from you when there were yet three months to the harvest; I would send rain upon one city and send no rain upon another

<sup>1</sup> All references are to the *Revised Standard Version of The Holy Bible* (New York/Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

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city. One field would be rained upon and the field on which it did not rain withered; so two or three cities wandered to one city to drink water and were not satisfied. Yet you did not return to me.”

Think about what’s going on with global warming, where in fact, we are experiencing heat in places where we didn’t have heat; now we have melting of the ice at the Poles.

The “Book of Amos” was in a sense speaking about such an existence; Not Proverbs! “Proverbs” is a relatively normal kind of ongoing existence, where people can plan and decide how they want to live their lives and go about doing it.

Nor is it the kind of extreme situation you find in the “Book of Micah.” If you look at the Seventh Chapter of the “Book of Micah,” what you get are such extremes that such statements as I’m going to teach you from the Book of Proverbs would make no sense. What Micah says is,

“...The godly man has perished from the earth, and there is none upright among men; they all lie in wait for blood and each hunts his brother with a net. Their hands are upon what is evil, to do diligently...”

I don’t have to continue, but if you look at the Seventh Chapter of the “Book of Micah” you will see exactly what I am referring to.

This is simply not true if you look at the “Book of Proverbs,” where what you have, it seems to me, is a kind of more or less normal existence. Now you may say to me, “Why are you dealing with Proverbs since we are not living a normal existence today?” If there is one thing you can say about our existence today, it is that it doesn’t seem to be too normal, but the Book of Proverbs says certain things that I think, even for our situation, have to be taken very seriously.

Since it’s always good to know what you are not dealing with, let me start by saying what’s not in Proverbs. First, there’s no immortality in “Proverbs.” There’s not much immortality in the whole Hebrew Bible, although there may be some disputed passages dealing with immortality in the “Book of Ecclesiastes,” the “Book of Jōb” and “Psalms.” There’s none of this in “Proverbs.” There’s also no messiah in the “Book of Proverbs.” Not only that, there’s no prophetic challenge of repentance; there’s no real sense of forgiveness and repentance. Nor is there concern about idolatry. And monotheism is taken for granted; It’s as if you don’t have to fight for monotheism against paganism, or against the pagan deities. There’s hardly a mention. I think there’s no mention of priests and only one mention of prophecy, and even then, it has nothing to do with prophets. So what exactly are we talking about? What exactly is in there?

There are three fundamental concepts and realities that one has to take very seriously, I would say even today. The first is wisdom. What does wisdom mean in the “Book of Proverbs”? I think the “Book of Proverbs” has contributed to our understanding of the meaning and significance of the concept of wisdom.

It doesn’t mean the same thing as in other places in the Bible, where, for example, wisdom is more pragmatic; it’s more like know-how. It’s like a carpenter has wisdom in the way he does woodwork. It doesn’t have that kind of a sense. And, in fact, if you look at the prophets, they are not very happy with wisdom at all because they are opposed to the so-called wise men who pretend to be wise, but do not really have any genuine sense of what God demands of us, and how they should live their lives.

Let me read to you, for example, in the Eighth Chapter of the “Book of Jeremiah,” the Ninth Verse, it says,

“The wise men shall be put to shame; they shall be dismayed and taken; lo, they have rejected the word of the Lord, and what wisdom is in them?”

In other words, they have a sense that wisdom is apart from any kind of religious connection. So, Jeremiah says, in fact in the next chapter, one of the great passages of the whole book of “Jeremiah,” in the Ninth Chapter, the 23<sup>rd</sup> Verse, it says

“Thus says the Lord: ‘Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, let not the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches; but let him who glories, glory in this, that he understands and knows me, that I am the Lord who practices steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth; for in these things I delight...’”

So, then what exactly is wisdom and what is the “Book of Proverbs” all about?

There’s no Messianic King, as I said, so what exactly is the Book of Proverbs all about? Here I think I’m going to say something that may, in fact, be controversial, but I think I can defend it and any of you who disagree, please do your best to challenge me and I’ll try to respond. I think that you find the motto (so to speak) for the

“Book of Proverbs” in Deuteronomy. If you look at Deuteronomy Chapter 30, Verse 15, what you have there is an amazing statement that I think summarizes the essence of what Proverbs is all about. What it says is,

“I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse; therefore, choose life, so that you and your descendants may live.”

This is an amazing statement. “I’ve set before you life and death. The blessing and the curse. Choose life so that you and your children may live.” The Book of Proverbs is a book that is founded on the concept of choice, that people have control over their lives. That it’s not fate, or the gods, or anything of that nature that actually is in control. You are in control of your destiny!

There is a similar statement, for example in Amos Chapter Five, Verse 14, where it says

“Seek good and not evil, that you may live.”

I think that what you have in Proverbs is that it’s through our choices that we determine what we become. In other words, it isn’t already determined what you will be. It isn’t already determined how you will live. We are, in fact, incomplete, and the very way we live our lives completes us through the choices we make, so that one’s life is really open. It isn’t something determined and we have freedom to go in different directions.

In this sense what the “Book of Proverbs” is saying, and here I think is my main contribution to the discussion of this Book, is that we actually choose our influences. Although this seems obvious, in many ways, it isn’t. For example, my son became a lawyer and what that meant was that he was going to be studying legal books. He’s going to be meeting with other lawyers and he’s going to be worrying about legal matters. So he’s really choosing an influence. If he were an historian, he would be reading history, or if he were a rabbi, he’d be worrying about Jews and Judaism and the religion of Judaism. We choose. When you marry, you’re not choosing a person, you’re choosing an influence. That person is going to have a tremendous influence on you. If you choose a profession, that profession is going to have an influence on you. So there’s no such thing as choosing without choosing influences,

and what basically the Book of Proverbs is saying is that the kind of influences that you pick are going to determine the kind of life that you live. And here one must ask, “what is wisdom and why is wisdom needed?” Because you need wisdom to make the right choices.

Let me turn to the Fourth Chapter of Proverbs, beginning with the 10th verse, and here it says

“Hear, my son, and accept my words, that the years of your life may be many. I have taught you the way of wisdom; I have led you in the paths of uprightness. When you walk, your step will not be hampered; and if you run, you will not stumble. Keep hold of instruction, do not let go; guard her, for she is your life. Do not enter the path of wicked, and do not walk in the way of evil men. Avoid it; do not go into it; turn away from it and pass on. For they cannot sleep unless they have done wrong; they are robbed of sleep unless they have made someone stumble. For they eat the bread of wickedness and drink the wine of violence. But the path of the righteous is like the light of dawn, which shines brighter and brighter until full day. The way of the wicked is like deep darkness; They do not know over what they stumble.”

So let’s be clear; the way of the righteous is a self-conscious living of life. That’s what Proverbs is saying. Live self-consciously. Don’t sleepwalk. Be aware of who you are and what you’re doing. Know that what you’re doing contributes to who you are and how you become what you are.

The 31 chapters of the Book of Proverbs tries to convey that anything that’s really good in ourselves – and in the world – cannot emerge until you make certain choices, and these choices determine the self that will emerge. So now we return to the concept of wisdom; why is it that you need wisdom? Because it’s wisdom that’s going to give you the self-conscious understanding of what the choices are, of what the future may be. Are you going to lead a virtuous life or engage in vices? Are you going to lead a life that will not only destroy you, but destroy everyone around you?

So, what you have here is that there is an accent on wisdom and choice, and it so illustrates what Deuteronomy says, “Choose life that you and your descendants [children] may live.” And so what you have throughout the Book of Proverbs is the idea that you’re teaching your child, you’re teaching your offspring how they should live their lives. How do we know this? If we go back to the First Chapter, beginning with the Eighth verse, it says

“Hear, my son, your father’s instruction, and reject not your mother’s teaching; for they are a fair garland for your head, and pendants for your neck. My son, if sinners entice you, do not consent. If they say, ‘Come with us, let us lie in wait for blood, let us wantonly ambush the innocent; like Sheol let us swallow them alive and whole, like those who go down to the Pit: we shall find all precious goods, we shall fill our houses with spoil; throw in your lot among us, we will all have one purse’— my son, do not walk in the way with them, hold back your foot from their paths.” It’s the whole idea of what kind of education, what kind of virtues are you going to teach your children.

Here I think you have very interesting concepts. What you have is contrasts: the Book of Proverbs is a series of contrasts and they are this: you can choose to live one way, or you can choose an opposite way. Once you read it over and over again it sinks in, and then it is clear; you know that it makes sense. Now comes the problem. “The Book of Proverbs” doesn’t just talk about wisdom as being a self-conscious understanding of life, an understanding of the past and the future, an understanding of those things that bring out good in you and those things that bring out the bad in you. It paves a somewhat more significant, much, much, more significant role to wisdom. Wisdom is part of the creative act of God; it is the all-encompassing intelligence of God. It’s the means by which God creates.

Let’s look at Proverbs, Chapter Eight for a minute, which is of course the most important, (that and another place which I will quote immediately). Look at Chapter Eight, Verse 22 which is almost a talk solely about wisdom.

Now the heading is actually, “Wisdom’s part in Creation,” so this is actually wisdom talking:

“The Lord created me at the beginning of his work, the first of his acts of old.”

So we are led to understand that God’s first act of creation is Wisdom.” Is that what we read in Genesis? (*B’resheet barah elohim et ha’shemayim v’et ha aretz,*) which means, “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” Is that wisdom first? Let’s continue with Proverbs, Chapter Eight, Verse 23,

“Ages ago I was set up, at the first, before the beginning of the earth.”

How is that possible? How could Wisdom be first when I translated the first verse of Genesis earlier: “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” Or, another way of translating it is: the first thing that God created, (or at first) God created. *B’reysheet*, in the beginning, is a very difficult word to translate because grammatically, it is in the construct state, and the Hebrew is very complicated. So, colloquially, it could be, at first, before the beginning of the earth.

Now Proverbs actually goes “behind” Genesis. Let me explain; here is what it says in Chapter Eight, Verse 24:

“When there were no depths I was brought forth,”

which corresponds with Genesis: *Ha’aretz hayta tohu veh’ vohu* – “And the earth was without form and void.”

Verse 24 through 31 describes the deep; the earth;

“When there were no springs abounding with water. Before the mountains had been shaped, before the hills I was brought forth, before he had made the earth with its fields or the first of the dust of the earth. When he established the heavens, I was there, when he drew a circle on the face of the deep, when he made firm the skies above. When he established the fountains of the deep when he assigned to the sea its limit so that the waters might not transgress his command, when he marked out the foundations of the earth...”

Of course, what this describes is the creation of the world. Proverbs then says, in effect, when all this happened, guess what? I, Wisdom, was there. There I was beside him. The Hebrew is very difficult in these next lines. The Revised Standard Version translates this portion, "then I was beside him, like a master workman." The Jewish Publication Society, however, translates it "as a child," not "like a master workman." I would prefer the translation, "as an architect," because I believe that is what the Hebrew means:

"I was there as an architect; and I was daily his delight, rejoicing before him always, rejoicing in his inhabited world and delighting in the sons of men."

Now I find this in some respects complicated and in other respects amazing. In what way is it complicated? It's complicated because, taken together, you have many different stories about creation. How do you connect this to some of the others? Let me just give you another example. If you look to the Third Chapter, 19<sup>th</sup> Verse it says,

"The Lord by wisdom founded the Earth; by understanding he established the heavens."

Or, the way I would prefer to translate it,

"In wisdom the Lord founded the Earth and by understanding he set forth the heavens in their place. By his knowledge the depths burst forth and the clouds drift dew."

You have a parallel passage, by the way, in the 104<sup>th</sup> Psalm Verse 24, with a similar meaning.

"O Lord, how manifold are thy works! In wisdom hast thou made them all; the earth is full of thy creatures..."

What exactly is the intention of this portion of Proverbs? What are we to understand when we talk about God creating wisdom? We are to learn that God created the world through wisdom, and that wisdom is the whole foundation of the earth. What it means essentially is that the world is a product of wisdom, and if it hadn't been created with wisdom, we would not be able to understand it. One must ask: to the extent that we understand it, why is it that we are able to understand the world? We understand it because there is an order - an ordering principle. It is this principle that gives us a sense of the world, and if

there hadn't been an ordering principle, what in the world would we know?

Let me now just digress from Proverbs to give you some of the parallels in the Apocrypha that also cite wisdom. If you look at Ecclesiasticus<sup>2</sup> there is a very interesting parallel. It says that wisdom was first of all created things. It agrees with Proverbs in that intelligent purpose has been there from the beginning.

"Who has laid bare the root of wisdom? Who has understood her subtlety? One alone is wise. The Lord most awesome seated upon his throne. It is the Lord who created her, surveyed and measured her and infused her into all of his works. (The Ways of Wisdom, 4-8, Chapter 1 Verses 6-9).

If God had not infused this order of wisdom in all his works, (which we can understand to the extent that we are wise) we wouldn't be able to understand, or comprehend it at all. Proverbs also implies that God has given all mankind wisdom in some measure; that all of us, in some form or another, have an aspect, a quality of wisdom.

Let me tell you why this is an interesting concept. We are the heirs of the findings and philosophies of Galileo and Descartes, but one might ask: What does it mean to be their heirs, especially in relation to Proverbs? First, the world for Galileo is a mathematical manifold. He teaches that if you want to understand the language of nature, learn geometry. Cartesian dualism says that the world is basically matter in motion: There isn't any value nor are there any ethics. For both these greats, there isn't anything that makes any sense from the point of view of morality. However, the wisdom in the Book of Proverbs not only contains knowledge with respect to order, it also contains knowledge with respect to ends, with respect to morality, and with respect to the purpose that we must take on if we are to do the kinds of things that enable us to be fully ethical human beings.

Another focus of Proverbs is the relationship between man and woman. The Fifth and Sixth Chapter talks about the woman; the woman who is an adulteress; the woman as an enticer; the woman who does everything she can to lay

<sup>2</sup> *The New English Bible with Apocrypha* (Oxford: Cambridge University Press, 1970).

in wait to seduce the fool, the simpleton, the person who can't control his passions. In the Fifth Chapter, starting with Verse 1, It says,

"My son be attentive to my wisdom, incline your ear to my understanding; that you may keep discretion, and your lips may guard knowledge. For the lips of a loose woman drip honey, and her speech is smoother than oil; but in the end she is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword... her steps follow the path to Sheol; she does not take heed to the path of life; her ways wander and she does not know it.

"And now O sons, listen to me, and do not depart from the words of my mouth."

I think it emphasizes this warning over and over again. So, in the Seventh Chapter as well you find the same warning. It says wisdom will

"...preserve you from the loose woman, from the adventures with her smooth words.

For at the window of my house I have looked out through my lattice, and I have seen among the simple, I have perceived among the youths, a young man without sense, passing along the street near her corner, taking the road to her house, in the twilight, in the evening at the time of night and darkness.

And lo, the woman meets him... she is loud and wayward, her feet do not stay at home; now in the street, now in the market... I had to offer sacrifices and today I paid my vows; so now I have come out to meet you, to seek you eagerly, and I have found you. I have decked my coach with coverings... I have perfumed my bed with myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon. Come, let us take our fill of love till morning; let us delight ourselves with love. For my husband is not at home; he has gone on a long journey; he took a bag of money with him; at full moon he will come home."

Now, it's very interesting that there is a two-fold contrast here. The first contrast occurs in the Fifth Chapter, starting at the second line of Verse 18, where it says,

"...rejoice in the wife of your youth... Let her affection fill you at all times with delight, be infatuated always with her love. Why should you be infatuated, my son, with a loose woman and embrace the bosom of an adventuress? For a man's ways are before the eyes of the Lord, and he watches all his paths. The iniquities of the wicked ensnare him, and he is caught in the toils of his sin. He dies for lack of discipline, and because of his great folly he is lost."

Now what this book does over and over again in a number of passages is praise to the skies a woman who actually engages in righteous deeds. And in fact, even though the first few chapters of the Book of Proverbs concentrates on the woman who entices men, it's not just that women entice men, it's also men who actually go out of their way to find a wayward woman. Let's be clear; it says in Chapter 6 Verse 29:

"...So is he who goes in to his neighbor's wife; None who touches her will go unpunished. Do not men despise a thief if he steals to satisfy his appetite when he is hungry?... For jealousy makes a man furious, and he will not spare when he takes revenge. He will accept no compensation nor be appeased though you multiply gifts."

There's no question here, as the Prophet Hosea asserts in Chapter 4 Verse 14, that men are as responsible, in fact more responsible, than women. But what is the contrast? The contrast to these earlier descriptions of women is found in the 31<sup>st</sup> Chapter, which diametrically opposes the many verses regarding the loose, wayward, woman. It is so important that it is read by the husband on Friday evenings during the Sabbath ceremony at home:

"A good wife who can find?"

An 'Ashet Chayal,' which starts the verse in Hebrew, by the way, is not "a good wife"; that is a mistranslation. An Ashet Chayal means a courageous woman, a woman of valor. A woman who takes charge. A woman who is in control. A woman who knows how to get things done. Good is too insipid, too pale. This is a woman who really takes things under her control.

“She is far more precious than jewels. The heart of her husband trusts in her and he will have no lack of gain. She does with him good, and not harm, all the days of her life. She seeks wool and flax, and works with willing hands. She is like the ships of the merchant, she brings her food from afar. She rises while it is yet night and provides food for her household and tasks for her maidens. She considers a field and buys it...”

Hello? This is a woman who considers a field and buys it; she is able to make important decisions in the management of her household – not a shrinking violet whose husband must always be consulted.

“with the fruit of her hand she plants a vineyard. She girds her loins with strength and makes her arms strong. She perceives that her merchandise is profitable. Her lamp does not go out at night. She puts her hands to the distaff, and her hands hold the spindle. She opens her hand to the poor...”

So she is also concerned about doing something for the poor, “and reaches out her hands to the needy”.

“She is not afraid of snow for her household, for all her household are clothed in scarlet... Her husband is known at the gates, when he sits among the elders of the land.”

Now it’s very interesting that everybody says demeaning things about the husband at the gates – that he’s not doing anything and she’s doing everything, all the heavy work; what kind of relationship is that?

However, if you turn to the Chapter 22, Verse 22, it specifically says that the man is actually working at the gate proposing how to help the poor. So it is not that he’s not doing anything of importance – he is judging with the elders. Now let us go back:

“Her husband is known at the gates, when he sits among the elders of the land. She makes linen garments and sells them; she delivers girdles to the merchants. Strength and dignity are her clothing...”

And the following is my favorite verse in this entire chapter, because of my own experience as a Rabbi, I find this to be true. It says,

“Strength and dignity are her clothing and she laughs at the time to come.”

She is not afraid of death. Why is she not afraid of death? Because her life has been meaningful. And what she has done with her life is something that has meaning. “She opens her mouth with wisdom.” She’s wise. “and the teaching of kindness is on her tongue.” She’s kind.

“She looks well to the ways of her household and does not eat the bread of idleness. Her children rise up and call her blessed; her husband also and he praises her: Many women have done excellently, but you surpass them all. Charm is deceitful and beauty is vain, but a woman who fears the Lord, [and fears the Lord actually means who practices religion] practices religion, is to be praised. Give her of the fruit of her hands, and let her works praise her in the gates.”

In conclusion, I want to paraphrase and comment on a verse from the Fifth Chapter, the 11<sup>th</sup> Verse. Basically, it says that at the end of one’s life, if you have chosen folly, have chosen vices, have chosen basically the exploitation of others and doing evil, “at the end of your life you groan when your flesh and body are consumed.”

At death, when your flesh and body are consumed, there is a sense of truth and here is how it reverberates within me. I’ve known many, many people over the years who have been ruthless and been quite successful in worldly terms, in the sense that they made a great deal of money. However, in my experience as a Rabbi, they did not deal with death very well. They really didn’t. It’s almost as if they reached a point and they reflected on their years and asked themselves, “What really has my life been?”

Let me conclude with something that I said to my students yesterday. I remember once asking my dear, wonderful professor, a giant, Hans Jonas, who I was very close to for 30 years; I asked him in particular because he was a great scholar,

one of the greatest ever, the foremost authority on Gnosticism. I said, "What sense do you make of it when it says that it repented of God that he made man and it grieved him to his heart? That God somehow was sorry when he saw what human beings were doing to one another? Prof. Jonas said to me, "Live your life in such a way that God doesn't repent that he made you."

I mentioned this to my son Henry and he said to me, "Dad, you know what's even worse?"

And I couldn't imagine what could be worse, so he said, "If you reflect on your life and you felt your entire life had been meaningless, it had all been fruitless, then you repent that God created you." And so this verse means that if you live an immoral life, one without ethics, seeking after meaningless things, then at the end of your life you groan, when the flesh of your body is consumed and you repent that God created you.





**ABBREVIATIONS for Confessional Families Churches and Councils**

<b>A</b>	Anglican
<b>AC</b>	Assyrian Church of the East
<b>AIC</b>	African Instituted Churches
<b>B</b>	Baptist
<b>CC</b>	Chaldean Catholic Church
<b>CEC</b>	Conference of European Churches
<b>CCEE</b>	Council of European Episcopal Conferences
<b>CP</b>	Constantinople Patriarchate
<b>CPCE</b>	Community of Protestant Churches in Europe <i>(formerly Leuenberg Church Fellowship)</i>
<b>D</b>	Disciples of Christ
<b>DOMBES</b>	Groupe des Dombes
<b>E</b>	Evangelicals
<b>FC</b>	Free Churches
<b>FO</b>	Faith and Order
<b>L</b>	Lutheran (includes German 'Evangelische')
<b>M</b>	Methodist
<b>MECC</b>	Middle East Council of Churches
<b>Mn</b>	Mennonite
<b>Mo</b>	Moravian
<b>NCC</b>	New Charismatic Churches
<b>O</b>	Eastern Orthodox (Byzantine)
<b>OC</b>	Old Catholic (includes Polish National)
<b>OO</b>	Oriental Orthodox (Non-Chalcedonian)
<b>Pe</b>	Pentecostal
<b>R</b>	Reformed
<b>RC</b>	Roman Catholic
<b>SA</b>	Salvation Army
<b>SDA</b>	Seventh-day Adventist
<b>U</b>	United Churches
<b>W</b>	Waldensian
<b>WCC</b>	World Council of Churches

## LIST OF DIALOGUES

**A-B:** Anglican-Baptist International Forum

**A-B / eng:** Informal Conversations between the Baptist Union of Great Britain and the Church of England

**A-D / aus:** Anglican Church of Australia-Churches of Christ Conversations

**A-L:** Anglican-Lutheran International Commission

**A-L / africa:** All Africa Anglican-Lutheran Commission

**A-L / aus:** Anglican-Lutheran Conversations in Australia

**A-L / can:** Canadian Lutheran Anglican Dialogue

**A-L / eng-g:** Representatives of the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD) and of the Church of England

**A-L / eng-nordic regions:** Representatives of the Nordic countries and of the Church of England

**A-L / eur:** Anglican-Lutheran European Regional Commission

**A-L / usa:** Episcopal-Lutheran Dialogue in the USA

**A-L-Mo / can:** Trilateral Anglican-Lutheran-Moravian Task Group on Full Communion

**A-L-R / eng-f:** Official Dialogue between the Church of England and the Lutheran-Reformed Permanent Council in France

**A-M:** Anglican-Methodist International Commission

**A-M / eng:** Anglican-Methodist Conversation in Great Britain

**A-M / ire:** Church of Ireland / Methodist Church of Ireland Covenant Council

**A-M / usa:** United Methodist-Episcopal Bilateral Dialogue

**A-M-R / eng:** Informal Conversations between the Church of England, the Methodist Church and the United Reformed Church

**A-Mo:** Anglican-Moravian Conversations

**A-Mo / usa:** Moravian-Episcopal Dialogue in the USA

**A-O:** Anglican-Orthodox Joint Doctrinal Commission

**A-O / usa:** Anglican-Orthodox Theological Consultation in the USA

**A-OC:** Anglican-Old Catholic Theological Conversations

**A-OC / na:** Anglican-Old Catholic North American Working Group

**A-OO:** Anglican-Oriental Orthodox Dialogue

**A-OO / copt:** Anglican-Coptic Relations

**A-Pe / eng:** Anglican-Pentecostal Consultation

**A-R:** Anglican-Reformed International Commission

**A-R / eng-scot:** Church of England-Church of Scotland Joint Study Group

**A-R / usa:** Presbyterian-Episcopal Bilateral Dialogue

**A-RC:** Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC)

**A-RC:** International Anglican-Roman Catholic Commission for Unity and Mission (IARCCUM)

**A-RC / aus:** Anglican-Roman Catholic Commission of Australia

**A-RC / b:** Belgian Anglican-Roman Catholic Committee

**A-RC / br:** Brazilian Anglican-Roman Catholic National Commission

**A-RC / can:** Canadian Anglican-Roman Catholic Dialogue Commission

**A-RC / eng:** English Anglican-Roman Catholic Committee

**A-RC / eur:** Anglican-Roman Catholic Working Group in Western Europe

**A-RC / f:** Anglican-Catholic Joint Working Group in France

**A-RC / nz:** Anglican-Roman Catholic Commission in Aotearoa New Zealand (ARCCANZ)

**A-RC / usa:** Anglican-Roman Catholic Dialogue in the USA

**A-RC / usa (ACNA):** Theological Meeting between the Anglican Church in North America and Roman Catholic Church

**A-U / aus:** Conversations between the Anglican Church of Australia and the Uniting Church in Australia

**AC-CC:** Joint Commission for Unity between the Assyrian Church of the East and the Chaldean Catholic Church

**AC-O / rus:** Bilateral Dialogue between the Russian Orthodox Church and the Assyrian Church of the East

**AC-OO / copt:** Theological Dialogue between the Assyrian Church of the East and the Coptic Orthodox Church

**AC-OO / syr:** Bilateral Commission between the Assyrian Church of the East and the Syrian Orthodox Church

**AC-RC:** Mixed Committee for Theological Dialogue between the Catholic Church and the Assyrian Church of the East

**AIC-R:** Dialogue between the African Instituted Churches and the World Alliance of Reformed Churches

**B-CPCE / eur:** Dialogue between the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe and the European Baptist Federation

**B-L:** Baptist-Lutheran Dialogue

**B-L / g:** Baptist-Lutheran Dialogue in Germany

**B-L / n:** Baptist-Lutheran Dialogue in Norway

**B-L / sf:** Baptist-Lutheran Conversation in Finland

**B-L / usa:** Baptist-Lutheran Dialogue in the USA

**B-M:** Baptist-Methodist International Dialogue

**B-M-W / italy:** Baptist-Methodist-Waldensian Relations in Italy

**B-Mn:** Baptist-Mennonite Theological Conversations

**B-O:** Baptist-Orthodox Preparatory Dialogue

**B-O / georgia:** Dialogue between the Orthodox Church of Georgia and the Evangelical Christians-Baptists of Georgia

**B-R:** Baptist-Reformed Dialogue

**B-RC:** Baptist-Roman Catholic International Conversations

**B-RC / f:** Baptist-Catholic Joint Committee in France

**B-RC / usa (ab):** American Baptist-Roman Catholic Dialogue

**B-RC / usa (sb):** Southern Baptist-Roman Catholic Dialogue

**CEC-CCEE:** Joint Committee of Conference of European Churches and Council of European Episcopal Conferences

**CPCE-RC:** Community of Protestant Churches in Europe - Roman Catholic Church Consultation

**D-L / usa:** Disciples of Christ-Lutheran Dialogue in the USA

**D-O / rus:** Disciples of Christ-Russian Orthodox Dialogue

**D-R:** Disciples of Christ-Reformed Dialogue

**D-RC:** Disciples of Christ-Roman Catholic International Commission for Dialogue

**D-U / aus:** Conversations between the Churches of Christ in Australia and the Uniting Church in Australia

**D-U / usa:** Disciples of Christ-United Church of Christ Dialogue in the USA

**DOMBES:** Dialogues des Dombes

**E-RC:** Evangelical-Roman Catholic Dialogue on Mission

**E-RC / can:** Canadian Evangelical-Roman Catholic Dialogue

**E-RC / f:** Evangelical-Roman Catholic Conversations in France

**E-SDA:** Theological Dialogue between the World Evangelical Alliance and the Seventh-day Adventist Church

**FC-O / g:** Free Churches-Orthodox Dialogue in Germany

**FO:** Faith and Order conferences, consultations, studies

**L-M:** International Lutheran-Methodist Joint Commission

**L-M / n:** Conversation between the Church of Norway and the United Methodist Church in Norway

**L-M / s:** Dialogue between the United Methodist Church in Sweden and Church of Sweden

**L-M / sf:** Lutheran-Methodist Dialogue in Finland

**L-M / usa:** US Lutheran-United Methodist Dialogue

**L-Mn:** Lutheran-Mennonite International Study Commission

**L-Mn / f:** Lutheran-Mennonite Dialogue in France

**L-Mn / g:** Theological Dialogue between the United Evangelical Lutheran Church in Germany (VELKD) and the Association of Mennonite Assemblies in Germany (AMG)

**L-Mn / usa:** Lutheran-Mennonite Dialogue in the USA

**L-Mn-RC:** Lutheran-Mennonite-Catholic Dialogue Commission

**L-Mo / usa:** Lutheran-Moravian Dialogue in the USA

**L-O:** Lutheran-Orthodox Joint Commission

**L-O / g:** Theological Dialogue between the Orthodox Church in Germany and the Evangelical Church in Germany

**L-O / g-cp:** Theological Dialogue between the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD) and the Ecumenical Patriarchate

**L-O / g-rom:** Theological Dialogue between the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD) and the Romanian Orthodox Church

**L-O / g-rus:** Theological Dialogue between the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD) and the Russian Orthodox Church

**L-O / sf:** Theological Discussions between the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland and the Finnish Orthodox Church

**L-O / sf-rus:** Theological Discussions between the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland and the Russian Orthodox Church

**L-O / usa:** Lutheran-Orthodox Dialogue in the USA

**L-O-R / f:** Dialogue between Representatives of the Inter-Orthodox Bishops' Committee in France and the Protestant Federation of France

**L-O-R / na:** Lutheran-Orthodox-Reformed Theological Conversations in North America

**L-OC / g:** Dialogue between the United Evangelical Lutheran Church in Germany (VELKD) and the Old Catholic Church in Germany

**L-OC / s:** Commission for Dialogue between the Church of Sweden and the Old Catholic Churches of the Union of Utrecht

**L-OO / copt:** Theological Dialogue between the Coptic Evangelical Church and the Coptic Orthodox Church

**L-OO / copt-s:** Coptic Orthodox-Lutheran Dialogue in Sweden

**L-OO / g:** Consultations between the Oriental Orthodox Churches and the Evangelical Church in Germany

**L-OO / india:** Dialogue between the Orthodox Syrian Church of the East and the Lutheran Churches in India

**L-Pe:** Lutheran-Pentecostal Conversations

**L-Pe / s:** Lutheran-Pentecostal Dialogue in Sweden

**L-Pe / sf:** Lutheran-Pentecostal Dialogue in Finland

**L-Pe-R / f:** Pentecostal-Protestant Dialogue in France

**L-R:** Lutheran-Reformed Joint Commission

**L-R / arg:** Dialogue between the Evangelical Church of the Rio de la Plata and the Evangelical Congregational Church of Argentina

**L-R / aus:** Dialogue between the Lutheran Church of Australia and the Reformed Churches of Australia

**L-R / can:** Canadian Lutheran-Reformed Conversations

**L-R / f:** Fédération Protestante de France

**L-R / usa:** Lutheran-Reformed Committee for Theological Conversations in the USA

**L-R-RC:** Lutheran-Reformed-Roman Catholic Dialogue

**L-R-RC / f:** Catholic-Protestant Joint Working Group in France

**L-R-SDA / f:** Protestant-Seventh-day Adventist Dialogue in France

**L-R-U / eur:** Leuenberg Church Fellowship

**L-RC:** Lutheran-Roman Catholic Commission on Unity

**L-RC / arg:** Lutheran-Roman Catholic Dialogue Commission in Argentina

**L-RC / aus:** Lutheran-Roman Catholic Dialogue in Australia

**L-RC / br:** National Roman Catholic-Lutheran Commission in Brazil

**L-RC / can:** Lutheran-Roman Catholic Dialogue in Canada

**L-RC / g:** Joint Commission of the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD) and the German Episcopal Conference (DB)

**L-RC / india:** Lutheran-Roman Catholic Dialogue in India

**L-RC / jap:** Lutheran-Roman Catholic Joint Commission in Japan

**L-RC / n:** Lutheran-Roman Catholic Discussion Group in Norway

**L-RC / s:** Official Working Group of Dialogue between the Church of Sweden and the Catholic Diocese of Stockholm

**L-RC / sf:** Lutheran-Roman Catholic Relations in Finland

**L-RC / usa:** Lutheran-Roman Catholic Dialogue in the USA

**L-SDA:** Lutheran-Seventh-day Adventist Consultations

**L-U / aus:** Theological Dialogue between the Lutheran Church of Australia and the Uniting Church in Australia

**M-O:** Methodist-Orthodox Commission

**M-Pe-W / italy:** Methodist-Pentecostal-Waldensian Dialogue in Italy

**M-R:** Methodist-Reformed Dialogue

**M-RC:** Joint Commission between the Roman Catholic Church and the World Methodist Council

**M-RC / eng:** English Roman Catholic-Methodist Committee

**M-RC / usa:** Dialogue between the Roman Catholic Church and the United Methodist Church in the USA

**M-SA:** International Dialogue between the Salvation Army and the World Methodist Council

**Mn-Pe / usa:** Dialogue between the Mennonite Church USA and the Church of God (Cleveland, TN)

**Mn-R:** Mennonite World Conference and World Alliance of Reformed Churches

**Mn-R / nl:** Mennonite-Reformed Dialogue in the Netherlands

**Mn-RC:** Mennonite-Catholic International Dialogue

**Mn-RC / latin america:** Mennonite-Catholic Dialogue in Latin America

**Mn-SDA:** Mennonite-Seventh-day Adventist Theological Conversations

**NCC-RC:** New Charismatic Churches-Roman Catholic Preliminary Conversations

**O-OC:** Joint (Mixed) Orthodox-Old Catholic Theological Commission

**O-OO:** Joint Commission of the Theological Dialogue between the Orthodox Church and the Oriental Orthodox Churches

**O-OO / rus:** Theological Dialogue between the Russian Orthodox Church and the Oriental Orthodox Churches

**O-OO / rus-armenia:** Theological Dialogue between the Russian Orthodox Church and the Armenian Apostolic Church

**O-OO / rus-copt:** Commission for Dialogue between the Russian Orthodox Church and the Coptic Church

**O-Pe:** Orthodox-Pentecostal Academic Dialogue

**O-R:** Orthodox-Reformed International Dialogue

**O-R / ch:** Protestant-Orthodox Dialogue Commission in Switzerland

**O-R / na:** Orthodox-Reformed Conversations in North America

**O-R / rus:** Dialogue between the World Alliance of Reformed Churches and the Russian Orthodox Church

**O-RC:** Joint International Commission for Theological Dialogue between the Roman Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church

**O-RC / can:** Canadian Orthodox and Catholic Bishops' Dialogue

**O-RC / ch:** Orthodox-Roman Catholic Dialogue in Switzerland

**O-RC / eng:** Catholic-Orthodox Pastoral Consultation in England

**O-RC / f:** Joint Catholic-Orthodox Committee in France

**O-RC / g:** Greek Orthodox-Roman Catholic Joint Commission in Germany

**O-RC / pol:** Russian Orthodox Church-Catholic Church in Poland Working Group

**O-RC / rom:** Joint Commission for Dialogue between the Romanian Orthodox Church and the Romanian Church United with Rome (Greek-Catholic)

**O-RC / rus:** Theological Conversations between Representatives of the Russian Orthodox Church and the Roman Catholic Church

**O-RC / rus-g:** Theological Dialogue between the Russian Orthodox Church and the German Episcopal Conference

- O-RC / usa:** North American Catholic-Orthodox Theological Consultation
- O-U / aus:** Theological Dialogue between the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia and the Uniting Church in Australia
- OC-R / india:** Old Catholic Church-Malankara Mar Thomas Syrian Church Theological Consultation
- OC-R-RC / ch:** Old Catholic-Reformed-Roman Catholic Dialogue in Switzerland
- OC-RC:** Old Catholic-Roman Catholic Conversations
- OC-RC / ch:** Dialogue Commission of the Old Catholic and the Roman Catholic Churches in Switzerland
- OC-RC / g:** Dialogue between the Old Catholic Church and the Roman Catholic Church in Germany
- OC-RC / na:** Polish National Catholic-Roman Catholic Dialogue
- OC-RC / nl:** Old Catholic-Roman Catholic Study Commission in the Netherlands
- OC-RC / pol:** Joint Commission of the Polish Catholic Church and the Roman Catholic Church in Poland
- OO-R:** Oriental Orthodox-Reformed Theological Dialogue
- OO-RC:** International Joint Commission for Theological Dialogue between the Catholic Church and the Oriental Orthodox Churches
- OO-RC / armenia:** Armenian Apostolic Church-Catholic Church Joint Commission
- OO-RC / copt:** International Joint Commission between the Catholic Church and the Coptic Orthodox Church
- OO-RC / eritrea:** Eritrean Orthodox Church and Catholic Church Relations
- OO-RC / ethiop:** Ethiopian Orthodox Church and Catholic Church Relations
- OO-RC / india:** Joint International Commission for Dialogue between the Catholic Church and the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church
- OO-RC / syr-india:** Joint International Commission for Dialogue between the Catholic Church and the Malankara Syrian Orthodox Church
- OO-RC / usa:** Official Oriental Orthodox-Roman Catholic Consultation
- Pe-R:** Pentecostal-Reformed Dialogue
- Pe-RC:** Pentecostal-Roman Catholic International Dialogue
- Pe-WCC:** Joint Consultative Group between the World Council of Churches and Pentecostals
- R-RC:** Reformed-Roman Catholic Joint Study Commission
- R-RC / a:** Dialogue between the Roman Catholic Church and the Presbyterian Reformed Church in Austria
- R-RC / b:** Dialogue between the Roman Catholic Church and the Presbyterian Reformed Church in Belgium
- R-RC / ch:** Protestant/Roman Catholic Dialogue Commission in Switzerland
- R-RC / nl:** Dialogue between the Roman Catholic Church and the Reformed Church in the Netherlands
- R-RC / scot:** Dialogue between the Roman Catholic Church and the Church of Scotland
- R-RC / usa:** Roman Catholic-Presbyterian Reformed Consultation in the USA
- R-SDA:** International Theological Dialogue between the Seventh-day Adventist Church and the World Alliance of Reformed Churches
- R-SDA / usa:** Presbyterian Church (USA)-Seventh-day Adventist Church Dialogue

**RC-SA:** Salvation Army - Catholic Informal Conversation

**RC-SDA:** Conversations between the Seventh-day Adventist Church and the Roman Catholic Church

**RC-U/ aus:** Working Group of the Roman Catholic Church and the Uniting Church in Australia

**RC-U/ can:** Roman Catholic-United Church Dialogue Group in Canada

**RC-W/ italy:** Roman Catholic-Waldensian Relations in Italy

**RC-WCC:** Joint Working Group between the Roman Catholic Church and the World Council of Churches

**SA-SDA:** Theological Dialogue between the Salvation Army and the Seventh-day Adventist Church

**SDA-WCC:** Seventh-day Adventist Church-World Council of Churches Conversations

**WCC:** World Council of Churches - assemblies, convocations, relations

## PERIODICALS SURVEYED

- A** Acta Ecumenica, AFER-African Ecclesial Review, American Baptist Quarterly, Amicizia ebraico-cristiana, Anglican Theological Review, Annales theologici, Apulia Theologica
- B** Bulletin of Ecumenical Theology
- C** Calvin Theological Journal, Catholica, Centro Pro Unione Bulletin, Chemins de dialogue, Chrétiens en Marche, Christian Orient, Concilium, Confronti, Contacts, Courier, Current Dialogue
- D** Diálogo ecuménico, Eastern Churches Journal, Ecclesia Mater, Ecclesiology, The Ecumenical Review, Ecumenical Trends, Ecumenismo Quotidiano, Ekklesia, Exchange
- F/G** Forum Letter, Global Christian Forum Newsletter, Herder
- H/I** Korrespondenz, International Journal for the Study of the Christian Church, International Review of Mission, Internationale kirchliche Zeitschrift, Irénikon, Istina
- J/K** Journal of Anglican Studies, Journal of Ecumenical Studies, Journal of Pentecostal Theology, Journal of the European Pentecostal Theological Association, Kerygma und Dogma
- L** The Living Church, Lutheran Forum, Lutheran Quarterly
- M/N** MD-Materialdienst des Konfessionskundlichen Instituts Bensheim, Nicolaus
- O** O Odigos, Odos, Ökumenische Rundschau, Oikumene, One in Christ, Oriente cristiano, Orthodoxes Forum, L'Osservatore Romano, Ostkirchliche Studien
- P/Q** Pastoral Ecuménica, Pneuma, Positions luthériennes, Proche-Orient Chrétien, Pro Dialogo, Pro Ecclesia, Protestantesimo, Qîqajôn di Bose
- R** Reformed World, Il Regno, Reseptio, Review of Ecumenical Studies, Rinnovamento nello Spirito Santo
- S** Sobornost, St Vladimir's Theological Quarterly, Studi di Teologia, Studi Ecumenici, Studia i dokumenty ecumeniczne, Studia Oecumenica, Studia Liturgica, Studies in Interreligious Dialogue
- T** The Tablet, Theological Studies
- U/V** Una Sancta, Unité des Chrétiens, Veritas in caritate: informazioni
- W/Z** dall'ecumenismo in Italia, The Window, Worship, Zeitzeichen



## Key to sub-headings

**INFORMATION**  
**REFLECTION AND REACTIONS**  
**TEXTS AND PAPERS**

*facts, communiqués, surveys, brief reports*  
*essays, responses, commentaries, theological papers*  
*documents, reports, statements, official responses*

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*Compiled by* Loredana Nepi



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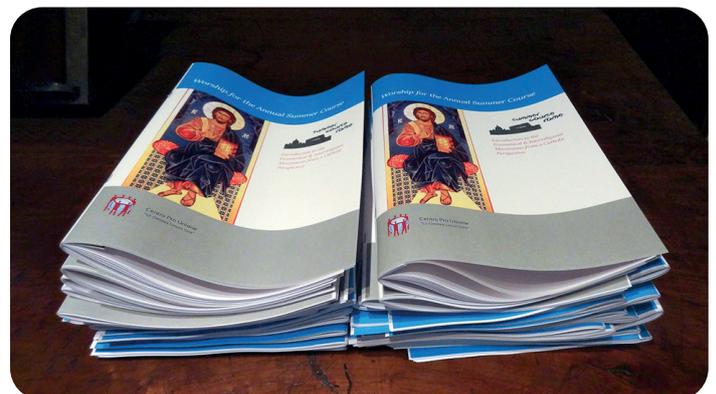
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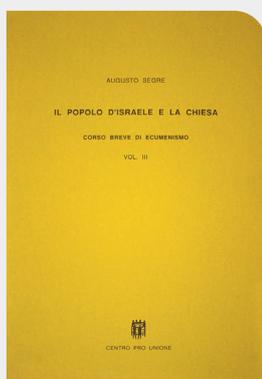
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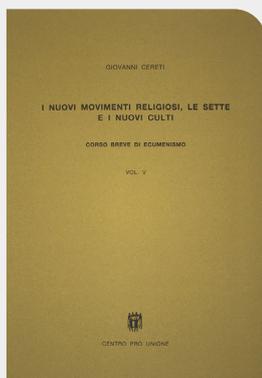
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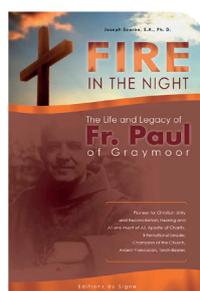
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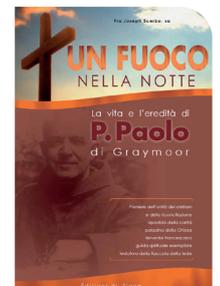
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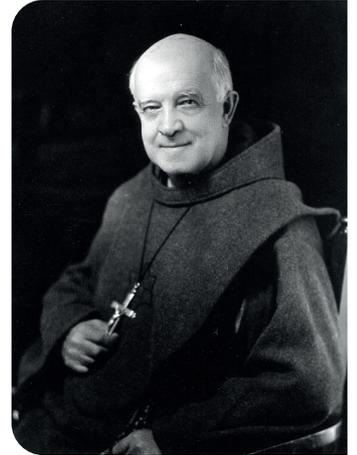
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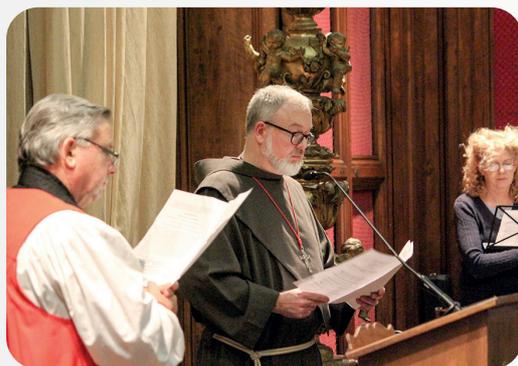
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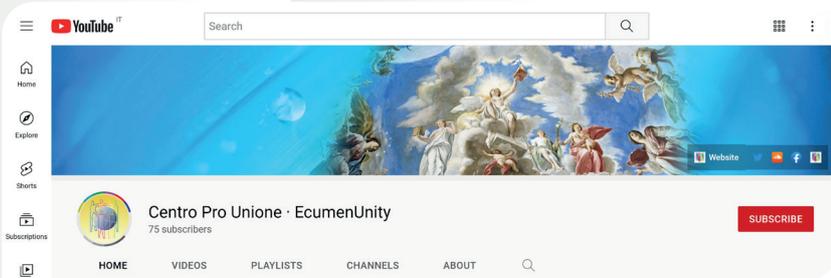
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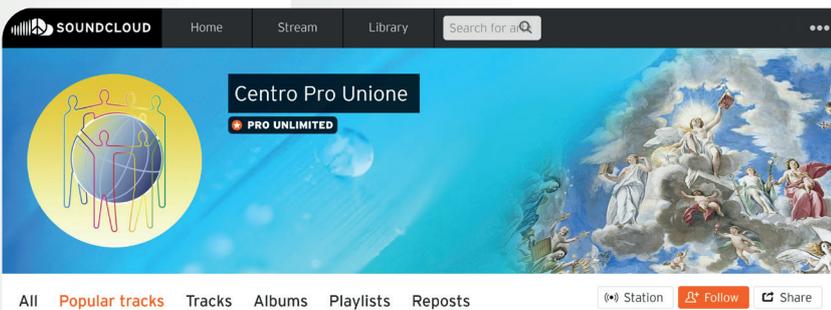
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#MADforEcumenism

15 March 2023 | @CentroProUnione



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