



THE
EXPERIENCE
OF WORSHIP
IN LATE MEDIEVAL
CATHEDRAL AND
PARISH CHURCH

LATIN EUCHARIST IN HONOUR OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

SALISBURY CATHEDRAL: 5 MAY 2011

RESPONSES MADE AT AN INFORMAL DISCUSSION HELD AFTER THE EUCHARIST:
CLERGY, SINGERS, RESEARCH TEAM

1 Observations from the Clergy

Canon Jeremy Davies (*Canon Precentor, Celebrant*)

- A great sense of a worshipping experience; this was certainly no mere liturgical archaeology; both the intensity and seriousness of the worship was striking.
- Notable how much fuller some of the prayers have become since Cranmer's translations. No evidence for this in the pre-Reformation rite – and that was a surprise.
- The singing was a delight – carried emotion, feeling, involvement. The phrasing felt not quite fluent – though one would need to sing it daily to achieve this.
- Deeply exciting to do Salisbury Use in Salisbury itself.

Canon Mark Bonney (*Canon Treasurer, Deacon*)

- The silences were powerful, especially later on in the Mass – no music; no sound other than the celebrant speaking in an undertone.
- As Deacon, MB was generally not aware of the congregation behind him, - quite isolating
- In general, the clergy remain 'faceless' to the congregation (even though the sanctuary and east end are quite well lit
- The absence of the reredos makes a difference – a recent procession managed with just two candles – though such things are not generally done at that time of night

Revd Jonathan Ball (*Subdeacon*)

- The power of the Word was particularly surprising. 'Taking the Word' to the people (through the kissing of the Gospel Book) seemed almost more important than the sacrament itself in this rite, though we only pay lip service to it today. This taking round of the Gospel also seemed to 'catch on' in the congregation.
- There was an expectation that juxtaposition of different elements of the service would be awkward, but that proved not to be the case. In fact the interaction worked really well – 'like bees buzzing around ... one feels part of a larger "oneness"'
- Interesting questions as to what happened when there was no Subdeacon present, or when the priest himself had no understanding of what he was reading. What was the power of the Mass to an illiterate priest?

Canon Edward Probert (*Canon Chancellor; in the congregation for this liturgy*)

The sense of our modern unfamiliarity with the rite is striking. Yet non-participation in the liturgy is not so strange even today for a non-musician working at Salisbury (like Canon Probert himself).

2 Observations from the Musicians

David Halls (*Director of Music, representing the Salisbury Singing-Men and Boy Choristers*)

- Pitch implications are interesting – DH sometimes taking the decision to ‘jack up’ the pitch for the sake of the children.
- As professionals, we normally expect to correct where we observe mistakes – does this still apply in enacting a medieval rite?
- General feeling of the Eucharist was similar to familiar liturgies heard in the monasteries today – though modern monastic communities [still] tend to sing flat!
- The Salisbury choristers have taken the whole experience on board very well
- DH at times felt ‘in the way’ physically – next time he would stand with the men, rather than in the centre
- Issues of pacing and speed: the chant was slower than expected (rulers set the starting pace in most cases) – a bit ‘hypnotic; certain items seemed even more slowed down – e.g. Agnus Dei – need for a ‘middle ground’ to suit all present?
- DH felt the pace for the polyphony in the Gloria in Excelsis worked well (though the Rulers would have liked it slower)

Christopher Hodkinson (*one of the two Choir Rulers*)

- CH is used to the Tridentine Rite, and was surprised by certain things – e.g. no elevation of the chalice, which created confusion as to when the Benedictus should begin.
- Similarly, when should the Communion chant begin? The Choir began it ‘when they were ready’, but should they have waited until the purification of the chalice?
- The ‘pre-intonations’ by Precentor and Rulers – how loud should these be, and how much of the chant should be sung?
- What happens if someone makes a mistake? (e.g. does the Ruler ‘correct’ the Precentor?)

3 Observations from the Servers

Michael Ball (*Acolyte*)

As a student of history, this was a really enjoyable experience. Michael has an interest in the fifteenth century because of costumed re-enactments he has been involved in. But here, ‘the solemnity leapt out.’

Anthony Lewis (*Thurifer, representing the servers generally*)

- A good experience overall – but some of the movements were uncomfortable and/or difficult for the servers

4 Observations from the Research Team

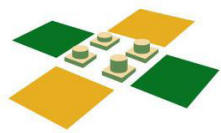
Dr Paul Barnwell (*observing from beyond the Quire*)

- Interesting to note that the medieval parish blessed a loaf at the end of the Mass – this equivalent in some ways to the offering of the sacrament in the Trinity Chapel after the Eucharist this evening.
- ‘Parading’ of the Gospel book – tradition dating back to the 3rd/4th century. Very striking watching it from the outside
- If the peace was passed individually, what [sounds?] overlaid it? It seems a convention that nothing happens musically, since the liturgy is so busy.
- Passing round of the pax is an interesting complementary practice to passing of the Gospel book.
- Compare contemporary Anglican tradition – things depend on the ‘right sequence’ rather less than they did at tonight’s liturgy – but the points of intersection are more crucial, especially when the congregation is involved.
- The elevation was invisible from the west end and the small bell almost inaudible

Judith Aveling (*congregation, sitting in Quire*):

- Being ‘mute’ is hard – nothing to join in with. Was ‘Et cum spiritu tuo’ really non-congregational? [All subsequently agreed that this could have been sung, and this was adopted for the Jesus Mass in September 2011.]
- The congregation seemed very engaged – but there was an awareness that there were no real ‘leaders’ in the congregation (which prompts comparison with pre-literate worship – who led?)
- A sense that the celebrant at the altar ‘could have been saying anything, with no-one the wiser.
- Bowing together (clergy and/or congregation) could be more synchronised
- The ablutions looked more confident than some other parts of the Mass
- The kissing of the book and the censuring of the people were both very moving
- It appeared difficult for the rulers to know the order of the rite of peace (i.e. when it was passed from hand to hand through the congregation).

*Discussion facilitated by John Harper
Notes compiled by Sally Harper*



THE
EXPERIENCE
OF WORSHIP
IN LATE MEDIEVAL
CATHEDRAL AND
PARISH CHURCH

LATIN EUCHARIST IN HONOUR OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

SALISBURY CATHEDRAL: 5 MAY 2011

RESPONSE FROM SALISBURY LAY VICARS

These comments were submitted by two Lay Vicars (here labelled (a) and (b)), in response to a questionnaire devised primarily for the boy choristers.

Last week you took part in a Latin Eucharist. It was as near as we could get to the kind of Eucharist held every day in the cathedral from about 1225 to 1549.

1. What did you think was most interesting, most different, and most memorable about the service?

(a) Fully involved ALL of the time.

(b) Multiple starts to plainsong: precentor-leader-leaders. Lack of hymns was different. The Gospel was most memorable.

It did not feel so different from what we often do – mid week Byrd

2. How did it feel to take part in a Eucharist that was entirely in Latin, and where you could not hear a lot of the words said at the altar by the Precentor?

(a) BECAUSE it's in Latin, you HAVE to concentrate. Not because I pretend to understand it, but because if/when it's in English, it's easy to take it for granted and allow your mind to wander away from the liturgy.

(b) Strangely normal!

3. There was quite a lot of turning to the altar and bowing for certain words. So it was much more physical than a normal Sunday Eucharist. What was all that like? And how did that help you to be part of the service?

(a) You can't switch off!

(b) We needed the music so it became awkward, but it would soon 'normalise'.

4. Three choristers helped by carrying candles and acting as book boy. What do you think it might have been like to be a medieval chorister who had jobs to do as a server as well as being a singer?

(a) You'd feel more involved in bits that would otherwise have seemed 'mysterious'.

(b) A feeling of 'importance' and 'inclusion'.

5. Most of the service was sung to plainsong. And there were no hymns. What did you feel about the music in the service?

(a) Timeless. Comforting. And in among yards of plainsong, the polyphonic setting of the Propers were even more special/contrasting.

(b) Restful. Mesmeric.

6. *No one except the Precentor received Communion. Did that seem odd? And, if so, why?*

(a) Exclusive and mysterious (secretive?), compared to today's inclusivity and openness.

(b) No.

7. *What did you feel was the same, and what was different about the Latin Eucharist and the usual Sunday Eucharist?*

(a) Somehow more special, exotic even! Contemporary use of incense binds us to previous centuries and greatly appreciated by three school colleagues (medieval historians, RE ...), who were fascinated by this reconstruction. And I dare say that the spiritual occupants of some of the Cathedral's many tombs felt a warm glow of contentment and familiarity ...

(b) Much text, movement and music clearly recognizable. Lack of congregational inclusion. Most enjoyable – special.



LATIN EUCHARIST IN HONOUR OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

SALISBURY CATHEDRAL: 5 MAY 2011

RESPONSES FROM THREE SALISBURY CHORISTERS

Last week you took part in a Latin Eucharist. It was as near as we could get to the kind of Eucharist held every day in the cathedral from about 1225 to 1549.

We would really like to know what you thought about it.

You can write whatever you want. But if you would like some ideas, here are some questions to get you started.

1. What did you think was most interesting, most different, and most memorable about the service?

It was all in Latin and we had to really concentrate as it was new, not just the music but all of the other things to do. Having the leaders was strange. Only the priest took communion.

2. How did it feel to take part in a Eucharist that was entirely in Latin, and where you could not hear a lot of the words said at the altar by the Precentor?

I understood some of the service and some of the chant was like we use at St Martin's. We are quite used to singing services in Latin in the cathedral, we didn't have the translations so I couldn't understand the readings. I was glad to have a translation which got a bit boring

3. There was quite a lot of turning to the altar and bowing for certain words. So it was much more physical than a normal Sunday Eucharist. What was all that like? And how did that help you to be part of the service?

I found the bowing and turning to face the altar a bit weird as there was so much of it. I had to concentrate quite hard to follow the instructions as it was unfamiliar. I felt part of the service because of the singing not because of the bowing.

4. Three choristers helped by carrying candles and acting as book boy. What do you think it might have been like to be a medieval chorister who had jobs to do as a server as well as being a singer?

I am used to serving and have done since I was very small as a boat boy so it would not be that strange. My brother Henry was the book boy and he managed it OK. He looked very serious but did well.

5. Most of the service was sung to plainsong. And there were no hymns. What did you feel about the music in the service?

We sing plainsong quite often, especially in Lent, so it was not new to me. I like singing it. Even so these chants were new and because of holidays there was a long gap after we learnt it. It went OK though. You have to concentrate as it is a bit exposed but is in some ways easier as the range was not so great and we only needed to get to a D.

6. *No one except the Precentor received Communion. Did that seem odd? And, if so, why?*

I am not confirmed but it was a bit weird not going for a blessing but I did not really mind.

7. *What did you feel was the same, and what was different about the Latin Eucharist and the usual Sunday Eucharist?*

I have written already what was different. In the end much was the same. We sang in our normal places, the service more or less followed the same structure, it was plainsong that we sometimes sing. It was interesting that the choir hundreds of years ago in the cathedral did so much which is still familiar to us today.

From Freddie Foster

The Latin Eucharist was a varied experience to a normal Modern Sunday Eucharist. Many of the practices and traditions of the old stand out in the new; to see how the service was presented in such a different time was an unusual but educational experience. Particularly puzzling was the fact that it felt like two services were going on, the priests held their own private service that was exclusive from the congregation and choir. In-between the two services were the rulers that drifted in and out of each and formed a link between the two. Making sure that the priests and choir were never too out of sync.

I can see how the congregation could have found this service frustrating as the priests did everything on the congregation's behalf! The Precentor was the only person to receive communion, and most of the action took place by the altar. Nothing was entrusted to the congregation.

The fact that children were used to bear candles is one tradition that is not continued. It was interesting to see that my predecessors were useful for many jobs other than singing!

From Louis Knight-Webb

I thought the Latin Eucharist was very interesting and quite bizarre. It felt weird turning East so many times for certain words. My favourite part about the Eucharist was being one of the two Candle Bearers. It was really fun doing all the moving about, putting candles down, facing in and bowing to the altar. I also got to hold a bowl of water, a decanter and a folded cloth on my forearm. It would have been pretty cool to be the proper candle bearer for the services, like I did. It would feel different because you and maybe another fellow chorister would be the only ones coming out at different times to everybody else.

I liked it how at the beginning the boys would come in separately to the men and would come in individually not in a line.

It was strange when it seemed nothing was going on but really the Precentor was in fact saying a prayer or something like that. You could not hear him saying it because it was a 'Silent Prayer'. I think it is quite silly how no one can hear it, because it should be said so everyone can hear it, because we are one community.

I find that plainsong itself is quite dull, it is all grim, and it's not jolly or happy. I like having hymns because they are usually happy and everyone can join in, not just the choir.

The fact that the Precentor is the only person in the cathedral who receives communion strikes me. Communion is when people can speak with God. They are drinking his blood, eating his body. The only time when they can really have their time with God.

The Latin Eucharist is different to the Sunday Eucharist's now is that nowadays Eucharist's are more people friendly. They interact with people more now. Everybody gets communion if they wish, there are hymns and prayers are spoken aloud. There also isn't as much plainsong in Sunday Eucharist's but there is some. But we still sing things in Latin in the Sunday Eucharist nowadays. The Processions have changed. Now it is more neat and tidy. We go in in pairs in one long 'Crocodile Line' now not individually.

I will treasure that day when I was a candle bearer and a chorister in the Latin Eucharist service. It was a once in a lifetime opportunity. Thank you to everybody who arranged it to work. It would have never happened without you amazing people.

Thank You

From Sebastian Halls



LATIN EUCHARIST IN HONOUR OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

SALISBURY CATHEDRAL: 5 MAY 2011

CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSES RETURNED AFTER THE EUCHARIST

Attendees were invited to comment on any issue, including, if they wished, the following:

- (a) the impact of the use of Latin and of unheard prayer
- (b) the use of space
- (c) the overlaying of action, words and music
- (d) attending Holy Communion where only the priest receives the sacrament

1. Regular Cathedral worshipper; came specially for this service; female, over 51; sat in Quire

- (a) Loved the Latin, and appreciated the translation and instructions. I brought along an ex-Catholic who was in instruction. Very moved.
- (b) Use of space? All I know is I couldn't see the high altar from where I was sitting (South side of quire, nearest the nave) so can't comment on movements in the sanctuary
- (c) Action, words and music – extremely moving.
- (d) Although we didn't eventually take the sacrament we (or at least I) felt totally involved and blessed. No problem in the type of service. More time for worship too!

I was interested in the notes on how regular BVM services were in medieval times, on Saturdays. Did they pray with rosaries I wonder?

I found the action of the choir entering silently as individuals also added to the reverence and humility of the service

2. Regular Cathedral worshipper; came specially for this service; female, over 51; sat in Sanctuary

- (a) Impact of use of Latin and unheard prayer – excellent
- (c) Overlaying of action, words, music – very good
- (d) Attending communion with only priest receiving - interesting

3. Regular Cathedral worshipper; female, over 51; sat in Quire

- (a) Impact of use of Latin and unheard prayer – not too unfamiliar as I learned it at school and sang the Ordinary of the Mass in choirs in non-liturgical contexts. Having been brought up in the 1950s and 60s in an Anglo-Catholic parish I was used to the overlaying of the Canon of the Mass by music, or its going on in silence in a said Mass. I should not want to go back to that practice as a matter of routine.
- (b) As a regular member of the cathedral congregation, and a server, I am used to the extensive use of the space in our modern worship, so that it did not strike me as something unfamiliar on this occasion.
- (c) Overlaying of action, words, music – again, I am used to having more than one thing going on at a time and by and large no-one seemed to have to hang around waiting while something else finished – not surprising as the Mass was compiled to be of a piece. But I was in the Quire so couldn't see if the altar party was marking time at any point.

(d) Attending communion with only priest receiving – not something I should want to be the norm and rather dubious theologically I suspect.

I found the whole experience very interesting as liturgy is something that matters to me. Because of my Anglo-Catholic background I was familiar with the Proper and the Ordinary of the Mass as performed in English, which I knew as Revised Western Rite. High Masses were very rare, but eastward position, use of incense, sacred ministers in line ahead (though changing to line abreast more often as I recall) was still going on at St Mary Magdalen's Oxford in the 1970s, by which time, of course, the RCs had given them up. In about 1977, my parish church in Headington, Oxford, put on three masses in consecutive weeks, following different rites, of which a version of Sarum use was the first, but there was not so much music. It is, however, the only Latin Mass I think I have heard until this one in Salisbury, and I was interested to see how the different elements, some familiar, some not, hang together – or rather, how much of it would in fact be familiar - quite a bit as it turned out.

4. Fairly regular Cathedral worshipper; came specially for this service; male, over 51; sat in Quire

The fact that we were taking part in a Service at least 750 years old, and in a language now rarely used, creating a very moving sense of timelessness. There was something very moving about the sound, the singing and the worship, and very strangely, the fact that on one level we were not taking part, increased the feeling that we were deeply involved. My wife and I loved it.

5. Came specially for this service; female, over 51; sat in Quire

A privilege to attend such a great service – very moving and effective. Good to see how the original worship would have been held and Latin is always a bonus. The service sheets were excellent and enabled all the congregation to feel they were part of it. Well done!

6. Regular worshipper at the Cathedral; female, over 51; sat in Quire

Took us back to medieval times when the congregation took a more silent, yet not passive, part. The contribution of processing, chanting and processing was impressive, as was the singing of the choir.

7. Regular worshipper at the Cathedral; female, over 51; sat in Nave

Very beautiful service. Well written, easy to follow service sheet. I was surprised how much we still use today of the medieval form of worship. More reverent than our services.

8. Regular worshipper at the Cathedral; over 51; sat in Quire

My first experience of a Latin Mass. Very inspiring – particularly loved the chanting and the whole reverential atmosphere throughout.

9. Came specially for this service; male, over 51; sat in Quire

(a) As a (European!) Roman Catholic priest, I would reject this form of service for general use, viz. liturgical reform of the RC Church, but would approve it for certain interest groups if requested.

(b) Spatial division of clergy and congregation is too marked. Movement conveyed strong ritualisation as opposed to spiritual content.

(c) Simultaneous unheard prayer and action of clergy with choral song was not spiritually edifying.

(d) [Receiving of the sacrament by priest alone] is not in the intention of Christ: 'Take, eat, this in remembrance of me ...'

10. Came specially for this service; female, over 51; sat in Quire

- (a) Impact of use of Latin and unheard prayer – no objection whatsoever to the use of Latin as an alternative. Nice now and again. Unheard prayer comes over as if an actor has forgotten his lines!
- (b) Use of space – much ritualised to-ing and fro-ing to no effect apart from irritation.
- (c) Overlaying of action, words, music – perhaps in very small doses for specific effect. Monotonous incantation tedious and a shameful waste of the splendour of Britain's choral tradition for sacred music
- (d) Attending Communion where only the priest receives – shocking indeed, The experience brought home to me vividly the mystical elevation of the priesthood and subjugation of the congregation achieved by a church obsessed by power and theological sophistry. A liturgy and ritualisation destined to provoke the free Christian spirit into Reformation. So glad there was one!

An interesting academic exercise, not to be repeated please ...

Just give me the spirituality of communal spoken prayer and kneeling at the altar rail in the presence of Christ, underpinned by music and song and hosted by the priest.

Like you usually do.

And without incense, to which many are allergic and which makes me feel slightly nauseous. Nice pot, though ...

11. Regular worshipper at the Cathedral; over 51; sat in Quire

The rustiness of my Latin was made clear.

Bowing for a long time hurt the base of my spine.

Not knowing what the celebrant was saying and being able to see what was going on were a bit off-putting. This was perhaps in keeping with the bishop and cathedral being feudal overlords (complete with their own gallows, according to Ken Grist, a local historian).

'Ite missa est' seemed a bit brusque, compared to the blessing at the end of our normal Eucharist.

The sacrament being received only by the celebrant reminded me of Sunday morning Eucharist in my school chapel, where the headmaster or chaplain celebrated and only he consumed the bread and wine.

12. Regular worshipper at the Cathedral; sat in Quire

Thank you for the invitation to provide feedback. To give my comments some context: I am the father of a Salisbury boy chorister and of a probationer (your book boy Henry who was, incidentally, delighted with the card you sent him) and I attend many cathedral services; I regularly serve at the Anglo-Catholic Sarum St Martin's and sing (horribly!) in the choir; I read history at university with a particular focus on the Reformation.

Most striking in the service was, of course, the feeling that as a congregation we were witnesses to, rather than participants in, the worship. The Latin, if beautiful sounding, was well beyond anything with which my now 35 year old "O" level could help me. It was useful having the texts but I wondered how educated was the typical member of a C16th congregation and how many would have been able to follow what was being said. Without translations (and familiarity with the modern Eucharist) I can imagine the sense of separateness from the proceedings would have been greater and how the incantations could have sounded like some kind of magic.

On the other hand I offer myself a word of caution. Not long ago I overheard a conversation between a few of my fellow members of the congregation after a cathedral evensong in which they complained strongly that they liked their services to be much more participative. They missed the point. It may not be me who is singing but, even so, I am in no doubt that this is collectively - clergy,

choir and people - our offering to God. It works because the offering is beautiful and appreciated and valuable to all of us present. Even in a huge building like Salisbury Cathedral it is shared and intimate. It also works, for me, because it is so familiar, providing a predictable framework. It is comfortable and comforting.

Nevertheless, I genuinely got a sense of how there could have been an appetite for a reformed church, for the vernacular and for the direct relationship with God without the requirement for the intercession of priests. In the reconstruction, though, because many of us know the priests personally and informally it was impossible properly to appreciate what would have been their status relative to ours.

Whether by design or by omission the thurifer did not cense my section of the congregation (sitting in the choir closest to where the screen would have been). We were missed from one of the few inclusive parts of the service which, however small, felt a little disappointing. You can see how strong was the desire to be part of things!

It all sounded beautiful. The plainsong was well executed, the said Latin texts sounded musical, and clearly all involved were taking it very seriously. And as usual I was inordinately proud of my sons' contributions ...

So did it manage to be a religious experience for me, a proper service over and above being an historical experiment? Yes, to an extent although I didn't feel compelled to take up the offer to receive communion following its conclusion. My emotional and spiritual response was chiefly a reaction to the recreation of something commonplace so long ago and, overwhelmingly, of the sense of the continuity of worship where I was sitting.

As an immediate and completely unthought out reaction, I'd love to see the cathedral somehow more overtly acknowledging the Sarum Rite in its liturgy and there must be a place for such historically informed services on a regular basis.

I hope that these rather unstructured thoughts may be of some use.

13. Regular worshipper at the Cathedral; came specially for thi service; over 51; sat between Quire and Sanctuary

When I attended Salisbury Cathedral School as a Non Chorister Boarder (1952-57), a few of us were given the opportunity to be Taperers who were also Servers at the Sung Eucharist on Sundays .Also on the then known Red Letter Saints Days and other Holy days during term time. The School also attended the Saints Day services. Incense was not used at all at that time in the Cathedral. The current Canon Precentor, Jeremy Davies, has added this to some services during his time at Salisbury. We also tapered for the Litany Services with the procession going around the whole length of the Cathedral.

At the Sung Eucharist Services we used the Sarum Use, a much simpler and less dramatic format than The Latin Eurchaist on 5 May 2011. We did have the Priest, Deacon and Sub Deacon for those services with the taperes serving. The music was usually Merbecke.

The Latin Service I must say was very a interesting Service with a lot of interesing additions and variations to the Sarum Use. The Choir, from where I was sitting, was brilliant with the music that would have been used at that time in 1225. Very good balances between Priest and Choir.

The following may have been an intentional but I was disapointed I could not hear the Priest (Canon Precentor) reading a Gospel reading as he left the Sanctuary at the end of this exceptional Service.

14. Regular worshipper at the Cathedral; over 51; sat in Quire

A bit of background information first. I am an Anglican layman aged 51, and I attend worship in the Cathedral on a regular basis, mainly for the weekday Eucharists on Holy Days. I worship regularly in Wilton Parish Church on Sundays. I have been an Altar Server ever since I was in my teens, and am firmly rooted in the Catholic tradition within the Church of England. I was educated at the University of Lancaster where I read Religious Studies with Social Anthropology as my minor subject.

When I found out about the project, I looked forward to being in the Cathedral and taking part in the service. It was a joy to see that so many others had taken the trouble to attend, including some acquaintances of mine who are members of the Roman Catholic communion. I was sitting in my usual place in Quire.

Knowing David Halls and the Choristers well, I was not surprised, but I must state that they did an excellent job in recreating the musical part of the service in what I perceived was an historical rendition. As I am used to the necessary division between servers and singers, and the typical impossibility of performing both roles in a Parish setting, I wonder how the young Choristers pressed into service as Acolytes felt. Whilst being personally blessed with an ability to sing, I have always been attracted to serving duties, and therefore have had to forgo a part within choir ranks, except perhaps on odd occasions. Loyalties to either one or the other necessarily dictate a preference, I would opine.

As I have long been interested in liturgy, I have previously done some research into the Tradentine rite, and although I was aware of the 'Sarum Rite', the only thing that I thought I knew about it was the fact that blue vestments were used in one season of the Christian year.

I think that the overriding aspect of the service, for me, was the effective disjoining of what was happening at the Altar and the music being performed by the Choir. From my understanding of the old Roman Mass, the Priest did sit down and continue his own prayers whilst the choir would sing the setting of the Mass, but the two did not as such overlap. The Sarum rite obviously allowed the two functions to carry on almost independently, albeit with elements where the two met, e.g. the Gospel procession.

Speaking to my RC friends after the service, they really appreciated the space that was allowed within the context of the Mass. Being of a certain age they recall how once upon a time, it was the Priest that said Mass on their behalf, and their part was just to be there and stand in the Holy Space. Vatican II changed all that with all-inclusive worship around the table. From my Anglican perspective, I remember the days when you went to the 8.00 am Low Mass to receive Holy Communion and then later on for the High Mass purely for worship, and where you did not normally receive. In this respect I have no difficulty in principle about a Mass where the 'faithful' do not receive, and am quite happy to be part of such a service as a non-communicant. I would add, however, that personally I value the opportunity for a weekday Mass and do not normally have the opportunity to attend early in the morning at the Cathedral. I therefore appreciated, the extra-liturgical action afterwards where we were able to receive the Sacrament, and in the traditional manner.

Language is a bit of a personally contentious issue for me. I have to admit that Latin and me did not get on at all during my first year at grammar school, and consequently I was allowed to do something else instead from then on. It was only later when I began to be interested in liturgy that I tried to familiarise myself with the language, although only in a liturgical sense. Having sung in various choirs over the years outside of Church, I have nevertheless had the opportunity to become adept at singing the Latin texts for the Mass and other services. So during this particular service I was not concerned about the use of Latin rather than English, and would probably not have too much of an

issue if this was the norm, rather than an occasional occurrence.

Further to this issue, I would like to make the observation that I do find it difficult when abroad to play any serious part in a liturgy when it is celebrated in the vernacular. In the days when all Masses were in Latin, you could go anywhere in the world and understand what was going on to a greater extent. Having said that, I do prefer to address the Almighty in my native tongue, publically and privately, and also in the modern idiom rather than prayer book language.

Reflecting on the use of silent prayer by the Celebrant, I remember when I was younger and growing up in West Molesey. We used the English Missal then, and there are numerous 'private' prayers reserved for the Priest and said silently, or soto voce certainly. I recall that proper service practice was that the MC should turn away from the Priest when he was saying these prayers, although one had to keep half an ear open to know where he had got to! Although I did not have difficulty with the concept then, I perceive that it is not appropriate to modern worship theory. However, there are still some elements of that in the prayers that are said during the preparation of the gifts and the lavabo, so there is still an obvious connection.

Overall the worship experience was good, although I would not want that to be the norm on a day by day basis. Many of my serving friends hanker back for the old days when things were done properly, and the King James Bible language was the proper way to address God! (This obviously applies to some Anglicans and brothers for the Roman Catholic communion). Without your efforts this part of liturgical history would become lost, and I wish you every success in your continuing endeavours.

15. Regular worshipper at the Cathedral; over 51; singing in Quire

It was fascinating to take part as a singer in the reconstructed Latin Rite Eucharist recently at Salisbury Cathedral. I volunteered myself as a singer because I wanted to be a more integral part of the service I had helped to facilitate. I'm not sure this had the result I was expecting.

My overriding impression was of the disconnection between what was going on at the altar and the musical part of the rite. Because I was so absorbed in trying to play my own part, it was difficult to be more than generally aware of what the clergy and servers were doing though, in any case, much of this would have only been easily understood either as a result of following the commentary or through prior liturgical knowledge. Very little was clearly visible. The continuity of the music was also striking because there were fewer points of articulation than we now expect. The changes of texture between the different kinds of chant and polyphony were also less marked than we might find in a normal cathedral Eucharist.

The use of Latin was less of a barrier with the familiar texts of the Ordinary than the Propers and the audible parts of the Canon. The silent parts of the service were simply mysterious and inaccessible. The only liturgical signposts that were available were communicated by various visible actions, which became highly significant as points of involvement.

The ritual actions in which we participated (bowing and turning to the altar) were challenging for the singers and, because they were not part of a learned pattern, felt self-conscious. However, they were a way of marking the importance of certain texts and helped to differentiate what could otherwise have been much more uniform. I'm certain it would have felt very different if these actions were habitual. The greater involvement of children in the Rite seemed entirely natural (and not unfamiliar to me as part of my own regular church experience). The boys who were given particular responsibilities were in a more privileged position than the adult singers because they did have a real connection with the world of the altar as well as with the music sung in quire.

As I have already said, the various types of chant, from syllabic to melismatic, became more differentiated. The sequence felt almost like a hymn and the creed was familiar. I found it difficult to engage with the melismatic chants because they felt too slow – both in the sense that I am more used

to a more fluid performance more like heightened speech but also because the phrases become too long to sing comfortably in one breath, so the effect was, literally, laborious.

Because of the disconnection between altar and quire, not receiving communion didn't feel particularly odd. In some ways, it would have felt inappropriate to receive because so much of my energy had focussed on the music that there was no sense in which I would have felt prepared for this significant liturgical act. However, if that was my normal experience of Church, I think it would have been very disenfranchising.

Intellectually and academically, I knew a good deal about what was to happen and I was well aware that the shape was, for the most part, that of the modern Rite. However, the feel of what happened was totally different. Even at the musical level, the dominance of the Proper texts over the Ordinary, combined with my lack of familiarity with the more arcane texts, gave a totally different effect to the whole service. In terms of posture, it was odd to spend so much time standing. The opportunities to change posture by turning and bowing were quite welcome – as was the chance to sit! Still more welcome was the opportunity to engage with others as we revered the Book of the Gospels and exchanged the Peace. I've already said that my musical involvement meant that I was only rarely aware of what was happening at the Altar. There were also moments where I expected something more dramatic and clearly audible – in particular, I'm thinking of the reading of the final Gospel, which I expected to have as much impact as it does at the end of the Midnight Mass in Salisbury. I'm very aware, though, that my reactions were shaped by the fact that this was an unusual experience in every respect and one I had not learned to understand through repetition. After the service, someone commented that it made them understand why the Reformation happened. I found myself both agreeing and disagreeing with this. It was quite easy to understand why a demand for access to the word of God in the vernacular would become not just a matter of liturgical theology but the focus of a radical social upheaval. It was also easy to imagine how distorted the Rite would become if the Priest was arrogant, ill-educated, slovenly, careless or mechanistic about the performance of his duties. Equally, pace Eamon Duffy, I became quite nostalgic about some of what we seemed to have lost in terms of the mystery of the medieval Rite and the sense in which ordinary church-goers would have needed to develop their own spiritual understanding of what was going on when they went to church. The Rite exemplifies a Church which offers no liturgical apologia but simply does what the rubrics demand. There is something liberating about that because there is far less emphasis on teaching, preaching and explaining than we now expect. To that extent, there seemed to be a greater emphasis on liturgy as something we do for God rather than on something God does for us. On the other hand, once people were encouraged to think for themselves and to take greater responsibility for their own salvation, it is easy to understand how they might become radicalised particularly if stirred to action by strong leadership.

16. Regular worshipper at the Cathedral; sat in Quire

One fortysomething attended with two children <15y. The ten year-old read a book mostly; the other two paid attention. We are cathedral regulars, one being a girl chorister and one being an old Edington lag, so we knew something of what we were expecting, though we were not able to attend your preparatory talks. We sat in the Quire.

I was very excited about the prospect of this service, and was also nearly late for it, which was not the best frame of mind in which to approach the event.

We were within the stalls and not well placed to see the liturgical action, which was a pity. The notes and service booklet were excellent.

I found the pace of the plainchant at first dreadfully turgid (this was where we lost the 10yo); though I learned afterwards this was a very deliberately chosen pace, I find it personally hard to credit that there would not be more fluidity and flexibility to the music. I noticed some points where the choir

and the captains diverged. And as the service proceeded, I became more accustomed to it. I wasn't terribly interested in the polyphony - was that a reflection of what the choir could be trained in from a standing start?

The use of space was I imagine good and edifying though mostly we could not see it. The theatre of music, silence, action, bells, movement, was exquisite. Regarding silence: as I understand it, the medieval worshippers would not have known much about what was being said or prayed in those silences, and I was grateful to know. I was grateful that it was pointed out specifically that the Elevation was the high point of the Mass - that's a point I haven't grasped before, but seeing it in its liturgical context made it clear to me why it had such power (though again I couldn't see it). Another very physical and visual pleasure was the exchange of the Kiss (which rapidly mutated to a handshake - your congregation needs more training!) and the adoration of the Book. I did not need to take Communion, in one or two kinds.

Would the congregation have responded to Dominus Vobiscum, or sung Amen? If so, that participation would be another great pleasure.

This will work better for me next time I come. I will be more ready to adjust my pace of thought, more receptive, and better prepared to get a seat where I can see. I would be really glad if these became a more regular event, perhaps even monthly. Nor would I be at all sad to see other services - vespers, compline. Also, I would love to see an early medieval service (?Sarum rite) reflecting the worship first offered in the building.

Thank you for enabling Salisbury to experience this.

[Subsequent follow-up]: Very glad you found the comment useful. In the spirit that for every 10 people who think something, one person will feed it back, I relay two other things I heard.

Two friends remarked what a pleasure it was to see the very visible transfer of the Kiss of Peace. A similar thing happens in the Salisbury Darkness to Light service, using candlelight, but it is not participatory.

One person said regretfully they'd never realised what a boon the misericords were. But standing - and even more so bowing - engages the participant physically. Interesting that kneeling was not part of the process....

I had not had a chance to read your additional material when I wrote my comments, and hadn't realised this is only a short project. Your team is the more to be congratulated for bringing this from a concept, a dream arising from studying old books, into a tangible reality. I hope the participants find the work very rewarding.

17. Regular worshipper at the Cathedral; sat in Quire

First of all thank you it was a very good experience. Mostly it reminded me of something of what it was like for me as a child growing up and young adult pre Vatican II days at a Solemn High Mass. I would not like to return to those days but we can certainly learn from them and it is good not to forget our history!

A few things stood out for me:

1. The Sense of Awe and Mystery in Worshipping God
2. How very clerical and male and exclusive it was. I certainly would not have liked being in the nave as a lay person.
3. So many silent bits while we were kept quiet or occupied with singing.
4. The participation by bodily movement was really good and gave some sense of personal participation.
5. The non-sharing of the Eucharist with the congregation who were actually present in the quire

really shocked (but well done for the arrangement you made for afterwards.)

6. The reading of the “Last Gospel” at the end was also a reminder of former days for me – but it being murmured by the celebrant was a surprise.

7. I kept wondering about the laity and would really like the experience of a ‘Low Mass’ in Salisbury (I do not think I can get to St Fagans in the Autumn.)

Thank you for the opportunity to share this with you.

18. Came specially for this service; sat in Quire

Observations and reflections

On arriving at the cathedral one of my first thoughts was that this eucharist would be celebrated in a manner that would take us back to something like the way it was performed in the 1530s and not far removed from the practice of the clergy who first envisioned and built the cathedral. The men who made the space for the liturgy. This was a Catholic Eucharist in a cathedral that is now Anglican with an Anglican celebrant and a congregation that included many Roman Catholics, amongst whom were those for whom this Eucharist had many familiarities, not least in its use of Latin.

Although in an important sense this eucharist was a historic re-enactment it was also, in a real sense, an act of worship, it would appear, for very many of the people present. It would have been hard to have maintained a grounded non-worshipping mindset. This whole event was about worshipping God, every part of it, every aspect of it, of every person present alongside the words of the celebrant, the chanting of the choir and the movements in and out and up and down the worship space. One person spoke passionately afterwards of her feelings of alienation resulting from her childhood experiences. For me personally the Latin was not a problem or a threat, although I am not a Latin scholar I had already received a brief introduction to the Sarum Rite. For the many in medieval times who were both illiterate and who had little or no understanding of it then what went on inside the church, and particularly the action screened off from the nave, might well have felt exclusive and alienating.

The dimensions of the space, a long rectangle of about 150’ by 30’, provided for the various layers of song, spoken word and action to take place in a dignified manner and without the potential for aural confusion or conflicts of movement. They worked well together and fitted the space. This contributed to a sense of quiet dignity and purpose; in a smaller space there would be more ‘pinch points’ of movement and action that can be a distraction from worship for all involved.

Our modern expectation is that each individual should be able to see and hear everything, but it was in a sense unnecessary. The words and the actions would be known and internalised and many would be otherwise occupied with their own concurrent devotions. The elevation of the host, regarded as the high point of the Mass, was not seen because of the bow at the moment of elevation, but the sound of the bell signified its happening. Like the prayers spoken by the celebrant the action took place and each worshipper saw it in their ‘mind’s eye. Perhaps this too is a practical working out of the idea of faith. As the priest elevates the host, or speaks the words of the prayer of consecration, even though the voice is too far away to be audible, the words and actions, or the knowledge of them, has been so internalised over time so that every detail of the worship has become a part of each individual. Some members of the congregation joined in with the chant because for them it was an automatic response.

The physicality of the worship was noticeable: this was participation but not as we know it and a long way from the people’s current expectations for worship in the newly-reordered parish church of St. John the Baptist at Itchen Abbas in Hampshire. Heavily padded chairs and plush carpets fill the worship space and make it clear that worship involves not only staying in one place but sitting down

too. At this Eucharist most of the time was spent in an active rather than a passive physical state of engagement, including, for the congregation, standing, turning, bowing, making the sign of the cross and sharing the Peace, but not singing. Would the occupants of the stalls have been mute in the medieval Eucharist?

The robes and vestments, not only for the clergy but also for the servers and singers, are a key visual element in worship and arguably a currently under-appreciated signal that this action is about our worship of God, in the House of God, with due dignity and ceremony. Each participant has a prescribed role and is dressed for the part, not least, in effect as a powerful reminder of the demands of that role in the worship. To others present the vestments anonymise the wearer and emphasise the role over the identity of the individual.

The plainchant and polyphony were performed beautifully by the cathedral choir. I wonder about the standard of the performance in the 1530s. I guess that we have no way of knowing. Nevertheless, without the benefit of modern media and communication, and without the employment of professional and highly-trained singers and without vocal coaches, perhaps the chant would have been somewhat less polished. I imagine too that a decision about the pace of the chant was determined predominantly by the prior experience of the musicians. But what about the pauses?

The organ was used only for the Offertory *Felix namque* and therefore provided a notable contrast to the otherwise unaccompanied chant and polyphony.

As a school teacher it was interesting to note the degree of involvement of the children. We spoke about the question of how much the boys would have joined in with the chant. Their involvement in fulfilling one or two minor roles beyond the music is significant for their learning. The provision of a progression of involvement in a series of tasks within the liturgy helps not only to engage their interest but also sustains it over a much longer term. Aspiring to extra responsibilities, to be a taperer, and once that is achieved to move up to, for example, holding a book for the priest, is powerful, especially, it seems for boys. Such engagement must, over time, have inspired the smallest chorister to become the celebrant at the Eucharist.

The ceremonial censing and presentation of the Gospel book to the various groups present was, for me, a new experience, emphasising a personal giving of the Gospel and all the significance that carries, to the individual. The giving of the Peace, too, was especially striking. We are familiar with the shaking of hands with as many people as we can before 'time is up'. This was a different and more profound experience. The passing of the Peace from the celebrant, and from person to person down the line meant that at a particular moment one particular person held it in themselves for the time it took to pass it on. It involved the responsibility of not only receiving and accepting the Peace but in the turning and passing it on to the next person. That moment would pose a challenge to each individual at this point in the eucharist. It served to emphasise that it was also your responsibility in the world outside. Hurried handshaking is a weaker symbolic action.

As the Peace was passed along the stalls the words 'Pax tecum' and 'et cum spiritu tuo' were spoken. In the entire eucharist this was our only vocalisation and so came as quite a shock, not least because, for me, the receiving and giving of greetings in Latin is unfamiliar. In that moment it also became apparent that it was entirely familiar for many of those around me, which was itself a surprise. Like everyone else I had listened while others had uttered streams of Latin for the best part of forty-five minutes and suddenly I found myself surprised at also saying those words as if they were part of a habitual response. Despite all that, the power of the action alone was probably sufficient.

19. Regular Cathedral worshipper; came specially for this service; female, over 51; sat in Quire

My main reason for attending the service was to experience what would have been available several hundred years ago, not to someone such as me, but to those who were part of the Cathedral community. As a Cathedral guide I tell visitors as much as I can as to what they might have experienced in the days before the Reformation - or during those chaotic days when nobody quite knew where they were going or for how long. Although I was very happy to be in the Quire, perhaps I should have been standing in the Nave (or even gone to the wall) for a greater sense of how the Latin Mass would have come over.

The use of Latin would have been familiar to worshippers but I did wonder how they knew, for instance, when 'unheard prayer' was being uttered. I would love to know what the average market seller, householder, sheep shearer etc thought about worship and whether, if they attended the Cathedral for a mass, they wished that they had stayed with their more familiar priest and surroundings in St Martin's or St Thomas' churches.

As a spectator yesterday, I was interested to find that it was quite difficult to see, even from my seat, what was going on at the High Altar but once again, it is impossible to put myself in the place of a priest, or someone familiar with the liturgy, several hundred years ago. On the other hand, being close to the singers was helpful and having the words printed for the congregation essential.

Attending a Eucharist with only the priest receiving the sacrament is very strange to a modern (Anglican) attender but presumably this was the norm at the time.

All in all, a fascinating occasion and I shall definitely try to attend some of the other services planned.

Thank you and best wishes with your studies,

20. Came specially for this service; male; sat in Quire

I am writing to give you my experiences of the Eucharist at Salisbury.

First of all, I found the introductory sessions with John Harper and Sally Harper incredibly helpful in terms of setting the context and understanding why things happened as they did - I think without this context I might have struggled slightly with some parts of the liturgy.

I must admit, that even with the context I was unsure how I would react to the silent Canon of the mass - I feared that it might be a meaningless silence where my thoughts drifted off. However, I actually found the silent recitation very powerful and moving, and I was conscious of being completely focused on the Eucharistic act, more so than in a spoken Eucharist. I felt myself concentrating more intently than normal (and I am used to anglo-catholic worship).

In terms of the space I can sense how it was a great privilege to be in the Quire - somehow the distance from where I was sitting to the high altar emphasized the importance of it, this was accentuated when the readings were given from the lectern. I think that perhaps this works better in a grand rather than an intimate space.

The music was beautifully sung by the choir and very powerful - I thought they did incredibly well considering there was so much for them to learn. It must have been hard to synchronize activity especially since there was independent activity taking place at the altar and among the choir.

Another feature that I found very moving was the passing of the peace - it felt so much more meaningful passing it in an ordered way rather than the haphazard way it takes place in today's liturgies - there was a real sense of warmth to this aspect of the service.

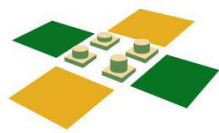
In terms of the communion being received only by the priest, I can imagine that when people did communicate at Easter it must have been such an awesome event - I did reflect that since most services now are Eucharistic we feel we have a right and expectation to receive and although I carefully prepare for communion every Sunday I did wonder whether I sometimes take this for granted. Presumably the people at the time felt they were experiencing the changing of the elements and this act in itself must have given them spiritual fulfillment?

There were times in the service, when I felt instinctively I wanted to respond but this wasn't a big deal

I hope these comments are helpful - it was an amazing experience that for me sheds a new light on celebration of the Eucharist.

Thanks again for the opportunity to participate and I look forward to attending a future event.

Notes collated by Sally Harper



THE
EXPERIENCE
OF WORSHIP
IN LATE MEDIEVAL
CATHEDRAL AND
PARISH CHURCH

LATIN EUCHARIST IN HONOUR OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

SALISBURY CATHEDRAL: 5 MAY 2011

RESPONSES GLEANED FROM INDIVIDUAL CONGREGATIONAL ATTENDEES

These varied comments were offered by an invited group who came to a discussion at Sarum College after the Eucharist, all of whom had been present in the congregation. Some had also attended a related short course at Sarum College earlier in the day.

- The Mass felt deeply physical – turning, posture etc
- No use of [congregational] voices – this was striking (though some people did join in with the responses, and others felt they had to hold themselves back from responding)
- Singing or speaking in Latin seemed a very familiar experience to some
- Some long periods of inaction ... though others delighted in not having to do anything – no thinking or reading.
- Movements in general were executed very devoutly – there was great enjoyment of this
- One person felt they were not well enough informed to be ‘easy’ at times – but felt very motivated to know it better
- Attending a Latin Mass with a translation was more meaningful for some than joining in with an English Eucharist on a Sunday morning
- The peace was a very powerful movement - passing the peace in a simple way from one person to the next was a delight. The order and delivery was especially noted – clear who it came from, and to whom it should go next.
- It was nevertheless very hard for those [congregation] in the presbytery who wanted to join in the peace and could not (one person speculated that the ‘common man’ perhaps felt very little involved here). It was also noted that the peace came so much later in the Mass in the medieval rite.
- The sense of flow throughout the Mass was very notable
- It would be very good to the whole thing again – this time being more familiar with the rite
- The Elevation was very difficult to see
- One person (an Irish Catholic) noted how good it had been as a child to receive a Missal; the written text made it much easier to feel engaged in the Mass
- Another person (a Cathedral guide) found the Mass interesting institutionally, but otherwise ‘couldn’t be doing with it!’ She didn’t find it ‘being close to God’ as an experience.
- It was agreed that there were big questions remaining as to how people DID engage
- Felt ‘monastic’ to one person – this added to the feeling of holiness and the spiritual – of being ‘enveloped’ in the Mass, without having to ‘do things’.
- One person felt this was ‘not the same’ as choral evensong, since one felt more included in the Mass; although for someone else, evensong ‘gives time to talk to God’, whereas the Mass did not.
- To what extent can you do your own praying in such a Mass? It all felt remote for at least one person – just another Mass being ‘ticked off’ for the priests themselves.
- The bringing of the Word to the people though the Gospel Book, and the people being made holy by censuring before they get the Book was noted (at that point it felt less like an ‘ego trip’ for the clergy for some)

- Perhaps it would feel even more powerful if each person present was censed, and each kissed the Book, rather than just some?
- One person (an art historian) felt very comfortable with the experience – the ethos is similar to what one still experiences in the Greek Orthodox church now (including the male domination), and relaxed movements are even more striking in the Orthodox church
- Interested that the acolyte had his hands covered some of the time – compare iconography of the Wise Men. In the Mass only the priests and his assistants actually hold the vessels. Compare the gifts of the Magi and the bringing in of Eucharistic gifts.
- The ordering of the clergy away from the sacrament was notable – the least senior are furthest away from the sacrament (i.e. Celebrant, Deacon, Subdeacon, Acolyte).
- Music enhanced the experience, but how much was this helped by the building?
- A great overall privilege – this was music and ritual used in this building at this time
- Some had not expected so much repetition of preliminary intonations by precentor and rulers – this took attention away from the ritual
- Spinning out of a short text is distracting (even when trying to follow the text in the book)
- One person reflected on the likely contrast between this Mass and a medieval parish Mass at Salisbury – which probably involved one priest with assistant, no music, and took place very early in the morning
- Even with forewarning, it was hard to get into the experience of what it would have felt like not to be able to receive communion
- Others were quite happy not to have to get up to receive – that would have been a totally different experience
- Since no-one was receiving, this felt less alienating than if you chose not to receive in a congregation of receivers

General feelings towards the Cathedral itself after the Latin Eucharist

- 'I felt very connected to the past – much more so than at Evensong on Sunday'
- 'I felt more distant from the altar'
- 'There were more comings and goings up and down'
- 'I would have liked the experience of being in the nave, with the screen still in place'
- 'I would have liked the boys to have gone out as though they were not so formally trained!'
- 'The building seemed more relevant here than in 21st-century worship – more part of worship than on a Sunday morning'
- 'The service fitted the space very well – the movement and use of space helped' [though one person felt that the building seemed more austere]
- 'I felt that some things were very nit-picking – I was fed up with not being able to engage and know what was being said'
- 'I noticed that some stayed facing east for the Credo – ingrained Anglicanism!'