

COR Newsletter – 21 May 2008

Dear all,

Last Saturday

Grace Victoria Dyer was baptised into the Christian faith at 11 o'clock on Saturday morning. The service started with Fr. Olivian from the Orthodox Church saying prayers for the mother and child at the entrance to our church and we proceeded into the church to continue with a baptism and mass. Incense was used for the first time in our church for a very long time. We pray for Grace, and for Irvin and Andreea and for both respective families. Pictures of this baptism are already on John's Blog. You can reach this by going to our website <http://www.churchoftheresurrection.eu> and then clicking on "COR Blog". (And yes, that *is* me wearing a cope!!)

Last Sunday in Bucharest

The flowers from the previous day's baptism were still adorning the church and John presided as I was in Sofia. John has confirmed that this Trinity Sunday was a service that felt good. Bucharest was of course remembered in the prayers of the people in Sofia.

Last Sunday in Sofia

This was a truly memorable service for many different reasons. The Spirit felt good and the little chapel was unusually full. As well as Alex and I making the journey to the Bulgarian capital Jo and Rene Kinberger, together with baby Neve also made the six hour drive from Bucharest. It is always worth the trip and I know Jo and Rene enjoyed both the drive and the atmosphere as well. This was the final service in Sofia for **Lionel and Pat Sainsbury**. They have been cornerstones of the Anglican Church and the wider ex-pat community in Sofia for six years now. So this was an emotional farewell. The service touched people who would not normally come to an Anglican service (and we even made contact with three Nigerian Anglicans who had no idea we existed, but had wandered into our service arriving early for the catholic mass). Our normally sedate after service coffee was so raucous the Catholics had to ask us to keep the noise down, but we found time to toast Lionel and Pat and Jonathan (another Sofia congregation mainstay and treasure) presented them with a beautiful icon to remember the Sofia congregation by. Three of the Sofia congregation have already decided to come to the **British Garden party** so we look forward to introducing them to the peculiar pleasures of Bucharest life very soon. As part of the continual improvements that seem to be happening weekly now to our website, pictures of the congregation and chapel in Sofia, and the farewell to Lionel and Pat Sainsbury are now on our website <http://www.churchoftheresurrection.eu> and clicking on the "picture galleries" button. *Note: Not all the photos have a description yet - this is an ongoing process.*

Next Sunday in Bucharest

Holy Communion at 10am with **Sunday school** followed by the church **BBQ at Peris**. Car sharing and "bring and share" food and drink please. If it is very hot then water might come in handy as well. Nancy and Eugeniu are providing the meat. See you all there! Directions: Take the DN1 north out of the city (towards Ploiesti), go past Tancabesti, under the footbridge that crosses the DN1 and turn at the Peris turn-off (it is a left turn, and clearly marked - there is even a little left turn lane in the road

no less). Follow all the twists and turns in the road and arriving at Paris you eventually come to the small "Primaria" with the National flag outside (this will be on your right). Take the very next turning on the left and you are on the right street. Nancy and Eugeniu's house is on your left after about 100 yards.

Coming soon to a church near you.....

A former chaplain of our little church in the mid 1960's did rather well for himself and eventually became the **Archbishop of York**, the second most important post in the Church of England. **David Hope** (for it is he!), the former archbishop of York has been invited back to Bucharest by the British Ambassador, Robin Barnett, as the guest of honour to celebrate the Queen's official birthday. Unfortunately, his stay will not coincide with a Sunday so we are proposing a mid week Eucharist - probably Thurs 19th June - at the church of the resurrection. David Hope, when he was chaplain actually lived in the church itself (which is why the church even has a shower!) and I'm sure this will be an emotional return for him. When details are more concrete I'll confirm the date of the service and for this sort of special occasion I would hope to see as many people as humanly possible in church to welcome him back!!

Simply magnificent

The final figure for the money raised at the Britannia Ball to support our church stands at the magnificent sum of 22,305 Euros. Thank you to everyone who helped make this event such a success.

Thought for the day

Speaking to Lionel just before the church service in Sofia, Lionel said that in all his years abroad, mixing with so many different cultures and religions, including long stints in India and Egypt, he was sure that the basic Christian message was about loving people, and that he had also seen the peace that people of other faiths derived from their own faith.

In typical Lionel fashion, he always downplayed his role and described himself as "just the verger" and that he left all the theological stuff to people like Jonathan Dunne or the chaplain. But actually, when it comes down to it, love is everything that Christianity is about - not convoluted doctrines (however true they may be). In the reading set for Trinity Sunday from 2 Corinthians, Paul mentions Jesus Christ, God and the Holy Spirit in one sentence (in a passage we now know as "the grace") so there are no prizes for guessing why it was chosen for Trinity Sunday - but Paul speaks of them not to support a doctrine that was formalised nearly 300 years after he had died, but because of what he experiences through them. Grace Love and Communion.

Grace, love and communion are the lived experiences of Paul's knowledge of God, Jesus and the Spirit. Grace love and communion are the focus of that small passage. In fact it was the *experience* of the whole church of the presence of God in Jesus and their collective experience of the presence of God in their communities through the Spirit after Jesus had died that led eventually to the doctrine of the Holy Trinity.

The theologian Karl Barth said "The best theology would need no advocates, it would prove itself". If this is so, then Grace love and communion would be the proofs of the Trinity. But the flipside of this of course is that where these things don't exist, what is this telling us?

Where does it leave those divided worldwide churches where communion is denied to Christians outside their denomination?

Where does it leave a church where some of its Bishops refuse to share communion with their own Archbishop as some conservatives refused to do at a joint meeting of Anglican Bishops in Northern Ireland and when those same people boycott the Lambeth conference?

Where does it leave a church when it refuses to invite a properly elected American Bishop in the communion to that same conference for the grievous sin of telling the truth?

If Karl Barth is right, then some people are denying the truth of God *in his very being*, by their actions.

The prayer for today is attributed to Saint Benedict

*O gracious and Holy Father,
give us wisdom to perceive you,
diligence to seek you,
patience to wait for you,
eyes to behold you,
a heart to meditate upon you,
and a life to proclaim you,
through the power of the Spirit
of Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen*

Love and peace

Martin