Liturgy and Architecture

by Peter Hammond

With a Foreword by F. W. Dillistone, Dean of Liverpool

"One cannot hope to design a satisfactory church," says Peter Hammond in this thoughtful book, "unless one is prepared to face fairly and squarely the question of what a church is for. . . ." He goes on to point out that "western Christendom is in the throes of a new reformation" which is leading to a rediscovery of some of the church's neglected traditions and a reassessment of the Church's role in the lives of its members and in the social order. This revolution, in turn, makes new demands on the building that is to be "a shelter for a worshipping community."
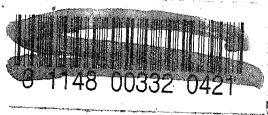
The traditional church plan, as developed in the late Middle Ages, the author shows, is a setting for a liturgy in which the role of the laity is passive. As the liturgical movement has brought the church the understanding a act of the whole

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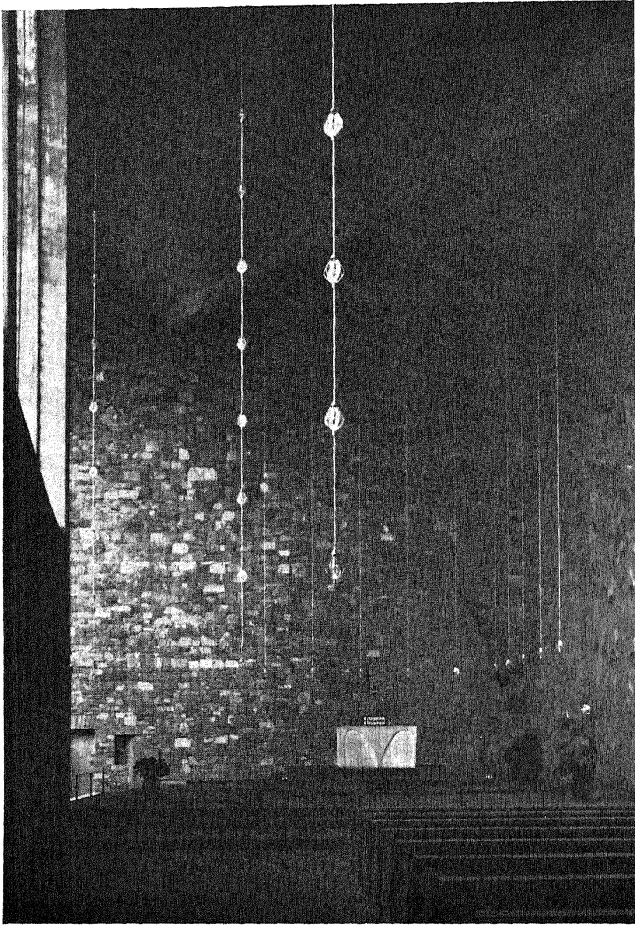
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LITURGY AND ARCHITECTURE

PETER HAMMOND

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F. W. Dillistone
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Foreword

BY THE DEAN OF LIVERPOOL

FORTY years ago a certain Swiss pastor sounded an alarm in Europe comparable, he said, to that which would be produced in his village by the violent ringing of the church-bell. And although there may have been countless exaggerations and false emphases since that time, few would deny that Barth's prophetic outburst brought new life into European theology and recalled Christian ministers the world over to their primary task of enquiring about the Word of God which it was their duty to proclaim.

Peter Hammond might not wish to be compared in any way to Karl Barth. But I could certainly wish that his book might sound the same kind of alarm for church builders to-day that Barth's early writings sounded for sermon builders in the period after the First World War. For in some ways the church-structure is now more important even than the sermon-structure in the life of the Church. As Mr. Hammond so forcibly points out, the problem of communication of which we hear so much is far more a problem of symbols (meaning, I assume, forms which can be *seen*) than of words (that is forms which can be heard or read).

I well remember hearing from the Chaplain-in-Chief of the Royal Air Force that in attempting to make some kind of religious contact with new recruits, he and his chaplains had found that the most useful line of approach was to ask whether the individual in question had ever seen a church. He might know virtually nothing else about the Christian faith but at least he was likely to have seen a church at some time. What, then, did he imagine that this building was? What was it for? What did people do inside it? For vast numbers of people to-day the building which they see is the only remaining link with the Christian tradition.

If this is true, then the importance of the symbolic structure, especially if it is newly built, becomes obvious. Will the church building and

what it represents mean anything at all to our contemporary world? Are the churches which have been erected in this country over the past ten years compelling crystallisations of Christian faith and life providing both a central place for the worshipping activities of the people of God and a vivid example of the integrity and authenticity which belongs (or should belong) to any building dedicated in a special way to God himself?

Peter Hammond's first warning came to my notice in the printed version of a broadcast he gave in early 1957. What he said then seemed to me so important and so challenging that I earnestly hoped he would carry his 'concern' further. This he has now done. He has in fact done two things. He has seriously called in question the whole programme of church building that has been going on in this country over the last thirty years: he has also opened our eyes to the quite remarkable developments that have taken place on the Continent and in America during the same period.

In this book he has said a good many hard things, even painful things. But in every department of life the process of informed criticism needs constantly to be going on, and not least in the realm of church architecture. Yet in point of fact the individual critic who is cognisant both of the theological problems and of the architectural problems which call for solution in the erection of any church building is rarely to be found. Fortunately Mr. Hammond can speak with knowledge and competence in both fields, and out of his unusually wide experience he has written a most stimulating essay in which he not only criticises but also puts forward constructive proposals for redeeming the situation before it is too late.

Of these proposals none I think is more important, or for that matter easier to bring about, than the establishment of groups up and down the country of those who share this concern from differing points of view. If only there could be creative consultation between architects, theologians, sociologists, liturgists, all of whom are needed in the building of a church, how much better the situation might become. For there is an alarming sense of finality about a church building. There can be experiments in music, in furnishings, in liturgies, in colour: if experience shows them not to have been successful no great harm has been done. But with a building it is different. Surely we have been in too much of a hurry. It is true that great new housing areas have seemed to clamour for attention. But is a society in the throes of a social revolution and in process of adapting itself to a completely new

communications system in the least ready to embark upon a vast pro-gramme of church building with all the fixity and finality that it is bound to imply?

I am profoundly thankful that Mr. Hammond has written this book. It is full of interesting material. It is of the highest value in giving English readers a clear view of what has been achieved on the Continent. But it is also a tract for the times, calling us back to first principles, asking us to re-examine our preconceived ideas, inviting us to think courageously about the great problems of the period in which we live. Obviously there will not be agreement on many of the issues he raises. I should want myself to raise questions at a good many points. But here is information, here are plans and pictures, here are the problems clearly stated, here is an invaluable drawing together of liturgy and society, of architecture and theology. I regard it as a great privilege to commend Mr. Hammond's book to the serious consideration of all those who are really concerned about the apprehension of and the practice of the Christian faith in England to-day.

F. W. DILLISTONE

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Preface

THERE has recently been something of a spate of books and articles about modern churches. The bibliography at the end of the present book is not intended to be exhaustive. A complete survey of literature published within the last five years would include references not only to every architectural review published in western Europe and America, and to a considerable number of lavishly produced picture-books, but also to periodicals as diverse as *Gemini* and *L'Automobilisme Ardennais*. While comparatively little has been written in English, and still less of any value, the appearance of another book on the subject may seem to demand a word of explanation.

The unsatisfactory character of so much recent writing on church architecture, particularly in this country, is due to the authors' reluctance to face fundamental issues. The really basic problems are rarely so much as hinted at. I have tried to write a book which, whatever its shortcomings, does at least recognise the seriousness and the complexity of these problems—even though it offers no easy solutions. I hope that it may go some way towards meeting the needs of the many thoughtful people who share my concern at the present state of church architecture on this side of the Channel, and who can find no satisfaction in the modish and gimmick-ridden pavilions of religious art which are constantly being held up to us as the precursors of a genuine renewal of sacred building: a church architecture for our time. I believe that they are nothing of the kind: that it is worse than useless to worry about introducing still more modern art into churches so long as we continue to ignore the fundamental, if unfashionable, questions of theology, liturgy and sociology which are raised by the very act of setting apart a special building for the service of God; and that it is supremely irrational to labour *ad nauseam* the point that architects must make full use of modern building materials and techniques while refusing to face the fact that the one thing that gives a certain coherence to all the serious architecture of the last ten years is its emphasis on the *programme*. Architecture is primarily a matter of the significant definition of space: *not* of artistic symbols, however contemporary, or the decorative

treatment of flat surfaces. I am afraid that the book which I have
written will be a sad disappointment to some people. It will certainly
disappoint the architect who wrote to me about 'the urgent need for
a text book for architects designing churches', and who added that 'the
sort of information we want is a treatise on colours and the meaning
of symbols, which can be introduced into the designs for carved and
enriched work'. It will, I fear, be equally disappointing to those who
turn to it in the hope of finding a series of neat solutions to specific
problems like the planning of baptisteries or the arrangement of sanc-
tuaries. For those who want solutions—and the latest and most fashion-
able solutions at that—there is the monumental *Handbook for Church
Building* recently published in Munich, not to mention the architectural
periodicals. What I have attempted to provide is something quite
different.

I have used the term *functional* with considerable reluctance, con-
scious as I am of the associations that it has gathered to itself since the
time of Horatio Greenough, and simply because I cannot think of a
better word. It will, I hope, be clear to anyone who reads as far as the
end of the first chapter that the word is here intended to connote far
more than material function: that it embraces the whole purpose of
the building. In a book which ranges over so wide a field it has un-
fortunately been impossible to discuss many important matters as
fully as I could have wished. I have frequently had to be content with
a paragraph where a chapter would scarcely have sufficed. Thus, in the
discussion of the holy table, in the third chapter, I have made no
reference to the question of the reserved sacrament; nor, in considering
the shape of the eucharistic room, have I considered the special require-
ments, if any, of the choir-offices. The book contains only a single
passing reference to the so-called dual-purpose church, and I should
have liked, had space permitted, to have discussed at far greater length
the effect of fixed seating on the layout of the church, the relationship
between the eucharistic room and the various buildings which serve
for extra-liturgical activities, and the whole sociological background
to church building. I hope, nevertheless, that this essay may stimu-
late others to give fresh thought to these and similar problems. Some
of these matters will be considered in greater detail in another book,
provisionally entitled *Modern Church Architecture: Essays in Discrimi-
nation*, that is now in preparation.

To any of my friends on the Continent who may read this book,
and who may well feel that some of the points to which I have devoted

a good deal of space are a trifle *vieux jeu*, I would only say that, even in an age of space-travel, the insulating properties of the English Channel are still remarkable, and that many of the commonplaces of Trier and Zürich would still be regarded as revolutionary in London or Oxford. I think they will agree that churches like those at Bow Common and Glenrothes suggest that it may not be long before we are able to contribute something to the debate that has been going on for a generation on the Continent: though it will doubtless be some years yet before the extra-mural department of the University of Basle thinks about arranging study-tours of new churches in the British Isles.

I must thank all those who provided me with the plans, photographs and other material without which this book could not have been written. I must also say a special word of thanks to Professor Willy Weyres, of Cologne, for generously allowing me to make use of material originally prepared for his own book *Neue Kirchen im Erz-bistum Köln*; to the Reverend William Wenninger, chairman of the Liturgical Commission of the diocese of Superior, Wisconsin, for permission to quote extensively from the diocesan directives; and to those architects who prepared plans and drawings specially for the book. A complete list of acknowledgements for permission to use other copyright material will be found elsewhere in the book. The second chapter incorporates the substance of two talks broadcast in the Third Programme in October 1957, and subsequently printed in *The Listener*. Finally, I am most grateful to Dr. F. W. Dillistone for his foreword; to Humphrey Green, who read the book in manuscript and made several valuable suggestions; to Robert Maguire and Keith Murray, for their part in a discussion which has now been going on for three years and to which I owe more than I can say; and, not least, to my wife, who has brought to the manuscript the critical faculties which I am inclined to regard as the peculiar prerogative of the Bryn Mawr graduate.

PETER HAMMOND

Bagendon Rectory, Cirencester
December 1959

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1. *The Modern Church*

During the last thirty years the Church of England has undertaken a vast programme of church building. More than two hundred and fifty consecrated churches, as well as numerous mission churches and halls, were erected during the ten years immediately preceding the Second World War: the great majority to meet the needs of new housing estates and dormitory suburbs. The destruction of the war years and the continuing growth of new centres of population made it inevitable that, as soon as the temporary restrictions on all kinds of construction were removed, a further wave of church building would follow. During the last ten years new churches have been springing up all over England, and the post-war building programme seems likely to be even more extensive than that undertaken during the 'thirties. There is scarcely a diocese in the country where new places for worship are not being built to-day. In many urban dioceses the provision of funds for new churches is a major item in the diocesan budget, and is likely to remain so for several years to come.

The results of all this activity have been depressing in the extreme. It is hard to think of any field of ecclesiastical investment where so much money has been squandered to so little purpose. The devastation caused by the war, the development of new and exciting techniques of building and a theological recovery within the Church of the full biblical meaning of the *ecclesia* and its liturgy together provided the Church with a splendid opportunity for creating a living architecture: an architecture firmly rooted in tradition and yet wholly of its time. The opportunity has not been taken. Pastoral zeal has gone hand in hand with a curious blindness to the latent potentialities of sacred art and architecture, and, as a result, the majority of our post-war churches are likely to prove a grave source of embarrassment to those who have to use them in years to come.

. The Church of England's failure to seize an opportunity such as is unlikely to recur is all the more tragic in view of what has been

happening during the same period in other countries. On the Continent there are many signs of a real renewal of church architecture. In Germany, Switzerland and France one can see churches which are an inspiration to the congregations which use them, and which merit a distinguished place in any survey of contemporary architecture; churches which are genuinely modern, not merely in the sense that they make full use of new building materials and methods of construction, but also because they embody an understanding of the Christian mystery which is unmistakably of our time. There are very few churches on this side of the Channel of which so much could be said. One has only to visit Cologne to realise how catastrophically we have failed in this country to profit from the opportunity afforded by the Second World War.

~~After~~ studying the recently published survey *Sixty Post-War Churches*[1] one is tempted to exclaim with André Malraux that the only worthy setting which remains for the central act of the Church's life is the mountain-top, or within the barbed wire of the camps. Better, surely, the house-church: to break bread in the suburban dining-room, or in the local school, rather than in buildings such as these. Nor can failure be attributed simply to economic difficulties and the soaring costs of building. There is little to choose between the unimaginative drabness of the dual-purpose churches, with their tawdry furnishings, and the empty pretentiousness of the more ambitious buildings for which, thanks to war-damage or the generosity of individual donors, ample funds were available. If anything, the costlier churches tend to be the more depressing. It is significant that many of the best churches built on the other side of the Channel in recent years owe much of their quality to an extreme simplicity dictated in the first place by economic necessity, but issuing in a genuine Christian poverty: not in the pretentious meanness which characterises so many of our own churches.

It is instructive to compare this English survey with a volume published in Paris a few months earlier, in connection with an exhibition of French post-war churches.[2] It has of course to be recognised that neither survey affords a complete picture. Both, however, while they do not include every building of importance, do give a fairly representative selection of recent churches, and the contrast is striking. The first and overwhelming impression produced by a comparison of the two surveys is that, whereas most of the English churches

[1] Incorporated Church Building Society, London, 1957.
[2] *Églises de France reconstruites.* Paris, 1956.

illustrated are exercises in one or other of the conventional ecclesiastical styles, the majority of the French churches are honest contemporary buildings, manifestly belonging to the second half of the twentieth century. They use the materials and constructional systems which lie ready to hand, and which, so far as a common architectural language can be said to exist in an age of stylistic confusion, constitute the basic vocabulary of all modern building. Churches like St. Julian, at Caen, and Notre-Dame de Royan, though they may be criticised on other grounds, are at least from the plastic and æsthetic point of view extremely exciting buildings. They speak to the twentieth century in the language of the living. They suggest, even to the uninitiated, that while the Gospel may be incredible it is not necessarily irrelevant.

It is here that the English survey is so profoundly disturbing. To turn from these French post-war churches to our own is to pass from the harsh realities of the twentieth century to a sheltered ecclesiastical backwater: delightful in its way, a paradise for the antiquarian and the medievalist, but utterly remote from the daily concerns of ordinary men and women. Notre-Dame de Royan and the charming neo-Georgian church at Bawdeswell, in Norfolk, belong not merely to different countries but to different worlds. There would seem to be a certain irony in preaching the relevance of the Christian faith to the problems of modern society in the revivalist churches—Gothic, Georgian, Byzantine or Romanesque—which are still being built all over England. These churches have no message for the contemporary world. They seem likely to confirm the agnostic in his conviction that the Church of England is no more than a curious anachronism: that Christianity itself is merely the by-product of a vanished culture.

But the contrast between the two surveys is not confined to matters of style. A closer analysis reveals a more fundamental divergence. Of the twenty-eight consecrated buildings illustrated in *Sixty Post-War Churches* all but three are based on what is still generally accepted in this country as the normal or traditional church plan—though in actual fact it represents a real departure from English tradition. Like so many other 'traditional' features of our Church life, it is a Victorian innovation and embodies the principles propagated with such astonishing success by the Cambridge ecclesiologists of the 1840's. The characteristic features of this plan are so well known as to need only the most summary description. 'The principal altar is set at the east end of a long building . . . and separated from the people by a surpliced choir, and often with a further element of separation in a medieval type of

chancel screen of greater or lesser elaboration. The pulpit occupies a position close to the chancel arch or chancel screen, either on the north or south side of the nave; and opposite to it is the lectern, usually of the eagle type; the font is in its medieval position at the west end. . . . The seats for the congregation, as far as possible, all face east.'[3] This conventional nineteenth-century plan persists beneath a wide diversity of style and architectural treatment. An analysis of an earlier survey of churches built in this country between 1930 and 1945 reveals that it forms the starting point for thirty-two out of thirty-five consecrated churches, and all but one of fifteen mission churches illustrated in the book.[4] The only churches which show signs of original thought, so far as the plan is concerned, are the John Keble Church, at Mill Hill, by D. F. Martin-Smith, Sir Ninian Comper's church at Cosham, and two churches, one at Wythenshawe, the other at Sunderland, by N. F. Cachemaille-Day.

Églises de France reconstruites discloses a very different situation on the other side of the Channel. Thirty-five new churches are illustrated in the book. Twenty-one of them are based on plans radically different from the conventional layout, consisting of a long narrow rectangle with the altar at the east end, which is almost universal in this country. These plans are of great variety. There are circular and octagonal churches with central altars; others in the form of a square, with the seats for the congregation on three sides of a free-standing altar and those for the clergy placed against the east wall, as in the early basilicas. There are other plans founded on the ellipse, the hexagon and the trapezoid. While the remaining fourteen churches all have a comparatively conventional plan, in the form of a more or less elongated rectangle, none of them has a lengthy chancel, and in all but two the main altar stands well clear of the east wall so that the celebrant at the eucharist can, if he so desires, face the people across the holy table.

Nor is it only, or indeed principally, in France that one finds this remarkable variety and flexibility in church planning. The most striking feature of the new churches built during the last ten years in Germany, Switzerland, the Low Countries, Italy, Scandinavia and America is their extraordinary diversity of plan. It is the uncritical acceptance of a conventional layout which, even more than the persistence of the conventional ecclesiastical styles, gives to modern church

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[3] G. W. O. Addleshaw and Frederick Etchells: *The Architectural Setting of Anglican Worship*. Faber & Faber, 1948, p. 224.

[4] *Fifty Modern Churches*. I.C.B.S., 1947.

architecture in this country its curiously insular character. Many of the English churches built between the wars make extensive use of stylistic clichés borrowed from the new architecture which was coming into being in Germany—Dominikus Böhm's great church of St. Englebert, at Cologne, soon produced a crop of brick bell-towers all over England. But while this revolutionary building provided English ecclesiastical architects with some new ingredients for their stylistic hotchpotch, its fundamental importance—its originality of plan—was entirely ignored.

Taking modern church architecture as a whole, one may distinguish three main schools of thought, three distinct approaches to the problem of designing a church. First, there are those—a rapidly dwindling minority, except perhaps in this country and in other strongholds of entrenched conservatism such as Spain—for whom all contemporary architecture is anathema, and who go on trying to infuse new life into forms which were in their day as modern as those of Le Corbusier's *Unité d'Habitation* at Marseilles or the new Opera House at Sydney, but which belong irrevocably to a vanished culture: those for whom certain familiar associations—'the smell of old damp stone or Victorian hassocks'—are, in Basil Taylor's words, 'a prerequisite of church furnishing, even of Christianity itself'.

So far as this school of thought is concerned, it is necessary merely to recognise its survival, and the fact that, in this country at least, it continues to exercise an influence out of all proportion to its vitality. Most of the churches which it has produced during the last thirty years have been justly ignored by the architectural press and are indeed beneath criticism. This particular battle has been fought and won, and it can only be a matter of time before even the most reactionary ecclesiastical architects and their clients are forced to recognise that it is no use addressing themselves to an uncomprehending world in a dead language. This is not to say that the Church of England will not continue to spend hundreds of thousands of pounds on buildings which scandalise the unbeliever and corrupt not merely the taste but also the faith of those who use them. The next few years will almost certainly produce a further harvest of still-born essays in the various ecclesiastical styles, complete with Gothic chairs, fifteenth-century altars, and all the familiar stock-in-trade of the church furnisher. But to-day the church furnishers themselves are beginning to turn their attention to 'simple contemporary furnishings'; to offer 'modern' alternatives to their 'traditional' designs. Sooner or later it will be generally accepted that it is in fact traditional to be modern. All else

apart, the cost of building elaborate churches in the nineteenth-century manner has become prohibitive.

The second school of thought is impatient of historicism and recognises that it is intolerable to go on building churches in the style of the fifteenth century or the eighteenth. It insists that the Church must make use of modern building materials and techniques, and must avail itself to the full of the work of living artists and craftsmen. 'Architects of to-day', writes the author of a recent book on modern churches which may be taken as representative of this school of thought, 'must reflect this century in the churches they design, using the materials and techniques with which we are familiar. If we do not build churches in keeping with the spirit of the age, we shall be admitting that religion no longer possesses the same vitality as our secular buildings.'[5] This is manifestly true, and one may rejoice that such a point of view is rapidly gaining ground in this country. Yet it is only half the truth: the fact remains that some of the very worst churches of the last thirty years are those which strive most resolutely after a contemporary idiom. Nothing is easier—or more irrelevant—than to disguise what is basically a nineteenth-century church in contemporary fancy-dress; to substitute 'contemporary' detail for Gothic, or to exploit the possibilities of steel and *béton brut* in the creation of conventional 'religious' effects. The roots of the problem lie deeper. 'Merely having an odd look, being the possessor of a Dreamland look-out tower, having a glass wall that at a touch disappears beneath the floor, displaying a mosaic of obscure symbolism constructed of broken bottles, or exhibiting a statue by a name guaranteed to strike terror in the conservative simple', does not, as one of our leading church architects has remarked, 'constitute a new approach to church building.'[6]

The 'solutions' to the problem of church design which this school of thought has produced are invariably superficial, though from a purely æsthetic point of view they are not without a certain specious attraction. To the man in the street they look like modern buildings, and it is their very superiority in this regard to the familiar exercises in dead languages which makes them so dangerously seductive. The new cathedral at Coventry has already been hailed as a modern church, wholly of its time. I believe that this is a highly superficial judgment: that it is in fact a building which contributes nothing to the solution of the real problems of church design and perpetuates a conception of a

[5] Edward D. Mills: *The Modern Church*. Architectural Press, 1956, p. 16.
[6] George G. Pace in the *St. Martin's Review*, May 1958, p. 134.

church which owes far more to the romantic movement than to the New Testament or authentic Christian tradition. The fundamental problem which we have to face to-day is one not of style but of *function*. There is little point in dressing up a conventional church in fashionable costume: in substituting 'contemporary' detail for Gothic; parabolic arches of reinforced concrete for elegant Corinthian columns; abstract patterns of glass slabs set in concrete for insipid Victorian transparencies. What really matters is whether or not the building embodies a modern understanding of the Christian mystery; whether or not it is informed by a theological programme which takes account of the new insights of biblical theology and patristic and liturgical scholarship. If it is not so informed, then no amount of contemporary detail, no glass or sculpture or painting, however fine in itself, can make that building a modern church.

The third approach to church building is far more widespread on the Continent than in this country. It is reflected in the preoccupation with the plan or layout of the church which is so marked among Continental architects. It may be remarked in passing that the churches produced by the second school of thought are, from the point of view of planning, no less conventional than those of the revivalists. This third approach starts from the rejection of the assumption that church design provides the one field in contemporary architecture where functional disciplines can be thrown to the winds. Those of us who take this view would assert that the principles of what, for the sake of convenience, may be called the modern movement in architecture are as valid for church architecture as for any other sort of building; and that good churches—no less than good schools or good hospitals—can be designed only through a radically functional approach. Such an approach will inevitably involve a consideration of some very fundamental theological and liturgical problems—problems which have as yet scarcely been tackled on this side of the Channel. One cannot hope to design a satisfactory church unless one is prepared to face fairly and squarely the question of what a church is for: and the answer to this question is by no means so simple, or so universally recognised, as is commonly supposed.

For most people in this country the word 'functionalism' has come to be associated not with an approach, a critical method, but with a *style*. For the man in the street the word conjures up a vision of the so-called White Architecture of the thirties—much of which was in fact extremely ill-adapted to its purpose. Thus, when a distinguished

English architect refers to Rudolf Schwarz's church at Aachen as 'a functionalist's dream' he is misusing a useful word. The church at Aachen can rightly be described as a functional building: not, however, because its exterior happens to display certain familiar stylistic characteristics, but because it is a building which embodies a most exceptional understanding and awareness of the true function or purpose of a church. The architect who designed this church knew what he was making. Functionalism is not a style but a way of looking at things. Its basic principle—which, once stated, is plainly no more than the most elementary common sense—is that before making anything one must know what it is for. This is a principle which is no less valid for the making of churches than for that of chairs and tables. Admittedly, the function of a chair is comparatively easy to formulate—which is not to say that a great deal of hard thought and experiment may not go to its making. With a church the matter becomes far more complicated; partly because the function of the thing itself is more complex than that of a 'machine for sitting in', partly because the intrusion of a host of irrelevant or at best secondary considerations has made it so difficult for us to approach the problem in a rational way.

The earliest Christian churches were essentially buildings for corporate worship. Their shape was determined by the need to make suitable provision for certain communal activities—above all for the eucharistic assembly on the Lord's day. As Nigel Melhuish has written: 'What was wanted in a church building was a workable and congruous setting for a quite analysable "function", rather than a vague and indefinable "devotional atmosphere". The Roman basilica was not chosen for its beauty, nor for its religiosity, but simply because of all contemporary buildings it was the one most suitable for the public performance of the liturgy. It was this strictly functional approach which laid the foundation for the whole subsequent development of Christian art and architecture.'[7] Church architecture is subject to the same basic laws as govern every other type of building. If the principles of the modern movement are valid for the construction of a school or a factory, they are equally valid for the making of churches. We cannot have a double standard. All truly modern design, as W. R. Lethaby pointed out many years ago, involves 'a definite analysis of possibilities—not a vague poetic dealing with poetic matters, with

[7] From an unpublished essay on *Church Building and the Liturgical Movement*, submitted for a R.I.B.A. competition in 1956.

derivative ideas of what looks domestic, or looks farmlike, or looks ecclesiastical . . . that is what architects have been doing in the last hundred years. They have been trying to deal with a set of flavours— things that looked like things but that were not the things themselves.'[8] The task of the modern architect is not to design a building that *looks like a church*. It is to create a building that *works* as a place for liturgy. The first and essential requirement is radical functional analysis.

The Church of England has much to learn from the work that has been done in this country during the last few years in the field of secular building. The Hertfordshire schools, for example, have deservedly gained a world-wide reputation; they have set a new standard for school design on both sides of the Atlantic. Their outstanding quality is due above all to the fact that the function of a school has been subjected to careful analysis by a group of architects and educationists, who have not hesitated to go back to first principles and have been prepared to modify their conclusions in the light of experience. Their work has borne fruit in a series of buildings which are of incomparably higher quality than our post-war churches, not only from the point of view of structural integrity and the imaginative use of new materials and techniques but above all because they embody the new insights of recent years in the realms of educational theory and child psychology. In much the same way the most successful churches built on the Continent since the war are the outcome of an attempt to analyse and reformulate the function of a church in the light of the new theological and liturgical insights so abundantly manifest to-day throughout the length and breadth of Christendom.

The history of the present renewal of church architecture shows that an architect cannot reasonably be expected to design a satisfactory church—a church which embodies in spatial and structural terms the theological vision of our time—unless he is furnished with an adequate brief. It is only when the Church is prepared to face its responsibility for thinking out afresh its own *raison d'être*, and that of the building in which it meets for the liturgy, that the architect or the artist can hope to achieve that fusion of authentic Christian tradition and contemporary forms which a true sacred art demands. The marked superiority of the best of recent continental churches to our own is not the result of there being more gifted architects in Switzerland and in Germany; it cannot be attributed simply to the fact that as a nation we are less artistic than the French. These churches are better than our own

[8] *Form in Civilization.* O.U.P., 2nd Edition 1957, p. 76.

because in those countries most deeply affected by the liturgical movement the Church *has* begun to fulfil its responsibility for providing the architect with a programme informed by a genuinely modern understanding of the function of a church, and by a living theological and liturgical tradition.

Just as the programme of functional analysis which has been undertaken in the field of school building has involved a collaboration between architects and educationists, the formulation of a programme for the design of churches has meant the bringing together of biblical and patristic scholars, liturgists, parish priests, architects, craftsmen and sociologists. The work which has already been done on the Continent has been stimulated and guided by centres like the Liturgical Institute at Trier, the *Centre de Pastorale liturgique* and the *Art Sacré* group in Paris, as well as by monastic centres such as the Benedictine abbey of La Pierre-qui-Vire, near Avallon, where theory and practice have gone hand in hand. It is difficult to over-estimate the part which these and similar centres have played in creating an informed body of opinion, in discriminating between what is of lasting value and the ephemeral products of passing fashion, and in providing a sound theological basis for experiment and research. We have no such centres in this country. We share with Spain and Ireland the unenviable distinction of being the only countries in western Christendom to-day which do not possess a single periodical devoted to the problems of modern church design. It is useless to criticise the architects who have been responsible for our post-war churches. They have done their best and they can scarcely be blamed if the churches which they have built reflect little more than their personal ideas of what a church should look like. The Church has failed to provide its architects with a proper brief.

The fundamental problem of modern church architecture has been admirably stated by an American Congregationalist theologian, Marvin Halverson, in a recent essay *On getting Good Architecture for the Church.*[9] 'A church building', he writes, 'which is effectively designed in terms of the function of the Church (and the particular congregation for which the building is erected) will have an appropriate form and thus the building may take on the nature of a symbol, saying to the world something of what the Church believes. But before this can be achieved the Church must have a clearer understanding of its function, its vocation, in the world—in to-day's *and* to-morrow's world. In a

[9] Ed. J. N. Shear. *Religious Buildings for To-day.* F. W. Dodge Corporation, New York, 1957, pp. 3f.

sense architecture cannot reach its proper achievement until there has been a theological recovery within the Church of the meaning of the Church. . . . One of the difficulties of church architecture in the past has been frequently that architectural form has followed too closely an inadequately conceived function. An architect can design a building, to be sure, for a church needing units to house its diverse activities. While the architect must have data on religious education requirements and space needs for the various groups in the church, the architect's task demands more than this. Fundamentally, he must know the Church's *raison d'être*. This understanding of the Church's purpose must be discovered by the minister and the congregation. The architect cannot be the theologian for the Church, just as the minister and the congregation cannot be the architect. In fact more architects should say "no" to a church until the Church is ready to say "yes" to its responsibility for rethinking its faith and life and work. . . . The architect's insistence on the Church fulfilling its responsibility can be the catalyst in the Church's re-assessment of itself and rediscovery of the source of its life.'

The ultimate causes of the Church of England's failure to create a living architecture are theological rather than architectural. They stem from the Church's failure to think out afresh its own function and that of the *domus ecclesiæ* in a post-Christian society. Our approach to church design has been insufficiently radical. We have made no serious attempt to relate the form of our churches to the new insights of the theologians and the liturgists. Most of the buildings which have been erected during the last thirty years reflect an understanding of the Church and the liturgy which is essentially romantic and nostalgic, an understanding which is fundamentally at variance with the Christian thought and experience of our own generation. The task of the church architect is not merely to find a contemporary idiom. It is rather to create architectural forms which embody the theological vision of the twentieth century as the characteristic forms of Gothic architecture expressed that of the twelfth. So long as we continue to consider the problem of the modern church as being primarily an architectural one, to be debated in an æsthetic vacuum, we shall come no nearer to finding a solution. It is only within the context of a theological and liturgical renewal comparable to that which now exists on the Continent, and within which the new church architecture was born, that we can hope to achieve that identity of tradition and modernity for which one looks in vain in most of our recent churches.

2. *The Twentieth-Century Reformation*

THE present rebirth of church architecture and sacred art on the Continent is only one among many manifestations of a recovery within the Church of the meaning of the Church. Church buildings like St. Albert, Saarbrücken, or SS. Felix and Regula, Zürich, are the product of a theological as well as an architectural renewal. They demand to be judged not simply on æsthetic grounds—as essays in plastic and structural research for its own sake—but as attempts to embody in architectural form a new understanding of the Church and the liturgy. The marked preference now shown on the other side of the Channel, if not in this country, for plans based on geometrical figures such as the circle, the square, the trapezoid, and the ellipse orientated on its short axis, owes very little to æsthetic considerations. It cannot be explained solely in terms of the freedom conferred by new methods of covering a space—though many of these plans would have been unthinkable so long as architects were constrained by the limitations of timber roofs or stone vaults. It reflects above all the demand that the laity should be able to play their full part in the Church's worship; that the relationship between the ministers at the altar and the whole body of the faithful should express their common status as members of the people of God, and should manifest the fact that all are active participants in the eucharistic action.

The best Swiss, German and French churches built during the last ten years are superior to their English counterparts not simply because they are incomparably more exciting from the point of view of structure, or because they exploit to the full the new materials and techniques now available to the architect. Their superiority as churches lies above all in the fact that they are *theologically* informed to a far greater degree than almost anything built on this side of the Channel. They are related to a living theology, to an authentic tradition rooted in the liturgy and the sacraments. Most of our own new churches reflect only a vague romanticism and the personal predilections of their architects. If church architecture is this country is to escape from the morass of

aestheticism and subjectivity into which it has fallen it must rediscover its true function as the handmaid of the liturgy. It must be brought into communication with the work of the theologian and the liturgist. The need is particularly urgent in view of the radical changes which have taken place during the last few years in the whole climate of theological thinking and liturgical practice.

It is fast becoming a commonplace to observe that western Christendom is in the throes of a new reformation. Not since the sixteenth century has there been such a calling in question of received traditions or such a ferment of experiment. The sources of Christian tradition are being examined afresh in the light of modern biblical and historical scholarship. Theology has begun to shake off the influence of scholasticism and is rediscovering its biblical, patristic and liturgical roots. There is a new sense of the meaning of the Church as the people of God and the body of Christ. A deepened understanding of the eucharist, and of its social implications, has transformed the life of many a parish and has effected something of a revolution in the celebration of the liturgy itself. The rediscovery of the half-forgotten world of eastern orthodoxy has cast an unfamiliar light on familiar western controversies, and has begun to bring home to us the limitations of a purely west-European view of Christian history. A growing recognition of the scandal of a divided Church has been a further vital factor in the creation of a fresh outlook among Christians of many different traditions and loyalties.

'Throughout Christendom', write the editors of a recently inaugurated series of liturgical studies, 'there are stirrings, questionings and experiments. Men are moved to look back on their traditions, rejecting much that they had taken for granted and finding treasures they did not expect. They look forward and outward, seeking to discern God's will in this time of change. Some come to a fresh understanding of their own and the Church's task by the theological study of the Bible. . . . Others are moved not so much by biblical theology as the liturgical movement. . . . Others again find themselves compellingly drawn by the search of the ecumenical movement for the unity, and wholeness of Christ's Church amidst the divisions and imperfections of the churches. Men held by one movement find themselves in sympathy with the others. The three converge. Together they are bringing about a new situation which it is scarcely an exaggeration to call the Reformation of the twentieth century.'[1]

All this must be extremely confusing to those who, in Osbert

[1] *Studies in Ministry and Worship.* S.C.M. Press 1957, Preface.

Lancaster's words, like to 'visualise the Universal Church in terms of High and Low, with Rome at the summit, Geneva at the bottom, and the dear old C. of E. sitting in quiet dignity on the middle rungs'.[2] The new reformation takes little account of traditional ecclesiastical frontiers. The leaven of reform is at work in every part of Christendom. Despite occasional forays by Anglican dignitaries, spurred on by highly publicised secessions to the fold of Rome, there is a marked increase of charity and mutual respect to be discerned in relations between separated Christians. It is significant that two of the most sympathetic and informed studies of the liturgical renewal in the Roman Catholic Church are the work of Anglican and Lutheran authors respectively, while a French Roman Catholic priest has written with rare insight of the spirit of Protestantism and about the Caroline Divines.[3] Methodist and Congregationalist theologians lay stress on the importance of the Church and the liturgy as belonging to the very heart of the Gospel, and insist that 'if evangelism is to be redeemed from impotence, dishonesty and irrelevance, they must return to its true and apostolic medium in the centrality of eucharistic worship'.[4] Rome itself seems irrevocably committed to paths of reform which must be highly bewildering to old-fashioned papalist clergymen in the Church of England; and evening communion is firmly established at Westminster Cathedral—if not as yet at Westminster Abbey.

On the other side of the Channel Roman Catholics yield nothing to their Reformed brethren in their emphasis on Bible-study, and on the ministry of the word as an essential element in eucharistic worship. Among French Catholics there has sprung up an astonishing revival of congregational psalmody—fostered by the splendid settings of the Jesuit Father Gelineau—which has lately moved the Bishop of Sheffield to remark that 'the Roman Church in France, if not in England, has gone right ahead of us in making the psalms once again a part of popular worship';[5] while the circulation of the new translation of the Bible carried out by Dominican scholars of the *École biblique* at Jerusalem might well arouse the envy of Mlle Sagan. At Taizé and

[2] From a review of my book *The Waters of Marah* in the *New Statesman and Nation*, May 5, 1956.

[3] See A. G. Hebert: *Liturgy and Society*; E. B. Koenker: *The Liturgical Renaissance in the Roman Catholic Church*; Louis Bouyer: *The Spirit and Forms of Protestantism* and *Life and Liturgy*.

[4] Dr. Donald Soper, as reported in the *Methodist Recorder*, December 20, 1956.

[5] *Theology*, LXII, No. 463. January 1959, p. 28.

Pomeyrol, in France, and at Grandchamp, in Switzerland, there are flourishing religious communities founded by French and Swiss Calvinists.

Even in the Church of England, where reform has proceeded at a far more measured pace than in some other countries, one finds—particularly in the theological colleges and in a movement like *Parish and People*—something of the same blurring of traditional party-lines, the same sweeping away of familiar ecclesiastical shibboleths, that is so manifest elsewhere. The announcement of an evening communion service, or the use of ordinary bread at the eucharist, can no longer be looked upon as reliable signs of Low Church orthodoxy. Gone are the days when Anglo-Catholic clergymen could be distinguished with complete confidence from their Evangelical brethren by the position they adopted at the holy table. I suspect that the patronage secretary of a certain high personage, who used to attach an appropriate label to every aspirant to a benefice by means of a carefully worded questionnaire, may by this time have found it necessary to add several new categories of 'churchmanship' to his list. He was certainly perplexed to discover a church in the diocese of London which had no candles on the altar, but seven on the altar-pace; which combined evening communion with the use of incense; and where the celebrant adopted neither the 'eastward' *nor* the 'north-end' position. These are trivial matters in themselves, but they are symptomatic of the way in which the new reformation is breaking down the familiar boundaries of a divided Christendom.

Among Catholics and Protestants alike there is a new readiness to submit existing ecclesiastical institutions and customs to the judgment of scripture and early Christian tradition, a frank recognition of the disastrous consequences of much that happened in western Christendom during the Middle Ages, and of the fact that many of the most impressive achievements of the Age of Faith were founded upon a dangerously one-sided view of the Church's nature and mission. There is also a growing recognition of the extent to which the reformers of the sixteenth century were themselves the unconscious victims of late-medieval assumptions and inadequate historical knowledge. It is becoming apparent that many of the great theological controversies of the Reformation period are largely meaningless outside the context of medieval scholasticism: that a fresh approach to scripture and early Christian tradition reveals both sides to have been arguing from faulty premises.

One thing the twentieth-century reformation has established beyond question: it is no longer possible to regard the Middle Ages as the Christian era *par excellence*, or as providing a norm for ourselves to-day. On the contrary, it has become increasingly clear during the last twenty or thirty years that the centuries which saw the hardening of local and temporary breaches of communion between east and west into permanent and universal estrangement also witnessed a profound change of outlook affecting every part of western Christendom, a change that has left its mark on every aspect of Christian living and thinking.

For the early Church dogma and liturgy, theology and personal piety, were indissolubly linked. In the writings of the great Fathers of the fourth century, theology is not a system of philosophical ideas but a mystery to be lived. The sermons of St. Gregory Nazianzen elude the categories of a later age: categories which are the product of the fragmentation of Christian experience into so many watertight compartments. Here spirituality involves the intellect as well as the emotions, and theological thinking, no less than personal piety, is nourished by the common prayer of the Church. In such writings as these there is, in the words of Vladimir Lossky, 'no theology apart from experience; it is necessary to change, to become a new man. To know God one must draw near to him. No one who does not follow the path of union with God can be a theologian. The knowledge of God is necessarily the way of deification . . . theology is the repentance of the human person before the face of the living God.'[6] In the west during the Middle Ages theology tended increasingly to lose its vital links with scripture and the liturgy. Slowly but surely it was transformed into an arid scholasticism: a technical science more concerned with philosophical ideas than with experimental knowledge of the living God in liturgy and in personal spirituality. It became more and more a theology of concepts, assimilated first to one philosophical system, then to another. It took on the character of a science—albeit the Queen of sciences—a mystery in a new sense, with its own initiates: not the holy people of God but the clergy. Compare St. Anselm's treatise *Why God became Man* with St. Athanasius' little book *On the Incarnation of the Word of God* and you can see the way in which the horizons have contracted, the links have been dissolved. The very character of theology has changed.

[6] *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church*. London, J. Clarke. 1957, p. 39.
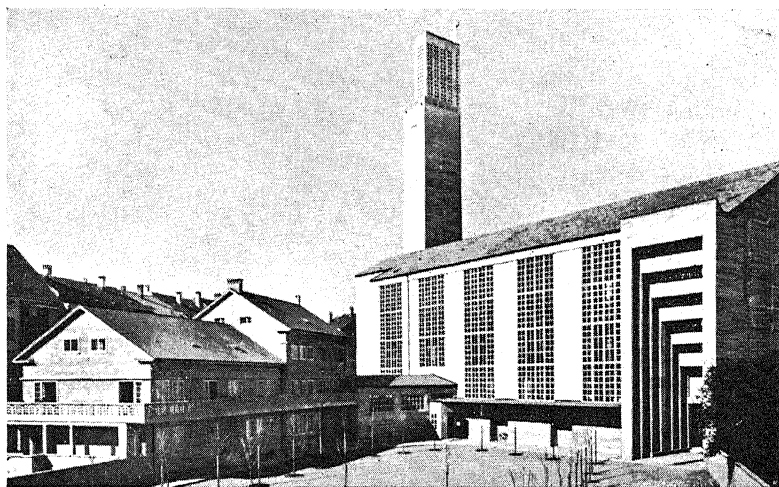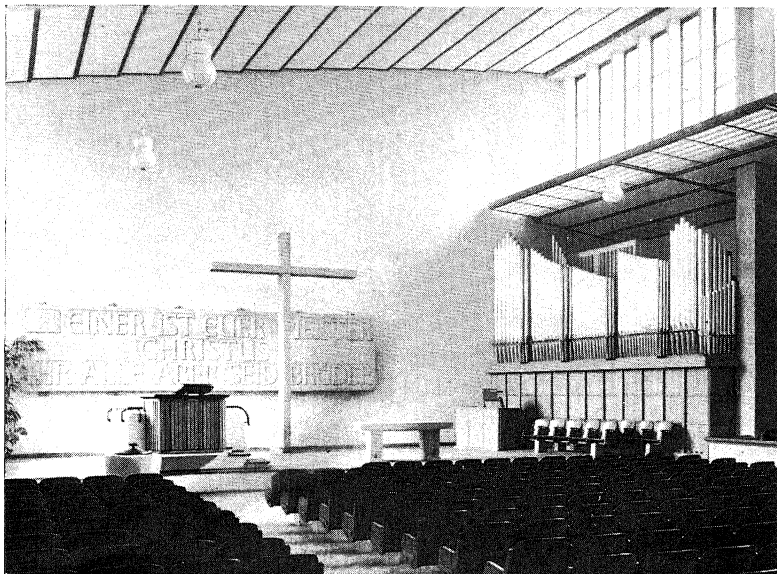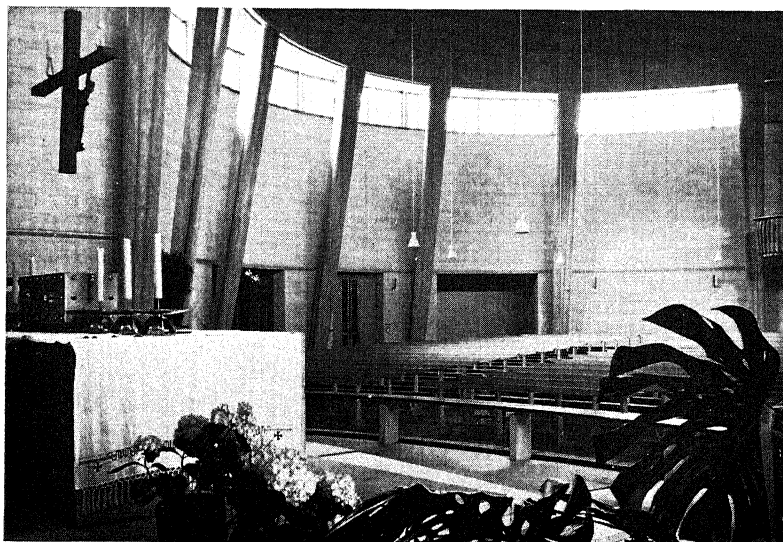
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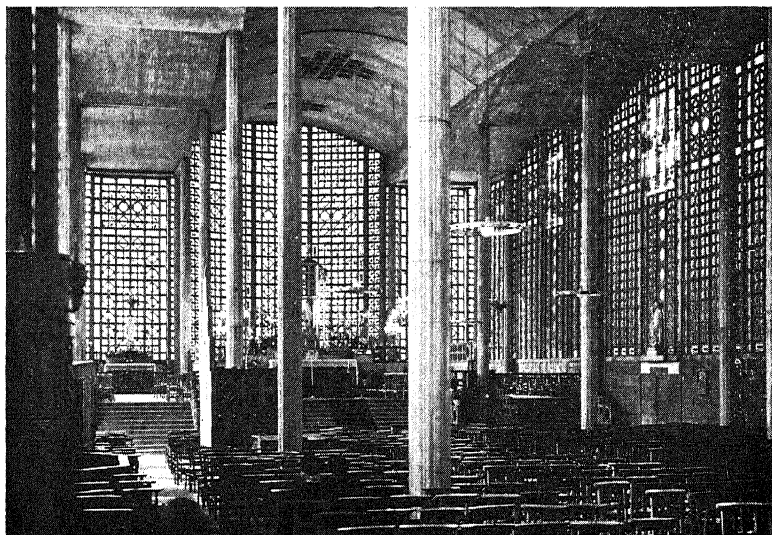
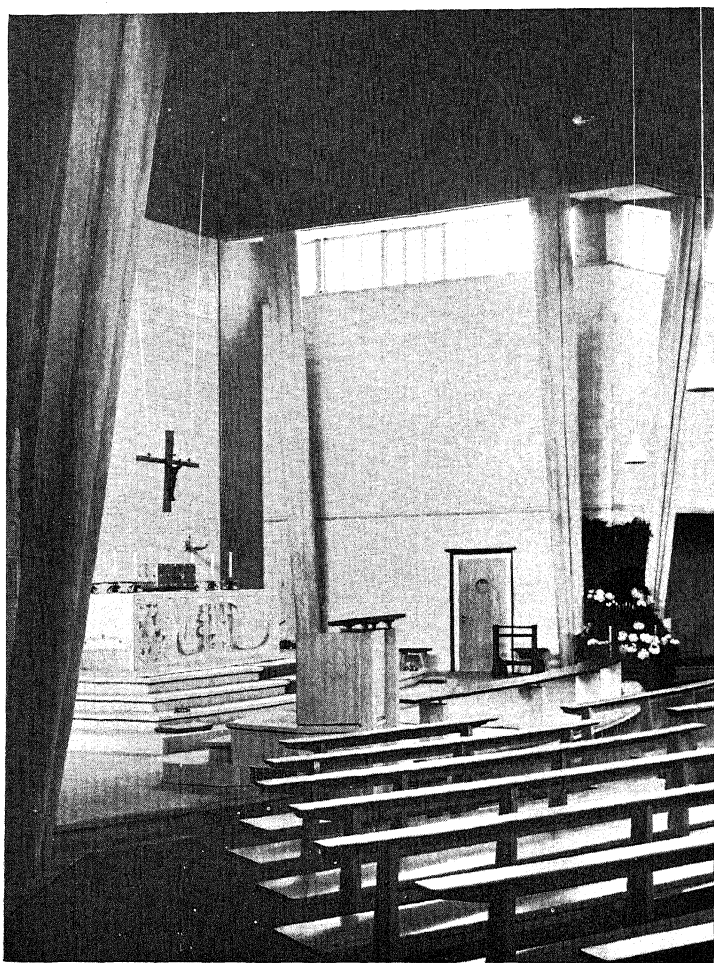3　Notre-Dame du Raincy
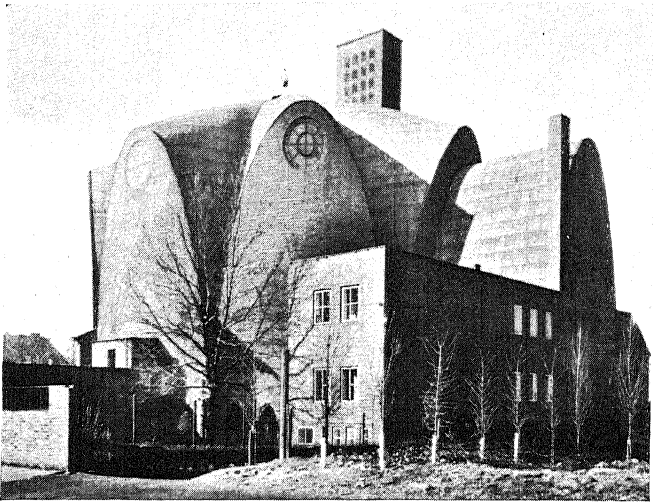
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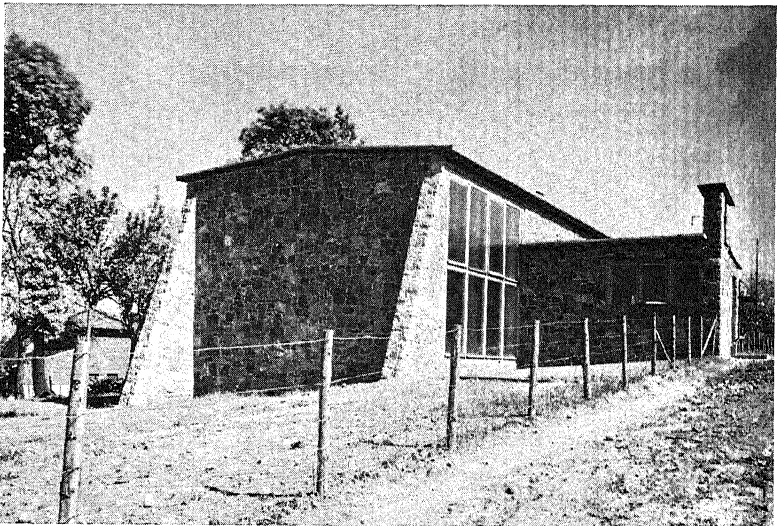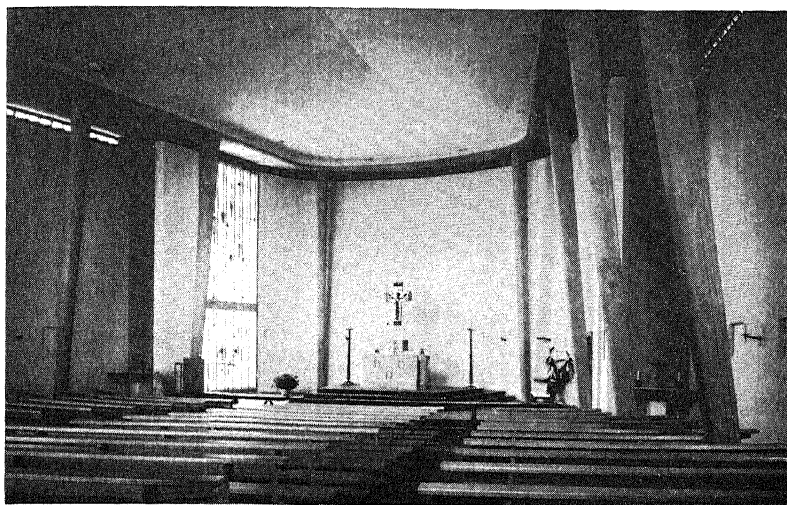

5   Chapel at Leversbach
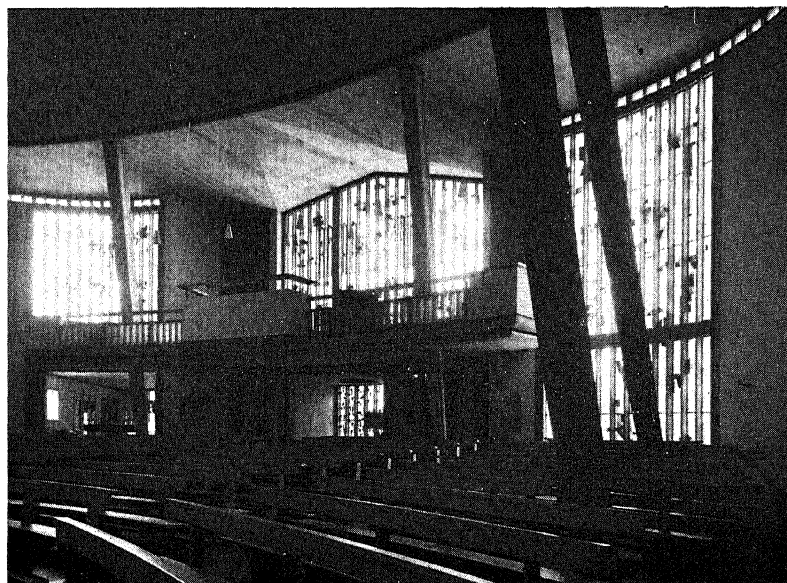
6   Reformed church at Zürich–Altstetten

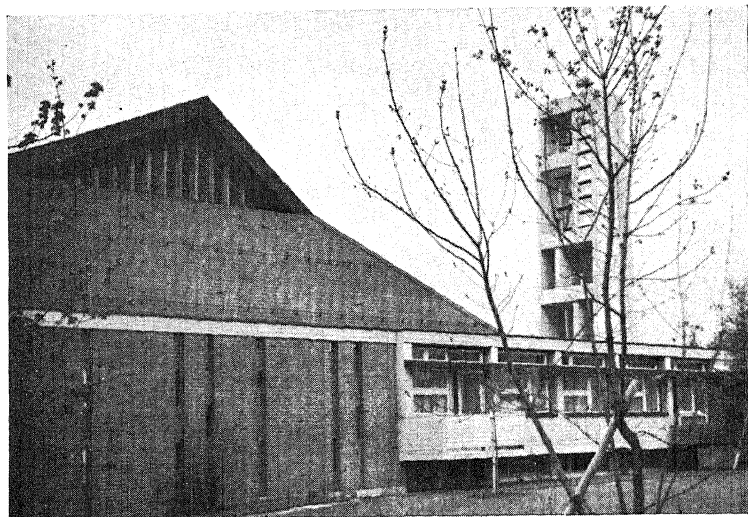7   SS. Felix and Regula, Zürich

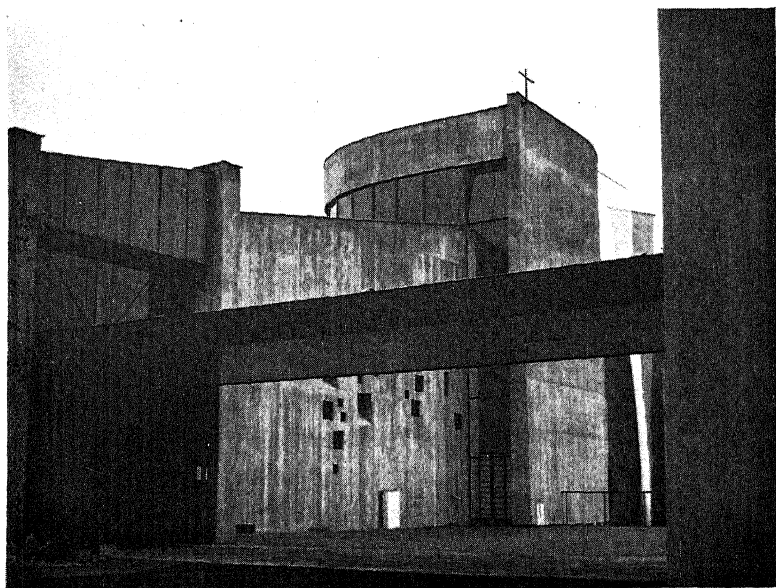8   SS. Felix and Regula, Zürich

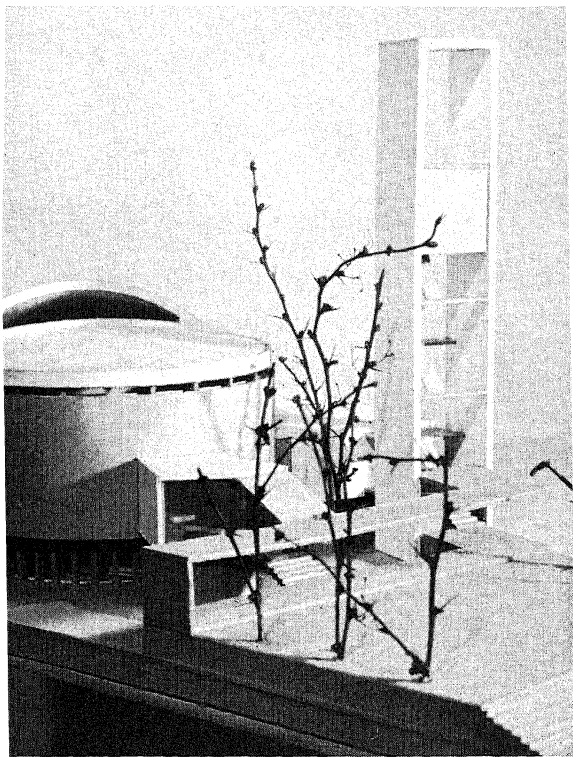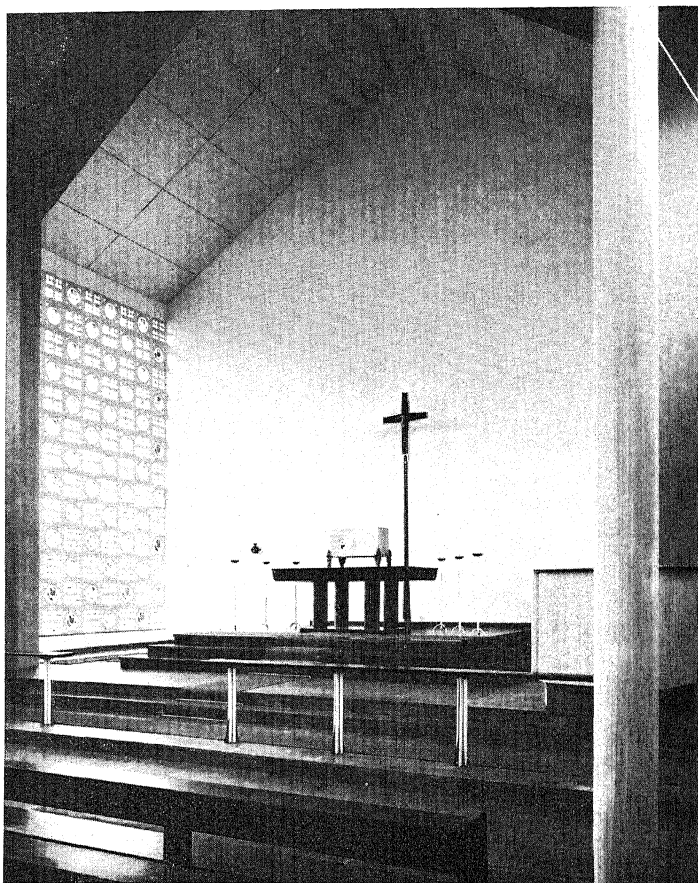9 and 10   Bruderklausenkirche, Gerlafingen

11   St. Thomas, Basle

12   Bruderklausenkirche, Birsfelden

13　Project for a church at Suarce, near Belfort

14 St. Elisabeth, Cologne-Mülheim

Closely bound up with this transformation of theology, there is, in the words of a Roman Catholic theologian, 'the slow but continuous disintegration of sound liturgical thinking which took place during the Middle Ages'.[7] The prayer of the Church became formalised and clericalised. It was expounded in novel and fantastic ways which betray a profound misunderstanding of the very nature of the liturgy and of its place in the life of the Church and the individual Christian. There was a growing divorce between the heart and the intellect, dogma and liturgy, theology and piety. Popular devotion, no longer nourished by a liturgy which was celebrated in an unknown tongue by professional 'experts', and cut off from its biblical roots, developed strange and novel forms. It became increasingly subjective and sentimental; more and more concerned with the suffering humanity of Christ. The paschal mystery gave place to a contemplation of the passion. The celebration of the liturgy, so far as the ordinary layman was concerned, became little more than an opportunity for mental prayer: for 'seeing' and 'thinking' rather than 'doing'. The mystery of the Holy Trinity was relegated to the sphere of philosophical abstractions. Recent editions of certain Cistercian writers of the twelfth century have emphasised the revolution which took place in western spirituality at about this period. A very similar development can be traced in the field of Christian imagery. Sacred art, in the true sense, slowly degenerated into 'religious' art. Contemplation gave place to æstheticism. The Christ of Bourges is no longer the cosmic Christ who dominates the great tympanum at Vezelay. We have passed from the realm of symbolism to that of anecdote.

Underlying these changes there is a profound transformation of the liturgy itself and the manner of its celebration. For the early Church, the eucharist, which is the heart of the liturgy, was, in the words of Dom Gregory Dix, 'primarily an *action* . . . and this action was *corporate*, the united joint action of the whole Church and not of the celebrant only. The prayer which the celebrant "said" was not the predominant thing in the rite. It took its place alongside the "special liturgies" of each of the other "orders", as one essential in the corporate worshipful act of the whole Church.'[8] The eucharist was regarded not as something 'said' by a priest on behalf of the people of God but as the common act of the whole body of Christ, every member of which had his appropriate function within the setting of the whole.

[7] Louis Bouyer: *Life & Liturgy*. Sheed & Ward, 1956, p. 41.
[8] *The Shape of the Liturgy*. Dacre Press, 1945, p. 15.

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'In the early Church', says Father Hebert, 'the deliberate effort was made to divide up the functions of worship among as many people as possible. The bishop was when possible the celebrant, and was surrounded by his priests, who . . . concelebrated with him; the deacons, headed by the archdeacon, and the sub-deacons had their share in the reading of the lessons and the ceremonial of the altar; chanters and choir, acolytes and doorkeepers all had their place; the people too had their share in the action, in the offering of the gifts and the kiss of peace and the communion.'[9]

This primitive understanding of the eucharist, as a communal action in which all the different orders of the *ecclesia* have their proper liturgy or service to perform, was reflected in the layout of the first buildings specially erected for public worship. The essential features of a type of plan which has at least as great a right to be regarded as 'traditional' as the typical layout of the fourteenth century can still be studied in a church such as the basilica of St. Clement, in Rome—a twelfth-century church which preserves the basic arrangements of a far older building. The 'eucharistic room' itself consisted of a rectangular hall with an apse at one end. The altar stood beneath a canopy or ciborium well forward from the east end of the church, and behind it in the apse were the seats for the bishop and his presbyters. During the first part of the eucharistic liturgy—the *synaxis* or ministry of the word—the ministers occupied these seats in the apse, and the bishop preached from his *edra* or throne. When they came to the altar for the offering of the gifts, and the bread and wine were brought up by the laity and placed on the holy table by the deacons, the bishop and his concelebrating presbyters faced the people across the altar. In the centre of the church, and adjoining the sanctuary, or presbytery as it was formerly known, was an enclosure defined by low *cancelli* or balustrades which was the place for the singers, the *schola cantorum*. The lessons were read from one or sometimes two *ambos* or pulpits which projected from this enclosure. Such a plan embodies a thoroughly biblical understanding of the Church and its worship. It expresses the fact that the eucharist is the act of the whole priestly community. The holy table is not unduly separated from the holy people of God who are themselves *corpus Christi*, the mystical body of Christ; it is manifestly the Lord's table round which the Church gathers for the eucharistic feast.

During the Dark Ages the western liturgy gradually lost its character

[9] *Liturgy and Society*. Faber & Faber, 1935, p. 75.

as a corporate action. As the Church moved out from the cities it was no longer possible for the bishop to be the celebrant at the Sunday eucharist of the diocese. The presbyter, who was originally merely his deputy, came to be regarded as the normal celebrant at the liturgy. The laity slowly but surely became mere spectators instead of participants in a communal act. They rarely communicated; they soon lost all part in the offering of the holy gifts. By the later Middle Ages, though traces of the older conception of the eucharist were preserved in the ceremonial of the high mass, particularly when the bishop celebrated, the *normal* type of celebration had come to be one at which a single presbyter, assisted by a server, 'said' mass on behalf of the community. The old diversity of functions virtually disappeared, along with the practice of concelebration. From the point of view of the ordinary Christian, the mass had become a wonderful and 'mysterious' cere- mony, performed on his behalf by professional ministers, which he 'saw' from afar. He had lost all sense of participating in a corporate action. *His* part was to occupy himself with 'devotions' which were entirely unrelated to what was taking place in the sanctuary, and to gaze in awe and adoration when the bell rang and the priest raised on high the consecrated host. In the low mass—the forerunner of the 'simple said service' of later Anglican tradition—seeing has taken the place of doing. The focus of attention has shifted from offering and communion to the elevation.

This whole process of development, from the communal liturgy of the fourth century to the low mass of the fourteenth,[10] is mirrored in the setting of the liturgy. The ministers relinquished their traditional position in the apse and turned their backs to the people. The bishop's throne was brought round from behind the holy table to a place between it and the congregation. Except on the comparatively rare occasions when the bishop presided at the eucharist, the whole of the *synaxis* was read by the celebrant from the altar itself. The altar was pushed back against the east wall of the church. By the fourteenth century this had become its normal position. The importance of the clergy in the medieval polity, and the new conception of the eucharist as some- thing said by a priest in virtue of his order, in isolation from the cor- porate offering of the whole Christian community, is reflected in the proliferation of subsidiary altars for 'private' masses within the eucha- ristic room itself. Finally, the adoption for the parish church of the

[10] See bibliography for references to books in which this development is described more fully than is possible here.

'two-room' plan developed for monastic use, with one room (the chancel) for the clergy and another (the nave) for the laity, separated by a screen, gave us the type of layout which was arbitrarily selected by the architects of the Gothic Revival as the only 'correct' plan, and which has since come to be accepted by most people in this country as the normal or traditional arrangement of a church. What is still *not* realised by most people is the fact that while the late-medieval plan was admirably functional in the context of the clericalised society and liturgy of its day, it reflects an entirely different understanding of the Church from that which informs the church buildings of an earlier age. It is the product of a theological and liturgical revolution.

One of the most serious consequences of this revolution was the sharpening of the distinction between clergyman and layman. In the fourth century we find a theological distinction of functions within the body of Christ. The bishop, the presbyter, the deacon and the ordinary Christian all have their special 'liturgy' both in and out of church. The *ecclesia* is an organic body, hierarchical in its structure. By the later Middle Ages the Church has become conterminous with society as a whole. The old distinction of function has been largely superseded by the sociological categories of clerk and layman. The holy people of God have lost all sense of active participation in the priestly and redemptive mission of the Church; they have lapsed into the psychological proletarianism that is still the greatest weakness of our church life to-day. The rise of clericalism is more and more widely recognised as being one of the gravest symptoms of that medieval distortion of Christian truth which underlies all our later divisions and controversies. The very words *layman* and *laity* have been severed from their biblical roots and have acquired a purely negative sense. The layman is no longer one who, through the mysteries of baptism, confirmation and communion, has become a member of a priestly body, the *laos* of God. He is considered only in terms of what he is not, and what he cannot do. He has become one who is *not* an initiate but rather an outsider, a non-expert: in brief, one who is not a clergyman. Although we still read in the liturgy the great biblical passages in which the Church is compared to a spiritual house built of living stones, in which the *laos* of God is described as a royal priesthood, such language seems nowadays to bear little relation to the realities of our church life.

The western layman has come to accept the fact that his proper role in the liturgy is a passive one: to 'hear and receive' 'with meek heart and due reverence'. He goes to church to hear a service 'taken' by a

clergyman, assisted perhaps by a select body of men and women all dressed up to look as much like clergy as possible. As to his extra-liturgical ministry, that is circumscribed by the well-defined frontiers of what is commonly known as 'church-work': raising money, organising bazaars and jumble-sales, keeping the churchyard tidy, and perhaps running a youth-club or helping with the Sunday school. The classified table of hymns at the beginning of *Hymns Ancient and Modern* suggests that the only activity proper to the layman (apart from religious exercises such as alms-giving and self-questioning) is as a lay-helper or church worker. Admittedly there is a further group of hymns entitled *Work for God and the Welfare of Mankind*, but it affords little specific guidance as to the nature of the lay apostolate. The general drift of these hymns is summed up in some well-known verses by John Mason Neale, describing the virtues proper to bishops, priests and deacons respectively. Then comes the memorable couplet:

> And to their flocks, a lowly mind
> To hear and to obey.

These lines give a very fair picture of the general western view of the place of the layman in the Church.[11] Hearing and obeying—there is little else left to him of his priestly ministry. Excluded from any active role in the liturgy, deprived of his extra-liturgical apostolate, the layman is left to his religious exercises. How often one hears the expression 'a devout layman'! Piety, in the modern sense of the word, has become a hopelessly inadequate substitute for a ministry involving the whole man and embracing every legitimate field of human activity. But the Son of God did not take our nature upon him in order that, suitably attired in Elizabethan costume, we might sing sentimental religious poetry set to lugubrious Victorian chants; still less that we might be turned some into clergymen and some into church workers. The apostolic vision of a re-created universe, a new creation 'in Christ', has faded and grown dim. Religion has taken the place of faith. The black robe of the medieval clerk has ousted the baptismal alb as the vesture of the initiate.

Despite the sixteenth-century reformation, the Church of England still bears the marks of the theological and liturgical revolution which occurred in western Christendom during the course of the Middle

[11] In eastern Christendom the situation is rather different. It is significant that in the Orthodox Church the liturgy has never lost its communal character to the extent that it has in the west. See bibliography.

Ages. The work of Archbishop Cranmer and his associates was only a first step along the path of reform, and their work has still to be completed. While in some ways, such as the translation of the text of the liturgy into the vernacular and the simplification of the daily office, they anticipated the liturgical reforms now taking place among continental Roman Catholics, the reformers were themselves deeply involved in the very errors which they sought to correct. Their restricted view of the scope of redemption, their pre-occupation with the death of Christ, reflect the same mental climate as Anselm's treatise on the Incarnation. The medieval conception of the relationship between clergy and laity is still taken for granted. The province of the layman is still to hear and to obey. The distinction between the *ecclesia docens* and the *ecclesia docta*—between the clergy, whose privilege it is to teach and instruct, and the laity, whose duty is meekly to attend—is not seriously challenged. The dilemma of the English reformers illustrates Alexis Khomiakov's celebrated dictum that all Protestants are crypto-Papists; that all the west knows but one datum, *a*; 'and whether it be preceded by the positive sign *plus*, as with the Romanists, or with the negative *minus*, as with the Protestants, the *a* remains the same'.[12]

The English communion service is in many ways an extreme example of late-medieval liturgical thinking. The suppression of everything in the canon of the mass except the words of institution, the introduction into the eucharistic liturgy of lengthy penitential devotions, the pre-occupation with the passion of Christ, to the virtual exclusion of any thought of his resurrection and ascension, or of his final glory in his whole mystical body, are all points which, as Bouyer points out, 'so far from being primitive practices, were actually the most recent and the most questionable accretions or modifications of the liturgy introduced during medieval times . . . the final development of the medieval over-emphasis on the suffering humanity of Christ, combined with the effects of the gradual disappearance of the true idea of the liturgy as sacramental'.[13] Gregory Dix was almost certainly right in his assertion that 'the lack of historical perspective, due to the medieval ignorance of history, was the greatest single contributory cause in the intellectual field of the sixteenth century break-up of western Christendom'.[14]

It was this lack of historical perspective, and of any critical appre-

[12] *Russia and the English Church*, ed. W. J. Birkbeck. London, 1895, p. 67.
[13] *Opus cit.*, p. 42.
[14] *Opus cit.*, p. 626.

ciation of liturgical development, that led the reformers into disastrous errors in their attempts to make the liturgy once again the *common* prayer of the people of God. They lacked the tools essential for carrying out the work they had undertaken. It was not sufficient that the people should *hear* the prayers that the priest was directed to read 'with a loud voice' in a language 'understanded of the people', though it was a step in the right direction. What was needed was a calling in question of the whole medieval conception of the eucharist as something said rather than done.

It is one of the tragedies of the sixteenth century that the English reformers took the low mass as the *norm* of eucharistic worship—though, considering the limitations of their knowledge of the early Church and the liturgical and devotional climate in which they had grown up, their error is readily understandable. As Dix points out: 'the first known edition of Justin Martyr was only issued in 1551, of the liturgy of St. James in 1560, of the Apostolic Constitutions in 1563. Such documents might have made both sides aware that they were arguing from much too narrow a basis in taking the medieval western tradition alone. But they did not appear until after the reformation had got under way. Passions were already inflamed; positions had been taken up and consecrated by the blood of martyrs on both sides. The new documents only provided weapons for the attack and defence of doctrines elaborated without reference to them.'[15] Despite the efforts made in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries to restore the liturgy to its proper place in the life of the Church and to re-assert its corporate character, the laity of the Church of England are still to a large extent mere hearers and spectators. The Church's mission in the contemporary world is still frustrated by clericalism and the attitudes that it has created, among clergy and laity alike. We still have to face the fundamental problem of restoring to the Christian layman his true priestly liturgy—both in and out of church—and of overcoming the psychological proletarianism that is part of the legacy of the Middle Ages. To all intents and purposes we are an unreformed Church. Our liturgy, despite its undeniable qualities, is only one among the many rites which 'stem from a Reformed tradition which has itself inadequately overcome the medievalism against which it first reacted'.[16]

[15] *Opus cit.*, p. 626.
[16] J. G. Davies: *An Experimental Liturgy.* Lutterworth Press, 1958, p. 7. A French Roman Catholic writer has recently remarked that, 'Vue de l'extérieur

There are many signs of a growing recognition that if the Church of England is to meet the challenge of a post-Christian environment, really radical reforms are necessary. A mere tinkering with antiquated machinery is useless. The recent memorandum issued by the official Liturgical Commission underlines, in its concluding paragraph, the really fundamental question of the doctrinal criteria of Anglican worship—and, by implication, of our church life in all its aspects. 'We should all agree', say the Commission, 'about the supremacy of scripture. . . . But are we committed to the exact doctrinal positions of Anglican reformers and revisers in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, as represented in the prayer books and formularies of those times? Or are we committed only to their general appeal to scripture, to the undivided Church and to reason? . . . Should we be prepared in fact to see the Book of Common Prayer growing and changing not only in accordance with "local colour and national culture" but also in accordance with fresh understandings of the eternal Gospel as they are made known by the work of scholars, the continuing life and worship of the Church, and the impact of the world around?'[17] Unless we are prepared to give an affirmative answer to this question there is little point in revising the Psalter or introducing offertory processions. The very possibility of true reform depends upon the frank recognition that the Book of Common Prayer, so far from being normative, is itself under judgment in the light of new theological, liturgical and historical insights.

This is a problem which has to be faced in any discussion of church architecture in this country. The authors of an important book which has exercised a considerable, and in many ways salutary, influence during the last ten years completely ignore the real challenge posed by the new reformation which is changing the face of western Christendom. They contend that 'what has been done since the Reformation will always be the most influential element in Anglican ecclesiology. . . . The Church of England has been and will continue to be profoundly affected by what it conceives to have been the practice of the primitive church, and also by its own medieval past; it has also felt the attraction, and will doubtless continue to do so, of the ecclesiology of the Counter-Reformation. But the buildings of the primitive church, the Middle

l'Église anglicane . . . donne l'impression de vivre toujours dans un climat de moyen âge et d'un moyen âge typiquement anglais.' (Maurice Villain: *Introduction a l'Oecuménisme*. Paris-Tournai, Casterman, 1958, p. 98.)

[17] *Prayer Book Revision in the Church of England*. S.P.C.K., 1957, p. 39.

Ages, or the Counter-Reformation, were not planned for the services of the Prayer Book; consequently they can only be a very secondary source of inspiration in planning or re-arranging an Anglican church. The chief source must be our own past. . . .'[18] Such a view illustrates all too clearly the way in which 'the Anglican appeal to history' can easily become 'the appeal to Anglican history', which, as Humphrey Green has remarked, 'is quite another thing'.[19]

The classic appeal of the Church of England has been away from itself and its own past to scripture and antiquity: to the Old and New Testaments and to the catholic fathers and ancient bishops. If we are to be loyal to that appeal, we must be prepared to submit our own past —as well as that of other Christians—to the judgment of scripture and antiquity: the seventeenth century no less than the fourteenth.

Modern liturgical and historical scholarship has established beyond reasonable question that the Prayer Book, like other documents of its time, falls far short of the standards to which the Church of England professes to appeal. The English Reformation of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries is essentially provisional in character. To treat the 'solutions' of that period as normative is to rule out any possibility of carrying the work which was then begun a stage further. *No* reformation can ever be final or definitive; the Church is always under judgment. While local traditions are not lightly to be set aside, even in a divided Christendom in which all local traditions have been marked by controversy and separation, the theological and liturgical criteria which should govern the planning of a church are above all those of scripture and Christian antiquity. All local traditions—including our own—must be judged in the light of those criteria.

The revision of the Book of Common Prayer is only one part of the task of liturgical reform which confronts us to-day, and there would seem to be little prospect of rapid progress in this field. The transformation of the *setting* of the liturgy is another matter. Experiments which have been going on in college chapels and parish churches all over the country during the past decade have shown that, even within the framework of a rite which is admittedly far from satisfactory, the whole character of the liturgy can be transformed if the layout of the building in which it is celebrated is modified in accordance with new theological insights. Liturgical reform can well begin with the church building itself.

[18] Addleshaw and Etchells: *opus cit.*, p. 223.
[19] "Appealing to History", *Sobornost*. Series 3, No. 20, p. 431.

In a growing number of churches during the last few years the altar has been brought forward, away from the east end of the church, and the ministers face the people across the altar. Such an arrangement of the sanctuary has been restored not simply because it is more primitive but because it embodies, as the medieval layout does not, a biblical understanding of what the Church is and what it does when it assembles on the Lord's Day. The effect of such changes in the layout of a church can be quite remarkable; it has been compared to that of performing one of Shakespeare's plays on an Elizabethan stage. The physical and psychological barriers separating actor from spectator are broken down, and all are drawn into the action which is taking place. It is this kind of adaptation of the plan to modern needs which, far more than any concern with structual or aesthetic problems, points the way to a real *rapprochement* between liturgy and architecture.

If, however, one of the major obstacles which stand in the way of true reform is a tendency to treat the solutions of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries as final and definitive, another and perhaps more serious temptation that besets the would-be reformer to-day is the attempt to reproduce the outward forms of Christian antiquity: the temptation to re-create a patristic liturgy, or to build Roman basilicas decked out in 'contemporary' costume. Any attempt to appeal from a less perfect tradition to a more perfect runs the risk of antiquarianism. The art of the Benedictine abbey of Beuron is a salutary warning. While the liturgical movement must, as Louis Bouyer says, 'necessarily go back to the well-springs of tradition . . . it is always in danger of the fatal mistake of letting itself become hypnotised by such a return, and therefore of considering itself as merely . . . a restoration of what was done in the past'.[20]

The solution to the problem of planning a modern church will not be found merely by substituting a fourth-century layout for one of the fourteenth century. The basilica belongs to an age which was constrained by the limitations of stone and timber. To-day, thanks to new materials and structural systems, we have the means for creating spatial relationships incomparably more subtle and more expressive than those of the basilica. A modern church based on a basilican type of plan will probably be a far more satisfactory building for corporate worship than one which adopts a medieval layout, because the earlier type is informed by a more biblical understanding of the Church and its liturgy. If the problem of planning a modern church were simply one

[20] *Opus cit.,* p. 40.

of selection from a catalogue of historic types there would be a great deal to be said for turning to the fourth century. But, to quote Louis Bouyer again, 'It is one thing to single out for recognition a period in the history of the Church when theology, Christian art and the daily life of the Church all gave clear and full testimony to the essential nature of Christianity; and it is quite another thing to remodel the external aspects of the Church of to-day according to the external aspects of that same period.'[21]

All attempts to reproduce the outward forms of another age, however excellent the period chosen, are essentially misguided. A true *retour aux sources* is indeed a prerequisite for any renewal of church architecture to-day. But if we turn—as we must—to the age of the Fathers of the Church, it is in order that we may renew our own understanding of the great truths which were so strikingly embodied in the liturgy and the church buildings of that period. We have to lay hold on those truths and to make them our own. We have then to try to express these same truths in terms of the architecture of our own day. Structural steel and shell concrete have opened up possibilities undreamed of in earlier ages—possibilities that it would be ridiculous to ignore. The liturgical movement is concerned not with the past but with the present—though it springs from a recognition of the fact that the solution of many of our immediate problems demands a return to sources of Christian tradition. Its dominant notes are missionary and pastoral rather than antiquarian or archæological. If we study the Fathers of the Church it is not because we desire to substitute the fourth century for the fourteenth as a kind of golden age, which is to be faithfully reproduced in all its details. In the words of a great and neglected theologian of the last century: 'We have to do for our day what they did for their day. We cannot do our work merely by reproducing theirs, but we must reproduce the old truth . . . in such form as suits . . . the mental characteristics of modern thought. . . . We must see that we are living in the brightness which illuminated the intelligence of the early ages before the Church was secularised. It is not enough for us to know what was fixed as the orthodox expression; we must have our minds trained affectionately in the orthodox consciousness, which is deeper and larger than the expression.'[22]

[21] *Opus cit.*, p. 21.
[22] Richard Meux Benson: *The Followers of the Lamb*. London, 1900, p. 12.

3. *Domus Ecclesiæ*

THE church building is the house of the Church, in the biblical sense of that word; the house of the people who are themselves the temple of the living God, the habitation of the Spirit; a spiritual house built of living stones. It has no meaning apart from the community which it serves. It is first and foremost a building in which the people of God meet to *do* certain things: to perform the various communal activities known collectively as liturgy, or public service. This is what a church is for. It is a building for corporate worship; above all, a room for the eucharistic assembly. Reduced to its bare essentials, it is a building to house a congregation gathered round an altar.

Many of the most satisfactory churches which men have ever made are the humble, anonymous structures which seek to do no more than fulfil this basic functional requirement. As Sir Ninian Comper has written, 'We can learn a lesson from the simplest of our medieval churches whose fabrics were little more than a barn—hardly so fine a barn as barns then were—but which became glorious by beautiful workmanship within. To so low and plain a fabric a worthy altar has only to be added and the white-washed barn will have an atmosphere of prayer and love. . . .'[1] Far better the white-washed barn which derives its purpose from a worthy altar, set in the right place, than the pretentious structure, lavishly adorned within and without with sculpture, mosaic, painting and stained-glass, which ignores its own fundamental *raison d'être* and that of the *ecclesia* whose house it is. No romantic aspiration to build a shrine to the glory of God can take the place of a firm grasp of the first and basic function of the *domus ecclesiæ* as a place for the corporate worship of the local Christian community.

Liturgy is the very heart of the Church's life. It is, says Marvin Halverson, 'the Church's primary function . . . it sums up all the activities and the meaning of the Church. . . . While personal devotion

[1] *Of the Atmosphere of a Church.* Sheldon Press, 1947, p. 31.

and private worship are not denied, worship in the Christian community is a communal act. Therefore a church building must be designed not for the worship of the individual alone with the Alone, but for a corporate fellowship called to a purpose in the world. The building should be shaped by worship, and not worship by architecture.'[2] The function of a Christian church is essentially liturgical. The whole structure, no less than the altar, the font or the chalice, is an instrument of worship. Whereas for the Jew the temple constituted the worship, for the Christian it is the worship that constitutes the church. The Old Testament image of the temple has found its fulfilment in the community which is itself God's building. A permanent structure set apart for the corporate worship of the people of God is not strictly essential to the Church's mission, though the worship of those who are 'in Christ' remains visible and local. For nearly three centuries 'the church' referred exclusively to a community, not a building; the liturgy was commonly celebrated in a domestic setting, in the houses of those who were themselves the *ecclesia* of God. In more recent times countless Christians have learned to enter afresh into the meaning of what it is to be the Church through worshipping together in prison-camps, in the kitchens of worker-priests' lodgings, and in the house-churches of dormitory suburbs.

To assert that the primary function of a Christian church is to convert the visitor into a worshipper is to ignore the building's fundamental *raison d'être* while giving undue prominence to something that is essentially incidental and derivative. The purpose of a church is not to provide the casual visitor with a 'worship experience', or to provoke an æsthetic *frisson*. If we are in little danger to-day of turning the Church's house of prayer into a den of thieves, we have come perilously close to making it a historic monument, a possession of high cultural and æsthetic interest, or a pavilion of religious art; a building to be visited and appreciated, rather than a place for the corporate worship of the living God. The first purpose of building a church is a purely practical one; to provide a shelter for the liturgical assembly of a particular Christian community.

Yet the church building is also *domus Dei*. If its primary function is to provide a convenient space for the people of God to celebrate the liturgy, it is also an embodiment, a visible manifestation, of what the Church is and believes. In the words of St. Thomas Aquinas, *domus ecclesiam significat*—the church building is itself an image of the mystical

[2] *Opus cit.*, p. 4.

body of Christ. In the last resort it is impossible to consider either of these functions in isolation from the other. But again it is a matter of first things first. A church will take on the nature of a symbol only in so far as its plan and structure are informed by a genuine understanding of the nature of the Christian community and its liturgy. The first essential is that the altar should be in the right place; that the relationship between the ministers at the altar and the whole body of the faithful, as well as between the font, the table of sacrifice and the place for the proclamation of the word, should manifest the true character of the Church as a eucharistic community, and of the liturgy as a communal service in which *all* are active participants. If these conditions are fulfilled, if the layout of the church is governed by an adequate theological programme, and if the building is an honest piece of construction, free from sham and irrelevant ornament, then its symbolic aspect can be left to take care of itself. It is worse than useless to worry about the more esoteric aspects of Christian symbolism until we have learned again to create churches which *work* as buildings for corporate worship.

In this sense, and without in any way denying the secondary and symbolic function of the *domus ecclesiæ*, the first problem that confronts us to-day is one of *planning for liturgy*. I believe John Betjeman is entirely right in his assertion that the first consideration of a modern architect should be the adaptation of the plan of a church to contemporary needs. It is perhaps scarcely necessary to add that contemporary planning needs involve far more than the provision of adequate vestry and lavatory accommodation, crying-rooms and car-parks. What is important is that the plan should be related to the theological thinking and liturgical practice of our own time—not to that of another century. This involves a far more serious attempt than has yet been made, in this country at least, to bring architecture and theology into communication with each other. It is impossible to design a church which will meet the needs of the second half of the twentieth century so long as we confine ourselves to questions of style, structural systems, building materials and aesthetics, and ignore the momentous developments which have been taking place during the last fifty years in the Church's understanding of itself, its worship and its function in the contemporary world. The fundamental irrelevance of most of our new churches is due to a 'failure to connect'. We have failed to realise the urgent need for bridging the chasm that separates the theologian and the liturgist from the architect and the artist. We have accepted uncritically a conventional layout which implies, for example, a view of the

laity hopelessly at variance with modern biblical scholarship, and which would be regarded as seriously defective by contemporary theologians —whatever their denominational allegiance. The majority of our post-war churches are anachronistic—whether they are built in a contemporary idiom or not—because their layout embodies a conception of the Church and its worship which is essentially medieval. The fact that many of them exploit the possibilities of new structural methods and materials does not make them modern churches.

A comparison may serve to make the point clear. Superficially, at least, the three recently completed churches designed by the architect of the new Coventry cathedral for housing estates in that city are modern buildings. The architect has eschewed the familiar ecclesiastical clichés. The three churches make full use of modern methods of standardisation, of concrete and of glass. So far as style and structural integrity are concerned, they provide a refreshing contrast to the revivalist churches which are still being erected all over the British Isles. Yet from the point of view of planning and spatial organisation these churches are anachronistic. They are entirely unrelated to the new insights of the theologian and the liturgist.

By contrast, the new church of St. Swithun, at Kennington, near Oxford, is at first glance no more than a further depressing example of the Church's inability to speak to the contemporary world in the language of the living. Stylistically it looks back to the eighteenth century. In other ways, however, this is a far more modern church than the three buildings at Coventry. It rejects the conventional nineteenth-century layout. Its cruciform plan, with a central altar and the choir in the eastern arm, represents a deliberate attempt to give architectural expression to a contemporary understanding of the Church as an organic community. The work of the architect has been informed by that of the theologian. At Kennington the parish priest was concerned not merely to build a church which was superficially contemporary. He wanted a building which would help the local congregation to realise more fully its true character and purpose when it assembled for the liturgy. In collaboration with the architect, he attempted, in his own words, 'to get back behind medieval practice; and to interpret the ideas and intentions behind the sixteenth-century reformers' direction to bring the altar into the midst of the people'; he was anxious to build a church which was itself a symbol of the mystical body of Christ as a eucharistic community. The aim has been only partially realised. The building which has been the outcome of this rethinking of the plan is

undistinguished and can scarcely be described as a modern church without serious qualifications. Yet, for all its revivalist character, it points the way to the kind of dialogue between theologian and architect which is a prerequisite of a renewal of church architecture in this country. It is a step in the right direction. The fundamental problem has at least been faced and its character recognised.

One of the ironies of the present situation in the field of church building is that 'the classic principles of Anglican worship' are being given far more convincing architectural expression in modern Roman Catholic churches on the Continent than in our own new churches. If one wishes to study outstanding examples of churches planned with the aim of enabling the whole body of the faithful not merely to be present at the liturgy, but also to realise to the full their common priesthood and to play an active part in the Church's worship, one will be well advised to go to Cologne, Düsseldorf, Basle or the French diocese of Besançon, rather than to London, Coventry or the New Towns. The free-standing altar, designed to permit celebration facing the people, and the one-room plan based on the square, the circle and the ellipse, with the congregation gathered around the holy table, though widespread on the Continent, are still comparatively rare on this side of the Channel.

The explanation is not hard to discover. It is not simply that the liturgical movement is far more developed abroad than in this country, or that many French and German Roman Catholic theologians are to be found in the *avant-garde* of the new reformation. There is plenty of sound and radical theological thinking going on in the Church of England. The explanation lies in what I have called our failure to connect. Whereas on the Continent church architecture has been in deep communication with theology and liturgy since the early 'twenties, in this country it has been carried on in an æsthetic vacuum and treated as something quite peripheral to the Church's pastoral and missionary task: the preserve of antiquarians, archdeacons, secretaries of boards of finance and church-furnishers. Though ample resources of fresh thinking have been available, they have not been brought to bear on the design of our new churches. Those who have been building have held little converse with those who have been theologising or liturgising. The results have been disastrous. Lacking the brief which only the theologian and the liturgist could supply, architects have experimented with untheological ideas, and for want of any guidance as to fundamental principles have been forced to rely

15   Franciscan church at Cologne
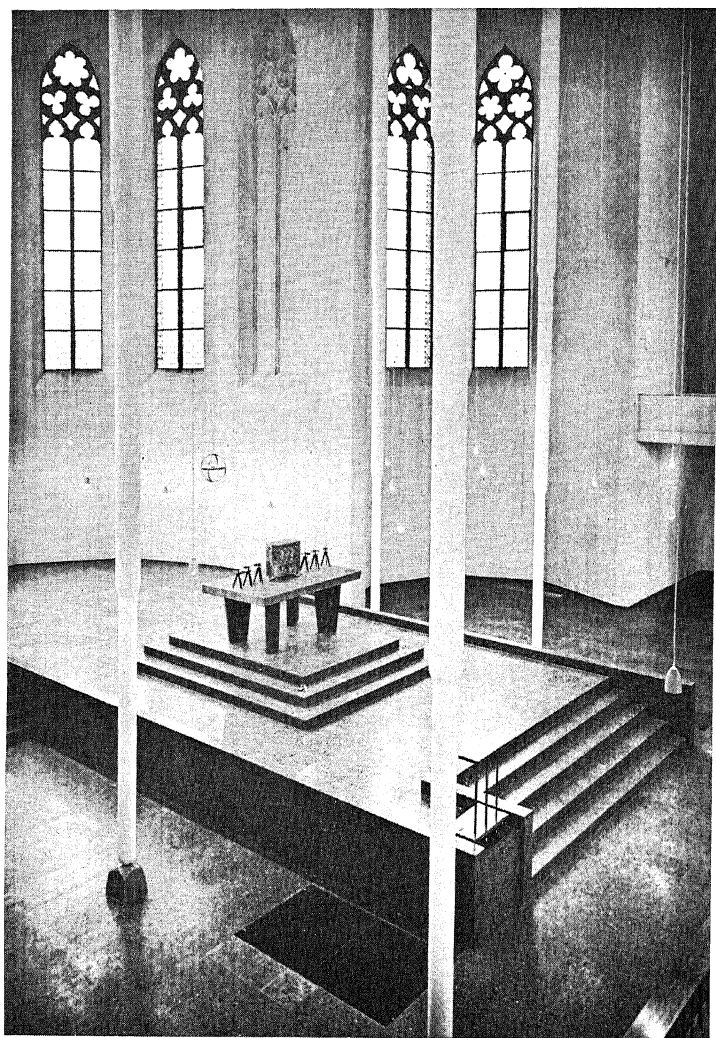
16   St. Englebert, Mülheim-Ruhr
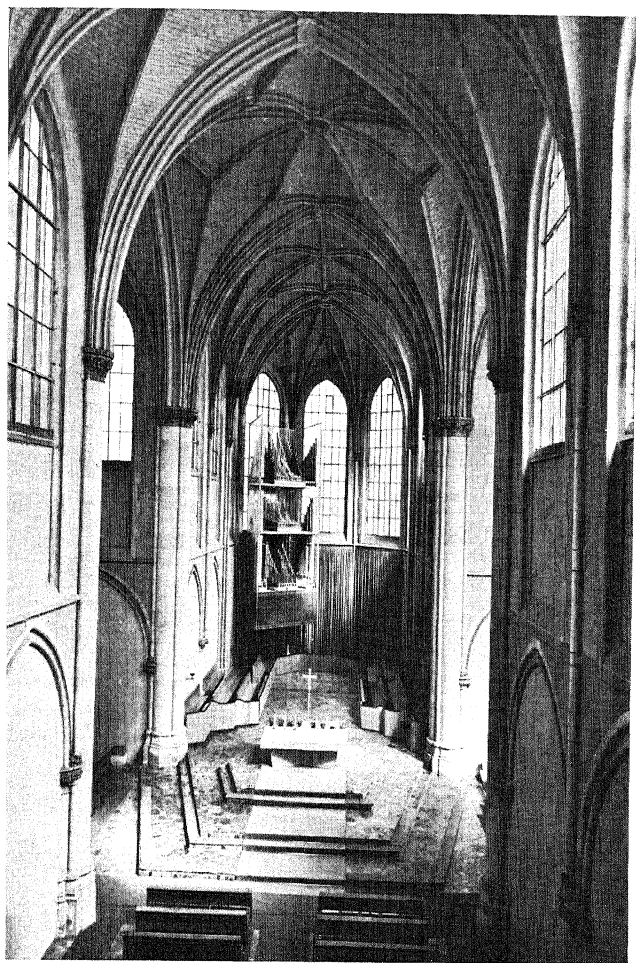
17 Church of the Conception of our Lady, Düsseldorf
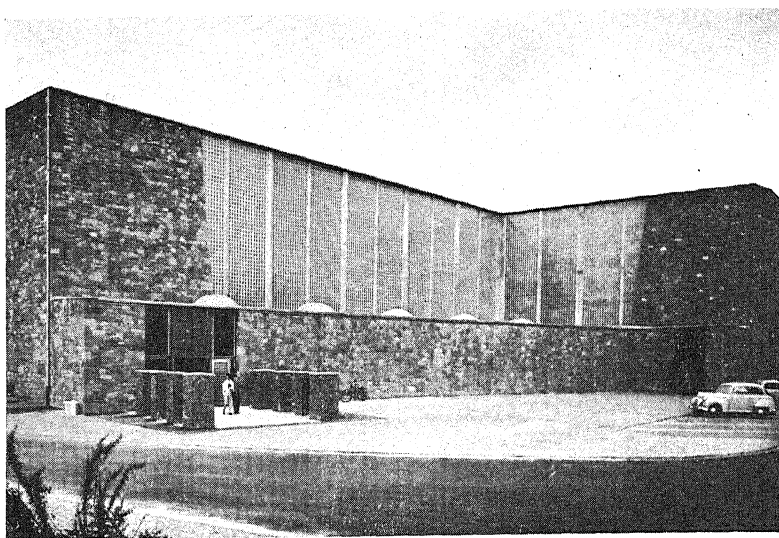
18 and 19   St. Anna, Düren
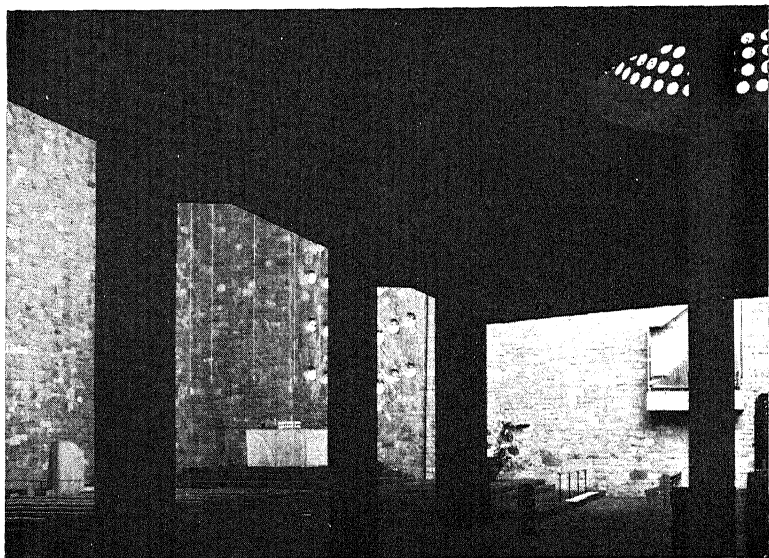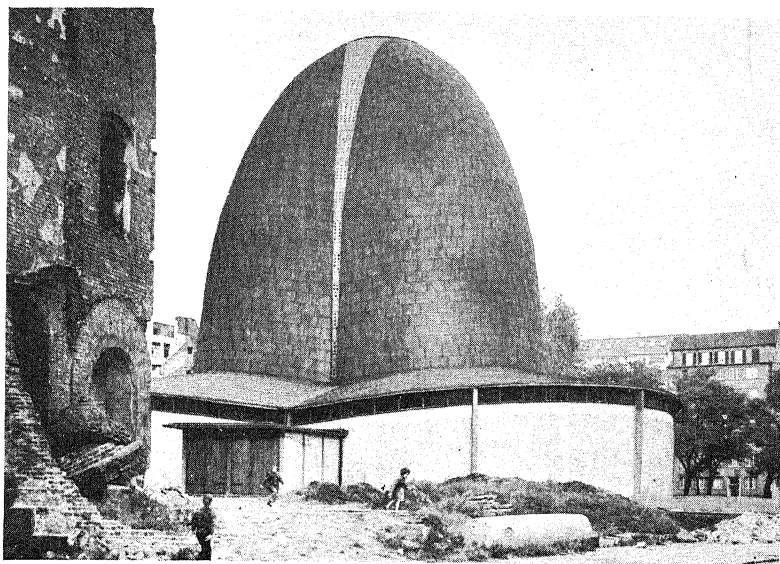
20   St. Rochus, Düsseldorf

21   St. Albert, Saarbrücken
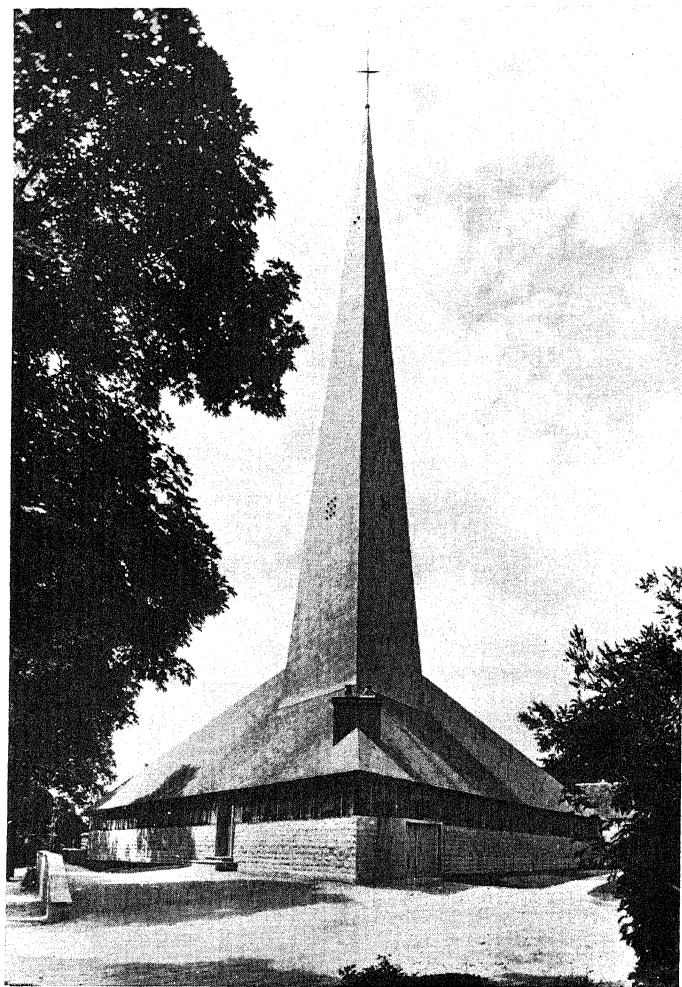
22   St. Agnes, Fontaine-les-Grès, near Troyes
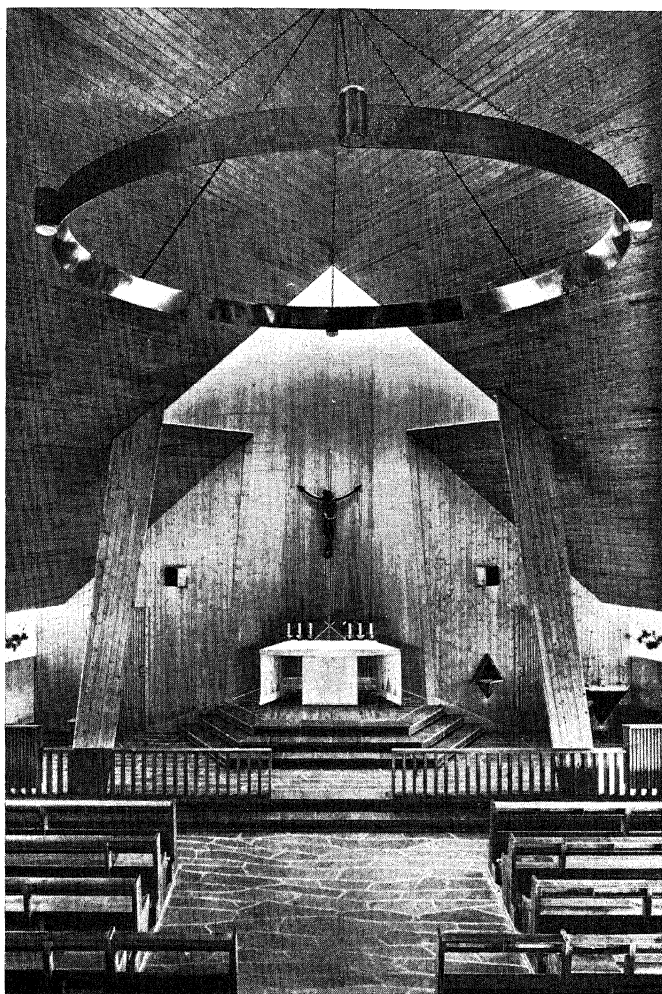
23   St. Agnes, Fontaine-les-Grès, near Troyes
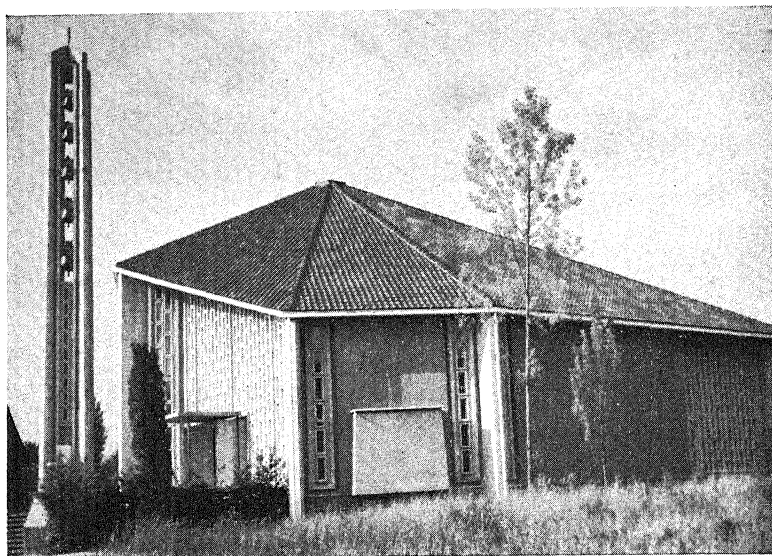
24　Bruderklausenkirche, Oberwil–Zug
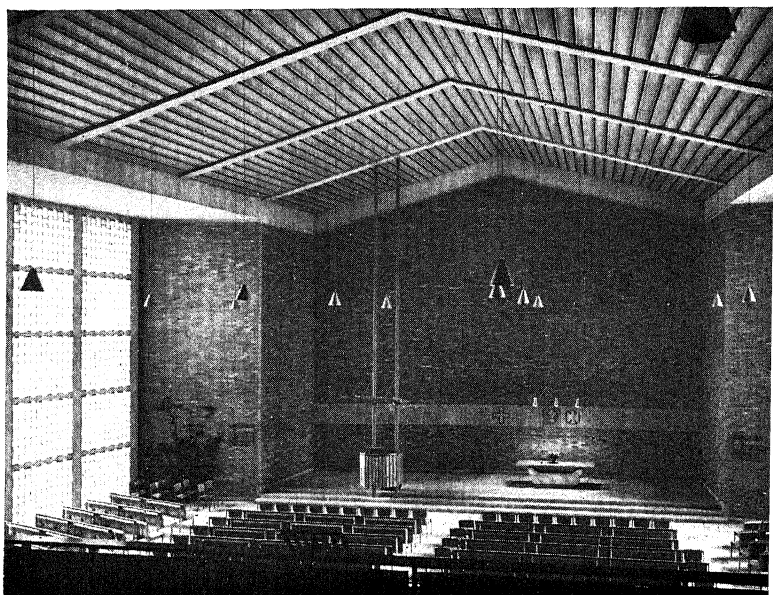
25　Bullingerkirche, Zürich

upon fashionable clichés culled from the architectural periodicals, or from a Scandinavian holiday, to give their churches a superficial modernity.

On the Continent, on the other hand, the potentialities of a living architecture as an instrument for the renewal of the whole life of the Church were widely recognised, even during the years immediately following the First World War. In Germany a group of clergy, architects and artists, which included Ildefons Herwegen, Abbot of the Benedictine monastery of Maria Laach and one of the greatest theologians of the liturgical movement, and Romano Guardini, was formed as long ago as 1922 to study the basic principles of modern church design. The Swiss *Societas S. Lucae* was founded a few years later with a similar purpose. Rudolf Schwarz and Dominikus Böhm, whose churches at Aachen and Cologne-Riehl are among the earliest convincing examples of modern architecture as an instrument of liturgy, were both deeply involved in the programme of research and experiment which was carried out in Germany between the wars.

The results of this work can be seen in a remarkable document, published in 1946 by the German Liturgical Commission, entitled *Directives for the Shaping of the House of God, according to the Spirit of the Roman Liturgy*.[3] It reveals a profound awareness of the function of the church building; it embodies the best biblical, patristic and liturgical thought of its day, and combines a firm grasp of tradition with a full understanding of the need for the unchangeable truths of the faith to find expression in a living language. When the German Church set about its tremendous task of rebuilding in the late 'forties and early 'fifties, these directives provided the architects and clergy concerned with a concise statement of liturgical principles and their architectural application such as is still unknown in this country. The results can be seen to-day in every city of western Germany. A comparison between these German directives and the brief which was supplied to the architects who took part in the Coventry cathedral competition underlines the reasons for the Church of England's failure to seize an opportunity which was exploited to the full in the bombed cities of the Rhineland.

A more recent example of collaboration between theologians and architects in the formulation of a programme for church building is the document entitled *Diocesan Building Directives*, issued by the Liturgical Commission of the Roman Catholic diocese of Superior,

[3] See Bibliography.

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Wisconsin, in the United States, in 1957.[4] This takes as its starting point the first of the five main principles laid down in the German directives, and applies it to the specific problems which the building of a church involves. The American brief is the work of a group consisting of architects, theologians, liturgists, an artist, a canonist and a pastor; it is intended 'to fill the real need for a practical, concise statement of liturgical principle . . . and to assist both pastor and architect in their collaboration in the important work of building a church'. The chairman of the commission has emphasised that the directives are no more than a small beginning, and that they will be revised and amplified in the light of further study and practical experience.

This is an approach which has already justified itself to the full in the Hertfordshire school programme. Its application to the problems of church design promises to be no less fruitful. The main principles of the American directives have already been embodied in the church of St. Antony, Superior, which is now in process of construction and which seems likely to prove one of the few really satisfactory churches built in the United States since the war. While the scope of both these important examples of functional analysis is, of course, limited to churches built for liturgical worship in accordance with the Roman rite, both are instinct with the spirit of the Bible and of Christian antiquity, and most of the principles laid down are no less valid for Anglican churches. They provide a convenient framework within which to consider some of the crucial problems which the design of a modern church involves.

First, we have a statement of the fundamental purpose of the house of the Church: 'A church is a sacred building dedicated to divine worship. . . . The supreme purpose of the church is to serve the sacred liturgy. The church is the home of the risen Christ who, under sacramental sign and sacred rite, continues his redemptive work among us. . . . In this sacred edifice the whole Christ, Head and members, offers perfect worship to the Father in heaven. . . . The baptised laity, the ordained ministers of the altar, and the priest form this one body of which the visible church is the unique symbol.' The German directives then proceed to analyse the various activities for which the church exists, and to state them in the order of their importance within the whole liturgical pattern: 'The Christian church. . . is a place where the people assemble to celebrate the re-presentation of the redeeming

[4] The text is published in the American periodical *Liturgical Arts*, Vol. XXVI, pp. 7–9 and 43–44.

sacrifice of our Lord, to partake of the fruits of Christ's redeeming sacrifice in the holy sacraments, to hear the preaching of the word of God... to engage in various non-liturgical devotions.' All these different functions must be provided for. To stress the fact that the church is first and foremost a place for the eucharistic assembly does not involve any denial of its secondary functions. The important thing is that *all* should be given clear and orderly expression—and 'orderly', as Theodor Filthaut points out, 'does not imply merely superficial practicality; it means rather that these different activities should be treated according to their essential significance'.[5]

The directives then go on to recognise that 'these various purposes which the church must serve present a peculiar problem in its construction. The eucharistic sacrifice requires an arrangement of space different from that required by the administration of the sacraments of baptism and penance; the requirements in the administration of these sacraments differ from those which preaching demands; and differences appear again . . . as between community worship and private devotion. It is the task of the architect to find a solution of the problem which will best satisfy these several purposes of the church edifice.'[6] Hence it is of crucial importance that the architect should understand the relative importance of all the various liturgical activities for which the church exists. 'He must be able to distinguish the essential from the peripheral and to subordinate lesser values to the higher.' His *first* concern must be to create an appropriate spatial setting for the eucharistic assembly, for the eucharist is the very heart of the liturgy.

The first of the applications of principle in the directives issued by the American commission states that 'the design of the church begins with the altar'. The building must be designed from the altar outwards. The task of the architect is not simply to create an interesting space, conceived in plastic and structural terms alone, and then to 'furnish' it. The altar, and its relationship to the worshipping community, must be the starting point for the layout of the eucharistic room.

[5] Henze and Filthaut: *Contemporary Church Art.* Sheed & Ward, 1956, p. 51.

[6] It is interesting to note that in the seventeenth century both Hooker and Beveridge recognise that each of the various liturgical functions of the church building demands its appropriate spatial setting, in their argument for the retention of the chancel screen. The purpose of the screen, in their view, was not to separate the clergy from the laity but to separate the chancel—which in the practice of the time had become the eucharistic room—from the nave, which served for the ministry of the word. See Addleshaw and Etchells, *opus cit.,* pp. 40f.

The Christian altar is the principal symbol of Christ in his church. As such, in the words of the American document, 'it must possess absolute prominence over all else contained by the church . . . it must be the unchallenged focal point of the building . . . it ought not to be needlessly multiplied'. One of the oldest and most venerable traditions of church planning is that the eucharistic room should contain only one altar. In eastern Christendom this tradition has been observed from the time when churches were first constructed right down to the present day. If, in a Greek church, it is necessary for some reason to have a secondary altar, this is always placed in a separate structure— a *parekklesion* or side-chapel, forming a distinct spatial entity. In such a church the Christological symbolism is given clear expression. Place a second altar in the building and the church is no longer an image of the spiritual house built of living stones. The symbolic meaning of the structure is obscured.

In western Christendom during the Dark Ages the gradual disappearance of concelebration and the rise of the 'private' mass created a need for subsidiary altars such as has never been felt in the Orthodox world—where concelebration is still generally practised. For a long time these altars were housed each in a separate chapel. In the later Middle Ages, however, they invaded the eucharistic room itself without any regard for its spatial character. What had formerly been a room containing a single altar was subdivided into a whole series of compartments. It is only in recent years that a recovery of the meaning of the altar itself, and of the space which contains it, has underlined the wisdom of the older tradition. The American directives recommend that 'where auxiliary altars are necessary . . . they should be placed out of view of the congregation'; and this is in line with current practice in every country where the influence of the liturgical movement is widespread.

Apart from churches served by communities of priests—where, unless concelebration again becomes general in the west, provision must inevitably be made for private masses—the only real need in the Church of England is normally for a second altar for use on occasions when only a few people are present. It is most desirable that in planning a new church provision should be made for a week-day chapel, entirely separate from the eucharistic room. Questions of tradition and theological principle apart, there are obvious practical advantages in such an arrangement. It is a simple matter to provide independent heating for a small chapel, which need in most cases be no larger than

a vestry, whereas comparatively few parishes can afford to use their main source of heating throughout the week. A less satisfactory alternative, in that the chapel remains an integral part of the eucharistic room itself, is to place the altar of the church in such a position that it can serve two 'rooms' of different sizes: a large one for the Sunday liturgy, a much smaller one for use on other occasions. A square altar, set in the angle of an L-shaped plan—as in the church of St. Anna, Düren—lends itself to such use. Alternatively, with a rectangular or cruciform plan, the week-day chapel can be placed to the east of the altar, but with the seating arranged to face west. The adaptation of the neo-Gothic church of St. Englebert, at Mülheim, where the chapel is placed in the polygonal apse, is a good example of such an arrangement, which might well be imitated by architects in this country. A church like St. Philip's, Cosham, would be greatly improved by the removal of the second altar. The recently consecrated church at Crownhill, near Plymouth, owes much of its quality as a place for the celebration of the eucharist to the fact that it contains only one altar; nothing has been allowed to obscure the building's primary function.

The altar is not simply the principal symbol of Christ: it is also the holy table round which the *ecclesia* gathers for the eucharistic banquet. This function is inadequately expressed if the altar is set against the east wall of the church. It is a table, not a sideboard. Again, tradition and practical considerations alike suggest that the altar should stand clear of the wall in the midst of the sanctuary. 'The altar's autonomy is to be secured by preserving its centralness and independence. It should not be placed against the sanctuary wall as other objects of furniture, but . . . ought to be *free-standing*. A minimum of three feet from the wall is to be observed. A greater distance is commendable.' The essential character of the holy table is entirely obscured when, as in so many of our modern churches, it is treated as the visual climax of an elongated, tunnel-like space. In a church such as All Saints at Darlaston, while the altar is in one sense the focal point of the building, its function is primarily æsthetic. It resembles that of the Corinthian arch which brings the eye to rest and closes the vista at the end of the great avenue at Stowe. The free-standing altar was normal throughout Christendom for a thousand years. It has remained so to this day in eastern Christendom. As to practical considerations, these reinforce the argument from tradition and functional analysis. The old custom of celebration facing the people is steadily gaining ground, in this

country as well as on the Continent; the great practical advantage of a
free-standing altar lies in the fact that the celebrant can face either
east or west. If, as seems possible, celebration *versus populum* does be-
come widespread again within the next twenty or thirty years, it will
be necessary to carry out some expensive alterations in the sanctuaries
of many of our post-war churches in which the altar is placed against
the east wall. This consideration alone would suggest that, in a time of
liturgical experiment, the free-standing altar is to be preferred to one
which compels the ministers to turn their backs to the congregation.
As to the third aspect of the Christian altar, as the 'high-place' of
sacrifice, 'standing between heaven and earth', it needs to be expressed
with restraint and with a due regard for the altar's other and primary
significance. It is appropriate that the holy table should be raised some-
what above the level of the nave.

   During the last thirty years architects have been realising afresh
the value of the ciborium or canopy as a means of emphasising the
unique importance of the altar and of relating it to the spatial character
of its setting. It needs to be remembered, however, that the ciborium
exists for the sake of the altar. It must not draw attention to itself.
Strictly speaking, the altar needs no ornament or decoration. It is
itself the most important and potent symbol that the church contains.
The ancient tradition of the Church forbade the placing on the holy
table itself of anything save what was necessary for the celebration of
the eucharist. It was not until the twelfth century that the candlesticks
and cross which had formerly been carried into church at the begin-
ning of the liturgy began to be placed on the altar; it was not until the
sixteenth century that altar crucifixes became obligatory in the Roman
rite. In many churches on the Continent it is again becoming custom-
ary to set the candlesticks on the pavement around the altar, rather
than on the holy table itself, and to leave the altar completely bare
except during the service. Again, this is not a matter of archæologising
or of being self-consciously 'primitive': it is the outcome of a fresh
realisation of the true dignity of the Lord's table. What has been said
in regard to the essentially subordinate function of the ciborium applies
equally to the treatment of the east wall. Monumental crosses, mural
paintings and assertive decoration of any kind can detract from the
primacy of the altar just as effectively as the sculptured reredoses,
statuary, candlesticks and vases which have so often in the past degraded
the holy table of the eucharistic banquet into a pedestal. The cardinal
principle to be observed in the decoration of the house of God is that

all decoration should be related to liturgical function; it must never become an end in itself.

The design of the church must begin with the altar; but the altar, though it is the focal point for the eucharist proper, is not the sole focus of the eucharistic assembly. The breaking of bread is preceded by the *synaxis*, the proclamation of the word of God, and word and sacrament are interdependent. If one of the most remarkable features of the twentieth-century reformation is the way in which the eucharist is slowly being restored to its rightful place in the life of the Reformed churches, another no less striking is the new emphasis on the ministry of the word which we find in Roman Catholic circles. The old balance between word and sacrament is being recovered; there is a fresh awareness of the importance of the sermon as an integral part of the eucharistic liturgy. This interdependence of word and sacrament must be clearly expressed in the relationship between the place for the proclamation of the word and the table of communion. Neither must overshadow the other. The medieval separation between pulpit and altar is the outward sign of a divorce between word and sacrament which was to have disastrous consequences in the sixteenth century, and which is only now beginning to be healed.

In the ancient basilicas the bishop appears to have expounded the scriptures in the eucharistic assembly from his throne in the apse, immediately behind the altar—though the lessons were read from the ambo, or ambos, which projected from the presbytery, or sanctuary, to use the modern term. There are many new Protestant churches where the pulpit is in fact placed in the position formerly occupied by the bishop's throne: the octagonal Maranathakerk, in Amsterdam, for example. In George Pace's university chapel at Ibadan, in Nigeria, a lectern which serves both for the reading and the exposition of the scriptures stands in front of the altar and on the east-west axis of the church. In practice, however, it is difficult to achieve a satisfactory relationship between the two focal points of the eucharistic assembly when one is placed immediately behind the other, and the prevailing tendency is to give full weight to the Christological symbolism of the holy table by putting it in the centre of the building, and to place the pulpit within the sanctuary but to one side of it. In Werner Moser's well-known church at Zürich the communion table and pulpit are placed side by side, so as to give equal prominence to word and sacrament, but both tend to be overshadowed by the huge cross which stands between them on the main axis of the building.

So far as the Church of England is concerned, and particularly in new churches the layout of which has been influenced by liturgical considerations, the present fashion is for twin ambos, one on either side of the sanctuary. This is certainly an improvement on the nineteenth-century custom of placing the pulpit so far away from the altar as to suggest—often with some appropriateness—that, whatever the function of the sermon might be, it was certainly not an integral part of the eucharistic liturgy.

The ideal would seem to be a single ambo or pulpit from which the word of God is proclaimed in the lessons and expounded in the sermon. It should be closely related to the holy table, and, in the words of the American directives, 'should possess dignity without being unduly massive'. The placing of the pulpit within the sanctuary and close to the altar-rail underlines the fact that it is the same Christ who feeds his people both by word and sacrament. 'There is a deep symbolism', says Filthaut, 'in having the same place for the communication of the word of the Lord as for the communication of the body of the Lord.'[7]

The shaping of the eucharistic room thus involves the creation of a space in which the *ecclesia* is gathered about two closely related focal points: the altar and the place for the proclamation of the word. In considering the character of the spatial setting for the eucharistic assembly the architect must bear in mind two fundamental truths concerning the nature of the worshipping community. First, the eucharist is a *communal* action; it is the united act of the Church which is the body of Christ. He alone is the true High Priest, of whom all the imperfect priests of the old dispensation were but types and shadows. And yet, as St. Augustine says, 'Not only was our Head anointed, but his body also, we ourselves. . . . He has incorporated us with himself, making us his own members, that in him we too should be Christ . . . because in some sort Whole Christ is the Head and body.' Secondly, within this priestly community there is a real diversity of functions; every member of the body of Christ does not have the same office. The special liturgy of a bishop, for example, differs from that of a deacon; the liturgy of the layman is not the same as that of the presbyter. To use a musical analogy, the structure of the eucharistic liturgy resembles that of a polyphonic motet, with its complex interweaving of different parts, rather than that of a plainsong melody in which everyone sings the same notes. Both these truths must find expression in the spatial setting of the eucharist.

[7] *Opus cit.*, p. 57.

The architectural implications are clearly stated in the American directives. 'Since the Church is a hierarchical or graded society, not all of her members have the same function. . . . This hierarchical differentiation of function . . . ought to be expressed in elevation and articulation by the architecture. The profound fact of the Church's unity, however, must not be forgotten in the attempt to achieve this visible gradation. Since the mystical body of Christ is a living, corporate society, the church architecture must possess an organic unity. Although many, we are one body. Functions differ, but the articulation of graded membership ought not to destroy the organic relationship of member to member. Although distinct in treatment, the sanctuary which contains the altar and the nave which houses the community of the baptised ought to be visually and psychologically one. Visual or architectural separation should be avoided. The arrangement of space relations should lend itself to the active participation of the laity in the sacred action of the liturgy. . . Long, narrow churches which remove the laity from close contact with the altar are undesirable.'

During the last few years the desire to reassert the half-forgotten truth that the whole *ecclesia* is a priestly community has led many clergy and architects to experiment with circular or octagonal plans, in which the holy table stands at the centre of the building (as in the first of Rudolf Schwarz's seven archetypal plans).[8] An early example of such a layout in this country is the church of the First Martyrs at Bradford, built in 1935. The unsatisfactory character of almost every church of this type is due to the fact that it stresses one aspect of the body of Christ—its organic, priestly nature—at the expense of the other. It fails to manifest the hierarchical gradation of functions within the worshipping community. This is likely to be the fatal weakness of any layout based on a central altar, though the advantages of such a plan as a means of emphasising the fact that *all* are participants in the eucharistic action are evident.[9] The problem is more complex. The relationship between sanctuary and nave must express separation *and* identity. It is here that modern structural systems provide the architect with the means for creating spatial relationships far more subtle and theologically expressive than were possible in other centuries.

The problem is not simply one of enabling the whole congregation

[8] See *Vom Bau der Kirche*, Verlag Lambert Schneider, Heidelberg, 1938, pp. 21ff.
[9] The directives of the German Liturgical Commission explicitly condemn the circular plan with the altar in the centre of the building.

to see the altar and to hear what the ministers say—though it is hardly necessary to add that both these minimum conditions of corporate participation in the liturgy must be fulfilled. The liturgy of the laity involves far more than merely hearing and seeing. 'That corporateness which all sections in the Church of England believe to be an essential part of liturgy'[10] falls far short of the standards at which we have to aim. The spatial setting of the eucharist must be such as to draw the congregation into the action taking place. It is not enough that the laity should be able to hear and see something done on their behalf by professional 'actors': the distinction between actors and spectators has to be broken down. The basic problem is closely akin to one which has been exercising a number of architects working in the field of theatre design. The principles laid down by Walter Gropius in this connection are extremely pertinent to the planning of churches as well as theatres.

The first of these principles, which Gropius stated in a lecture given at Rome as long ago as 1934, is that 'complete co-ordination of all architectural elements leads to a unity between actor and spectator'. There must be 'no separation between stage and auditorium'. The architect must use 'all possible spatial means capable of shaking the spectator out of his lethargy, of surprising and assaulting him and obliging him to take a real, living interest in the play'.[11] Substitute 'sanctuary and nave' for 'stage and auditorium', and 'liturgy' for 'play', and you have a very precise description of the aim which has been realised with varying degrees of success in a rapidly growing number of modern churches based on circular or elliptical plans.

Again, 'the principles of the new theatre are . . . *a community theatre* linking the people together—*architectural integration* of all space-forming elements with the intention of bringing about a *human integration* between actors and spectators—*abolition of separation* between the "fictitious world" on the stage and the "real world" of the audience—*audience participation* in the action of the drama to stir up and awaken their dormant creative capacities—by erasing the distinction between "this side" and "that side" of the footlights, between the stage and the auditorium: by bringing the events of the drama among the audience: by animating the theatre through the creation of a three-dimensional space instead of a flat "stage-picture" . . . to extend the

[10] Addleshaw and Etchells, *opus cit.*, p. 15.
[11] Quoted in S. Giedion: *Walter Gropius.* London, Architectural Press, 1954, p. 154.

scene being enacted on the central stage, so as to encompass the specta-
tors and bring them in some way within it'.[12] All these principles are
embodied in the Total Theatre project of 1927 and the later design for
the Ukrainian State Theatre at Kharkov—neither of which was
carried out. Despite the great technical virtuosity displayed in these
projects, technical means are rigorously subordinated to the basic aim
of creating a building for the performance of what is essentially a cor-
porate activity. There are to be no spectators in these theatres; all are
to be active participants in the drama. Though the stage is distinct
from the auditorium the relationship between the two is such that
everyone is drawn into the action.

It is interesting to compare these projects with some of the most
successful churches of recent years—SS. Felix and Regula, at Zürich,
for example, or another church by Fritz Metzger at Riehen, on the
outskirts of Basle. Just as for Gropius 'the heart of the theatre is the
stage', and 'the starting point for a new conception of theatrical space'
is the shape of the stage and its relationship with the spectator, so for
Metzger the heart of the church is the sanctuary which contains the two
focal points of the eucharistic liturgy. The shape of the sanctuary and
the relationship between altar and pulpit and the congregation are the
starting point for what may justly be described as a new conception of
liturgical space. These churches are designed for a communal liturgy
in which all are actively involved: not for a spectacle in which, no
matter how good the vision and acoustics may be, there remains a hard-
and-fast distinction between actors and spectators. While the sanctuary
itself is clearly defined, it is not simply separate from the nave: nave
and sanctuary are visually and psychologically one. New building
materials and methods of construction have enabled the architect to
create a single integrated space as a means to achieving the human
integration that the liturgy demands. If Gropius' theatre projects are
'a response to our unconscious need to create again a *vita communis*, a
form of life which transforms the passive spectator into an active
participant',[13] a church like St. Francis, Riehen, is a true image of the
City in which all human seeking after community is destined to find
its fulfilment. The building takes on the nature of a symbol: *domus
ecclesiam significat.*

To sum up: the ideal setting for the eucharistic assembly is a spatial

[12] Quoted in S. Giedion: *Walter Gropius.* London, Architectural Press, 1954,
p. 65.
[13] *Ibid.,* p. 63.

arrangement which enables the whole congregation to be gathered round a free-standing altar, but which also expresses in the relationship of nave to sanctuary the hierarchical gradation of functions within the one priestly community. The churches to be described in the next four chapters will show how architects have attempted during the last thirty years to create eucharistic rooms which satisfy both these requirements. If the number of wholly successful solutions to this basic problem of modern church design is still extremely small, a comparison between a building such as the church of St. Antony, Basle, and some of the most recent churches by Fritz Metzger and Hermann Baur affords striking evidence of the progress that has been made during the course of a generation of continuous thought and experiment. But before I turn to an examination of specific solutions, there are two further problems of church planning which must be briefly considered. The first concerns the choir, the second the baptistery.

One of the peculiar difficulties which stand in the way of the reform of the architectural setting of worship in the Church of England is the persistence of the idea—which dates only from the middle of the nineteenth century—that the one appropriate place for the choir is in a chancel between the altar and the congregation.[14] Such an arrangement makes it almost impossible to achieve a satisfactory relationship between the ministers at the altar and the whole body of the faithful. It also tends to set the singers apart from the rest of the laity and to obscure their true liturgical function. One of the results of the parish communion movement has been to create a widespread recognition of the problem posed by the surpliced choir. 'It is significant', say Addleshaw and Etchells, 'that in many new churches where the Victorian arrangement has been adopted, the choir stalls have been made as low and unobtrusive as possible, with a really wide alley in between so as to allow a good view of the altar.'[15] The fact is, however, that no matter how unobtrusive the choir stalls may be, the placing of the singers between the congregation and the altar involves a most undesirable element of separation between nave and sanctuary, and it is imperative to find a more satisfactory alternative.

[14] This idea is not of course confined to the Church of England: the typical Victorian plan has had a most disastrous influence on Protestant church architecture. In California the surpliced choir has even found a home among members of the Society of Friends, though Quakers have on the whole been firm in their resistance to such innovations, and most of their architecture remains admirably functional.

[15] *Opus cit.*, p. 234.

In modern Roman Catholic churches the singers and organ are usually placed in a west gallery, behind the congregation. The gallery has also been restored to favour in many Anglican churches built since about 1930. Recently, however, there have been signs of a return to the ancient tradition that the *schola cantorum* should be placed close to the altar, and not set apart from the whole body of the laity in a gallery. Thus the Superior directives insist that the choir should 'be no exception to the oneness of the community in worship. The choir ought not to be placed in a loft apart from the assembly, but should form an integral part with it.' The position of the singers must be governed by liturgical as well as musical considerations. In a church planned on conventional lines there is sometimes no satisfactory alternative to placing the choir either in a gallery or in their Victorian position— though in many churches where the singers wear ordinary lay dress they now occupy the seats at the east or west end of the nave. If, however, a church is planned from the outset not in accordance with nineteenth-century principles but from the point of view of liturgical function, it is not difficult to find a satisfactory solution to this problem. It is often possible to place the singers to one side or other of the sanctuary. Another alternative is to put them in a central 'chancel', rather as in the early basilicas; the John Keble church at Mill Hill is the first example of such an arrangement in this country. In many modern churches the choir occupy seats to the east of the altar, though a position to the north or south of the sanctuary is generally found to be more satisfactory. As to the organ, the fact that it is now possible to separate the console from the instrument itself has opened up many interesting possibilities. Again, the essential thing to be borne in mind is the liturgical function of the instrument. Its purpose is not to dominate but to *serve* the liturgy. In many modern churches a fresh realisation of this truth has brought the organ into a new and more direct relationship with the altar and the sanctuary: 'The instrument has emerged from the darkness of chambers and case-work to speak for itself, and to become visually suggestive of its aural function.'[16]

The problem of creating an appropriate spatial setting for the administration of the sacrament of baptism is a particularly intractable one. The baptistery, in the words of the American directives, 'is to be located near the entrance of the church. The holy font should make a strong statement to the community entering for divine worship,

[16] Alison and Peter Smithson: Notes on a project submitted for the Coventry cathedral competition in 1951.

since it is a continual sign of the Christian's rebirth in Christ and his membership in the mystical body. . . . A step of descent toward the font is commendable to portray the rich Pauline doctrine of baptism.' We have here a genuine symbolism of place, rooted in scripture and liturgical tradition; something quite different from the dubious allegorism of Durandus and his nineteenth-century followers. It is vividly expressed in a modern church built for the Oxford Mission to Calcutta, at Barisal in Eastern Bengal, under the direction of the late Mother Edith, O.M.S.E., where the church is approached through a narthex containing a large tank, which stretches across its entire width. All unbaptised persons must remain to the west of this tank until they pass through it at their baptism. Those who are baptised enter the church through doors placed to the east of the narthex, and opening directly into the room for the eucharistic assembly.

The difficulty of giving full expression to this traditional symbolism of a baptistery located near the entrance to the church, and through which the congregation must pass in order to reach the eucharistic room, arises whenever the attempt is made to administer the sacrament of rebirth in the presence of the whole congregation, and not merely of the sponsors and a few relatives and friends. The number of English parishes in which public baptisms, either at the parish communion or at one of the choir offices, are now taken for granted is rapidly increasing. This has led many clergy to imitate the practice, widespread among Reformed Christians on the Continent, of placing the font close to the altar—often within the sanctuary itself—despite the fact that this totally destroys any symbolism of place. If the problem were simply one of finding the most satisfactory place for the font within a room primarily designed for the celebration of the eucharist, and furnished with fixed seating facing towards the sanctuary, there might be something to be said in favour of grouping altar, pulpit and font together, to form a single liturgical focus. This, however, is open to question. It seems very doubtful if the baptistery should be within the eucharistic room at all. On the contrary, the ideal spatial setting for the font would seem to be a separate room, distinct from that which serves for the Sunday liturgy, but related to it in such a way as to emphasise the theological relationship between baptism and eucharist.

The whole question of the relationship of baptistery to eucharistic room urgently needs to be thought out afresh in terms of theological and liturgical principle—not merely of practical convenience and antiquarian precedent. There are two specific problems which demand far

more serious consideration than they have yet received. First, the English Prayer Book, like Reformed practice in general, tends to assume that *infant* baptism is normal. This is surely unsatisfactory. The archetypal service of Christian initiation is that of the baptism and confirmation of an adult within the setting of the eucharist. The reformed Easter vigil service of the Roman rite is far more satisfactory than any of the Reformed initiation rites when judged in the light of scripture and early tradition. Secondly, we need to give far more thought to the possibilities of liturgical *movement*. There can be little doubt that the introduction of fixed seating has been an important factor in encouraging the laity to regard themselves as spectators rather than participants. One of the surest ways of breaking down the psychological barriers to lay participation in the liturgy is to get people out of their pews. The procession to the font might well involve the movement of the whole congregation to the baptistery. This would stress the fact that the whole of the church building is a liturgical space: a church does not consist of a sanctuary, within which the liturgical action takes place, to which is annexed a separate room for the accommodation of an audience, the form of which can be governed by purely practical considerations.

Continental experience suggests that the problem of the relationship of baptistery to eucharistic room will probably be most satisfactorily solved by making the porch or narthex considerably more spacious than is at present customary, and placing the font within it. André Le Donné's church at Mulhouse, consecrated in 1959, provides a particularly satisfactory example of such a solution. It is also desirable that the baptistery should include whatever accommodation is required for the administration of the sacrament of penance. The eucharistic room ought never to be cluttered with confessionals which obscure its primary function. Far more attention needs to be given to the design of the narthex and porch. Together they provide what is potentially a most fruitful field for research and experiment. Again, the possibilities of something comparable to the ancient *atrium*—a forecourt, providing a transitional space between the street and the church itself—call for serious consideration, particularly in the case of an urban parish church.

Specific problems apart, however, the basic need in this country at the present time is for a fresh approach to the whole business of designing a church: an approach founded on the recognition that a church is first and foremost a building for corporate worship, a shelter for a worshipping community—not a shrine or a monument. The architectural form of the building, and the relationship between its

several parts, must spring from an analysis of its liturgical function. Such analysis is of vital importance not least from the point of view of finance. English church architecture of the last thirty years abounds in examples of fantastic expenditure on architectural or decorative features which are at best of very minor importance—and at worst downright meaningless—to the neglect of what is essential. I saw only recently a church in the diocese of London, completed in 1958, where the best part of a hundred thousand pounds had been spent on a vast and pretentious structure, complete with flying buttresses and a cloister, but where the main altar was a cheap and unsightly wooden table secured from a bombed church. Far better the white-washed barn.

It is instructive, from this point of view, to consider the matter of the church tower. In terms of function the tower may be said to serve two distinct purposes: first, as a support for a bell which can be rung to summon parishioners to services; secondly, as a landmark by which the sacred edifice can be readily identified from a distance. Both functions are somewhat peripheral. It may well be asked whether, in an age of reliable clocks and watches, radio and telephone time-signals, and widely publicised times of service, a bell to summon worshippers to church has not become just as much of an anachronism as a town crier. Even if a bell is required, it can perfectly well be hung from the main structure of the church. As to the tower's other function, while I have often been grateful for a prominent landmark as a means by which to locate a newly constructed church in the suburbs of Paris or Basle, the fact remains that the building exists primarily for the sake of the local community; the convenience of students of modern ecclesiastical architecture is at best a very minor consideration. Nevertheless, in nine cases out of ten it is still considered necessary for a new church to be provided—often at considerable expense—with a lofty tower which serves no essential purpose and which could perfectly well be dispensed with.

Unfortunately, one has still to reckon with what Paul Winninger has aptly termed *le complexe du monument*. A soaring, aspiring tower, dominating the surrounding buildings, is an essential element in the *idea* of a church which has haunted the western European consciousness since the Middle Ages. There can be little hope of real progress until we succeed in getting behind this romantic idea of a church to the consideration of the building's essential function. The importance of the German directives lies above all in the fact that they recall architects and clergy alike to the fundamental principles that must govern the

shaping of the house of the Church. They are concerned solely with the analysis of the problem: with the restatement of the general programme of a church. They attempt to state *what* has to be done—not *how* it is to be done. That is a matter for the architect, who is concerned not only with analysis but also with the creative idea: with form, light, proportion and spatial relationships. The general programme is no more than one essential ingredient in the genesis of the specific solution. But while it is important to recognise the limitations of the directives, and that in themselves they provide no complete answer to the problems of creating a church, one has also to recognise that they have made it possible for many German architects, not all of them particularly imaginative, to build churches which do at least *work* as buildings for corporate worship and which are conceived in terms of their social and liturgical function. There are still comparatively few modern churches in this country of which so much can be said.

E

4. *New Trends in Church Planning on the Continent 1923–1940*

I N an address given at the Congress held at Assisi in September 1956, Monsignor Wagner, Director of the Liturgical Institute at Trier, remarked that 'those who like to pin-point the historical beginnings of great movements in the history of the Church are unusually fortunate in the case of what, for the sake of convenience, is known as "the liturgical movement"'.[1] He went on to refer to the conference which took place at Malines in 1909, at which a young Benedictine monk of Mont César, Dom Lambert Beauduin, was enabled, thanks to the support of Cardinal Mercier, to put forward (in the section of the conference devoted to Christian art and archæology) certain proposals which led to the creation of the Belgian liturgical movement. While the origins of the present liturgical renewal go back far into the nineteenth century, to Dom Guéranger (despite his errors) and the monks of Solesmes; and while the ground had been prepared by the reforms inaugurated by Pope Pius X; there can be little doubt that the address given at Malines in 1909 marks the decisive moment in the history of the liturgical movement.

Dom Lambert's epoch-making proposals could scarcely have been made under less appropriate auspices. From the outset the liturgical movement was preoccupied with pastoral rather than archæological problems. Dom Lambert was not concerned with what is commonly thought of as 'liturgiology'—with the liturgy as a work of art, or with the minutiæ of ceremonial observance. He was concerned rather to recall the Church to the true sources of spiritual renewal; to re-assert the half-forgotten truths that the liturgy is itself the great school of Christian living and spirituality, and that to *live* the liturgy, and in the spirit of the liturgy, is to share in the very life of Christ in his body the Church. As Father Bouyer has emphasised, one of the great

[1] *La Maison-Dieu*, Nos. 47-48, 1956, p. 107. (Cf. Bouyer's *Life & Liturgy*, pp. 58ff.)

characteristics of the Belgian liturgical movement was 'that it was not the work of a party or of specialists, nor was it a kind of separate activity in the Church. From the first everyone understood it to be a general renewal of Christian teaching and life, both individual and collective, a renewal of the Church itself through the renewal of its parochial life.'[2]

After the First World War the Belgian liturgical movement, with its strong pastoral emphasis, gradually coalesced with two other movements of renewal. The first, which was predominantly theological and intellectual in character, was centred on the German abbey of Maria Laach, and owed its inspiration to two outstanding theologians and scholars, Abbot Ildefons Herwegen and Dom Odo Casel. The second, which was more popular and concerned above all with the rediscovery of the Bible, stemmed from the work of Pius Parsch and the Augustinian canons of Klosterneuburg, in Austria. The Catholic youth movements, particularly the 'Quickborn' circle in Germany, provided a further element in the growing recovery within the Church of the meaning of the Church and its common prayer. In the course of the 'twenties these various strands became intertwined. The liturgical renewal was enriched by the rediscovery of the scriptures; the new understanding of the Church's corporate worship gave rise to the liturgical apostolate; the work of the theologians provided the basis for a radical reappraisal of the function of Christian art and architecture. The full implications of the movement that had begun in Belgium in 1909 were becoming apparent.

In the meantime much had been happening in the architectural world. Here too a major revolution had been gathering momentum. By 1923, when Le Corbusier published his epoch-making book *Vers une Architecture*, the modern movement in architecture (to use a convenient name for something which, no less than the liturgical movement, is in fact extremely complex) was firmly established. I have not the space to trace, even in outline, the growth of this movement.[3] In essence it was a revolt against the falsehood of an approach to architecture which had degraded the architect into a purveyor of assorted styles and historical souvenirs, and which had isolated the most social of the arts from the daily life of the community. Again, the origins of the movement stretch far back into the nineteenth century to the work of engineers like Thomas Telford and Marc Seguin, and

[2] *Opus cit.,* p. 64.
[3] See Bibliography.

to the influence of the French *École Polytechnique*, founded in 1794. During the course of the century the new architecture foreshadowed in the writings of men like César Daly and Horatio Greenough slowly and laboriously came to birth: not in the official academies or the offices of the fashionable practitioners of architecture as a fine art, but in the commercial buildings of the St. Louis water-front, in steamships and bridges and grain elevators, the market halls of Paris, the department stores of Chicago, and in occasional masterpieces like Henri Labrouste's book stacks at the *Bibliothèque Nationale*, Gustave Eiffel's Garabit viaduct, the *Palais des Machines* at the Paris international exhibition of 1889 and Charles Rennie Mackintosh's art school at Glasgow, built ten years later.

In the same year that Dom Lambert Beauduin read his paper at Malines Peter Behrens built the Turbo factory in Berlin, one of the first really convincing modern buildings, and in the following year Adolf Loos' now celebrated house at Vienna set a new standard in the field of domestic building. The *Deutscher Werkbund*—an association of craftsmen and designers which stands somewhere between the English arts and crafts movement and the *Bauhaus*—had been founded in 1907. By the outbreak of the First World War, Walter Gropius and Frank Lloyd Wright had appeared on the architectural scene, Henri van der Velde was exercising considerable influence as director of the art school at Weimar (where Gropius succeeded him in 1919) and the new architecture was coming to maturity in Germany and in Austria. It was, however, in France that the modern movement in architecture and the liturgical movement in the Church first came together to create a modern church.

In 1918 the Abbé Nègre, parish priest of Le Raincy, in the eastern suburbs of Paris, set about building a new church. Several ecclesiastical architects were consulted: their estimates of the cost of building a large church in the approved ecclesiastical style went far beyond the limited financial resources available. The Abbé, who must have been a man of unusual courage, turned to an architect who had never built a church but who had already established a European reputation as a master of reinforced-concrete construction. Auguste Perret produced a design for a church large enough to accommodate two thousand people and costing far less than anything envisaged by his ecclesiastical colleagues. Work commenced in 1922 and the church was completed the following year. If the decisive date in the development of the liturgical movement is the year 1909, the consecration of the church

of Notre-Dame du Raincy in 1923 marks the opening of a new chapter in the history of ecclesiastical architecture.

To those for whom ecclesiastical architecture was synonymous with anachronistic essays in dead languages the church must have been a revelation of the possibilities of modern architecture in the service of the liturgy. Here at last was a church of real integrity, an honest piece of reinforced-concrete construction, devoid of meretricious ornament or irrelevant detail: a building that was *real*. But Perret's great church is of outstanding importance not simply on account of its honesty and its great architectural integrity; there had been several earlier attempts to exploit the possibilities of steel and concrete for church building,
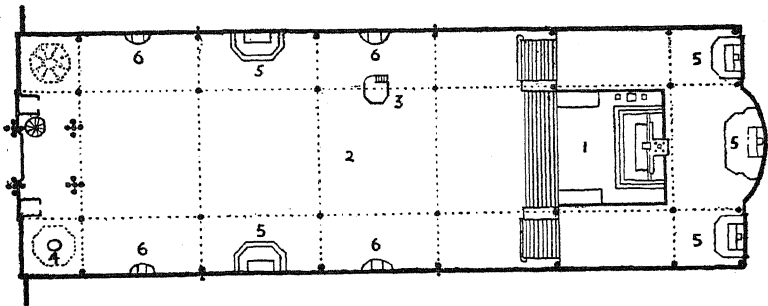
PLAN 1. NOTRE-DAME DU RAINCY
1. Sanctuary; 2. Nave; 3. Pulpit; 4. Baptistery; 5. Secondary altars; 6. Confessionals

though none of them of this quality. What gives the church its special significance is the way in which it embodies a new understanding of its purpose. 'What Notre-Dame du Raincy shows', says Anton Henze, 'is a new conception. In plan it harks back to the long rectangle of the basilica, but it has compressed it and eliminated the separate choir. The altar . . . has come nearer to the congregation. The pillars supporting the slightly arched roof have shrunk away to slender rods; the walls have dissolved into a honeycomb of cement, forming a gleaming pattern of coloured glass. The whole interior is light and open. To-day we can look on it as an inspired forerunner of the modern church.'[4] To those who are familiar with the planning experiments of the past decade the layout of Notre-Dame du Raincy will seem somewhat conventional. The plan is based on a long narrow

[4]*Opus cit.*, p. 22.

rectangle, the principal altar is raised well above the level of the nave, the pulpit stands on the north side of the church and there are five secondary altars within the eucharistic room itself. To the left and right of the entrance are the baptistery and a small chapel. There is, however, no structural division between nave and sanctuary; the church is a single integrated space centred on an altar. The slender pillars do not seriously obstruct the congregation's view of the holy table. This one-room plan foreshadows the developments of the thirties; it is the first tentative statement of the problem that has dominated church architecture on the Continent for the last generation. It is sad to record that, so far as France is concerned, the example of Le Raincy was virtually ignored until the 'fifties. Apart from a church at Montmagny, built in 1925, and three chapels—one for a college another for a religious community—Auguste Perret had to wait thirty years for his next ecclesiastical commission. In 1927 his project for a vast basilica at La Chapelle was rejected in favour of a design about which the less said the better. In 1938, when almost every architect in Paris was given the opportunity to take part in an extensive programme of church building, Perret was ignored. He did not live to see the completion of his great square church of St. Joseph at Le Havre, which, as the exterior would suggest, is in fact a development of the rejected project of 1927, though its plan, based on a square with a central altar, reflects the changes that have taken place in French liturgical thought and practice in the course of a generation.

Elsewhere on the Continent, however, the time was ripe for a genuine renewal of church architecture and the example of Notre Dame du Raincy did not pass unheeded. In 1927 Karl Moser built the church of St. Antony, at Basle, which owes a great deal to Perret. From the point of view of structure this is a church of the highest importance. The complete honesty with which Moser accepted the logic of steel and concrete and glass, the monumental simplicity of the tower and the great porch, mark the full accomplishment of the technical revolution that was begun at Le Raincy. In its plan, however, the church is comparatively conventional. Like Notre-Dame du Raincy, it recalls the aisled basilica, but the division between nave and sanctuary is more emphatic. The pulpit stands on the north side of the nave and there are secondary altars on either side of the sanctuary. There is a large baptistery opening off the north side of the nave. The principal altar is somewhat withdrawn and there is a solid wall behind it. This remarkable church is a landmark in the development of modern

architecture—ecclesiastical *and* secular—in Switzerland, where it was
the first genuinely modern building of any significance.

With the exception of the two churches just described, the renewal
of church architecture down to about 1933 is largely confined to
Germany. I have already said something of the group which was
founded in 1922 to study the principles of modern church architecture,
and which was in close touch with the theological and liturgical de-
velopments taking place at the abbey of Maria Laach. It was in Ger-
many at this period, and in the dialogue which took place between
architects and theologians, that the basic principles of modern church
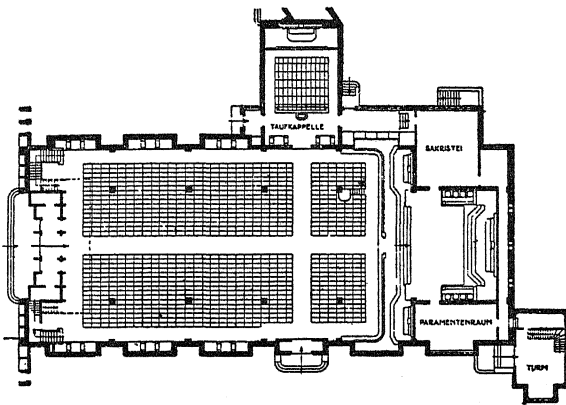
PLAN 2. ST. ANTONY, BASLE

design were first clearly formulated. Those who were involved in this
dialogue were not concerned merely to exploit the possibilities of new
materials and structural systems in the creation of conventional effects
and associations. They were concerned with the essential function of
the *domus ecclesiæ*, and with its embodiment in the architecture of its
day. One of the leading theorists of this group was Rudolf Schwarz,
who was also connected with the 'Quickborn' wing of the Catholic
youth movement in Germany. Schwarz's approach to church build-
ing is admirably summed up in the two principles which are strikingly
embodied in his two pre-war churches at Aachen and Leversbach:
'First, to start from a reality based on faith, not from one based on
art, this truth or reality being of such a kind as to produce a com-
munity and an artistic achievement. Secondly, to be absolutely truth-
ful in our artistic language by saying nothing more than we can say in

our times, and nothing which cannot be understood by our contem-
poraries. If what we have to say is not much, compared with the
Middle Ages and antiquity, it is still better to remain in our sphere
and to renounce all sorts of mystical theories which will not be
visualised or experienced by anybody'.[5]
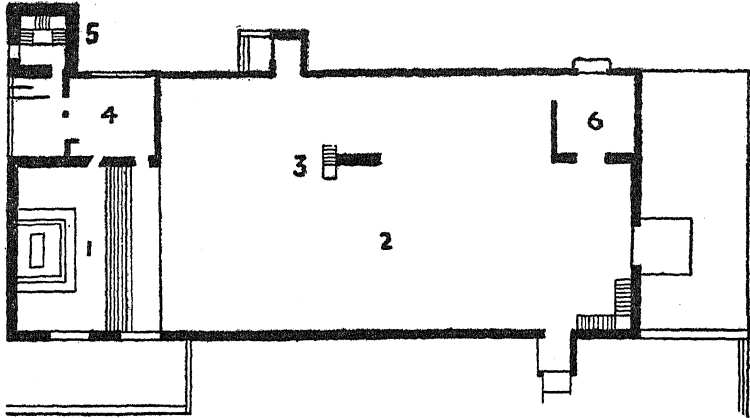
PLAN 3. CORPUS CHRISTI, AACHEN
1. Sanctuary; 2. Nave; 3. Pulpit; 4. Sacristy; 5. Tower;
6. Baptistery

Schwarz's church of Corpus Christi at Aachen was consecrated
in December 1930. It is an extraordinary example of absolute truth-
fulness and of concentration on essentials. The eucharistic room is a
rectangular hall unobstructed by columns; a space to contain the altar
and the worshipping community. There is no decoration, there are no
distracting irrelevancies. Nothing relieves the severity of the white
walls and the black marble altar. All secondary functions are banished
to the porch, or to a subsidiary structure set at right angles to the
church proper, where they do not challenge the building's essential
purpose as a house for the eucharistic assembly. The architectonic
quality of the church is a matter of order, proportion and an honest
use of materials. But it also represents a conscious attempt to express in
terms of architecture the liturgical ideals associated with Maria Laach:
it is the outward embodiment of a *theological* vision.

[5] Quoted in H. A. Reinhold's article 'A Revolution in Church Architecture',
Liturgical Arts, 1938, VI, 3.

Sir Edward Maufe's observations on this remarkable church are characteristic of a great deal of recent English 'criticism' of new churches; they reveal a total incomprehension of the nature of the problem with which Schwarz was grappling. The church at Aachen, he writes, 'is something of a functionalist's dream—a functionalist who has swung so far on the pendulum of revolt against over-statement that he denies us the graces of life, and becomes stingy and rather negative. . . . An extreme example of sans-serif architecture.'[6] A far more perceptive critic is Father H. A. Reinhold, who, in comparing this church with the earlier one at Basle, underlines with great precision its fundamental importance: 'If Moser's church . . . created a *technical* revolution in church building, Schwarz's Corpus Christi church in Aachen started another one, deeper and more radical. It makes architects really develop, as a new problem, the essential church out of its *theological, liturgical* and *practical* conception.'[7] The church at Aachen is the work of an architect who stands in the main stream of *both* the movements—the one theological, the other architectural—which have together brought about a revolution in church building. Perret and Moser were concerned primarily with structure. Schwarz takes for granted the three basic 'precepts' of the modern movement —honesty of structural expression, honesty in the use of materials, and honesty in the expression of function. What he also does—and it is this above all that makes his first church such a landmark—is to embody in architectural forms of the most rigorous integrity a conception of the function of a church which is informed by a genuinely modern understanding of the *ecclesia* and its liturgy. To quote Father Reinhold again: 'I think Rudolf Schwarz has made the church anew *a house for* divine worship, not an autonomous, architectural expression of religious feeling, *religiöses Weltgefühl*. That is a step forward.'[8] It was indeed a step forward in 1930, and it is sobering to reflect that, so far as church architecture in this country nearly thirty years later is concerned, the lesson embodied in Schwarz's fine church has still to be learned. We are still fighting for the basic honesties.

Among the other German architects who were involved in the debate between the architects and the theologians at this period,

[6] *Modern Church Architecture*. London, I.C.B.S., 1948, p. 29.
[7] 'The Architecture of Rudolf Schwarz', *Architectural Forum*, January 1939, p. 24.
[8] *Ibid.*, p. 26.

Dominikus Böhm, who died in 1955, is the most important. Böhm
built several churches during the 'twenties which exploit the possibili-
ties of the parabolic arch and other structural forms borrowed from
the secular architecture of the time. These early churches, unlike those
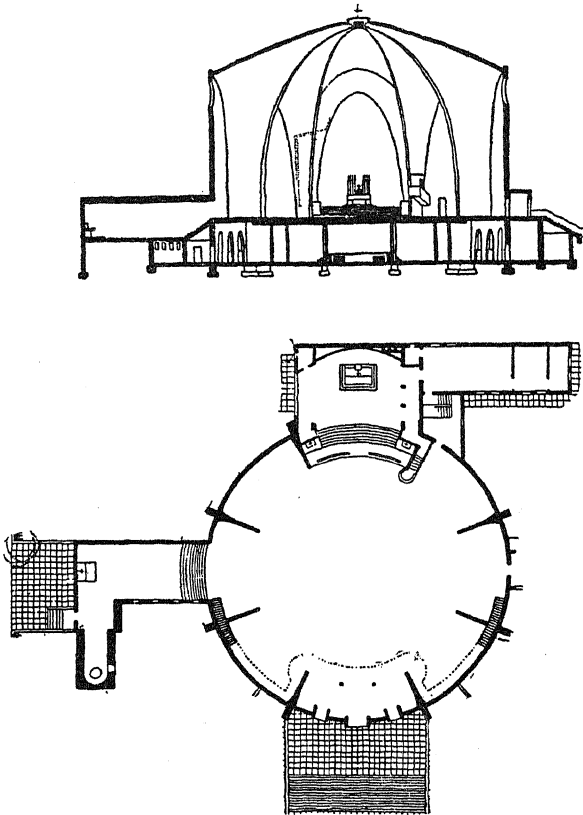
PLAN 4. ST. ENGLEBERT, RIEHL

which he built during the last few years of his life, suggest a concern
to demonstrate that the kind of atmosphere commonly associated with
Gothic architecture could be obtained, with a minimum of historical
allusion, by an honest use of steel and reinforced concrete. In this
respect they have more in common with Perret's churches than with
those of Schwarz—though the church which Böhm built for the
Caritas Institute at Cologne in 1928 has something of the quality of

his later work. The church of St. Englebert, Riehl, in the northern part of Cologne, which was consecrated in 1932, while it retains something of the evocative feeling of the earlier church at Bischofsheim—where Böhm uses structural forms reminiscent of the great hangars at Orly to create an essentially Gothic effect—is of great importance from the point of view of the plan. Indeed, from this standpoint it has been a far more potent influence on the development of the modern church than any of the three buildings already described, all of which are based on a long rectangle.

The plan of St. Englebert's, Riehl, is founded on a perfect circle. The high altar is set in the midst of a shallow sanctuary opening off the circular nave, from which it is approached by a broad flight of steps; the pulpit is on the south side of the altar-recess, and there is a gallery for choir and organ over the main entrance. The week-day chapel, the baptistery and the bell tower are placed to the north of the church, and the various parochial offices are housed in a crypt. The church has been compared to a vast concrete tent. As in Böhm's earlier church at Frielingsdorf the dome begins at ground-level.[9] Though churches based on the circle or the ellipse have become common enough during the last ten years, this is the first convincing example of a modern church with a plan of this type.

The great attraction of the circular plan, as compared to the long rectangle of the basilica, lies in the fact that it enables the whole congregation to be brought into proximity to the altar: not merely to see it from afar. In the church of St. Englebert, however, the altar is somewhat withdrawn and raised high above the nave. Subsequent experiments with this type of plan have aimed at establishing a closer relationship between nave and sanctuary—at gathering the congregation *around* the altar. Some of the ways in which this has been done will be examined in a later chapter. But it was these four churches, all built during the period 1923–32, which first afforded conclusive evidence of the potentialities of a living architecture as an instrument of a living liturgy. Together they have been called the cradle of modern church architecture, which, as Anton Henze has written, 'is still working on the basic liturgical features of their interiors and the forms to which they gave rise. All that has been built in succeeding decades, and is now gaining ground in Europe and America as the ecclesiastical

[9] To be precise the church is roofed 'not with a dome but with lobes of paraboloid barrel-vaulting.' (Henry-Russell Hitchcock: *Architecture 19th & 20th centuries*. Penguin Books, 1958, p. 345.)

architecture of our day, has developed upon the foundations laid in these four churches . . . by Perret, Moser, Schwarz and Böhm.'[10]

There are two smaller churches built in Germany in the mid-'thirties which are of unusual interest. Dominikus Böhm's church at Ringenberg, completed in 1935, is the earliest example known to me of a
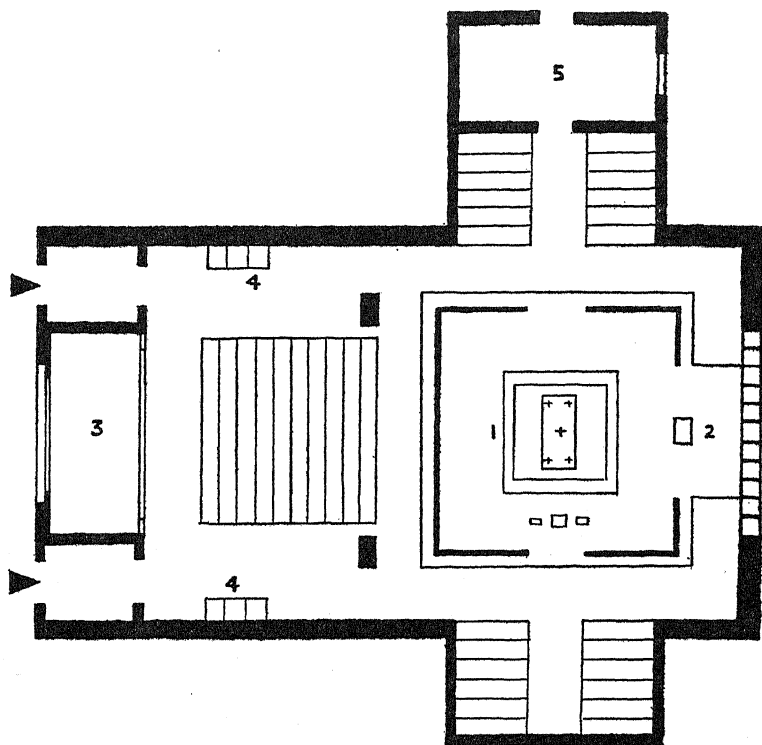
PLAN 5. RINGENBERG
1. Sanctuary; 2. Sacrament altar; 3. Baptistery; 4. Confessional; 5. Sacristy

type of plan that has been widely adopted in recent years. The congregation sit on three sides of a free-standing altar, which is so situated that the celebrant can adopt the westward position at the eucharist. To the east of the principal altar is a small sacrament altar bearing the tabernacle for the reserved sacrament. The second of these churches is the chapel which Rudolf Schwarz built for the village of Leversbach,

[10] *Opus cit.*, p. 23.

near Cologne, in 1934. There are very few modern churches which will compare with it as an example of the possibilities of extreme simplicity, when simplicity is informed and illuminated by a sense of purpose. This is essentially a building to house an altar; there is no 'art', nothing save the basic necessities. The altar is a simple stone table, free-standing in the midst of an uncluttered sanctuary. It is impossible to describe the *style* of the building. It is no more 'contemporary', in the popular sense of that word, than Gothic or Romanesque; it is simply an honest piece of construction. Yet this is one of the most completely satisfying buildings for worship that have been built in the last fifty years. Its poverty is not 'insufficiency, frail weakness or pauperism. It is rather the strength of an original grasp of the essentials of catholic belief in holy mysteries which demand *askesis*—preparedness, self-effacement, a tense will to renounce peripheral distractions—and which fill one instead with a new richness of other-worldly values.'[11] Everything about this modest chapel is real; it rings true. Would that our own architects would study it, and learn from it that before building a church one must know what one is making.

The renewal of church architecture in Germany at this period was not confined to Catholic circles. Several churches built for Reformed congregations by Otto Bartning during the late 'twenties and early 'thirties combine a high degree of structural integrity with a flexibility of plan that was very unusual at the time. The plan of his 'Pressa' church at Essen-Altendorf, completed in 1928, anticipates that of many churches of the 'fifties; it is based on a trapezoid, with a semi-circular sanctuary, and the pulpit stands immediately in front of the communion table. The church of the Resurrection, at Essen, two years later in date, is circular with a centralised layout; while the Gustav-Adolf-Kirche in Berlin, completed in 1935, is again trapezoidal in form. Another Protestant church with a plan based on a trapezoid is the Nikolai-Kirche at Dortmund, built in 1930 by the architects Pinno and Grund. Latteyer and Schneiders' Friedenskirche, at Ludwigshafen, completed in 1932, is another round church, with the sanctuary placed on the periphery of the circular plan. These German architects, particularly Bartning, were among the first to realise the potentialities for liturgical worship of trapezoidal and circular types of plan. Both types have become common since about 1950 in Roman Catholic churches. All these German churches were destroyed or badly damaged during the Second World War, as was the Leversbach chapel.

[11] H. A. Reinhold, *opus cit.*, p. 25.

The coming to power of the Nazi party virtually ended architectural experiment in Germany until the late 'forties. So far as church architecture was concerned, the initiative passed to Switzerland, where, from the mid-'thirties onwards, the pioneer work of the previous decade bore fruit in a remarkable series of modern churches, the first of which was Fritz Metzger's church of St. Charles, at Lucerne, consecrated in 1933. Switzerland was the only country in western Christendom which, by the late 'thirties, had created a living tradition of church architecture. There is still no other country where modern churches of real quality take their place so naturally among the best secular buildings of their day. The 'ecclesiastical' architect does not exist. The finest Swiss churches are the work of the same architects who have created some of the most outstanding schools, hospitals and houses of the last thirty years. The Church has learned how to speak in the language of the living. 'To-day,' wrote the Dominican Father Régamey in 1947, 'if one wants to see a mature religious architecture, one must go to the region which lies between St. Gallen, Lucerne and Basle. . . . The qualities which are so striking when one first sees these churches—their logical construction, their adaptation to the demands of the liturgy, and the way in which they express a modern sensibility—become more and more apparent as one studies them.'[12]

Metzger's early church of St. Charles, at Lucerne, is a remarkable example of the one-room type of plan, the development of which has been a feature of Swiss ecclesiastical architecture. The church is based on a U-shaped plan and the altar stands in a semicircular sanctuary, raised well above the level of the nave. The architectural form of the building is extremely simple; the flat ceiling and the unbroken line of windows bind nave and sanctuary together in a single space. The processional way is defined by a series of marble columns. The pulpit has been brought into closer relationship to the sanctuary. The church is built on two levels on a sloping site. On the lower floor there is a week-day chapel and the baptistery. The upper floor, which is approached by a splendid porch, is given over entirely to the room for the eucharistic assembly. Sir Edward Maufe, while admitting that the exterior of this church 'forms an admirable composition', goes on to complain that the interior is less satisfactory: 'for there is no mystery, and the form of the structure seems more suitable for a hall than a church'.[13] The

[12] 'L'exemple de la Suisse alémanique.' *L'Art sacré*, 1947, Nos. 1–2.
[13] *Opus cit.*, p. 57.

mystery to which this church bears witness is the mystery of the Word made flesh—visible and tangible; the mystery of Christ present and active in the community which is his body, the two or three gathered together in his name; the mystery rooted in the liturgy and the sacraments from which the building derives its *raison d'être* and which it so admirably serves.
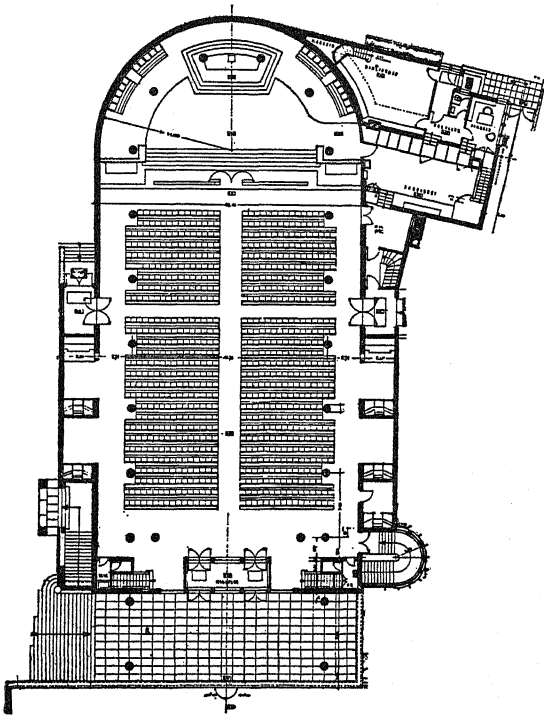
PLAN 6. ST. CHARLES, LUCERNE

During the next few years Metzger and two former pupils of Karl Moser—Hermann Baur and Otto Dreyer—built a series of churches of real quality. They are all of the one-room type and based on a simple rectangular plan, with no structural division between nave and sanctuary. It was not until after the Second World War that Metzger and Baur forsook the rectangular plan and began to explore more complex spatial relationships between nave and sanctuary. Their pre-war churches are, from this point of view, comparatively conventional.

The virtues of these churches are simplicity, integrity, economy of means and subordination to liturgical requirements. They are essen-tially houses for worship; they do not shock or startle or draw attention to themselves. They have a feeling for human scale which makes for a satisfactory relationship between the ministers at the altar and the whole congregation. There are still some unsatisfactory features: several otherwise admirable churches are marred by the introduc-tion of unworthy mural paintings—the renewal of the visual arts had not kept pace with that of architecture in Switzerland—and it
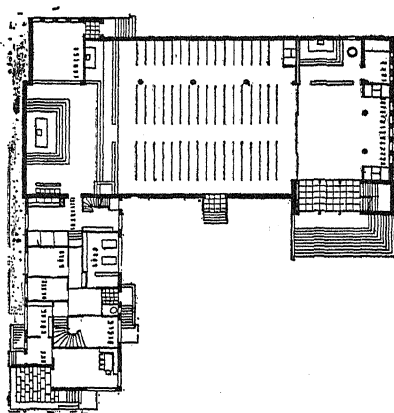
PLAN 7. ST. THERESA, ZÜRICH-FRIESENBERG
Architect: Fritz Metzger

was still possible in 1935 for three altars to be placed side by side in the sanctuary of Metzger's church of St. Gallus at Oberuzwil. Never-theless, by the end of the 'thirties Catholic church architecture in Switzerland was coming to maturity.

The renewal began rather later among the Reformed communities in Switzerland but, once under way, soon produced several churches of considerable distinction. The first sign that the architectural revolution was spreading from Catholic circles to Reformed was the celebrated Johanneskirche, built in Basle in 1936 by the architects Burckhardt and Egender: a rather bald but in its way extremely impressive structure of steel and concrete, with a striking open-work bell tower and a south wall glazed from floor to ceiling. The church has an asym-metrical rectangular plan, the seats for the choir are placed to the north of the sanctuary, and communion table and pulpit are both
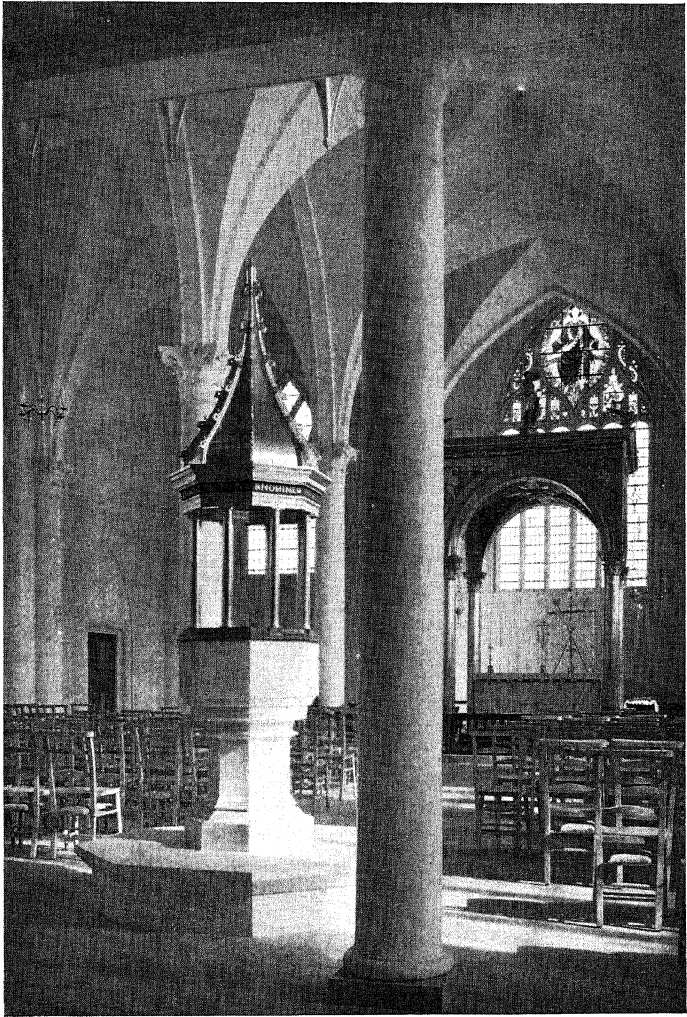
26   St. Philip, Cosham

27 St. Michael and All Angels, Wythenshawe
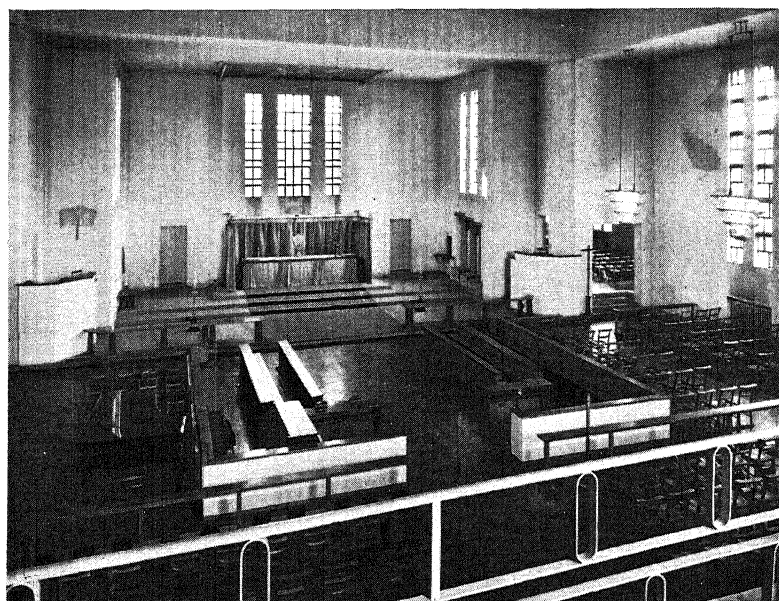
28 John Keble church, Mill Hill
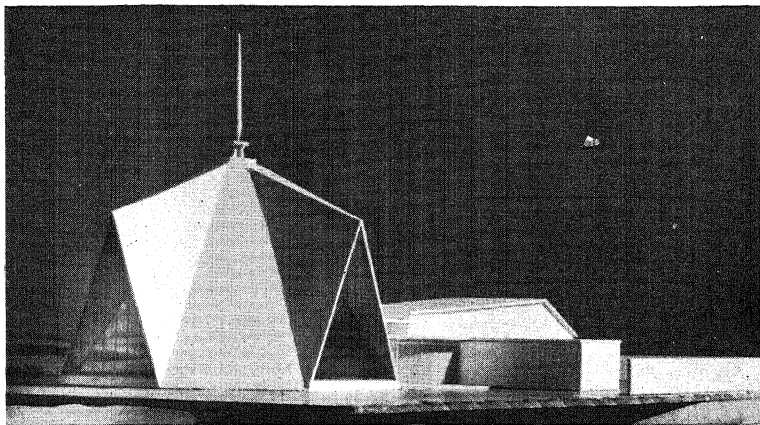
29   Church of the Holy Cross, Doncaster
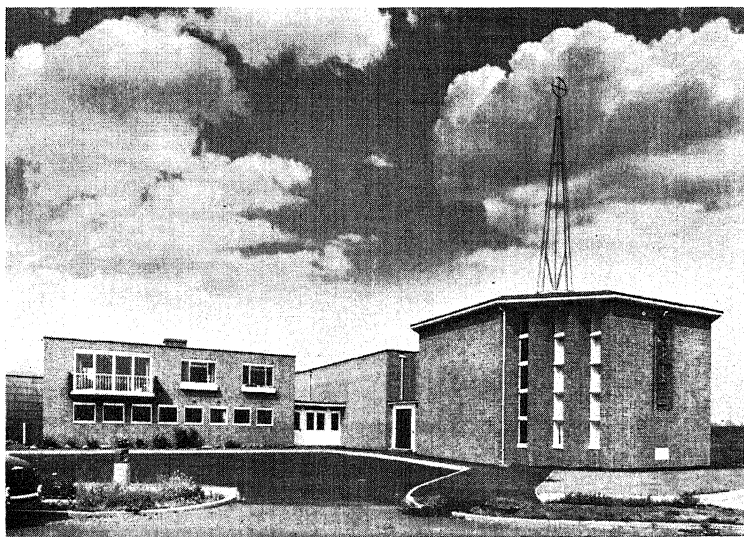
30   St. Peter, Cricklewood
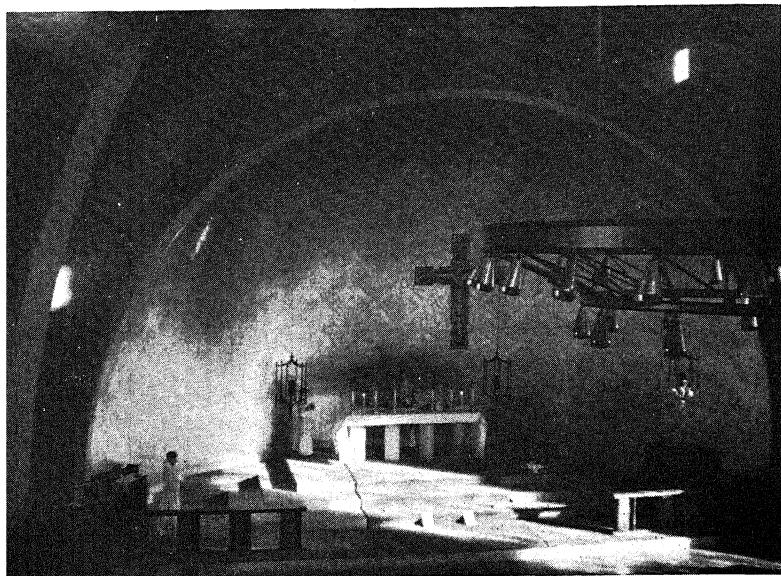
31 All Saints, Hanworth

32 St. Richard, Three Bridges
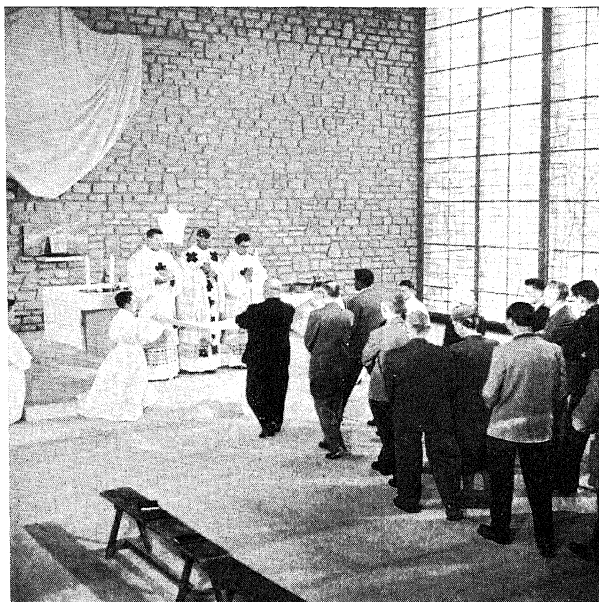
33　The communion of the people at Notre-Dame des
Pauvres, Issy-les-Moulineaux, Paris
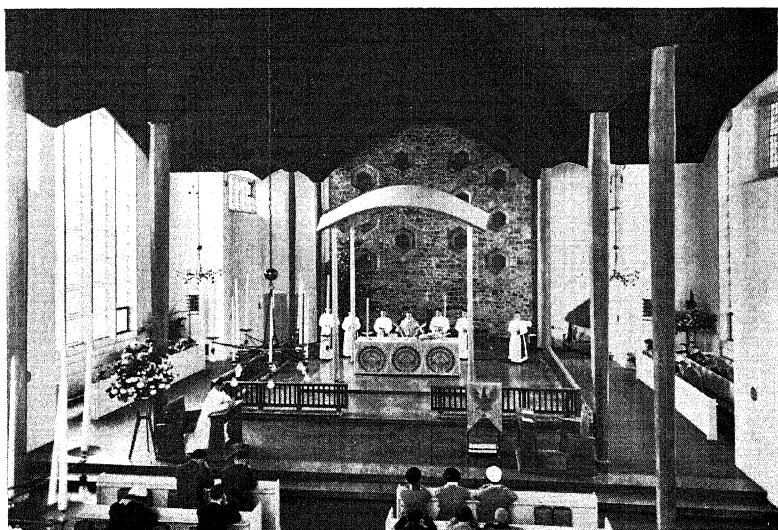
34　Church of the Ascension, Crownhill, near Plymouth
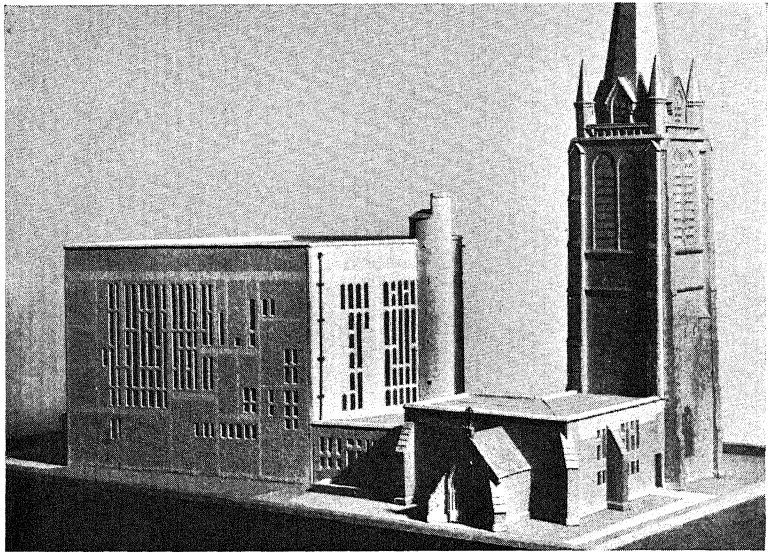
35 Project for rebuilding of St. Mark, Sheffield
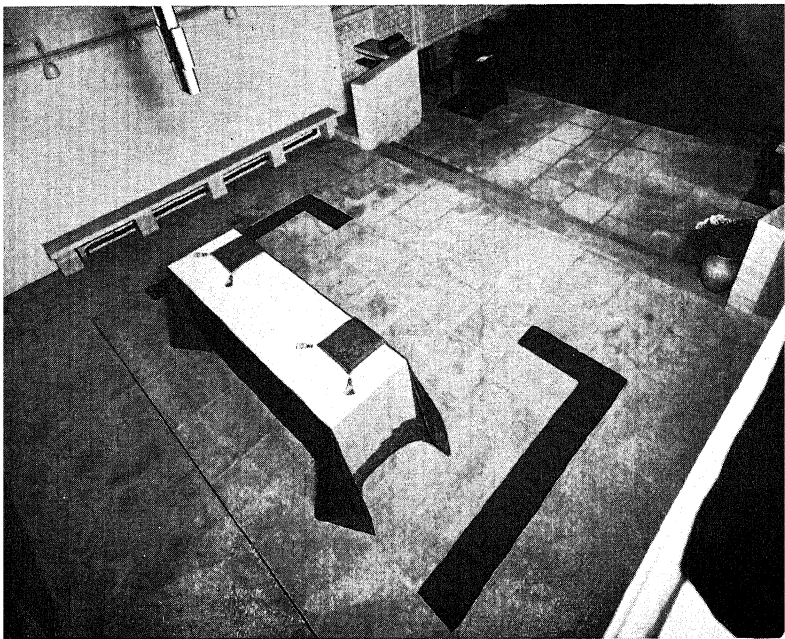
36 The restored sanctuary, St. Aidan's College, Birkenhead
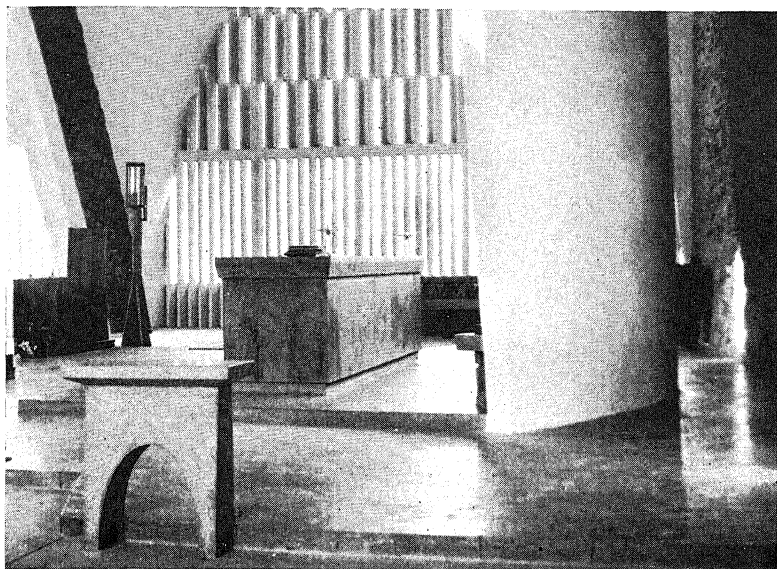
37 and 38   Chapel of the Resurrection, University College, Ibadan, Nigeria
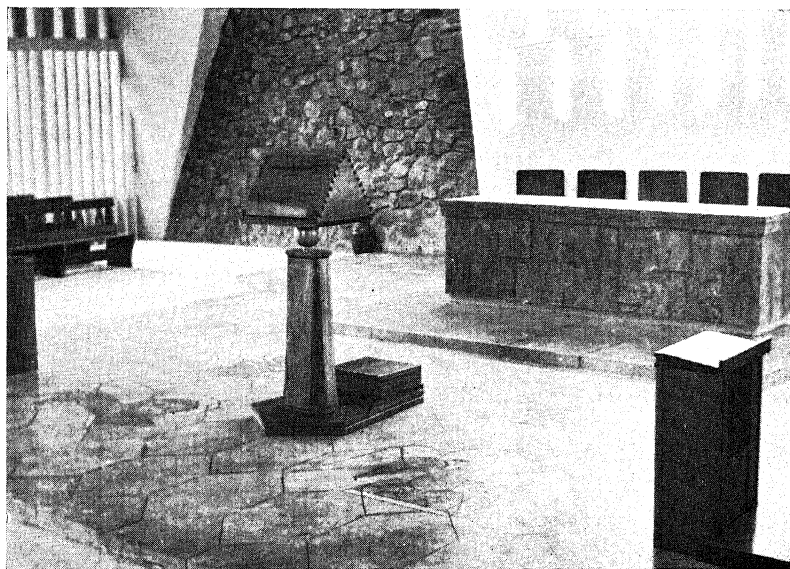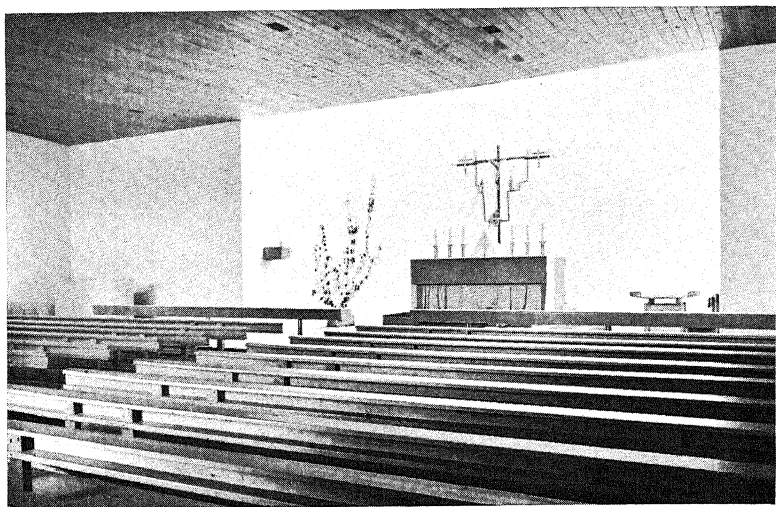
39 and 40   Church at Glenrothes New Town
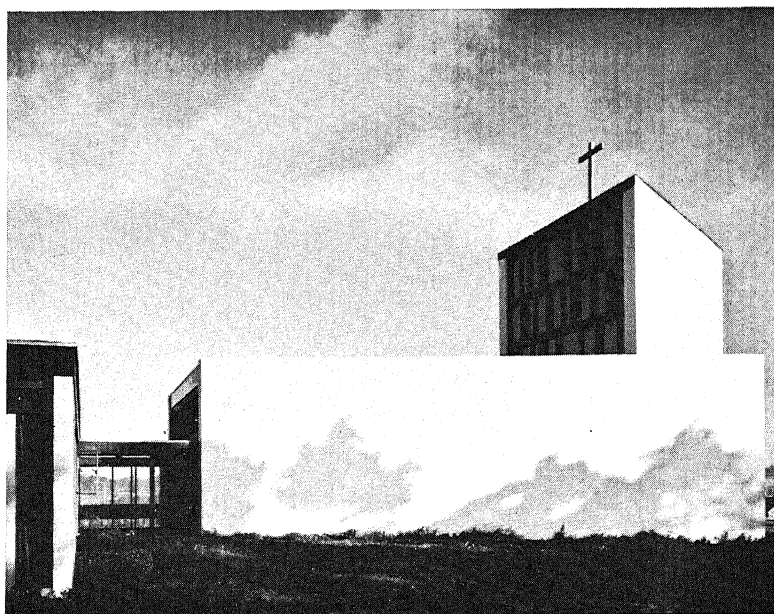
somewhat overshadowed by the organ. It is significant that in many Reformed churches built since the war the choir and organ have ceased to be the most prominent feature of the interior. In Werner Moser's church at Zürich-Alstetten, completed five years later than the Johanneskirche, they have been moved to the south side of the sanctuary, within which are grouped the three liturgical foci of font, pulpit and communion table. This is quite the finest Reformed church to be built in Switzerland or in any other country down to 1941, and it will bear comparison with the Roman Catholic churches of Metzger, Baur
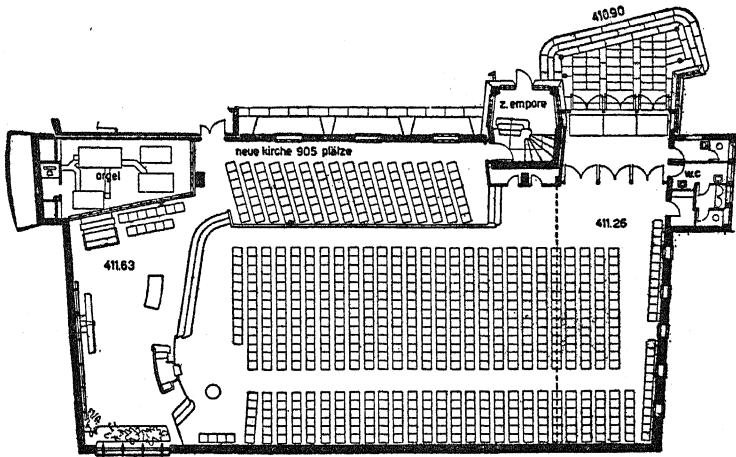
PLAN 8. REFORMED CHURCH, ZÜRICH-ALTSTETTEN

and Dreyer which, by the late 'thirties, had given Swiss church architecture an unchallenged pre-eminence.

There are a few other churches of the late 'twenties and 'thirties which may be briefly noted. Professor A. Gocar's church at Königsgrätz (Hradec Králové), in Czechoslovakia, built in 1929, is an early example of a trapezoidal layout; from the point of view of the plan it has much in common with Bartning's church at Essen-Altendorf. Martin Weber built an octagonal church at Frankfurt A. M. as early as 1926; L. G. Daneri's church of San Marcelino, at Genoa, built a year later than St. Englebert's, Riehl, is based on a circular plan which recalls that of the earlier building, though in other respects the two churches have little in common. The way in which the six secondary

altars are set in shallow recesses all around the eucharistic room gives this church a decidedly baroque flavour.

To sum up: the modern church is the product of two distinct movements, one architectural the other theological and liturgical. The two movements come together for the first time at Le Raincy to create a church which is not merely an honest piece of construction but which also expresses something of the Church's new understanding of itself and of its function in the modern world. During the next eighteen years, in Germany and Switzerland, the two movements mingle and interact, and out of the resulting ferment of theological thought and architectural experiment there emerge a handful of churches which embody—tentatively at first, but with a growing assurance—the new insights, both architectural *and* theological, of our time. It is these churches which have provided the foundation upon which all subsequent ecclesiastical architecture of any significance has been based. Without them the widespread renewal of sacred art and architecture during the last ten years would have been unthinkable.

5. *Church Planning in England 1928–1940*

T HE theological and liturgical renaissance taking place on the Continent attracted little attention in this country until the publication of Father Gabriel Hebert's *Liturgy and Society* in 1935. This book was originally intended, in the words of the author, 'to be a treatise on the principles of Christian worship, inspired to a large extent by the Liturgical Movement in the Roman Catholic Church, which, in seeking to reintroduce the Catholic laity to the treasures of the liturgy, has found itself possessed of a key to unlock many doors, and engaged in an ever-widening circle of activities'.[1] It developed into a radical reappraisal of the function of the Church in contemporary society. It is difficult to overestimate the importance of this remarkable essay. For many of my own generation it opened up entirely new perspectives, and presented a gospel, which we had been inclined to dismiss as a mere irrelevance, in a way which was as stimulating as it was unfamiliar. It has continued to be the gateway through which many have first entered into the world of the liturgical renewal on the Continent. Though it can hardly be said to have exercised any direct influence on church planning during the late 'thirties, its long-term effects have been incalculable. It is a real turning point in the history of theological thought in the Church of England in the twentieth century, and, as an introduction to the basic principles and aims of the liturgical movement, it is still of great value.

Many of the ideas set forth in this epoch-making book found concrete expression during the period under consideration in the development of what is commonly known as the Parish Communion. In a growing number of parishes, of all shades of churchmanship, the main service of Sunday morning came, in the course of the 'thirties, to be a

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[1] A. G. Hebert: *Liturgy and Society: the Function of the Church in the Modern World*. Faber & Faber, 1935, p. 8.

celebration of the eucharist, with music and a 'liturgical' sermon, at which most of the congregation communicated. In many parishes the service was followed by breakfast in an adjoining hall. In contrast to the non-communicating high mass of the late nineteenth century and the period of the Anglo-Catholic congresses, as well as the high mattins which had usurped the place of the eucharist in other parishes, the parish communion was markedly congregational in character and the laity were encouraged to take their full part in the service. The new liturgical pattern for Sunday morning was described, and provided with a theological foundation, in a volume of essays published in 1937 and edited by Father Hebert,[2] and it has been one of the main factors contributing to a fresh approach to church planning during the period since the Second World War.

English church architecture of the 'thirties is remarkable only for the faithfulness with which it adheres to the 'traditional' church plan. Beneath the stylistic eclecticism so characteristic of the time, the long, narrow, rectangular plan with the altar at the east end persists almost unchallenged. In a few churches the choir and organ were banished from the position which had been assigned to them by the Cambridge ecclesiologists, and were moved from the chancel to a west or side gallery. In other churches the singers were placed in the front of the nave. There was a tendency for chancels to become wider and shorter, with a generous amount of space between the choir stalls, so that the altar could be seen from every part of the church. There were some tentative approximations to the one-room plan exemplified by Notre Dame du Raincy and Corpus Christi, Aachen. But the free-standing altar remained something of a rarity, and in so far as church design was influenced by real or imaginary contemporary needs it was almost invariably questions of style and structure, rather than of planning, which were at issue.

If, however, the most striking characteristic of church architecture in this country during the decade before the Second World War is its uncritical acceptance of the conventional plan, there are several exceptional churches which must be briefly noticed. Two of these are Roman Catholic parish churches, but both are so unlike the majority of churches built in England during the 'thirties in the way in which they reflect the new liturgical insights, that it would be ridiculous to ignore them. It may be remarked in passing that the Roman Catholic Church in this country was, if anything, even less receptive to new

[2] *The Parish Communion.* S.P.C.K., 1937.

ideas from across the Channel at this period than was the Church of England.

The first of these churches was built at Bradford in 1935. It is based on an octagonal plan and there is a central altar. 'The altar is right in the middle,' wrote Eric Gill a few months after the church had been
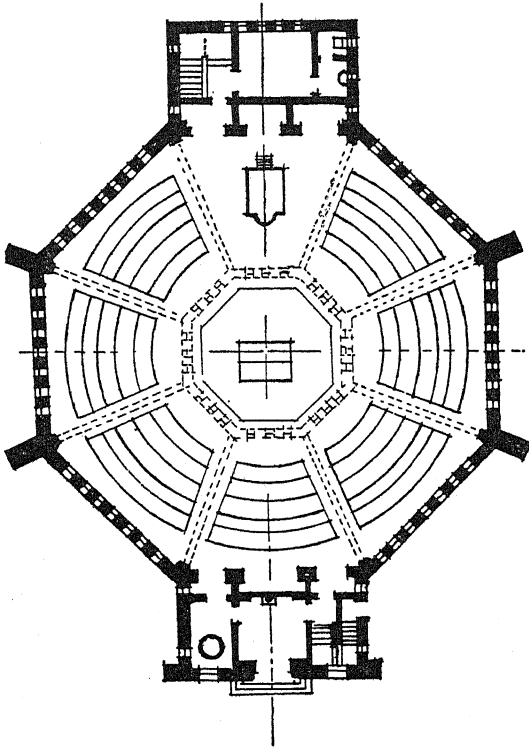
PLAN 1. CHURCH OF THE FIRST MARTYRS, BRADFORD

consecrated, 'and the result is very remarkable. The sacrifice is offered not only for the people, but by and in the midst of them.'[3] The church was the result of Father John O'Connor's desire to create a building which would express the essential character of the eucharist as a corporate action in which the laity as well as the celebrant have their part to play. The pulpit is placed behind the altar on the main axis of the

[3] *Letters of Eric Gill* (Ed. Walter Shewring). Jonathan Cape, 1947, p. 351.

church. The baptistery is to the left of the porch as one enters the building. Apart from its unconventional plan the church of the First Martyrs, at Bradford, has little interest. It was designed by a local architect, J. H. Langtry Langton.

The second of these two Roman Catholic churches was designed by Eric Gill himself for a parish at Gorleston-on-Sea, in Norfolk. It was consecrated in 1939, and embodies many of the ideas expressed in Gill's essay 'The Mass for the Masses',[4] particularly his contention that 'there is nothing whatever in the nature of an altar that implies that it
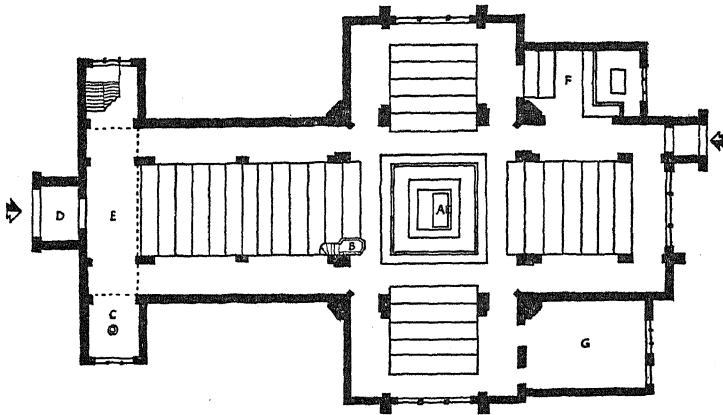
PLAN 2. CHURCH OF ST. PETER,
GORLESTON-ON-SEA

A. Altar; B. Pulpit; C. Baptistery; D. Porch; E. Gallery; F. Chapel; G. Sacristy.

should be anywhere else but in the middle. It began as a table around which people sat and partook of the consecrated bread and wine. It remains that thing.' The church at Gorleston has a cruciform plan, and the altar stands at the centre of the building, surrounded by the congregation. 'The only thing to write home about', wrote Gill, while the church was still under construction, 'is the fact that it will have a central altar. Everything springs from that—the plan grows from that and the outside is simply the result of the inside . . . it is certain to be judged by all sorts of false canons. No one will believe that we designed the job from the altar outwards and trusted to luck after that.'[5] Gill was well aware of the shortcomings of this building. He realised only too well that it was 'gawky and amateurish', and that this first attempt

[4] *Sacred and Secular.* 1940, pp. 140ff.
[5] *Letters*, pp. 414f.

to translate his vision of a revived liturgy into terms of brick and timber
had brought to light a host of problems which could only be solved by
further experiment. But with all its faults, St. Peter's Gorleston is one
of the most courageous essays in planning for liturgy that the 'thirties
produced, and it is a pity that Gill had no further opportunity to build
a church.

To return to the Church of England, there are three parish churches
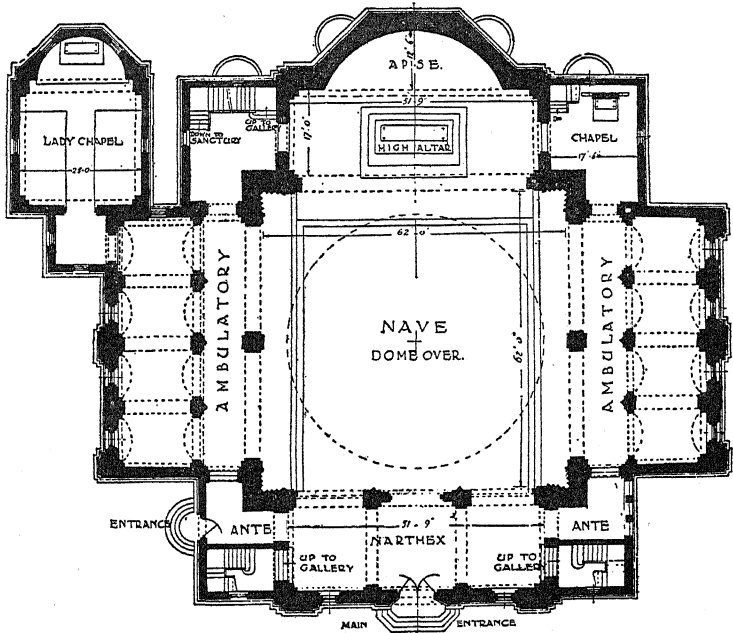
PLAN 3. KELHAM CHAPEL

built in this country during the 'thirties which, though they have
nothing in common from the point of view of style, stand apart from
the other churches of the period in virtue of their emphasis on the plan.
Before considering these churches, however, there is one other building
which deserves to be noticed. This is the chapel built for the Society
of the Sacred Mission at Kelham, near Newark, in 1927–28, to take the
place of the glazed entrance court of Sir Gilbert Scott's Kelham Hall,
which had formerly served as the Society's chapel. It is in many ways
a remarkable church, far in advance of its time so far as this country is
concerned. Its architect, Charles Clayton Thompson, died in 1932,

and the chapel has still to be finished. If the exterior is rather odd, the interior is of real quality: and this, no less than the church at Gorleston, is a building which has been designed from the altar outwards. The 'programme' included the provision of seating for three hundred students, arranged in such a way as to facilitate the antiphonal singing of plain chant. The basic feature of the plan is a central square, covered by a concrete dome. To the east, beyond the great rood arch, is a spacious sanctuary with a free-standing altar; to the west a narthex. The building is admirably adapted to its liturgical function. It is an excellent example of what can happen when an architect of integrity is so
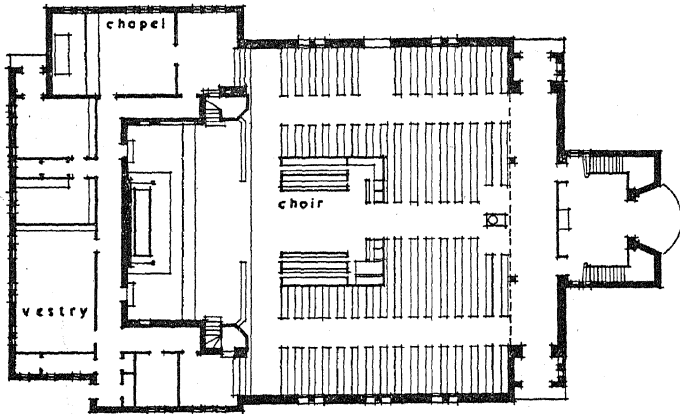
PLAN 4. JOHN KEBLE CHURCH, MILL HILL

fortunate as to find a client who has given real thought to the formulation of a programme informed by a living liturgical tradition, and who is more concerned with the fact that the building should *work* as a place for corporate worship than with its appearance. Such occasions are unhappily all too rare in the history of English church architecture of the twentieth century.

Of the three parish churches which occupy a special place in the development of church planning in this country during the years before the war, the first, and the most 'contemporary' from the point of view of style, is the John Keble church at Mill Hill, consecrated in 1936. The plan of this church embodies the ideals of the parish communion movement. The rectangular nave is wider than it is long; the 'chancel' for the clergy and singers is in the centre of the

church, surrounded on three sides by the congregation; and the sanctuary takes the form of a wide shallow rectangle, opening off the nave. Though the altar is placed against the east wall it is plainly visible to everyone, and the whole congregation is reasonably close to it. A separate chapel is provided for use on week-days. The organ is in the west gallery with a separate console in the chancel; the font is at the west end of the central aisle.

This is an important church which suggested a new solution to the difficult problem of accommodating a surpliced choir in such a way that they do not separate the congregation from the ministers at the altar. It is the first parish church built in this country which breaks away decisively from the conventional nineteenth-century layout, in an attempt to establish a closer relationship between priest and people, and to enable the laity to play an active part in the liturgy. The only disappointing feature of the plan concerns the placing of the altar. The altar itself, which is of the conventional so-called 'English' type, is somewhat out of keeping with the architectural character of the building. The church would be vastly improved if, instead of the altar being placed against the east wall, it were set in the middle of the sanctuary with plenty of space all around it. It is much to be hoped that such a modification of the original plan may some day be put in hand. It would, of course, involve some readjustment of levels within the sanctuary, but the difficulties should not be insurmountable.

The following year saw the consecration of another important church: St. Michael and All Angels, Wythenshawe, in the diocese of Manchester, by N. F. Cachemaille-Day. Like the John Keble church, it employs the Diagrid system of reinforced-concrete construction, the basis of which is a grid of squares placed diamondwise. The star-shaped plan evolved naturally from the use of this constructional system. The plan has many of the same advantages as that of the church of Mill Hill, as compared with the conventional layout. Though the concrete-slab roof is supported by slender columns, the congregation's view of the altar is not seriously obstructed. (These columns were necessitated by a waterlogged site; they are actually piles and go down fifteen feet into the earth.) As at Mill Hill, the architect was concerned above all to create a church in which the whole congregation could be close to the altar. The plan would have been even more satisfactory from the point of view of liturgical function had not the then Bishop of Manchester insisted upon certain modifications of the architect's original drawings. The effect of these changes was to push the altar further back

into the sanctuary in order to make room for choir stalls between it and the people. It was originally intended that the choir should be seated at the back of the church, and there can be little doubt that this would have been a more satisfactory arrangement. But despite these
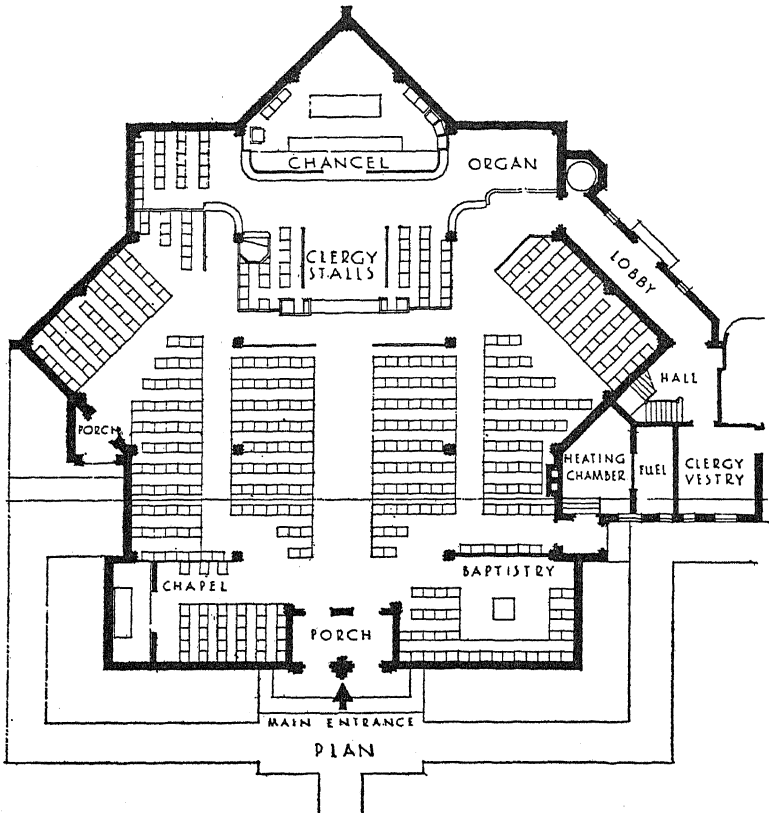
PLAN 5. ST. MICHAEL AND ALL ANGELS,
WYTHENSHAWE

modifications the plan is an interesting one, and marks a notable step forward in the adaptation of the layout of a parish church to modern liturgical needs.

While the John Keble church and St. Michael's Wythenshawe look like modern buildings, St. Philip's Cosham, completed in 1938, bears little resemblance to anything that the man in the street is likely to associate with functional architecture. Yet there is no church built in

this country since the beginning of the century which is so perfectly fitted to its purpose. It is the work of an architect for whom architecture is essentially the handmaid of the liturgy, and Christian tradition something far more vital than a storehouse of precedents and historic detail. This church functions as the great majority of modern churches—for all their display of contemporary clichés—do not. It is a building for corporate worship: a building to house an altar. From the point of view of plan it is extremely simple—a short rectangle,
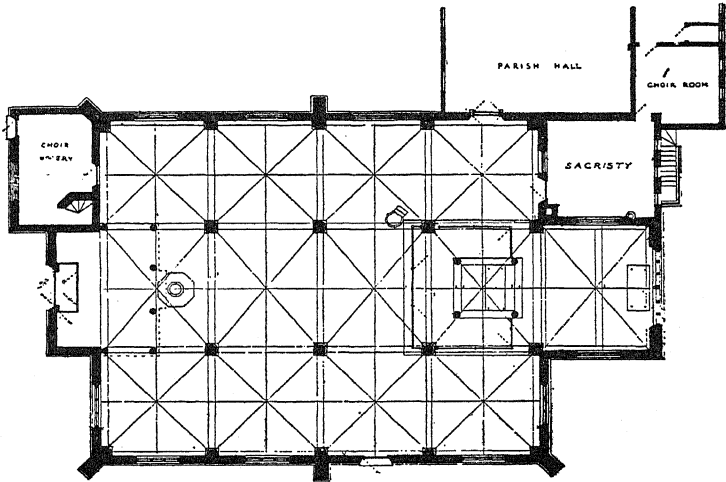
PLAN 6. ST. PHILIP, COSHAM

with the altar free-standing beneath a ciborium, surrounded by *cancelli*, or altar rails, and a small chapel behind it. The font stands near the porch, on the main axis of the church. There is a west gallery for the singers and the organ. The plan embodies the architect's conviction that the type of layout common in the fourth century, with the altar 'in the midst of the worshippers, and not separated from them by any choir but only by a very open screen, or merely by low *cancelli* . . . is suited to the needs of to-day in a way in which the medieval plan, to which we in England still adhere amidst all vagaries of styles, is not suited, developed as it was for monastic use'.[6]

The church of St. Philip provides a conclusive answer to those who

[6] J. N. Comper: *Of the Atmosphere of a Church.* Sheldon Press, 1947, p. 21.

assert that to bring the altar forward, into the midst of the people, must involve the sacrifice of mystery. We can well afford to dispense with the false mystery which is dependent upon romantic vistas, Wagnerian gloom and other devices more appropriate to the opera house than to the Christian church. The little church at Cosham scorns such theatrical tricks. It exemplifies its architect's contention that 'knowledge of tradition is the first requisite for the creation of atmosphere in a church', and that this elusive quality 'must be the product of one mind so steeped in tradition as a second nature that . . . he can receive the inspiration to apply it to the needs which he has to meet.'[7] This is an authentic *domus ecclesiæ*, a church of very rare quality, completely subordinated to the demands of the liturgy which is its inspiration and its *raison d'être*. The twenty years which have elapsed since its consecration have produced nothing worthy of comparison with it on this side of the Channel.

Among all the other new churches built in England during the 'thirties there are very few which need be noticed. The church of St. Saviour, at Eltham, consecrated in 1933, which gained for its architects —Welch, Cachemaille-Day and Lander—the R.I.B.A. award for the best building erected in the London area during the previous three years, attempts with some success to explore the possibilities of the one-room plan. A small mission church at Sunderland, also by N. F. Cachemaille-Day, which was completed just before the war, has an interesting plan with a free-standing altar standing in a shallow apsidal sanctuary. It foreshadows the same architect's church at Hanworth, twenty years later in date, and its unpretentious simplicity provides a welcome contrast to the reach-me-down splendours of most of the mission churches of its time. The chapel of the Queen's College, Birmingham, with a plan deliberately based on the primitive basilican layout and intended for the celebration of the eucharist facing the people, will be considered in a later chapter. The structure of the chapel was completed before the war, but the building was not used until 1947.

I have already had occasion to refer to Sir Edward Maufe's little book on *Modern Church Architecture*, published in 1948. As a guide to 'modern foreign churches' it is wildly misleading: the treatment meted out to Rudolf Schwarz is typical. It is, however, an extraordinarily illuminating work in another respect: it provides a fascinating

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[7] *Ibid.*, pp. 12, 29. My only criticism of the plan of this church relates to the arrangement of the chapel behind the principal altar (see p. 37).

glimpse of an approach to church building which was widespread in the offices of English ecclesiastical architects of the 'thirties and which is reflected in the churches of the period. Take, for example, the author's remarks about a rather dull Roman Catholic church in Holland, which has a secondary altar on either side of the church, within the sanctuary itself. After a brief reference to the jointing of the brickwork and the lighting of the sanctuary, Sir Edward observes that 'the secondary altars . . . greatly improve the value of the design,
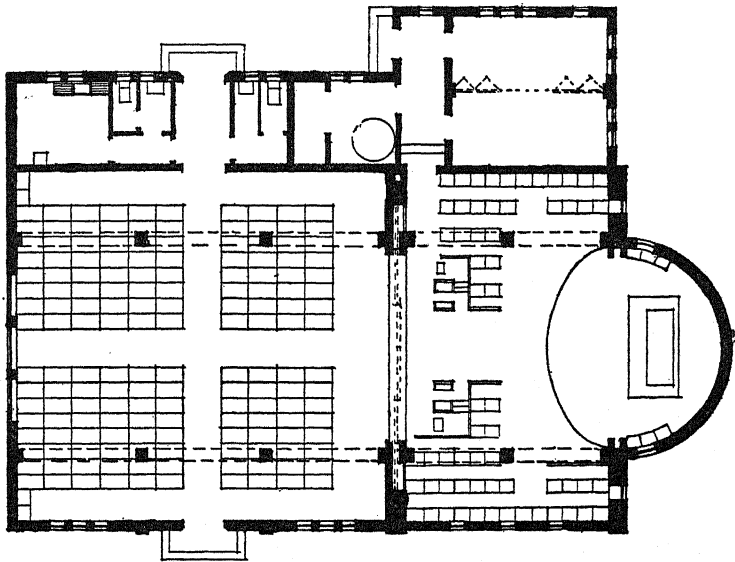
PLAN 7. MISSION CHURCH, SUNDERLAND

seeming to stabilise the thrust of the arch and bring the composition to rest'. This seems to me to be quite remarkably revealing. The altars are thought of, *not* in terms of their liturgical function or as things to be used, but as elements in a composition. It does not seem to occur to the author that the setting up of secondary altars within the sanctuary is perhaps undesirable for theological and liturgical reasons. He is plainly not interested in such questions; his approach is essentially æsthetic—not theological or functional.

This impression is borne out by a study of his other criticisms of foreign churches. 'The virtues of the pre-Nazi church in Germany', he tells us, are 'the direct expression of all its parts and the fine

contrast shown in proportion, fenestration and ornament.' There is scarcely a reference to planning in the whole book. Sir Edward does observe of a church at Stuttgart that 'it is appropriate that the social rooms lead off the west end of the church, while the clergy house leads off the east end'; while the round Friedenskirche at Ludwigshafen moves him to remark that 'here the traditional type of church plan has been abandoned for a circular hall . . . being suitable, perhaps, for an evangelical church'. No: the things that are recommended as deserving close study are the details of fenestration and the simple means used to obtain 'a dramatic composition'. The emphasis throughout is on colour and lighting and texture. Church architecture has been taken out of its social context and isolated in an æsthetic vacuum where theological and liturgical criteria are irrelevant.

I mention this book only because there can be little question that the approach which it reveals was very common in this country during the period between the wars. English church architects did undoubtedly study with the closest attention the fenestration of the bell-tower at Riehl and the Friedenskirche at Vienna. They learned from continental architects quite a number of new ways of obtaining a dramatic composition with very simple means. What they completely failed to grasp was the fact that architects like Schwarz, in Germany, and Metzger, in Switzerland, were attempting to find a solution to an entirely different set of problems. It was only Comper, Gill and a few other men who saw the essential irrelevance of most of the churches that were being built all over the British Isles, and who realised that the real questions at issue were theological and liturgical rather than stylistic and æsthetic. The handful of churches described in this chapter stand out from the other buildings of the time because they reassert the half-forgotten truth that a church must be conceived in terms of its liturgical function—not as a composition; that the *domus ecclesiæ* is '*a house for* divine worship, not an autonomous architectural expression of religious feeling'; and that it can never be considered apart from the whole life of the community which it serves and signifies.

6. *Post-War Developments in Church Planning in Western Europe and America*

DURING the decade which has elapsed since the resumption of church building in western Europe, after the virtual standstill imposed by the Second World War, the influence of the liturgical movement has grown immensely. While it is still among continental Roman Catholics that the signs of the renewal are most apparent, the twentieth-century reformation now extends to every part of western Christendom, and beyond. The encyclical *Mediator Dei* of Pope Pius XII, the reform of the liturgy for Holy Week, the decretal on the simplification of the rubrics, and the international congress held at Assisi in 1956 all bear witness to the vitality of the movement within the Roman Catholic Church. One has only to study the liturgies of the Church of South India and of the Reformed Church in France to realise the extent to which ideas that were still revolutionary in the mid-'thirties have now won widespread acceptance in other circles.

It is undoubtedly in France that progress has been most spectacular. It was not until the years of the German occupation that the liturgical movement really established itself on French soil, but within a matter of fifteen years an extraordinary transformation has occurred. It seems hardly credible that in 1940 France was still scarcely affected by the reforming influences that were at work in other countries of western Europe. To-day it can be taken for granted that the French theologians will be found in the *avant-garde* of any new venture: the crossing from Le Havre to Southampton now seems like a passage from a reformed church to an unreformed.

The radical reassessment of the state of Christianity in France which dates from the publication in 1943 of the epoch-making book *La France, Pays de Mission?* has issued in a drastic reorientation of the work of the Church. It has stimulated a ferment of experiment—liturgical, pastoral and missionary—and, from about 1951 onwards,

has inspired a series of remarkable churches, several of which have been widely, if not always critically, acclaimed on both sides of the Atlantic. One of these churches—Le Corbusier's pilgrimage chapel at Ronchamp—is probably the most completely satisfying modern church which has been built in any country: though its effect upon the work of lesser architects promises to be catastrophic; a rash of random windows already extends from Berlin to Tokyo. While the first signs of the present renewal of French sacred art are to be found in the field of painting, stained glass and mosaic, rather than of architecture, the liturgical renaissance has lately produced some experiments in church planning, which, if they lack the assurance and subtlety of the best of the work carried out on the other side of the Rhine, reveal something of the same preoccupation with liturgical function as characterises the new churches of western Germany and Switzerland. The Dominican centre in Paris, which publishes the review *L'Art Sacré*, has established itself since the war as perhaps the most important and influential institution of its kind in western Christendom.

In America, though the influence of fresh liturgical thinking tends still to be confined to comparatively small minorities within the various Christian communities, the new outlook has made considerable progress—especially among Roman Catholics—and church planning has gained a new flexibility and freedom from convention. Some of the most distinguished architects now working in the States, including Mies van der Rohe, Marcel Breuer, Frank Lloyd Wright and Saarinen, have contributed to the nascent renewal of ecclesiastical architecture. The Benedictine monastery at Collegeville, where Marcel Breuer is building a church, has become one of the focal-points of the liturgical movement in the Roman Catholic Church, and made an impressive contribution to the international congress at Assisi. Among American Protestants too, the ecumenical movement has had an invigorating effect upon church planning.

Italy has in the last few years produced a number of interesting new churches, including two or three based on a circular plan. In Holland, the Dutch Reformed Church is making sustained efforts to create an architecture genuinely informed by contemporary theological insights. In Germany and in Switzerland the work of the late 'twenties and the 'thirties has provided a solid foundation for further research and experiment, and these two countries, together with the French diocese of Besançon, are unquestionably the most profitable fields in which to study the influence of recent liturgical scholarship and

experience on the planning of churches. The Liturgical Institute at Trier has become one of the most important centres of the liturgical renewal in western Europe.

All over Christendom to-day one can see a new and deepened understanding of the Church and the liturgy finding expression in a living architecture. New methods of construction have provided architects with the tools with which to create buildings which enable the Church to be itself, to realise to the full its character as a priestly community, whenever it meets to celebrate the liturgy. What Dr. J. G. Davies has written of the first flowering of Christian architecture could be applied equally appropriately to its rebirth during the last thirty years. 'Even from a cursory survey of the Christian churches throughout the different countries,' he writes, 'one factor clearly emerges, namely the immense variety of plans. There is, of course, even amidst such diversity, a certain similarity, since the buildings were destined for the same use—the celebration of the liturgy—but this did not prevent the burgeoning of native genius, and the creation of new types went on apace.'[1]

It is, however, necessary to discriminate. There is no particular virtue in an unconventional plan—any more than in unusual detail. The extraordinary diversity of planning to be seen in post-war architecture in Europe and America is not wholly due to a concern for liturgical function. Many of the unconventional plans of the last few years seem to reflect preoccupations of a rather different order. The commonest type of aberration is that which results from the desire to exploit new structural forms for their own sake, or to pursue a programme of plastic research as an end in itself. The outcome is often very exciting from a purely æsthetic standpoint; unfortunately the success or failure of a church, as of any other building, has to be judged in the light of other than purely æsthetic criteria. The type of plan based on an ellipse orientated on its long axis has proved very popular, particularly in France, since the war, despite the fact that it is in many ways extremely ill-adapted to liturgical requirements. Recent examples of such a plan include Notre-Dame de Royan, St. Julian, Caen, and Maurice Novarina's new church at Villeparisis. All these churches possess considerable plastic quality. Simply as objects to be contemplated—as one might contemplate a piece of sculpture—they are undeniably impressive. Whether they will *work* as buildings for

[1] *The Origin and Development of Early Christian Architecture.* S.C.M. Press, 1952, p. 138.

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corporate worship is another matter. It is difficult to avoid the impression that their plan springs from a concern with structural problems rather than from anything comparable to the rigorous functional analysis which informs the post-war churches of Fritz Metzger, for example, or Hermann Baur. Again, several recent projects which have been published in the architectural periodicals suggest that the architect has started out with an arbitrary desire to build, it may be, a round church, or to exploit the possibilities of a particular constructional system, regardless of the demands of the programme. This is not an approach to church architecture—or indeed to architecture of any kind—which is calculated to produce a satisfactory building.

Then there are the modern churches whose plan is determined by a type of symbolism which, though it is perfectly legitimate in two-dimensional arts such as painting or mosaic, is entirely inappropriate where architecture is concerned. An extreme example of such a plan —which seems likely to be as ill-adapted to liturgical requirements as it is certainly unconventional—is a new German church, which, as can doubtless be determined from a helicopter, though it may well be less readily apparent from ground-level, is based upon the Greek capitals Alpha and Omega. Barry Byrne's well-known church at Kansas City, the plan of which deliberately recalls the fish of Christian symbolism, is another example of a fundamentally mistaken approach to church planning. It has much in common with that of the Cambridge ecclesiologists, with their cruciform churches symbolising the doctrine of the atonement. Often it is found in combination with the other false approach—the concern with structure rather than function.

One of the most regrettable features of·English church architecture since the middle of the nineteenth century has been its *lack* of variety: its dull uniformity of plan and furnishing. In this it perpetuates one of the cardinal errors of the Cambridge ecclesiologists—the view that there is one 'correct' way of arranging a church, regardless of the infinite variety of local and regional needs. The average Gothic revival church is planned in exactly the same way, whether it serves a small rural community in the Cotswolds, an industrial parish in the north of England, or a chaplaincy in Greece. This, as Canon Addleshaw has demonstrated with a wealth of fascinating detail, contrasts sharply with Anglican church planning from the time of the Reformation down to about 1840, which, with all its shortcomings, does display 'a remarkable degree of intelligent adaptability and flexibility with regard to the needs of that time, combined with loyalty to what

are the classic principles governing the planning of an Anglican church'.[2] What the Cambridge ecclesiologists failed to recognise is the vital distinction between the general *programme* of a church—which is above all a matter of theological and liturgical principle—and, to use a French term for which we seem to have no exact equivalent, the *parti*: the particular and specific solution. The latter involves the working out of the principles embodied in the programme, with due regard to local pastoral and liturgical needs, the nature of the site, the material resources available, and many other factors, all making for diversity.

Even the most cursory survey of post-war church architecture in other countries shows that loyalty to a theological and liturgical programme is compatible with the greatest possible flexibility of plan. It is an illusion to suppose that there is one, and only one, liturgically correct plan for a parish church. What is essential is that every specific solution should spring from, and be informed by, an adequate theological programme. The liturgical movement is not concerned to promote a particular arrangement of church furniture. Our task in this country is not to produce a 'liturgical' alternative to the plan which was worked out in Cambridge in the 1840's and which, with few modifications, is still the basis of most of our church planning. It is rather to formulate a theological programme which takes account of the biblical and liturgical insights so abundantly manifest to-day, and to leave the *parti* to the architect and the local congregation.

Take the basic problem of church planning: the creation of a spatial setting for the eucharistic assembly. The task of the architect is to relate the altar to the congregation in such a way as to express two fundamental truths: first, that all are participants in the eucharistic action; secondly, that within the one priestly community there is a diversity of special liturgies or functions. The sanctuary which contains the altar must be clearly defined in relation to the interior volume of the church, otherwise the second of these truths will be inadequately expressed in the form of the building; it must not, however, be set apart from the nave to such an extent as to obscure the organic unity of the holy people of God. There is no single, ideal solution to this problem, though certain types of plan, such as the elongated rectangle with a structural division between nave and sanctuary and the altar set against the east wall, manifestly fail to do justice to the priestly function of the laity, while others, such as the circular or octagonal plan

[2] *Opus cit.*, p. 225.

with a central altar, do not make plain the hierarchical structure of the *ecclesia.* Between these two extremes, however, there are many different types of plan which, provided only that they spring from a concern for liturgical function, and not from a mere hankering after novelty, can provide a very satisfactory setting for the eucharistic assembly. To show the way in which the same basic truths about the nature of the Church and the liturgy can find expression in very diverse architectural forms, I propose to consider some of the specific solutions to the problem of planning the eucharistic room which have found favour during the last ten years on the Continent and in America. The diagrams reproduced are drastically simplified: the churches discussed have been reduced to their basic elements—an altar, a congregation and a space to contain them.

The cardinal principle of church planning is that architecture should be shaped by worship—*not* worship by architecture. The architect must first establish a satisfactory and theologically expressive relationship between an altar and a congregation; only then can he go on to create an appropriate spatial setting for an activity which, in the last resort, is independent of architecture. All too often the process is reversed: the architect decides to use a particular type of structure or plan which may well have been evolved in terms of some entirely alien function or activity. He then proceeds to consider the best way of relating an altar to a congregation *within the limitations imposed by* an arbitrarily selected space. It is impossible to build a satisfactory church in this way. It is essential to start from the worshipping assembly and its needs, and only then to consider the type of setting which will best enable the community to be itself and to fulfil its primary function. Unless the architect realises this he is likely to create a building in which the Church's understanding of itself and of its worship will be distorted, rather than deepened and enriched, by the form of the building in which it gathers for the liturgy.

We start then with an altar and with a congregation of which different members have different functions. Leaving aside for the moment all questions of architectural form, and considering the eucharist as an action which can, if need be, perfectly well be celebrated in the open air, what kind of relationship between the worshipping community and the altar does the character of the Church, in the biblical sense of that word, demand? The first diagram illustrates a common but erroneous answer to this question. The second suggests a relationship which gives full weight to *both* the theological truths concerning the

nature of the worshipping community which must be expressed. In the earliest buildings erected exclusively for public worship the essential features of this relationship are preserved—though already worship is beginning to be shaped by architecture as a result of the adaptation of
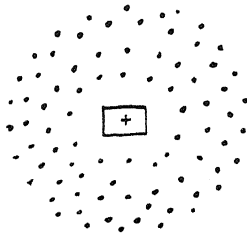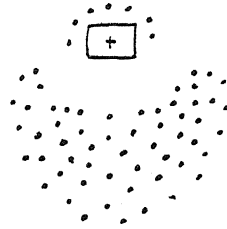
FIG. 1 FIG. 2

the liturgy to a building type evolved for quite a different function, and which reflects the limitations of contemporary methods of covering a space (*Figure* 3). By the later Middle Ages, however, the whole character of the relationship between the altar and the worshipping
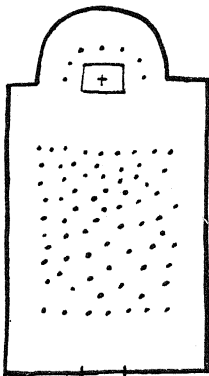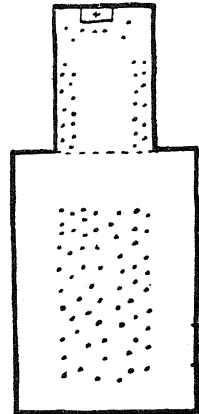
FIG. 3 FIG. 4

community has changed: the laity are no longer *circumstantes*, those who stand around; one of the fundamental truths concerning the nature of the *ecclesia* has been almost totally obscured (*Figure* 4). The idea of the liturgical assembly as 'an advancing column, a procession headed by the priest who, as spokesman of the community, leads them

in prayer and sacrifice before God',[3] though not without a certain value, would seem to be the outcome of an attempt to attach a symbolic meaning to something that originates in the difficulty of covering a space large enough to contain a considerable number of people except in the form of a long, narrow rectangle. The only alternative was a more or less square space roofed with a dome, and it is perhaps significant that in eastern Christendom, where the old understanding of the liturgy as a communal action has never been obscured to the same extent as in the west, the Church has continued to erect houses for worship of this type: though the development of the iconostasis has of course had a considerable effect upon the relationship between the altar and the congregation. To-day, for the first time in history, almost anything is structurally possible. Architecture has gained a freedom and a flexibility which would, as Peter Smithson has remarked, 'have sent Brunelleschi wild with joy. For the first time it is possible for architects to be completely aware of the forces at work in their structures and to find their exact plastic expression without arbitrariness or fear. . . . We can control the stresses within our materials, opening the door to a new world of controlled space.'[4] So within the last few years we can see architects going back to the fundamental problem of relating an altar to a congregation, and using their newly found freedom, not as an end in itself, but as an instrument for creating a liturgical space more deeply expressive of its function than was possible in earlier ages.

I suggested that the kind of relationship expressed in the second of my diagrams provides the starting point for the creation of the spatial setting of the eucharistic assembly. How, in terms of planning, is such a relationship to be achieved? Many architects have sought an answer in a layout based on a circle, but with the altar placed on the periphery of the plan rather than in the centre. Two examples of this type of plan are the church of St. Peter, Yvetot, in France, by Yves Marchand, and Saarinen's M.I.T. chapel at Cambridge, in the United States (*Figures* 5 and 6). Each of these churches consists of a cylindrical space in which the whole congregation is close to the altar and which is unobstructed by columns. They suggest, however, that the crucial difficulty with a plan of this type is likely to be the definition of the sanctuary within the total volume of the interior. The M.I.T. chapel is very small and the sanctuary is defined to some extent by the use of a lantern, immediately above the altar, which is almost the only source

[3] J. A. Jungmann: *Public Worship*. Challoner Publications, 1957, p. 58.
[4] *Opus cit.*, p. 14.

of light. At Yvetot the size of the church makes the problem far more acute, and the lighting serves to define the sanctuary only to the extent that the colours in the enormous band of stained glass, that stretches all around the church, do lead the eye towards the altar—or at least to a point immediately above it. But the sanctuary tends to be swallowed up in the vast cylindrical space; there is more than a suggestion of arbitrariness in its relationship to the nave.

The same problem arises, with the addition of a further complicating factor, in the numerous modern churches based on an ellipse orientated on its long axis. Most of these churches give the impression of having been conceived in terms of structure, and only secondarily as buildings to house an altar and a congregation. Like the circular plan, this layout
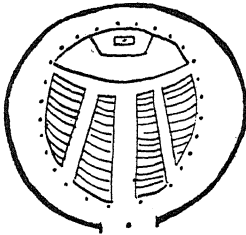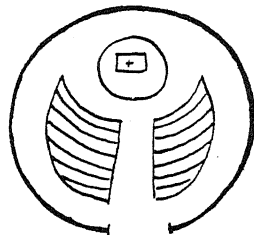
FIG. 5   FIG. 6

creates a volume which is 'neutral' in the sense that it does not have an obvious focal point; there is no one position in such a building where the altar *must* stand. On the contrary, not only is it necessary, as with the circular plan, to create a focus within a space which lacks any directional feeling, but the elliptical volume tends to have *two* foci, one at each end—and, if the altar is placed in one, the problem then arises of what to do with the other. A plan of this type seems to demand two altars, one at either end (*Figure* 7). Cut it in half and you would be left with two volumes well adapted to liturgical requirements. While a church like St. Julien's, Caen, does make it possible to achieve something like the ideal relationship between the altar and the congregation, the interior space has little formal relationship to either; there is rather a sort of 'liturgical space' within a space (*Figure* 8). Rudolf Schwarz has attempted to solve the problem of the two competing foci by creating two subsidiary 'rooms' opening off the sanctuary of his church of St. Michael, at Frankfurt, which is also based on an elongated ellipse. One of these serves as a week-day chapel, the other

for the choir. The space at the west end of the church is used as the baptistery (*Figure* 9). Far more satisfactory is the solution adopted by Gottfried Böhm for his church of St. Albert, Saarbrücken. Here the interior achieves a quality of formal inevitability which is very rare in a modern church. The ellipse on which the plan is based is not symme-
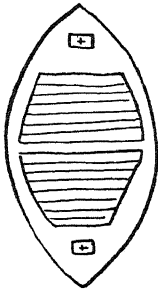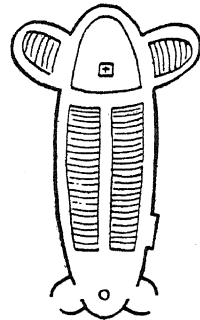
FIG. 7   FIG. 8   FIG. 9

trical but is flattened at one end like an egg. This immediately creates one obviously 'right' place for the altar, and the sanctuary is further defined by the light from the large lantern tower above the altar (*Figure* 10).

Some of the most successful plans of the last decade have been based on an ellipse orientated on its *short* axis. As in the case of the circular plan with the altar on the periphery, the difficulty is usually to define
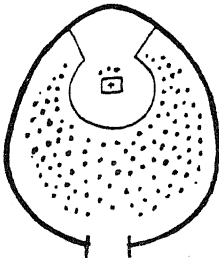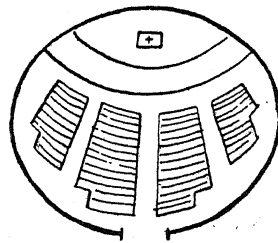
FIG. 10   FIG. 11

the sanctuary in relation to the volume of the interior as a whole. It is very instructive from this point of view to compare Fritz Metzger's church of SS. Felix and Regula, at Zürich (see *Plan* 3 at end of chapter), with the chapel of the University Clinic at Freiburg, in Germany, by Horst Linde (*Figure* 11). Both plans create an admirable relationship between the ministers at the altar and the whole body of the faithful.

Metzger, however, succeeds also in relating the altar and congregation to the space which contains them by setting the altar in a shallow recess. This defines the sanctuary and relates it to the nave far more satisfactorily than in the case of the Freiburg chapel, excellent though the latter is in other respects.

The next two diagrams illustrate alternative plans based on a square. The first type has been employed with outstanding success by the young Swiss architect Rainer Senn for his remarkable little chapel of St. Andrew, near Nice. He has used it again for his later church at Pontarlier. Another recent example of such a plan is the church of St. Rochus, at Türnich, in Germany (see *Plan* 6 at end of chapter). An interesting example of the second type of plan can be seen at Marienau-les-Forbach, in the Moselle. Yet another layout based on the square
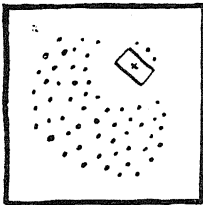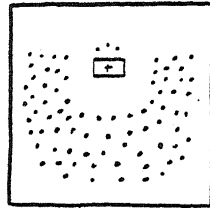
FIG. 12   FIG. 13

is illustrated by Dominikus Böhm's church of St. Maria-Königin, at Cologne, consecrated in 1954, a few months before the death of this pioneer of modern church design (see *Plan* 8 at end of chapter).

Another type of plan which was being used as long ago as the late 'twenties by Otto Bartning, in Germany, and which has been widely adopted in several countries during the last few years, is that based on the trapezoid. At Issy-les-Moulineaux, in Paris, the architects Duverdier and Lombard have placed the altar near the longer of the two parallel sides of the trapezoid (*Figure* 14). This is unusual—though in this instance very satisfactory. More often the altar is placed near the shorter side of the plan, so that the north and south walls converge towards the sanctuary. Raymond Lopez's chapel at Saint-Valery-en-Caux is one of many post-war churches in France based on this type of plan (*Figure* 15). Then there are many modern churches—Catholic and Reformed—which adopt an octagonal or hexagonal layout. Catholic churches of this type include Bernhard Rotterdam's church of St. Michael, Wipperfurth-Neye, in Germany, where the relationship

between altar and congregation recalls the earlier church at Ringenberg.
Among Protestant examples may be mentioned A. H. Steiner's Mar-
kuskirche, in Zürich, and the Maranathakerk at Amsterdam, both of
which are based on a regular octagon. At Fontaine-les-Grès, in France,
there is a notable example of a triangular church—the unusual layout
of which was determined by the character of the site. Then there are
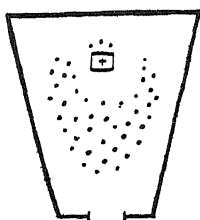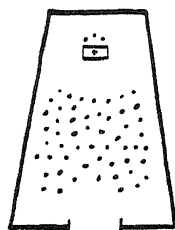
FIG. 14   FIG. 15

more complex plans, based on several intersecting geometrical figures,
like St. Francis, Riehen, at Basle (see *Plan* 2), where a trapezoidal nave
is combined with an elliptical sanctuary; St. Rochus, Düsseldorf (see
Plan 9), founded on three intersecting circles; the Bruderklausenkirche
at Gerlafingen, in Switzerland, where Metzger has simplified and
developed the plan of the eucharistic room of the church of SS. Felix
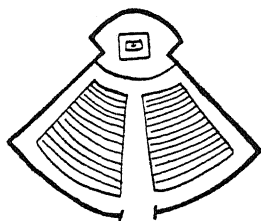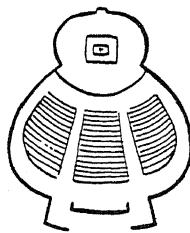
FIG. 16   FIG. 17

and Regula, at Zürich (see *Plans* 3 and 4); and Hermann Baur's
churches at Birsfelden and Wülflingen-Winterthur (*Figures* 16 and
17), also in Switzerland.

All these churches demonstrate the way in which, given a real
understanding of the purpose of the *domus ecclesiæ* and the nature of the
worshipping community, new methods of covering a space can open
up all kinds of fascinating possibilities in the creation of a setting for the
eucharistic assembly. Nor is the interest of these churches confined to

the space which they provide for the church's primary function alone. The post-war churches of Metzger and Baur, in particular, deserve the most careful study; the way in which these Swiss architects distinguish the essential from the peripheral and group the different parts of the church according to their liturgical significance; the way they relate the baptistery, the week-day chapel and the other subsidiary rooms to the space containing the principal altar, and the whole complex of buildings to its environment; reflect an approach to church building which one could wish were more widespread on this side of the Channel. It is not sufficiently recognised that the design of a church, as of any other building, is first and foremost a matter of spatial organisation. The importance of Metzger's church at Riehen, or of Baur's Bruderklausenkirche at Birsfelden, on the opposite bank of the Rhine, lies above all in the way in which they succeed in expressing a hierarchy of liturgical values, not by means of 'artistic' symbols—contemporary or otherwise—but through significant spatial relationships. This must always be the real business of the architect; and by comparison with such buildings the fundamental irrelevance of churches like Assy, Audincourt and the new cathedral at Coventry becomes apparent, despite the undeniable quality of many of the works of art which they contain.

The plans which follow illustrate a few of the most interesting experiments carried out on the Continent and in America during the last ten years. All the churches selected are buildings for Roman Catholic worship, and the plans show the extent to which a common liturgical programme can be embodied in a wide variety of planning types. They also reveal some of the possibilities which a modern technology can open up for the creation of theologically expressive spatial relationships, provided only that the architect has a real understanding of the liturgical significance of the various 'rooms', and is also conscious of the nature of the means by which this significance is to be made manifest. None of these churches owes anything to mere decorative features. Their quality lies rather in an admirable clarity of plan and spatial organisation: a clarity that derives from a firm grasp of liturgical function.
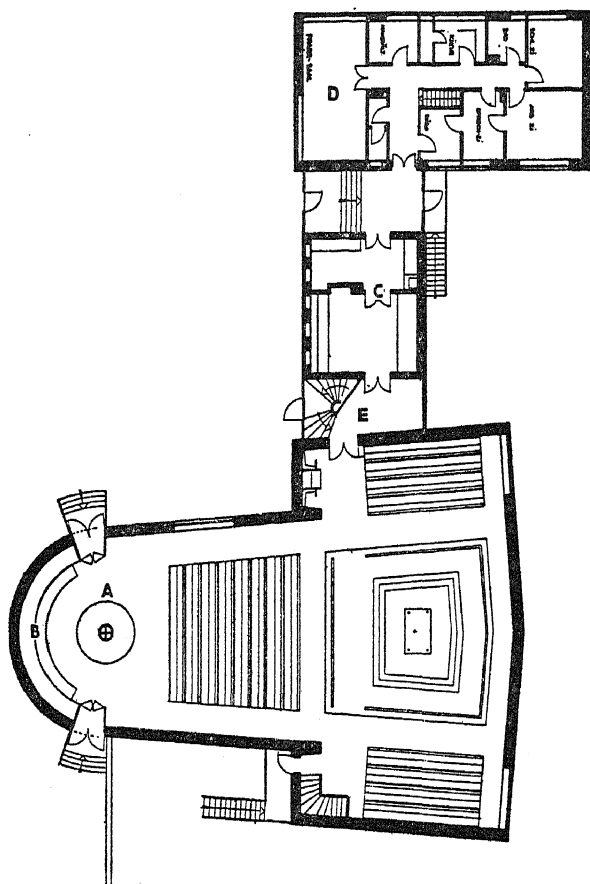
PLAN 1. CHURCH OF CHRIST THE KING,
MÜLHEIM-RUHR

Architect: Ludger Kösters

A. Baptistery; B. Choir; C. Sacristy; D. Presbytery and
parish hall; E. Stairs to crypt
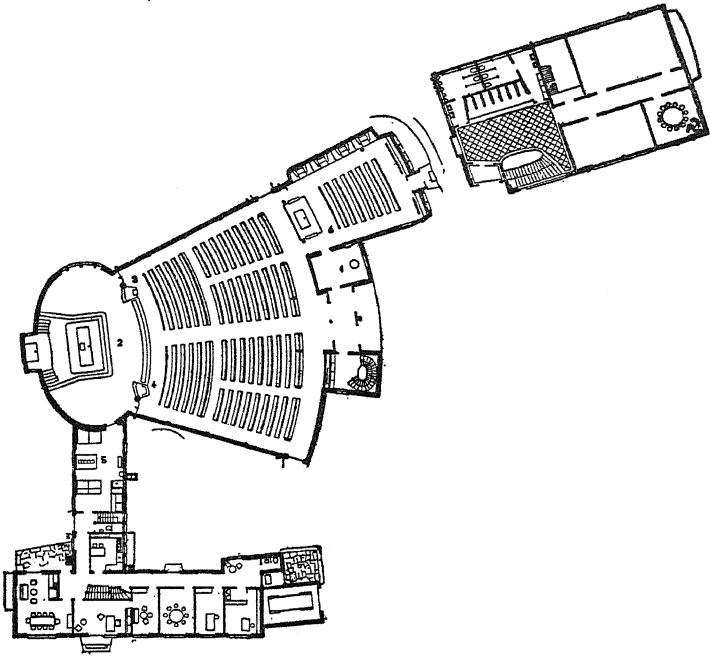
PLAN 2. ST. FRANCIS, RIEHEN, BASLE
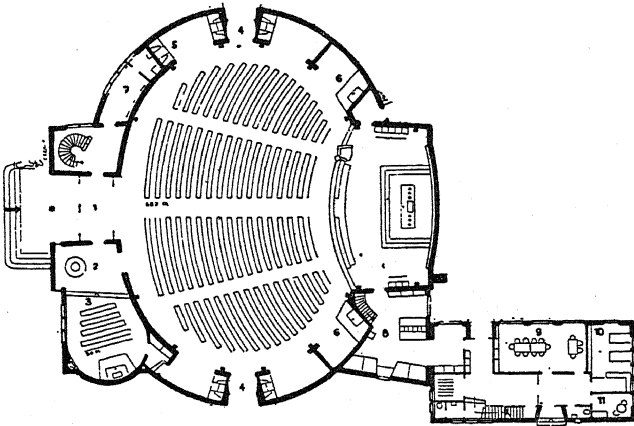
PLAN 3. SS. FELIX AND REGULA, ZÜRICH

In both of these churches by Fritz Metzger there is a west
gallery for choir and organ, and the baptistery and week-day
chapel are placed to the right of the porch. At Riehen there is
a sacrament altar east of the sanctuary
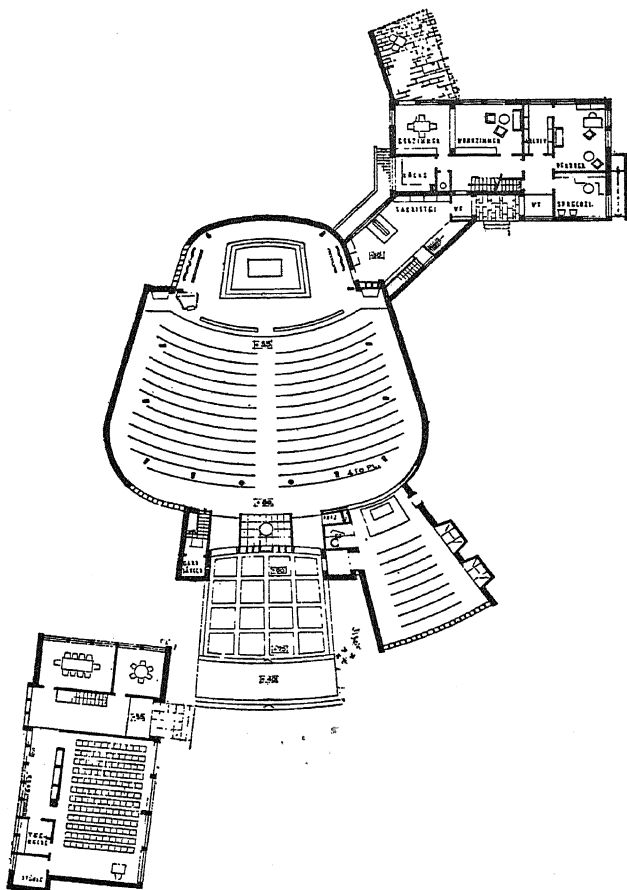
PLAN 4. CHURCH AT GERLAFINGEN,
NEAR SOLOTHURN

Architect: Fritz Metzger

The baptistery is on the main axis of the church with choir
gallery over. The week-day chapel is to the right of the porch
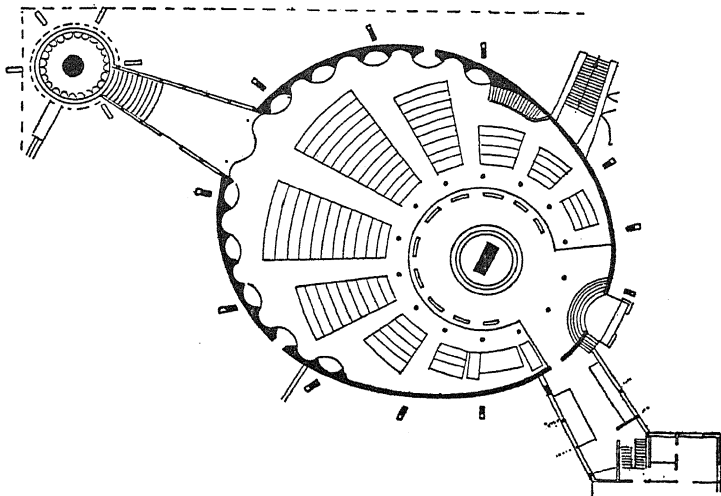
PLAN 5. ST. ALBERT, SAARBRÜCKEN

Architect: Gottfried Böhm

The baptistery is combined with the tower. Choir and organ
are placed on the north side of the sanctuary. Sacrament altar
east of the sanctuary
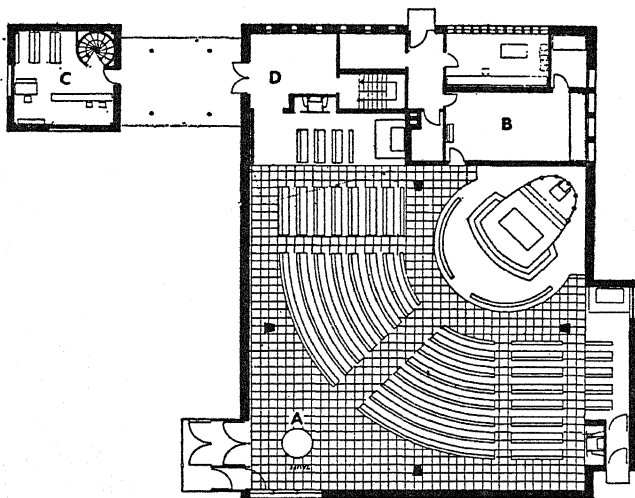
PLAN 6. ST. ROCHUS, TÜRNICH

Architect: Karl Band

A. Baptistery; B. Sacristy; C. Tower (containing library);
D. Gallery for choir
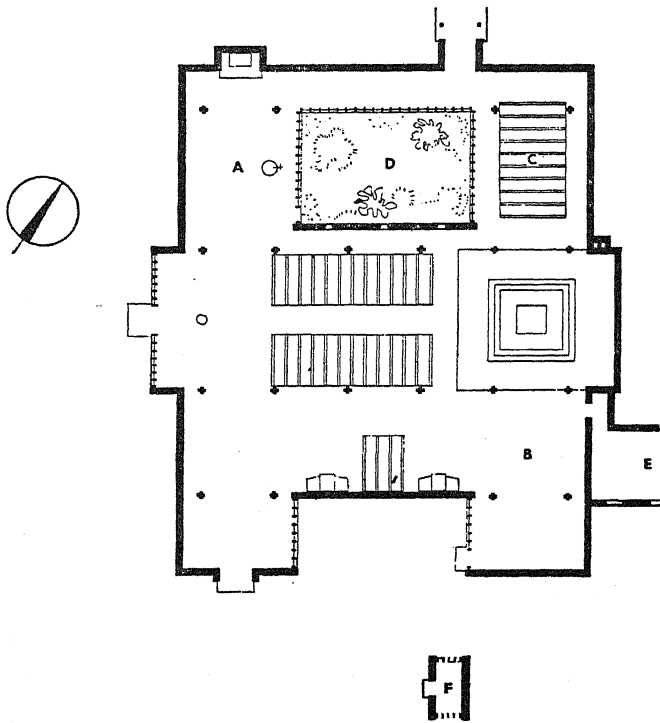
PLAN 7. CHURCH OF THE HOLY
REDEEMER, COLOGNE-RATH
Architect: Fritz Schaller
A. Baptistery; B. Choir; C. Week-day chapel; D. Courtyard;
E. Sacristy; F. Tower
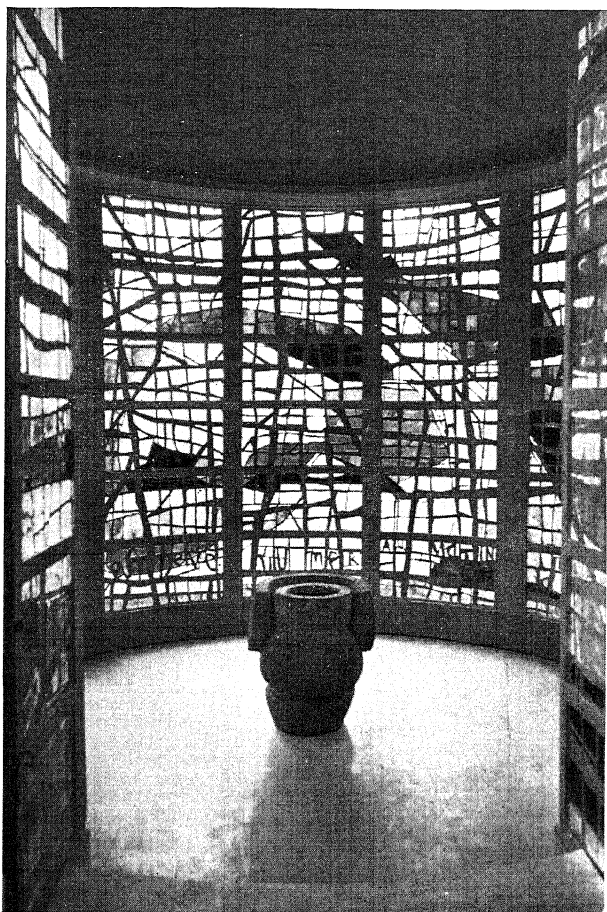
41 The baptistery, Audincourt
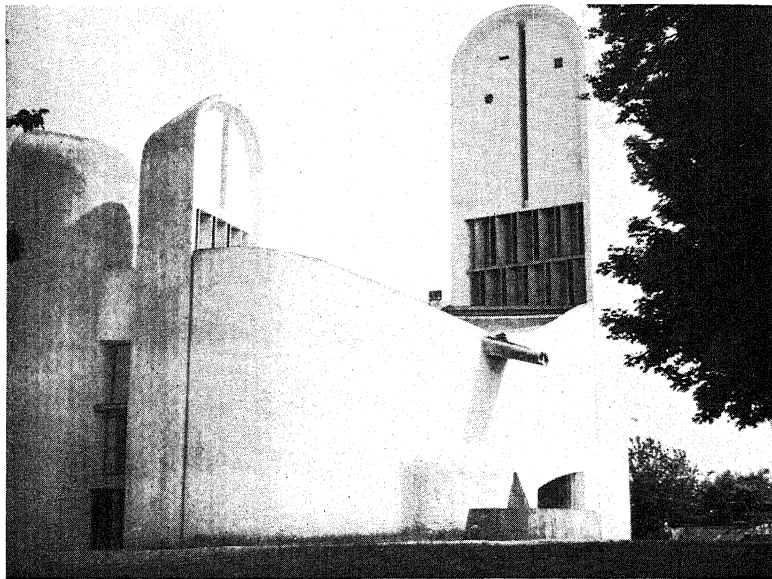
42 and 43   Pilgrimage chapel at Ronchamp
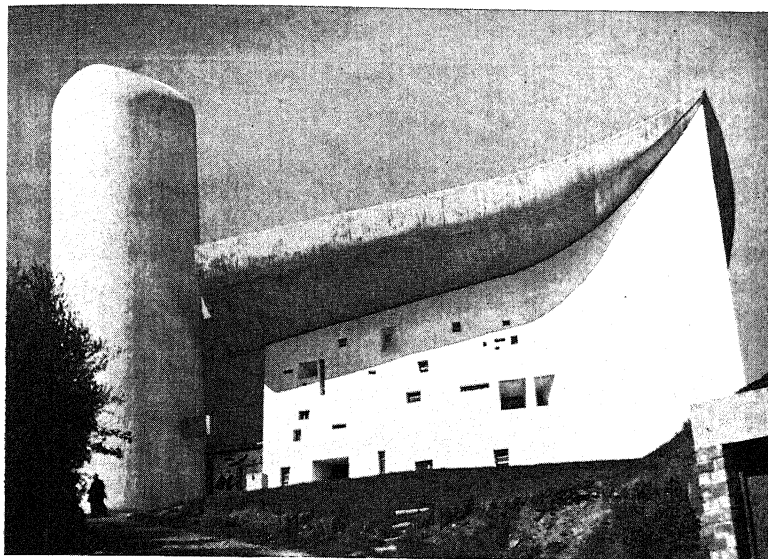
44   Pilgrimage chapel at Ronchamp
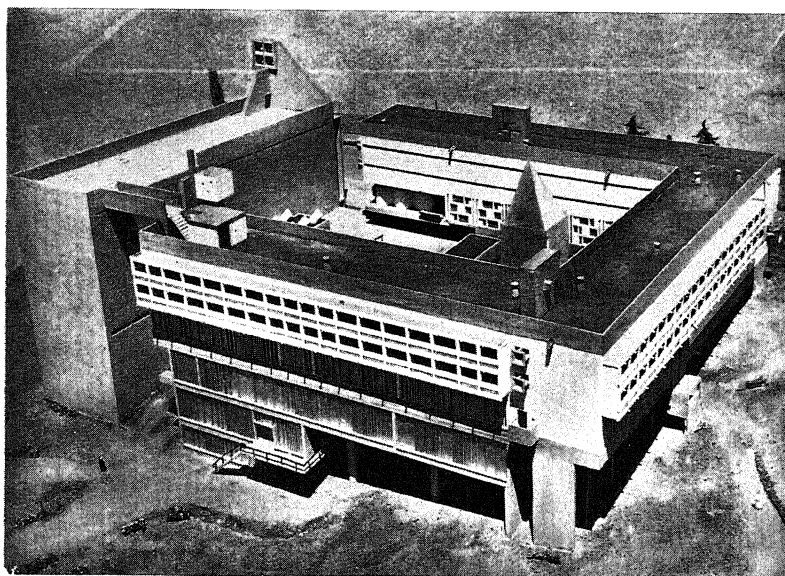
45   Dominican Priory, La Tourette

46   Chapel at Vence
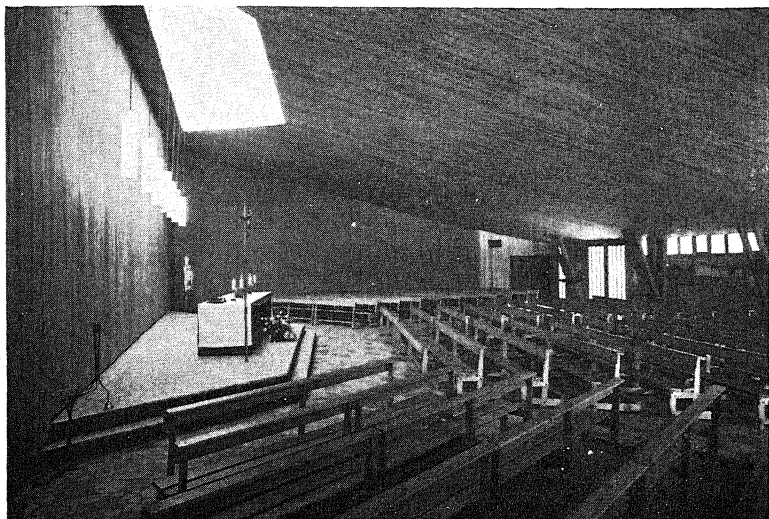
47   St. James, Grenoble
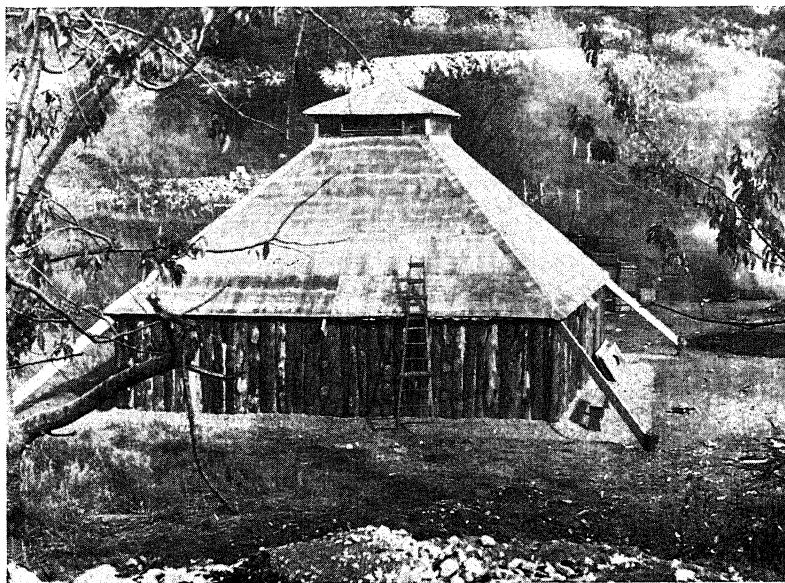
48   Chapel of St. Andrew, near Nice
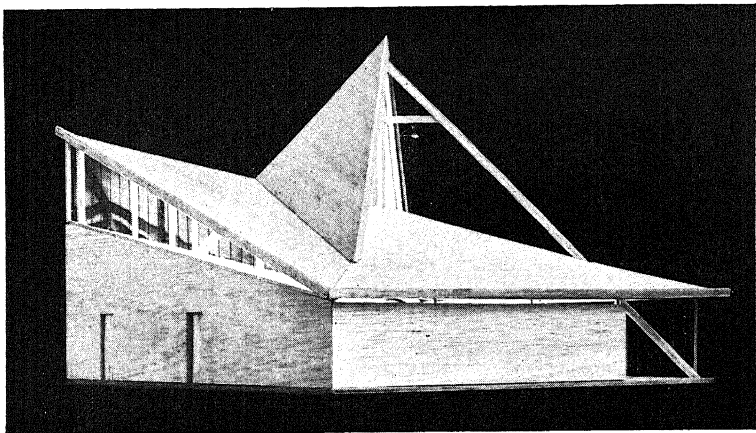
49 and 50   Church of our Lady, Pontarlier
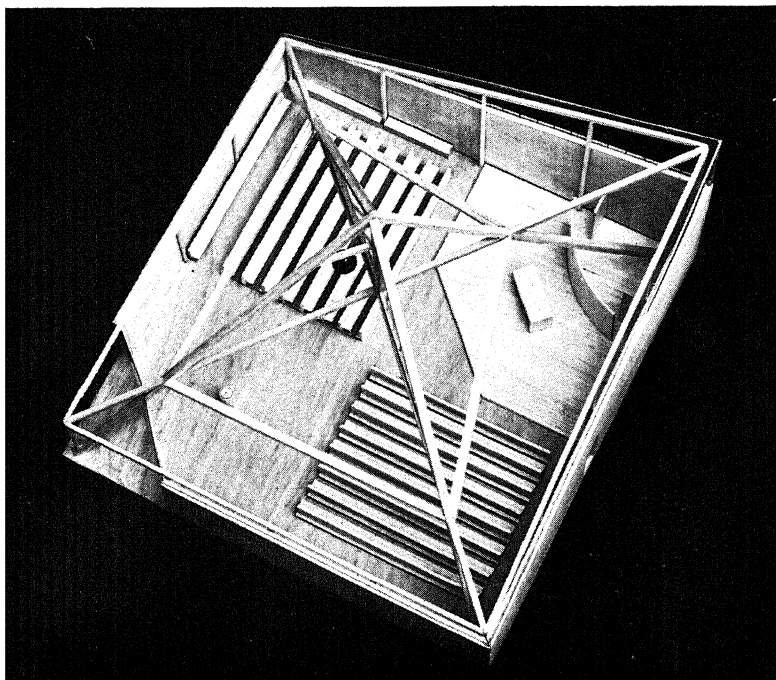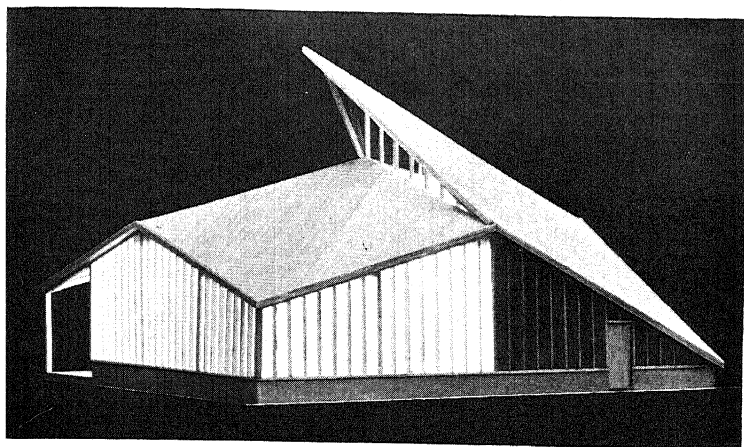
51 and 52 Project for a chapel at Ferrette
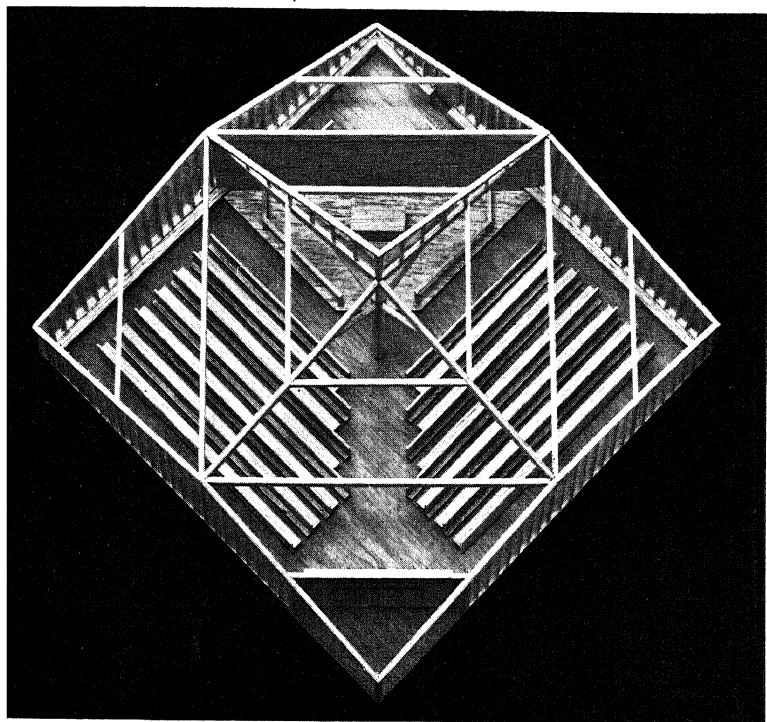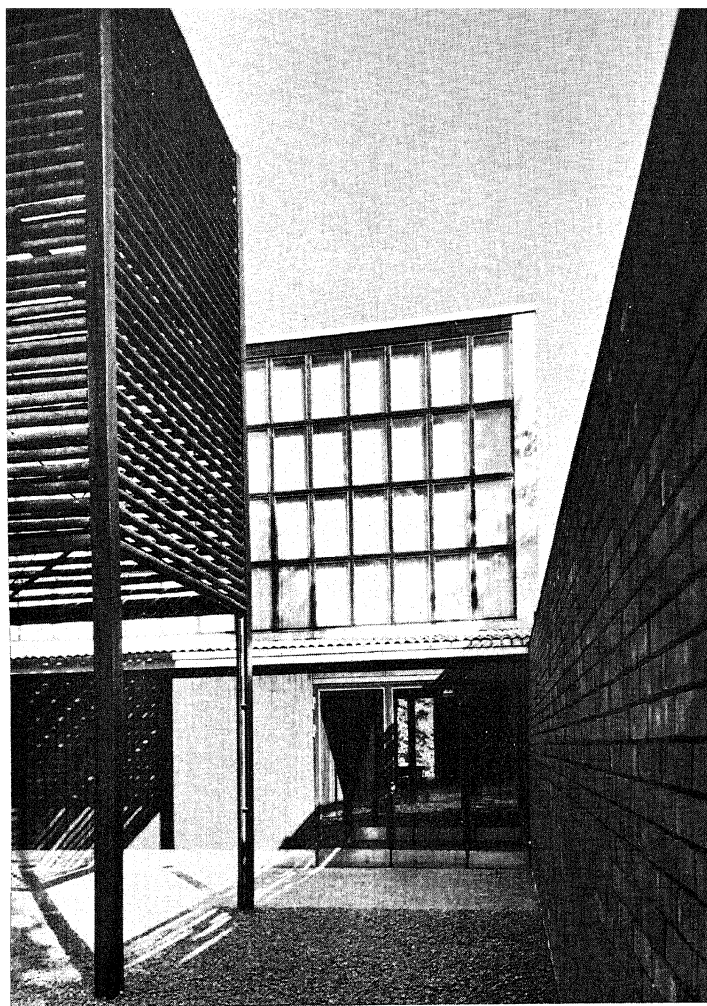
53 University chapel, Otaniemi, Finland
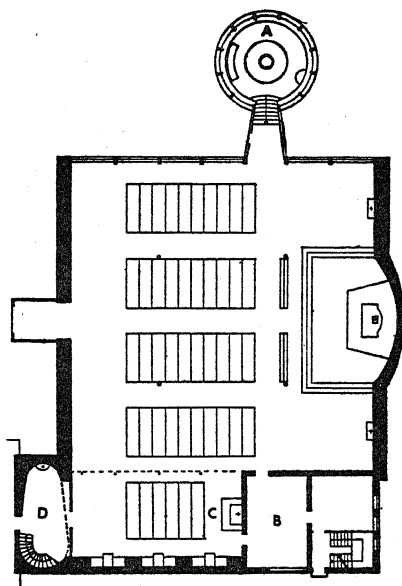
PLAN 8. ST. MARIA-KÖNIGIN, COLOGNE

Architect: Dominikus Böhm

A. Baptistery; B. Sacristy; C and D Chapels; Gallery for choir over B and C
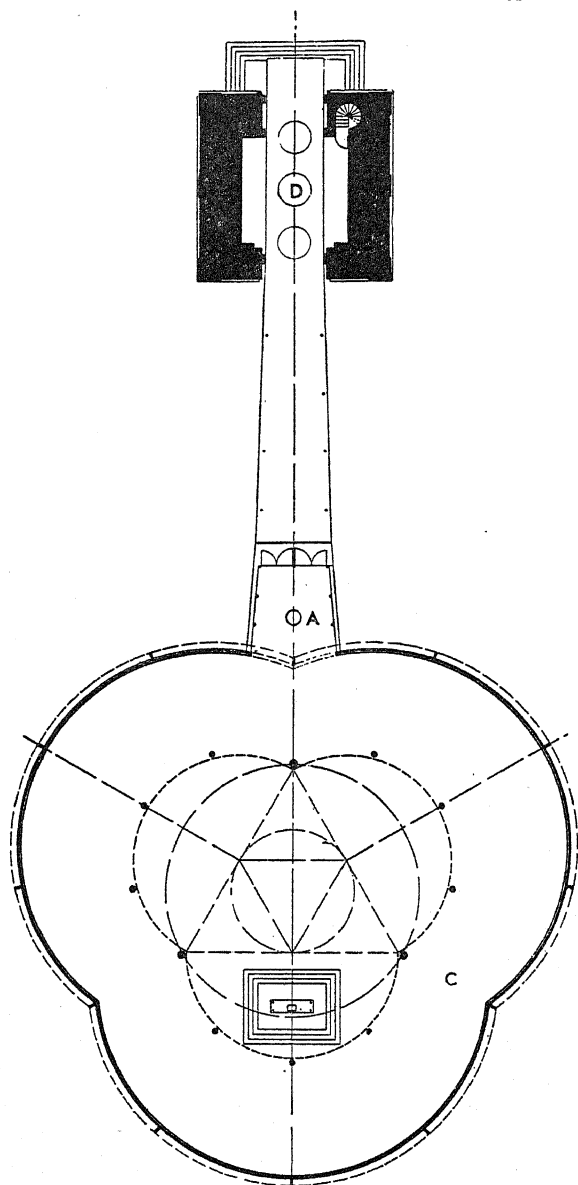
PLAN 9. ST. ROCHUS, DÜSSELDORF
Architect: Paul Schneider-Esleben
A. Baptistery; C. Choir; D. Existing tower
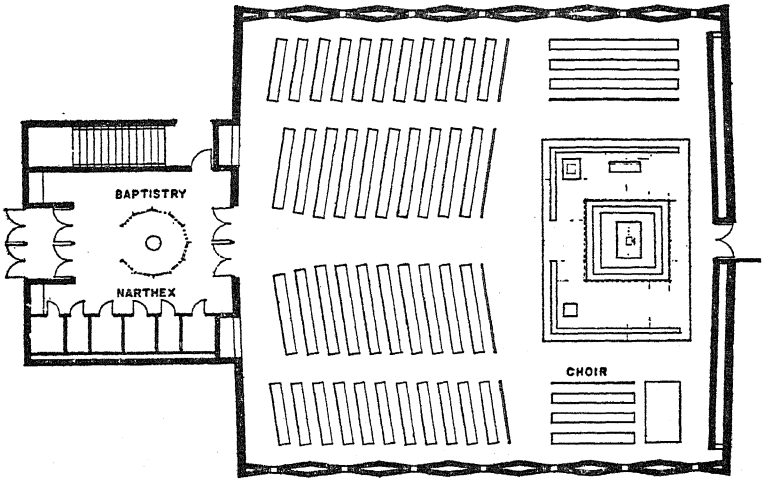
PLAN 10. CHURCH OF ST. ANTONY
SUPERIOR, WISCONSIN

Architects: Thorshov and Cerny

7. *Liturgy and Architecture in the Church of England since 1945*

THE tragedy of our post-war programme of church building is summed up in a sentence from the introduction to Lewis Mumford's great work on *The Culture of Cities*. 'The ignorant', writes Mumford, 'were completely unprepared, but that did not prevent the building.' In Germany the need to build vast numbers of new churches, and to rebuild old ones, coincided with the full flood of liturgical renewal. A theological recovery within the Church of the meaning of the Church had created the essential requirement for a rebirth of church architecture. The fruit of many years of thought and experiment was embodied in the *Directives*, published in 1946, which provided the architect and the artist with a true liturgical brief. The Church was ready to grasp the opportunity when it came, and the results can be seen in Cologne and elsewhere. In France too, though the liturgical movement was still in its infancy when the time for building arrived, there existed a small but influential group of clergy and laymen who had a firm grasp of the questions at issue, and who were able to play a decisive rôle in the post-war building programme by means of periodicals, conferences and special centres created for this purpose.

The Church in Britain was totally unprepared. The foundations had not been laid; the problems had not been stated. The means for research and for propaganda did not exist. We were not ready to build the humblest *domus ecclesiæ*—much less a cathedral. There was scarcely a church in the whole of the British Isles to serve as an example of the possibilities of modern architecture in the service of the liturgy. *We* had no Notre-Dame du Raincy. If the wartime restrictions on church building had only lasted ten years longer than they did, our post-war building programme might have had more chance of success. The opportunity came too soon. It is only within the last two or three years that the new insights of the theologian and the liturgist have begun to find expression in the design of our churches; we are

only now becoming aware of the disastrous consequences of our earlier failure to connect.

Within the last decade or so the principles of the liturgical movement have slowly but surely been winning acceptance on this side of the Channel; not only in the universities and theological colleges but also in a growing number of parishes. It has taken us twenty years to assimilate the lessons of *Liturgy and Society*, or to realise the full implications of the theological teaching of Sir Edwyn Hoskyns for the daily life of the Church and its members—and even to-day the vision of the prophets of the 'thirties has still to be translated into action. It is still only rarely that one finds a Christian community fully awakened to its responsibilities and aware of its true function in the modern world. Most of our church life is still utterly irrelevant to the Church's essential task, and merely perpetuates the conventional ritual patterns of a vanished culture. Yet there has been a change in the theological climate. The spread of the parish communion and the parish meeting, baptismal reform and experiments in the field of liturgy and of adult education are all symptomatic of a genuine renewal within the Church of an awareness of what it is to *be* the Church. There is a growing realisation that the work of the parish priest needs to be informed by that of the theologian. There are a number of new churches, recently completed or now under construction, which from the planning standpoint at least, if in no other way, reveal a fresh understanding of their *raison d'être* as buildings for liturgy.

Many factors have contributed to this change of outlook, but one major influence has been Dom Gregory Dix's book *The Shape of the Liturgy*, first published in 1945. If this remarkable study of eucharistic worship had appeared a few years earlier, the history of post-war church building in this country might well have been very different. Gregory Dix saw the eucharist not simply as a service, as a focus for individual piety, but as a corporate action containing within itself the true pattern and norm for the daily life of the body of Christ. He provided the theological basis for a new conception of Christian society. His vision of eucharistic man is as relevant for the pastor and for the sociologist as for the liturgist. His book affords a glimpse of a new order, a new pattern of community, no longer fragmented or compartmentalised into sacred and secular, but in which religion and life, dogma and mysticism, liturgy and daily living, are once again integrated within the eucharistic fellowship of a redeemed humanity. The influence of the book has been profound. Directly or indirectly it has been the

inspiration of a host of liturgical experiments which have, in their turn, begun to affect the layout of the church building itself.

The chapel of the Queen's College, Birmingham, reflects the influence of an earlier essay by Gregory Dix, published in *The Parish Communion* in 1937. As was noted in an earlier chapter, work began on this chapel in 1938, but the college buildings were handed over to the Queen Elizabeth hospital at the outbreak of war and the students who remained moved to Cambridge. The chapel was finally dedicated in May 1947. In plan it resembles a Roman basilica. There is a rectangular nave with an apse at the east end and the altar stands on the chord of the apse. There was to have been a baldachino above the altar, but this had to be sacrificed in order to obtain the approval of the council of the college for the project as a whole. The chapel was built by a Birmingham architect, H. W. Hobbiss, and is a neo-Romanesque structure, interesting only from the point of view of planning.

The unusual layout of this college chapel was determined by theological and liturgical considerations. It reflects the desire of the Principal of the College, J. O. Cobham (now Archdeacon of Durham), to declericalise the liturgy, to reassert the true character of the eucharist as a communal action, and to restore that diversity of special liturgies which had been swallowed up by the all-devouring presbyter in the course of the Middle Ages. The fundamental aim was not to re-create a patristic liturgy, but rather to give fresh emphasis to elements in Anglican liturgical tradition which had been generally ignored as a result of the nineteenth-century passion for all things medieval. When the chapel was at last ready for use in 1947, the celebration of the eucharist *versus populum* was restored on all Sundays and festivals. On other occasions—even when the eucharist was celebrated without music—there were always three ministers, and the epistle was read by a layman. This chapel was also the scene of one of the earliest attempts made in the Church of England to revive the old practice of concelebration, as an alternative to a series of 'private' masses, and there were occasions when as many as ten or eleven priests faced the people across the free-standing altar.

While the Queen's College was one of the first centres of liturgical reform to be created in this country since the war, other experiments of a similar kind were being made elsewhere. The liturgical movement on the Continent was attracting attention. More and more clergy were becoming conscious of the gulf which separated the biblical theology of

teachers like Hoskyns from the day-to-day routine of their parishes, and of the need for really radical reform if the Church was again to be itself. In the autumn of 1948 a small group of clergy, who were conscious of the immense importance of the events taking place beyond the Channel, resolved that the time had come 'for a step forward in the Church of England along the lines known on the Continent as the Liturgical Movement'. In January 1949 they invited some sixty other clergy—the majority of whom were parish priests—to attend a conference at the Queen's College. About forty accepted the invitation, and it was agreed to launch a new association, to set up a centre in London similar to the *Centre de Pastorale Liturgique* in Paris, to publish a review comparable to the French centre's *La Maison-Dieu* as well as occasional albums, and to provide an information service.

This ambitious project has never been fully carried out. The need for a permanent centre to serve as a focal point for the liturgical renewal in this country is as great to-day as it was ten years ago. The failure to create an English equivalent of the French C.P.L. in 1949 was due mainly to the fact that all the clergy who had been responsible for the Birmingham conference were already burdened with parochial or other responsibilities. The building up of such a centre would inevitably have involved a great deal of work, and the administrative problems which the project entailed demanded at least a part-time staff. One of the great weaknesses of the Church of England is the lack of anything comparable to the Order of St. Dominic. But though the conference failed to attain its main objective, it led to a further gathering of clergy at Birmingham in January 1950, and it was at this second conference that the *Parish and People* movement was launched.

The aim of this conference was to 'create an association which would link together and extend the various manifestations of new life'. It was to concern itself with 'the theology of the Bible, the Christian community, liturgical worship, and the Church and society'. During the last eight years the association has published a quarterly review (also with the title of *Parish and People*) and other literature, and has organised many conferences for clergy and laity in different parts of the country. A number of its members have been in close touch with similar groups on the Continent, particularly in France. *Parish and People* has been instrumental in commending the parish communion type of service and in fostering all kinds of experiments in the field of liturgical worship. Inevitably the scope of its activity has been more

restricted than was envisaged by the clergy who convened the con-
ference of 1949. It might also be said that the urgently missionary note,
so characteristic of the liturgical movement on the other side of the
Channel, has been somewhat muted in *Parish and People* circles: one is
sometimes tempted to exaggerate the significance of the fact that the
English communion service ends with a blessing—with the invocation
of the peace of God—whereas the Roman mass has preserved the more
primitive dismissal, *Ite:* Go out, into the world!

There can, nevertheless, be no doubt of the fact that *Parish and
People* has performed a most useful service in bridging the gulf between
the biblical theologian and the parish priest, and in creating a new
understanding among church people of the meaning of what they do in
church Sunday by Sunday. It has been an important factor in the
growth of a changed theological outlook. Though it has concerned
itself scarcely at all with the problems of church architecture and
sacred art, it has indirectly done a great deal to prepare the ground for
a fresh approach to these problems, which, as I emphasised in an earlier
chapter, are primarily theological in character.

Quite recently there have at last been unmistakable signs of a new
freedom and flexibility in church planning in this country, as well as
on the Continent. The survey which follows—and which is not in-
tended to be exhaustive—shows the way in which a fresh approach to
church design, an approach which starts from the needs of a worship-
ping community and not from a romantic notion of what a church
should look like, is beginning to break down the rigid conventions of
nineteenth-century planning. I have included in this survey plans, and
in some cases sections or elevations, of thirteen churches consecrated
since the Second World War and a further eighteen projects, some of
which are now in process of realisation. Thirty-one churches represents
a very small proportion of our post-war building programme, but
these churches have a significance which is far greater than their
number might suggest. Few of them will, from the point of view of
sheer architectural quality, bear comparison with the best work carried
out in recent years abroad. That is hardly surprising in the circum-
stances; we have only now begun to tackle the problems which have
been exercising church architects and their clients for thirty years or
more in countries such as Germany and Switzerland. What is more to
the point is the fact that all these churches reveal some measure of
awareness that the design of a church, as of any other building, must
start from an analysis of its purpose.

The majority of the plans illustrated are of parish churches. I have included a group of plans which show alternative solutions to the problem of planning a 'church-centre' in which a hall, designed to provide additional seating on special occasions, is conceived as an integral part of the church. Also included in the survey are projects for a chapel-group for the University of North Staffordshire; one of the unsuccessful designs submitted for the Coventry cathedral competition; a group of plans of small chapels in different parts of the British Isles; and one of an inter-denominational chapel at Ibadan—one of the few really outstanding churches built since the war by a British architect. With the exception of the two university chapels, I have confined the survey to churches designed exclusively for Anglican use.

So far as Roman Catholic church architecture is concerned, the contrast between post-war church buildings in this country and abroad is as dispiriting as it is remarkable. A recently completed church at Pershore is an admirable example of liturgical planning, though it is an undistinguished piece of building; the new church at Glenrothes New Town in Scotland, by the architects Gillespie, Kidd and Coia, would seem—so far as can be judged from photographs alone—to be a building of quite exceptional quality. In general, however, Roman Catholic architecture on this side of the Channel is still at a low ebb. As to the Free Churches, a comparison between the rebuilt City Temple and some of the churches built for Reformed congregations in Switzerland, Germany and Holland, may serve to underline the fact that the failure to create a genuinely modern church architecture is by no means confined to the Church of England. Though in Methodist and Congregationalist circles a considerable amount of thought has been given to the design of community centres, in which the church forms part of a complex of related buildings, and though revivalism in architecture no longer goes unchallenged, there seems to be little awareness of the problems of planning for corporate worship, of the kind that is evident among Continental Protestants and also, to some extent, in the United States. The chapter on 'planning considerations' in a recent book on church design by an architect who is himself a Methodist, and who is a declared enemy of revivalism, is concerned far more with the exclusion of draughts and the provision of space for umbrellas and overcoats than with the relationship between word and sacrament.[1]

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[1] See *The Modern Church*, by Edward D. Mills, pp. 53–58. A comparison with the essay by the American Congregationalist Marvin Halverson, quoted in the first chapter, is instructive.

1. CHAPEL OF THE QUEEN'S COLLEGE, BIRMINGHAM (1938–1947). Architect: Holland W. Hobbiss

2. ALL SAINTS, BAWDESWELL, NORFOLK (1955). Architect: J. Fletcher Watson

3. ST. CUTHBERT, PETERLEE, CO. DURHAM (1957). Architects: Cordingley and McIntyre

All three of these churches are examples of a basilican or Romanesque type of plan, deliberately adopted in preference to a late-medieval layout on theological and liturgical grounds. The chapel at Birmingham has already been described (p. 102).

The parish church at Bawdeswell has a very simple plan consisting of rectangular nave and apsidal sanctuary. The free-standing altar is set well back in the apse and there are no seats within the sanctuary. The desk for the officiant at the choir offices is combined with the lectern and the pulpit in a 'three-decker' on the north side of the nave. The font is at the west end, with organ gallery above. The space opposite the pulpit on the south side of the church is intended for children or, on occasion, for an orchestra. The church is very small and is unashamedly revivalist in character: it is sobering to reflect that it was built in the same year as Hunstanton school, a few miles to the north-west.

The church of St. Cuthbert, Peterlee, which will eventually form part of a complex of buildings including a church hall and vicarage, illustrates the way in which the liturgical experiments initiated at the Queen's College, Birmingham are now beginning to influence the planning of parish churches: the vicar of this parish was a student at Birmingham before ordination. The plan resembles that of the aisled basilica—though the singers are placed in a west gallery, not in a central 'chancel'. The arrangement of the sanctuary is that of a fourth-century church. The altar stands beneath a ciborium, and the bishop's throne and the seats for the other ministers are behind the altar in the apse. As at Birmingham, there are ambos at either end of the altar rail. The position of the font is at least unconventional. It is near the front of the church, but, owing to the fact that the porch is on the north side of the building, something of the symbolism of entry into the church through the baptistery is preserved. While, however, a plan of this type is well suited to a small chapel, it seems doubtful whether it is satisfactory for a building which seats nearly 500. Although the altar is well
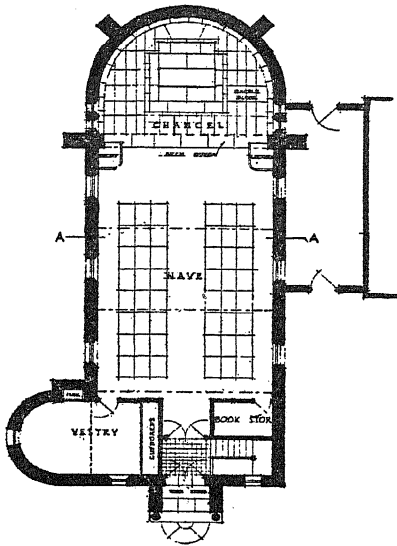
PLAN 1. QUEEN'S COLLEGE
CHAPEL, BIRMINGHAM
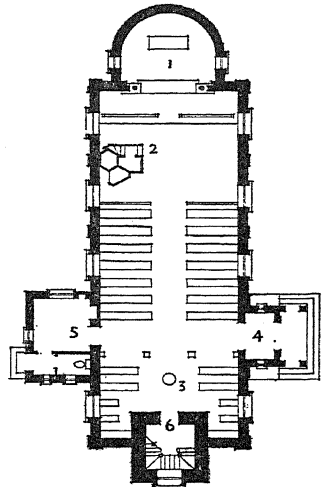
PLAN 2. ALL SAINTS,
BAWDESWELL,
NORFOLK

1. Sanctuary; 2. Three-decker
pulpit; 3. Baptistery with gallery over; 4. Porch; 5. Vestry
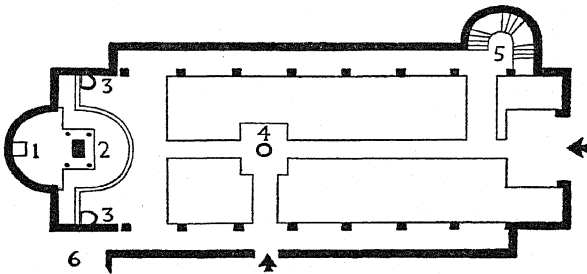
PLAN 3. ST. CUTHBERT, PETERLEE
1. Bishop's throne; 2. Altar; 3. Ambo; 4. Font;
5. Stairs to gallery; 6. Vestry and sacristy

clear of the apse and the celebrant can face the people, those at the back of the church are a long way from the sanctuary. This is a church which seems to illustrate the point made on p. 26 regarding the temptation to substitute a patristic plan for a medieval one.
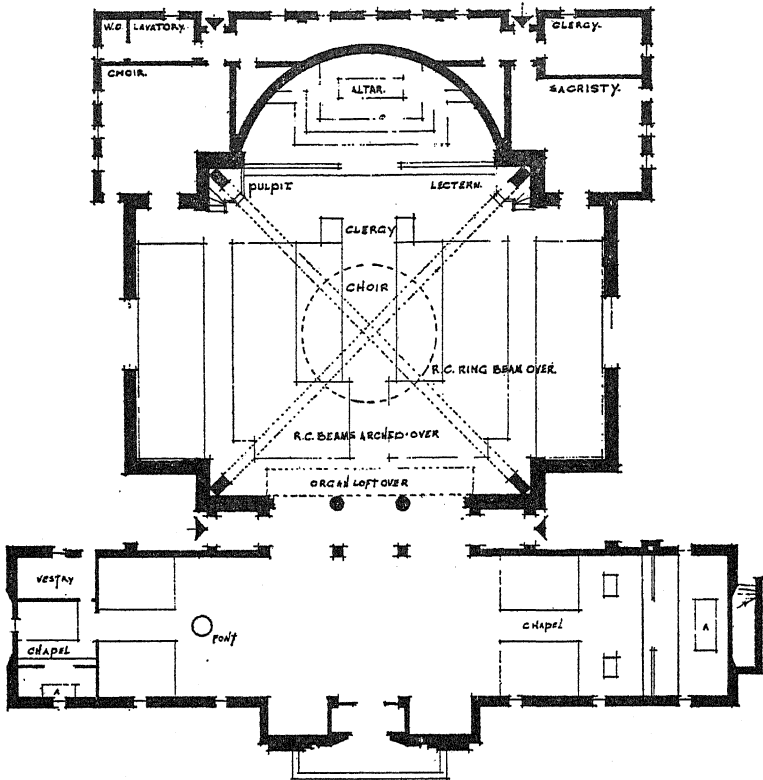
PLAN 4. ALL SAINTS CHURCH,
HANWORTH

4. ALL SAINTS, HANWORTH, MIDDLESEX (1951–57). Architect: N. F. Cachemaille-Day

This church comprises two distinct parts: a eucharistic room and a subsidiary structure which provides for all secondary functions. The former consists of a large open space, wider than it is long and

unobstructed by columns. The central lantern is supported on two re-inforced-concrete beams arched over a central square measuring fifty feet in each direction. In this way the whole congregation is brought close to the altar—a simple stone table resting on four massive pillars—which is set in a shallow apsidal sanctuary opening off the central square to the east. The altar is so placed that the celebrant can adopt either the eastward or the westward position. There is an organ platform over the entrance to the church, and the console is situated among the singers, as in the John Keble church at Mill Hill, but here the space for the choir is sunk slightly below the level of the rest of the church. There are two ambos, one on either side of the sanctuary. Sacristy and vestries are placed to the east of the church. To the west is a low structure—which actually served as a temporary church for five years. This contains a spacious narthex with the baptistery to the left of the porch, with a small chapel beyond, and a larger chapel, in which the sacrament is reserved, to the right. This is a church which manifests an unusual understanding of its purpose. It is the fruit of collaboration between an informed client and an architect who, as early as the mid-'thirties, was concerned with the problems of planning for liturgy; and who, in his church at Wythenshawe, showed a readiness to break away from the conventions of the nineteenth-century layout. In the light of the experience gained during the eighteen months that the church has been in use, the possibility of moving the altar further forward in the apse is under consideration, as is the location of the choir.

5. BISHOP GORTON CHURCH, ALLESLEY PARK, COVENTRY
Architect: N. F. Cachemaille-Day

6. ST. COLUMBA, BANNERSGATE, BIRMINGHAM. Architect:
N. F. Cachemaille-Day

Each of these projected churches by the architect of All Saints, Hanworth, is based on a square and illustrates the present trend away from an elongated plan towards one which gathers the whole congregation round the altar. At Allesley Park the square altar will stand on circular steps in the middle of the central square, with the congregation seated on three sides of the sanctuary. To the east of the altar there is a week-day chapel. The entrance to the church is on the north side. The choir is placed to the west of the sanctuary, as are the pulpit
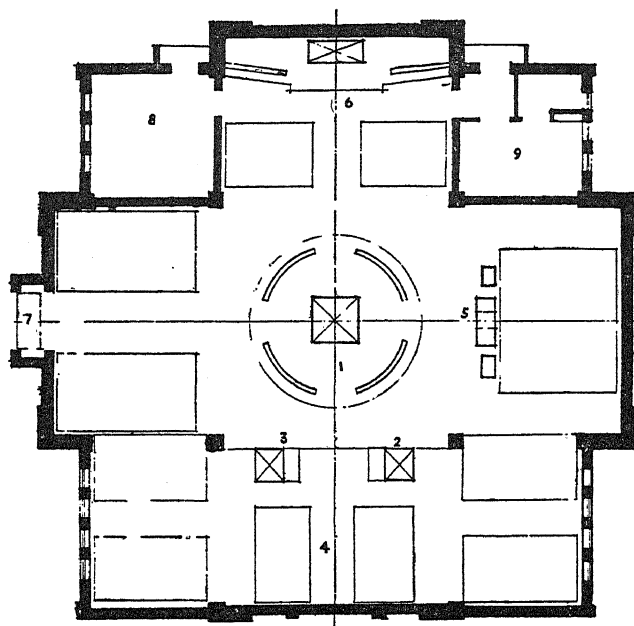
PLAN 5. BISHOP GORTON CHURCH, ALLESLEY
PARK

1. Sanctuary; 2. Pulpit; 3. Lectern; 4. Choir; 5. Seats
for clergy; 6. Chapel; 7. Porch; 8 Vestry; 9 Sacristy
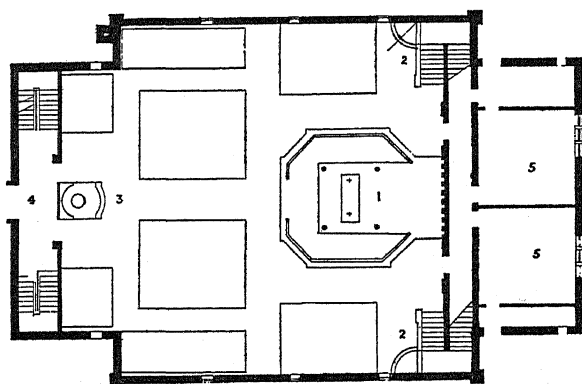
PLAN 6. ST. COLUMBA, BANNERSGATE

1. Sanctuary; 2. Ambo; 3. Baptistery with gallery over;
4. Porch; 5. Vestries with chapel over

and lectern. The placing of the font is still under consideration; the plan reproduced here is a provisional one.

At Bannersgate the central square will be covered by a shell-concrete dome. The free-standing altar is again placed so that the congregation will sit on three sides of the sanctuary. The seats for the ministers will be placed behind the altar, which will stand beneath a ciborium. There are ambos to the north and south of the sanctuary, and a west gallery over the baptistery. To the east of the eucharistic room there will be a lower and subordinate structure containing, on the ground floor, vestry and sacristy. Above them, and reached by stairs at the east end of the church, is to be the week-day chapel.

7. CHURCH OF ST. MICHAEL, HATFIELD HYDE, WELWYN GARDEN CITY. Architects: Denis Clarke Hall, Sam Scorer and Roy Bright, in association with Peter Bridges

An unusually interesting project which shows the possibilities of an alternative layout based on the square, in which the altar is placed on a diagonal. This is a plan which has been extensively used of late in France and Germany (see, for example, Rainer Senn's chapels at Pontarlier and Nice, and the church of St. Rochus, Türnich, by Karl Band). It is, so far as I know, the first example of such a plan on this side of the Channel. The altar stands beneath a square baldachino. The combined pulpit and lectern is placed within the triangular sanctuary to the north of the altar. The font occupies the corresponding position to the south. There is fixed seating for 230 people; the number can be increased to 400 when necessary by the use of stacking-chairs, a store for which is provided. The week-day chapel is separate from the eucharistic room. Sacristy, vestry, chair-store, etc., are all placed on two sides of the square, and there is a good-sized porch with provision for literature, notices, etc. The structure of the church involves the use of a concrete vault in the form of a hyperbolic paraboloid. The date of completion is still uncertain. This promises to be one of the more interesting churches built in this country since the war.

8. ST. PAUL, BOW COMMON, LONDON. Architect: Robert Maguire

A church of outstanding promise, which is essentially a building for corporate worship, by a young architect who has been trying for
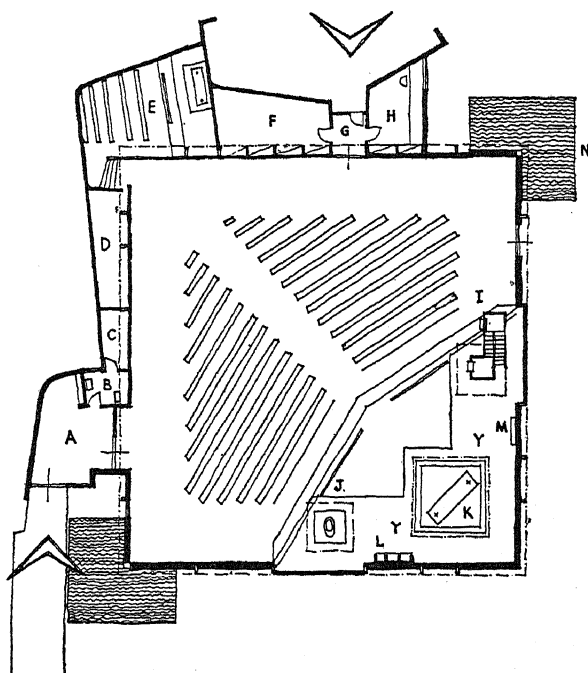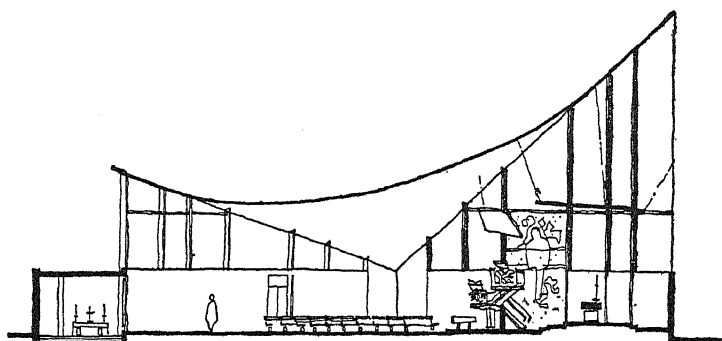
PLAN 7. ST. MICHAEL, HATFIELD HYDE

A. Entrance porch with display and bookstall; B. W.C.;
C. Flower room; D. Chair store; E. Chapel; F. Choir
vestry; G. Lobby; H. Clergy vestry; I. Pulpit and lectern;
J. Baptistery; K. Altar with baldachino; L. Sedilia;
M. Credence; N. Pools for rain water
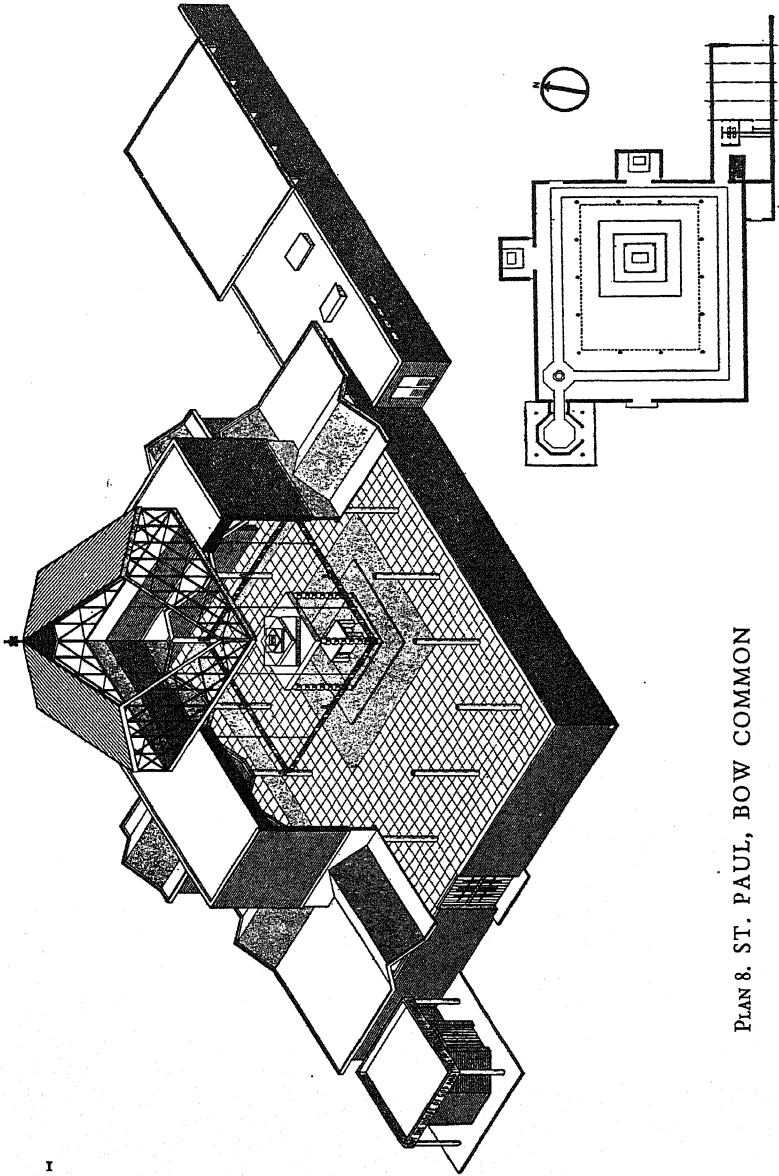
PLAN 8. ST. PAUL, BOW COMMON

several years to formulate a functional programme for church design, and who is convinced that the new insights of the liturgical movement demand 'a complete rethinking of the problems of church planning'. The plan of this church has, in his own words, 'grown from an attempt to relate the altar (considered as the principal symbol of our Lord in the church) to the priest and people in such a way that they can best carry out their functions in the liturgy'. The plan of the church is extremely simple: a rectangle almost as broad as it is long. The altar, with its ciborium, is placed beneath a large glazed lantern which provides the main source of illumination. The sanctuary is further defined by special paving, as is the processional way which surrounds the central space on all sides beyond the colonnade. The congregation will enter the church through the octagonal porch in the north-west corner, passing through the baptistery. There is also a processional west door. Behind the high altar, on the main axis of the church, there is a small chapel for the reserved sacrament. There is a Lady chapel opening off the processional way to the north of the sanctuary, and the organ is on the west wall. There will be no fixed seating in the church and the position of the pulpit is to be decided in the light of experience. This is a church of far greater importance than its unpretentious character might suggest. It is a true *domus ecclesiæ*, planned from the altar outwards. It may well prove to be something of a landmark in the re-creation of a living tradition of church architecture in this country. The foundation stone was laid in December 1958, and the church is to be consecrated in April, 1960.

9. CHURCH OF THE HOLY CROSS, DONCASTER. Architects: Henry Braddock and D. F. Martin-Smith

10. CHURCH OF ST. FRANCIS, LOCKLEAZE, BRISTOL. Architects: T. H. B. Burrough and F. L. Hannam

Two projected churches based on an octagonal plan. The first resembles a vast concrete tent, with the vault springing from ground-level (compare Dominikus Böhm's celebrated church at Cologne-Riehl). The altar is placed on the periphery of the plan—though the possibility of bringing it further forward in the sanctuary is under discussion. The placing of the choir recalls Martin-Smith's pioneer church at Mill Hill. The pulpit is on the north side of the sanctuary; the font is near the main entrance, on the main axis of the building,

ELEVATION
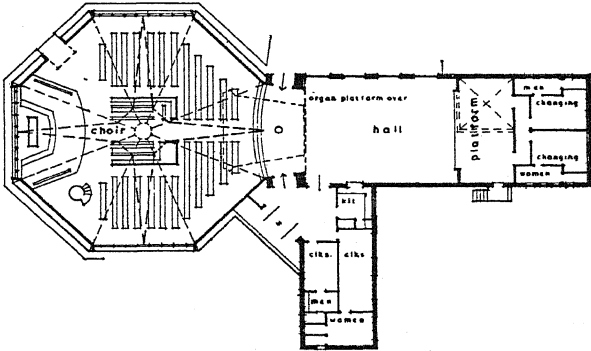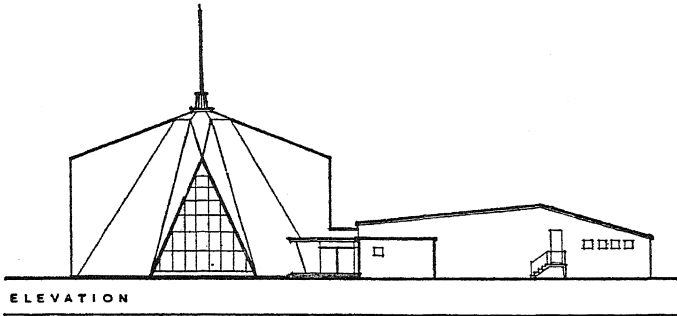
PLAN 9. HOLY CROSS, DONCASTER
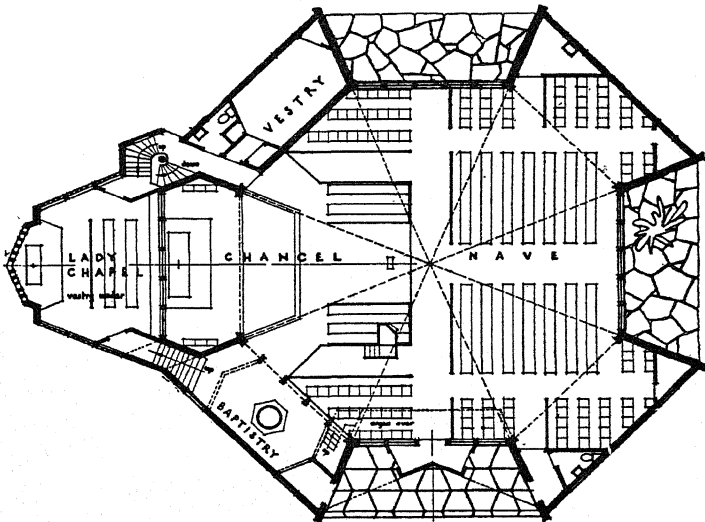
PLAN 10. ST. FRANCIS, LOCKLEAZE

with organ platform above. The church is designed to seat 300, but the adjoining hall, which forms an integral part of the church, can be used to provide additional seating for 240. There seems to be no provision for a week-day chapel.

The projected church at Bristol is similar in its general layout, but here the baptistery is to the left of the porch, on the north side of the church, and the organ is placed in a north gallery. The pulpit is on the north side of the chancel. To the east of the church there is a vestry with a separate week-day chapel above it. The position of the altar, which was decided by the client, throws away many of the advantages of the octagonal plan. It is hoped that, as people become accustomed to the idea that a free-standing altar is in fact 'traditional', it will be possible to bring the altar further forward. The architects have had this possibility in mind, and such a modification will involve no major change in the levels within the sanctuary. There is, however, a lack of simplicity about this plan—particularly in the way in which the seats for the congregation have been fitted into the awkward angles of the building—that suggests structural rather than liturgical preoccupations. (See p. 82). Nor, unfortunately, is this lack of simplicity confined to the plan.

11. Projected church for a Housing Estate at Ronkswood, Worcester. Architect: Maurice W. Jones

The circular plan was dictated by the character of the site. The altar is placed on the periphery of the circle, with a shallow recess behind it to contain the bishop's throne and seats for the other clergy. There are ambos on either side of the sanctuary. The congregation enter the church through the large circular baptistery. A gallery provides extra seating for 100 when required. The choir will occupy the two front rows of seats in the body of the church. To the east of the church it is hoped in due course to build a separate hall, to replace a temporary building which at present serves as both church and hall. Around the church there is to be an open space or 'garth' enclosed by a high wall. This will serve to insulate the church from noise, and will also afford a measure of protection from small boys—an important consideration in a church which has glazed panels extending to floor-level. This seems to be the first example in this country of a type of layout which has become very popular abroad. Date of completion uncertain.
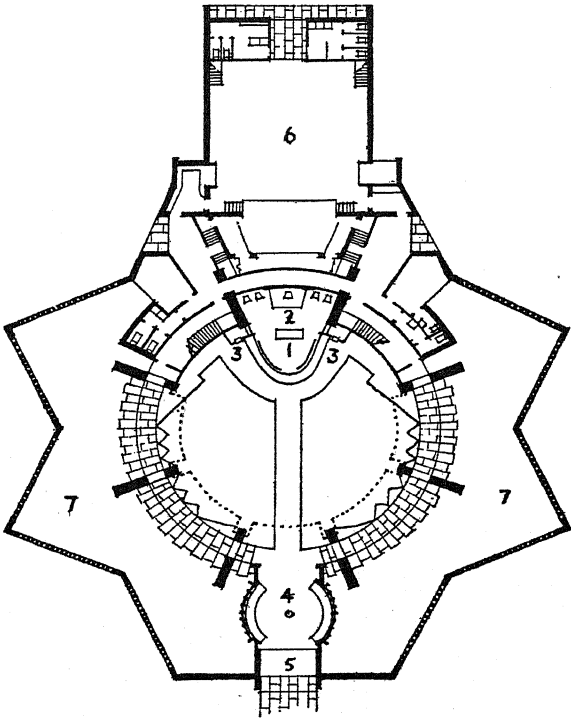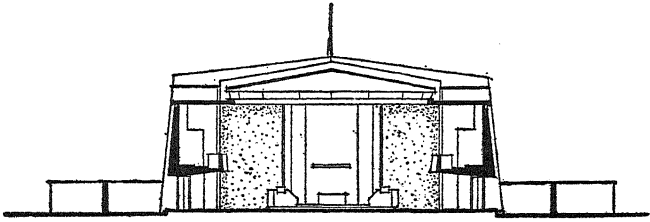
PLAN 11. RONKSWOOD, WORCESTER
1. Altar; 2. Bishop's throne; 3. Ambos; 4. Baptistery;
5. Porch; 6. Hall; 7. Garth

12. CHURCH OF THE ASCENSION, CROWNHILL, PLYMOUTH (1958). Architects: Robert Potter and Richard Hare

13. ST. GEORGE, OAKDALE, POOLE, DORSET. Architects: Robert Potter and Richard Hare

14. ST. MARY, PECKHAM, LONDON. Architects: Robert Potter and Richard Hare

The church at Crownhill, consecrated in December 1958 and built largely by direct labour, is one of the most satisfactory buildings for liturgy completed in this country since the war. The architects were fortunate in finding a client with a real understanding of the liturgy and a determination to build a church which would enable the local Christian community to worship with understanding. Their collaboration has borne fruit in an interior of unusual quality. The church contains a single altar which stands beneath a ciborium at the centre of the cruciform building. There are seats for the congregation on three sides of the sanctuary; the bishop's throne is behind the altar. Choir and organ are placed in a west gallery, above the baptistery. There is no pulpit; a lectern serves both for the proclamation and the exposition of the word. Behind the bishop's chair is the processional cross—there is no cross on the altar, and the celebrant faces the people. On the east wall of the church there is to be a figure of Christ in Majesty by Sir Jacob Epstein, surrounded by twelve small hexagonal windows designed by the same artist and executed in Paris by Jean Barillet. Unlike some modern churches, however, this is first and foremost a building for corporate worship: not a museum of religious art, owing its sole distinction to the work of a celebrated painter or sculptor.

The experience gained at Crownhill is reflected in the plan of the projected church at Oakdale. The main development from the earlier plan lies in the abandonment of the rectangular basis. At Oakdale the church is widest on the north-south axis of the high altar and tapers towards its extremities. In this church, however, it was necessary to include a second altar, as the programme demanded the provision of a large chapel. This has been placed to the east of the sanctuary so that it can on occasion provide extra seating for the Sunday liturgy. The bishop's throne and the processional cross are in the same position as at Crownhill, but there is a pulpit as well as a lectern. Baptistery and organ gallery are again at the west end of the nave.
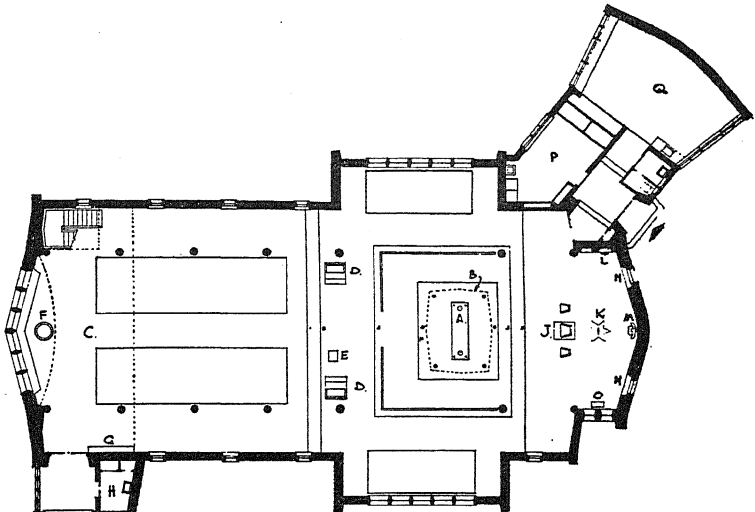
A. Altar; B. Ciborium over; C. Choir and organ in gallery over; D. Clergy seat; E. Lectern pulpit; F. Font; G. Literature; H. Flower room; I. Tower; J. Bishop's chair; K. Processional cross; L. Aumbry; M. Christ in Majesty; N. The Apostles in stained glass; O. Credence; P. Clergy vestry; Q. Choir vestry and parish room

PLAN 12. CHURCH OF THE ASCENSION, CROWNHILL

A. High Altar; B. Ciborium, suspended; C. Choir and organ in gallery over; D. Clergy seat; E. Lectern; F. Font; G. Literature; H. Tower; I. Porch; J. Processional cross; K. Bishop's chair; L. Pulpit; M. Lady chapel; N. Credence; O. Clergy vestry; P. Choir vestry
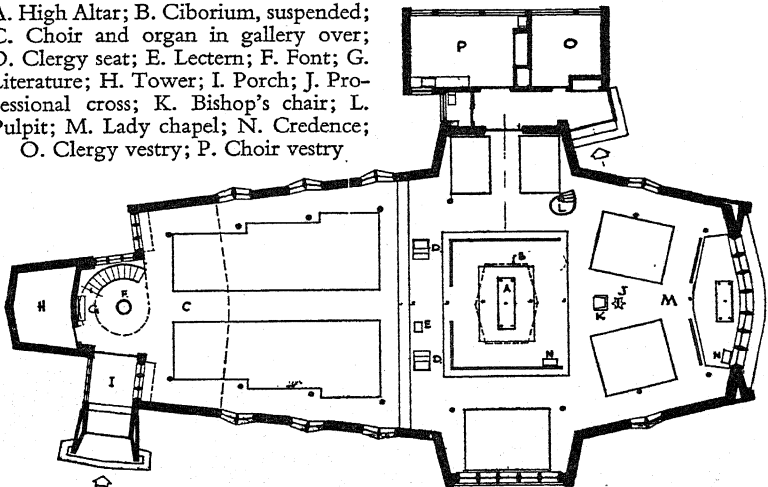
PLAN 13. ST. GEORGE, OAKDALE

In the still more recent project for a church at Peckham the nave is much shorter, so that the altar stands almost at the centre of the building. The pulpit and lectern are slightly to the east of the altar, with the bishop's throne between them, and the client required that the font should stand in the sanctuary (it will normally stand between the altar and the pulpit, but will be moved to a central position in front of the altar when there is a baptism). Here, too, the architects had to provide

NORMAL

FOR BAPTISMS
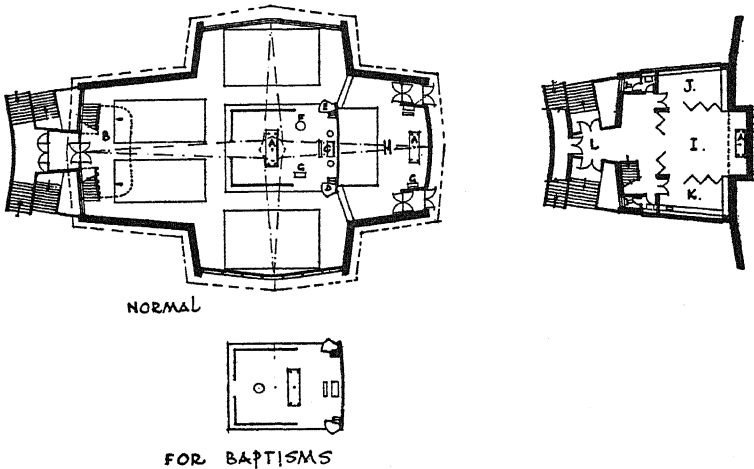
PLAN 14. ST. MARY, PECKHAM

A. Altar; B. Choir and organ in gallery over; C. Bishop's
chair and/or clergy seat; D. Lectern; E. Pulpit; F. Font;
G. Credence; H. Morning chapel; I. Chapel; J. Vestry;
K. Sacristy; L. Porch

a chapel within the main volume of the building. There is a second and smaller chapel situated below the nave, together with the vestry and sacristy. Choir and organ are in a west gallery.

15. CHURCH OF ST. SWITHUN, KENNINGTON, OXFORD (1958). Architect: Lawrence Dale

This cruciform church, with central altar, and choir and organ in the eastern arm, has been described on p. 31. It is unfortunate that the arrangement of seating has been modified since the church was consecrated, in order to provide a week-day chapel of a somewhat

improvised character in the south transept, where the sacrament is also reserved. This detracts considerably from the building's primary character as a room for the eucharistic assembly. It should not have
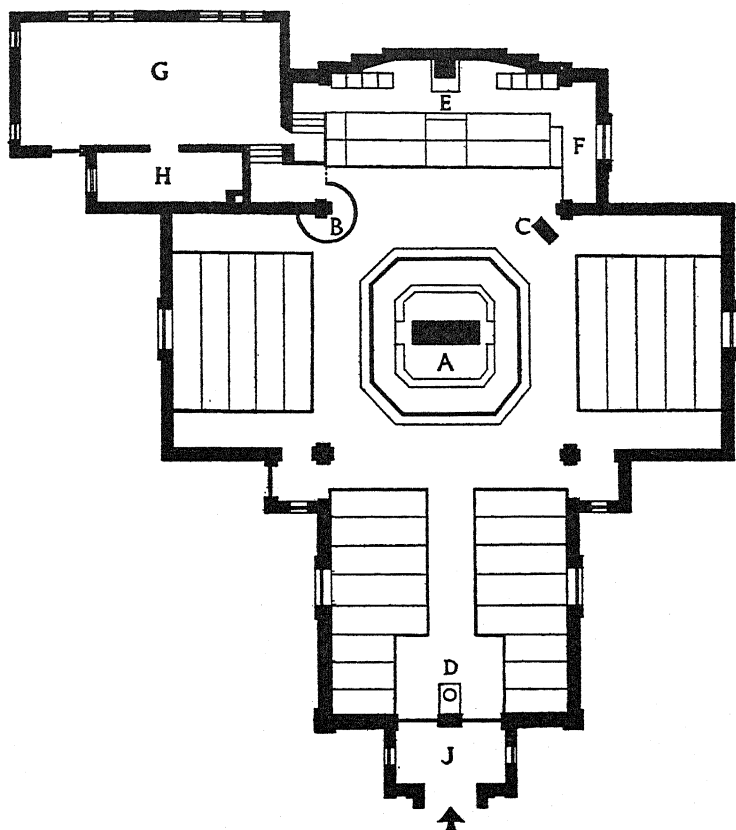
PLAN 15. ST. SWITHUN, KENNINGTON,
OXFORD

A. Altar; B. Pulpit; C. Lectern; D. Font; E. Bishop's
throne and seats for clergy and choir; F. Organ;
G. Vestry and sacristy; H. Heating; J. Porch

been difficult to find space for a small chapel in the subsidiary structure to the north-east of the church containing the sacristy, etc. This would have had the further advantage of providing a space which could have been independently heated in winter.

16. CHAPEL OF THE RESURRECTION, UNIVERSITY COLLEGE,
     IBADAN, NIGERIA (1954). Architect: George G. Pace

This inter-denominational chapel, which is used by all the Christian communities with the exception of the Roman Catholics, who have their own chapel, was designed in 1952 and completed two years later.
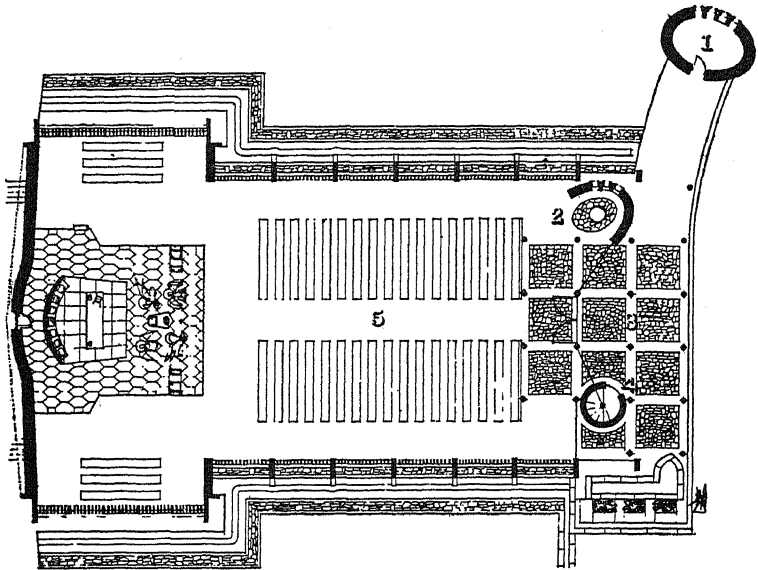
PLAN 16. CHAPEL OF THE RESURRECTION,
                IBADAN

1. Tower; 2. Baptistery; 3. Entrance; 4. Stairs to gallery;
                      5. Nave

It is a building of great simplicity which possesses something of the radiant poverty that characterises so many of the finest churches of the last thirty years. The T-shaped plan enables the congregation to be seated on three sides of the free-standing altar, behind which are chairs for the ministers. In front of the altar is a lectern, which, as at Crownhill, also serves as a pulpit. There is a west gallery, a large open narthex and a detached bell-tower. The baptistery is to the right of the entrance to the church.

17. CHURCH OF ST. MARK, NEWBY, SCARBOROUGH. Architect: George G. Pace

The general layout of this projected church is similar to that of the Ibadan chapel. The site slopes steeply from west to east, and this has led the architect to place the sacristy and separate week-day chapel below the east end of the church and on a different axis. The altar is
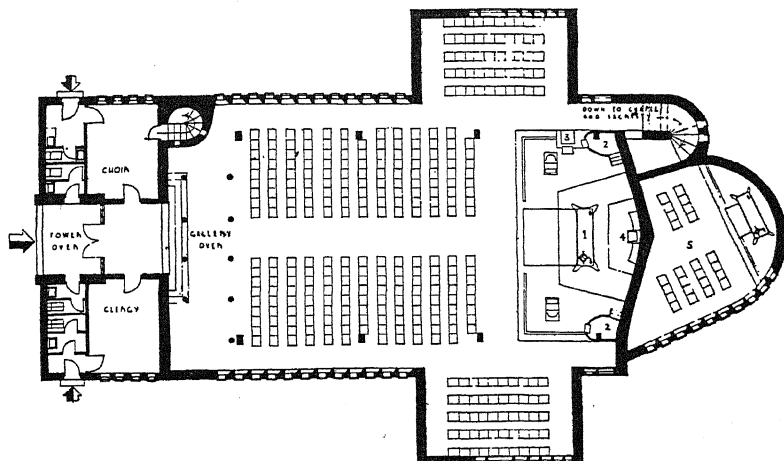
PLAN 17. ST. MARK, NEWBY
1. Altar; 2. Ambo; 3. Font; 4. Bishop's throne; 5. Chapel

free-standing and the bishop's throne is placed against the east wall. There are ambos to the north and south of the altar, and the font is also in the sanctuary. Choir and organ are in the west gallery, below which are the vestries.

18. ST. MARY, SOUTHGATE, CRAWLEY (1958). Architects: Henry Braddock and D. F. Martin-Smith
19. LITTLE ST. PETER, CRICKLEWOOD (1958). Architects: Henry Braddock and D. F. Martin-Smith
20. CHURCH AT HARDWICK, STOCKTON-ON-TEES. Architects: Henry Braddock and D. F. Martin-Smith

Three examples of churches which combine church and hall in an integral scheme. At Crawley the hall is set at right angles to the church
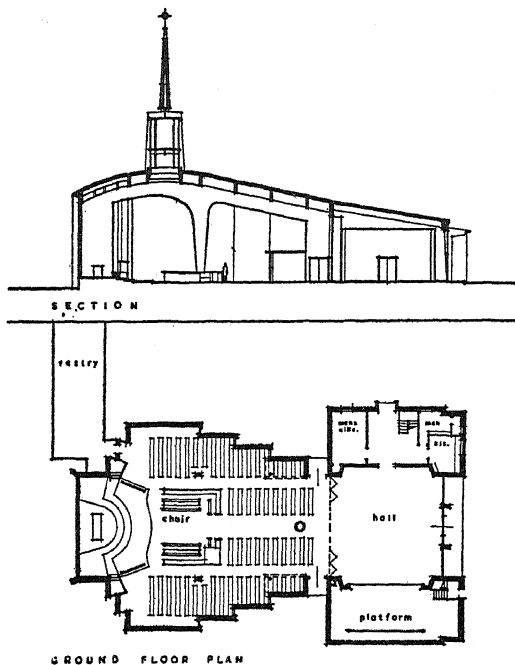
PLAN 18. ST. MARY, SOUTHGATE,
CRAWLEY
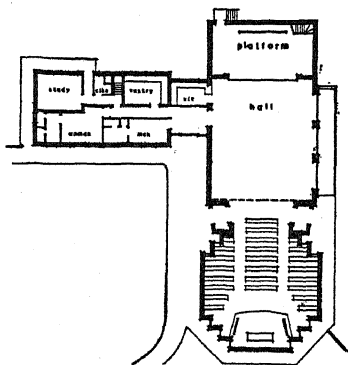
PLAN 19. LITTLE ST. PETER, CRICKLE-
WOOD

—which is hexagonal in plan, with the choir in the John Keble position and a free-standing altar (which has, since the consecration of the church, been pushed back against the east wall).

ELEVATION

GROUND FLOOR PLAN
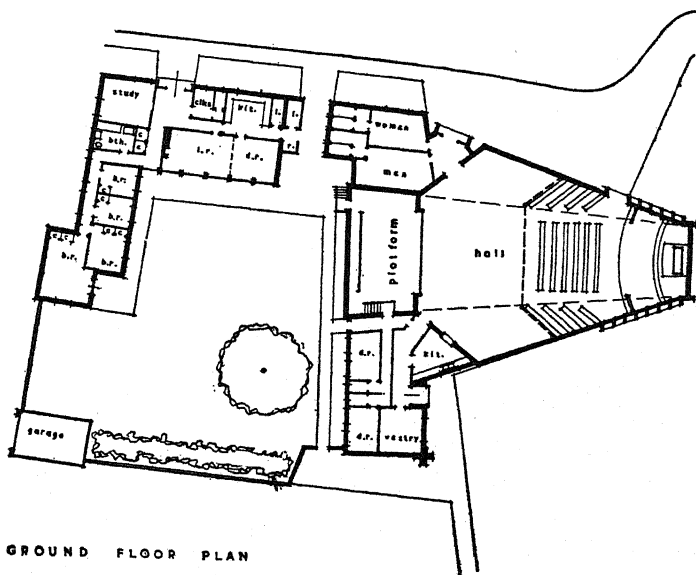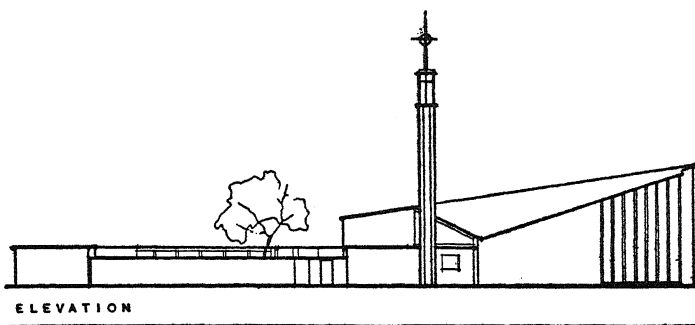
PLAN 20. HARDWICK, STOCKTON-ON-TEES

The church at Cricklewood, based on an irregular octagon, is combined with a hall on the same axis.

At Hardwick church and hall form a single structural unit, again hexagonal in plan. In each instance the hall is separated from the

church by a screen which can be rolled back to provide additional seating when required. The disadvantage of this kind of relationship between church and hall lies in the fact that when the division is removed an extremely elongated space is created, particularly in the case of a church as large as the one at Crawley.
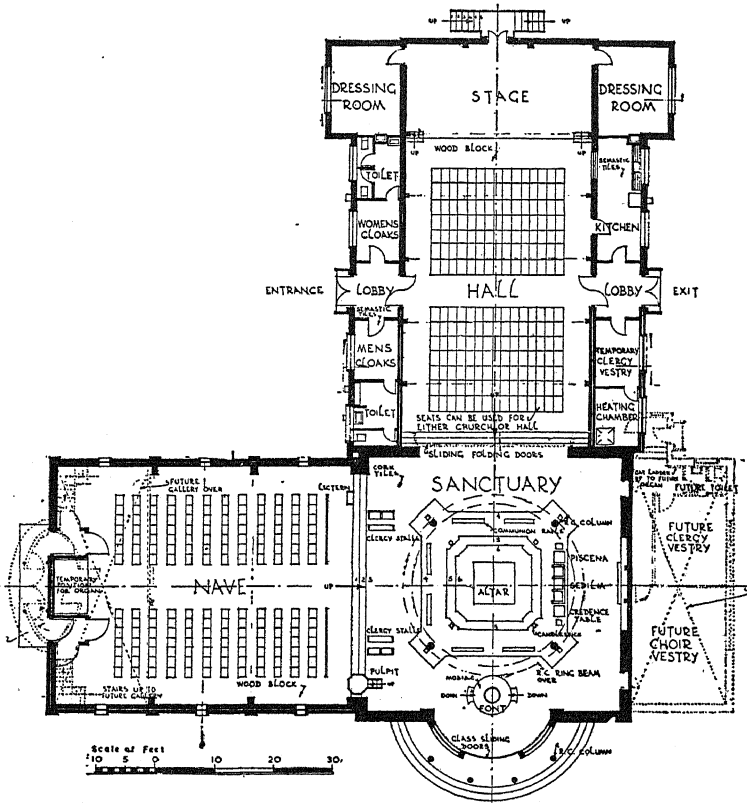
PLAN 21. ST. RICHARD, THREE BRIDGES

21. CHURCH OF ST. RICHARD, THREE BRIDGES, CRAWLEY (1954). Architect: N. F. Cachemaille-Day

Another attempt to find a solution to the problem of combining a church with a hall. The heart of the plan is the square sanctuary, with its square altar standing beneath a large circular lantern. The nave and

the hall open off this central space to create an L-shaped building in which the altar is axial to both. Except on the comparatively rare occasions when extra seating is required (the nave provides seating for 250) the church is separated from the hall by folding doors. The
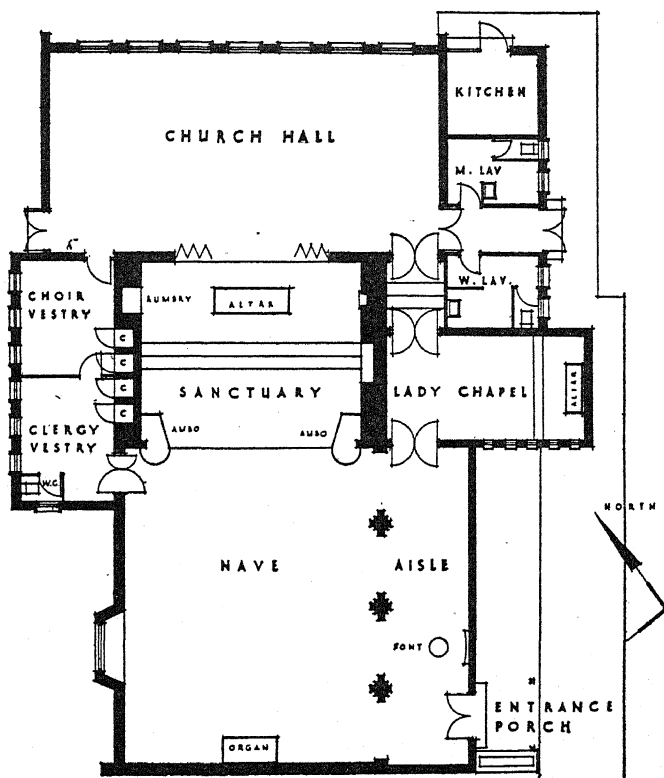
PLAN 22. CHURCH OF THE EPIPHANY, MERSTHAM

church then becomes a self-contained building consisting of square sanctuary and short rectangular nave. The pulpit is placed in the south-west corner of the sanctuary, so that it commands both nave and hall. The baptistery consists of a shallow apsidal recess to the south of the sanctuary.

22. CHURCH OF THE EPIPHANY, MERSTHAM, SURREY (1955).
    Architects: Alleyn and Mansell.

23. ST. MICHAEL AND ALL ANGELS, LONDON FIELDS,
    LONDON, E.8. Architect: N. F. Cachemaille-Day

A further solution to the same problem. In each of these churches
(the details of the second are provisional) the hall is placed to the east
of the sanctuary, so that when the screen is rolled back the altar is
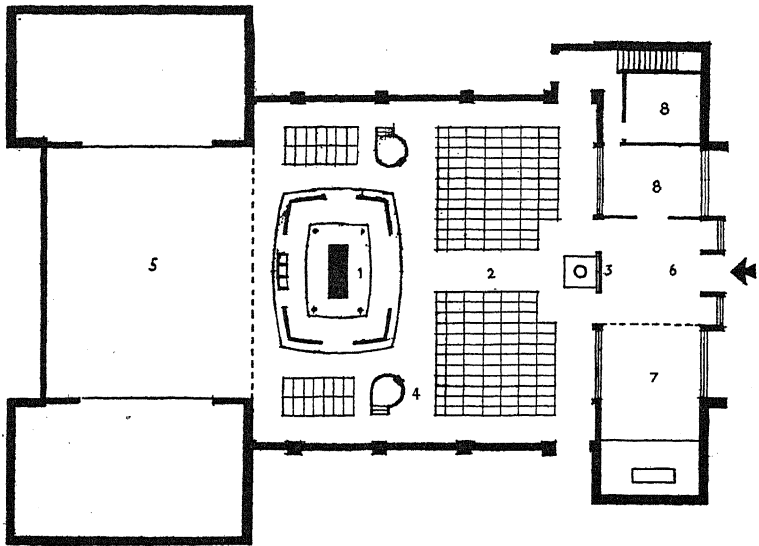
PLAN 23. ST. MICHAEL AND ALL ANGELS,
LONDON FIELDS

1. Sanctuary; 2. Nave; 3. Font; 4. Ambo; 5. Hall;
6. Porch; 7. Chapel; 8. Vestry

more or less central. This suggests one simple way of improving many
of the cheap 'dual-purpose' buildings erected since the war. The church
at Merstham has a number of interesting features and it is regrettable
that it has suffered extensive and largely irrelevant 'decoration'. The
treatment of the sanctuary is particularly unfortunate, and tends to
obscure the virtues of the plan.

24. CHURCH OF ALL SAINTS, INTAKE, DONCASTER (1953). Architect: George G. Pace

An interesting and suggestive example of the possibilities of adapting a conventional plan. The architect started at a considerable disadvantage, since he had literally to build on another man's foundations. A highly conventional neo-Romanesque church, consisting of rectan-
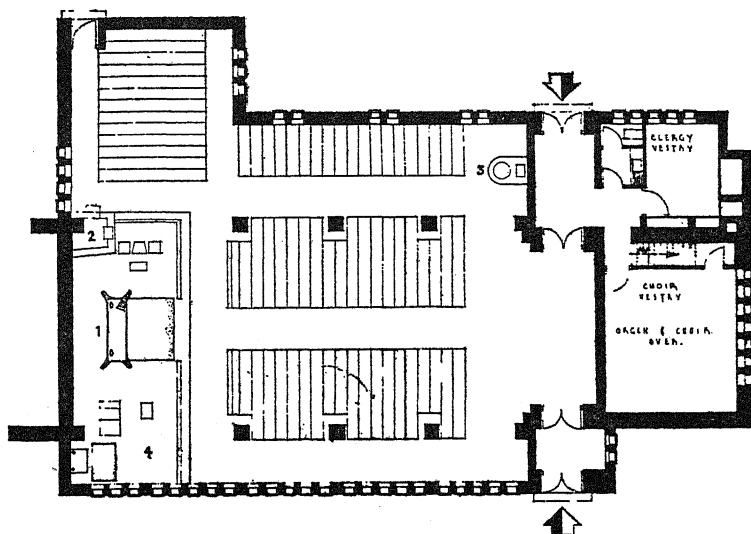
PLAN 24. ALL SAINTS, INTAKE
1. Altar; 2. Pulpit; 3. Font; 4. Chapel

gular aisled nave and chancel, was put in hand in 1939, but work was discontinued at the outbreak of war, when the walls had been built up to a height of five feet. When a new architect was commissioned to complete the church in 1951, he pulled down the existing walls and designed a new church to fit the pre-war foundations. By sacrificing the traditional orientation he succeeded in creating a far more satisfactory church. The original chancel became the choir vestry (with a gallery for organ and choir above). The new sanctuary is at the west end of the building, and an L-shaped plan has been created by utilising the old foundations for the transept. The pulpit is placed to the liturgical south of the altar. The baptistery is near the porch. There is a tiny

K

chapel in the 'north' aisle. The new layout might have been improved by making the altar square and using the transept as a week-day chapel —as is done in Rudolf Schwarz's church at Düren. Such an arrangement would have made a second altar redundant.
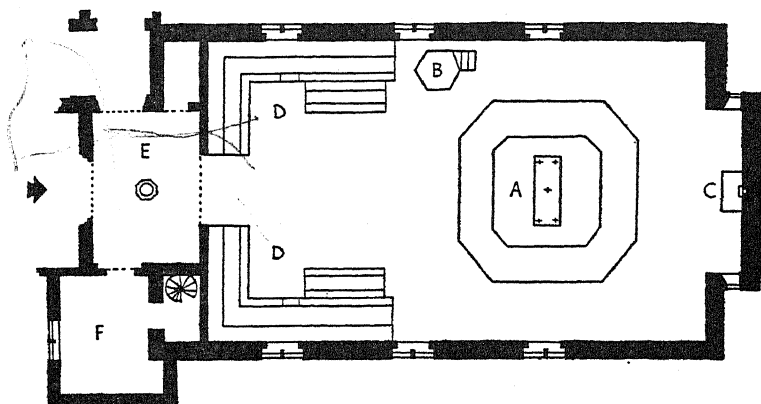
PLAN 25. CHAPEL OF THE ROYAL
FOUNDATION OF ST. KATHARINE,
STEPNEY
A. Altar; B. Pulpit; C. Sacrament altar; D. Stalls;
E. Baptistery; F. Vestry

25. CHAPEL OF THE ROYAL FOUNDATION OF ST. KATHA-
    RINE, STEPNEY (1951). Architect: R. E. Enthoven

26. CHAPEL AT ST. MICHAEL'S COLLEGE, LLANDAFF (1958).
    Architect: George G. Pace

27. CHAPEL AT WHIRLOW GRANGE, SHEFFIELD (1958).
    Architect: George G. Pace

Three examples of very small churches based on a simple one-room plan. The chapel of the Royal Foundation of St. Katharine—one of the focal points for informed liturgical experiment in this country since the war—has a free-standing altar designed for celebration facing the people, with a small sacrament altar behind it. The pulpit stands to the north of the sanctuary, and the only fixed seating consists of stalls at the west end of the chapel. There is a west gallery for the organ and a separate baptistery. This is a good example of an unpretentious structure which really works as a building for liturgy, and which owes
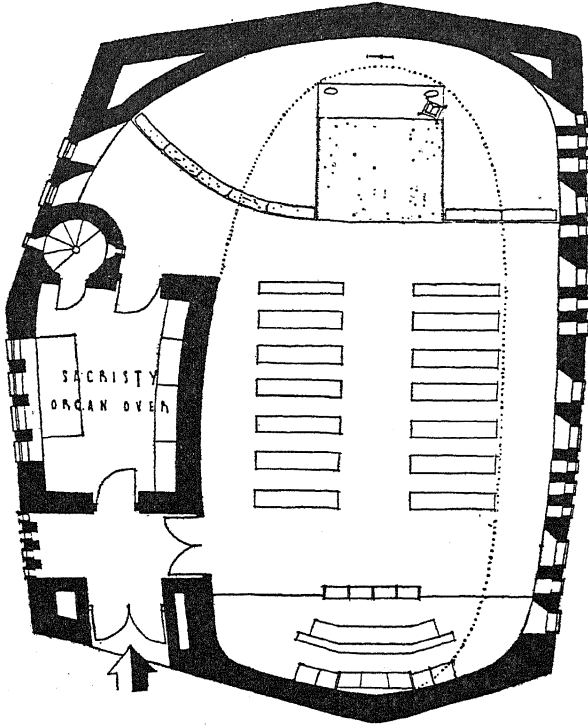
PLAN 26. ST. MICHAEL'S THEOLOGICAL
COLLEGE, LLANDAFF
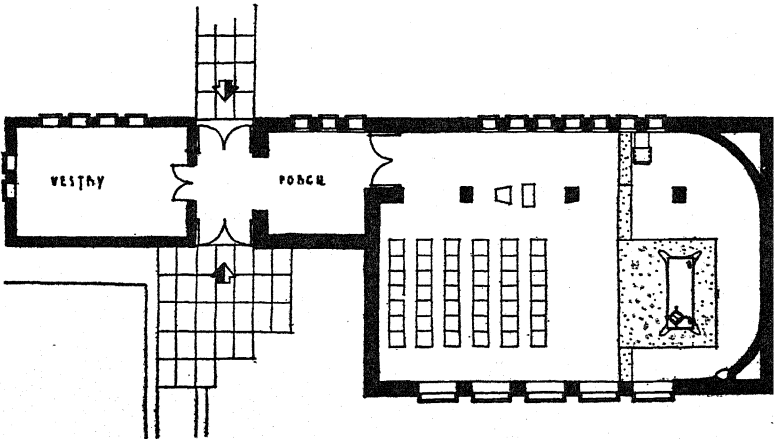
PLAN 27. WHIRLOW GRANGE CHAPEL,
SHEFFIELD

its distinction to a worthy altar set in the right place. The altar, which is the work of Keith Murray and Ralph Beyer, is particularly fine. It stands beneath a ciborium.

Each of the two chapels by George Pace has a free-standing altar, and, to facilitate celebration facing the people, the processional cross stands behind the altar and well clear of it. At Llandaff there is an organ gallery above the sacristy on the north side of the chapel. These are both buildings of unusual quality.
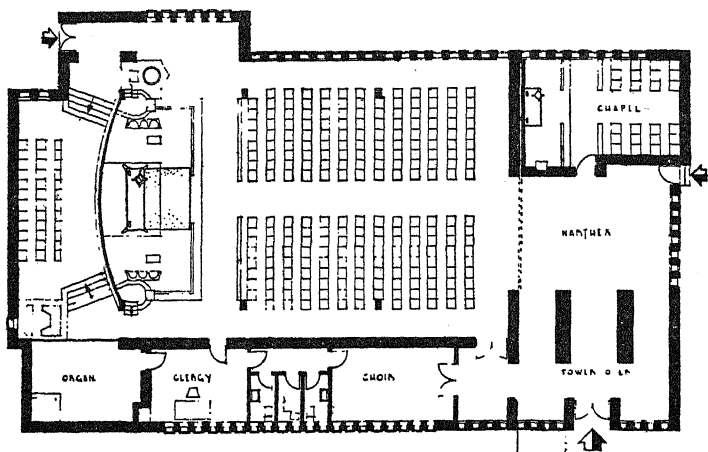
PLAN 28. SS. LEONARD AND JUDE,
DONCASTER

28. CHURCH OF SS. LEONARD AND JUDE, DONCASTER (1959). Architect: George G. Pace

This church has several interesting features. The arrangement of the sanctuary is similar to that of the projected church at Newby (*Plan* 17), but here the font is placed to the south of the altar in a shallow recess. The choir and organ are behind the altar and well below the level of the rest of the church so that they are not excessively prominent. The church may be compared in this respect with the one at Kennington (*Plan* 15), or with that of St. Augustine, Whitton, in Middlesex, in both of which the singers are placed *above* the level of the nave. At the west end of this church there is an unusually spacious narthex, and a small week-day chapel, entirely separate from the

main volume of the church and independently heated. The placing of the vestry and sacristy, etc., was determined by the character of the site. It was desirable to insulate the church so far as possible from the noise of traffic on the main road adjoining it to the north.

29. CHURCH OF ST. MARK, SHEFFIELD. Architect: George G. Pace

This is a new church which incorporates the tower and porch of a neo-Gothic building, the rest of which was destroyed during the war.
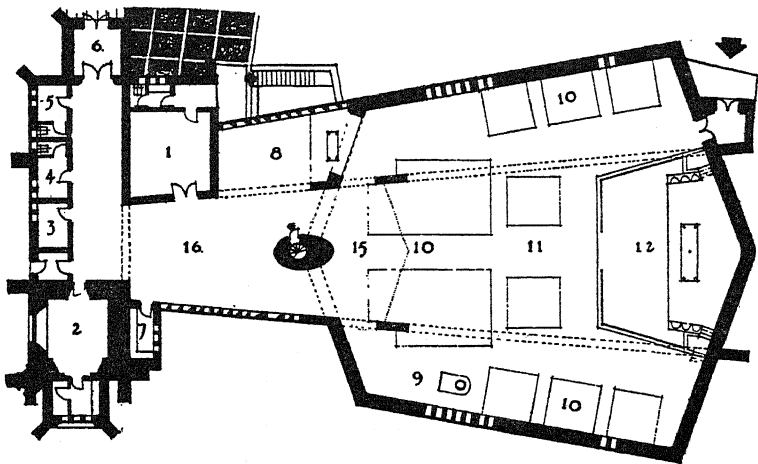
PLAN 29. ST. MARK, SHEFFIELD
1–5. Vestries etc; 6. Porch; 8. Chapel; 9. Baptistery;
10. Seating for congregation; 11. Choir; 12. Sanctuary;
15. Gallery; 16. Narthex

A comparison with two other post-war churches—St. John's, St. Leonards-on-Sea, and St. Michael's, Tettenhall—where a new church has been designed to 'harmonise' with an existing tower, is instructive. At Sheffield the architect has made no attempt to imitate the style of the earlier work, but has followed the more traditional course of incorporating the old in the new. The eucharistic room is hexagonal in plan and is unobstructed by columns (this is an interesting project from the point of view of structure as well as plan). There is no structural division between nave and sanctuary. The choir is placed in a central chancel and there is a west gallery for the organ. There are

ambos north and south of the altar, which is free-standing. The font is
in the south-west corner of the church, to the right of the entrance.
Since it is intended that the church shall be used by the university, the
architect has provided a large narthex which can be used for meetings
and exhibitions. Opening off this narthex to the north is the week-
day chapel. The church was designed in 1950 but the date of completion
is still uncertain.
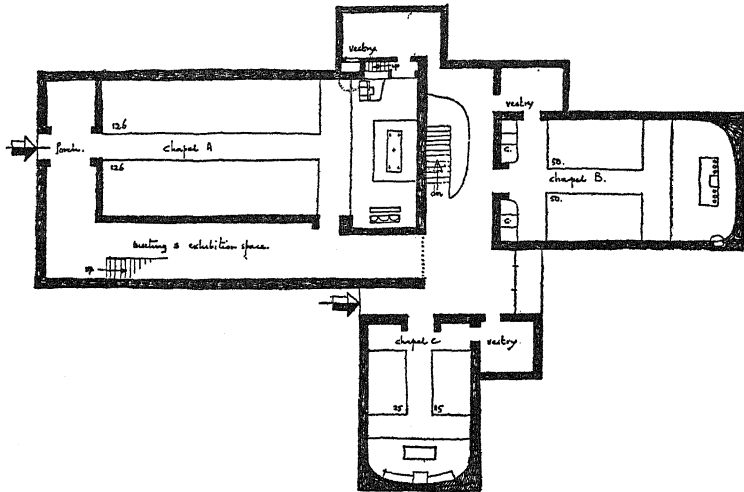
PLAN 30. UNIVERSITY OF NORTH
STAFFORDSHIRE. PROJECTED CHAPEL GROUP

30. PROJECTED CHAPEL-GROUP FOR THE UNIVERSITY OF
    NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE, KEELE. Architect: George G. Pace

This unusual project recalls the Interfaith Centre at Brandeis Uni-
versity, Massachusetts, by the architects Harrison and Abramovitz,
where three separate buildings for the Catholic, Protestant and Jewish
communities are grouped around a small lake. At Keele, however, the
three chapels—Anglican, Roman Catholic and Free Church, in order
of size—are housed in a single structure. The Anglican chapel has a
free-standing altar and a combined pulpit and lectern. There is a gallery
which extends round two sides of the chapel, and below the gallery
a separate space for meetings and exhibitions. The organ is in the
south-west corner of the gallery. Below the Roman Catholic chapel

there is a room which will serve as a library and meeting-space. Each of
the three chapels will have its own vestry, etc. Designed 1958, date of
completion uncertain.
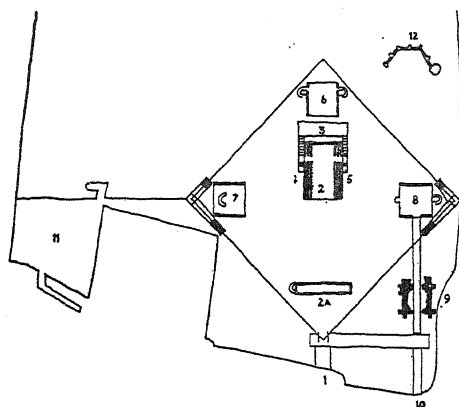
PLAN

1. Entrance; 2. 'Ark' (schola cantorum); 2A. Music
gallery; 3 Organ over, altar under; 4 Pulpit; 5 Lectern;
6. Lady chapel; 7. Chapter-house
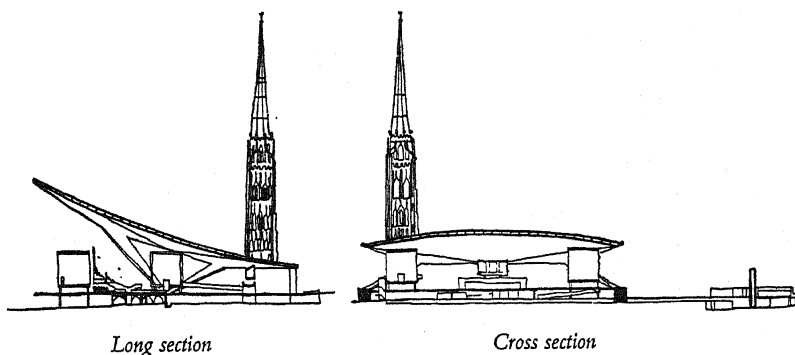
Long section   *Cross section*

PLAN 31. PROJECT FOR COVENTRY
CATHEDRAL

31. PROJECT FOR COVENTRY CATHEDRAL (1951). Architects:
Alison and Peter Smithson

Among all the entries submitted for the Coventry competition, not
excepting the successful design, this project stands out as a serious and
imaginative attempt to approach the problem from the point of view

of functional analysis rather than from that of conventional ideas and associations. If some of its features seem questionable, that is sufficiently explained by the unsatisfactory character of the brief with which the architects were supplied. Structurally, this project is of quite exceptional interest. The church was conceived as 'one large simple volume containing all the cathedral functions, rather than as a series of small related volumes whose tensions would be slackened and confused by the general lack of order in the adjacent buildings'. The plan is based on a square, with the altar set on the diagonal forming the east-west axis. The whole space would have been covered by an 'anti-elastic shell': a vast concrete vault 'tilted up in the east and down in the west, internally reaching its climax over the altar', of polished marble aggregate. Among the planning features which may be briefly noted are the placing of the congregation 'equidistant from the altar rather than progressively further away from it'; the treatment of the organ from the point of view of the instrument's liturgical function; the way in which the ancillary chapels (none of which has its own altar) all open on to *the* altar, 'a single block of translucent stone' at the centre of the cathedral; and the adaptation of the primitive presbytery and chancel for the *schola cantorum* to the exigencies of modern cathedral worship. One may hope that the architects will not have to wait long for an opportunity to build a church; the qualities displayed in their Coventry project are lamentably rare in modern church architecture on this side of the Channel.[2]

[2] Since this chapter was set up in print I have had the opportunity to study two further projects for new churches, both of exceptional interest. The first, by Robert Potter and Richard Hare, is for the church of St. Aldate, at Gloucester, and the plan has much in common with that of Hermann Baur's church at Birsfelden (see figure 16 on p. 90). The second, for the church of St. Matthew, Perry Beeches, in Birmingham, is by Robert Maguire, the architect of the church of St. Paul, at Bow Common, and is a project of quite outstanding importance, which fully bears out the hopes aroused by the earlier building. I hope to publish both of these projects in another book which is now in preparation, together with several designs for new churches in the diocese of London by Norman Haines which exemplify a most unusual understanding of modern liturgical requirements.

8. *Ancient Churches and Modern Needs*

THE present liturgical renewal raises once again the difficult problem of adapting ancient buildings to modern liturgical requirements. Except in the new towns and housing estates new churches are comparatively rare. The majority of congregations in this country, particularly in rural areas, have, for better or worse, to worship in buildings which reflect the liturgical and social patterns of another century, and which, in spite of their beauty and their historic associations, are often ill-adapted to the needs of our own day. If this is still not generally recognised, it is because most of our parish churches preserve a type of liturgical worship which is a lingering survival from the latter part of the Victorian era, and to which the typical nineteenth-century plan is admirably suited.

It is necessary, in view of the predominantly æsthetic and antiquarian approach to church restoration in this country, to stress the fact that the crucial problem is a liturgical and not an æsthetic one. The majority of Gothic-revival churches are unsuitable for twentieth-century worship not simply because they are often full of unlovely ecclesiastical furniture and sentimental stained-glass, or because they have ill-proportioned altars and dreadful sculptured reredoses. Their unsuitability is due above all to the fact that they are planned in accordance with an understanding of the liturgy which is fundamentally at variance with modern biblical and liturgical scholarship. As the influence of the new reformation becomes more widespread on this side of the Channel—as it assuredly will within the next ten or twenty years—more and more clergy will be compelled to face the difficulties of building up a true liturgical community in buildings which were never intended for such a purpose. The influence of the *Parish and People* movement, the spread of the parish communion, and the restoration of the sacrament of baptism to its proper place in the liturgy have all contributed to a growing awareness of some of the less satisfactory aspects of our historic churches. The surpliced choir and

the distant altar have already become something of a problem in many parishes. As the new theological insights percolate down from the universities and theological colleges to the bedrock of the ordinary English parish, and as liturgical reform extends outwards from the dormitory suburbs and housing estates where it is most in evidence to-day, the need for modifying the layout of many of our ancient churches in the interests of modern liturgical and pastoral needs will become apparent.

The problem is most acute where a congregation has inherited a late-medieval parish church, or one planned in conformity with the principles of the Cambridge ecclesiologists. Churches of the twelfth century, in which the altar is comparatively close to the people, present far fewer difficulties. Many seventeenth- and eighteenth-century churches, with an 'auditory' type of plan, lend themselves with very little modification of layout to the new liturgical requirements. The really tricky problems arise when it is a question of adapting a large church with a long chancel and perhaps a screen separating the altar from the congregation. How, in such a building, is the Christian lay-man to recover his proper liturgy? How is he to be transformed from a passive spectator into an active participant in the eucharistic action? Often he can see next to nothing of what is taking place at the altar. In many churches the celebrant is almost inaudible to the laity in the nave. The typical church plan of the later Middle Ages, with its multi-plication of secondary rooms within the main volume of the church, was never intended for corporate worship. The function of such churches was radically different from that of the modern eucharistic room, in which the whole body of the *laos* is gathered around the table of sacrifice. In the context of the clericalised society and liturgy of their own day these churches were admirably adapted to their purpose. It is hardly surprising if they fail to satisfy the very different needs of the twentieth century.

English church architecture of the seventeenth century provides many instructive examples of the rearrangement of such churches as these in the interests of changing liturgical requirements—though few of the solutions then adopted are suitable for our own time. It has indeed to be recognised that there is sometimes no wholly satisfactory solution to the problems posed by medieval or Gothic revival churches. It is often necessary to choose between modern liturgical and pastoral needs, on the one hand, and æsthetic and antiquarian principles on the other. The two cannot always be entirely reconciled. It may well be

necessary to do violence to the architectural character of the *domus ecclesiæ* in order to build up the *ecclesia*, the spiritual house constructed of living stones, which gives the building its meaning and purpose. Such a choice can be desperately difficult and it is impossible to lay down general principles: each case has to be treated on its merits. The difficulty is not lessened by the prevailing tendency among church people in this country to regard their parish churches not so much as buildings for the worship of the living God as monuments to a romanticised past—a tendency which is much in evidence among those who are particularly concerned with the care and restoration of our historic churches. Those who serve on our advisory committees should be required to make a thorough study of the work of rebuilding and rearrangement carried out on the Continent during the last ten years, above all in western Germany. The archdiocese of Cologne abounds in striking examples of what *can* be done with unpromising nineteenth-century material, provided only that antiquarian considerations are subordinated to the needs of the present.[1]

Many of these German adaptations have involved the transformation of cruciform churches by the removal of the high altar from the eastern arm of the building to a new position in the crossing. The treatment of the old sanctuary varies considerably. In some instances, such as the adaptation of the neo-Gothic church of the Conception of our Lady, at Düsseldorf, the space to the east of the altar houses the choir and organ; in others, like the church of the Sacred Heart at

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[1] In fairness to the much-criticised Diocesan Advisory Committees, and the Central Council for the Care of Churches which links them, it should be pointed out that they are not authorised to consider the desirability of *changes* in the layout of a church unless such changes are in accordance with the letter of the existing rubrics and canons (most of which date from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries). These committees were originally created for one purpose only, namely, to prevent the kind of misuse of ancient buildings which, during the early years of the present century, had reached such a point that a considerable body of informed opinion was in favour of transferring the responsibility for all church buildings to the then Office of Works. Thus the desirability of modifying a church in accordance with changes in liturgical thought and practice is a subject which lies outside these bodies' terms of reference. They can take no action until changes in the existing law have been formally adopted by Church Assembly and the Convocations. This explains the absence from the discussion of 'twentieth-century needs' in the Twelfth Report of the Central Council (Church Information Board, 1957) of any reference to liturgical changes. I am grateful to Mr. W. I. Croome for pointing this out to me.

Cologne-Mülheim, or St. Englebert's, Mülheim-Ruhr, the former apse becomes a week-day chapel, with the seats arranged to face west, towards the high altar. Again, at Essen-Borbeck, the apse of the neo-Gothic church of St. Dionysius is sealed off from the church to provide a separate week-day chapel, with three rooms for various purposes above it. In Rudolf Schwarz's adaptation of the large neo-Romanesque church of St. Heribert, at Cologne-Deutz, the apse to the east of the high altar is transformed into the baptistery.

The partially rebuilt Franciscan church in the Ulrichgasse at Cologne, and the Dominican church of the Holy Cross, a short distance to the west, also exemplify the unsuspected possibilities of nineteenth-century churches ill-adapted, as originally planned, to corporate worship. The altar of the former is set at an angle so that it commands both arms of the L-shaped plan (rather as in Henri Matisse's little chapel at Vence); in the Dominican church the altar has been brought well forward, with a small altar for the reserved sacrament immediately behind it, and the choir has also been placed to the east of the altar—somewhat less conspicuously than in the church at Düsseldorf—in two shallow recesses on either side of the spacious new sanctuary. Many of these adaptations suggest possible solutions to the problem of making old churches in this country more suitable for a liturgy in which all are active participants.

Among the more spectacular transformations of nineteenth-century churches are several which have involved the demolition of the whole of the north wall of an existing, or damaged, nave and the building of a new nave and sanctuary at right angles to the original axis of the church. In two recent examples of radical replanning on these lines—St. Michael, Düsseldorf-Lierenfeld, and St. Rochus, Duisdorf—the old apsidal sanctuary has become the baptistery of the new church[2]. Another very remarkable example of the adaptation of an old plan can be seen in the church of St. Mauritius, a short distance to the south of the cathedral at Cologne, where the nave of a neo-Gothic church dating

[2] A project for the enlargement of the church of St. Lawrence at Eastcote, in Middlesex, by Norman Haines and Partners, closely resembles the treatment of these two German churches. Here too the north wall of the nave is to be demolished and an entirely new nave added at right angles to the axis of the present building. This will be wider than it is long, and the congregational seating will be placed on three sides of a free-standing altar. The present sanctuary is to be transformed into a separate sacrament chapel.
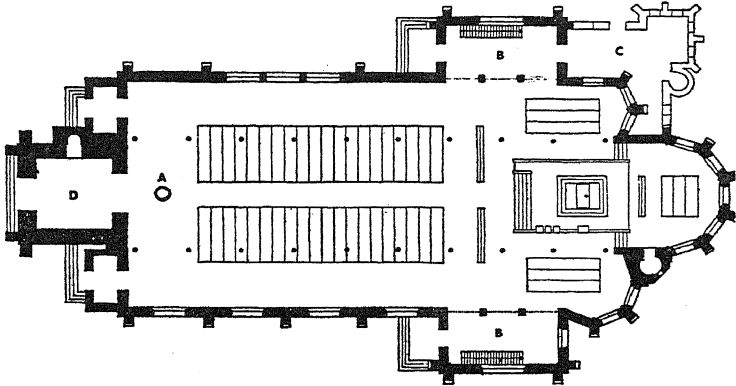
PLAN 1. ST. ENGLEBERT, MÜLHEIM-
RUHR

Architect: Hans Schwippert
A. Font; B. Galleries; C. Sacristy; D. Tower
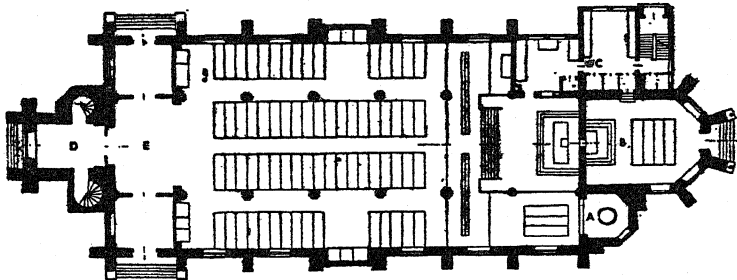
PLAN 2. ST. DIONYSIUS, ESSEN-BORBECK

Architect: Emil Jung
A. Baptistery; B. Chapel; C. Sacristy; D. Tower; E. Gallery
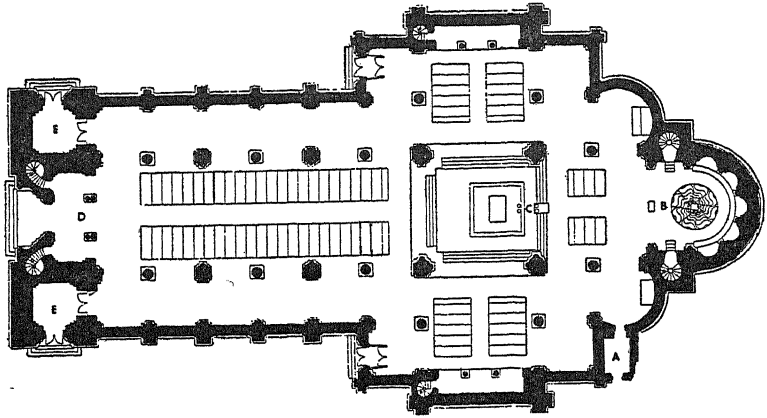
PLAN 3. ST. HERIBERT, COLOGNE-DEUTZ
Architects: Rudolf Schwarz and Josef Bernard
A. Entrance to sacristy; B. Baptistery; C. Shrine of St. Heribert;
D. Gallery; E. Towers
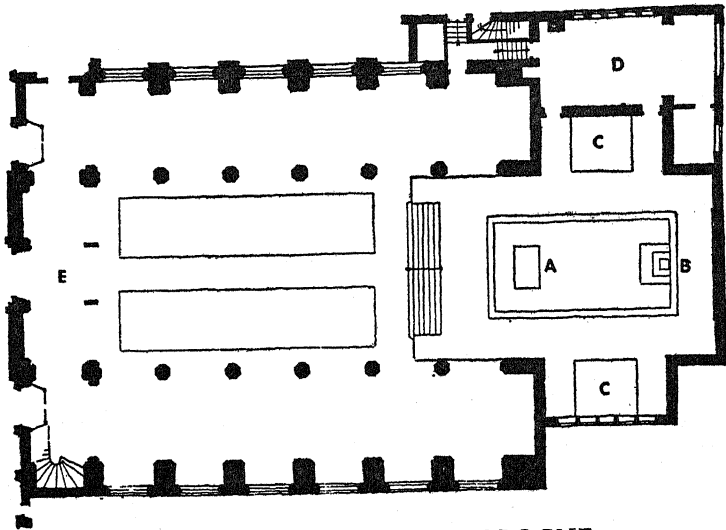
PLAN 4. HOLY CROSS, COLOGNE
Architect: Hans Lohmeyer
A. Altar; B. Sacrament altar; C. Choir; D. Sacristy;
E. Gallery

from 1865 has been turned into an open courtyard, which forms a sort of atrium, and the new church, which is considerably wider than it is long, is compressed into the eastern part of the old one, to create an admirably liturgical layout.
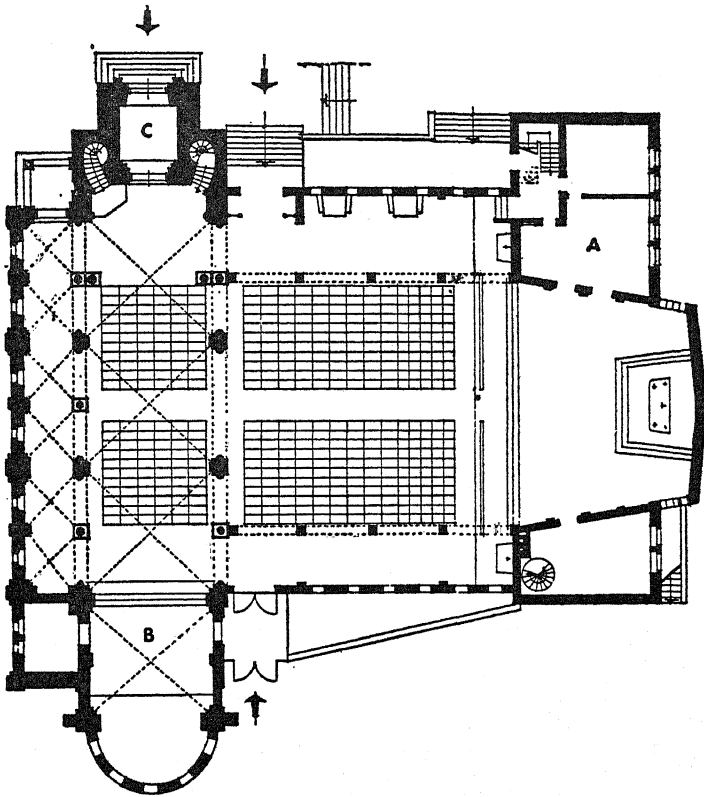
PLAN 5. ST. ROCHUS, DUISDORF

Architects: Toni Kleefisch and Carl Leyers

A. Sacristy with choir gallery over; B. Baptistery; C. Tower

While it may be readily admitted that none of these churches possessed the historical associations that had gathered about some of our own bombed churches, the contrast between Cologne and London is nevertheless very striking. In Cologne the damaged churches have been treated as buildings in which the living offer their communal worship

to the living God: the needs of the present have taken precedence over all other considerations. In London, on the other hand, they have gone largely unrecognised. Quite apart from questions of planning for liturgy, the rebuilding and adaptation of these German churches shows conclusively that good modern architecture can take its place alongside the work of another century without any violent sense of incongruity. Most of our own historic churches are of course a patch-
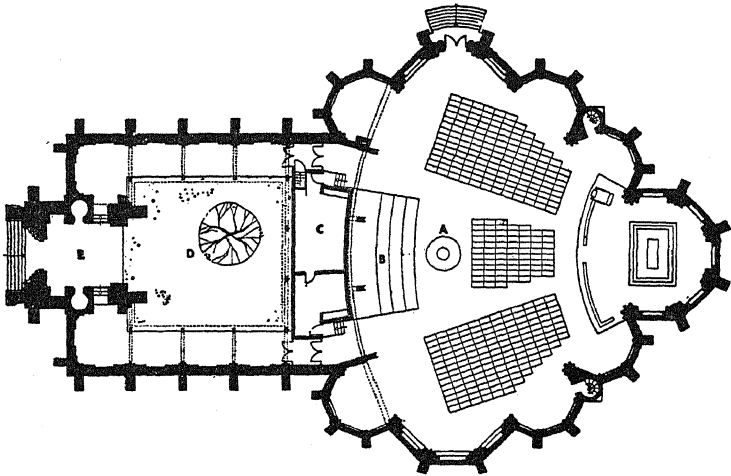
PLAN 6. ST. MAURITIUS, COLOGNE

Architect: Fritz Schaller

A. Font; B. Choir; C. Sacristy; D. Courtyard; E. Tower.

work of different styles; the last thing that would have occurred to a thirteenth-century architect would have been to imitate the work of one of his eleventh-century predecessors. He would have been far more likely to have pulled down the old church and built a good modern one. The point is further underlined by Schwarz's masterly adaptation of a very fine medieval church at Trier, as well as by many of the adaptations carried out in France since 1951. A notable French example is the rebuilding and refurnishing of the church at La Besace, a few miles north of Buzancy, in the Ardennes, where a modern nave is happily wedded to a twelfth-century apse. It is pleasant to note that the rebuilding of at least one nineteenth-century church in this country —St. Mark's, Sheffield—is to be governed by a frank recognition of

new liturgical needs. Such an approach is still very exceptional on this side of the Channel.

The rebuilding of damaged churches apart, however, there are many English parishes where the problem of adapting a more or less ancient building has been tackled during the last few years with courage and imagination. For every church that has been permanently modified there are many more where a portable nave-altar has been introduced in order to make it possible for the congregation to take a more active part in the Sunday eucharist. But, as Addleshaw and Etchells pertinently remark: 'There is little to be said for a mere temporary altar; generally its temporary nature is only too obvious. . . . If the high altar at the east end of the chancel is too far from the people in the nave at a parish communion, it is presumably too far from them at other services, and should not be used in connection with a service when the congregation is in the nave. The logical outcome, therefore, of the need for setting up a temporary nave altar for these Sunday morning services is to cease to use the chancel at all on occasions when the people are gathered in the nave, and to place a permanent altar at the east end of the latter with suitable provision for the clergy and choir, but avoiding a perpetuation of the error of interposing the latter between the altar and the people. Such an altar would, in effect, become the principal, or people's, altar of the church, and would be used for all the main services when a considerable body of the faithful were gathered together; it would also have the immense advantage in cruciform churches that those in the transepts would be able to take an equal part in the service. The chancel . . . could then be used, much in the same way as in the Middle Ages, by the clergy for the weekday offices and celebrations and also by the laity.'[2]

An example of the rearrangement of a cruciform medieval church on these lines can be seen at Cuddesdon, near Oxford, where the church is used by the theological college as well as the parish. At Cuddesdon a new high altar was set up in the crossing in 1941. This overcame the problem of a long chancel and made it possible for communicants to kneel on three sides of the altar at the administration of the sacrament. It also created a far more satisfactory relationship between altar and pulpit. A wrought-iron screen was placed on the eastern side of the crossing, thus transforming the chancel into a

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[2] Addleshaw and Etchells, *opus cit.*, pp. 239ff. I have already pointed out on p. 37 that the use of the chancel in this way need not involve the provision of a second altar. (See *Plan* 1, p. 141.)

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separate chapel with its own altar. The singers normally occupy the
seats at the west end of the nave—though on special occasions the
screen to the east of the high altar can be thrown open and the choir
accommodated in the old chancel.

A similar rearrangement of a nineteenth-century church has been
carried out since the war at Charlestown, in Cornwall, by the same
architect, S. E. Dykes-Bower, who was responsible for the modi-
fication of the church at Cuddesdon. Here too the old chancel has been
transformed into a separate chapel, and the congregation are seated on
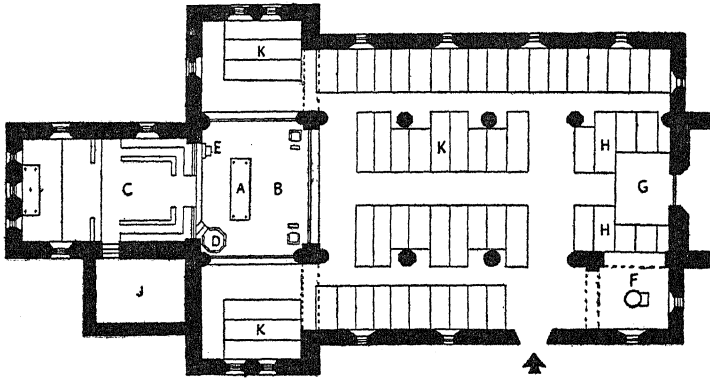
PLAN 7. CHARLESTOWN
A. Principal altar; B. Sanctuary; C. Chapel; D. Pulpit;
E. Lectern; F. Baptistery; G. Organ; H. Choir; J. Vestry;
K. Seats for congregation

three sides of the new high altar in the crossing. The choir and organ
have been moved to the west end of the nave, and the baptistery takes
the place of a choir vestry in the north-west corner of the building.
The font formerly stood in the south aisle. There are communion rails
on three sides of the altar, and the building is now well adapted to the
liturgical requirements of a simple parish communion service.

In general a cruciform church lends itself to modification in a way
in which other types of medieval plan do not. At Charlestown, as at
Cuddesdon, the new layout is as satisfactory from the æsthetic stand-
point as from the liturgical. The rearrangement of the small medieval
church at Northolt may serve as an example of a courageous attempt
to find a solution to a more intractable problem. With the extension of
the Central Line the village of Northolt was rapidly swallowed up in

a vast new housing development. A simple parish communion was started during the early 'forties and by 1950 the number of communicants on an ordinary Sunday had risen to well over a hundred. The church was a small building dating from the end of the thirteenth century, and consisting of nave, with south aisle, and a long chancel. Such a building was ill-adapted to the needs of a liturgical parish. It was a positive hindrance to the building up of the body of Christ and the offering of a truly corporate worship. The incumbent decided finally that the urgent pastoral need outweighed purely architectural considerations. In 1951 the church was rearranged to meet liturgical requirements. The altar was brought forward to the chancel step, so that the celebrant at the eucharist could face the people, and the choir was placed behind the altar, at the east end of the chancel. The use of portable kneeling benches, placed in position around the altar after the offertory procession, enabled a large number of communicants to receive the sacrament with the minimum of delay. While such a re-arrangement of a medieval church will undoubtedly shock the architectural purist, no one who has taken part in the Sunday eucharist at Northolt can doubt that the modifications have served to promote a living liturgy. The whole character of the service has been transformed.

One of the most curious episodes in the history of liturgical reform in the Church of England—all traces of which have now been swept away—is the modification of a particularly unpromising Victorian chapel at Blundell's School, in Devonshire, carried out in 1938. It owed its inspiration to Neville Gorton, headmaster of the school from 1934 to 1943, and subsequently bishop of Coventry, where he was to be faced with the task of building a new cathedral. The headmaster, to quote a recent essay by the Bishop of Southwark, 'was so anxious that the communion service should mean to the boys what it meant to him, that he decided to make it, on occasion, the main service on a Sunday morning. To assist his purpose, he determined to build a modern stone altar, designed by Eric Gill, on circular steps towards the centre of the rather ugly Victorian-gothic chapel. He outlined his scheme to the boys. The old sanctuary was destroyed, pews were ripped out, foundations were laid, and boys swarmed into the chapel with every conceivable implement. Senior Blundell's was aghast. But within a few months the most remarkable transformation had taken place. The stone altar, the circular steps, the large hanging rood—the work of the boys under the direction of Eric Gill—were as unusual as they were beautiful. . . . Some years later men with different appreciations of

Christianity "restored" the chapel to its Victorian splendour. Gill's altar was found on a dump in the yard; and there is no longer outward evidence of what was unquestionably an exceptionally creative period in the religious life of the school.'[3]

Eric Gill's letters yield two characteristic comments on these events. 'The headmaster', he writes to Father O'Connor in February 1938, 'said to me, "Would the altar look better a few feet away from the east wall?", and I said to him, "It doesn't matter where it would look better, the question is where it would *be* better, and where it would be better, you will come to see that it looks better."' Three months later he reports: 'I have just come back from Tiverton. The boys are working heroically on their chapel, and although it has not been feasible to put the altar in the middle, they have cleared a lot of pews out of the east end and have put the altar right in the centre of the cleared space. They are now making a new altar from my designs. It is really a remarkable business because I have, I think, made it clear that it is not an architectural reform but a liturgical one.'[4]

While the plan of the new cathedral at Coventry owes several of its distinctive features to Bishop Gorton, his desire for an altar standing in the midst of the people, not near the east end of the church, was never realised. It is appropriate that the Bishop Gorton Memorial Church, now being built at Allesley Park, Coventry, should be based on a square plan, and that the holy table should stand on circular steps at the very centre of the building. The church will be a fitting memorial to one who, sensitive as he was to æsthetic considerations, was always primarily concerned with building up the flock of Christ, and who once said of an ancient church that it would be better to pull it down than to treat it as an historical monument, or as a possession of cultural interest.

The radical changes carried out since 1951 in the layout of another rather ugly Victorian chapel, at St. Aidan's College, Birkenhead, are interesting as a further example of architectural reform inspired by theological and liturgical considerations. The chapel dates from about 1880 and is a long rectangular building of the one-room type with an apsidal east end. Until the recent modifications the altar stood against the east wall, and the celebrant at the eucharist, following a tradition

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[3] *Neville Gorton, Bishop of Coventry 1943–55*, ed. F. W. Moyle. S.P.C.K., 1957, pp. 87f. The altar was subsequently retrieved from the dump by Bishop Gorton and placed in the chapel of St. Faith's Shelter, Coventry.

[4] *Letters*, pp. 400, 403.

which still persists in Evangelical circles in this country, adopted the 'north end' position. The late Principal of the college, the Reverend W. M. F. Scott, initiated in the early 'fifties certain far-reaching liturgical reforms with the aim of giving greater prominence to the corporate character of the eucharist as the act of the Lord's people gathered round the Lord's table. The task of adapting the chapel in accordance with this fundamental aim was entrusted to George G. Pace. The sanctuary was stripped of its Victorian furnishings, a new altar was set up where the entrance to the old sanctuary had been, and two simple stone ambos were built on either side of the chapel and a few feet to the west of the altar. A chair for the celebrant occupies the place of the old altar against the east wall. The celebrant goes to this chair for the first part of the eucharistic liturgy, and the lections are read and the sermon preached from the two ambos. The celebrant comes to the altar for the offertory, and remains there facing the people for the rest of the service. The two assistant ministers stand on the north and south sides of the altar respectively. Nothing is placed on the altar except the sacred vessels themselves and the altar-book with its cushion. A large cross hangs above the holy table. The congregation remain standing for the greater part of the service.

The experiments made at this college during the last few years show the way in which, even when the 1662 communion service is used almost as it stands, the whole ethos of the service can be transformed by a few simple changes in the layout of the building and in the manner of its celebration which these architectural alterations make possible. As the Principal of the college has written: 'Such simple changes as these can release an entirely new atmosphere at the holy communion, so that it becomes once again the Lord's people gathering round the Lord's table, hearing his word together, giving thanks for their redemption, and receiving its fruits.'[5]

A church of a rather different type which has also been adapted on the lines of the chapel at Birkenhead, and for very similar reasons, is Archbishop Tenison's Tabernacle in London, built in 1702, and since 1868 the parish church of St. Thomas, Regent Street. The church has a very simple auditory type plan, almost as broad as it is long, and with a gallery extending round three sides. The organ is situated in the gallery above the main entrance at the west end. To rearrange this church in the interests of a liturgy in which all could be active participants proved to be a comparatively simple matter. A new high altar

[5] *V.* the article 'One Body, One Bread', in *The Churchman*, September 1956.

was set up towards the centre of the church in 1951. The bishop's throne and the seats for the other ministers were placed against the east wall. Owing to financial and other difficulties the present arrangement of the church is still only provisional. Plans for the permanent modification of the building were drawn up several years ago, and the present temporary high altar will eventually be replaced by a simple stone table covered by a ciborium. The University church of St. George, Bloomsbury, is another London church where the eucharist has for some years been celebrated 'facing the people', and where a provisional modification of the earlier layout has been undertaken, to permit of a more truly corporate worship.

The plans drawn up for the rebuilding of the seventeenth-century
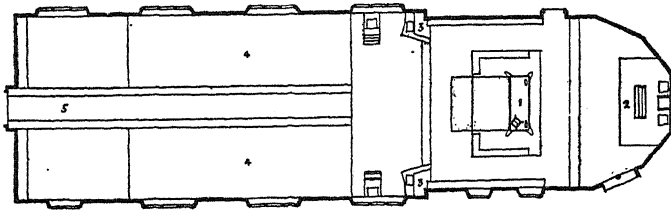
PLAN 8. ST. AIDAN'S, BIRKENHEAD
1. Altar; 2. Seats for clergy; 3. Ambo; 4. Seats for congregation;
5. Entrance.

church of St. Michael, Paternoster Royal, in the City of London, also reveal the influence of fresh liturgical thought. They are the work of Elidir Davies, an architect who has already been concerned with the problems of breaking down the physical and psychological barriers between actors and spectators in the field of theatre design. Here again it is proposed to have a free-standing altar, surrounded by low *cancelli*, with the bishop's throne in its old position against the east wall, and the choir in a west gallery. The existing pulpit will be placed to the north of the sanctuary.

Another adaptation of the layout of an auditory type of church which follows very similar lines can be seen in the church of St. John-at-Hackney, rebuilt after a disastrous fire by N. F. Cachemaille-Day and re-consecrated in 1958. The free-standing altar stands on circular steps, with seats for the choir to the north and south of the sanctuary and the bishop's throne behind the altar against the east wall. The sanctuary of the medieval church of the Holy Trinity, Christchurch, Newport,

Monmouthshire, which was partly destroyed by fire in 1949 and re-built four years later by George G. Pace, also has a free-standing altar with seats for the bishop and clergy behind it.

In the Episcopal Church of Scotland, the focal point for the liturgical renewal during the last ten years has been the church of St. Columba-by-the-Castle, in Edinburgh, where the rethinking of the meaning of the common prayer of the Church has gone hand in hand with the reform of its setting. In 1950 and 1951 the chancel screen was removed
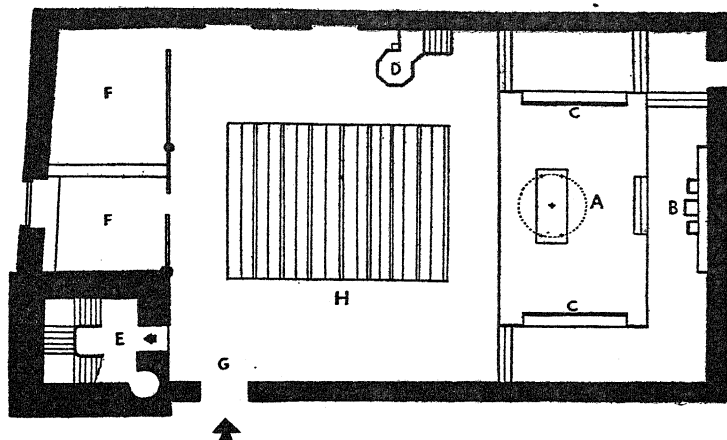
PLAN 9. ST. MICHAEL, PATERNOSTER
ROYAL
A. Altar; B. Seats for clergy; C. Communion rail;
D. Pulpit; E. Baptistery, tower above; F. Vestry;
G. Porch; H. Seats for congregation

from this nineteenth-century building (along with a good deal of ecclesiastical furniture), the altar was brought forward so that the celebrant could face the people, and a Victorian reredos was covered up. Summing up the effect of these changes, the Reverend E. N. Kemp writes: 'What we have lost at St. Columba's is the feeling that "he (the priest) is up there doing something for us"; what we have gained is an understanding that the people of God are one priesthood. . . . The encircling of the altar for the eucharistic action is the setting in which we see that the whole Church is priestly.'[6] In addition to these churches

[6] See *Theology*, vol. LXI, no. 461, November 1958, pp. 451ff: 'A Liturgy and Society Theme in Edinburgh'.

where a more or less radical adaptation of an existing layout has been undertaken, there are many others where a few simple changes, such as the bringing forward of the altar, have had a remarkable effect on the whole character of the eucharistic liturgy. The chapel of Clare College, Cambridge, is one of several college chapels where this has happened. The first church built by Sir Ninian Comper—St. Barnabas, Little Ilford, in Essex, consecrated in 1908 and based on a very different plan from the one adopted at Cosham thirty years later—has also been adapted to new liturgical needs to the extent that a large 'English' altar has been replaced by a simple free-standing table, and the font moved to a new position.

All these examples, and one could quote many others, show the way in which a new understanding of liturgical worship, and of the *domus ecclesiæ* as a building for worship, is beginning to influence the replanning of existing buildings in this country, as well as on the Continent. The plan of the church is being modified *not* in accordance with æsthetic or antiquarian criteria, but because congregations have begun to realise the full meaning of what they do in church, and have sought to express this new understanding in the layout of the building. This is an approach that holds out real hope for the future of church architecture in this country, and one may rejoice at these testimonies to its recovery.

I have spoken of ancient or historic churches, but it would be idle to ignore the fact that there are hundreds of churches built in this country within the last thirty years which, from the point of view of planning, imply a purely romantic understanding of the liturgy and of the function of the *domus ecclesiæ*, and which present formidable obstacles to the building up of a worshipping community. It seems only too probable that in twenty years' time a considerable number of parish clergy will be urgently concerned with the problem of adapting *postwar* churches to liturgical needs which, ignored when they were built, have in the meantime won general recognition. Twice recently my advice has been asked by clergy whose efforts to restore to their laity their proper place in the liturgy, and to build up a eucharistic community centred on the altar, are being hampered by unsuitable churches erected during the late 'thirties and early 'fifties respectively. This is perhaps the most lamentable aspect of the Church's failure to seize its opportunity. We have built—and indeed are still building—at vast expense, churches which embody an understanding of the Christian mystery which is rapidly becoming a period-piece. Many an

incumbent who has built a new church during these last few years has, all unwittingly, been creating problems for his successors which may in some cases prove almost insoluble; and all because he has built for yesterday rather than to-morrow.

There is little than can now be done to redeem the tragic failure of the church building programme of the last thirty years. The Church has failed to seize its opportunity—and now it is too late. Most of our new churches are costly and abiding monuments to the Church of England's failure to submit its structures and its traditions to the judgment of new biblical and historical insights, or to discern the will of God in the events of our time.

As the influence of the twentieth-century reformation grows more widespread, the full extent of the opportunity which has been lost will become apparent. It will gradually be borne home to us that the majority of our 'modern' churches require considerable and expensive modifications of plan if they are not to hinder the presentation of the gospel to the contemporary world. It is all the more important that the problem of adapting existing buildings—ancient *or* modern—to the true needs of to-day should receive the most serious attention; and, above all, that it should not be left to professional antiquaries and those expert in the mysteries of medieval ecclesiology. The problem is primarily a pastoral and missionary one. The key to its solution lies in the hands of the biblical theologian and of the parish priest, charged with the task of building up the body of Christ, the temple of the living God, in the waste-lands of our sprawling dormitory suburbs and in rural areas which are just as much a *pays de mission* as New Guinea or the forests of the Amazon.

9. *Domus Dei*

'I HAVE not proposed to speak of the whole of architecture: the sublime sculptures of the Parthenon, the glittering mosaics of the vaults of St. Mark's, the solemn splendour of the glass of Chartres, and all the fear, mystery, rapture, delight and play which have been wrought into them. . . . Although I have not spoken of these, it is because I want just such as these—but different—that I have spoken at all. . . . It is because I want all these that I have set myself to consider how they might be attained, and it is my own conclusions on the matter that I have now put before you. We need first the natural, the obvious, and, if it will not offend to say so, the reasonable, so that to these which might seem to be under our own control, may be added we know not how or what of gifts and graces. . . . Building has been, and may be, an art, imaginative, poetic, even mystic and magic. When poetry and magic are in the people and in the age they will appear in their arts, and I want them, but there is not the least good in saying, "Let us go to and build magic buildings. Let us be poetic". Yet let me say again, it is because I want these things that I face this problem.'
—W. R. LETHABY: *The Architecture of Adventure.*

'A question of morality; lack of truth is intolerable, we perish in untruth.'—LE CORBUSIER: *Towards a New Architecture.*

I N considering the present nascent renewal of church architecture throughout western Christendom I have been concerned with the church building primarily as a house for corporate worship; as the place where the holy people of God meet to *do* certain things which are known collectively as liturgy and which centre upon the eucharistic action. It can hardly be too strongly emphasised that the only good reason for building a church is to provide a shelter for a worshipping community, a place where the Church, in the biblical sense, may offer to God the one 'full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world'.

The form of the church must spring from its liturgical function. The architect must know what he is making. Yet the church is not simply a building where the *ecclesia* of God meets to offer the holy eucharist.

It is also the house of God, the tabernacle of the risen and ascended *Kyrios,* the sign of the City, the place where heaven and earth meet in the eternal now of the mysteries. Over and above its utilitarian function as a house for corporate worship the building possesses a symbolic purpose: *domus ecclesiam significat*—the house of stones which shelters the congregation gathered round the altar is itself the unique symbol of the mystical body of Christ, the temple of living stones built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets. Planning for liturgy involves far more than superficial practicality; it must embrace both these functions of the church. It is no use calling in a sculptor to make good the symbolic deficiencies of a building which has been conceived in purely structural or utilitarian terms. One cannot turn a hall into a church by sticking a monumental cross on the east wall, or by commissioning a celebrated artist to paint a mural in the Lady chapel. The church must be a symbolic structure: it must be informed from the outset by a theological understanding of its purpose. Again one is brought back to questions such as the relationship between altar and congregation, the shape of the eucharistic room, and the distinction between what is essential and what is peripheral. These things are important not just from the point of view of practical convenience but also from that of the building's symbolic meaning. The church will take on the nature of a symbol only in so far as the architect understands its *raison d'être.*

But the truth must not merely be *known:* it must also be *expressed.* The essential nature of the eucharistic community must be made manifest in terms of the building materials and structural systems of our own time. The Church must, so to speak, take flesh, be made incarnate, in stone, glass and concrete, as well as in the persons of those who are incorporated into Christ through the mysteries of baptism and confirmation and eucharist. A good plan, a plan informed by a real understanding of what the Church is and does, will not of itself suffice to create a satisfactory church. Many of the English churches which I have described are admirable examples of rational planning informed by a new sense of the essential function of the *domus ecclesiæ* as a building for corporate worship; yet they are unconvincing; the meaning of the Church has been understood but inadequately expressed. Only in two or three of these churches—and those the simplest—does mere construction flower into architecture; for the most part the chord within us remains unstruck, the axis is not touched. Heaven and earth still meet in the holy mysteries but the joy and wonder of this intercourse

must be apprehended by faith alone, the setting of this mysterious traffic remains earthbound. Where an architect has attempted to venture beyond the simple provision of adequate accommodation for a given ritual he has usually lapsed into rhetoric and falsehood, or taken refuge in conventional symbols which no longer communicate their meaning. There is more poetry in Hunstanton school and the new airport buildings at Gatwick than in all our post-war churches put together, and for two reasons. First, these are buildings which have been conceived in terms of their essential function—not from the point of view of what they should look like. Secondly, and this brings me to a matter of quite fundamental importance, they possess an *integrity* and an architectural seriousness such as are rarely found in modern churches on this side of the Channel.

The English Prayer Book requires that the bread which is used at the eucharist shall be 'the best and purest . . . that conveniently may be gotten'. The same principle holds good of everything that is used in the service of God. It must, on the natural level, be *worthy* of consecration before it can properly be set apart for the liturgy which is God's work. There is something inherently scandalous in a badly designed chalice or a sentimental statue. Only the best is good enough; and it is a melancholy fact that the Church's standards often seem to be lower, far less exacting, than those of the world. Very little of our church furniture would merit a place in the Design Centre or even be tolerated in our homes. The standards which, with certain rare exceptions, still obtain in the fields of ecclesiastical printing, music and stained glass, are scarcely those of a community which is called to be a city set on a hill. As Dr. Vidler has remarked, 'a Church that acquiesces in shoddiness even in its sanctuaries is not likely to send people out into the world bent on raising standards everywhere, and on seeing that everything, however "secular", is offered to God as perfectly as possible'.[1]

In the short speech that Le Corbusier made at the consecration of his pilgrimage chapel at Ronchamp in 1955 he reminded his audience that 'some things are sacred and others are not sacred—whether they are "religious" or not'. In France, as in other countries, the Church has been compelled to recognise that there is no art or architecture *less* sacred than what commonly passes as religious art and architecture. If, on the other hand, there is any contemporary art which does possess something at least of a sacred quality, it is frequently the work of men who are not

[1] *Christian Belief and this World.* S.C.M. Press, 1956, p. 123.

practising Christians but whose standards of integrity as artists put Christians to shame. It was the frank recognition of this paradoxical situation—which is found in this country as well as in France—by men like the late Father Couturier, that gave rise to the so-called *appel aux maîtres au dehors* which has had such an invigorating effect upon the whole life of the French Church during the last decade.

The first and inescapable criterion of sacred art is a certain natural integrity. Sacredness is not at all a matter of 'religious' or literary content or association: it is first of all a question of honesty, of truth. A stained-glass window does not automatically acquire a sacred character in virtue of its subject-matter. A Braque still-life has a kind of sacredness which is rarely found in the religious paintings commissioned for our churches; a Bartok quartet has an integrity such as is seldom to be discerned in the 'sacred' oratorios which our grandparents delighted in. Notre-Dame du Raincy is a landmark in the development of the modern church not only on account of the way in which it reflects the dawn of a new understanding of the liturgy, but even more in its uncompromising honesty and the stark purity of its structural geometry. The quality of Perret's great church becomes apparent if it is compared with the slightly later church at Moreuil by the architects Duval and Gonse. On the one hand, an exacting sense of what can and what cannot be done with reinforced concrete; on the other, artistic compromise in the interests of religious and sentimental associations. The first quality that the Church must demand of an architect is complete artistic integrity: not a conventional piety, and still less a familiarity with the 'ecclesiastical' styles. The styles are a lie: our concern to-day must be to clothe the truths of the faith in honest modern dress—the simpler the better, provided only that the cloth is good and that it is well cut. It is better to come before God naked than in period costume.

If one compares the best of the churches built in France since 1950 with our own, one cannot but remark the extreme simplicity and *dépouillement* which is one of their most striking characteristics. The use of unrendered stone and concrete, bare stone altars, a total absence of ornament for its own sake, all combine to create an atmosphere of great austerity, relieved only by a sensitive handling of natural materials and a sparing use of colour—usually in the form of non-figurative glass slabs set in concrete. We look in vain for the carved and painted reredoses, the rich brocades, the gilded angels and the ornate altars which are part of the normal stock-in-trade of church-furnishers in this

country. It would be a mistake to attribute this extreme simplicity to a latent Jansenism, or even to economic necessity alone—though the latter has been an important factor from the time of Le Raincy onwards. It is rather the first and necessary step towards a reassertion of the symbolic function of the house of God.

It was probably inevitable that it should take this form. Church architecture had reached such a nadir of banality and falsehood that any attempt to recover its true character was bound to involve a purgation: a cleansing of the temple from all the false gods of sham, complacency, middle-class respectability and worldliness, who had found a lodging beneath its roof. The first and most urgent need was for churches which would by their intrinsic character bear witness to the half-forgotten Christian virtues of poverty, humility and simplicity. More ambitious tasks could wait. Nobody is his senses would claim that churches such as those at Issy-les-Moulineaux, Morsang-sur-Orge and Tournan-en-Brie, or the Dominican priory at Lille, are architectural masterpieces. They do, however, share with many of the unpretentious village churches of the twelfth century a fundamental honesty and integrity which may well provide a basis for greater undertakings. It is noteworthy that two of the most completely satisfying churches built in any country since the war—the chapels at Ronchamp and Eveux—each possesses in a very marked degree this quality of simplicity and silence and poverty. There is no seeking after effect, no attempt to create a conventionally religious atmosphere by theatrical tricks or historical allusion. Only the honest use of modern building materials, of proportion and of space, to create a place of recollection and silence and prayer: a valid symbol of the purity of heart that stands so high in the scale of evangelical virtues.

If there is one quality which is shared by all the most convincing churches of the last decade it is that of simplicity. Rudolf Schwarz's church at Düren, Rainer Senn's tiny wooden chapel at Nice and his church at Pontarlier, the post-war churches of Fritz Metzger, and the rebuilt Franciscan church in Cologne, all have in common an absolute truthfulness of artistic language, an extreme economy of means, and a high simplicity informed by a sense of liturgical function. The two churches which stand out from the general run of post-war churches built by British architects—the Chapel of the Resurrection, at Ibadan, and the Roman Catholic parish church at Glenrothes, in Scotland—exemplify the same qualities. It is true that, to recall Schwarz's dictum about artistic integrity, what these churches have to

say is not much compared with the Middle Ages and antiquity. Nevertheless, what they do say carries conviction—it rings true; the empty rhetoric of most of our modern churches convinces nobody.

The French Dominicans' policy of going to the *maîtres au dehors* rather than to the ecclesiastical architects, the purveyors of historical souvenirs, was founded on the recognition that only the best and purest architecture 'that conveniently may be gotten', only the work of the most exacting of living artists, is good enough for the Church. Bazaine's splendid baptistery at Audincourt, the chapels at Ronchamp and Vence, and Le Corbusier's *Couvent d'Etudes* at Eveux all afford striking proof of the possibilities of collaboration between an enlightened ecclesiastical client and an artist of great personal vision and integrity. We have nothing worthy of comparison with them on this side of the Channel; they point the way to the recovery of a living tradition of church architecture. But the process of recovery is likely to be a long and arduous one. It is only as the architect himself learns to enter into the unfamiliar world of the liturgy, only as his personal vision is moulded and informed by the prayer of the Church that his work will regain the symbolic power that characterises the church buildings of other ages. Sacred art, as Malraux points out, 'can exist only in a community, a social group swayed by the same belief'.[2] It may well be necessary at the present time for the Church to turn to the *maîtres au dehors*: the majority of our ecclesiastical architects have demonstrated beyond reasonable doubt that they are incapable of building modern churches; the best and purest art of our day will certainly not be found in the showrooms of our church-furnishers. If the Church has sufficient understanding of its own nature, and of its function in the modern world, to *brief* the architect, as well as the courage to commission him, the result can, as we have seen in France, be quite remarkable.

Yet we must not expect too much. Before tradition can again be fully and explicitly embodied in a living language the architect must cease to be *au dehors*. Sacred art, as Father Couturier reminds us, is a language—not a *décor*. It is a language which has to be mastered, slowly and laboriously like any other, and its only school is the liturgy. It can never be wholly intelligible save to the initiate. The great tympanum at Vezelay can be admired for its plastic and æsthetic qualities by the casual tourist or the art historian; it yields its full meaning only to the Christian who is himself living in the power of the paschal

[2] *The Voices of Silence*, tr. Stuart Gilbert. Secker & Warburg, 1954, p. 602. See also the preface to *The Anathemata* by David Jones, Faber 1952.

mystery of which it is so eloquent a symbol. The Christian mystery is not a matter of romantic vistas and dim religious light. It is the mystery of the re-creation of all things in Christ; the mystery of a new order of reality which has entered into the world and which is present and active in the sacramental life of the Church—in baptism and eucharist, in bread and wine, water and oil; in the icon which is itself a centre of energy, an outward sign of the presence of the living God.

The symbolic function of the house of God involves far more than the creation of a 'religious atmosphere', or a sense of 'mystery' in the popular sense of that word. It is certainly desirable that a church should convey a feeling of the numinous: of the *tremendum mysterium* of the unapproachable God. The liturgy of the consecration of a church proclaims: 'How dreadful is this place! This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.' There is, however, nothing specifically Christian about this. It is true in some measure of the temples of every religion. It is a property of natural phenomena perhaps even more than of human artifacts. A sunset or the contemplation of the night sky can yield a genuine 'worship experience'— a sense of the mystery that haunts the everyday world. The function of Christian symbolism is more specific. The catholic faith is not just a vague theism. A church must express far more than the otherness of an unknown and unknowable deity. The God to whom we offer our eucharist, in and through his Son Jesus Christ, is not simply the God who manifested himself obscurely in the lightning and thick darkness of Mount Sinai.

An exaggerated emphasis on the 'awe-fulness' of the mysteries (in the Christian and liturgical sense of that word), an unbalanced stress on the thought of the *tremendum mysterium* of the unknowable, unapproachable God to the exclusion of any thought of the presence of the risen Lord in his body the Church, in the two or three gathered together in his name, reflects the decay of an informed faith into a vague piety. It is significant that the new emphasis on awe and dread which makes its appearance in the course of the fourth century should coincide with the influx of vast numbers of half-converted pagans into the Church, and the decline of both offering and communion among the laity.

The cult of mystery, in the popular as distinct from the Christian sense of the word, always goes hand in hand with a diminished sense of responsibility on the part of the ordinary Christian. It is when the layman ceases to be an active participant in the redemptive work of the Church and becomes in some measure an 'outsider' that Christian

mysticism tends to lose its authentic character, its vital connection with the liturgy and the sacraments. Sacred art must do far more than provoke an æsthetic or emotional *frisson*. Its function is to make manifest under the form of sign and symbol the presence of the New Creation—that new order of reality which entered into the cosmos as the fruit of Christ's strange work. The decay of sacred art into religious art, a language of energetic symbols into a mawkish sentimentality, is symptomatic of a growing blindness: the transformation of contemplation and communion into æstheticism. As André Malraux has written: 'The great Christian art did not die because all possible forms had been used up: it died because faith was being transformed into piety.'[3]

There are many people in this country who are deeply concerned to bridge the gulf that now separates the Church from the artist, and who long to see the Church fulfilling its former role as the patron of all that is most vital in contemporary art. Such a desire is admirable, but it is liable to obscure the fundamental problem of church design. Until architects have learned to build churches which, in themselves and apart from any decoration, are symbolic structures, it is beside the point to commission painters and sculptors and stained-glass artists to provide 'works of art' for new churches. We want *churches*, not museums of religious art. The basic need is for *architecture* to recover its symbolic function. The unity and simplicity which characterise the most successful modern churches frequently exclude all decoration. Many otherwise admirable Swiss and German churches are marred by unsuitable paintings and glass; the painted doors at Ronchamp are the only unconvincing feature of a building of unique symbolic power—the same might be said of the altar cross in the little church at Glenrothes; the churches of Rudolf Schwarz and Rainer Senn offer no opportunities to the artist. This is doubtless regrettable; it is nevertheless part of the process of concentration on essentials which is the first step towards the recovery of a living tradition of sacred architecture.

Before the subsidiary arts can again find a place in the house of God they must rediscover their liturgical function. As Father Jungmann has pointed out, we can see in art 'a kind of centrifugal force, a tendency to break loose from the holy foundation of humble divine worship and to become an end in itself . . . . We should not find it a matter for unmixed regret that the prevailing poverty of these days has necessitated the choice of simple forms in church building and ornamentation,

[3] *Opus cit.*, p. 603.

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since through these the essential basic thoughts are more clearly expressed and can be more easily understood.'[4] Unless the arts are subordinated to the primary purpose of the *domus ecclesiæ* as a house for corporate worship they 'constitute a danger for the liturgy. The social prayer of the people, for instance, finds expression in song; next this song is refined to a higher artistic standard within the competence only of skilled singers—and the people become condemned to silence. Then comes the final step when the singing is yet further elaborated till it becomes concert music, retaining indeed the religious texts, but utterly worldly in its spirit and ministering only to æsthetic tastes.'[5] A similar development can be traced from about the twelfth century onwards in almost every field of art. The arts cease to be instruments of corporate worship and become autonomous, developing according to their own nature, no longer subordinated to an overriding theological vision.

It should go without saying that when the artist is given the opportunity to make his contribution to the design of a church it must be as a member of a team: his task is not to create a work of art but to assist the architect in his supreme task of fashioning an instrument of worship, of creating an *ambiance* for the celebration of the liturgy. The architect must see the church as a whole; it is no use designing a building and then calling in a group of artists to 'decorate' it. Unfortunately, the architect himself often has only the vaguest notion of the function of the subsidiary arts. The directives of the German Liturgical Commission insist that all decoration must be related to the specific liturgical function of the part of the building in question. Thus the decoration of the eucharistic room must be relevant to the action which it serves; this is not the place for paintings illustrating the lives of the saints, or indeed for any kind of didactic or anecdotal art. If there are to be paintings or mosaics in the sanctuary, they must, in the words of the Liturgical Commission of the diocese of Superior, 'recall the great mysteries enacted in the sacred liturgy of the Church. Rather than relating to the cult of the saints or a particular feast of the Church's year, art themes of the sanctuary should be universal in character, developing the rich signification of the eucharistic sign. Eschatological themes of which the eucharist is the prefiguration are especially appropriate.' This is a principle which applies to the decoration of all the different rooms of the house of God; decoration must subserve liturgical function. We can learn a great deal from a study of the art of

[4] *Opus cit.*, pp. 6–7.
[5] *Ibid.*

eastern Christendom, which, despite western influence, has remained essentially theological and liturgical—though the last thing we want to-day is the lifeless neo-Byzantinism of Beuron and Maria Laach. What we should try to emulate is not the outward form but the approach, rooted as it is in a sense of liturgical purpose.

There is one characteristic of a great deal of contemporary art which makes it peculiarly apt for baptism—its rejection of naturalism. Sacred art has always demanded a certain degree of abstraction. The Christ of Vezelay is a graphic symbol of the incarnate Word. A Byzantine virgin rejects the accidents of anatomy and physical appearance in the interests of a theological vision. As Malraux points out: 'The quality modern art has in common with the sacred arts . . . is that, like them, it sponsors only such forms as are discrepant from visual experience.'[6] It was this quality of modern French painting which, together with its great artistic integrity, impressed Father Couturier as capable of providing the Church with a valuable instrument for the transformation of ecclesiastical art, and for purging it of the sentimental and literary irrelevancies which obscured its essential function. 'This art', as he remarked at a conference in 1949, 'comes closer to a certain ascetic rigour, to an austerity such as we do not find in the naturalistic art which was formerly available to us, and hence is more suited to the expression of what is sacred.'

This judgment is fully borne out by what has happened in France during the last ten years. If the present preoccupation with a severely non-figurative art is only the *first* step towards the recovery of an authentic language of symbols, it is none the less a necessary one. The decay of sacred art, properly so-called, into religious art is marked by an ever-increasing naturalism. Compare the image of Christ at Vezelay with that at Chartres and one can see the beginning of a long descent that leads, via Raphael and Rubens, to Ingres, the art of Saint Sulpice and the modern religious Christmas card. To-day, in France at least, and to a lesser extent in other countries, the process has been arrested. We find a new and refreshing insistence on the primary virtues of line, rhythm, proportion and colour. A new language is being created, and in a few outstanding works like Manessier's windows at Les Bréseux and Léger's at Courfaivre, in Bazaine's baptistery at Audincourt and Schilling's altar for All Saints, Basle, we can see a living artist giving authentic utterance to a vision which is not simply his own but is also that of the Church. Works like these hold out

[6] *Opus cit.*, p. 595.

immense promise, but they are no more than the first-fruits of re-
newal. It is only when we have learned afresh to see things in them-
selves—and not in terms of something else—only when we have
grasped the fact that sacred art is first of all a matter of integrity, of just
proportions, harmony and line, *not* of literary or sentimental content,
only then that we shall be ready to tackle the further problems which
the recovery of a living symbolism must involve: problems which
embrace some very fundamental aspects of the present state of
western culture.

I said in an earlier chapter that, provided only that the form of a
church springs from and clearly expresses its purpose, and that the
building is an honest piece of construction, free from pretentious
ornament and other distracting irrelevancies, its symbolic aspect can
be left to take care of itself. This is no time for writing epic poems but
for mastering the very rudiments of grammar and syntax. The great
thing is that we should be honest: that we should say nothing that
cannot be said from the heart, and that we should say it as simply, as
directly and as unaffectedly as possible. If the foundations are well
laid the rest will come, given only time and a deepened understanding
of the nature of the true mystery which lies at the heart of the Church's
life. One of the most completely successful symbolic structures of our
time is the chapel of St. André-de-Nice, which the young Swiss archi-
tect Rainer Senn built for the Abbé Pierre's *chiffonniers*. It was built
by the architect himself and a friend in a matter of three weeks at a
total cost of sixty pounds, and it has a poetry that springs from the
purest sources of Christian tradition. Like Rudolf Schwarz's chapel at
Leversbach, it is instinct with the spirit of Christian poverty—which is
something quite different from the squalid pauperism of most of our
own provisional churches and mission halls. It is an outward embodi-
ment of a community which has nothing and which yet possesses all
things, a true image of the temple built of living stones. Such a building
takes us to the heart of the matter.

The problem of communication, to use a grossly overworked phrase,
is not simply, or indeed primarily, a problem of *verbal* communication:
it is above all a problem of symbols which no longer communicate.
Before we can turn to profit the fascinating possibilities which modern
architecture opens up for the expression of a modern cosmology we
have to ask ourselves whether the symbols which still dominate the
Church's thinking possess any real validity in the second half of the
twentieth century. If the symbols which we are using are *not* valid,

then it is of very little consequence whether we build our churches in the style of the fourteenth century or in a contemporary idiom. To try to infuse new vitality into symbolic forms which have lost all meaning and reference is a pathetic waste of time and energy and money. I have not the space to discuss fully the nature, and the implications for church architecture, of a problem which lies at the root of the Church's inability to proclaim the gospel within the setting of a modern industrialised society. I will content myself with a single illustration of the confusion that is so clearly reflected in the design of our post-war churches.

An American bishop has recently drawn attention, in an article which deserves to be studied by all who are concerned with the building of new churches, to the stultifying effect upon modern church architecture of a symbol which, however valid it may have been in the Middle Ages, no longer possesses any vital reference. His thesis is 'that the cathedral symbol which has dominated our thinking and imagination for so long, and has dictated the forms and concepts of our building and decoration, from actual cathedrals to country parish churches, is dead and had better be buried. The sooner we get it out of our system the better it will be for the ultimate development of living art and architecture in the service of religion.'[7] The cathedral, he goes on, the great church dominating the city and asserting its pre-eminence by mass and bulk and soaring height, which has been the model—recognised or unrecognised—for western church architecture of every kind during the last thousand years, included much more than the apostolic faith in its symbolism. 'It typified wealth and power and esteem, if not downright human pride. It chose mass and bulk and height as the necessary concomitants of its imaginative display; the greater the mass and the more exalted the height the more impressive the symbolism, until, in the course of time, it encountered the humiliation of Beauvais. All this, however, had very little relation to actual use or usefulness, for the cathedral, quite obviously, was not primarily designed to house the family of God. Moreover, the practical enslavement of the Christian world to the symbolism of the cathedral changed and warped the original concept of the Christian liturgy as the act of communal worship.'

We are still haunted by the image of the medieval cathedral. All

[7] See *Liturgical Arts*, vol. XXVII, no. I, November 1958. 'Art and Architecture for the Church in our Age', by the Rt. Revd. Robert J. Dwyer, Bishop of Reno, Nevada.

over the British Isles there are churches which seek to recapture the symbolic power of an image that is essentially the product of a cultural pattern, a relationship between the Church of God and society at large, which is totally irrelevant to the twentieth century. The still unfinished cathedral at Liverpool, striving to dominate the jagged skyline of a modern industrial city, is a pathetic anachronism, a monument to the Church's failure to rethink its proper function in contemporary society. Still more pathetic are the urban and suburban churches which embody the same nostalgic yearning after a vanished past: the Methodist church at Bournemouth, for example, with its spire 132 feet high, surmounted by a great cross 'which will be floodlit at night and can be seen miles out at sea'. For better or worse, Christendom, in the medieval sense of the word, is dead. It is high time that we recognised the fact and stopped building churches which are no more than extravagant essays in romanticism, wholly unrelated to the social realities of the modern world.

We have to get behind the *idea* of a church which has dominated western architecture since the Middle Ages, and which has distorted our liturgical thinking and our piety. It is necessary to go back to the sources of Christian tradition in order that we may lay hold afresh on the essential meaning of the house of God as a shelter for a worshipping community gathered round an altar. Splendid and evocative as the cathedral symbol was, it obscured this primary function of the church building as a house for corporate worship. In the cathedral concept, as the Bishop of Reno remarks, 'it was the structure itself which assumed priority. It was the fortress of the faith, the stronghold of religion, the rhetorical assertion of the temporal triumph of Christendom. But the altar which the cathedral housed might be and often was quite inconspicuous. . . . It was no longer the immediate and spontaneous symbol of the church. And for all the liturgical revival of the last hundred years, the altar has not yet recovered its rightful place in our symbolic imagination. If it is to be restored, it must be by dint of a revolution in our thinking. . . . If we are to conceive the altar as the heart and centre of the church we have to do more than merely adapt the cathedral concept to a more convenient accommodation. *We have to think of a structure designed for the altar, rather than the altar designed for the structure.* We have to think of the liturgy for which the altar is the focal point as central to the whole meaning and usefulness of the church, not as an adjunct of a monument which could very well serve for any number of extraneous purposes.'

What, the Bishop goes on to ask, does this point to in the design of a church? 'It means, first of all, getting rid of the archæological preconceptions of the cathedral; preconceptions from which the employment of contemporary forms' (as at Coventry, for example) 'is no more exempt than the insistence on the baroque or the Gothic. It means breaking with the tradition of the nave, where you can put the people for convenience, and the sanctuary where you can enshrine the altar in its niche. It means a long farewell to those trite formulas of church planning which have blighted imagination and ingenuity and have covered the country with edifices which, whatever their incidental differences of style, are as like as peas in a pod. . . . It means making the altar central to the entire architectural scheme, in such a way that it is the immediate focus of the family of Christ gathered around it and participating in the divine action. . . . Once this is established as a principle and accepted as a genuine challenge by the architect who is sensitive to liturgical values, what a tremendous field opens up for splendid variety in the building of the churches of to-morrow!'

This is only one example of the kind of fundamental problem which urgently needs to be thought out *before* an architect sets about designing a church. In this country such problems have been ignored: they have yet to be stated, much less solved. It is hardly surprising in the circumstances if our post-war building has been so catastrophic a failure, or if the new churches, which might have been a vital influence for good in the renewal of the whole life of the Church, have instead become an embarrassing and appallingly permanent liability. To-day we are at last beginning to realise that architecture cannot be treated as something peripheral to the Church's mission without disastrous consequences.

Bad churches do not merely corrupt the æsthetic sensibilities of those who use them: they obscure the nature of the *ecclesia* itself and of the gospel which it is called to proclaim and make manifest. They prevent the family of God from realising the full meaning of what it does when it meets for the liturgy; they frustrate the building up of the very eucharistic community for the sake of which the house of stones exists. As for the effect of our modern churches on the unbeliever, the latter can scarcely be blamed if, in the face of these pathetic essays in period costume or 'contemporary' fancy-dress, he concludes that the Church no longer has anything useful to contribute to a society which is totally unimpressed by ecclesiastical rhetoric. It is asking a great deal

of the clergy of the Church of England to expect them to preach about the relevance of the Christian faith to modern society in buildings which, far more eloquently than any sermon, assert the contrary. How can one speak, without intolerable irony, of poverty and humility and truth in churches which are monuments to pride and worldliness and falsehood? It is painful to say these things, but they need saying. We have to face the consequences of our refusal to treat the problems of church design with the seriousness that they demand. We have left the responsibility for the design of our new churches in the hands of committees and individuals many of whom have had little understanding of the nature of the Church and none at all of the nature of architecture. As a result, one of the most potent instruments in the Church's armoury has been entirely wasted, with consequences which extend to every field of the Church's liturgical, pastoral and missionary activity.

It has lately become something of a commonplace to assert that liturgy is normative of ministry. What is done Sunday by Sunday within the four walls of the church building will inevitably exercise a decisive influence upon the wider life of the Christian community. It is significant that the rise of the Catholic Action movement within the Roman communion has from the outset been closely bound up with the reform of the liturgy; that the preoccupations which have already brought about a widespread restoration of the ancient ceremonies connected with the offertory, and the celebration of the eucharist *versus populum*, have all been missionary rather than antiquarian. So long as the layman in church remains a passive spectator of something done on his behalf by professional actors, it is likely that he will be equally passive in regard to what is done out of church. A clericalised liturgy means a clericalised apostolate. If, on the other hand, the layman has learned to accept his responsibilities as a member of an organic, priestly community, and as an active participant in the eucharist, this awareness will undoubtedly be reflected in due course in his whole attitude towards the Church and its apostolic mission in the contemporary world. The eucharist creates the community. The surest way of bringing home to the laity that they *are* the Church—and not the passive recipients of spiritual consolation at the hands of a professional ministry—is to make plain the full implications of the eucharistic liturgy.

It is precisely here that the influence of good or bad architecture can be of such immense importance. A church that is not designed in

accordance with its primary function as a shelter for a congregation gathered round an altar, or that reflects a distorted or impoverished understanding of the corporate action from which it derives its *raison d'être*, will prevent those whose house it is from attaining to a full awareness of their own calling. It is a sheer waste of time to exhort the laity to co-operate with the clergy in teaching and evangelism, and to realise that they too are apostles, so long as we go on building churches which make it virtually impossible for the ordinary Christian to play his full part in the very action which will inevitably be normative of his understanding of his mission. The man who builds a church is, in the last resort, playing a decisive rôle in the creation of a community.

Many more new churches will undoubtedly be built in this country during the next decade. In several dioceses appeals for funds are still being launched; scarcely a month passes without the publication of some new project. It is clearly out of question to call a halt to all this church building for several years, in order that churchmen and architects alike may have a breathing space in which to face some fundamental problems. The opportunity for reflection and rethinking came during the 'forties, before the post-war building programme gathered momentum, and it was not taken. It is all the more urgent to consider what can still be done to redeem the waste and folly of the last ten years and to create some genuine modern churches. One thing at least is clear: the situation calls for radical measures. We have nothing to lose by a fresh and imaginative approach to church architecture; the alternative—a further crop of medieval churches in a contemporary idiom—is too dreadful to contemplate with equanimity. As I have insisted, it is not simply a matter of experimenting with new materials and structural systems: of using new methods of construction to create familiar effects. Still less is it a question of persuading a few more conservative clients to commission 'advanced' artists to design contemporary altar frontals, streamlined crucifixes or abstract stained glass. The real problems are of a different order altogether. The primary need is for systematic research such as has already been attempted in other branches of architecture—notably that of school building—by architects, theologians, liturgists and sociologists working as a team. Somehow or other we have to bridge the present chasm between the Church and the best and most serious architectural thinking of our generation: and it is high time that churchmen awoke to the fact that serious architects to-day are *not* primarily concerned with questions of

style, or with the pursuit of a contemporary idiom. It is beside the point to criticise the efforts of local architects, working in isolation and with only the sketchiest of briefs, so long as this fundamental need is ignored.

The outstanding quality of many of our post-war schools is due above all to the thoroughness with which the basic problems have been thought out. The architects and educationists concerned have attempted to start from first principles and to formulate the essential purpose of the building in all its various aspects. But all this research and analysis has not been pursued in isolation. Carefully considered development projects have been built and criticised after a period of use. Theoretical conclusions have been modified in the light of experience. Ideas which have survived rigorous testing have been refined and embodied in further projects. Given such an approach, failures can be as valuable in the long run as successes. Mistakes are unlikely to be repeated. After ten years of continuous thought and experiment there has been built up an invaluable body of information which has been made generally available by means of the Ministry of Education's building bulletins—the scope of which ranges from cost analysis and studies of specific projects, to the use of colour in schools and the design of kitchens. Not the least important aspect of all this work has been the way in which the ability to distinguish between the essential and the peripheral—the fruit of radical functional analysis—and the development of new and precise techniques of cost analysis and cost planning, have enabled architects and local authorities to use whatever money is available for a school to the best advantage.

We have here an approach to an architectural problem which has already proved itself in other branches of architecture as well as that of school building—in the design of hospitals, for example—and which could be immensely fruitful if it were applied to church architecture also. What is required to make this possible is some kind of research institute, preferably situated in a university town, and with a full-time staff, facilities for conferences and exhibitions, and the resources for publishing regular bulletins. Such a centre could be of incalculable service and might exercise a powerful influence, not only in this country but throughout the Anglican communion. A comparatively modest sum, such as would suffice for its creation and maintenance, could save untold waste and extravagance in the field of actual construction. If the institute provided the Church with nothing more than a centre for the diffusion of new ideas and an information and advisory

service it would still be a sound investment. It could, however, offer far more than this, provided that the work of research and analysis, which would be its primary task, were related to a serious building programme, methodically planned and systematically carried out over a period of several years. Such a programme would demand close collaboration between the institute and local authorities—above all at the diocesan level—so that development projects could be built, with the full co-operation of selected communities prepared to fulfil their own responsibilities, and subsequently criticised in the light of day-to-day use. In this way we might hope to create within a few years a common pool of experience and information which could be drawn upon by any parish priest or architect faced with the task of building a new church. It would no longer be necessary for architects to waste time and money on fruitless experiments with untheological ideas, or to deplore the inability of a client to provide them with an adequate brief. Until the ecclesiastical authorities are awakened to the need for drastic action on the lines already laid down in the post-war schools programme the most that can reasonably be expected is that here and there, thanks to the courage and initiative of an individual client, an occasional building of real quality will emerge from the present chaos of waste, mediocrity and uninformed experiment.

This is not to say that nothing can be done to remedy the existing state of affairs until such time as a policy of this kind is seriously undertaken at the central or diocesan level. If local groups of theologians and architects were formed in different parts of the country for study and consultation, and the results of their work could be made available to parish priests and others concerned with church building, this could rapidly lead to a widespread raising of standards. The formation in 1958 of the *New Churches Research Group* may well stimulate unofficial action on these lines. The general observance of two basic principles by parish priests responsible for the building of new churches could also have considerable effect, in spite of the apathy and ignorance at present prevailing in high places. The first concerns the formulation of the programme; the second, the choice of an architect.

First, there should be no thought of building, or of commissioning an architect to produce sketch designs, until priest and congregation have together made a serious attempt to realise afresh their true function as the people of God. They should resist any effort on the part of diocesan authorities to *start* with a building and then try to create a worshipping community to justify it. There are far too many parishes

already where the growth of the temple built of living stones is stifled by extravagant monuments to ecclesiastical vanity, imposed from above and bearing little relation to the needs of the community which they should serve. Far better that a congregation should break bread and study the word of God in a temporary building for several years, before getting down to the details of a permanent church, if in this way they can learn something of the meaning of the *ecclesia*: what it is and what it is for. It is far better to wait five years for a really satisfactory church than to build in haste and then to repent at leisure. Most of the fundamental weaknesses of our post-war churches stem from an insufficiently considered programme. On these grounds alone there is a strong case for devoting far more attention to the possibilities of the *église provisoire*.[8]

Secondly, when the time does come to think about choosing an architect, the parish should bear in mind the Prayer Book maxim that they are to look for the best and purest architecture that conveniently may be gotten. They might do worse than to go and look at whatever examples of authentic modern architecture their particular locality will afford—the list is unlikely to include many churches—or to seek the advice of the principal of a good architectural school. The possibility of a competition should also be considered, particularly as a means of discovering a young and still unknown architect of integrity and imagination. If they have to choose between an agnostic architect who believes passionately in architectural honesty, and who will stand no nonsense when architectural principles are at stake, and a churchman whose critical standards are less exacting, the former is invariably to be preferred. Provided that the priest and congregation have done their preliminary thinking thoroughly, the architect will have a brief which does at least provide a basis for further exploration; and if, as is to be hoped, he is accustomed to consider a building in terms of purpose and function, rather than as a dramatic composition, unrelated to social needs, he will undoubtedly challenge his clients to further thinking and compel them to re-examine some of their supposed requirements. This again is a process that demands time and the closest possible collaboration between architect and client.[9]

While much could be accomplished on these lines, provided only

[8] See *Construire des Églises*, by Paul Winninger. Paris, Les Éditions du Cerf 1957, particularly pp. 224–240.

[9] See *Programme and Idea* by Robert Maguire. London, *New Churches Research Group Papers No. 2,* 1959.

that the local church is prepared to take its responsibilities seriously, the crucial need to-day is for systematic research and experiment on a scale which goes far beyond the resources of a single parish. The prospect for the next decade hinges upon the recognition of this fact by the ecclesiastical authorities. Given a deepened understanding of the potentialities of church architecture as an instrument for forming a community, the ending of the present entirely haphazard system—if system it can be called—of commissioning and briefing architects, and the readiness to learn from the mistakes of the past, the next ten years might mark the opening of a new and exciting chapter in the history of church architecture in this country.

It would nevertheless be idle to pretend that, despite some encouraging developments within the last two or three years, the prospects of a genuine renewal of church architecture in Britain are particularly bright. There is little to suggest that, in official circles at least, there is any real awareness that an immense opportunity has been all but lost. Even among those who are most concerned at the Church's inability to lift up valid signs there are very few who recognise the true nature of the questions at issue; the majority still assume that the problems are artistic rather than theological. It is only when church architecture is placed squarely within its social context, only when the design of the house of God is related both to modern architectural thinking and also to the work of the theologian, the liturgist, the pastor and the sociologist, that we shall begin to realise the potentialities that lie open to us. When that happens—and not until then—we may hope to discover the secret of an architecture that is at once traditional, in the true sense of that much abused word, and wholly of its time: an architecture that is capable of becoming a vital factor not merely in the reform of the liturgy but, through the renewal of the Church's common prayer, in the transformation of the whole life of the Christian community.

Bibliography and Indexes

Bibliography

I. THE LITURGICAL MOVEMENT

LIFE AND LITURGY, by Louis Bouyer. Sheed and Ward, 1956.
Incomparably the best general introduction to the liturgical movement, its background, history and aims, available in English or in any other language. A book of first-rate importance.

THE LITURGICAL RENAISSANCE IN THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH, by Ernest B. Koenker. University of Chicago Press, 1954.
A well-documented survey by a Lutheran theologian. It contains a useful bibliography.

LITURGY AND SOCIETY: THE FUNCTION OF THE CHURCH IN THE MODERN WORLD, by A. G. Hebert. Faber and Faber, 1935.
The first study of the liturgical movement by an English writer. It is still valuable though it needs to be supplemented by one of the more recent books.

HISTOIRE DU MOUVEMENT LITURGIQUE, by Olivier Rousseau. Paris. Les Éditions du Cerf, 1945.
Provides a more detailed account of the origins of the movement than will be found elsewhere, though the survey given by Father Bouyer will probably suffice for the general reader.

The following smaller books are also recommended:
THE LITURGICAL MOVEMENT AND THE LOCAL CHURCH, by Alfred R. Shands. S.C.M. Press, 1959.

THE SPIRIT OF THE LITURGY, by Romano Guardini (English translation published by Sheed and Ward).
The French translation by Robert d'Harcourt contains a valuable introduction on the liturgical movement in Germany.

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LITURGICAL RENEWAL: STUDIES IN CATHOLIC AND PROTESTANT DEVELOPMENTS ON THE CONTINENT, by J. D. Benoit. S.C.M. Press, 1958.
Particularly valuable for developments among French and Swiss Calvinists.

THE LITURGY AND THE CHRISTIAN FAITH, by M. H. Shepherd, Jr. S.P.C.K., 1957.

LITURGY THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH (Liturgical Press, Collegeville, Minnesota, U.S.A.).

A translation of Dom Lambert Beauduin's *La piété de l'Eglise*, first published in 1914.

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MISSARUM SOLLEMNIA, by J. A. Jungmann. Vienna, 1949.
A monumental work by a Jesuit scholar of international repute.
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THE SHAPE OF THE LITURGY, by Gregory Dix. Dacre Press, 1945.
A brilliant book, the fundamental importance of which is not affected by certain legitimate criticisms that have been made of the author's treatment of specific issues. For the English reader it provides far the most readable account of the decline of sound liturgical thinking in the Middle Ages. It is also extremely illuminating on the subject of the persistence of late-medieval assumptions despite the sixteenth-century reformation. Bouyer is also valuable on this topic, as is E. L. Mascall in *The Recovery of Unity*, Longmans, 1958.

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A book of capital importance by a Russian theologian which presents an unfamiliar view of medieval developments in western theology. See also *The Divine Realm*, by Evgueny Lampert. Faber and Faber, 1944; and my own book *The Waters of Marah*, Rockliff, 1956.

There is a vast and rapidly growing literature on particular aspects of the liturgical movement on the Continent, comparatively little of which has yet been translated into English.
The French periodical *La Maison-Dieu* is a mine of information and documentation. Two important books which bring out the pastoral and missionary character of the present renewal of the Church in France are: *La France, pays de mission?*, by H. Godin and Y. Daniel, 1943; and *Paroisse, communauté missionnaite* by H. Michonneau and H. C. Chery, 1945, published by Les Éditions du Cerf in the series *Rencontres*. Both these books are available in English translations with the somewhat misleading titles of *France pagan?* and *Revolution in a City Parish*. See also *Christians around the Altar*, Chapman, 1958, an English translation of one of the numerous publications of the parochial centre of St. Severin, in Paris.

So far as the liturgical renewal in this country is concerned, comparatively little has been written outside the pages of periodicals like 'Parish and People' and 'Theology'.

Two important books are *The Parish Communion*, edited by A. G. Hebert, S.P.C.K., 1937, and *The Parish comes Alive*, by E. W. Southcott, Mowbrays, 1956. See also the series *Studies in Ministry and Worship*, published by the S.C.M. Press from 1957 onwards; *The Celebration of the Eucharist facing the People*, by Basil Minchin, Bristol, 1954; and *An Experimental Liturgy*, by G. Cope, J. G. Davies and D. A. Tytler, Lutterworth Press, 1958.

II. THE MODERN MOVEMENT IN ARCHITECTURE

There is a vast amount of literature available on this subject. I confine myself to suggesting one magisterial survey and several books which are likely to be particularly helpful to the reader without a specialised knowledge of architecture.

ARCHITECTURE, NINETEENTH AND TWENTIETH CENTURIES, by Henry-Russell Hitchcock. Pelican History of Art. Penguin Books, 1958.
> Likely to be the standard work on the subject for many years to come. It contains a very full bibliography and many photographs.

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> Provides the general reader with an admirable brief survey and a useful bibliography.

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> A book of capital importance which ought to be required reading for anyone who is concerned with the building of churches.

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> A survey of the work carried out in this field: it would make an admirable Lent Book for bishops, archdeacons and ecclesiastical architects.

SPACE, TIME AND ARCHITECTURE, by S. Giedion. Harvard University Press and O.U.P., third and revised edition, 1956.
> Another book of great importance which may be recommended to the layman in architectural matters.

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III. MODERN CHURCH ARCHITECTURE

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> Quite the most thorough and systematic work at present available. It includes extensive surveys of post-war churches built since 1945 throughout the world, a detailed study of the historic development of the church building and much else. It contains about 400 photographs and more than 1000 plans and diagrams. The price in this country is £6 10s.

KIRCHEN UNSERER ZEIT, by R. Biedrzynski. Munich, Hirmer, 1958.
One of the best of the many well-illustrated surveys of modern churches published during the last few years. It deals mainly with Germany.

CONTEMPORARY CHURCH ART, by Anton Henze and Theodor Filthaut. Sheed and Ward, 1956.
A translation by Cecily Hastings of another German work. The scope of this book is confined to Roman Catholic churches.

BETONKIRCHEN, by Ferdinand Pfammater. Einsiedeln, Benziger Verlag, 1948.
A very thorough survey of early concrete churches which contains material not easily found elsewhere. The main emphasis is on structure.

RELIGIOUS BUILDINGS FOR TO-DAY, New York, F. W. Dodge Corporation, 1957.
Mainly a picture-book. It contains an admirable introduction by P. Marvin Halverson but is otherwise rather disappointing.

THE MODERN CHURCH, by Edward D. Mills. Architectural Press, 1956.
Another general survey of an extremely superficial kind.

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An important book by a Dominican theologian. An English translation is in preparation and is to be published by Herder & Herder (New York) in 1960.

L'ART SACRÉ MODERNE, by Joseph Pichard. Paris, Arthaud, 1953.
A study of origins, with particular reference to France.

NEUE KIRCHEN IM ERZBISTUM KÖLN, by Willy Weyres. Düsseldorf. Schwann Verlag, 1957.
An extremely valuable survey of post-war church building in the archdiocese of Cologne.

MODERNE KIRCHLICHE KUNST IN DER SCHWEIZ, by Robert Hess. Zürich. NZN Buchverlag, 1951.
A convenient brief guide to modern churches in Switzerland which will be found useful in planning a study tour. A new edition is in preparation.

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An excellent illustrated survey of the work of two of the leading church architects of our time. Like the preceding work, this is published in the *Ars Sacra* series (*see* Periodicals).

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A lavishly produced survey of church building in Italy from 1945 to 1955. It is available in this country at a price of seven guineas.

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Three admirably produced studies of these two French chapels.

GUIDE TO MODERN FRENCH CHURCHES, by Peter Hammond. London, *New Churches Research Group Papers No. 1*, 1959.
A brief guide to French churches built during the last thirty-five years which will be useful for those wishing to plan a study tour.

CONSTRUIRE DES ÉGLISES, by Paul Winninger; and LA VILLE ET L'ÉGLISE, by Jean Chelini. Paris, Les Éditions du Cerf, 1958-59.
Two important books on the pastoral and sociological background to church building. The first is particularly valuable.

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An extremely valuable historical survey of English church architecture from the Reformation onwards. Its only unsatisfactory feature is the authors' tendency to regard the Book of Common Prayer as the ultimate norm of liturgical worship.

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Harris was published in Chicago in 1958, but the publishers, the Henry Regnery Company, state that this is not available in Great Britain.

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Quaderni di Chiesa e Quartiere. Edited by L. Cherardi and published in Bologna.

Zodiaque. Quarterly published at the Abbey of La Pierre-qui-Vire, near Avallon, and edited by Dom Angelico Surchamp, O.S.B.

In addition to reviews dealing exclusively with church architecture, several architectural periodicals of a more general nature have recently published special numbers devoted to the subject. See, for example, L'ARCHITECTURE D'AUJOURD'HUI No 71, 1957; ARCHITEKTUR WETTBEWERBE, Heft 20, 1956, and Heft 27, 1959 (containing several interesting projects not previously published).

Acknowledgments

Index to Churches

References in *italic* numerals are to illustrations, all other references are to page numbers. The letter R denotes a restoration or adaptation of an existing church. An asterisk indicates an uncompleted project. The names of the architects are in italics.

General Index

community, a reconsideration of the physical setting becomes necessary. The placement of the altar, the pulpit, the choir, the baptistery must be re-thought. And fundamental thinking about the relationship of these elements in the plan must precede any consideration of materials and details of style. "No amount of contemporary detail," says the author, can make a church truly modern.

From these principles Mr. Hammond proceeds to an examination of trends in church planning on the Continent, in England, and in America, from the 1920's to the late 1950's. Plans for both Protestant and Roman Catholic churches are examined in detail to show what they offer in the way of solutions to the specific problems imposed by the requirements of the liturgy. The author's points are liberally illustrated by detailed ground plans, elevations, and photographs. One chapter surveys experiments in the modification of existing churches to meet the needs of liturgical reform. The final chapter pleads for new approaches to the problems of church architecture that will bring together artists, architects, theologians, liturgists and sociologists in the realization of a church architecture that is at once traditional and wholly of its time.

Peter Hammond, an Anglican clergyman, is Secretary of the New Churches Research Group.