

Theological Statement

With what can we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable will we use for it? It is like a mustard seed, which when sown upon the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth; yet when it is sown it grows up and becomes the greatest of all shrubs, and puts forth large branches, so that the birds of the air can make their nests in its shade.

S. Mark 4:30-32 (NRSV)

“The mustard plant ... tends to take over where it is not wanted, tends to get out of control, tends to attract birds within cultivated areas where they are not particularly desired. And that, said Jesus, was what the kingdom was like ... A pungent shrub with dangerous takeover properties. Something you would want only in small and carefully controlled doses – if you could control it.”

From "Jesus: A Revolutionary Biography", p65 John Dominic Crossan, HarperCollins, 1994

The Roots

We believe that God is by nature fundamentally engaged with the world and on the side of poor and oppressed people.

This understanding is rooted in the:

- ✘ words of Holy Scripture,
- ✘ Holy Mass, which establishes the equality of all people
- ✘ writings of the Mothers and Fathers of the Faith,
- ✘ tradition of the Communion of the Saints,
- ✘ historic doctrines of the Holy Church:
- ✘ relationship of perfect and equal love displayed in the Holy Trinity,
- ✘ vulnerable love exemplified in the person of Jesus Christ.

We find our roots in those who have sought to live out these insights in the past. They include comrades, living and departed, in the Guild of S. Matthew, the Christian Social Union, the League of the Kingdom of God, the Catholic Crusade and the Jubilee Group.

This radical heritage forms the basis of our vision for the new Society of Sacramental Socialists (henceforth **SSS**).

The **SSS** will attempt to be faithful to this tradition in the early 21st Century, amidst the continuing challenge of capitalism; the resurgence of fascism and imperialism; the new challenge of globalisation; and the rise of the 'christian' right.

We recognise that both Christianity and Socialism have been abused for evil. The **SSS** stands against all forms of Socialism and Christianity which prevent human flourishing.

The Trunk

The **SSS** will be a society made up of people who are committed to the Catholic tradition of the Anglican Church and international socialism.

We will seek to live as Christ's disciples within the Church, nourished by Holy Scripture, the Sacraments, and study.

We will pledge ourselves to pray for one another when apart and to meet together regularly for corporate worship, theological reflection, and active struggle for God's kingdom. We will also seek to promote the views of catholic socialism through publications.

The Branches

The **SSS** will seek to live out the fundamental truth that love of God and love of neighbour cannot be separated. With all Catholic Christians, we believe in the Real Presence of Christ both in the Eucharist and in the least of his sisters and brothers.

Members of the **SSS** are committed to seeking God's kingdom and its righteousness. This will take different forms for different people; we will offer mutual support and be accountable to one another. As a Society we will work with all who share our aims and outlook, including Christians of other denominations, members of other faiths and all people of goodwill.

Rochester Report and Windsor Report

We mourn the damaging disunity in the Catholic Movement of the Church of England but for the sake of clarity feel that it is important to state our positions on two key areas of current controversy:

1. We are committed to the ordination of women to the diaconate, priesthood and episcopate.
2. We are committed to justice and equality for gay and lesbian people in all levels of church life.

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Prayer of the Society

*Lord Jesus, our Leader,
we give ourselves to you,
for the cause of your glorious kingdom.
For joy or for sorrow,
for success or for failure,
for life or for death;
now and for evermore.
Amen. **

** From the prayers of the 'Catholic Crusade*