



Open to Grace

Luke 17:21, John 18:33-37

Dear Friends

Welcome to the T4CG Newsletter. On the feast of Christ the King we are reflecting on the deep malaise of a culture that is so confident to live without God. We are asking what prevents us from being open to grace, praying we will become more and more open to surrender to God's direction. We are thinking about what each of us can do to restore a sense of the sacred, and that we should intentionally conceive of and speak about the Kingdom.

We are looking at the growing tendency of government and big corporates to default to technocratic approaches and how they undermine the common good. We are recognising how much more important now are those circles of love, mutual respect, and shared sacrifices - feeling increasingly like acts of resistance. We sense that the renewal of relationships will lead to a new politics of grace, to a new settlement. We need a relational church.

So in this edition, we are delighted to have **Edward Hadas** writing about the technocratic paradigm from the perspective of Catholic social thought, explaining how technocracy undermines the common good. Meanwhile **Andrew Rumsey** reflects on the mystical relationship between parish churches and place, and how they can help us become open to grace. Finally, **Jenny Sinclair** laments the churches' struggle to respond to the new era, and proposes a new formation for the civic and spiritual renewal of our country.

Our latest public event took place a few days ago featuring **Imogen Sinclair, Lord Glasman, Caroline Slocock and Ruth Kelly**. It was a fascinating discussion so do watch the video below. You'll also see below our latest **annual report** and that we are **recruiting for a new post** - we'd be grateful if you would pray for this and share with your contacts. You will also see an update about our common good **course for churches**. Finally, as usual, you'll find our latest **recommended books**.

Every blessing,
Together for the Common Good



The Common Good: what does it mean for government?

Our first in-person event since the pandemic took place on 16 November, at St Mary's Putney, home of the 1647 Putney Debates. Click the image above to watch the video. Here are some quotes from the debate:

- *"I hope that some of the covenantal language we are using can help policy people understand what is common and what is good. I think the state should have some conception of the good life and to encourage that in families."*
Imogen Sinclair
- *"Politics involves coercive power, but it is also about who we are. People want to be free to speak about a conception of the Kingdom. I don't hear enough about a Christian vision of society - concepts like love and grace."* **Lord Glasman**
- *"Successive governments have overlooked 'place' - it is easier to thrive if you live in a good place, with the social infrastructure that people value. Government should be borrowing and seeding local endowment funds."* **Caroline Slocock**

For full details and to watch videos from the whole series, click [here](#).

This series of four debates, "What does the common good mean for families, society and government?" was organised by T4CG and St. Mary's University, in association with CSAN and the CSJ. It was supported by CCLA, one of the UK's largest ethical fund managers, home of the new Catholic Investment Fund.



Covid and the technocratic paradigm

It is sometimes argued that the technocratic approach to health has poisoned the response to Covid-19, that a technical bureaucracy of life-preservation is replacing the bonds of loving care. In this essay, **Edward Hadas** shows that when technical thinking, which has done so much good in the modern world, is allowed too much power, it slips into an anti-human paradigm. And because technocracy is inherently anti-social, it undermines the common good.

Edward suggests that the good life - that which is a foretaste of heaven - can be helped by technical thinking, but the technocratic paradigm has no space for the virtues of faith, hope, and love, nor for the transcendental realities of God's grace, unity, and beauty.



A new formation, for a new era

Jenny Sinclair addresses the causes of the spiritual malaise across the West, the corresponding degradation experienced by people and the desecration of places in our country. Lamenting that church leaders were not trained for this moment, and recognising the profound changes going on in the church, she proposes a new formation to equip the people of the churches for the new era, based on an openness to the Spirit and the restoration of the relationship between church, people and with place.

[Read the essay](#)



Feeding the roots: church buildings and local ecology

With many churches in the UK facing a trajectory of decline, **Andrew Rumsey** reflects on the enduring relationship between parish churches and the meaning of place and belonging. Like ancient trees, they can oxygenate the life around them, and help us become open to grace - but only if their roots are nourished.

[Read the story](#)



[Read the latest here](#)



An illustration depicting business growth and planning. In the foreground, three diverse business professionals (two men and one woman) are smiling and embracing each other. In the background, a large red arrow points upwards and to the right, symbolizing growth. Two figures are running along this arrow: one in a white shirt and blue pants, and another in a blue suit carrying a briefcase. To the right, a calendar for February is shown with a yellow pencil pointing to a date, and a magnifying glass highlights a specific date, suggesting strategic planning and time management.

[Download recruitment pack here](#)



We've not had time to select articles for this edition.



Recommended books

Our latest selection

- **Andrew Rumsey** [English Grounds: A Pastoral Journal](#)
- **Charles Murray** [Coming Apart: The State of White America](#)
- **Elle Hardy** [Beyond Belief: How Pentecostal Christianity Is Taking Over the World](#)
- **Anna Rowlands** [Towards a Politics of Communion: Catholic Social Teaching in Dark Times](#)
- **Mark Stears** [Out of the Ordinary: How Everyday Life Inspired a Nation and How It Can Again](#)
- **Darren McGarvey** [Poverty Safari: Understanding the Anger of Britain's Underclass](#)
- **David Skelton** [The New Snobbery: Taking on modern elitism and empowering the working class](#)

You may also be interested in

- [Recommended books](#) in previous newsletters
- our [Leading Thinkers](#) collection
- [Common Good thinking](#) and Catholic social thought

What is the Common Good?

The Common Good is the **shared life** of a society in which everyone can flourish - as we act together in different ways that all contribute towards that goal, enabled by social conditions that mean every single person can participate.

We create these conditions and pursue that goal by working together across our differences, each of us taking responsibility, according to our calling and ability.

[Find out more and explore our free resources](#)



Thank you for paying attention!

Supporting T4CG

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About us

Together for the Common Good works with people across the churches and beyond.
We broker relationships, convene conversations and help people fulfil their vocation for the common good.
We are non partisan, independent, ecumenical and proud of our Christian traditions.

Our People

Team: Jenny Sinclair (Founder Director), Alison Gelder (Director of Operations, p/t)
Louise Lambert (Team Support Worker, p/t), Chris Knowles (Here: Now: Us People project leader, p/t)
Board of Trustees: Richard Holman (Chair), Holly Terry (Company Secretary), Sophie Stanes, Geoff Knott, Edward Hadas

Our sincere thanks

Our sincere thanks for help-in-kind and support from our partners and associates who contribute pro bono to different strands of our work. [Download](#) the latest T4CG annual report to find out more. We are most grateful to our regular donors for their faithful generosity and to CCLA for enabling us to build this smart new website.



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Together for the Common Good (Registered charity No. 1172113) · Registered office: 11 Genoa Avenue · London, UK SW15 6DY · United Kingdom