

Being Human

This *Sofia* starts with shortened versions of talks given by the three main speakers at the SOF annual conference, which took place on Zoom again in July this year. Live recordings of their full talks are also now online at:

www.sofconference.org.uk/recordings.html

Each of the three speakers address the subject of 'Being Human' from a different angle. Brian Mountford focuses on humans as the story-telling animal and the religious animal. He refers to the scientist Rovelli's 'strongly holistic relational view of nature and reality', which 'touches upon the very insight that theologians have intuitively found in metaphors, such as the doctrine of the Holy Trinity.' The three 'distinct not separate' persons of the Trinity each possess the whole divine nature and are distinguished by their 'subsistent relationships'. If human beings, indeed the whole cosmos, share this essential character of being related, perhaps God as Trinity is a personification of that; we created God in our own image, not the other way round.

Peter Francis focuses on Jesus: 'I still call myself a Christian despite antipathy to the creeds of the church because for me Jesus/Yeshua

remains a model of a truly human (humane) being (someone who embodies life in all its fullness)'.

Anastasia Somerville-Wong, the first Humanist Chaplain to join the Multi-faith Chaplaincy Team at the University of Exeter, says we need both social enterprises that are independent of the state with a strong focus on inclusive spirituality, ethical engagement and activism, as well as multi-faith chaplaincies attached to institutions. She explores how each of these might work.

This *Sofia* also contains an account by one of SOF Network's founders, Stephen Mitchell, on 'How it all Began'. There is plenty more, including poetry, reviews and letters. The front cover shows Jesus and the Canaanite woman (and her dog) who has just asked him to heal her daughter. Is Jesus being racist in what he says to her? Answers to this question would be welcome in a Letter to the Editor.

Below you will see a notice for our newly published SOF book, *As I Please* by John Pearson. There is also an insert flier which you can fill in to buy it. Recommended!

NEW SOF BOOK

As I Please

by John Pearson

A collection of pieces John Pearson has written for his regular *As I Please* column in *Sofia* over the last eight years, together with some longer articles and reviews he has contributed to the magazine since he joined SOF Network in 1992.

HOW TO ORDER

By post, giving your name, address and number of copies, with a cheque for £12 per book (post-free) payable to Sea of Faith or SOF to: SOF Network, 3 Belle Grove Place, Spital Tongues, Newcastle upon Tyne NE2 4LH.

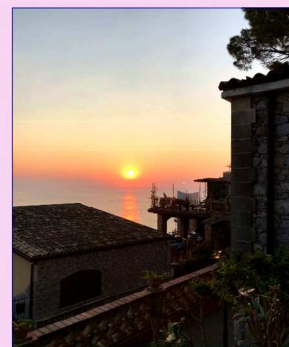
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As I Please

John Pearson