“Christian Responses to the Political Challenge of Islam: contemporary Christian-Muslim engagements in the public square”

by Revd Dr Richard J. Sudworth

Abstract:
The contemporary responses to Islam in the public square of three Christian theologians – Kenneth Cragg, Pope Benedict XVI, and Rowan Williams – are analysed in the light of the evident diversity of political Islam. They offer complementary insights into theologies of the Church, the common good, Christian culture, sin, notions of power, and the doctrine of God, and highlight the need for a Christian political theology that can engage with Islam in all its diversity and yet challenge elements of Islamic voluntarism that are inhibitive of religious plurality.

Revd Dr Richard Sudworth is an ordained Anglican priest, splitting his time between Queen’s and inner city parish ministry. His doctoral research at Heythrop College, University of London, examined the political theology of the Church of England in response to Islam and it is this intersection of ecclesiology, politics and the public square that Richard is particularly interested in. Having come into ordained ministry from a mission context, serving in North Africa and Birmingham with the Church Mission Society, he is keen to explore how the Anglican tradition can be faithfully retrieved and re-imagined to support models of church in our post-Christendom context. Richard is the author of Distinctly Welcoming: Christian presence in a mutlifaith society (Scripture Union, 2007) and has published articles in the Anglican Theological Review, Anvil, Practical Theology and ARAM as well as contributing essays to a number of books on contemporary mission. By way of recreation, aside from enjoying time with the family, Richard may be found listening to Bach, Nick Cave or dressed in lycra cycling the country roads of Warwickshire.