

News of Liturgy

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INFANT BAPTISM—SYNOD SAYS 'YES' TO RE-EXAMINATION

Readers of *NOL* who sympathized with my plea last month for support for the Southwell motion on infant baptism at General Synod will be pleased to know the motion was duly passed on 11 November. It ran as follows:

'That this Synod, endorsing the forms of interrogation of Series 2 and draft Series 3 Infant Baptism Services, desires that there should be a re-examination of the conditions upon which infants are accepted for baptism.'

The mood of Synod was entirely different from that in the unsatisfactory debate in February 1974, when the running was made by people (lay, clerical and episcopal) who were keen on the opportunities for the gospel offered by accepting all and sundry for baptism. This time there was some questioning (e.g. about clinical baptism and about the theology of the place of the infant in God's economy), but there were also speeches from those who have worked at implementing various sorts of policies—and the sheer variety of positions held itself became an argument for re-examination. The Bishop of Durham expressed some disquiet about the forms of interrogation in the two alternative services mentioned, and the Bishop of Leicester held (gently) to his own position of accepting all infants. Even he acknowledged that he gets letters from parents who have felt rejected by their local parishes, so there must be *some* variety of practice even in the Leicester diocese.

When it came to the vote, a show of hands made it appear dead-level! There was then a count, and the motion was passed by 170 votes to 151—a cliff-hanger almost as close as those going on in the Commons just across Parliament Square all the same week. As far as I could see, almost all the Bishops present voted against the motion, the Bishop of Southwell being an exception.

Meeting with members of Synod during the week gave evidence that a large number had in fact been approached by readers of *NOL* after my appeal for help last month. It is interesting to speculate on whether or not this lobbying turned the scales. A few less persons in the chamber at the time, or a few more voting against, and the motion would have been narrowly lost. And narrowly lost would have been *totally* lost. The issue would have been buried for another four or five years.

As it is the issue is re-opened in a very timely way. There are no other initiation questions afoot to complicate this one. It can be looked at entirely on its own, and can be treated as an encapsulated entity—as it

truly is. It is likely that the tide of unrest in the country has risen just as far as the motion itself would suggest—that there is a slender majority in favour of a hard look at the issue, a large minority not in favour of it. This suggests we got the right sort of mild motion before the Synod at just the right time. For my part, I am very grateful to those who pitched in and helped it to happen.

We now await news from Standing Committee as to how they will handle this issue. I shall report as soon as I hear.

SERIES 3 COMMUNION—THE QUESTIONNAIRES ARE OUT

I must apologize if remarks in these columns earlier suggested that the questionnaires on Series 3 would not come till the New Year. They are upon us now—given out to the ten selected laity in Bramcote two days before I write this. (St. John's College does not count as a parish, and is only involved in the sense that we shall fill it in unofficially, and some of our students are being used by the diocesan liturgical committee to process the official returns). Parishes which are not selected can obtain questionnaires from their diocesan committees, and can go through the process just the same.

Elsewhere in this issue of *NOL* John Wilkinson, who has piloted the questionnaire through the Liturgical Commission, writes of the problems in compiling it. Perhaps I may meanwhile make some wider remarks about the general possibilities in relation to the revision of Series 3. It will be recalled that the whole exercise is being done in order to put a more finally polished text into the *Alternative Service Book* which is due to come into use in 1980.

Roger Beckwith has written in *The Churchman* for October-December 1976 urging that the Commission should be made to concentrate on three points which, he says, make the service controversial for evangelicals. These are petitions for the departed, eucharistic sacrifice, and reservation of the elements. Readers of *The Churchman* must judge for themselves whether he has made out the case that Series 3 is in error on these points. It should be noted that the Executive Committee of NEAC has already rejected his plea that the text of Series 3 should be doctored on such occasions as a demonstration to everybody that the existing text is controversial. The Archbishop of Canterbury will not be embarrassed in the event by such a 'demonstration'.

For myself, I doubt whether the points at which Series 3 can be improved should be so narrowly identified, and I distrust the possibility of having unfruitful battles around the points which Roger Beckwith has selected. On the other hand, I do hope everyone who has the chance will write in his thinking on the back of the questionnaire—however diffuse his style, or disorganized his presentation. We all *need* to know where room for

improvement—whether doctrinal, or structural, or linguistic, or seasonal—can be found. Those who are concerned to do a thorough job may like to consider the following points:

- (1) Are there verbal infelicities?
- (2) Are there points where further enriching can be done? (e.g. with alternative eucharistic prayers, more seasonal provision, etc.)
- (3) Is there anything to learn or recover from the material in the 1971 white report (still available at 25p) which was rejected by General Synod in the famous 'Night of the Long Knives' in November 1971? (A memorable description of this is to be read in David Frost's Grove Booklet 12 *The Language of Series 3*).
- (4) Should we update the ICET texts to those in the 1975 edition of *Prayers we have in Common*?
- (5) Specialist points—e.g. are the acclamations in the right place? There may well be those who will go back also to Richard More's Grove Booklet no. 40 *Freedom in a Framework* in order to stretch their thinking.

We shall be reporting on the outcome of the questionnaires.

Colin Buchanan

OTHER NEWS ON THE OFFICIAL FRONT

In General Synod in the week 8-12 November the following decisions were taken:

Final Approval: Series 3 Communion (extension from 1 February 1977 to 31 December 1979)—Bps. 29-0, Clergy 137-8, Laity 139-7.

Series 3 Funerals (extension from 1 June 1979 to 31 December 1979)—Bps. 28-0, Clergy 131-1, Laity 145-4.

Series 3 Collects (from 1 February 1977 to 31 December 1979)—Bps. 30-1, Clergy 151-21, Laity 136-15. In the course of introducing this proposal the Bishop of Derby said 'There are far too many unauthorized forms of collects around, and we need to pass these forms to put a stop to it.' Whether all use of the pirate Grove Collects will cease on 1 February 1977 remains to be seen... We will be keeping readers in touch with the availability of the official ones in January.

Revision Stage: Series 3 Marriage was considered for revision, but, contrary to all expectation, the task was not quite finished. Thus provisional approval is delayed till February.

The Reconciliation of Ministries: The Faith and Order Group of the Board of Mission and Unity proposed that this should be done (in the context of the 'covenant' in the Ten Propositions on Unity) by a rite drawn from proposals made by a French Catholic and Protestant Group known as the 'Groupe des Dombes'. This proposal was in essence to accept each other's ministries as having the right substance already, but as lacking the fulness of the *sign*. So a laying on of a bishop's hands would be used for topping up the *sign*, not the ordination. The BMU, having read its Group's report, asked the Synod to refer the question of *how* to accept each other's ministries back to the Churches Unity Commission itself, and Synod duly obliged.

Calendar and Lectionary: The Standing Committee explained in its report on the business on the agenda that the Liturgical Commission was recommending to the House of Bishops (which I had forgotten) that a 'Daily Lectionary for the Eucharist' be added to the Calendar and Lectionary proposals in GS 292. The House of Bishops met on 8 November, and strong rumour round Church House had it that they had rejected the Commission's proposals in favour of material from an Italian source. We shall see...

Questions: I asked the chairman of the Standing Committee what steps would be taken to make '1½' generally acceptable before it was included in the 1980 Alternative Service Book. I was told the Standing Committee will 'watch the situation carefully'.

Charles Manchester of Guildford diocese asked about the position of the *Good News Bible*, and apparently the House of Bishops can approve it for Morning and Evening Prayer, but the provisional and final approval of the whole Synod is needed to 'authorize' it for Holy Communion.

Mr. Roger Godin asked a complicated question (in several parts) as to why the Liturgical Commission sheered away from the 'uncomfortable words' of Jesus, but was reassured that this is not so, and that he had failed to refer sufficiently closely to GS 292 in framing his question.

BOOKS THIS MONTH

Praise Him in the Dance is now selling well at £3.75. Two Roman Catholic Pentecostal works are worth a mention also. *New Heavens? New Earth?* (D.L.T. £2.25) is subtitled 'An Encounter with Pentecostalism'. It is by a distinguished team: Simon Tugwell, Peter Hocken, George Every, and John Orme Mills, with a Foreword by Walter Hollenweger. It raises many 'charismatic' questions to a new level—especially the eschatological. We also have copies of *Theological and Pastoral Orientations on the Catholic Charismatic Renewal* (Notre Dame, U.S.A. £1.10)—prepared by a group convened by Cardinal Suenens.

Praying Together is a small collection of private prayers put together by Philip Caraman. It is notable as the first-ever joint publishing venture of the SPCK and the Catholic Truth Society (it costs 30p). It is commended by the Archbishops of Canterbury and Westminster jointly. But it has to be said it reads as a Roman Catholic collection rather than as an ecumenical one.

7p (8p in 1977, or £1.90 [£2.25 by air] for an annual subscription by post)

GROVE BOOKS

BRAMCOTE NOTTS. (0602 251114)

PRODUCING A QUESTIONNAIRE FOR SERIES 3

Justin Martyr, Thomas Cranmer, and Bishop Frere—they all had great advantages over the Church of England Liturgical Commission. But one thing we have and they didn't was the Church Commissioners' computer, and this is a tremendous advantage. It enables the Commission to work with some wide knowledge of what people are thinking in the parishes.

Obviously one of the services which will have an important place in the *Alternative Services Book, 1980* is the Series 3 Holy Communion. But it would be a pity to include it in the book (a semi-permanent publication) without taking account of the way it has been used and the ways the users fell about it. So the Commission decided to take soundings by means of a Questionnaire.

Many readers of *NOL* will remember the questionnaire on Series 2 Holy Communion which was circulated seven years ago. The whole process of liturgical revision was fresh to a great many people in those days, and the Commission needed the answers to several questions with far-reaching implications. The results of the questionnaire on Series 2 formed the basis for writing Series 3. But now many months have gone by, and with each one we have become, as a Church, more accustomed to the diversity of forms and words which came as such a shock to some of us during the sixties. In the new questionnaire the Commission is not questioning the appropriateness of having a Series 3 Holy Communion. Obviously there is a large number of church members who use it with satisfaction, and there is no question of preventing anyone using it. But there are a number of points in the service at which the Commission needs to know how the users are reacting to the wording as it stands. The service is full of options. Are *all* of them needed? It would certainly make it easier to present the service in print if the ones which are never used could be left out. Nor, if the Commission itself decides it would like to suggest a slight alteration, does it know how wedded the users are to the wording as it stands. These sort of points the questionnaire will, we believe, clarify, and we can learn the way the Church is going before we make our new text for the 1980 Book.

The questionnaire comes in two parts. One is purely factual, asking whether the parish concerned is rural or urban, and which parts of the Holy Communion Service it had been using. This is to be completed by the incumbent. The other part is a questionnaire about opinions, and there are ten opinion-questionnaires to one factual. These constitute a set, and sets are being sent to ten per cent of the parishes.

The computer can produce statistical results to the kind of questions which are to be answered by ticks in boxes. In fact the Commission has asked for a total of forty-one variations and combinations of results from the computer staff, and has been assured that this is not too greedy. But the computer cannot read or classify the words which are used for writing comments on the back of the questionnaires. These have to be read and classified by human beings. And the human beings concerned (to whom the Commission is constantly grateful and on whom it frequently depends) are the members of the diocesan liturgical committees. Without them we could not attempt an enquiry of this type or on this scale. Their voluntary help is much appreciated.

John Wilkinson

ANGLICANS OVERSEAS

Australia

The proposal for a new Prayer Book is being worked through most energetically in Australia. Not only is a new book to be debated at the General Synod of the Church of England in Australia in August 1977, but Synod has required that the draft be brought before it *in the format in which it will ultimately appear*. The Synod is not prepared to leave setting up the book to backroom boys but insists on seeing what it will look like. Obviously, *Australia '77* (mentioned in these columns in previous months) will be a centre-piece of the book. Whilst we were still trying to get hold of copies of the May edition it re-appeared in a September edition which has just reached us ('Son of '77' as the editor of *Church Scene* describes it!). It seems little changed from the text on which we commented in August. The Australians have worn the ICET Gloria in Excelsis but have not shown any liking for the texts of the Creed and Lord's Prayer.

We have also been sent drafts of baptism and confirmation services, daily services and 'Ministration to the Sick'. The baptism draft draws on the English Series 2 and Series 3 texts; confirmation is notable for keeping the 1662 'strengthen them . . . with the Holy Spirit', and the 1662 formula at the laying on of hands (though there are also modern services drawn from Prayer Book sources); the daily services include a modern variant of compline; and the services for the sick include forms for laying on hands and anointing.

Canada

It appears that the national Doctrine and Worship Committee is busy on principles of initiation (which sound as though a hundred flowers are to bloom together), but it has also compiled a new eucharistic rite, the text of which has reached us (though not in a form which is marketable yet). It is intended as a flexible use, and is notable for having six eucharistic prayers, three from Roman Catholic sources (one of them from the texts for 'children's eucharists'), one from Holland, one from the East and one from (P)ECUSA. The Nicene Creed is mandatory only at Trinity. But as before, there is little that is indigenously Canadian in the rite. The Canadian General Synod meets every two years, and will thus assemble in 1977. Presumably this rite is intended to be presented to the Synod then.

Meantime Niagara diocese has duly followed Toronto and the B.C. dioceses, and voted for the admission of unconfirmed children to communion.

The first official ordinations of women to the presbyterate in Canada are to take place on St. Andrew's Day, 30 November 1976.

N.B. Speaking of the ordination of women, it is worth noting that in the U.S.A. the first 'lawful' ordinations will take place probably very soon after and that those previously ordained on 'the wrong side of the blanket' will have their ordinations 'regularized'. At proof stage we note that the first use of such an American woman priest in England to preside at the eucharist here has just been announced. For better or worse, she will no doubt not be the last.

We hope to report on the U.S.A. liturgical situation next month.

Keeping the Feast of St. Mary . . .

Following the editorial in *NOL* in June, setting out reasons why to keep the 'death-day' of the BVM was a possible way forwards in calendrical change, it transpired that this year 15 August fell on a Sunday (which it will not again till 1982). The following letter arose (from a stalwart evangelical cleric) as a result . . .

"our special service for 15 August] came into being out of three factors—

- (i) Your mention in *NOL* of the possibility of 15 August being allotted by the Liturgical Commission to St. Mary on protestant lines.
- (ii) The suggestion by a member of the church here of a service led by women on the other Mary days—or the nearest Sunday—which he dug up out of the Mowbrays/SPCK calendar.
- (iii) The fact that we are a St. Mary's Church but without a specific name day as an annual day of dedication.

Consequently, I latched onto 15 August and invited various ladies, most of whose names were in fact Mary, to lead our normal Morning Prayer, but calling it a Church Dedication Service. Actually, I took the Prayer Book parts and announcements, two different Marys read the lessons (1 Sam. 2.1-10 and Luke 1.39-56, if I remember rightly), another woman led the prayers from the congregation, and a third Mary preached; two sideswomen officiated. There was a good turnout and the service seemed to be much appreciated. No liturgical innovations, and I don't know if we'll repeat it; all I can say is that it "clicked" . . .

David Shacklock
(Rector of Northiam, Sussex)

G - R - O - W

We mentioned last month that the old 'Latimer House Liturgy Group' is now independent and was considering a new constitution. The main problem proved to be the name. Indeed the members were faced with a proposal that they should be called the 'Evangelical Anglican Research in Worship and Information Group', but the resultant E-A-R-W-I-G title was rejected, not because the group did not wish to be called by this name in principle, but because the title was so obviously contrived towards this result! The mnemonic-lovers were not so easily defeated, and instead came up with 'Group for the Renewal Of Worship' (G-R-O-WI), and this was accepted. Plans included a long hard forward-look into 1977, and the catalogue issued with this edition of *NOL* indicates the planning done. Further titles of booklets have been suggested—enough to carry the programme through to mid-1978 at least.

This month's booklet . . .

is no. 47, *Liturgy for Marriage: Some Guidelines with Reference to the Series 3 Service*, by Charles H. Hutchins (the author of no. 11, now out of print, and editor of no. 31). The intention was that this booklet would follow the giving of provisional approval by Synod, when the text would be more or less final (only subject to fiddling by the bishops) but the Revision Stage in Synod was not finished this month, so the booklet has to handle a provisional text. We are used to this—the booklet on funerals

(no. 28 by Trevor Lloyd) and on infant baptism (no. 37 by Colin Buchanan) both handled a draft text—though we have never been caught quite so much in the middle before. Two amendments were made to the text during the odd minutes used by Synod for this task, and they are taken into account in the booklet. Our intention is to produce a printed slip of further information to include in the booklet when the service is finally authorized.

. . . and next month's . . .

is Liturgical Study no. 8, *Hippolytus: A translated text for students with notes and commentary*, by Geoffrey Cuming. It is a pleasure to welcome another leading member of the Liturgical Commission to this series (Charles Whitaker launched this series in March 1975), and his contribution is very timely, and typically thorough. The text of Hippolytus' *Apostolic Tradition* is crucial to all studies of sacramental liturgy but there has previously been no cheap edition of it available in English.

In prospect . . .

An extra, which is not mentioned in the catalogue which comes with this *NOL*, is *Thinking about Baptism* by Ted Pratt. This is an illustrated folding leaflet for parents who apply for baptism for their children. It has been produced in the light of the response to Ted Pratt's appeals in *NOL*, and in the Church press, for information about parishes' needs and desires in this area. The date and price are still unfixed (we are awaiting material from an artist), but we hope they will be soon and cheap respectively.

Ethics booklets

The November booklet is *Trade, Justice and the Wealth of Nations*, by Duncan Munro. The catalogue reveals a first modest glimpse of John Stott appearing under the Grove Books banner. We have good hopes it will not be the last appearance. . .

CORRIGENDA

The text of the Preface to the Marriage service printed in *NOL* in October needed very slight emendation (it was agreed over the phone—but not quite correctly . . .). The following corrections should be made:

- Para 1: For 'spirit' read 'Spirit'.
- Para 4: In each case, after 'given' add a comma. In the third case, delete 'so' after it.
After 'love, and' add a comma.
- Para 4: For 'to be held in honour by all,' read 'that all should honour';
Delete 'therefore'.
After 'lightly' and after 'responsibly' add commas.
- Para 5: After 'God' add a comma.
After 'other' for a comma read a semi-colon.
- Para 6: For 'So now' read 'therefore'.
In addition, in para 4, 'they become members of each other's families' should be deleted, following Synod's amendment.

The other corrigendum has become a laugh—readers have offered to correct last month's 'Errata'! And they are right:

- In line 1: For 'footnote 6' read 'footnote 4'
- In line 6: For 'has altered this in a second edition' read 'hopes to alter this in any second edition'

The corrected 'Errata' for Liturgical Study 7 are being inserted as a printed slip into the booklet as it is distributed