

News of Liturgy

Editor: Colin Buchanan

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Editorial

Readers of *NOL* will have had plenty of passing hints about where I stand on admitting children to communion, but as far as I can recall it has not been the subject of an editorial before. Now the Synodical programme is moving us towards a November General Synod in which there is good hope (though of course no certainty) that we shall at last reach the Winchester Diocesan motion:

'That this Synod requests the Standing Committee to review the General Synod's Resolution of July 1976 disallowing the admission of baptized persons to the Holy Communion followed at a later stage by Confirmation, with a view, in the light of the growing demand for such an option, to permitting the introduction of this change in certain dioceses for a period of twelve years, as a pilot experiment.'

I am a member of the working party set up by a committee of the Board of Education under the chairmanship of the Bishop of Knaresborough to study this question, and the working party is now hoping to get a background paper to members of Synod prior to the debate. Amongst the evidence-gathering which has gone on, there has been an enquiry of all the diocesan bishops about existing experiments, and replies from most are to hand. Clearly, a large number of bishops have viewed it as disloyal to the 1976 General Synod decision to allow anything of this sort to go on, but others have winked at or even encouraged pioneer moves in this direction. There are even places where American Episcopalian families have come to live, and there has been an unwillingness to excommunicate those who are already communicants. So the issue is well and truly alive, and will not go away whilst the Parish Communion is central to the worship of so many parishes.

I tried to write a factual report on what happened in 1974-6, and on progress since, in a seven-page appendix I put in Liturgical Study no. 27 a year ago—*Infant Communion Then and Now* by David Holeton. But it is clear that the situation has moved on since then (and my own coverage was far from complete), and any case I was trying there to be factual, whereas here I can be flagrantly propagandist. So on with the propaganda.

I offer the following theological propositions as a kind of package for your consideration:

- 1 In the New Testament those who are baptized are also communicant. If there is infant baptism (and there is), then there is also infant and child communion.
- 2 Baptism alone is full sacramental incorporation into the Church of Christ, and in principle it qualifies the recipients for communion.
- 3 Intellectual attainment is not a *sine qua non* for admission to communion.

- 4 Infants (and others) are to be treated as believers from the time of their baptism onwards.
- 5 It is illogical to require a growing child to show evidence of the fruits of grace in discipleship whilst denying him or her the means of grace in communion.
- 6 It is scandalous to cut off from communion those who are reckoned in Christ with us but are deemed too young to receive.
- 7 The child of a Christian home should not be able to remember beginning the rhythm of the communicant life.

And so one could go on. Of course there are messy side-questions (what of those who have no Christian parents?). New patterns of nurture are needed to cope with such questions. But no anomalies in a new pattern could ever be as glaring and shrieking as those in the present ones. One wonders how the Standing Committee will manage to confine it to 'certain dioceses' . . .

Oh yes, and for the benefit of General Synod members reading this—it may come up late in the week of 8—12 November, but please stick around and vote for it. You will be able to tell your grandchildren that you helped to turn them into communicants before they had ever been thought of.

I personally shall have another battle to fight over that absolution that week—news of this can be found on another page.

And I should also give warning here to those who take Worship Booklets on standing order that we are proposing another inertia-sell distribution in October. Please read page 4 carefully to get the message. We did not send Julian Charley's *Rome Canterbury and the Future* on inertia-sell when perhaps we should have done (it earned an editorial in *Church Times* on 10 September), but you will need this extra item in October.

Colin Buchanan

CLERICAL DRESS

It is a long time since we stopped on the question of liturgical vesture, and in principle it would probably come up in *NOL* among 'coelacanth's'. However, *Theology* for September 1982 includes a long article by Martin Down on 'The Costume of the Clergy' and, although this is largely concerned with the 1604 provisions for what a bishop should wear in bed and the 1980 Chester provisions for the wearing of the dog-collar round the parish (and at all other times and places), there is passing reference to the retention of the surplice for use in services in Elizabeth's reign and a raising of the general question as to whether the clergy ought to be distinguished from the laity by their dress. On this latter point Down concludes:

' . . . the practice of the Lord and his Apostles and the example of the Church throughout the first five centuries strongly suggest that clerical costume is basically unchristian.'

He does not spell out whether this includes liturgical costume. If it did include it, it might say more than he wanted to say. Or would it?

Meanwhile a crackdown through the country is trying to confine scarlet cassocks to Queens' Chaplains.

POWER THROUGH PRAYER?

The following petition was found on the wall of the room of a resident in an Anglican theological college this month:

'O great St. Joseph of Cupertino, who by your prayers did obtain from God the grace to be asked in your examination only the questions you knew, obtain for me success in my examination. In return I promise to make your name known and cause others to invoke you.
O great St. Joseph of Cupertino, grant my request.
Amen.'

We hope to reveal on a later occasion whether this candidate did pass his exams and go on to ordination. If so, he is clearly on to something.

COLLECTS TO ACCOMPANY RITE B

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| 3 October Pentecost 18 | 'The Offering of Life' | Translate ASB backwards |
| 10 October Pentecost 19 | 'The Life of Faith' | Translate ASB backwards |
| 17 October Laet Sunday after Pentecost | 'Citizens of Heaven' | BCP Trinity 6 |
| 24 October 9 before Christmas | 'The Creation' | Almighty God, who hast created the heavens and the earth, and hast made man in thine image; Grant us in all thy works to perceive thy hand, and ever to praise thee for thy wisdom and love; through Jesus Christ our Lord.
(C. S. I. 9 before Easter (altd.)) |
| 31 October 8 before Christmas | 'The Fall' | BCP Epiphany 6 |
| 7 November 7 before Christmas | 'The Election of God's People: Abraham' | O God, who didst promise to faithful Abraham that in him all families of the earth would be blessed: Grant us a firm faith, that in us thy promises may be fulfilled; through Jesus Christ our Lord.
(C. S. I. Pentecost 4 (altd.)) |

N.B. 'Year 1' begins again on 24 October—and do not trust your Filofax re 17 October . . .
We have had requests to put our 'Rite B Collects' into a book—would there be any takers?

This month's booklet . . .

. . . is Liturgical Study no. 31, *Eucharistic Sacrifice: The Roots of a Metaphor*, by Rowan Williams. Ever since we published no. 19 (*Eucharistic Offering*

in the *Early Church* by Richard Hanson) we have been looking out for an anglo-catholic—and learned—reply to it. Rowan Williams, who is the author of the recent valuable book on spirituality *The Wound of Knowledge*, is a lecturer in theology in Cambridge, and he views his study as 'complementing' Hanson as much as 'contradicting' him. We anticipate that the argument will continue over the coming years—there is much clearing of the ground still to be done on this subject.

. . . and next month's is

Worship no. 82, *Eucharistic Concelebration*, by John Fenwick. Here is a very live issue in the use of rite A and at ordinations today (and, of course, in other parts of the Anglican Communion). *NOL* has been accused of taking every opportunity to make snide remarks about 'concelebration' and is glad at last to recommend a booklet about principles in the matter (whilst still not promising to give up all asides on the subject). And the Liturgical Commission is chipping in with an official paper at the same time—*GS Misc Concelebration in the Eucharist* by Trevor Lloyd and Hugh Wybrew (Church House Bookshop). The authors of this official document have been aware of John Fenwick's work, and have both drawn upon his material, and shared theirs with him. The Commission has shown some interest in enabling the Grove Booklet to have an element of commentary on their production. SO PLEASE NOTE THE NEXT THREE LINES:

. . . the official GS Misc paper

Will be distributed automatically to all who take Worship Booklets on Standing Order, post free, *unless* a specific cancellation is received. We do not usually wish 'inertia-sell' material on our our long-suffering customers (and indeed have been blamed by some for not sending *Rome Canterbury*, and *the Future* automatically) but in this case the two publications may come out simultaneously, and the Church House Bookshop stuff cannot be obtained through normal trade and bookstall channels. So we think we are doing you a favour, and our bulk order has helped keep the price of the GS document down!. But there may yet be a hitch.

. . . and reprints (or new edition)

are now available for both *Thinking about Baptism* (8pp., 12p or £5.50 per 50) and Liturgical Study no. 7, *What did Cranmer think he was doing?* by COB (very slightly revised, £1.40).

. . . and a catalogue

should also come with this issue (and it includes news of renewing and of prices in 1983).

. . . and also in October

come Spirituality Series no. 3, *Pietist, Puritan, and Pentecostalist: Three Types of Evangelical Spirituality* by John Tiller, *News of Hymnody* no. 4 (with full review of *Hymns for Today's Church*), and *Theological Renewal* no. 22 (with a discussion of doctrinal issues between the Church of England and the Church of Rome in the light of recent publications, some of them ours).

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GROVE BOOKS

BRAMCOTE NOTTS. NG9 3DS (0602 251114)

14p

THAT ABSOLUTION—PERSONAL STATEMENT BY COB

I get letters from round the country complaining about my wanting to stop people using much-loved forms. This is such a caricature that I think I can best meet it by setting out in brief form a summary of all I wrote on the subject. in these columns in 1981.

- 1 The specific point of complaint is the form of words 'I absolve you' said by the priest to the penitent. I have not so far seen any changing of theological context which changes my mind on this.
- 2 The specific purpose in trying to eliminate it from the text has been *not* to stop it being used where people believe (rightly or wrongly) that it is pastorally useful or desirable. It has only been to stop the Church of England giving the text official authorization, whilst still allowing its use (as the opening rubric allows *any* form of absolution to be used).
- 3 The heart of the objection to it has been that 'absolve' means the same as 'forgive' in virtually all forms of parlance (including the BCP in nearly every case), and therefore 'I absolve you' has the priest taking to himself powers which are God's alone. The rubric above says he is to declare the forgiveness of God, and this can be done in a thousand authoritative ways which do not have the priest sounding as though he had a power of absolution himself. But, despite the rubric, the 'I absolve you' has proved non-negotiable among many members of Synod.
- 4 If it is the case that some penitents cannot feel forgiven unless they hear these words, then (although, as said above, they can still have the words) the Church of England has actually got a problem about the *gospel*—a problem about grace and God's word. And the problem should not be solved by our deciding to authorize these words because some people say they need them, and need them in print in official services, so much.
- 5 If the House of Bishops does not decide to alter 'I absolve you', then at Final Approval in November there is no possibility of amendment from the floor of Synod. There will therefore be no step open to opponents but to say 'yes' or 'no' to the whole rite. If they say 'no' (and I expect and intend to), then although they will be attempting to prevent the rite from being authorized, they will not be attempting to inhibit the use of the rite or the material. Such private ministries are not alternative to anything in the Book of Common Prayer and thus are already in use by the authority of the particular minister, and would simply continue to be used, with the extra benefit of some of the useful material which is now suggested in the proposed rite. It is a new step for the Church of England to try to authorize such a rite, and *no harm will come if the present position in fact continues unchanged.*

C.O.B.

ANOTHER EMPEROR WITHOUT CLOTHES

A letter from one Stephen Pix (a non-stipendiary clergyman) in the same issue of *Theology* cuts through centuries of discussion of priesthood thus:

'It is the Church which is priestly, and Christ is our Great High Priest. Our ministers are pastors, with no more or less authority than we choose to in vest them with.

'If we accept this, we admit that the priest presides at the Eucharist not because of some divine necessity but as a matter of administrative convenience. If that convenience becomes an inconvenience, for example in a country area where one priest may be responsible for as many as six churches, because it is a man-made rule it can be changed.

'I realize that to take this line spoils the fun, but it does make life a good deal simpler; even I can understand it'.

Book Review

G. W. Ireson, *A Handbook of Parish Preaching*. (Mowbray, 145pp, £3.75). How many pastoral theology books fill me with admiration for the author's erudition and skill, yet with depression at my own comparative incompetence! But not this one. It actually left me feeling, 'This is something I can do!' A genuine Handbook related strictly to the parish, and dealing with problems like 'Is the Parish Communion the death-knell of the serious sermon?'; 'The Lectionary—master or servant?'; 'What should come *after* the sermon?', it is relevant for all serious readers of *NOL*, and stimulating for more casual ones who, like Canon Ireson, want to improve liturgy and reinstate preaching. People need, he says, not merely to understand but to experience, 'see', and desire the truth. Remembering is less important than digesting the sermon. There is plenty on the constructive use of illustrations, anecdotes, personal experiences and topical issues; and an important chapter on 'Why preach, these days, on the Old Testament?' The various steps from the diary entry 'preaching' to the written text and its delivery are carefully traced and modelled for the reader. It is, I think, the best book I have read on 'How?' I'm not sure that it ever faces the question 'Why?', or if the author has any real vision of expository, surely the foundation of all, preaching. So required reading, yes, but in conjunction with 1982's other book on the subject, John Stott's *I believe in Preaching*. How much better off we are than a year ago!

Roger Bowen

LAUGHTER IN LITURGY

Robert Cadman writes:

'Last Saturday . . . viz. on 29 August—at an ASB marriage we reached the bride's promises . . .

RC: I, Jennifer, take you, Patrick

Bride: I, Jennifer, take you, Patrick

RC: To be my wife

Bride: (loudly): I'm not saying that . . .

(*Congregation dissolves in helpless laughter*)

RC: A very wise decision—is anyone recording this?

HOW IS THE ASB DOING?

We are now nearly two years from the original publication of the ASB. It may be some time yet before there is any official reflection upon the merits and demerits of the rites and other provision in the Book. But readers are invited to write in to *NOL* now (on a postcard perhaps, and certainly without expectation of getting acknowledgment) to suggest places where the text is wearing thin, or is proving jejune. Single-line complaints are what we are seeking—we already know about the folk who object to the whole Book, and we do hear from them at intervals anyway.

COMPUTERIZATION

Grove Books is a notoriously horse-and-buggy enterprise, held together by pieces of elastic and a bit of imagination, without finance, fibre, or foundations. Think of our surprise therefore to find ourselves computerized—all through our kind friends of St. John's College (who got their box of ricks in through *their* kind friends at the Central Board of Finance of the Church of England and John Clapham of Word Processing Consultants in Exeter). Each customer should therefore find that his/her envelope has a computer-print-out name and address on the front, and this should include a code-number and code letters ('W' for Worship etc.) indicating which series of booklets he receives. By December we hope that invoicing will also be computerized . . . If you get things twice, please return both address-slips and we should be able to tell the computer what to do.

Other book

We have received a mountain of them. Kenneth Stevenson (ed.) *Liturgy Reshaped* (S.P.C.K., £8.50), the book which is partly *Festschrift* for Geoffrey Cuming on his sixty-fifth birthday (and the contributors had a nice lunch together, thank you), and is full of useful things. The coincidence of the title with that of the last chapter of GJC's second edition of *A History of Anglican Liturgy* is sheerly coincidence, not in any way causal. The Alcuin Club have an 'extra' in *The Cloud of Witnesses* (Collins, £3.95) edited by Martin Draper and with collects written by George Timms. It makes 'full provision' (including a well-chosen non-scriptural reading) for each lesser saint's day in the ASB, and will be greatly valued by those who keep these days. The *Anglican Cycle for Prayer* (published in USA, but distributed in England by CIO) is out for 1983 (£1.50), and so is *The Church Pocket-Book Diary* (S.P.C.K., £3.85). A rare piece of work is a symposium by J. C. H. Aveling, D. M. Loades, and H. R. McAdoo, *Rome and the Anglicans*, edited by Wolfgang Haase (de Gruyter, Berlin, DM138 or c. £35). This is a highly scholarly hardback containing essays covering the whole history of Anglican-Roman Catholic relationships (including some of the inside history of ARCIC) since a famous divorce case. The editor of *News of Hymnody*, Robin Leaver, has added to the Latimer Studies a distinguished monograph (no. 13 in the series, 42pp., £1.25), *Music as Preaching: Bach, Passions and Music in Worship*. Frank Colquhoun has added to his *Parish Prayers* and *Contemporary Parish Prayers* a new one, *New Parish Prayers* (Hodder and Stoughton, £6.95). This adds another

570 prayers to his previous collection, and his field is broadened to include a great spectrum of themes—including mental health, family concerns, industry, 'life's later years', and so on. Many will be useful in the home and in private prayer as well as enriching liturgical services. We also have the first round of books for Loughborough 1983—notably Richard Holloway *Signs of Glory* (D.L.T., £2.50) on John's Gospel and Michael Hollings *Hearts not Garments* (D.L.T., £2.50) on renewal in the life of the church. There are also study guides to accompany these and four books of Bible studies cviled '*God's Word*' by Robin Eastcote. Epworth have published volume 1 of an ecumenical *Companion to the Lectionary* by David Calvert and John Stacey—*Prefaces to the Lessons* (£5.50), and also *Family Worship in Theory and Practise* (for Methodist local preachers) (£2.95).

None of the mentions above precludes fuller reviewing in future months. The assiduous will also keep their eyes open for this year's Alcuin Club book—*Nuptial Blessing* by Kenneth Stevenson.

CARRYING AROUND BREAD AND WINE . . .

No, not the 'reserved sacrament' but symbols of ministry along with water and the Bible. It just happens to have come to my attention through being at services on two successive days this month in which these symbols were used. On Friday 3 September I went to David Gillett's institution at St. Hugh's Lewsey in Luton, and there, instead of the incumbent parading round the furniture, the various elements were brought to him. The next day at Southwell Minster I went to the 'passing out' service for the ordinands of the East Midlands Ministerial Training Course. Lo and behold, the elements and a Bible were brought up to the president at the beginning of the service with suitable wording. Later the bread and wine and the Bible were used for their obvious purposes. There were no baptisms, but the water came in handy for the *Lavabo*.

Is this sort of ceremony becoming more frequent? Is it a sort of *correctio*?

COELACANTHS

Eastward-facing brings further correspondence, including a letter from a predecessor of Philip Barrett (not 'Peter' Barrett as we wrongly printed, and apologise) who says that there was no turning to the East for the Gloria in Excelsis until six years ago in Hereford cathedral. It just shows how short a time constitutes a 'tradition'.

But enough of the East. We now ask about the commixture. Why is water added to wine (which is well over 90% water anyway)? What does the congregation learn from the ceremony? Advice and help would be appreciated.