

News of Liturgy

Editor: Colin Buchanan Issue no. 121

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Editorial

Twice recently—once in West Australia, once in Eire—I have had my attention drawn to people going to church early on a Saturday evening. I do not often do that myself—just occasionally for the fairly cool liturgical event of the installation of a new Canon in Southwell Minster in the context of a cathedral evensong. But I recently followed Saturday evening worshippers and went, as they had been doing, to a Roman Catholic 'First mass of Sunday' celebration at 6.30 p.m. on Saturday. You do not have to travel thousands of miles; these events occur on my doorstep.

What is happening is that the Church of Rome, taking courage from Genesis chapter 1 and the Jewish tradition generally, is observing 'an evening and a morning' as the first day of the week. It would be hard to say that they are in any absolute sense wrong. But what lies behind the Saturday-at-6.30 celebration is that folk can go out on a Saturday evening, and then lie in (or go to sporting events or whatever) with a good conscience on Sunday, as their church-going duty for the week has been fulfilled. I understood the pressure towards this the more when I found myself the next day (in respect of the West Australian experience) at an Anglican country parish, which had a service once a month. I happened in on the annual church meeting, and the question of changing the time of the once-a-month morning service arose. It then became clear that the service had to fit round yacht club times (West Australia is where the America's Cup winners originated, and where the return match will come next year . . .). Choose the wrong time, and the church officers would be unchurched! What price Saturday evening then?

Of course the RC rite on a Saturday is intended to provide a facility for individuals rather than build up a congregation. The one I attended had large numbers, and it was fairly participatory. But it had no preaching and no singing, and was not well related to any intention of building up a congregational life. Its main purpose—well fulfilled, I should guess—was to adapt to a secularized Sunday and enable the sons of light to have a secular Sunday as well as fulfilling their religious duties. The matter is before our minds particularly in England, because the government has been under pressure to rationalize the Sunday trading laws, and the issue at root has been the nature of Sunday in our present society. Is it in any sense Christian? Can a foothold for a privileged position for Christian worship be sustained? What sorts of competition would threaten that privileged position?

Part of the terms of the problem is that Christians have little or no doctrine of Sunday, and ministers would not be able to guide their flocks about the ethical problems involved. Is participation in sport (even by clergy running in mass marathons!) compatible with a Christian observance of

Sunday? Should Christians have any scruple about using public transport, working overtime or shifts, or leading their own children or other people into such habits?

The law may favour one approach or another, but at the end of the day the church has to adopt a strategy. Do we go with the world's use of Sunday, trimming our sails (as by the use of early Saturday evening) to catch as many as possible at as low a cost as possible. Or, do we say that to join Christ is to join a community which in essence meets at a time when the world is in bed or kicking a football about; and to belong to Christ is to forfeit and abandon that way of spending Sunday? Should we in fact go on to suggest that an hour in a church building is itself only a passing nod to God and to his people, and lay on a much fuller programme? There are parishes with 'all-age education', parishes with congregational conferences at intervals on Sundays, parishes with parish lunches following Sunday morning services. All these pursuits take the world head-on. To be Christian is to be incorporated into a whole way of life, reorientating the week, redeploing the family, and reversing normal priorities. What if this means that the yacht-club Christian is no longer seen around the club? He has better things to do and Sunday must not be used for following worldly ways . . .

So the Christian is faced not only with the difficult question as to how 'different' the laws of a secularized nation should make Sunday, but also with how demanding a church commitment should nowadays be viewed as sufficient. What are norms of lay participation in church life? What minister dares teach any specific answer to this?

Colin Buchanan

MUSEUM-PIECES ON DISPLAY

Professor Stuart Hall sends notice that on three Thursdays at 1.10 p.m. there will be three (historically reconstructed) re-runs of ancient liturgical rites of the Church of England at King's College, London, chapel. The events are:

24 January	'The Supper of the Lord' 1549
14 February	'The Lordes Supper' 1552
28 February	'The Lord's Supper' 1661

Those who wish to communicate should follow the ancient rubrics and notify Professor Hall by the day before, though, at a pinch, up to 1 p.m. on the day will do (when names should be given to stewards). Non communicants should simply roll up.

The notice sent round emphasizes that these are 'acts of worship' and 'not merely for exhibition'. As the last one is the current official standard rite of the Church of England this may seem an amazing reassurance to give. Does it suggest that 1662 rites celebrated without this explanation are simply archaeology on display?

(We apologize for not announcing the first of these last month—we did not hear till the day before ourselves.)

GENERAL SYNOD IN FEBRUARY

General Synod meets from 12 to 15 February 1985, and the following liturgical business is before it:

- 1 On Tuesday and Thursday: debates on Lima ('BEM') and ARCIC particularly involving discussion of baptism and eucharist. On the Thursday motions following the reception of the FOAG response to these reports will be taken.
- 2 On the Wednesday: debates to give final approval for authorization from 31 December 1985 to 31 December 1990 to the following in-between rites: Series 1 Marriage and Burial; Series 2 Baptism and Confirmation; Series 3 Communion. They will be the subject of separate votes, and thus any (or even all) of them could fail to gain the two-thirds majority in each House. The last-mentioned only just survived by a bare majority when a proposal to delete it from the list came before the November Synod. The liturgical business is continued with a proposal to extend the life of the 'Revised Catechism'. This is a dated document from the early 1960s, which it is doubtful if members of Synod have seen, let alone used, in most cases. *Lent, Holy Week, Easter* follows. This will be debated under a provision that comment made to the Liturgical Commission will be 'taken aboard' at its next meeting, and the rites will then go to the House of Bishops for the Archbishops to approve them. It is not wholly clear to *NOL* (and perhaps not to the Standing Committee) that the procedure of 'commending', mentioned in *NOL* in October, has to be the right way. (Incidentally, the Liturgical Commission is holding a public 'Holy Week' in September for diocesan liturgical secretaries and/or others, at Keble College, Oxford. Services, we hasten to add, will be at St. Giles' not in Keble College chapel. Details from the Liturgical Commission). Send in *your* comments too.
- 3 Also on the Wednesday: the 'Marriage Regulation' was due to return for final approval after being round the dioceses. It is clearly in deep trouble, and the Church of England's whole stance with it. The Bishops will not persist with it.
- 4 The report *Godparents* will be debated on the Friday morning. Some members of Synod expect Canon Michael Hodge to attach his own following motion to the debate.

Extra saints in the Calendar? Various Private Members' Motions seek to get Janani Luwum, Edward Bouverie Pusey, and William Temple, added to the ASB Calendar. The first of these (date, 16 February, see page 7 below) is now the first in line of the PMMs. But the Liturgical Commission is asking that all three should be delayed whilst more consideration is given to the enrolling of names on a national register. There already exists, of course, provision for dioceses to keep their own supplementary list.

LAUGHTER IN LITURGY

Barrie Moss writes from Stanley, Co. Durham:

'At the 10.15 Parish Eucharist on Sunday, 13 January, someone entered the church and made his way to the celebrant during the gradual hymn and whispered something in his ear. As a result of

this, when the gradual hymn was over, the celebrant announced: "If the owner of car number so-and-so is in church, would he go to the car park as apparently it is on fire". The organist's reaction was to blast away with "Glory to Christ our Saviour" which the choir sang with enthusiasm.'

Our contributor goes on to draw the inference that organists and choirs 'hear' what they expect, not what is actually said. But there must be some organists (perhaps car-owning ones) who would have 'heard' this, surely?

CHILDREN AT COMMUNION

In various ways, odd notes on this issue are needed. The Knaresborough working party slogs on, and might yet have a report for the November session of the new Synod. The pan-Anglican consultation in Boston, Mass. (dollar permitting) comes on 30 July to 1 August this year. The organizers are keen to have evidence of two sorts:

- 1 children's own testimony as to their own theology and sentiments about both exclusion and inclusion—please send sworn statements from children of any age to *NOL*.
- 2 provincial (and also diocesan) rules, regulations or Canons which bear on the issue.

This month's booklet . . .

. . . is Worship series no. 91, *Adult Baptisms*, by Colin Buchanan. The Church of England finds itself a genuinely Baptist connexion, if adult baptisms are a genuine test of being Baptist. This booklet considers candidates, preparation, rites, and theology. It also looks at alternatives to a second 'baptism'.

. . . and next month's

is Pastoral Series no. 21, *The Pastoral Care of Young People*, by Lance Pierson. Here is help for all those with responsibility in this demanding (and rewarding) area.

. . . and other series

include Ethics no. 56, *Peace and War: A Debate on Pacifism*, by Oliver O'Donovan and Ron Sider (January); and Spirituality no. 12, *Prayer in Pain*, by Ian Williams (February).

. . . and reprints

most recently have been Pastoral series nos. 9 and 10—*Good News Down the Street* by Michael Wooderson, and *Freemasonry—A Way of Salvation?* by John Lawrence. All Pastoral Titles are now in print.

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GROVE BOOKS
BRAMCOTE NOTTS. NG9 3DS (0602 251114)

Price-rise

Alongside the publication of *Latest Anglican Liturgies 1976-1984*, which should occur between now and Easter (SPCK/Alcuin, £25 sterling retail price for the SPCK hardback); the price of its predecessor *Further Anglican Liturgies, 1968-1975* will go up on 1 April. Prices are currently: hardback £14.50 and paperback £8.50. These will become £17.50 and £10.50. So you are invited to invest in this now.

Renewing your Anvil Subscription

Just a reminder—have you got it done yet?

And did you see a Grove Booklet on TV?

Well, you would have, if, like us, you switched on on the first day of the televising the debates in the House of Lords, and got (as we did, first time round—and thereafter in the repeats on the news) none other than Bishop Maurice Wood of Norwich. Well, the good bishop was waving Julian Charley's Pastoral Booklet, *Pastoral Support for the Unemployed*, so we got a little free TV advertising time. Did I hear someone say 'Non tali auxilio'? Eheu, quocunque auxilio . . .

THAT SEABURY BI-CENTENARY

The Primus of the Scottish Episcopal Church has written to protest about features of our correspondent's report in November *NOL* on the Aberdeen celebrations in memory of the consecration of Samuel Seabury on 14 November 1784. He raises the following points:

- (i) Donald Dunn missed the Tuesday parts of the celebration, and therefore did not see it whole (the Primus has kindly supplied us with his sermon—on Skinner, the chief consecrator of Seabury—on that occasion).
- (ii) The Primus is not as sure as Dunn that at the original consecration of Seabury Geneva gowns were worn and the 1662 Book used—how would we get further light on these points?
- (iii) The Primus doubts whether Donald Dunn should have attached any significance to the fact that no episcopal consecration took place in America until *three* bishops consecrated in England were available *as well as Seabury*.
- (iv) The Primus denies that the American Church was indulging in some form of economic colonialism when it handed over money for training women for ministry. There was no suggestion, he says, of ordination of women to the priesthood included within that gift, and it is improper to read that into it—and then complain.

THE ROYAL BAPTISM

We have muttered in the past about Royal baptisms—muttering that the drawing room of the Palace is hardly 'public worship'. This time, Prince Harry was baptized on 19 December in St. George's, Windsor. We are not so grudging as to complain further—we think this *is* public baptism. (And in any case, if the Church of England detached a fraction further from the State, there might be a case for giving special room to the Royal Family to do things their own way, overriding Canon law etc.)

ASB IN BRAILLE?

The enquiry last month has led to much useful come-back, which we attempt to systematize:

- 1 Official provision: Mr. Ian Dodd of the Central Board of Finance of the Church of England (which holds the copyright of the ASB) informs us that the following are available:
Rite A—one volume (Cat. no. 46458)—standard price £6.60 (90% discount for the blind=66p).
Rite B—one volume (Cat. no. 46106)—standard price £4 (discounted, 40p).
Sentences, Collects and Readings—four volumes (Cat. nos. 46102-5)—standard price £4 per volume (discounted, 40p).
Baptism, confirmation and marriage are all under preparation.
Orders to RNIB, 224 Great Portland Street, London W1N 6AA.
- 2 The Rev. Alan Hawker writes: 'We have an ASB Rite A service in Braille, provided . . . by the RNIB. What we have found more difficult is obtaining Braille copies of hymns. We have a complete Braille copy of volume one of *Songs of Fellowship*. But to date we have found no-one producing a Braille copy of *Hymns for Today's Church*, *Psalm Praise*, or *Jesus Praise* . . . To overcome this, one of our fellowship has devised a computer programme. With its use, hymns can be typed in, changed into Braille, and then run off the printer, using an ingenious combination of paper and toilet paper! This has given us the ability to produce all service materials in Braille . . . (A sample of the 'Brailled' Creed was enclosed).
- 3 Others have sent addresses, but the central one seems to be the RNIB, as under (1) above.

SPECIAL LITURGICAL EVENTS

In January

A notable event in the life of the Church of England was the final elimination of the Croydon enclave of the diocese of Canterbury. It was not lost from the map, but was fused into the diocese of Southwark which surrounds it. New Year's Day saw a special service of transfer held in Southwark cathedral, when the Archbishop of Canterbury relinquished his island, and released his clergy who promptly swore canonical obedience to the Bishop of Southwark. The only ceremonial bit, as far as we can read the rite from the service sheet, was when the Archbishop said to the Bishop of Southwark 'I give you this staff'—and even then there is no rubric to tell it what happened, and it is *possible* he was handing over suffragan, archdeacon, clergy and even secretaries, rather than a pastoral crook. Certainly the next thing after it was the swearing obedience by the Croydon staff . . .

On 12 January the new Bishop of Peterborough was enthroned in his cathedral. One correspondent writes that it was 'an anthem sandwich, buttered with four rather slow hymns. The filling turned out to be legal matter, a good deal of winking about, recitation of the obvious by the dean, hand shaking, and a sermon . . . The first word of prayer for Almighty God was uttered one hour and five minutes after the service began. Of course it was not liturgy; it was a ceremony, down to the absurd banging on door (surely the invention of some high church freemason?) . . .

In February

On 16 February the new Bishop of Portsmouth will be enthroned. Advance rumours suggest that there is to be a three-part job—enthronement and preaching in the cathedral, followed by a procession to the Guildhall for civic courtesies, and a bite of lunch, and then finally a eucharist back on ecclesiastical premises. *That* does sound like a liturgical sandwich indeed. The Provost may well send us his own (probably modestly glowing) report, but any other Pompey-dweller is welcome to pitch in with backbench comment.

On the same day, in Uganda the remains of Janani Luwum will be brought up for burial at Namirembe cathedral, on the eighth anniversary of his original martyrdom at the hands of Amin. And the day after, Misaeri Kauma, now elected to be bishop of Namirembe, will be enthroned at the cathedral. We are trying to get reports of these doings too.

In May

There is to be a 'fortieth anniversary of VE Day' service. Speculation in England has touched on whether Mrs. Thatcher trusts the Archbishop of Canterbury to preach at it! We think she will *have* to trust him. More in future months.

CONFIRMATION IN VACANT DIOCESES

The article below was written for the ACC following my notes in NOL, mentioned within the article. It was published in Anglican Information, and is reproduced by permission.

There are many Anglican understandings of confirmation—one has only to listen to episcopal addresses at confirmations to gather that. It was a rite given a particular meaning in the sixteenth century, but largely ignored in practice in the succeeding three hundred years. It became a pastoral rite in practice in the nineteenth century, and from the 1890s onwards was treated by many (but certainly not all) Anglicans as a sacramental completion of baptism, with a particular tendency on the part of the advocates of this view to draw a straight line from the Samaritan episode in Acts 8 to modern Anglican confirmation. The reading from Acts slipped into confirmation rites in the first half of this century in Canada, the USA, and the Church of England's 'Deposited Book' of 1928. The implications were enormous—on the one hand non-episcopalians were only half-initiated (see the 1920 Lambeth Appeal, where confirmation gets tacked on to the 'Quadrilateral' in a way foreign to the latter's origins), and on the other, confirmation by a bishop had within it a great promise of the coming (perhaps the initial coming) of the Holy Spirit. This was very far from the Reformers' understanding.

The difficulties in the 'new' view were met in part by the assertion that really water-baptism and laying-on-of-hands belonged together as they had been in the 'primitive' rites (i.e. in Hippolytus—for they certainly were not in the most primitive of all—Acts 8!). And this in turn led to an admiration of the Eastern Orthodox usage, where the parish presbyter gives *both* water-baptism *and* 'sealing' (i.e. anointing with oil) to infants. The oil in this case has been 'blessed by the bishop'—and thus, the protagonists urge, represents the presence of the bishop.

It has to be confessed that the Anglican Churches have been *more* insistent on the presence of the bishop (i.e. in person, not just *via* oil) than any other communion in the worldwide church. Today there are many Roman Catholic dioceses where *presbyteral* confirmation (i.e. by the parish priest) is the norm. The existence of such untidinesses encouraged the founders of the Church of South India to provide for the option of *presbyteral* confirmation, which has been used in some dioceses. Thus far Anglicans themselves have not breached their own walls. Yet the meeting of Primates in the latter part of 1983 apparently explored the possibility of confirmations being done (as an emergency provision) by *presbyters* using 'episcopally blessed' oils, when a bishop was in exile (as in the case of Iran). I commented jocularly on this suggestion in my *NOL* in May 1984 ('Carrying Oil to the Gulf?').

I do not say that this should not be done. What I do say is that it cannot be done on the most general understanding of Anglican confirmation. For our only definitive understanding comes from the 1662 BCP. And there it says that confirmation is 'laying on of hands upon those that are baptized and come to years of discretion' (subtitle). The rubric requires the bishop to lay hands on each, and the post-confirmation prayer says 'upon whom (after the example of thy holy Apostles) we have now laid our hands'. In other words, at the Reformation there was a move *away* from a theology which linked the inner grace with the extraordinary event of Acts 8, but *towards* a practice which emulated the apostles in using an outward laying-on-of-hands. The contention here is that, whatever disagreements there may have been about the grace or significance of the rite, there has been an unchanging certainty about the outward sign. Anointings may have various meanings (and in unexplained ways they are used in some places as secondary ceremonies at confirmations)—but they cannot *be* confirmation.

And, after all, why is it so important that there should be some rite (any rite?) called 'confirmation'? The rubrics have always provided for those 'ready and desirous' to be admitted to communion. This was the basis for all admissions to communion for 150 years in the American colonies, and indeed in the Channel Islands. The trend in the Anglican Communion is towards admitting young children to communion on the basis of baptism alone. So why not adults also? If we want to go down some road towards the Eastern Orthodox practice (which only came in in the late fourth century in the East) then we ought to argue for it with some theological learning and an understanding of the wider implications. If we settle for this absolute necessity of confirmation—even to the point of administering a rite which the reformers would never have recognized as confirmation though we choose to title it such—then we shall take all sorts of backward steps in both our ecumenical relationships and our internal discipline of admission to communion.

The trend in Anglicanism generally today is towards understanding confirmation *not* as admission to communion, but as the point of adult ratification of baptismal vows. It is a proper question as to whether or not that needs a bishop. It is a much more tortuous one as to whether it needs a presbyter armed with oil blessed by a bishop beyond the waters who is thus thought in some metaphysical way to be presiding at the rite. A few of us yet need convincing.