

News of Liturgy

Editor Colin Buchanan Issue no. 141 September 1986
Editorial

I have now been a year in Birmingham, and have been publishing my liturgical scrapbook for eight months. I indulge myself and take a few lines to reflect on some general impressions. I hasten to add that I list what has surprised me, not what is most necessarily the important.

(i) I am still thrilled to preside at parish eucharists, even on unfamiliar territory, and even though sometimes the expectations of those present are wholly unfathomable. (I am also quite glad at intervals not to be driving the bus). I am surprised at the numbers of parishes where (despite the opening Note in Rite A) they slump from standing to sitting or kneeling halfway through the eucharistic prayer. Sometimes they are caught in uncertainty – perhaps because I have innocently omitted some standard cue like 'Let us pray?' I am also surprised that clergy still 'make their communion' in such a way that, having done so once in a day, they will not receive again – even when with a bishop or, more extraordinarily, with their own confirmation candidates who are probably receiving communion for the first time.

(ii) I am slightly weary of the small round of musical settings of Rite A – though it is cheeky of such a poor musician to say it. But at St. John's we were used to having quite striking homegrown composers (and also to the Fisherfolk *King of Glory* setting).

Two of the St. John's compositions are available from Nottingham – *The St. John's Setting* by David Butterfield, and *The Shalom Setting* by John Harding. I am not greatly struck on Rutter, Addington, or Salisbury, but I may be revealing my lowbrow tastes.

(iii) I am puzzled by the lectionary and preaching implications of doing confirmations on around 40 Sundays of the year, twice on many of them. We have a printed diocesan confirmation booklet, and it contains two Epistles and two Gospels. Do we read other passages, not available for the congregation to follow, or do I preach the same sermons willy-nilly (as I think most people think bishops do), or what?

(iv) Curiously, I am now much more struck on washing my hands during the service than I was previously. I have never had much patience with it as symbolic, but I now see it can be truly functional. I may have handled hat and stick for a processional entry, though I take them off at the beginning of a service rather than try to find some satisfying liturgical use for them. I will certainly have handled books. If there is baptism, I will have used water, will have 'signed' foreheads, and as like as not have used candles (and occasionally oil). At confirmation I will have laid hands on heads, hair and hats, and encountered grease, lacquer, etc. At the Peace I will have shaken many by the hand, and perhaps had kisses and bear-hugs from others. I may even have been unable to avoid alms-dishes, or bags, or their equivalent. So there is a case for washing hands before handling the bread of the sacrament.

(v) Although I make mistakes sometimes, and get conned other times, there is scope for a bishop to be involved in planning, preparatory to leading liturgy, rather more than I expected. I have also had the chance to write more kinds of liturgical texts than I ever expected.

I have taken the opportunity and returned to look again at that famous joint Alcuin/Church Union publication, *Episcopal Services* (1980). I heard a fellow suffragan say how helpful he found it, and, rather than simply scoff, I thought I had better check it again (which I conspicuously failed to do when newly consecrated). I find it more realistic than I remembered, but still extraordinarily pettifogging in telling me what to do with my fingers when giving a blessing. It still uses 'preside' in the Gothic Revival sense that a bishop 'presides' by doing nothing whilst others lead the service (contrast the ASB here). I find precedent (which I did not want) for the odd idea of 'blessing' the water in an ewer in one place, and then processing behind the ewer to a font in another place (I have written about this elsewhere). I am told to sit to interrogate baptism and confirmation candidates, which I would never dream of doing. At ordinations 'the new priests should concelebrate with the Bishop' (*should* – *whew!*). The final fun comes in the 'Additional Detailed Notes' – kissing altars, using vimpa, gloves, gremial veil, etc., and texts to go with the various anointings which it envisages and with the 'presentation' of paten and chalice and elements to the newly ordained priests. Ah well, perhaps I am missing some of the fun. But I do not think I would do most of these things very well. I just hope God can use my slightly simpler liturgical channels as I set them out and pray for his power to touch the worshippers.

Colin Buchanan

ANDREW AND SARAH (continued)

No correspondent has yet answered the query in last month's *NOL* about the prayer of 'Blessing of the Ring', but two quite touchy letters have come from those who noticed (what I saw but failed to record) that the groom took the bride's *left* hand at the crucial point where the text says he takes her *right* hand in order to marry her. They even seem quite upset that I did not record it – and one correspondent asks whether they are 'validly married', and drops a half-hint that the Archbishop is not getting enough practice at doing weddings to keep *his* hand in, so to speak.

Another correspondent points out, what I had certainly missed, that Series 1 marriage does make provision for reading scripture.

Yet another correspondent reckons I was too even-handed in allowing that the couple could 'choose' which rite to use. Far from it, as our correspondent sees it – the law says that the officiating minister chooses, and the couple can then object – which is slightly different from them choosing. *NOL* is not ignorant of the law (at least not this time), but had some difficulty imagining the particular adversarial process going on which our correspondent envisages.

LITURGY FOR BLACK WORSHIPPERS

Here in Birmingham we are trying to come to grips with whether there are any distinctive needs of black Anglican worshippers of which liturgical planning should take account. It is an open question. Do write in.

Correspondence

Dear Colin,

Am I the only reader of *NOL* to have noticed an increasingly propagandist approach as far as the ordination of women as priests is concerned?

With respect, I fear, I have detected an inconsistency in methodology on your part. In your weighty defence of infant baptism you concede that there is a one-sentence argument against the practice, but then proceed to build up a cumulative case (drawing upon scripture, tradition, and pastoral practice) to counter the initially attractive one-sentence position.

Surely the ordination of women debate shows an exact parallel? It is possible to make an apparently irresistible one-sentence case in favour of women priests. However, if one adopts your methodology and seeks to assemble a *cumulative* case against, the evidence, in my opinion, very soon reaches overwhelming proportions.

The irony of it is that *you* trained me to think this way!

As ever,

John Fenwick

Editorial Response

Dear John

Thank you very much for your letter – a classic case, if I may say so, of ways in which you think which are *not* attributable to your years as a student of mine. I am tempted to ask whether a fig tree can bear thistles . . .

The problems you set me (in amongst some devious back-scratching) are as follows:

- (1) You do not actually do what I do in my Booklet on infant baptism – that is, set out the one-sentence case and then demolish it. I am left to guess what this one-sentence case is which I am supposed to propagate.
- (2) Even if there *were* a one-sentence case to be made for the ordination of women, that would not of itself demonstrate it was a *wrong* case. It is only if the refutation lies to hand that a case becomes *wrong* when it is brief. Some brief cases stand unrefuted. Some might even be irrefutable!
- (3) I have always thought the one-sentence case was being made by the *opponents* of women's ordination (e.g. 'the man is the head of the woman, and ordination is about headship in the church, ergo women cannot be ordained'). The cumulative case lies against such reasoning, and I will develop it gladly. Does our correspondent acknowledge himself susceptible to such argumentation in proportion to its complexity and cumulativeness? (If so, we can probably lay it on with a trowel . . .).
- (4) Finally, in answer to the general charge of being 'propagandist', *NOL* pleads total innocence on this point. Scrupulously even-handed treatment on all issues is our unswerving editorial policy. All but the one-eyed readers will have noticed this long since. Perish the day we vary one jot or tittle from fair journalism.

C.O.B.

MAKING WOMEN DEACONS – A POSSIBLE TIMETABLE

Now that the Ecclesiastical Committee of Parliament can have no objections to the form of either the Measure or the Canon for permitting women to be made deacons, the question arises as to when the Measure may get to Parliament. Apparently, there is a chance that the period of 'spill-over' from the recent session of Parliament, i.e. some time in late October, may yet see the Lords and Commons deal with the Measure. If it then succeeded what timetable would follow? (And – of course – no-one takes for granted nowadays that Measures *will* carry the Commons . . .). Firstly, the Measure only comes into effect on a day to be named by the two Archbishops.

Secondly, the Royal Licence has to be obtained for the Promulgation of the Canon – which cannot be earlier than the February 1987 session of General Synod, and might even be later.

Thirdly, the two Archbishops have to put out the form of service which they authorize under the Canon for making deaconesses deacons (though, of course, if they were dilatory, new women deacons could be ordained under the Measure, even without this service).

So what timetable is implied? Perhaps all will be clear by mid-April 1987. But dioceses must not plan dates for such services before Parliament has passed the Measure, and they would be wise to be no more than very tentative until after February. And deaconesses would be well advised to sleep soundly at night on some other basis of comfort than supposed certainty about the date.

This month's booklet . . .

is Liturgical Study no. 47, *The Medieval Development of Liturgical Symbolism*, by Paul Rorem, an American Lutheran scholar. This involves quite a concentration on a few expositors, notably Cabasilas and Amalar, but the range of ways of understanding symbolism is well illustrated.

. . . and next month's

is Worship Series no. 97, *Celebrating Agapes*, by Trevor Lloyd, who wrote the original Grove Booklet on *Agapes and Informal Eucharists* (no. 19 way back in 1973). He had a large hand in constructing the Commission's recommended material on this, and now presents new coaching (and cooking) hints of a more comprehensive character than before.

. . . and some administrative problems

have been still hanging round us since Julia, our previous sales assistant, went off work in the Spring. A considerable backlog (which included taking on new Standing Order customers – some on post-ordination grants – and dealing with specific queries) has hung around, and is only now being cured. Pat Morris, erstwhile COB's personal secretary at Nottingham and now Administrative Assistant to the Administrator of St. John's College, is overseeing the finance and despatch side of the St. John's College, is overseeing the finance and despatch side of the business at Nottingham, and Marcus Titley has newly arrived as the sales assistant, and between them are busy restoring our dented image. Please forgive any delay there has been in your own dealings, give us the benefit of any doubt, and double your orders to test us to the limit . . .

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Book Reviews

Brian Edwards *Shall we Dance?* (Evangelical Press, 1984, pp.153, £1.95).

This has been out for some time, but I ordered it out of curiosity from the EP catalogue. Both catalogue and cover are besprinkled with 'open' questions and answers – e.g. 'So what does the Bible teach . . . ?' Brian Edwards looks at these controversial issues and presents a positive message for the church today. Ah but – in fact the book is an all-out attack on dance in worship. This is summarily completed by two-thirds of the way through, and the final part is a 'positive' exaltation of preaching as a 'better way'. I do not agree with the thesis, and I found the preaching part unacceptable as the punch-line of a book with this title (it should be 'Give up dancing – listen to preaching'), but I was more annoyed still with the bland blurbs which never gave a hint that this was anything but an instruction book. Could not the EP come clean and tell us what their book is about?

C.O.B.

A New Dictionary of Liturgy and Worship, ed. J. G. Davies (SCM, London, 1986) pp.544, £19.50 hardback.

The publication of *A New Dictionary of Liturgy and Worship* earlier this year is an event to be welcomed. The *New Dictionary* represents a thoroughly revised and updated version of the original *Dictionary of Liturgy and Worship*, first published in 1972. Social developments and liturgical revision during the 1970s rapidly outdated some of the entries in the original *Dictionary*; the *New Dictionary* reflects many of these changes. There is a major new article on Liturgical Revisions, and a number of the original composite articles have been updated; notably those on Baptism, Burial, Liturgical Books, Marriage and Ordination. Minor factual corrections to the original entries have been made where necessary. The growth and development of women's ministry is reflected in new articles on the Feminist Liturgical Movement, Inclusive Language, the Ordination of Women, and Women and Worship. Other trends in society and theology are noted in new articles on the relationship between Liberation Theology and Worship, Indiginization and the theory of Signs and Symbols in Worship. Two important new articles have replaced the previous single entry on the Use of the Bible in Worship: viz. Old Testament Worship (J. H. Eaton) and New Testament Worship (I. H. Marshall).

The *New Dictionary* continues to reflect a wide range of theological viewpoints, and with its much expanded size (pp.544 compared to pp.385) now contains articles on the worship of a wider spectrum of churches, including the Armenian Church, the URC and the Rastafarians amongst others. More space has also enabled expanded and updated bibliographies to be given, together with a much clearer system of cross-referencing in bold type. The number of photographs and illustrations has also been increased (there is a fetching one of an Egyptian festa procession in the Old Testament article; and a Jehovah's Witness baptism by total immersion at Twickenham Rugby Football ground . . .). The printing and layout of the new book are excellent; the book is very easy to handle and read.

In any Dictionary there are always going to be omissions. Despite the editor's caveat that readers should refer to the *New Dictionary of Theology* and the *Dictionary of Christian Spirituality*, I for one would have appreciated articles on Liturgical Language and the Phenomenology of Worship amongst others, and for more space to have been given to Charismatic Worship. These subjects are only treated in the broadest terms in the other Dictionaries in the SCM series. That having been said, the new article on the Sociology of Worship (D. Newton) is an excellent example of some of the newly commissioned articles relating other academic disciplines to worship.

The *New Dictionary* reflects the broad aims and concerns of its predecessor. It provides background information and introductory material to a wide range of topics within the broad categories of liturgy and worship. Where it surpasses the original *Dictionary* is in the greater range of material which it covers, and, most obviously, in its updating to take account of the fast pace of liturgical and social change in the 1970's and '80s.

Jane Sinclair

(Ed.) A. G. Martimont, *The Church at Prayer*. No. IV. *The Liturgy and Time* (ET, Geoffrey Chapman, London, 1986) pp.xv plus 304, 312.50.

Aime Georges Martimont's *L'Eglise en prière* first appeared in 1961, and was a synthesis of the work and research of the French Liturgical Movement and the thought behind the reforms of Vatican II. After the third edition in 1965, an attempt was made to translate it into English, but the attempt was never completed. Because of more recent liturgical research, it became necessary to up-date the French work, and this new English translation is from the new French edition of 1983.

Volume IV deals with the liturgical calendar and the daily office. Written before Taft's recent work on the office, and Talley's erudite survey of the liturgical year, this volume provides an excellent basis from which to approach these two more recent and more technical studies. P. Jounel examines Sunday, stressing its newness and its underlying theology, and he takes us through the liturgical year. Unlike Talley, he is content to rely on the old history of religions explanation of the choice of 25th December, though like Talley, he draws attention to the East's rich associations at Epiphany. Non-Roman Catholic readers may feel that the section on the cult of the Virgin Mary could have been condensed.

Martimont considers the history and development of the daily office. Like Taft, he stresses that the Office celebrates the *time of day* with Morning and Evening Prayer being the corner stones. His conclusions regarding the Jewish background are a little too optimistic, and the student should follow the more cautious approach of Taft. There is an excellent discussion of the spirituality of the Office, reminding us that prayer is to be prayed, not just studied.

Each section of the book has an excellent bibliography, and not only does this study give an excellent historical survey, but also provides an excellent guide and commentary on the present Roman Catholic rites. This is a useful book for students and scholars alike, and is likely to prove more useful than the cumbersome *The Study of Liturgy*.

Bryan D. Spinks

COB's LITURGICAL SCRAPBOOK

August: Strictly speaking, I was on holiday, and will not comment on liturgical activities I spotted from the pew elsewhere in the country. But (25) Bank Holiday Monday gave me a knock-on from Acts 86 (see *NOL* for August); I decided to inspect the Birmingham 'Superprix', a noisy spectacular pursued by racing cars round the Inner Ring Road and Markets area. So I went (in a jumper, not in purple) at noon (in wet weather) to the wire fence, and discovered it cost £7 to go in, and so I asked a police-woman there where I could see it free. As I spoke, a voice behind said 'That's the Bishop of Aston, isn't it?'. So I turned and found a police-woman-sergeant, who said 'I saw you at Acts 86'. 'Oh' said I 'What did you make of it?' 'Great' she said 'and my inspector had his leg lengthened there'. Then, when I said 'tell me about it', she said 'he's in the van up there; come and meet him'. So I duly said hallo through his van window and he, quite casually, confirmed the story, telling it with a vanload of police personnel listening. Before the praying at Acts 86, he had apparently been asked whether he wanted the half inch added or subtracted (after all, one needs to know what to pray for . . .), and he had said 'added – I am a policeman' – and so it had been. In fact, I gather 42 reports or claims of verifiable healing had come into the Acts 86 committee. This is not exactly liturgical, but, holidays or no, Superprix or no, it is very much part of my scrapbook: (31) back to work, and confirmation.

September: (1) I am to go into hospital for small hernia operation, so (I think for the first time in my life) I am anointed by Bishop Hugh in his chapel at communion, before going off to Nottingham – the first thing the first nurse said to me on the ward was 'Didn't I see you at Acts 86?', (see above) – clearly quite an introduction; (7) back into liturgical action after trying out various people's hospital visiting and praying techniques (I give them good marks), and I planned the op for a Monday before a Sunday with no confirmations, so that I could cancel at short notice if recovery was behind schedule, and so I simply preach at the eucharist (at St. Alphege Solihull), and sit down for the rest of the service; (11) first time back leading worship – Institution in the inner city (and rush on after 9 p.m. to speak at a teachers' dinner); (14) baptisms and confirmations in the morning and after the Peace the little kiddies from Children's Church march in and give me a homemade greetings card – in the afternoon walk over the ground for Sunday evening next week, where there is to be a baptism by submersion in an inflatable pool at Springfield – and where should the pool go? – and in the evening start a Visitation in an incense-swinging parish (and recall to myself that it is actually the first time I've swung it – I am pretty unskilled as well as not highly motivated . . .); (15) break off Visitation at lunchtime to conduct my first funeral since being a bishop, that of a 20-year-old son of a vicarage, who has died after a six-year fight with cancer. Six contemporaries, one a Moslem and probably few believers, carry the coffin, an astonishing sight – and we sing Easter hymns (Tim had woken in his last night on earth, had whispered the Lord's Prayer with his father, had said a firm 'Amen', and then 'Good-bye', and had closed his eyes and died in his sleep, and the knowledge of Jesus' victory over death was very near to us); (16) return at unearthly pre-breakfast hour to preside at communion in St. John's College chapel for the Society for Liturgical Study (liturgists are better at preaching than

at practising liturgy, and I had to chase them out of the back row . . .) – interesting practical paper by Michael Perham on 'Liturgical formation', in which he favoured less didacticism about our symbols.

ASB EUCHARISTIC LESSONS INDEX

We apologize for omitting this in July, but now carry on again where we left off in June.

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