

News of Liturgy

Editor: Colin Buchanan

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Editorial

At the end of October (on 30 October, we think) was published *Church Family Worship* edited by Michael Perry, with a team from Jubilate Hymns and from CPAS (Hodder and Stoughton, hardback £5.95, limp £3.95, reduction for quantities as introductory offer, and the price of each rises by £1 on 31 March). This is one of the more notable liturgical publishing ventures of the year and is worth a place in this editorial. The book's timing was beautifully related (though by providence rather than foresight, we guess) to some public complaining about family services, particularly by the Bishop of Malmesbury. So what is the book like?

The first reaction of a reader is amazement, perhaps not untinged with some confusion, about the rich variety of materials, and the complex but carefully planned presentation of them, in this volume. After the initial rites (largely taken from the ASB, and covering the first 26 pages), there are no more page numbers. Instead all items are thereafter numbered in sequence throughout the book, as is the tradition in hymn-books. So we have versicles and responses, songs, prayers, exhortations, dramatized readings, and many other liturgical items, all bearing numbers in sequence, and arranged in larger sections. The sections begin with one for 'Throughout the Year', then continue with six for the periods of the Calendar year, two months at a time. 'The Christmas Season' warrants a separate section, and items 'For the Minister' complete the numbered items, and the rest is references.

The intention is clear – the service outlines allow of the use of the items, or other kinds of service can be built up from them. The Calendrical shape allows materials of various sorts to be grouped according to the ASB themes of Sundays, though other themes (e.g. holidays by the sea!) run across the ASB at intervals. Hymns are Jubilate (*Hymns for Today's Church*) version, and thus 'thou' and 'thee' never intrude, though the 'inclusive language' question does not yet seem to have reached the team.

This volume can do nothing but good. It may never reach the parish communion parishes, though many could benefit from it. It may be a *little* literacy-adept, well-scrubbed, Sunday-best, middle-class, nuclear-family, regular-in-church in its contents and style. But that is to say something about the Church of England itself – or about the suburban belts of it. For the church that is, and the family services that are, this book is great gain. May it sell well and circulate productively.

Colin Buchanan

ORDINATION OF WOMEN AS DEACONS

The last stages came on 4 November, when the Lords debated the Measure, which had passed the Commons on 28 October by 303-25 (see *NOL* for October). In the Lords the vote was by acclamation and the Measure then received the Royal assent on 7 November. The Canon will be promulgated at the February Synod, and we hope that the Archbishops will release soon the text of the service that they, uniquely, alone devise and authorize (i.e. for deaconing deaconesses). We will endeavour to publish this, or the distinctive features of it. We would also like to know a little about arrangements being made round the country for the use of it. But we do not yet know the date the Archbishops will set for the coming into force of the Measure.

GENERAL SYNOD NOVEMBER 1986

That unhelpful FOAG report *The Priesthood and the Ordained Ministry* came up for debate on Tuesday 11 November. The report was duly received, but the Synod was restive about the next motion:

'That this Synod welcomes Chapter XIII as a contemporary Church of England expression of the Anglican understanding of the priesthood of the ordained ministry.'

Readers of *NOL* will recall that chapter XIII produces the rabbit of ministerial priesthood out of a hat that in the first four chapters clearly contained no such creature – and asserts that this priesthood derives from the high priesthood of Christ but without saying how it does, or where the derivation is based in scripture. Thus the Archdeacon of West Ham, Peter Dawes, moved as an amendment:

'Delete all words after "Synod" and insert "believes Chapter XIII to be inconsistent with Chapters I-IV, and refers the report to the House of Bishops for further study.'

This amendment was lost by 224 votes to 207 (with eight recorded abstentions), a vote which virtually removed any status or standing the report might have claimed up to that point. Thus the Synod voted (200-170) for Alan Stanley's amendment, which lightened the original motion thus:

'That this Synod welcomes Chapter XIII of GS 694 as a stimulating contribution to the development of a contemporary Church of England expression of the Anglican understanding of the priesthood of the ordained ministry.'

Other amendments perished, and a vote by Houses was held on the amended motion. It came out as follows:

	Ayes	Noes
Bishops	35	0
Clergy	162	47
Laity	121	90

So it passes – but when 43% of the House of Laity reckon it is not even a 'stimulating contribution' it does seem the report has more or less got its come-uppance.

For the record, on the Wednesday the Synod handled *BEM* and ARCIC (which had previously been debated by the Convocations and House of Laity separately on Monday) thus:

'That this Synod to the extent described in GS 661 recognizes in *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* the faith of the Church through the ages.' (383-12).

The two ARCIC statements on Eucharist and Ministry were viewed as 'consonant in substance' with the faith of the Church of England as follows:

	Eucharist		Ministry	
	Ayes	Noes	Ayes	Noes
Bishops	33	0	33	0
Clergy	189	27	173	31
Laity	141	65	133	68

Then on the Thursday came the last two motions:

'That this Synod recognizes that the *Venice Statement* on Authority I together with its *Elucidation* and Authority II (*Final Report* pp. 52-98) record sufficient convergence on the nature of authority in the Church for our communions together to explore further the structures of authority and the exercise of collegiality and primacy in the Church.'

	Ayes	Noes
Bishops	38	5
Clergy	182	43
Laity	124	89

'That this Synod affirms that the ARCIC *Final Report* offers a sufficient basis for taking the next concrete steps towards the reconciliation of our Churches and proposes that such steps should include those listed in paragraph 271 of the Report of the Faith and Order Advisory Group (GS 661).'

	Ayes	Noes
Bishops	43	0
Clergy	200	8
Laity	157	43

One idly wonders what sort of metaphor a 'concrete step' may be, and whether such steps are easy or hard to take.

DEACONS OFFICIATING AT MARRIAGES

In law deacons are clerks in holy orders, and are authorized to officiate at marriages. This was confirmed by the lawyers when the ASB marriage service was going through General Synod in 1976-77. But various bishops have continued to forbid deacons to do this, presumably on the old-fashioned ground that they should not utter liturgical blessings (on which point *NOL* has at times in the past exposed some of the absurdities).

Now the minutes of the House of Bishops of 21 October include the following:

'Deacons: Authority to conduct Marriage Services'
The House received a report from the Legal Advisory Commission, presented on behalf of the Commission by the Bishop of St. Germans. The House noted the right of deacons under the secular law to solemnize marriages, though the exercise of the right had never been general. The House recorded the view that it would recognize marriages solemnized by deacons and that they may pronounce the blessing for which the authorized rites provided. The House asked that at an appropriate opportunity steps should be taken to modify the rubrics in the Series 1 and ASB Marriage Services to remove any uncertainty about the position of deacons and the extent of their authority.'

In one sense this is all otiose – the House of Bishops coming to terms with what is already the case. In another sense, it is good to have them recording their agreement with the law and their clear intention of making the situation plain. They are just in time to enable women deacons to officiate without reproach at marriages – perhaps it was pressure from that direction which led to the clarification of the House's mind at the right moment.

This month's booklet . . .

is Pastoral Series no. 29, *Yes, Manager . . . Management in the Local Church*, by Brian Pearson.

. . . and next month's

is Liturgical Study no. 48, *Anglican Confirmation*, by Colin Buchanan. This Liturgical Study concludes twelve years of the existing pattern of quarterly Studies, and the *opusculum* on confirmation which Colin Buchanan has been wanting to publish most of these years here sees the light of day. The Study combines historical exposition with liturgical study and an examination of contemporary trends around the Anglican Communion.

. . . and the new Liturgical Studies

are to be published under the aegis of the Joint Editorial Board of the Alcuin Club and the Group for Renewal of Worship, and a publicity blurb about this scheme, and about the plan for the whole of 1987, will be circulated with the December mailing.

. . . and Reprints

include Pastoral Series no. 5, *The Wisdom to Listen*, by Michael Mitton, now going to its third printing, and Worship Series no. 76, *Leading Worship*, by Colin Buchanan, going to a second edition.

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THE BISHOP OF LONDON IN OKLAHOMA

I recall when Ian Smith announced his UDI in November 1965 (after we had waited for it for some time) one of the papers produced the headline 'He does it'. So it was with the Bishop of London – on 29 October 'he did it'. He appeared in Tulsa, Oklahoma, and confirmed 24 candidates of the disconnected Episcopal parish there – before the world's TV cameras. There are several odd features – not least how he squared his action with the motion of 21 October in the House of Bishops the minute of which reads as follows:

'Episcopal Jurisdiction'

The House received and considered a statement from the House of Bishops of ECUSA. After debate the House:

- (1) agreed that a Bishop of the Church of England should not exercise episcopal care over a priest and congregation situated in a diocese of another Province except with the consent of the proper authorities of that Province, and
- (2) invited the Archbishop of Canterbury to take any steps he thought appropriate to promote full understanding with the House of Bishops of ECUSA on this matter and on the pastoral issues involved.

The voting was:

In favour	47
Against	1
Abstentions	2

But one can just see (as I guessed when I saw it) how a sophistication would leave him compatible with the motion (from which he had himself abstained). What is odder still is that *another Bishop was visible back-view* on the TV shots at Tulsa. So there exists in the USA someone in episcopal orders to lay hands on the parish's candidates. So who was kidding whom that there was grave pastoral need on behalf of these 24? If confirming people witnesses to taking on jurisdiction, then that is more than the Bishop of London was claiming. If it leaves the confirmed with no distinct relationship with the confirming bishop (which is how Anglicans behave *de facto*, as they ship in itinerant and retired wearers of the purple), then why would not an American bishop who was apparently on hand do? The suspicion remains that the Bishop of London was doing some cocking a snoop action beyond what his own account indicated. But why should he want to do that?

And what action would take a parish of the Church of England out of *its* diocese?

STOP PRESS – SYNODICAL FOOTNOTE

We gather that the Rev. Peter Hobson moved a following motion to *BEM* in the Synod debate reported earlier, to ask for a hard look at the 'apparently indiscriminate baptismal policies' mentioned in *BEM*. In the event, he withdrew it on gaining certain assurances. Full details next month.

LAY PRESIDENCY AT THE EUCHARIST

It may be recalled that the Province of the Southern Cone of South America raised at the Primates' meeting in April the desire of the dioceses of Chile and of Peru with Bolivia to authorize deacons and lay people to It may be recalled that the Providence of the Southern Cone of South American raised at the Primates' meeting in April the desire of the dioceses of Chile and of Peru with Bolivia to authoprize deacons and lay people to preside at communion. Although they apparently got a dusty answer from the Primates, the issue still came to the Provincial Synod on 1-4 May. The very tiny Synod (three representatives of each of five dioceses) finally voted by 8 votes to 7 against permitting these two dioceses to proceed. Bishop David Evans, Bishop of Peru and Bolivia, who was Acting Primate in recent months, writes in a report that on the one hand the presence of observers from Brazil and from Province IX of ECUSA ensured that they did not vote without awareness of more traditional Anglicans concerns, but on the other hand he expresses what is his own clear personal concern that the 'pressing pastoral situation' had not been sufficiently understood, and that the Synod had suffered from 'an over-energetic support of tradition and the *status quo*'.

Meanwhile in England the Bishop of Salisbury adds his weight in a Selwyn Lecture, delivered on 4 October, but only publicized recently: 'I see no reason why any group of Christians should not invite one of their number to preside . . . The exclusive link between presidency and ordination is wrong.'

ANDREW AND SARAH

(Reprinted by permission from *The Times* 4 October 1986)

FOURTH LEADER

Now that the nation has recovered from the excess of bliss represented by the wedding of Prince Andrew to the then Miss Sarah Ferguson, a more critical scrutiny may with propriety be directed to one aspect of it that has profound ceremonial and even constitutional implications. It was reported in the *Church Times* that Miss Ferguson plighted her troth in Westminster Abbey while putting forward her left hand, contrary to the rubrics of the Book of Common Prayer, which demand the right.

It is a comfort that a spokesperson for the Archbishop of Canterbury has given an assurance that wrong-handedness in matters of marriage ritual is not *per se* grounds for nullity. It seems unlikely that Miss Ferguson is a secret Ritualist, trying to sneak *sinister* Italian church practices past the Primate of All England as was tried in the last century; indeed, this is a subject on which the Roman Ritual appears to be silent. Nor, it can be said with confidence, is she a freemason.

But given the speed with which dress designers ensure that not-quite-carbon copies of the Wedding Dress were in all the appropriate shops next day, and given the alacrity with which a certain hair style, prominent in an earlier Royal Wedding, became overnight the standard in every High Street, it is too much to hope that this is the last we shall hear of left-handed plight-trothing.

Is it not true that Queen Victoria's grasping of a chicken drum-stick (whether with left or right hand is not reported) was the signal for the general adoption of this easy solution to a hitherto tricky challenge to manipulative skills? Is it not also true (or was it just another jibe from Ronald Knox?) that a prelatial false step at a Roman Mass became the overnight fashion in Anglo-Catholic circles, who believed the Vatican had introduced an extra genuflexion?

There is therefore no weight in the dismissive approach to matters of etiquette and rubric; the idea that grown-ups have better things to worry about. These are the better things. The road that begins with an accidental proffering of an about-to-be royal left-hand ends with royal weddings under water in swimming pools. And we have no reason to think Dr. Runcie would look well in snorkel gear with rubber flippers. He has critics enough already.

The Crown Appointments Commission would start considering candidates for his succession, when that comes due, on an entirely false basis: the ability to maintain an aura of primacy in submarine circumstances. It would be rather better if the Archbishop were to revise his recent assurances: a wrong-handed approach to marriage, he should say, is an ancient Royal Prerogative and a privilege of brides of naval officers, no-one else.

COB's LITURGICAL SCRAPBOOK

October: (19) Confirmation in the morning at Aston parish church (which somehow people think is where I 'belong' – as though I had a cathedra or something), my last harvest in mid-afternoon, this time in the unbelievable (for Birmingham diocese) church at Baddesley Clinton which is in the middle of fields without housing in sight, and in the evening I begin a visitation with a sermon (as requested) on the kinds of comprehensiveness which it is proper for the C/E to accept; (22) Lambeth Palace in the morning (Rite B and Westminster Abbey choir boys), and the first of our own diocesan demos of *Lent Holy Week and Easter* in the evening – in this half we gave them a procession of palms, a penitential rite (with ashing of some), and a footwashing (in which I once again qualified for the role of washer – is someone trying to tell me something?) – it was moving to have folk say on an October evening that they had 'felt' right inside it all, and when I ask if they would like to end discussion with a hymn, they not only pitch in fortissimo but also wave their palm branches again – quite a variant on finishing with a sober compline; (24) one of our curates has been on a priests' Pilgrimage, and has sent me a card which says 'I have lit a candle for you in the shrine at Walsingham' – is this prayer or prosyletization? (26) preach (for 'Creation Sunday') in a parish which has ASB Morning Prayer, and – wait for it – staying behind Rite A Communion – unique in my experience as a combination, and with strong overtones of a time-warp; at lunch a Bible reading on stewardship in an estate church; and in the evening baptisms and confirmations and communion and an interesting array of the newly married and those on the brink;

November: (2) In the morning there is the fiftieth anniversary of the consecration of the church building and the creation of the parish of St. Mary Magdalen, Hazelwell: there is an imaginative reflective soliloquy on 'How the gospel came to Hazelwell', which includes imaginery (but researched and wholly credible) account of the consecration service (at which Bishop Barnes presided – and included his knocking on the door three times with his staff, and his sermon on 'the permanence of religion'); – after September's editorial remarks I enjoy singing the Pulkingham *King of Glory* setting of the eucharist, a composition I had assumed had not touched Birmingham parishes – includes a good Lord's Prayer. In the evening there is a 1662 Evensong at the 'Miners' Service' at Baxterley (near our two pits) and the music comes from Doormill Colliery Band – looking very smart in red uniform, but with as many women as men playing instruments . . . (4) I join morning worship at the Bible Society's splendid new HQ in Swindon at 9 a.m., and attempt to expound and apply 2 Cor. 11 (my host quotes this Scrapbook at me, so I tell him he'll be in it); (5) Feast of Guy Fawkes, but for 18 Birmingham churchpersons it is the day of the Vacancy in See Committee, and I am presiding at communion, in the round, in a room at the University where the Committee is to meet, and we use (for the first time in my memory) the Propers for the election of a bishop – including the Acts 1 reading – on pp.949-953 in the ASB – I will tell readers later how our prayers were answered, but we did have a chance to use the lot ourselves; (6) baptisms and confirmations made memorable to me by my leaving my spectacles at home, thus testing my liturgical memory and my ability to decipher vague blurs in the book, but with added fun when a woman churchwarden, on the way back from the baptistry, trod on the trailing edge of my cope, and could not readily discern why I stood immovably in close juxtaposition to her (indeed eyeball to eyeball like Morecambe and Wise) – finally, in order that events might proceed I had to indulge in a stage whisper 'You're standing on my cope', and she duly released me; (9) Remembrance Sunday rather overtakes Abraham as the theme of the day, and, having struggled through my long periods of harvests, I now take on themes of war and peace – asking myself how long 'we shall remember them', as I preach to an old-fashioned morning Matins congregation, and an evening British Legion event, with about 200 present in very convivial surrounds in Sheldon – but I also slip in another evening service elsewhere where I have chance to teach (without robing) about the Bible in the church, taking questions as I go along; (10) Institution where I venture to suggest to a parish in my sermon that Eastward-facing presidents of the eucharist are in danger of being taken for actors in a kind of drama, rather than being true persons through whom the power of God is to come . . . ; (12) another kind of informal service in a mid-week evening in a UPA parish in Smethwick – I choose hymns from *Mission Praise* (which seems to be ubiquitous) and lead a tolerable hymn-sandwich, whilst the vicar concerned is at an emergency meeting of a Community Association.

FOOTNOTE TO SCRAPBOOK: I seem to sing almost every week that . . . the faithful few fought bravely to guard the nation's life.'

Who will tell me what I mean when I sing it?