

News of Liturgy

Editor: Colin Buchanan

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Editorial

One of the less prominent features of the February Synod was the 'final drafting stage' of the process of authorization of the Ecumenical Canons. These come for final approval in General Synod in July, and then go to Parliament. I am not really trying to grind another axe of mine, but Parliament is going to be a problem for the church – it could just possibly, of course, be a problem of substance, in that members of both Houses who think they own the Church of England *could* decide that they wanted no truck with ecumenical flexibility. I do not seriously anticipate that. But there may be much more probably be a problem about timetable. Welsh and overseas Anglicans and non-Anglicans reader may well be horrified to discover that here the church is wholly at the mercy of the political process. Not only is Parliament normally in recess from July to November, but the prospect of a General Election throws the timetable much further out. If a new government is formed (of whatever party or pastiche of parties) between now and Christmas, then ecclesiastical legislation is delayed by not only the electing process, and the pressing legislative matters the new government *must* adopt – but in fact ecclesiastical 'Measures' can only be introduced into Parliament by the Ecclesiastical Committee (which links Synod with both Houses), and there is no pressure upon a government to hurry in the formation of that Committee. Pshaw.

However, let delay be turned into a virtue. As I buzz round the dozen Local Ecumenical Projects in Birmingham diocese, I am aware that although much goes well, it is not at all clear that we would be ready if the Measure and Canons came into force even by Christmas. For, as I read draft Canon B44, there is need of a sound constitutional basis for each LEP before any responsible bishop could sign the 'instrument' which makes the relevant parts of the Canon come into play. And it would be grievous if ecumenical arrangements which have been growing slowly had yet not got a sufficiently solid basis for a seven-year period of thoroughly authorized life to be given. We could have the odd situation that the arrangement was felt to go backwards at the point where it should have gone forwards. I believe that the final enactment of this Measure is going to put the Church of England to the test quite seriously as to how well based its ecumenical arrangements are.

The crucial points in section 4 of the draft Canon are as follows:

'A bishop . . . may by an instrument . . .

- (d) authorize a priest of the Church of England to preside in that area in accordance with a rite authorized by any other participating Church;
- (e) make provision for the holding in that area of joint services with any other participating Church, including services of baptism and confirmation;

- (f) authorize the holding, in a place of worship of the Church of England in that area, of services of Holy Communion presided over by a minister of any other participating Church.'

I read this as including quite a few points which will need local interpretation. I hope in future months to do some spelling out of the possibilities in this. But I note that right now is the time for girding LEPs (and creating new ones – on which also I have some ideas) for the coming into force of the new Canons – perhaps, but only perhaps, in the first half of 1988.

Colin Buchanan

ORDINATION OF WOMEN AS DEACONS

Happy reports come in from all round the country about these services, though no-one has yet answered last month's conundrum about when women ordained overseas (or in Wales) now 'became' deacons in the eyes of the Church of England. The first woman to become deacon by English process is named as the Rev. Angela Bailey of Canterbury: various sermons are to hand; and a further succession of reports are due in. In Portsmouth there was included that which is apparently always now used with deacons, that is, that the bishop washed the new deacons' feet. Another point not strictly relevant to the question of *women* candidates is made in a separate report from London which is mentioned below.

In Lichfield, where the rite is due on 24 May, there have been drafting efforts going on to add a pepped-up Preface to the rite. The following text has come to hand from Lichfield sources, though it is emphasized by those sources that further touching-up might occur between now and 24 May. It runs as follows:

PREFACE

Our Lord Jesus Christ recognized and received the ministry of women and from the Apostolic Age women have set apart their lives in devotion to him for the building up of His Body, the Church, and for wider service throughout the world.

We recall the rich contribution women have made to the Church in our own nation through the centuries: Hilda of Whitby, Julian of Norwich, Josephine Butler, Gladys Aylward, Mary Sumner, Evelyn Underhill and many others whose example of holiness, humility and service has brought both men and women to faith and thirst in Christ.

On this historic occasion we give thanks to God for the service rendered to the Church of England since 1861 by the Order of Deaconesses.

From that time they have ministered in town and city parishes, labouring diligently among the crowded populations of industrial areas; they have found joy in sharing in and in leading worship; and proclaiming the gospel; they have cared for and instructed the young; they have given counsel and guidance to those in trouble, bringing comfort to the sick, and the dying the bereaved.

In all this their faithfulness has looked for no reward, save that of serving our Lord.

We are proud to share our joy with all those whom God has called to this ministry which he has so widely used and so abundantly blessed.

We affirm and uphold their ministry and we celebrate today the richness which their Ordination to the Diaconate within the historic three-fold ministry will bring to the Church.

We commend those to be ordained to the grace of God who alone equips his people for work in his service.

MULTIPLYING THE LOAVES

In the Bishop Hugh Farewell, reported in the Scrapbook in this issue, around 170 baskets were used for distributing bread and 170 crystal goblets for wine. In the hymn after the Peace the right number of distributants picked up the requisite supply and came on the stage standing in a half-moon four deep round behind Bishop Hugh, most people carrying both basket and goblet. They followed the well-publicized 'Portsmouth' dictum that they were 'cake-stands not co-consecrators' – and thus were a mix of clergy and laity, though all were authorized to administer the elements – in fact they passed them along the rows. The Provost of Portsmouth writes in to confirm that Portsmouth cathedral followed its own principles at the ordination of women as deacons, and that is a relief to hear in Birmingham! But the Archdeacon of Northolt writes in to describe the eucharistic action in St. Paul's when 71 women were made deacons:

'To facilitate things there was a second Holy Table, at the West End . . . At the Offertory Hymn two of the "presiding" Bishops and others from the group of clergy involved were processed to the West End and one of the Bishops . . . said the Thanksgiving Prayer rather softly and made the "usual" manual acts over the bread and wine. The elements from that Table were then used to communicate half the people . . . The Bishop of London was presiding . . . I wonder if this novel extension has happened elsewhere.'

So here we need a new name for something like two simultaneous celebrations under the same roof – perhaps 'simulcelebration'? – or is it a 'stretched con-celebration'? With Portsmouth you do know which celebration you are attending.

CANTICLE

- 1 Jesus, as a mother you gather your 'people · to 'you:
you are gentle with us as a 'mother 'with her 'children;
- 2 Often you weep over our 'sins · and our 'pride:
tenderly you 'draw us from 'hatred · and 'judgement.
- 3 You comfort us in sorrow and 'bind up · our 'wounds:
in sickness you 'nurse us, and with pure 'milk · you 'feed us.
- 4 Jesus, by your dying we are 'born to · new 'life:
by your anguish and 'labour · we come 'forth in 'joy.
- 5 Despair turns to hope through 'your sweet 'goodness:
through your 'gentleness we · find 'comfort in 'fear.
- 6 Your warmth gives 'life · to the 'dead:
your 'touch makes 'sin · ners 'righteous.

- 7 Lord Jesus, in your 'mercy 'heal us:
in your love and 'ten · der'ness re'make us;
- 8 In your compassion bring 'grace · and for'givenness:
for the beauty of 'heaven may · your 'love pre'pare us.

Copyright Michael Vasey 1987 – after St. Anselm's *Prayer to St. Paul*

AUTHOR'S COMMENTARY ON CANTICLE

This canticle has as its inspiration Anselm's meditative *Prayer to St. Paul*. This is regarded as one of the classic Christian texts on the motherhood of God or, more accurately, the motherhood of Christ. Anselm takes as his starting point 1 Thess. 2.7, 8. Scriptural passages that lie behind the canticle include: 1 Thess. 2.7, 8; Matt. 23.37-39; Is. 66.13; 1 Peter 2.2-3; John 3; John 16.20-22; John 11.35-44. The canticle draws on scripture and classical Christian tradition. It is hoped that it may be an acceptable way of highlighting feminine imagery in the liturgy, and may complement canticles, such as the Magnificat, whose major image of God is as warrior and judge. If the canticle is to be used responsorially one of the following lines would be suitable as the refrain: 1a, 7a, 7b, 8a.

This month's booklet . . .

is worship Series no. 99, *Remembrance Sunday*, by Andrew Jones. The discussion focusses on war and peace, and the implications of 'remembrance'. He goes on from this basis to look at the liturgical outworkings and some pastoral issues associated.

. . . and the Grove Ethical Study

is the second in the new series, though no. 65 in the whole series, *Ethical Tensions in the Welfare State* by Roy McCloughry (£1.50).

. . . and next month's is

Pastoral Series no. 31, *Staying Sane under Stress*, by Patsy Kettle (nee Evans, authoress of no. 18 *What? Me a House Group Leader?*).

. . . and the AGM of Grove Books Ltd.

is at St. John's College, Nottingham, at 1.30 p.m. on Tuesday 2 June 1987.

Are you an Alcuin Club Member?

If so, it is very possible that you have not yet received your March Joint Liturgical Study no. 1. Grove Books takes responsibility for a nonsense, and would be much helped if you wrote and told us. We will even try to send your stamp back with the Study.

LITURGY IN PROTEST

For the record, we note on Monday 13 April in St. George's Cathedral, Capetown, a service of prayer for those detained without trial (which apparently include large numbers of children). The service followed a ban

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over the previous weekend of all encouragement to honour detainees, to protest against their imprisonment, to call for their release, or to perform any public act of solidarity with them. Archbishop Tutu reckoned that the ban could well prohibit the saying of prayers for their release, and saw the Church as thereby gagged unless it tested out the ban. He therefore called for this service on the Monday, and at it committed himself to continue seeking publicly for release of all detained without trial. The cathedral was apparently packed, largely with white people, and the government made it clear soon after that they would not treat the saying of prayers as falling under the ban, though inciting congregations to press for the release of detainees would be. It sounds from the outside as though sermons must be delicately phrased but prayers can be as inflammatory as their devisers can make them. If this *is* the line of demarcation, it does not take a very intelligent observer to spot that it will not last. Indeed, it looks as though it was twisted and dented and frequently breached at that amazing protest service.

Archbishop's Letter

HYGIENE AND THE CHALICE

After discussion with the House of Bishops, we have decided to issue to all clergy the following guide about the use of the chalice:

Public concern about AIDS has aroused fears among some people that the sharing of the common cup might be a possible means of infection. The advice given to us by the highest medical authorities is that such fears are groundless. The virus which causes AIDS may occasionally be present in saliva, but recent research has shown that saliva inhibits the activity of the virus and that it has not been transmitted by being swallowed. There is therefore no reason to take special precautions when administering the chalice other than those listed below.

People who are infected by the virus or who have AIDS will be unusually susceptible to other infections and may wish, and should be allowed, to receive communion by intinction or in one kind.

Research on the chalice as a possible means of transmitting other types of infection has shown that the risk is extremely small. This can be reduced even further by the application of the normal rules of hygiene:

- 1 A chalice of gold, silver or other suitable metal is to be preferred to pottery, particularly unglazed pottery.
- 2 The rim of the chalice should be firmly wiped with a purificator after it has left the lips of each communicant. The same part of the purificator should not be used repeatedly, nor should it be allowed to become sodden.
- 3 Anyone with cuts, sores or abrasions on their lips should receive communion by intinction or in one kind.
- 4 In addition to ritual ablutions, the chalice should be thoroughly cleaned after use.

We suggest that this notice is displayed in the vestry or in some other suitable place within your church.

**Robert Cantuar:
John Ebot:**

April 1987

EDITORIAL COMMENT

Without much medical knowledge, I gladly endorse the above. However, I do want to intrude a question of principle for Anglicans to consider. I detect the following inconsistencies in our approach to the matter:

- (i) We are absolutely sure that the symbolism of a 'common cup' is foundational to our eucharistic practice – whereas about 85% of us are wholly unbothered by atomized individualized wafers as the way of sharing the 'common loaf';
- (ii) not only so, but the symbolism of the 'common cup' is, in hard cases, more important than the reception of two elements *separately* – in other words, the 'common cup' is preserved at the price of intinction.

Have we got our starting points slightly confused?

ECUMENICAL WORSHIP AT NOTTINGHAM

Martin Conway, the President of the Selly Oak Colleges, writes about the worship at the 'Not Strangers but Pilgrims' Conference held over the last weekend of March in Nottingham University. There were 400 present from a great range of denominations, including the 'black-led' Churches. The morning services on both Saturday and Sunday were led by ordained women. But the main feature of the report goes as follows:

'Debate about the [sc. the policy of the Roman Catholic Church not to share in communion with other Churches] clearly broke out in the Conference already early on the Saturday; in the group where I was on the Saturday afternoon a good deal of time was given to this, including two long – and not particularly convincing – speeches by Bishop Charles Henderson in defence of the current Roman Catholic policy. So there was a great deal of emotion in the air when Archbishop Derek Warlock of Liverpool led a mass for the Conference in the Great Hall on the Saturday evening, accompanied by some 16 of his fellow Bishops and other priests (one woman referred to a 'solid wall of male con-celebrants'!). He referred with notable restraint and brevity to the pain involved in the discipline. The congregation was invited to sing hymns while the Catholics received communion – several Catholics to my knowledge felt unable to do so.

During the plenary debate on the Sunday morning Bishop Cormac Murphy O'Connor spoke to the whole Conference about the dilemmas raised by our differing eucharistic disciplines, in a way which to my feeling cleared the air somewhat. We were also drawing close to the end of the Conference when we met in an upstairs hall – no more positively conducive than the Great Hall but at least somewhat less crowded and with less feeling of oppressive pomp – for a Church of England Eucharist immediately after lunch on the Sunday afternoon. There were two women in the much smaller altar party which processed in during the first hymn, and it was a welcome touch that a black Pentecostal had been asked to read the epistle, a Roman Catholic priest the gospel and the incoming Methodist Ecumenical Secretary the intercessions. It also seemed entirely appropriate and encouraging that Archbishop John Habgood, in a carefully prepared

reference to the question of eucharistic discipline, invited those who would by their own disciplines feel unable to receive the bread and the wine but who nevertheless wished to identify themselves with this Eucharist, to approach along with everyone else and simply indicate to those distributing the bread and the wine that they would not be receiving. I happened to find myself in the line just in front of a long-standing friend who is a Benedictine Sister, deeply committed to the ecumenical movement and yet no less deeply loyal to her own Roman Catholic obedience. As I turned away from receiving the elements I noticed her approach those distributing them, smile to them and bow deeply with her hands folded across her chest in a gesture which abundantly conveyed both the joy of sharing and the painful commitment of abstaining.

COB'S LITURGICAL SCRAPBOOK

March: (20) the 1300th anniversary of the death of St. Cuthbert on the Farne Islands – and high festivities at St. Cuthbert's Castle Vale, where I preside, swing a little incense, and preach a sermon on 'How lovely on the mountains' (but it has to become 'How lovely on the Vale') – and bring greetings from a parish of St. Cuthbert's in Vancouver, but cannot tell my hearers the sex of the Canadian priest who sent greetings: (21) the day the deaconesses are made deacon, with the Canterbury and York rite – and Bishop Hugh has gone to much trouble to make the psalm, the readings, the prayers, etc. all 'inclusive' or, of course, actually feminine in their language – but the choir have not had copies of his psalm so we get Coverdale unemasculated from them, and Bishop Hugh himself reads from the monster cards (already existent for use at ordinations) held up at points by servers, rather than from his edited text, so he slips into his own trap on one or two occasions – the women all have sprigs of yellow rose given to each of them before the service, and they carry them in procession and have them with them throughout – after the delivery of the New Testament they adjust their stoles . . . and there is great spontaneous applause before we proceed to the Peace: (22) at a morning inner-city confirmation I confirm a wholly deaf woman (with interpretation by signing, and a crowd of supporters singing delightfully by signing) along with her hearing husband; in the afternoon it is back to the independent school; and in the evening at a parish quite near – three confirmation services in a day: (24) baptism and confirmation at Yardley, where last year the water escaped from the font – all carefully checked this year; (25) Lady Day and confirmation in Sparkhill, including two elderly women who explain that no-one has ever conveyed the gospel the way this new priest-in-charge has; (29) a Mother's Day service – but eucharist and adult (I hope) sermon – in Rite B Edgbaston, but I cheerfully carry my own posy down the aisle at the end; in the evening I break new ground for my episcopate – I attend a packed 1662 Evensong for the last service of the long-standing Rector of Solihull, Canon Raymond Wilkinson, as he retires on Tuesday – and I lead the 'Prayers after the Third Collect' – my first in ancient tongue for years; (31) and now it is Bishop Hugh's Farewell, and that 7000-worshipper job comes up at The Arena at the NEC – I am not staying on it here, but we manage to communicate the whole congregation in under ten minutes, and thus keep to time – and the congregation find Bishop Hugh's last act, laying

aside his cope, mitre, alb, stole and crosier on the platform, before walking out in purple cassock with Eliza his wife beside him, but otherwise alone, the most moving part of all – though the mood is quickly terminated by the cascade of 3000 specially logo-ed balloons from the roof as the fun and the cheering breaks out.

April: (5) Passion Sunday, and at two confirmations I reckon the 'Greeks' in the ASB Gospel are the new and unexpected converts, whilst the Jews would be from long-standing Christian families! In the evening I run a question-and-answer session on worship at Water Orton, in place of a sermon; (8-11) a break from liturgy as all the time is going on the appointment of our new Bishop of Birmingham – more elsewhere about this (i.e. in other journals – not this one); (12) Palm Sunday, and again I follow the ASB, and preach on 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord' – and find I would be interested to learn more about how this originally got attached to the Sanctus, and why (can any readers help?) . . .

Book Review

Roger Arguile *The Offering of the People* (Jubilee Group, 1986, 20pp, £1).

This booklet is interesting more for its 'jubilee' provenance and for its broad scope than for its detailed argument. The Jubilee Group is the Anglican Catholic pressure group for the reform of society, and thus, by definition, it is a group concerned to link sacramental life with life in society. In one sense it aims to fulfil the thesis of Donald Gray's *Earth and Altar*. So how stands the 'offertory' nowadays?

Roger Arguile is content to accept the current conventional wisdom that Gregory Dix got the offertory wrong, and that the laying of the Holy Table is *not* the first of the instituted dominical acts. But he is also concerned to exhibit a patristic emphasis upon the people's offering of the elements as their contribution to the eucharist, and their assertion of the importance of creation. A slightly densely argued chapter follows salvaging the concept of 'offering' from wanton attackers ('. . . what distinction between pagan and Christian worship is threatened by the continued use of ideas of offering, and how?'). But this seems to assume that certain ideas of offering already hold the Christian field until they are attacked – whereas I would argue that, although the early liturgical tradition has plenty about offering (see Kenneth Stevenson's book reviewed here last month), yet the normative and New Testament assumptions run the other way – that Christian sacramental worship is not seen as an oblation of any sort of the created fruits of the earth, and the onus is on those who would demonstrate otherwise.

The later discussion disappoints, as it does not tackle Rite A closely, does not discuss the sensitive point about 'offertory' and the Roman Catholic prayers at it, concentrates too much on what I have said in *The End of the Offertory* about money and 1 Chron. 29, and perhaps is in too much of a hurry to get to the 'pay-off' of 'the relationship between our liturgy and our understanding of the world' (p.18). However, I am unaware of serious Anglican attempts to re-create the offertory as a credible theological event since Michael Ramsey dealt it that deft blow about 'shallow and romantic Pelagianism' in 1958. I think it will need better than this to become credible – and I doubt if better is available. But let the debate continue.

C.O.B.