

News of Liturgy

Editor: Colin Buchanan

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Editorial

I doubt if the ordination of women is worth a headline two months running, but it *is* necessary to put it into an editorial again.

The General Synod duly worked its way through the mass of paper which we reported last month. It took note of the House of Bishops' report on theological issues (classified by John Sentamu in the debate as 'unanimous disagreement'), and then addressed the (draft) Priests (Ordination of Women) Measure for 'general approval'. Financial factors were not part of this Measure (see below), but provisions for conscientious non-participation (without resignation) in the general move of the Church of England were. The legislation proved too complex in this matter for the Archbishop of Canterbury, and he, having given signals in the 'issues' debate that he would now favour the ordination of women, went into opposition apparently over this secondary matter – which, to proponents, looked like a failure to understand that the Synod had yet to come to amending the draft legislation. Others were daunted or swayed by his opposition, and the conscience provisions were treated as structuring schism into the Church of England. This is surely nonsense? All experience of 'conscience' clauses (such as existed in the South India Union) shows that the hesitation usually disappears once the threshold is crossed, and certainly the provision for conscience is not only scriptural but in the best sense charitable – and actually giving away very little. Admittedly it must be difficult for a bishop to imagine that on the one hand the Church of England still provides an authentic Catholic ecclesiastical structure although it ordains women to the presbyterate, but on the other that he will both affirm its ecclesiality and yet decline so to ordain.

The voting result was:	Ayes	Noes
Bishops	28	21
Clergy	137	102
Laity	134	93

The two Canons consequential upon the Measure were given similar 'General Approval' (the substantive one by 20–13, 126–89, and 127–78); and the amending one (which tidies up other Canons by slipping in feminine pronouns) by 20–11, 129–72, and 125–66). The draft Ordination of Women (Financial Provisions) Measure was then debated, and received 'General Approval' by 11–8, 119–60, and 116–66. It looks as though half the bishops had gone to the Lord Mayor's banquet by then, whilst the whole vote had dropped a little also. There was no necessary correlation between the voting on the two Measures – it would be possible to favour the ordination of women, but to resist compensation, and possible too to resist the ordination of women but favour compensation. My own view is that, if anyone wants to be a martyr, his martyrdom looks faintly odd if it is cushioned with a large nest-egg. Perhaps that is an argument *for* offering compensation.

In constitutional terms the matter is now referred to a Revision Committee and submissions to that Committee have to be received by 31 October. The

Committee will probably report to the February 1989 Session of General Synod with a revised text of the two Measures, and they will then have a Revision Stage in General Synod, before being sent down to the dioceses. Meanwhile the Lambeth Conference is starting to address itself to the question of women in the episcopate. There is fear and alarm around lest the Anglican Communion tear itself in half, or become a balkanized set of 'no-go' areas. It will still be under discussion when this is printed, and by the end of August we shall know it all. But God preserve us in some kind of unity.
Colin Buchanan

HE DOES IT . . .

The 'Will he?' 'Won't he?' is over. On 30 June rebel Archbishop Lefebvre consecrated four bishops, and thus split definitively and presumably irreversibly from the Pope. From Lefebvre's point of view he had to balance the last leverage he had with the Pope – that is, that he still had not gone to this last point of rebellion, and in theory still might not go – against his own age. For he is 82, and his threats to consecrate his own line of succession might have shortly become incredible, if he had for instance gone to a nursing home, or showed signs of senility. So, with an uninvited car from the Pope reported to be standing ready to convey him to the Vatican at no notice if he turned aside from his obduracy, he nevertheless did the deed. He appeared briefly on English television, wearing the white gloves and celebrating (of course) the 1570 mass.

Two or three questions remain. Is he a new Pope? In other words, did his four receive some *jurisdiction* – as, e.g., one for each continent – to sustain the true faith and true faithful? Or are they (like the English non-Jurors during their roughest passage) simply a 'College' of bishops, enjoying the correct ontology, keeping alive a succession for when the times do alter (which is surely unimaginable?), and meanwhile without stated functions? It is said that Lefebvre has ordained 5000 priests when forbidden to do so by the Pope, and that, presumably, would provide a skeletal staff around the world for an alternative papal church? But are the faithful there in comparable numbers?

The reporting in England got it wrong as usual. If our understanding is aright, Lefebvism is not a protest at the 'banning of the Latin mass', for it has never been banned, and the definitive form of all new Roman rites is in Latin (save the new marriage text, we gather), and can usually be celebrated in Latin. Nor is the point the use of the old Roman Canon – that too, with tiny emendation, figures as the first eucharistic prayer in the modern rite. No, the real point of protest is *not* the banning of anything – it is *permitting* of more biblical and even protestant-looking uses since Vatican II. Lefebvists can say that they have consistently taught and used exactly the same rites without change – and the church has drifted from them.

But then the questions end and the paradoxes arise. For twenty-five years the Roman Catholic Church has encouraged far more liberty of thought and belief in the individual. Lefebvists object strongly – and yet act upon the principle more astonishingly than any. Once in England it was said that it was nonsense in the name of the king to take up arms against the king – now we see a fiercely principled papalist bishop function on behalf of his principles in the most anti-papalist way imaginable.

By the way, was there another bishop assisting him? One or two reports spoke of an assistant? Does anyone know?

IN MEMORIAM – ARTHUR COURATIN

Arthur Couratin died on 9 July 1988 at the age of 86, and with his death another link with the first decade of the Church of England Liturgical Commission has been broken (though he was not, I believe, a founder-member). I write in haste at the Lambeth Conference – and at a distance from the literature which would give titles and dates of his works. I hope to add a brief note about that next month.

However, there was a long pre-history to Arthur. Ordained in Wales in the 1920s he became principal of 'Staggers' at the age of 34 and remained till he was 60. His 26 years came vividly to my mind when in 1980 I attended the opening of the new St. Stephen's House on the Cowley Road site in Oxford, and Arthur attended in his old age. He sat and held court whilst a great queue of old students of all generations filed slowly up to him to pay respects – I had hoped to speak to him, but felt I would be a slight fraud if I joined the queue!

However, it is as a liturgical scholar, particularly of the 1950s (after the death of Gregory Dix, who was of the same age as he) that Arthur gained fame. He collaborated with Edward Ratcliff in the various publications setting out the theory that in Hippolytus the Sanctus came at the end of the Canon, and he never wavered in his total devotion to Ratcliff and all his works ('Ratcliff is in the front row of the chorus: all the rest of us at best are but in the second row' he said to me). Like Ratcliff he also wrote on Cranmer, and followed and amplified the line of Dix that Cranmer was a true protestant.

I came on the Liturgical Commission in September 1964, when Arthur was busy doing the drafting for what would become Series 2 communion. I noted his impatience at people who criticized at a meeting what they had seen ages before through the post – so I invited myself to spend a morning with him in Durham, whither he had gone in 1962 to be Canon Residentiary, and learned something of the principles moving him – and he in turn came twice to lecture at the old LCD for me. However, what I in my youthful ignorance never detected was that he and Ratcliff not only wished to write an anamnesis paragraph 'Therefore . . . in remembrance . . . we offer to thee this bread and this cup', but that they wished to do so *not* because it was the finest expression they could attain of their doctrine of eucharistic sacrifice, *but* because they were convinced it was the most primitive expression of the wording available. When therefore I dissented, other anglo-catholics were willing to look at other forms of wording, but these two great scholars were not only attached non-negotiably to the particular words, but also, as old men, saw their one chance, for they had waited decades, now about to disappear. They thus dug their heels in, and the Commission voted with them. But when the Convocations and House of Laity changed things, Edward Ratcliff died, and Arthur Couratin resigned from the Commission a few days later in great disappointment – and went into opposition for many years. It was the end of an era . . .

Arthur muttered to me once 'In Durham cathedral there are two main matters of liturgical interest – one is the anthem, and the other is the collection'. Legend had it that he there united with 'Hewie' Turner in resisting the use of Series 2 once it was authorized – 'Hewie' on the grounds

it sold out to the Pope, Arthur on the grounds it had surrendered to Geneva. But he ceased to write on liturgy (apart from a chapter in the Pelican History of Theology), and, for instance, when J. G. Davies was first editing *A Dictionary of Liturgy and Worship* in 1970 or so, I received a request for a contribution on a list of articles and authors in which 'Couratin' had been deleted, and my name inserted by palimpsest. Series 2 remained the monument to his labours, for all he had rejected it. He set the English style, teed up the eucharistic prayer for the Sanctus to go to the end at the next revision, and introduced the text in the liturgical conference of February 1966. The very end of his theories peeps through at us still in Rite A – for he thought the second century church saw itself like the elders in Exodus 24 – who offered and sprinkled the blood of the covenant, and thus gained access to the holy mountain, where they saw God face to face and 'ate and drank' in his presence. Thus the footprints of Arthur remain faintly on our rites when we say

'As we eat and drink these holy gifts
in the presence of your divine majesty
renew us . . .'

He taught me much of my liturgist's trade, mischievous and misleading though I believe him to have been. I always feared his sewing something up when I was not there, and I once even left a rugby field at half-time (when there had been a late kick-off) rather than miss five minutes of the Commission's meeting – because of my fear of his slick move! But the name of the game was known, and we could pull each other's legs. I owe him much, and I honour his memory and his own orientation to Jesus Christ.
C.O.B.

This month's Booklet . . .

is worship Series no. 104, *The Laying on of Hands in the Parish Healing Ministry*, by Carolyn Headley. This is a thorough investigation of the biblical material, followed up by some history and some psychology, burgeoning out into a thorough look at parish pastoral possibilities.

. . . and next month's

is Booklet on Evangelism no. 3, *Exclusive Language as a Hindrance to Evangelism*, by Barbara Temple.

. . . and a new catalogue

should come with this mailing.

. . . but NOH will not

as June *NOL* ran late, and July *NOH* was ready early, so we put the latter in with the former.

. . . and Canon B43

is held over to next month. We *think* the Commons approved the Measure.

DUDLEY AND CORBYN – DIOCESAN LITURGICAL COMMITTEE EDITORS

NOL reminds readers that, from the September issue, there is to be a clearing-house for items of Diocesan Liturgical Committee interest in England.

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Diocesan Committee secretaries are urged to keep one or other of these two posted as to good ideas or interesting agendas (yes, or conferences) which are running within their diocesan purviews.

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A LAMBETH LITURGICAL DIARY

16 July (Saturday): We all arrive and have a late evening welcome, where Alistair Haggart, chaplain to the Conference, tells us we have all been given *Hymns Ancient and Modern New Standard*. Sure enough, there it is in the kit handed out. This goes with a service book which has a slightly truncated morning office playing the part of ante-communion. There is a carefully selected Conference Lectionary, Coverdale Canticles, BCP Creeds and Frost Psalter, and we shall all be in Bible study groups of ten, working at John 13.

17 July (Sunday): Opening service in Canterbury Cathedral – splendid television as 500 plus bishops parade in Convocation robes. The liturgy is strictly Rite A, and even an African song takes an English quality from the Cathedral choir that sings it. No concessions to ‘inclusive language’. Evening prayer in the Sports Hall (the interior of which has had a false front and sides added to the interior to make it tasteful, if no wholly numinous – though rumour suggests at a five-figure cost!). Very trad, straight and English. I am picking up concerns from overseas people that all cultural variations have been squashed out before we start – and I rather share the fear.

18 July (Monday): Now we know – the morning eucharist was indeed flat in its style, with a strong A & M air to it. I raise the question at our ‘section’ meeting (i.e. one quarter of the Conference) and am savaged by Bishop David Lunn of Sheffield, who simply says he likes the worship not to give him cultural shocks (a very *English* response).

19 July (Tuesday) to **22 July** (Friday): Our captivity to the worship book and the hymn book continue. We have sung *Come down, O Love Divine* twice, varied only by *Give me joy in my heart* (the West Indian choice), by Fred Kaan and Pratt Green, *Lord of the Dance* (one or two feet tapped) and – marvel of marvels – *Abide with me*, by courtesy of the Middle East jurisdiction! The ‘Portsmouth’ style of having twenty-seven distributants of communion come and pick up the vessels and stand round holding them during the eucharistic prayer has been followed – with a variant that the persons lift up their vessels higher at the dominical words in the eucharistic prayer, and sometimes also at the doxology. Apparently some Provinces have never seen lay persons (yes we have not only bishops’ wives here, but also ACC members) administering both elements, so perhaps we are being dangerously radical. Eucharistic prayers themselves have varied, though the Scottish piskie one had a head start being printed in the book – and the Jerusalem one (a ‘thou’ form cross between Series 2 and Rite A) had a Proper Preface that mentioned both Bethlehem and Jerusalem. Meanwhile my small Group has shared well, united well, prayed together well – and extemporary prayer is taken for granted as our medium of expression. We also stop each day at noon for a moment of ‘recollection’. [More next month].

THE KENNETH STEVENSON COLUMN

Is the President also a compere?

Clergy often find it very difficult to worship at one another’s churches and clergy who are supposed to be liturgists sometimes have to work very hard to keep their souls in reasonable condition. I remember once sitting next to a liturgist-priest who spent the whole time of service making a mental catalogue of what was going wrong. (Presumably he went home, wrote it up, and sent it to the local clergy in question, as some free advice!). I have one bete-noire – and it’s the ‘president-compere syndrome’. Do I have to describe? Perhaps an extreme example is worth noting. President appears half-dressed before the service really begins and talks at inordinate length at the congregation, exhorting them to do this, that, and the other. Some of it is good entertainment, other parts of it may well lead into some worship. If that were the end of it, and the fully-dressed president then slid through the service without the aid of more exhortations, that might be well and good.

But often he doesn’t. The congregation is treated to a sort of extended commentary on the meaning of the eucharist. The rite is punctuated by happy little snippets of didactic ‘relevance’, and so (if I may be allowed self-quotation) the liturgy ends up lying on the floor, with the subtlety of a piece of pulped garlic.

Of course, people need things explained to them. (What, pray, is the parish doing by letting its family eucharist become the sole act of worship of any substance in the week – backed up by no programme of Christian education?). In my present parish, once a year we celebrate together the 10.00 a.m. service, but have no sermon. Instead, there is a series of short devotional ‘narrator’ insertions at four or five points in the service. And to make the point, these insertions are given at a lectern, in a ‘sotto voce’ manner, by someone other than the President. If we’re talking about the proper ‘roles’ in worship, then that method of delineating responsibilities takes some beating. (Shades of the Deacons . . . ?!).

And there will be other occasions, such as when there is a considerable number of visitors, or one of those ‘parade’ eucharists, when the church is full of younger people whose parents may not have a strong relationship with the local church. (Whose fault might that be?). For that occasion, I still think there is mileage in a well-prepared (but briefer) ‘compere’ who is NOT the president. And my theological reason for this is not that I am a patristic fundamentalist and see here the germs of distinction between deacons and presbyters, but simply that IF the president does it at all, the idea is secretly fostered that all the words in worship are material that is chucked AT the congregation. (The parallel with the TV chat-show becomes even greater). We are frequently told that the ASB is an unwieldy book and courageous are the parishes who print their own booklets, especially when they soon discover that they have lost out on many flexibilities because the booklet in question expresses where the parish is at in one year of its development. But, even though there are congregations full of illiterate people (in the moneyed suburbs as well as all those UPA’s we’re talking about at the moment) there is still a basic trust lacking on the part of many clergy towards the liturgy *to be the liturgy*. (And here I’m talking about all the varieties of churchmanship). By far the worst is the high churchman who has done a bit of poor educational psychology and thinks that oil at baptism is a good time to turn the sacrament of initiation into a piece of therapy. If symbols need to be explained, why bother to use them?

At the risk of crying for the moon, I’d rather let people experience worship a bit more, and leave them alone. They might then begin to realize that in the world of worship (and, indeed, of the gospel), we do the Lord a great degree of disservice if we expect the meanings of his things to leap to our minds straight away. People come to our churches with many hidden expectations thrust upon them by the kind of society of which they are a part (and we gassing clergy, too!). If one looks carefully at the New Testament, one discovers that Jesus was sparing with his explanations. The world wants good news – yes. But that means confrontation with God’s realities, not a lecture, ill-prepared, and patronizingly delivered. Aidan Kavanagh once said, *obiter dicta*, ‘the encounter at the burning bush was no seminar’. He has also written, ‘Creativity of the Spontaneous MeMe variety condemns rite and symbol to lingering deaths by trivialization’ (*On Liturgical Theology*, p.102).

JANE SINCLAIR’S LITURGICAL DIARY

[Jane is lecturer in liturgy at St. John’s College, Nottingham, and a member of the Church of England Liturgical Commission]

June: (1) 7.45 a.m. ASB Morning Prayer as usual with 10 students jammed into my study; (2) College service of Rite A with baptisms. Crowded, noisy and joyful: exams are over. Three young daughters of a student are baptised. The youngest (2 years) effectively undermines hours of teaching by indulging in self-baptism as she sloshes water from the font all over herself. In the melee the minister abandons the ASB prayer that the newly baptised might fight ‘valiantly’ and eshorts the girls to fight ‘manfully’ – the incongruity of the adverb is a subject for much comment over dinner; (5) Rite A at All Souls, Radford – my ‘regular’ church, which I only manage to attend infrequently during term. We roast in the small, 1980’s-built church/community centre: the glass skylights above create a stifling greenhouse effect (which also goes a long way towards stifling worship); (7) 45 minutes of evening worship based very loosely on the Nine O’Clock service at St. Thomas Crookes, Sheffield. Rock music versions of some popular choruses; slides projected onto the walls throughout; a superb dramatic reading of the story of the Prodigal Son; use of video on two screens; amplification; a highly structured act of worship . . . but not your usual evening prayer! (10) The College Agape, held in the dining room. We use the first of the Eucharistic Prayers currently under discussion in the Liturgical Commission. It is shorter, and of a much more responsive and participatory nature than the average ASB eucharistic prayer. The congregation moves on the action of the prayer in tandem with the president. Words of worship from Revelation 4 and 5 are much in evidence, and the prayer ends powerfully with the Sanctus. It is the subject of much appreciative comment after Agape; (12) I spend hours in Toxteth, Liverpool, on a Liturgical Commission UPA worship consultation. Commission members are keen to hear about what is already happening in worship in UPA parishes and to experience a variety of that worship for themselves. We also need to test some of the new ideas and material currently under discussion on the Commission to see what worshippers think of it. So . . . I find myself at St. Gabriel’s, Toxteth for morning worship – a ‘Guest Service’, based loosely on Morning Prayer. As I am welcomed warmly, I am handed a copy of *Church Family Worship* (which I have never used as a pew book before). The service is very lively, informal (no

robes worn here) and well led by the vicar and (female) reader. Everyone enjoys themselves with a ‘Praise Shout’ (calling out different titles of Jesus) at one point in the service; there is much use of bodies in worship – hands raised, clapping, toes tapping . . . No Commission material is used, but I am given plenty of comment on the worship afterwards by members of the congregation. *Church Family Worship* is universally derided by the laity as far too complex and difficult to follow. I agree – even I was lost! (14) The ASB Calendar reminds us to commemorate the Fathers of the Eastern Church today. To do so we hold a very much simplified service of Orthodox Vespers in the chapel. Incense, candles, Gospel procession, sung intercession, and superb theological hymnody (much of it in metrical version in *With One Voice*). I give a brief explanation beforehand about the significance of incense in worship, and the Gospel procession. This is a form of liturgy foreign to most of those present – but is nonetheless found to be refreshingly conducive to worship by many staff and students; (16) College chapel again, Rite A, and farewell to Noel Pollard – off to Ridley Hall as Vice-principal and lecturer in Church History and Worship; (18) End of term. 12 noon sees the Service of Thanksgiving and Commissioning for our leavers – all goes well with the planning (320 people to be squeezed into the chapel) . . . until a message is ‘phoned through at 11.10 a.m. that Nick Sagovsky (Dean of Clare College, Cambridge and our preacher) has had his car break down south of Grantham. Mad dash to Grantham and back. Arrive in the chapel at 12.40, to be greeted with warm applause in what has become a delightfully informal and memorable act of worship. *Plus ca change* at St. John’s College!; (20–24) Out of term, so Morning Prayer is said by the faithful College remnant in the Senior Common Room each morning; (26) Another UPA consultation, this time at (evangelical) Christ Church, Sparkbrook (Birmingham). Rite A Holy Communion treated fairly informally. OHP used effectively during the sermon; the theme set (as at St. Gabriel’s, Toxteth) by the SU Learning Together material. We use the second of the eucharistic prayers under discussion by the Liturgical Commission. Much shorter than ASB, but with similar ‘cue lines’ for the Sanctus, Acclamations and Doxology. We sing verses of ‘Holy, holy, holy’ (*Mission Praise 74*) instead of the Sanctus, and in addition to the Acclamations and Doxology. COB assures me afterwards that this ‘doubling’ of said Acclamations by an appropriate chorus is becoming a feature of Anglican Worship – at least in Birmingham. We then meet with members of Christ Church, and St. Gregory’s, Small Heath over lunch. St. Gregory’s (very anglo-catholic) have this morning used the third of the eucharistic prayers under discussion – shorter still, with several short congregational responses throughout, and ending with the Sanctus. It transpires that St. Gregory’s, too, have used *Mission Praise 74* instead of the Sanctus (I smile wryly at the thought that maybe it is to be choruses which are to blaze the trail of greater unity between churches of widely disparate churchmanships!). Both prayers meet with general approval by laity and clergy, but more work needs to be done on ensuring clarity of language. There is a call for well-illustrated inexpensive seasonal service cards or pamphlets to be provided when the new material is published; (27 – July 1) I see out the month whilst on retreat with the Sisters of the Love of God at Bede House, Staplehurst. A converted oast house serves as the simplest of chapels. Formal but unfussy sung offices six times daily attended by ten people at most. It is refreshing to have plenty of time to worship in peace.