News of Liturgy

Editor: Colin Buchanan Issue no. 171

Editorial

THE CONSECRATION OF A WOMAN BISHOP

I endured some ribbing for listing the consecration of Barbara Harris under 'small items' last month. The truth was that my expected correspondent did not provide an account, and I was finally left with but small space. Simultaneously, my erstwhile diocesan, Hugh Montefiore, had got himself accredited as the pressman present on behalf of The Times – and those who hired him then did not use his material. Well, the next stop for frustrated Journalists is NOL, so we have stretched a point and stretched our space, and print his article entire to make amends for last month. (We assume this correspondent did not abandon the detached ranks of the press and assist at the laying on of hands – indeed he was probably not dressed right).

I have been accused of making light-hearted remarks at the expense of those whose consciences are being squeezed by the ordination of women. I cannot sit on fences all the time — I have to sell NOL after all — but I will gladly print reasoned replies. And I do think I sometimes pull the leg of people whose causes I share.

But this time the serious discussion is led off by Hugh Montefiore. He alone takes responsibility for his article.

Colin Buchanan

REPORT ON THE CONSECRATION AT BOSTON

by Bishop Hugh Montefiore

When Barbara Harris was first told that she had been elected Suffragan Bishop, she could not believe it. On Saturday, 11 October the unbelievable became reality. History was made in Boston, Massachusetts, when the first woman bishop was consecrated into the historic episcopate of the Church. I have little doubt that, by the mid-twenty-first century, this Anglican initiative will be seen by the entire Church as an important turning point, the first time when women were able to exert full leadership and authority in its life. The Cardinal Archbishop of Boston, of course, was unable to be present at the consecration, as would normally be expected; but, unlike the Archbishop of Canterbury, he did send a letter. Moreover, Bishop Harris actually received a warm letter of welcome from an organization representing 3,000 Roman Catholic bishops, priests and religious.

Her consecration was a big event in every sense, because the import of what happened matched with the impact of the occassion.

It was very American. The processions began with the Stars and Stripes ceremonially carried into the sanctuary. Despite the separation of Church and State, Governor Dukakis and the Mayor of Boston were both present. There was also a typically American blend of dignity and informality. Frequent and prolonged clapping were intermixed with reverence and silence. The Presiding Bishop and Barbara Harris (both said to be wearing

bullet-proof vests in the light of continual telephone threats) conducted themselves with great dignity, but this did not prevent good-humoured smiles and laughter, and even the occasional balloon. ('How do you pop this?', asked Bishop David Johnson of Massachusetts before he gave out the notices).

There was also a typically American openness. Two formal objections were heard. (The one from the Prayer Book Society alleged that all the episcopal acts of a woman bishop would be null and void, a phrase curiously reminiscent of the official Roman Catholic condemnation in 'Apostolicae Curae' of Anglican male orders as being absolutely null and utterly void). The Presiding Bishop listened with patience and dignity, and when he ruled that the consecration should proceed, his words were drowned in an ovation of approval.

The consecration was a huge event, in keeping with American style. It lasted, with processions in and out, for nearly four hours. The Hynes Memorial Auditorium held over 8,000 worshippers. There were 55 bishops, literally hundreds of priests (including Lee Tim Oi, the first woman priest). The 42 minute sermon, for all its rhetoric, seemed endless. The 10 foot high TV screens enabled those at the back to see even better than those in front. Every Anglican chalice in Boston had been requisitioned, and the sacristan told me that she had distributed 20 gallons of wine.

Immediately after being consecrated, in accordance with American custom, Bishop Harris celebrated Holy Communion. Whenever I see a woman actually functioning as a priest, the whole controversy about woman's ordination seems to me absurd. I looked at Barbara Harris officiating. She was habited in the traditional vestments of the Church. Her words and actions were the same as those of men. She celebrated with reverence and concentration. She resembled her fellow bishops in every way, except for her sexuality. Womanhood seemed in no way to impede her symbolic role: on the contrary, it added a wholeness to the episcopate.

Barbara Harris is said to be a strange choice for the first woman bishop. She has never been full-time in charge of a parish — but neither has the Archbishop of Canterbury. Like the Bishop of Bradford, she graduated in the university of life. She makes outspoken political remarks, a habit not unnoticed in the Bishop of Durham. She has spoken up for gays, like the Bishop of Gloucester. Like the Bishop of Croydon, she is black. She is divorced; but the Church has traditionally exercised discipline not against the divorced but against the remarried.

Those who would have preferred a more conventional candidate were given a powerful warning by the preacher about the threat that many feel whenever the Church follows the way of Incarnation and (in the words of St. Paul) chooses what is foolish and weak in the eyes of the world to confound the wise.

I suspect that underneath all these objections there lie two fundamental ones; Barbara's gender and her blackness. The symbolic affirmation of both womanhood and colour at her consecration made a powerful contribution to the healing of these two ancient and deeply felt hurts with the Church.

Samuel Seabury, when he was consecrated the first (male) American bishop in 1784, also seemed a most improbable choice for this office; but he later became an excellent bishop. To judge from Ms. Harris' debut at

the Press Conference immediately after her consecration, she seems likely to equal Seabury's record as America's first woman bishop.

Until the consecration of Seabury, the Bishop of London exercised jurisdiction over all Anglicans in America. Americans had no bishop of their own. If they had one, the Wesleyan schism could hardly have happened. The English refused to consecrate one. The Americans persuaded the Scottish bishops to do this, and thereupon the English immediately found a way to do the same!

The threat of the present Bishop of London to excommunicate all those bishops who have consented to Bishop Harris' consecration carries little weight in the USA, because his remarkable intervention at Tulsa in 1986 has awoken folk memories of this oppressive colonial past. Boston, the scene of the famous 'tea-party' in 1783, is a particularly appropriate place for an action showing American independence of the Church of England, which cannot as yet give official recognition of Bishop Barbara. (I myself could not attend officially as a bishop, but only as press representative for *The Times*, which proceeded to 'lose' my copy, so that it was not printed).

The number of dissenting Anglicans can be seen from their Sunday celebration of Holy Communion in Boston on the Sunday after Bishop Harris' consecration. The self-styled 'Bishop of New England' gave communion to fourteen communicants!

Bishop Harris was freely elected bishop (at the sixth ballot) by the clerical and lay representatives of the Diocese of Massachusetts. Her election was confirmed (just) by the majority of Diocesan Bishops and their Standing Committees. In the providence of God, decisions matter more than numbers. Her consecration is undeniably valid according to the canons of the Episcopal Church of the United States. The Anglican bishops agreed at their recent Lambeth Conference to respect such decisions by sister churches.

It was inevitable that Americans should elect a woman as bishop once women were admitted to the priesthood. Over the last fifteen years many very able women have been ordained. In the diocese of Masssachuetts alone there are now over 70 women priests. At the Anglican seminary at Berkeley, California, over half the seminarians are women, and there are large numbers in all seminaries.

The Americans are as anxious as the other Anglican Churches that this consecration should not disrupt the Anglican Communion. Fortunately, we are not a Confessional Church, so that the consecration of a woman cannot be regarded as contrary to Anglican doctrine. Nor are we a centrally organized hierarchial Communion, so that this consecration cannot be seen in the same light as ordinations carried out by Archbishop Lefebvre against the wishes of the Pope.

The world-wide Anglican Communion is primarily a family, with family affections and loyalties and with a family ethos. The consecration of Bishop Harris is a reminder to the English — unwelcome to some — that the cadet branch of the family which they once planted in America has by now long come of age. Few families are entirely of one mind, most have their disagreements and differences, especially when the younger generations grow up. Even when this results in a certain estrangement, they still remain a family. It often turns out that what to the older generation may

seem in the short term to be disastrous rebounds in the longer term to the positive advantage of all.

On this perspective, the consecration of Bishop Harris on 11 February, 1989, instead of being a cause of disunity within the Anglican communion and with other communions, could well turn out to herald a future blessing of wholeness for the entire Church of God.

LITURGICAL COMMISSION'S EUCHARISTIC PRAYERS

Last Autumn NOL published a eucharistic prayer which the Liturgical Commission had released at the diocesan secretaries' conference. Others were known to exist, not least through the 'UPA' exercise Jane Sinclair and Trevor Lloyd carried out with some samples. We now discover that, far from this being a secretive or even daringly illegal sortie, they were as honest and above board as could ever be imagined. How so? Well their rites had been legalized by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, Impossible, you say? No, very possible, under Canon B.5A which makes a provision hitherto wholly ignored:

'B.5A. OF AUTHORIZATION FOR THE USE OF A SERVICE IN DRAFT FORM Where a form of service is in course of preparation with a view to its submission to the General Synod for approval by Synod under Canon B.2, the Archbishops may authorize that service in draftform to be conducted by a minister in the presence of a congregation consisting of such persons only as the archbishop may designate.'

It is an interesting thought that the two archbishops must, under the Canon, actually have named the people of St. Gregory's, Small Heath, and Christ Church, Sparkbrook, before Trevor Lloyd and Jane Sinclair arrived to try out these texts on them – the congregations, had they known of the ennumeration of them going on under the Canon, would certainly have been very flattered. But all this is a distraction; the main point here is to point out that the eucharistic celebrations with new texts were not done in a corner but in a canonically semi-public way, and we may assume that (unless the archbishops swore their named congregations to secrecy) the texts are in the public arena. We thus publish another eucharistic prayer, but self-denyingly refrain from comment, and instead invite correspondence.

ALTERNATIVE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER A

The president takes the bread and wine

Pres We celebrate together the gifts and the grace of God.

All We take this bread,
We take this wine,
to follow his example,
and obey his command.

Pres The Lord is here. or The Lord be with you.

All His Spirit is with us. and also with you.

Pres Lift up your hearts.

All We lift them to the Lord.

Pres Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All It is right to give him thanks and praise.

Pres Blessed are you, Lord, God of the universe, you bring forth bread from the earth.

Blessed be God for ever.

Pres Blessed are you, Lord, God of the universe, you create the fruit of the vine

// Blessed be God for ever.

Pres The created universe praises you, its creator. Sun and rain, hills and rivers praise you.

A// Blessed be God for ever.

Pres The fruit of the earth itself praises you:
Wheat and grape, this bread and wine we have,
are part of the riches of your earth.

// You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honour and power, for you created all things, and through your will they have their being.

Pres
You made us in your image,
and went on loving us even when we turned against you.
You loved us so much you gave up your Son
that we may no longer be slaves to sin
but rise to life with him.

(A proper preface may be inserted here)
You lift us up to join the songs of heaven:

Worthy is the Lamb, the Lamb that was slain, to receive all power and wealth, wisdom and might, honour and glory and praise!

Pres Until the kingdom of God comes we keep the feast that he began.
The night before he died, at supper with his friends

He took bread and gave you thanks.

He broke it and shared it: 'my body given for you.'

After supper he took the cup of wine:

The new covenant, sealed with my blood.

Do this in remembrance of me.'

We celebrate his offering of himself once for all on the cross, his resurrection, ascension and coming again:

You chose us to be your people
You called us a royal priesthood
We offer you the sacrifice of praise.

Dying you destroyed our death Rising you restored our life Lord Jesus, come in glory!

Pres We are your new creation in Christ:
Fill us with your Spirit,
to bring good news to the poor,
to heal the broken-hearted,
to announce release to captives
and freedom to prisoners.
As we eat this bread and drink this wine:

// Come, Holy Spirit, flow through us, fill our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving with your power and love.

Pres With all in heaven we worship you in songs of everlasting praise: Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.

This month's publication . . .

is Joint Liturgical Study no. 9, Liturgy in Ancient Jerusalem. by John Baldovin, an American Jesuit from Notre Dame, The Joint Editorial Board enters the third year of joint publication with a sense of pride in this study...

... and the Pastoral Booklet

is no. 37, His Other Sheep: Relating to People of Another Faith. by Pat Hooker. The Booklet is virtually entirely autobiographical, concerning Pat Hooker's work (alongside her husband) in the encounter with people of other faiths in Smethwick, particularly with Sikhs.

... and next month's

is Worship no. 108, Worship in Small Congregations, by David Cutts. The author is incumbent of small country hamlets in Suffolk, but he also addresses the needs of urban churches with but a few worshipping.

... and a delightful (but not deliberate) misprint

occurs in Worship no. 107, where the Anglican Consultation which gave birth to the Boston Statement (calling for children to be admitted to communion simply on the basis of their baptism) is dubbed 'the first Intentional Anglican Consultation'... Donald Gray, who convened it, writes with some glee, and anticipates seeing me at the 'next accidental one in York this Summer!' If you look back at the toing and froing about an Anglican International Liturgical Commission, you might think there was something Freudian in the contraction of 'International' to 'Intentional'. On the other hand, you might just recognize Grove Books' proof-reading style.

CONFERENCES

Cranmer Hall, Durham, are running from 30 June to 3 July, a conference to celebrate the 500th anniversary of Cranmer's birth, and this will include a special service in Durham cathedral on 2 July. (Whether St. Cuthbert's remains, which were dug up by the Reformation leaders, and were alleged up till then to have been without corruption but, so it is said, mouldered away to the mere bones on the spot when inspected on that occasion, will approve of Cranmer we know not - but they were treated to more of his work in the 1960s and 1970s than most places . . .). Details from the Rev. Ian Cundy, St. John's College, Durham DH1 3RJ.

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Societas Liturgica, the international conference of liturgists which meets once every two years, meets from 14 to 19 August in York, its first English venue since Canterbury in 1977. The theme is 'Liturgy and Enculturation', and the fully residential cost is £120 for a shared room or £135 for a single room (plus £20 for registering after 30 April, and another £20 for nonmembers) plus the actual conference fee of £100. Bookings (with payment) should be made to the Rev. Canon Dr. Donald Gray, 1 Little Cloister, Westminster Abbey, London SW1P 3PL, Anglicans who attend Societas are able to stay on to the Anglican International Liturgical Consultation which follows it from 20 to 23 August.

INDUCTING MINISTERS IN LEPS

Has any reader samples of induction services for ministers (whether Anglican or not) in Local Ecumenical Projects? If so, please send a copy to the Rev. Michael Vasey, Cranmer Hall, South Bailey, Durham.

Book Review

George Guiver, CR, Company of Voices: Daily Prayer and the People of God (SPCK, 1988) £15.00.

The study of the Daily Office has seemed like a rather poor liturgical relation within Anglicanism until recently. George Guiver's book will help to restore the balance: what is particularly compelling about it is that it views the subject of daily prayer from such a wide variety of perspectives It begins, not with the usual historical material, but with a deeply insightful overview of the need of the human soul to pray at all - and specifically to pray liturgically in a daily pattern. The first few chapters are full of tantalizing quotes from a wide variety of sources – everything from Charles Davis to Kafka, from Gregory Dix to Peter Berger, as he explains the place of myth, form and rhythm, work and play, and the body in prayer.

George Guiver also points out, as a timely reminder in an age when enculturation is a significant theme in liturgical study, that prayer and worship often run counter to the world in which we live. Prayer is usually the sctivity of a minority and the world may remain blind to its insights: 'In order to know the Gospel as it really is', he says, 'not only do we have to set one foot outside our culture, but we also have to decontaminate that foot' 'Such an idea of prayer as pure gift without any thought of return is alien to the spirit of the modern age. We cannot believe in a God who would want us to spend time on him alone, time which is unlikely to produce any practical results'.

The author notes, as does section 207 of the Lambeth Report, that our Anglican forms of daily office are no longer adequate. When the ASB 1980 was planned, we treated their peculiarly Anglican form as somewhat sacrosanct and simply tinkered with the pattern, adding a few variants. But Guiver sees the offices on a much wider canvas than the purely Anglican, and, in pointing out the variety of types of and approaches to daily prayer through the ages, he asks some radical questions into our situation. For example, he notes that 'the practice of public reading of the scriptures passed from the synagogue into the Christian eucharist but not into the daily office, except later in the night prayer of the monks', and that in John Cassian the lessons were 'an extraordinary element on a voluntary basis for those who wished, by assiduous meditation, to retain the memory of the divine scriptures'. Are we right, then, in making the reading of three large chunks of scripture (as at present) the focus of our offices? And have we thought out the appropriateness of psalmody used also on this model? He also points out our lack of an Intercessory focus, of which the preces (which were originally versicles and responses after biddings to prayer and continued in their present form in Anglicanism) are a decapitated and very inadequare reminder. Overall his conclusions about the Anglican office are pretty negative:

'All Cranmer did was reshuffle the cards, weeding handfuls of them out. There is nothing in its text or shape which other Christians can draw on, and nothing which has proved of any influence on the wider Church . . .

... the association of a particular form of the daily office with ecclesial identity is, in the Anglican Church, disproportionate.

Even if his assessment is overly harsh, what he goes on to call for could be the beginning of an an answer to Lambeth's desire for 'the emergence of richer forms of non-eucharistic worship throughout the communion'. He suggests: distinct Sunday and weekday offices, new ways of 'doing' psalms (eg passing the psalm-book around a group, folloewd by silence and an extempore prayer summing up the psalm), the use of suitable commentaries or other theological books, a wide variety of lectionaries, more and varied provision for intercession, the use of cassette-tapes, and moving away from an all-inclusive book, to a wide variety of source books. 'Perhaps', he concludes, 'the Church needs to provide a kind of "kit", letting local communities get on with it using it as they see best'.

If Company of Voices is anything to go by, and I believe it is, we stand on the edge of a liturgical creativity in relation to the daily office which will make present provisions seem stifling, drab and monochrome. I look forward with excitement, but I can see it will strike fear into the hearts of ASB traditionalists! Do read it.

Harold C. Miller

DIOCESE TO DIOCESE

Editors: John Corbyn and Martin Dudley

Leicester Diocese

'Worship, people and God?' - a day conference on the changing role of the Laity in Anglican Worship: The Rev. Anne Horton writes:

The idea of this workshop came as a result of some work by the committee in response to the suggestion by the Lituraical Commission that diocesan committees ought to be about the business of 'liturgical formation'.' In our preparations, we began with a project to find out 'What makes congregations tick (or not) liturgically'. We discovered quite a lot of lay interest and concern in matters liturgical, some of which found expression within congregational life and some of it seemingly frustrated. We also found that many clergy were concerned that their congregations become more liturgically aware and flexible - some are apparently neither!

We hoped that the day would achieve a number of things. As a liturgical committee, we hoped to glean information about what was happening across the diocese; for the participants, we wanted to offer the opportunity to share with others and learn from one another, to offer some encouragement and give information about developments in Anglican worship. Thus our aims were wide-ranging and ambitious, perhaps a little too much so.

We wanted to offer a day of variety in order to go some way to fulfilling all our objectives. We chose a venue with a fair amount of flexible work and worship space. We had given out invitations through the clergy mailing and directly to PCC secretaries. We asked for details in advance of the numbers planning to attend, which meant we were well prepared for the 160 laypeople and 20 clergy, representing 55 churches, who attended We began with an 'ice breaking' first session for sharing feelings and experiences on lay participation in worship. It was evident that lay people wanted to be involved at least as much as they were being and more. They expected proper planning and preparation so that what was done was well done. They were aware of the tensions which participation could produce. especially the heightening of differences between those who were regular and active worshippers and those who were irregular and passive.

After coffee, Dr. Geoffrey Rowell, a member of the Liturgical Commission, gave the keynote address. I suspect that the brief we gave him was too wide - 'the history and theological basis of Anglican worship', together with 'a glimpse into the future'. Clearly people were most interested in all the new plans for Anglican liturgy and their part in it. Most of the questions and comments related to that and we had to close the session with people still wanting more. It was very obvious that many of the laity no longer see the clergy as the sole experts in liturgy, nor as those who, alone, should be responsible for its planning and execution. The attitudes of worshippers, as well as the liturgists we use, are changing significantly.

Next came the opportunity, in groups, to plan an act of worship for Good Friday. This proved interesting and people obviously enjoyed themselves. showing in the process a fair degree of liturgical awareness. Consideration was given to such factors as the presence of young people, ecumenical dimensions and the element of Christian witness.

The day finished with a Vigil for Candlemas, along the lines suggested by the Liturgical Commission. People spoke of it as a good liturgical experience, though they commented on the lack of lay participation!

A good day. Perhaps too full. But people went away having enjoyed themselves and asking for more. Those of us who planned and organized it enjoyed it too, and we will be planning for more. The next one will be at Loughborough this Autumn. (Other dioceses, please report too – Editors).

Manchester Diocese

The Manchester committee continues to be active on a number of fronts. A conference on 'Prayer in Daily Life' is soon to be held. A conference on Worship and Music has been pencilled in for January 1990. A working group has been formed to consider holding a conference on the role of the deacon in worship. This last subject seems to be popular in a number of quarters at the moment. Some of what I've read on this topic seems most unhelpful. Great care needs to be taken to see that deacons do not take to themselves the functions of Readers and other lay people and thereby exclude them. Further there are dangers in deacons being given tasks such as setting and clearing the table at the eucharist (which otherwise are done by the president) not least in what this says about the diaconal ministry of the presiding presbyter-deacon. The ordination of women as (presently) permanent deacons has raised many questions about the nature of that ministry. Perhaps consideration needs to be given to the diaconal ministry, liturgical and otherwise, of the presbyter himself.

'Advent to Candlemas' revisited

Last November I wrote about the material being produced by the Liturgical Commission for the period from Advent to Candlemas. Since then I have myself used the material produced for Epiphany and have some reactions. On the feast of the Epiphany I led a service in Lancaster Prison for inmates and invited visitors, using the commission's material. We slightly adapted the suggested symbolic actions. At the crib we placed three small parcels representing the gifts of the magi. I omitted one of the prayers suggested at this point because it so strongly presumed the use of incense that the prayer would have sounded strange without it. For the section concerning the miracle at Cana, instead of placing just a vessel of wine on the altartable we placed two glass vessels, one containing water and the other wine. For the section concerning the baptism of Jesus we used the form of baptismal renewal based on the Methodist covenant service. We did this in the light of the ecumenical nature of the service, the Methodist chaplain leading this part of the service. As suggested, I sprinkled the congregation with water; unable to pour over the threshold I also sprinkled water on the lintles and posts of the chapel doors. This last action has perhaps echoes. of the Passover. Rather than having one address I gave a short one-point homily in each part of the service.

As a vigil the service proved most useful as an ecumenical occasion, in could easily be used in this way in parishes. Many will be nervous, as I was, of throwing water or wafting incense, not least because of their 'papist connotations. Perhaps Rome's general abandonment of these will give the rest of us the courage to take them up!

The most difficult part of drawing up the service was finding suitable hymns. The visit of the magi presents no real problems, except one generally has to sing about kings. The miracle at Cana and the baptism of Jesus proved quite difficult. There is a real need for suitable hymns to be written for such liturgical occasions as this, particularly hymns that can be sund to familiar and popular hymns. The metrical adaption of the Exultet printed in Lent. Holy Week and Easter services and hymns' as 'The Easter Song o' Praise' is such an example. The service order benefitted greatly from the use of graphics in Pueblo Publishing's, 'Clip art for feasts and seasons'. When the commission prepares its work for publication it would do well to include appropriate graphics. At the consultation on this material it was said that the Liturgical Commission was investigating publishing the material on floppy disc to facilitate the production of service orders. This would certainly have saved me a deal of time.

Whilst the proposed services have been welcomed for the richness and variety of the material they include they have come in for criticism. Some people have wondered whether they meet any real demand in the parishes. Others have commented on the 'wordiness' of the material. Much of the material certainly requires close attention and a good reading ability by worshippers. This is serious enough a criticism of this part of the commission's work, it is more fatal when it is directed, as indeed it is, against their material produced for use in UPAs and for Family Worship.

John Corbyn

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