

News of Liturgy

Editor: Colin Buchanan Issue no. 173 May 1989

Editorial

THE EAMES COMMISSION

The Eames Commission reported to the meeting of Anglican Primates in Cyprus at the end of April, just too late for us to pick up the proposals and comment last month. A full text of the Eames Commission report is still not to hand as I write, though that *may* be my fault for not digging it out from somewhere – certainly the bookshops do not have it. (STOP PRESS copies now available from Church House Bookshop at £1.50).

In essence it appears that the (carefully balanced) Commission has simply had to ask people to live with each other, or at worst, in different rooms in the same house, with an agreed pattern of life which tells the neighbours the inhabitants are living together, but in fact means they have to meet each other. My own experience suggests that such an arrangement is, in domestic matters, all too often the prelude to public divorce. *Absit omen* . . .

For the hard facts of the issue cannot easily be fudged. The Eames Commission explores 'Episcopal Visitors', whereby a parish receives visits from a neighbouring bishop, with the agreement of their own bishop – but the Primates do not like that. The idea of a con-ordination, in which the woman bishop had a male episcopal peer to beef up her ritual acts, also does not win favour. (This is not only demeaning to the woman, but involves such a split between episcopal jurisdiction and ritual efficacy as to do something very odd to the man also – he would be the drone in the hive . . .).

For the truth must surely be that, to those to whom matters of orders and ordination are secondary, even if they would prefer women not to be presbyters or bishops, they can cope with them and do not need protecting from their ministry. But to those to whom the questions are primary and even foundational to the faith, then being protected from the particular persons' ministry will not suffice. The very ecclesial decision to ordain or consecrate does of itself so damage the fabric of the church that, whether a particular woman presbyter or bishop ever hives into sight or not in any particular place, the churchly context has become unsustainable. The only remaining question then is the relationship of one Province to another within the Anglican Communion, and how far one Province can be insulated from a churchly decision in another.

An interesting point has recently been drawn to my attention from the Southern Cone of South America. When the Synod there was addressing the question of lay presidency of the eucharist in 1986 and the issue was lost by eight votes to seven in that miniscule Synod, there was great pressure from ECUSA upon the members not to proceed with this (supposedly) damaging change. There is an interesting contrast between that and

the decision by the General Convention of 1976 to ordain women as presbyters – or the more recent provision for the ordination of Barbara Harris to the episcopate. These involved shrugging off outside pressure. The matter is particularly in my mind not because I greatly favour lay presidency, but because of my awareness at the Lambeth Conference of how the desire for it in Chile was more or less swept under the carpet, and the issue could even be debated on its merits. (See my *Lambeth and Liturgy 1988*, Grove Worship Series no. 106, page 23).

So the issue then comes back to the ecclesiological one – what kind of animal is the Anglican Communion? What kind of decision-taking is possible for it as a Communion? And what is the significance of a decision taken in one Province and not honoured or understood in another? Is the process of 'reception' (mentioned in the Eames' report) a good analogy? Or is this a bright idea from Roman Catholic thought now being cynically pressed into service in a different sense for Anglican purposes to authenticate an action not actually universally approved? Indeed, can one *discern* 'reception' when it is only one-half or one-quarter effected? Or is it something else at that point . . . ?

I expect that readers will know that my own life has taken another of its twists since the April issue of *NOL* was conceived. I chaired the multi-denominational Executive Committee which brought Desmond Tutu to Birmingham for a memorable Celebration Week from 18 to 23 April. We lost a packet of money – for reasons not yet wholly laid bare, but certainly including an element of vicious anti-Tutu propaganda, fuelled in part from Pretoria. I went to my own diocese for help during the actual Week, as our cash ran out, and we needed to pay sub-contractors. The diocese ultimately bailed the Celebration out to the tune of over £100,000. After the Celebration was over (and numbers were less than we needed again during the final weekend) I then considered my position in relation to the Diocesan Board of Finance and put my resignation into my diocesan bishop's hands, as taking full responsibility for the shortfall. It was accepted on that same basis. My departure was announced on 11 May, and will take effect at the end of September. Meanwhile I have been swamped with kind letters, gifts of money (which have gone to the deficit), and very positive reflections on the Celebration itself – I wonder whether you saw the final Villa Park rally on *Songs of Praise* on BBC TV on Pentecost Sunday?

I have three times at least in my life been lifted up when I had no reason to expect to be. I have also had three occasions when I have been cast down from my seat, and this is the third. So I sing the Magnificat and see it all coming true in my own life – and perhaps God has at least one more up and one more down yet to come. Oh yes, and the Psalms of the daily course for the first half of May were a great comfort.

NOL and Grove Books will continue. I will keep you posted about COB in due course.

Colin Buchanan

Book Reviews

Ecumenical Relations: Canons B43 and B44: Code of Practice (Church House Bookshop, 1989, 50pp., £2).

Earlier issues of *NOL* have referred to this 'Code' at the stages where it was first drafted by a working party including Liturgical Commission members, then approved with slight changes by the House of Bishops in January, then knocked about further (though not enough) by the BMU conference on 6 February, and then promised for publication. Sp here it is at last – published on 30 May.

A large proportion of the 50 pages is devoted to official sources, the background legislation, the text of the two canons etc. I was sorry not to find my own Grove Booklet in the Bibliography. The rest of the coaching material includes the useful along with the self-evident. To my own mind more interest attaches to B44 (of Local Ecumenical Projects) than to B43, which is of general relevance to all parishes, and usually only canonizes what is already frequent practice.

As to B44, there are model forms for registering the various stages of approval of the extending into a sharing agreement, and these we have already used in Birmingham diocese before the 'Code was published. One oddity here is that whereas the form for the incumbent's approval acknowledges that 'part' of a parish may be a recognized LEP, the other forms do not – and this is even odder where, as in one Birmingham case, the LEP is a Conventional District, which could hardly be covered by the blanket form given for the (parent) PCC's approval. The forms become bizarre when they provide for the winding up of LEPs . . .

There is much to rejoice the biblical heart in the guidelines given on pages 21-22 about what should or should not be in the eucharist. However, the heart sinks on page 23, where the Code is narrower and tighter than the Canon – and where I, for one, have complained consistently about the point in public and in private, and have been ignored. In B44, para 4 (1) (e) the Canon itself provides 'for the holding . . . of joint services with any other participating Church, including services of baptism and confirmation' (page 47). It is clear that this authorizes the use of jointly prepared eucharistic services, such as the present Archbishop of York launched at the Queen's College in Birmingham, or the present Bishop of Shrewsbury had a hand in at the Keele University chaplaincy. The Canon was constructed to provide for such possibilities, *but the Code appears to exclude them*. On page 23 it reads (with reference to para 4 (1) (d)) 'This excludes all other rites (i.e. other than Church of England ones) except those allowed by the order of some other Church'. There is no discussion about the eucharist and para 4 (1) (e), though in section 88 there is a platitudinous remark about the impropriety of 'locally created rites', so that a faithful following of the Code will take away genuinely needed ecumenical provision which the Canon allows. This is frankly disgraceful. In my own last actions in relation to Birmingham LEPs, I have already had to advise my diocesan to follow the Canon, rather than the Code.

The Code presents two other problems:

- (i) It came very late – in Birmingham we were well down the line in accordance with the Canon a year before we even knew there would

be a Code. Thus the Code proposes to let existing LEPs run, at least for a period, whereas my own assumption had always been that an attempt to make the ecumenical scene legally tidy ought to apply to the existing untidiness particularly (compare the introduction of the Alternative Services Measure in 1966).

- (ii) An extraordinary oddity is that I cannot discover *whose* 'Code' this is! I wonder whether in fact it is only attributable to the Church House Bookshop, which markets it. It is full of advice, rulings, guidance and commentary – yet not once does it tell us (as far as I see) *who* is offering us this freedom from on high. We are told on page 2 of previous codes produced by the House of Bishops – but this Code is not attributed. We do actually know that the House of Bishops has seen the Code and (more or less) adopted it. But the actual published booklet appears to rest upon the sheer mesmeric effect of print, rather than the authority of anyone telling us that 'this is so'.

The 'Draft Instrument' arose after much public squawking and private correspondence (not least in these columns) as the one really useful assistance needed with B44 – that is, the drafting of an 'Instrument' – was not in the Code in its earlier drafts. Well, we asked for it, and we have got it. It is verbose and exhaustive, and my own reflection (after several bouts of attempted drafting) is that it would be better in each LEP to draft simply for those points at which other Canons were being over-ruled (i.e. draft negatively by the exceptions to the usual Anglican rules), rather than attempting to make full provision, and the published 'Draft' does seem to go somewhat in that direction compared with earlier circulated drafts.

The amusing feature of the Draft Instrument is that on page 6 it provides (in accordance with B44, para 4 (1) (e), on which see above) for exactly that form of 'joint service' of holy communion which the Code tells us would be a 'locally created rite' which 'tends to isolate the LEP from communion with the wider Church'. So hurrah for the Instrument, drawn up with reference to the actual Canon and not someone's prejudices.

COB

Kenneth Stevenson, *Accept This Offering, The Eucharist as Sacrifice Today* (SPCK, London, 1989), 88pp, £3.95.

Three years ago Kenneth Stevenson gave us *Eucharist and Offering* (Pueblo, New York, 1986; reviewed by COB in *NOL*, March 1987), a weighty historical study in which he argued the case for the centrality of the notion of sacrifice in the Church's tradition of eucharistic celebration and the importance of an understanding of all worship as sacrificial. In that scholarly study it is clear that his intentions are ecumenical, devotional and pastoral, and he has now followed this through with *Accept This Offering*, a little book that makes the same case and is appropriately dedicated to his own 'praying community'.

Accept This Offering is a brief, synchronic guide to the eucharist, pointing to the sacrificial nature of the whole and its parts, written at a level suitable for the parish bookstall. Unfortunately, I do not think it is a success. At times the discussion is practical and concrete, at times the scholarly concerns of the liturgist break through. When this happens there is simply not enough clarity about fundamental concepts, so the result is ill-articulated and at times confused. Four main areas seem to me to raise problems.

Stevenson appears to use 'offering' and 'sacrifice' interchangeably, but though all sacrifice may be offering, surely not all offering is sacrifice, and to call it such is seriously to blur the connotations of sometimes violent destruction and of particularity which go with sacrifice? Rather than persuading the reluctant to a wider use of 'sacrifice', the unclarity takes the power from the sacrificial metaphor.

What might persuade the reluctant to be more adventurous linguistically is a theological structure that is firmly trinitarian, and here I find the book to be seriously deficient. If the one who offers in the eucharist is seen ultimately to be Christ, and the dynamic of the Church's offering is clearly understood to be the dynamic of the Spirit, the old arguments about propitiation and pelagianism lose their power – though if the eucharist is set in the context of the eternal self-giving of the Trinity, it is correspondingly important to hold onto the once-for-allness of the cross. Lack of a strong trinitarian theological structure leads in the book to statements like this: 'The Church is servant of Christ and therefore dares to act boldly in imitation of him'. (p.87). What is missing is a firm hold on the Church's 'in-Christness' and the power of the Spirit that makes the eucharist more than a ritual *imitatio Christi*.

This little book skirts one of the central questions of eucharistic theology: how is Christ present in the eucharistic elements? However much Stevenson wants to draw back from discussion about an explicit moment of consecration and to restore an overall sacrificial dynamic, it is in part the conviction that the consecrated elements act as a focus for the presence of Christ that makes sense of the desire to intercede after the epiclesis (we have drawn close to him and he to us), and the conviction that Christ is substantially present in the elements gives to the Tridentine doctrine of the mass as propitiatory sacrifice its singular clarity and power. In the West a realist doctrine of Real Presence went with the mass being defined as 'really' a sacrifice. The question that must be faced, even in a little book like this, seems to me: why should a doctrine of the mass as metaphorically a sacrifice not to go with a doctrine of the metaphorical presence of Christ in the sacrament – and if it does what are we saying?

In *Eucharist and Offering*, Stevenson uses three 'criteria' (are they really 'criteria'?) for the interpretation of the eucharist: 'story', 'response' and 'gift'. In *Accept This Offering* they are described on the penultimate page as 'three inherent movements of sacrifice in the Eucharist'. Colin Buchanan found that the more he read the big book 'the less clear' he found 'the categories'. Turning them into 'movements of sacrifice' does not solve the problem – especially when there is no clarifying discussion of the notion of sacrifice, nor of other key terms like 'metaphor' or 'paradox'. The result is a vague theology of eucharistic offering which will not persuade the unwilling that we have here a deep channel of recovered meaning (as I think we do); the suspicion remains that we are not that far from some old theological rocks.

Nicholas Sagovsky

This month's Booklets . . .
are Evangelism no. 6, *Claiming the Urban Village*, by Ian Bunting, and Spirituality no. 29, *Advance by Retreat*, by John Pearce. Ian Bunting is well-known for his very effective 'church-planting' ministry at Chester-le-Street in County Durham, and here he reflects at some depth upon the sociological context for evangelism. John Pearce wrote (with his wife) an earlier Spirituality Booklet, no. 21, *Inner-City Spirituality*, which is now running out of print, and in this new Booklet he takes particular pains to put before an evangelical constituency the strengths and values of going on Retreat – a concept (and terminology) only just reaching many evangelicals.

. . . and next month's
are Joint Liturgical Study no. 10, *Adult Initiation*, edited by Donald Withey and Pastoral Series no. 38, *No-Gay Areas: Pastoral Care of Homosexual Christians*, by Lance Pierson. The Liturgical Study includes four papers read at last Summer's conference of the Society for Liturgical Study (SLS), at Nottingham, essays by David Thompson ('Theology of Adult Initiation in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries'), by COB ('Adult Initiation and the Anglican Church'), by Christopher Walsh ('Adult Initiation and the Catholic Church'), and by Peter Ball ('Adult Initiation and the Adult Catechumenate'). The Pastoral Booklet carries its message in its title.

. . . and Reprints
include immediately Spirituality no. 16, *Silence*, by David Runcorn, and (yet again) Pastoral no. 9, *Good News down the Street*, by Michael Wooderson. Soon we hope to add Liturgical Study no. 12/13, *Worship in the New Testament*, by Charlie Moule, and Ministry and Worship no. 61, *One Baptism Once*, by COB.

. . . and a snip
is *Latest Anglican Liturgies* 1976-1984 edited by COB – now remaindered by SPCK, and available from Grove Books for £6.50 per copy post-free (instead of the original £25).

. . . and prices
go up for the cheaper items on 1 July. The Board of Directors reluctantly concluded in May that all £1.10 Booklets should go up to £1.20 on 1 July. Get your orders in quickly for back-numbers at the £1.10 price. (All other items keep their prices unchanged).

MORE CRANMER OPPORTUNITIES

The Quincentenary of Archbishop Thomas Cranmer is being celebrated by study of his work and participation in worship as he wished it to be in Winchester Cathedral on Saturday 8 July. Professor Stuart Hall, Professor

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of Ecclesiastical History in the University of London will lecture in the Prior's Hall at 11.00 a.m. (coffee at 10.30 a.m.) on Cranmer's Life and Liturgies. At 12.30 p.m. the 1552 Order of Holy Communion will be celebrated in the Cathedral. At 2.15 p.m. Dr. Bryan Spinks, Chaplain of Churcho-hill College, Cambridge, lectures on 'Cranmer and the Liturgy Today', in the Prior's Hall. After discussion we depart at 3.30 p.m. Admission £2.00, Unwaged £1.00. Please bring your own lunch.

COB

THE BRINK OF NEW SERVICES

The Liturgical Commission is still busy lifting the corner of the semi-transparent wraps still more or less in position over the new liturgical material designed to be used in Urban Priority Areas. A report was given to the conference of bishops from dioceses including UPAs at Lambeth Palace on 9 May. Pat Dearnley, the Archbishop's Officer for UPAs, was reported in *Church Times* as saying that the proposals would be too radical for some, and not radical enough for others. However, he is known to take the view that there could well be a third category of UPA parishes which will find them 'just right'. (We print in this issue a letter about the particular eucharistic prayer from the Commission we published recently).

GENERAL SYNOD STANDING COMMITTEE FUDGES THE BAPTISMAL ISSUE AGAIN

The London Regional Conference of the Movement for the Reform of Infant Baptism (MORIB), a Movement of which I am President, heard on 6 May from Roger Godin, whose Private Member's Motion passed through the last session of General Synod and was reported in our February issue. The thrust of his motion was a request to the Standing Committee to bring a thorough report before the Synod. On 6 May he reported that the secretary-general had told him there is no funding available for a working party on the issue, and therefore Martin Reardon, outgoing secretary of the Board of Mission and Unity, would do a one-man job, a 'position paper'. It is no secret – indeed it was in *Church Times* on 12 May – that Roger Godin was not overjoyed about this decision. The Standing Committee had given no warning in the February debate of their inability to do a thorough job, whilst the Archbishop of York had said almost the opposite, that the task should be theologically well-based.

The point at issue is that the Southwell motion which the Synod carried in November 1976 (calling for a 're-consideration' of the conditions upon which infants are accepted for baptism) was met by a one-man report – the rather limp and brief Knapp-Fisher document of 1977. For a controverted issue, this was highly unsatisfactory, and was in fact never fed back into Synod. The Synod has since had other instances of one-man treatments of controverted topics – particularly in respect of 'penance' where it was highly unsatisfactory. Martin Reardon is much better placed than previous one-man bands to do the job, but it is dangerous in principle, and cheese-paring in practice, to remit the task to him alone. At least he should have assessors available by post, which might be contained within an extra fiver on the budget and avoid a supplementary vote in Synod.

C.O.B.

DIOCESE TO DIOCESE

Editors: John Corbyn and Martin Dudley

Wakefield Worship

The Bishop of Wakefield recently delivered himself of his opinion of the quality of worship in his diocese. He wrote in the April edition of the diocesan monthly publication, *See Link*:

'As I go round the Diocese, I am, quite frankly, ashamed of what passes for worship in some churches. . . I began to think "poor God" – does he really have to put up with this every Sunday?'

Perhaps a light in the darkness of worship in Wakefield can be seen in the interest, especially by lay people, in a day conference recently held by the Wakefield Diocesan Committee for Liturgy and Worship. The Rev. Christopher Sterry, the secretary of that committee writes:

Encouraged by a strong request from the Diocesan Centenary Consultation, held at Lancaster in September 1988, the Committee began to plan its first 'training day'. The chosen title was 'Living Worship – Preparation and Presentation of Parish Worship'. The Committee decided to focus on ordinary, week by week parish worship. The aim was to encourage parishes to approach it with greater vision and imagination. The event was advertised through the Diocesan mailing, and through the Secretary's ever-growing mailing list of interested laity who never hear anything from their clergy! Publicity was also given a great boost by the controversial letter in the Diocesan newsletter from the Bishop of Wakefield, David Hope, in which he roundly criticized the appalling standard of worship he encountered in many parishes.

The number of participants exceeded our wildest expectations. The Conference was attended by a total of 344 people (including 22 leaders). Interestingly participation was predominantly lay. Apart from workshop leaders there were only 44 clergy.

Bishop David began the day with an inspirational address on the vital importance of worship at the heart of the church's life. He referred to the very positive experiences of worship the Diocese had enjoyed during 1988, our centenary year, notably at the Centenary Eucharist and the Lancaster Consultation. Emphasizing the importance of the quality of worship, he stressed the need for every church to prepare for worship conscientiously, and to make good use of all its resources. Finally he challenged parishes to present worship in such a way that it would leave people saying 'It was good, Lord, to be here!' rather than 'Thank God that's over!'.

The plenary session before lunch was an 'Any Questions' panel discussion. A number of very controversial questions were tackled, including 'What do you do with noisy kids?' and 'Are church choirs a good thing?' In answer to a question on inclusive language, Trevor Lloyd gave a concise summary on the current situation. Surprisingly a conservative and anti-inclusive response from the floor was greeted with widespread applause!

The main speaker in the afternoon was Trevor Lloyd from the Liturgical Commission, who gave a wide-ranging practical address, well illustrated on the OHP. Trevor discussed both preparation and presentation in terms of resources available, looking at these in terms of people, space, texts, and time.

Three hours during the day were spent in workshops. Participants chose one workshop from a selection of ten: Music, Preparation, Prayer, Presentation, Art, Drama, Dance, Coping with Change, Children and The Word, Children, Coping with Change and Prayer were overwhelming first choices amongst the laity. The conference finished with a very lively act of worship at the local parish church – filled to overflowing.

Over 120 people returned feedback from after the event. Organizing so many people is never easy and inevitably there were some criticisms. Many of them were of a practical nature, about the location, queues for lunch etc. Others, more seriously, complained of a gap in expectation between workshop leaders and participants. One major reflection, from a number of people, was that we had tried to tackle too much in too short a space of time. Over a hundred people expressed interest in another conference, many of them suggesting useful topics to tackle in the future. A number of parishes also asked for help from the committee on a local basis. One popular request was for advice in forming a parish committee. The overwhelming reaction however was of great enthusiasm, and desire to learn more. We have been very encouraged by our first effort, and we have learned much for the future!

Chris Sterry's report shows yet again the interest and concern in the parishes about worship. One wonders why more parishes were represented by their laity than the clergy? From my own experience there is resistance by the clergy to Saturday meetings, yet lay people are often unable to attend weekday meetings. These two factors are not easily reconciled, yet it is so vital on this issue for clergy and laity to learn together.

An Inadequate Liturgical Commission

Over the months Martin and I have reported the activities of a number of diocesan committees. Naturally we can only report those who are active and choose to communicate with us. A picture has emerged of a number of very active committees, about which we regularly report, and of other dioceses where the Liturgical Committee is non-existent, moribund or defunct.

I have come to wonder, both from my own experience of Liturgical Committees as well as the picture I have built up from co-writing this column, whether the work of diocesan committees could not benefit from support from the Liturgical Commission.

It is all well and good that our church has a national Liturgical Commission on a continuing basis. However the Commission seems to be consumed with the admittedly time-deavouring business of producing reports and liturgical texts. Good liturgical texts and reports are important in the process of the renewal of worship but their mere publication does not itself renew worship – the comment of the Bishop of Wakefield above amply demonstrates this.

I quite appreciate that the Liturgical Commission, as it is presently constituted and resourced, is not able to take on a wider role. I would like, therefore, to make this modest proposal: that two half-time field officers are appointed to the Liturgical Commission, one based in the north and one in the south, one combined with a parochial and one with a college appointment. Such field officers would be able to assist and support not only Liturgical Committees, and where necessary, help with their formation if required, but also with Post-Ordination Training, Laity Development, Readers' Committees and the like. They might also be able to co-ordinate regional conferences and put together day conference 'road shows' which could be put on in a number of dioceses. I realize that funding would be a problem, but could not at least some of the cost be contributed by educational trusts?

In this area there is a need, perceived not least by the bishops, but also by the laity of our church; is there a will to do something about it?

Hereford Diocese

The Hereford Diocesan Liturgical Committee recently reviewed the 'Worship Swap Shop' which it held towards the end of last year. Over 30 had indicated that they wished to attend – 60 arrived on the day! It was felt to have been a useful day and material shared at it had been circulated to participants. Follow-on consultations on modern hymnbooks, drama and the tension between eucharistic and non-eucharistic family worship were discussed.

Inductions Again!

The Rev. Ken Jamieson has written to me on this theme, sharing his experience of two Free Church inductions in the Midlands. In the first, at Blenheim Crescent Baptist Church in Luton, the new minister was handed a membership roll of the church, being charged to care for those listed, and a map of the area, being charged to care for those resident. At a Pentecostal induction he attended, the previous minister was the preacher – such a contrast to our Anglican way of doing things.

John Corbyn

The Rev. John Corbyn
24 Milkington Stile Lane
Lancaster LA1 5QB
0524-382362

The Rev. Martin Dudley
The Vicarage, 107 Owlsmoor Road
Owlsmoor, Camberley GU15 4SS
0344-771286