

News of Liturgy

Editor: Colin Buchanan

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What does it mean, theologically?

It seems to me that consecration consists of setting the bread and wine aside (i) in remembrance of Jesus' death, and (ii) as a sign of incorporation into Christ. The agape bread is set aside, but as a sign of something different: the unconditional love of Jesus.

What do we do for an encore?

After Easter we had begun an 11.00 a.m. family service, and since this would include some parents who transferred from the 9.30 a.m. communion, we had to have communion at least occasionally. So we have settled into a pattern of a monthly communion with agape bread at the family service. We use the same pattern as above, but children come to the rail with their parents. While giving communion bread to communicants, I give agape bread to anyone else who wants it, saying, 'Receive this bread as a sign of the great love of Jesus'.

There have been no complaints. The 9.30 a.m. communion continues as before, since we are rarely have any non-communicants there.

John Hartley, Hanford (Stoke-on-Trent)

Books Received

We have neither space nor time this month for detailed book reviews, but mention for the record various titles we hope to review in future months. Crossing the Atlantic for distribution by Columba Book Service, 93 The Rise, Mount Merrion, Blackrock, Co. Dublin, Eire is a whole series of books. From the Liturgical Press comes Michael Skelley, *The Liturgy of the World: Karl Rahner's Theology of Worship* (176pp., £9.99). Skelley identifies in Rahner a 'liturgy' that is the life of the church lived in the world, penetrated by the grace of God. The ritual liturgy of Christian worship is a focus and model of this. We also have through Columba a Resource Publications book, Susan Jorgensen, *Rekindling the Passion: Liturgical Renewal in your Community* (252pp., £13.50). This is a multi-faceted exploration of what the worship event ought to be for the participants. Geoffrey Chapman have sent the third edition of J. D. Crichton, *Christian Celebration: Understanding the Sacraments* (xii/273pp. £12.99)—a book which is a classic, now revised considerably by its octogenarian (and highly active) author. A different kind of book (if only because largely Protestant) comes from Marc Europe—Paul Beasley-Murray, *Anyone for Ordination?* (xv/174pp., £8.99). This is a symposium from two Anglican contributors, one Methodist, one RC, one URC, one Baptist, one 'Anabaptist' (a Mennonite), one Independent, and one 'new Church' (Roger Forster). It varies from the doctrinal to the pastoral, and from the historical to the anecdotal, and is not well summarized by its title. Kingsway published last year Joel Edwards, *Let's Praise him Again: An African-Caribbean Perspective on Worship* (118pp., £5.99), a title which is self-explanatory—and the book has both a wide survey and a profound exploration of black Pentecostalism, right through to the Secret Rapture . . .

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Editorial

I spent the first week of June at a kind of holiday centre on the Indian Ocean, a few miles North of Mombasa. The place was called Kanamai, and it was the venue for the first pan-African Anglican Liturgical Consultation, convened by Bishop David Gitari of Kirinyaga in the Church of the Province of Kenya under the aegis of CAPA (the Council of Anglican Provinces in Africa). There were participants present from all round Africa, though West Africa was slightly short—the Province of Nigeria alone having failed to send a representative and the Province of West Africa itself having only one—Bishop Robert Okine of Ghana—as the other man nominated, a Sierra Leonean, wrote to say that he could not travel in the octave of Pentecost—a form of self-denial in a festive season which no-one present had ever encountered before.

I remember Bishop Bill Westwood saying at the Lambeth Conference that all the enthusiasm being generated among the bishops would not go far when we got home. 'Who is going to wax enthusiastic at other people's holiday slides?' he asked. I bear that in mind, and do not delay on what a good *experience* it was (but it was). However, it also had significance and, one dares hope, a likely actual impact upon various parts of church life in Africa.

For the theme was 'African culture and Anglican liturgy', and the Consultation was particularly concentrating on rites of passage, and asking whether and how they could be baptized into Christ—and into Christian liturgy. The upshot was a statement of principle from each of five working groups, the adoption of each statement by the whole Consultation (around 40 persons in all), and the writing of an Introduction by Bishop Gitari. So the bulk of this issue of NOL was intended to the forwarding to our readers of the Kenamai Statement, a document which would be simultaneously made available as a small booklet for distribution in African Provinces (and elsewhere). The Statement was made in the context of the York 1989 International Anglican Liturgical Consultation, which handled inculturation, and the Toronto 1991 International Anglican Liturgical Consultation, which treated initiation. The commendation of the Toronto document by the Cape Town meeting of Primates and ACC was also taken very seriously.

So much for preamble. But in the event the Statement was not ready for the end of June, and we are instead publishing a slightly thinner NOL than usual this month, with a promise of a fatter one next month. Stand by for it.

Colin Buchanan

GENERAL SYNOD JULY 1993

General Synod goes into residence at York University from 9 to 13 July. Liturgy will not rank hugely on the agenda, but we shall have the revision stage of *The Service of the Word and Affirmations of Faith* and final approval of the revised 'liturgical Canons'.

A remarkable sea-change has come over *The Service of the Word*, now re-dubbed *A Service of the Word*. The single page of rubrics has grown and grown. There is now an 'Introduction'—i.e. a coaching document which, for the first time ever, is an integral authorized part of an official alternative service of the Church of England. It will be interesting to see if attempts are made to amend it line-by-line in Synod. (We are also using the new standing orders—not new in terms of time, but innovatory in that they have simply been waiting to be used for some time, and this is their first outing; they allow for a referral back to the Revision Committee after the Revision Stage in Synod). The rubrics of the original draft are now not only topped but also tailed—the revised text includes eleven pages of actual liturgical text (penitential material, partly from *Patterns*, and absolutions), curiously, just as the Revision Committee is telling us *how* lay people should say absolutions, the revised Canons are telling us that they must not say them at all . . .

In with the Synod papers is an official symposium by the Liturgical Commission—*The Renewal of Common Prayer: Unity and Diversity in Church of England Worship; Essays by the Liturgical Commission* edited by Michael Perham (CHP and SPCK, £7.99). There is no time this month to do other than note it, but it will be surveyed and accorded due treatment next month.

On the agenda also is a diocesan Synod motion from Worcester asking for 'further discussion' of communion before confirmation (on which see page 3 opposite).

Meanwhile we await the end of the painful process of the Ecclesiastical Committee of Parliament's consideration of the ordination of women as presbyters (which seems to have been largely shadow-boxing with Clause 2 . . .). We understand the Ecclesiastical Committee is to meet with the Legislative Committee of General Synod on 5 July, and that we shall hear the outcome at General Synod. If by any chance the Ecclesiastical Committee is then satisfied, it *could* in theory before the Summer parliamentary recess issue its certificate that the Measure is 'expedient' to be introduced into Lords and Commons, and if that were to happen then it seems that the Measure could go through Parliament in late October, and thus the Canon could be promulgated in February 1994 at that projected one-day session of General Synod. (If anyone outside England, or outside the Church of England, thinks that the Parliamentary involvement is simply mad, that person is absolutely right, but it is not the task of *News of Liturgy* to do other than report the procedure with our usual objectivity). At the same time the House of Bishops has picked up the tip that the Ecclesiastical Committee wanted more guarantees of fair treatment for those opposed to the ordination of women as presbyters. Thus the House is bringing to Synod a draft 'Act of Synod' which, if adopted, would give some further moral weight to the plans to create three new suffragan sees in order to provide 'provincial episcopal visitors'.

Someone told me that the congregation often includes Episcopal clergy from other parishes who wonder what they can learn and take home to enliven their own congregations. I understand that Pentecostal ministers also turn up as observers. Whether the distinctive worship of the Church of the King is portable, or whether it is limited to the congregation who made a particular and unique pilgrimage, remains to be seen. In the meantime it is a beautiful synthesis of two distinct Christian traditions, and a signal that the possibility of creativity and discovery is far from over.

Paul Gibson, 8 June 1993

Eclectic, Issue No. 3, Autumn 1992

AGAPE BREAD AT COMMUNION

What do you do with the children at communion time?

I have always found it offensive that we deny them bread and wine, even when their faith is as real as that of many adults. Here the high-church tradition is heavily eucharistic, but matters came to a head when the local junior school (C.E.(C)) booked to come to church on Ascension Day for the traditional 'high mass'. (I'm the first non-Anglo-Catholic for sixty years, and I'm not very good at 'high mass'!)

I thought of having a hymn-sandwich, but that would deny our regular mid-week congregation their communion service on a festival. How about a tack-on communion after the children had gone? But the exit of 270 children would disrupt any service, it would exclude the believing members of staff, and the syllabus talks about letting children experience Anglican worship, including eucharistic worship. I did not want to have 270 children as mere spectators, so at the archdeacon's suggestion I used 'agape bread'.

What did we do?

At the offertory hymn a large wooden bowl of brown sliced bread, cut into about 300 pieces, was brought up together with the usual bread and wine, while the collection was being taken. I said a shortened thanksgiving prayer (usual ASB structure) over the communion bread (white sliced) and wine, and then a prayer over the 'agape bread' which I based on the words over rings at a wedding: ' . . . by your blessing, let this bread be to those who eat it a sign of the great love of Jesus . . .'. Communicants were then invited up to the communion rail to receive communion. Then all were invited to take a piece of bread if they wished, as a sign of Jesus' love. The bread was divided into several bowls and passed along the rows, supervised by eight of our regular adults—numbers were too large for the children to come forward to the rail. Almost all the children and some parents took a piece of bread.

What reactions did we get?

The children seemed to like the service, and members of staff fed back positive comments afterwards. More surprisingly, the regular congregations also thought it was lovely, and no-one raised any theological quibbles at all. Was that because of my care in not confusing the two breads, or was it just that the adults hate theology but love seeing children in church?

Is it biblical?

The archdeacon says it derives from the love feasts of 1 Corinthians, but I'm not so sure about that. The bread and wine were part of the last supper but not the whole of it, so I guess I think it is acceptable to add agape bread to the modern communion service. Besides, wedding rings are not biblical, but most Christians accept them as helpful.

THE CHURCH OF THE KING, VALDOSTA

During a recent meeting of the Council of Associated Parishes (a group of North American Anglicans concerned with renewal through liturgy), members had opportunity to attend Sunday worship in Valdosta, Georgia. One of the options was 'The Church of the King', a congregation formed about three years ago out of an interesting background and with fascinating consequences.

Apparently a schism in a large Pentecostal congregation led to the separation of one pastor and a large number of members. After prayerful consideration the pastor recommended that the group apply for membership in the Episcopal Church. The Diocese of Georgia imposed a period of preparation, after which some 200 members were confirmed together, and the pastor (Stan White) was ordained to the priesthood.

The congregation acquired an old boat warehouse on a suburban commercial strip and converted it into a church. The setting is clearly in debt to both the Pentecostal background of the members and their present Anglican identity. However, many decorations are in a style not usually associated with the Episcopal Church. (Although the majority of the members of the Church of the King appear to be white, I was told that it contains a larger percentage of black members than any other Episcopal church in southern Georgia). It is also noteworthy that banners contain words rather than iconic images.

When I attended the Church of the King I was welcomed warmly at the door. The processional hymn (projected, like all hymns, onto a blank wall) was 'Alleluia, sing to Jesus', familiar enough to Anglicans. Some people waved their arms. Music was supported by organ, piano, orchestra, choir, and quartet. The musical effect was powerful, combining (I was to discover as the liturgy went on) elements of black American, Motown, and pure rock.

The remarkable feature of worship at the Church of the King is the integrity with which it honours the structure of the Episcopal Book of Common Prayer, and yet is able to 'grow' within that structure (like roses on a trellis) the full-bodied exuberance of Pentecostal piety. After the greeting we sang part of the *Gloria*, and then followed it with at least half a dozen biblically-based praise choruses, all of which expanded and developed the *Gloria's* theme. I was told that in other charismatic parishes in the area there was a tendency to use praise choruses for a forty-minute warm-up before a fairly dreary celebration of the eucharist. Here the praise element was embedded with authenticity in the very pattern of the rite.

I was struck a number of times during the liturgy by how 'Anglican' it was, but without loss of Pentecostal qualities. The sermon was delivered in a free-moving style associated with the more modest forms of southern evangelism. The content however was quite different. It was, in fact, a teaching sermon, and part of a teaching series on relationships. It included an appeal to reason (thank you, Richard Hooker), and it seriously questioned religiosity.

A group of lay leaders joined the priest at the holy table during the eucharistic prayer (the principal Sunday liturgy is always a eucharist), and they assisted in distributing holy communion at stations. A healing liturgy followed the time of communion. Those who presented themselves for anointing were embraced at the same time by members of the congregation. The announcements indicated a broad range of opportunities for study and worship at other times on Sunday and during the remainder of the week.

COMMUNION BEFORE CONFIRMATION

There are three new publications on the English scene which hasten the case for the Church of England to alter its rules on admission of children to communion prior to confirmation. The first of these is the long-awaited volume *Growing in Newness of Life: Christian Initiation in Anglicanism Today: Papers from the Fourth International Anglican Liturgical Consultation* edited by David Holeton (who chairs the IALCs) and published by the Anglican Book Centre, Toronto at CAN\$14.95. It is imported into the UK by the Canterbury Press, Norwich and retails for £7.50. Although it was reviewed in *Church Times* in June, our review copy only reached NOL at the time of going to press. The essays give much more body to the Toronto Statement 'Walk in Newness of Life', and include evidence from different parts of the world about both theology and practice, and both liturgy and pastoral ministry (including, of course, discussion of the adult catechumenate).

The second publication has a semi-official standing in the Church of England—it is *Communion before Confirmation*, by the Culham College Institute, Abingdon (44 pages but no price visible). The Institute conducted on behalf of a working group of the House of Bishops a survey of the parishes round the country where projects of giving communion to children before the age of confirmation have been established. There is a 'political' background to this, in that, when the House of Bishops blocked synodical progress towards 'communion before confirmation' in 1991, the two faint notes of hope which emerged were the two working parties—this one on the actual evidence from parishes ahead of their times, and the other on the catechumenate (which has yet to report). In the event the Culham College Institute survey is highly encouraging. It does not pretend to be handling theology—it is only asking whether there was evidence one way or another as to whether such projects were a 'success'. It seems that 98 parishes completed questionnaires (and the returning the questionnaire may itself, of course, have a self-selecting element in it), and the overwhelming bulk of responses is highly favourable. Perhaps, as one bishop said on seeing it, 'the tide is coming in' (it has been a long way out and a long time turning in the Church of England).

The third publication will not naturally cross the desk of most NOL readers. It is an article by Leslie Francis and David Lankshear, entitled 'Changing Trends in Anglican Confirmation: The Implications for Local Church Life' and published in the *Journal of Empirical Theology* Volume 6 (1993) no. 1. (It has been helpfully supplied to NOL by Leslie Francis). In the words of its own initial summary 'This paper explores in detail the changing trends in candidates presented for confirmation throughout one Church of England diocese between 1981 and 1989 and models the implications of these trends against indicators of local church life and church growth'. The diocese concerned is Chelmsford, one of the largest and most populous dioceses in the Church of England, and one with a great sociological spread from teeming East London to thinly populated East Anglia. We do not stay here on the full range of information gleaned, but it is clear that in the nine years the total fell by one-sixth, whilst the category of over-21s not only rose proportionately within the falling total, but rose absolutely from the first three years to the last three years of the decade. In a complex and demanding statistical presentation the authors show an apparent connection between healthy numbers of teenage and adult candidates and overall church growth, whilst they are less ready to

assert such growth where there is a prevalence of under-13s being confirmed—these findings present little encouragement for those benefices currently promoting the policy of presenting pre-teenagers for confirmation' (page 75). What then should we make of the erstwhile recent majority view in the House of Bishops that we should be ready to lower the age of confirmation (rather than admit to communion prior to confirmation)? Again, is it that the tide is genuinely turning?

This month's publication is . . .

. . . Alcuin/GROW Joint Liturgical Study no. 24, *Liturgical Presidency* by Paul James, an East London presbyter who has done some close research into the *manner* of eucharistic celebration and the presidency of it.

. . . and next month's

is *Worship Series* no. 125, *Ministerial Integrity in Liturgy*, by Charles Hutchins.

THE COMMISSION AND THE PRAYER BOOK SOCIETY

We continue the printing of the text we began earlier this year.

THE PBS SUBMISSION

4. The Commission will be reviewing the Lectionary. Whatever other changes are made so far as scripture readings printed for use in services are concerned, we would urge that:

- (i) The Authorized Version should be included for use with Prayer Book and other traditional language services.
- (ii) Only one modern language version should be used. We would suggest the Revised Standard Version (of 1952) for three reasons:
 - (a) It is good for reading aloud.
 - (b) Its cadences are close to those of the Authorized Version.
 - (c) For this reason it can be substituted readily for the AV if, for a particular passage, the latter is judged too difficult or inaccurate.

We share the feeling of the Commission that the present multiplicity of versions has contributed to a growing ignorance of the Bible. The AV and RSV are sufficiently alike for a passage to be recognisably the same in the two versions.

THE LITURGICAL COMMISSION RESPONSE

4. The Commission shares the view that the ideal in any replacement to the ASB would be the use of only one modern language version of scripture that would then have the chance to establish itself alongside the AV through regular liturgical use. The majority of the Commission, if pressed, would probably show a personal preference for the 1952 RSV, and that is the version that the Commission has used in most of its recent writings. But those who are most concerned with the inclusive language issue might argue for the New RSV, and there are also those who have been impressed with the Revised English Bible, which, unlike the NEB that preceded it, was written with liturgical reading in mind. But the Commission is doubtful whether the Church can come to an agreement on this issue. A lot will depend on whether a revised ASB is to include the text for all lections, and that has still to be clarified.

BITS AND PIECES

For the sake of the record, we have now cleared up the liturgical circumstances in which Ann Widdecombe first received communion in the Church of Rome—Donald Gray, the chaplain to the Speaker, has supplied the following corrigenda to our April issue:

1. She had already been *received*—at Westminster cathedral.
2. The chapel concerned was *not* the crypt chapel, but the chapel of St. Mary Undercroft. A crypt is not an undercroft, nor *vice-versa* . . .
3. It was not the first RC mass there—it happens at regular intervals.

I had a 'first' the other day myself—I was baptizing an adult by submersion and the man concerned asked in advance which ear-rings he should wear! My mind ran off to Hippolytus, and his instruction that there should be no alien object on the candidates: however, as, in Hippolytus' case, that would have included all clothing, and we allow and indeed approve of candidates being clad, I decided that ear-rings were to be classified as clothing, and simply said 'no devilish fetishes' . . .

We received a batch of back-numbers of *Liturgy Canada*, an unofficial journal produced quarterly by the 'Hoskin Group' (a name drawn from Hoskin Avenue, the Toronto avenue on one side of which is Wycliffe College, the evangelical seminary, and on the other side of which is Trinity College, traditionally polarized from it—so 'Hoskin' is the road which joins (or separates?) two traditions of Anglicanism). It is unlike NOL—it is tastefully produced and sometimes illustrated, and has up to 20 A4 pages. Its price is not exhibited, and it comes as the house journal of the Hoskin Group, and it looks as though you have to join the Group. Enquiries to The Hoskin Group, 9 Royal Palm Drive, Brampton, Ontario L6Z 1P1, Canada. We do not know how far it goes beyond Canada, so we retain our claim to be the only international Anglican liturgical journal. We note in one of last year's issues some of the *obiter dicta* from the 1991 International Anglican Liturgical Consultation in Toronto, including the interesting information that in Australia, prior to the coming of the W. G. Broughton, the first bishop, in 1836, archdeacons were commissioned to administer confirmation . . .

We learn that in the Province of Kenya, a Provincial Board of Theological Education held a Liturgical Consultation on 20-23 April 1993, and gave interim approval to rites for consecrating bishops, ordaining deacons, blessing marriages, consecrating bishops, ordaining deacons, blessing marriages, consecrating buildings, reconciling penitent sinners, burial, and making lay-readers. The texts concerned are not yet in the public arena, and more work is to be done—but clearly the creativity of the Kenyan liturgical persons continues unabated.

We have also seen new drafts of parts of a revision, or at least expansion, of the modern language eucharistic liturgy in Wales. In the present stage of drafting there are six eucharistic prayers. Two of them owe quite a bit to *Patterns*, one of them is drawn from the third prayer in Rite A, and four of them (overlapping with the first two) invoke the Holy Spirit upon the elements.