

DIOCESAN REPORT 8: ROCHESTER

There are many ways to inform those around you about the things which you are trying to say and do. Our Committee is no different. You can attract people by your behaviour—odd or otherwise, but, as we sit in different vicarages across the diocese when we meet up, nobody would notice. You can write to people and hope they read the things you send to them. You can invite them to join you with many others in the hope that they will be drawn to a crowd and you can of course invite them to small and select gatherings.

Each have their strengths and some have their weaknesses. Here at Rochester we have tried a number of them this year and each has met with some success. We tried to encourage people to attend lunchtime meetings and bring their packed lunches. We had one such lunchtime meeting in each of the archdeaconries, so as to be fair. About 15 people turned up at each session and Colin Buchanan and I shared with those attending what was happening in the world of liturgy and what publications were available.

It had seemed to us that many clergy and readers (not to mention the rest) do not know and many not want to know what is going on. This may be the rub. Many of us are keen to hear of the latest report and read the latest piece of study that is coming out of those brilliant minds which have made liturgy their special field. These things may even change the entire nature of the Church of England but do they—that 'lot'—really care? I suppose 45 is 'nt bad for lunchtime sessions—though we did far better at our Clergy Summer school at Winchester.

Here we laid on all sorts of things for all sorts of clergy. High Mass—Prayer book communion—*Celebrating Common Prayer* offices and an 'open' gathering. One of the problems that we faced and did affect what we actually did was working away from the familiar base. Most of the clergy appreciated what we did but it was interesting that the services in the chapel didn't all quite go as we might have hoped.

This problem of communicating to others is the challenge for all DLCs and the Liturgical Commission as a whole. The mystery of the liturgy and how people actually worship is hard to get across and sometimes difficult to share. We may know the theory and understand good practice, but how it works out in a local church can be a different matter. This came home to me when I was asked to lead a day on worship in a small country parish.

We talked about children in worship and music and how to get people together and plan and we had a very good day. On the Sunday I went back to lead the usual morning service. I had all the variety that you might want to use and I had prepared for children to be present. Much of this had to be changed because of numbers good by country parish standards: I faced 30 adults and 5 children. Moving from the 'book' to the practice may be the very thing that makes it hard for so many people who lead in worship. Perhaps that is why they don't always read what we write and turn out for what we do.

Paul Wright

News of Liturgy

Editor: Colin Buchanan

Issue No. 226

October 1993

Editorial

The annual meeting of diocesan representatives with the Liturgical Commission took place on 13 October, and was smartly chaired by the new chairman of the Commission, the nearly-new-purple Provost David Stancliffe, soon to be new Sarum in his own person. We met at St. Peter's, Eaton Square, and the day began with a eucharist 'staffed' by Chelmsford diocesan liturgical committee, and that in fact meant that the president was one Paul James, who came fresh from writing the *Alcuin/GROW Liturgical Study 24*, which we published in June. He told me that he is now watched like a hawk whenever he presides—his Study was entitled '*Liturgical Presidency*'!

I was critical in advance of the agenda (as well as the cost) of the day, so I must quickly recant (as far as the agenda is concerned), and pay tribute to a very good day, with only minor passing troughs.

The chairman set out for us initially a seven-year programme for liturgical revision and enrichment. He pointed out that the programme, which he was setting before the House of Bishops, was dependent upon getting material smoothly through the Synod—and he was greatly encouraged by the progress made there by *A Service of the Word*.

The items in the programme went as follows:

1. **Lectionary and Calendar:** he anticipated that the future in this field lay with the international *A Revised Common Lectionary*.
2. **Books:** he thought there had been an over-emphasis in the ASB on separating BCP and modern materials, and perhaps any 'core' Sunday worship book could include elements of both (see my editorial last month, though).
3. **Publishing:** this might well come centrally in disk form, in a kind of development from *Worship-Master* (about which, a package allegedly launched at the CRE in May, NOL is trying to get information). The standard Stancliffe joke on this point is that, with the projected development (and windowed) plan, if you order the Gloria in Excelsis in Advent, the programme does not simply obey, but flashes an alerting sign, to say 'Do you really mean that?'.
4. **Initiation:** the Commission are addressing issues about the renewal of baptismal vows (e.g. in restoration from lapsing and in reception from other denominations); and the issue of admission to communion before confirmation will arise with the report of the working party on the catechumenate, chaired by the Bishop of St. Edmundsbury and Ipswich (once 'Knaresborough'), and appointed from the Boards of Education and Mission and from the Liturgical Commission. This group will report in 1994.
5. **Seasonal and Thematic Material:** the Commission has already had a hand, official or semi-official, in the production of *Patterns*, *Promise*, *Celebrating Common Prayer*, and *Enriching the Christian Year*, and much of this material would be drawn together into future official provision.
6. **Funerals/Weddings:** there is little direct information, but David Stancliffe hinted that we should expect these to involve a 'process', rather than a single liminal step.

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As to daily offices, the chairman told us that the unofficial material in *Celebrating Common Prayer* was the most likely route into the future.

Then came questions.

What about eucharistic prayers? Answer: four or more would go to House of Bishops in 1994, including at least one for use with children. The text we had seen last year (published in NOL in October 1992) was then at draft 4, but has now reached draft 12. *Patterns* material was the starting point for others.

When will the 'commended' material in *Patterns* be published? Answer: around Easter next year.

What effect will revision have on cremations? Answer: (by David Hebblethwaite, secretary of the Commission): our material *will* get to them. Further answer (by Michael Perham): we hope our services will be sufficiently attractive to bring people back to services in church.

Will male pronouns survive the next seven years as applied to God? Answer (by Jane Sinclair): that is only one among a whole cluster of questions about language.

What Lord's Prayer are we to expect in future? Answer: the Commission proved to be a trifle divided—and the chairman raised the question as to whether we needed to be consistent in addressing God as 'you'.

Does provision of great variety mean that people recognize nothing as familiar or known? Answer (by Michael Vasey): this cannot just be left to chance and we need to identify and commend 'core' materials.

Are we to receive any help in ordaining women as presbyters? Answer: yes, there is material going to the House of Bishops. (This has since happened and the recommendations are in the public arena).

Can the Liturgical Commission give guidance to those planning institution services? Answer (by Trevor Lloyd): dioceses not only re-invent the wheel, but do so whenever they get a new bishop (!); and (by Michael Vasey): there is a very good archive of such materials kept by Michael Sadgrove, sub-provost of Coventry cathedral.

In the rest of the morning we had Michael Perham reporting on PRAXIS. He mentioned: regional developments; consultations on liturgical language on 4 November; a day on music on 20 January; training women for eucharistic presidency (this sounded insulting to me—there is no national provision for men, so why women?—but I was told 'the women themselves want it'—see page 4 below); a syllabus for courses in liturgical formation; finance (PRAXIS has some).

After lunch we had the now famous RC catechumenate and Easter video from Pasadena, *This is the Night* (produced by McCrimmons). Kenneth Stevenson commented on the 'drama' of the Easter Vigil (with dunking adult baptisms and near-dunking in oil at presbyteral confirmation) 'one verger with a wand could kill it all dead'.

If some of this looks like making friends with the dog why should we hide it?

Secondly, the terrorizing dowagers. Your own tribute to David Silk talks of you together 'finding ways of convincing the various glowering conservatisms and making them budge constructively'. Such conservatism is not entirely absent from the bench of Bishops. It is compounded by the great burdens that they carry and by a natural impatience with what inevitably seems to be bewildering detail. You yourself ask the question whether David Stancliffe is the first person appointed to the bench for his liturgical expertise. There are bishops who understand the need for liturgical development, who have some sense of what is going on around the world and in other churches, and who respect and appreciate the contribution of the individuals on the Liturgical Commission. There may even be quite a number of them. But other voices are not absent. To them liturgists are dangerous busybodies, bent on destroying the stability of souls and strangely subject to a number of contradictory fads; liturgical fidgetting, antiquarianism, radical feminism, vulgar popularizing, doctrinal naivety, ecumenical fadishness, ignorance of the passion of unchurched punters for unadorned monotony, etc.

The dowagers have a number of strategies open to them; hit the postman, cancel the mail or cut the money to the post office so that the postman calls less often. The Liturgical Commission can be as adventurous as it likes, but it knows that these three strategies are easily drawn on both in Synod and in the House of Bishops. With respect to resources, the Commissions on which I have had the privilege to serve seem to me to have brought the skill of making bricks without straw to a fine art. You have been where we now are, so be kind to us. Part of our task is to get the odd dowager into the ambulance while pandering to her delusion that she needs a horse-drawn carriage on her way to a ball. If in the course of this we discover that we like the dog and can be friends with it don't blame us too much.

Yours as ever

Michael Vasey

[This too will be answered in due course—COB]

MORE APOLOGIES

The September NOL was dreadfully late, a hazard which is present every month (as there is a balancing act involving the editor's personal schedule, the latest news which should come from the month in question, the alarmingly fast approach of the end of the month, and a printer's schedule which involves amazing hours and superb achievements). The hazard is worse every third month, when a Joint Liturgical Study is going through the press, as this production usually entails far greater quantity of material than a 24-page booklet, as well as complex type-setting arrangements to get the requisite notes on each page, and 100% accuracy in proof-reading and correcting. Thus it was in September, and we apologize.

In the process the Winchester Liturgical Committee report came out as signed by one 'Charles Pugh'. No such cleric (if cleric he be) exists in *Crockfords*, and the likely explanations that it should have read 'Charles Taylor'. This cleric does exist and is the chairman of the Winchester DLC, and should have been named aright. Again, we apologize.

(Certainly, I am nowhere conscious of saying 'he's got that wrong'—but then, for reasons that escape me, I had never myself assembled the historical evidence as to whether in the early middle ages 23, 24, 25, candles were burning at Tenebrae or in what shape they were set out, or in what order they were extinguished. I must have been short-changing my students all my teaching years, and fear lest they are now ill-equipped.)

Anglicans should perhaps be warned that Anglicanism hardly appears in the pages of an account which is virtually exclusively Roman Catholic: there are precisely four mentions in the index, amounting to a total of around ten lines in all, nine for the Church of England and one for the Episcopal Church of the USA!

COB

... and a 'find'

is a few copies of the original 1980 guide by Robin Leaver, *Hymns with the New Lectionary*. Current price, £3 postfree. First come, first served.

Correspondence

Dear Colin,

With reference to your September editorial, has the Liturgical Commission been frightened by a bark? No. Is the Commission concerned clearly and unambiguously with the question, 'what will the Church need in the third millennium?' Yes. But the situation is complex as I shall try to show. In terms of your analogy, the postman (Commission) has discovered some genuine sympathy for the dog. Furthermore the Commission is in danger of being terrorized by a couple of the elderly dowagers in whose house the dog lives. To make matters worse some of them are friends with the Director of the Post Office.

First of all, learning to love the dog. When the Prayer Book was primarily an instrument of ecclesiastical power and the enemy of new liturgical life in the Church, confrontation was inevitable. Now that the important battle is over, what is good in the liturgical tradition of our church—a dubious mixture of BCP, popular religion, Western spirituality both Augustinian and Franciscan, Oxford movement romanticism, etc.—can be appreciated for its own sake. We can be more relaxed and look at some of the deeper questions of liturgical life such as the rhythms between stability and dynamic movement.

The seventies were characterized by confidence in the spare lean lines of so-called modernity. The nineties are happier with cultural diversity, kinder towards ancient wisdom, and searching for the poetic. *The Promise of His Glory* reflects all these moods—and takes more seriously past and present inculturation of the gospel in this society than many lean and politicized Christians of the sixties and seventies. You rightly call for debate on inculturated liturgy without noticing that *Promise* is part of that response. The more lyric tone of the new translation of the missal currently under discussion in the Roman Catholic Church is another sign of new priorities and sensitivities.

Again the concern of Cranmer to create a common pattern of prayer to give a Christian shape to corporate and individual life deserves respect. Deregulation, in liturgy as in the rest of public life, is not an unqualified good. It is a characteristic of Anglican theological method to take past history into account. *The Renewal of Common Prayer* looks at a thoroughly modern (postmodern?) question; for Anglicans this means reflecting on the past as well as the future.

Questions and answers followed this one too. Michael Vasey had slipped in a pretend-policy point: 'We need not stricter baptism, but slower baptism' (which, when it comes to infants, would provide a much stricter baptism than anything I am thought to recommend). He also offered a health warning about adopting 'a transferred Catholic exoticism'. One of the questions about renewal and exciting liturgy was: 'Do we have laity with that level of excitement?'. Well, there might yet be.

Colin Buchanan

GENERAL SYNOD NOVEMBER 1993

Within a crowded programme from 9 to 12 November, General Synod has various kinds of liturgical business to fulfil:

(a) The 'Liturgical Canons' (which actually means 'The Canons about Liturgy'—contained within 'Amending Canon no. 17'). This Canon reaches final approval at this group of sessions, and, after due processing, will then rewrite the existing 'liturgical Canons'. NOL hopes to print the revised text of these Canons one by one month by month, lest anything unlawful occurs anywhere. (In passing, it is worth noting that few clergy, or Readers, actually *see* the Canons when they are revised—perhaps few do even without revision, and probably few do at the point of promising canonical obedience).

(b) *A Service of the Word and Affirmations of Faith*: These also come for final approval and authorization. The House of Bishops has not fiddled with the text, save to smooth cosmetically some tiny points in *A Service* and to be more precise at one point about the doctrine of the incarnation of the 'Creed following after the Athanasian Creed'—and those lines now read:

Fully God and fully human;
human in both mind and body.

(c) 'Extended Communion': A report from the Liturgical Commission which went through the House of Bishops in June will be brought for a 'take note' debate. It does not include texts, and is therefore a preliminary consideration—a kind of seminar approach to what may yet become substantive proposals. The central issue related to the provision not just for the sick, but for different congregations at a distance from the celebration, or for the same congregation a week or two distanced in time from the actual celebration.

(d) The 'Act of Synod': Much of Synod's attention will be concentrated on this item of the agenda. It is liturgical insofar as it touches on which bishop shall officiate at confirmations in various parishes, but much of it is simply administrative.

(e) Clearly non-liturgical business: Well, the Church Commissioners and the report on them will seize headlines. Modestly in behind such colourful (and fate-full?) displays comes COB's Private Member's Motion, asking the Standing Committee to bring forward proposals to remove direct state control on the appointment of diocesan bishops and on church legislation. Readers of NOL are invited to prod their own representatives ...

THE ORDINATION OF WOMEN AS PRESBYTERS

This legislation finally reaches the Commons on 29 October and the Lords on 2 November. At the time of writing the Church Society has brought an action for judicial review against both the Ecclesiastical Committee of Parliament and the two Archbishops as presidents of the General Synod, on the grounds that an alteration to the doctrine of the Church of England, which they assert the ordination to be, requires an *Act* of Parliament rather than a Measure. NOL would opine that, if this were the case, then the same must have been true of the Measure concerning the ordination of women as deacons in 1986—but, more to the point, that *all* church legislation, so long as it touches on the Church of England alone, is produced by Measure; that, with that one condition, there is no limit upon what can be enacted by Measure; and that to attempt to do it by 'normal' Parliamentary process (i.e. with three readings, amendments etc.) would not only be intolerably complex and delayed, but would also be quite insulting to the Church of England which would be having its life overhauled by a process in which it was simply not involved (except by bishops in the Lords). I cannot think of a stupider way of trying to delay or defeat the Measure. If, *per impossibile*, it were decreed that an Act is needed, then Parliament might well do it by eliminating the provision for the Church of England to be an exception to the Sex Discrimination Act. Whether Synod could then make a Canon on the subject is very doubtful. The application was heard on 27 and 28 October and dismissed.

Then on 29 October The Commons passed the Measure by 194 to 21.

Meanwhile the officers of Synod are still planning for the promulgation of the Canon at a special meeting on 22 February, and various bishops are planning dates running from March through to joining the women deacons into ordinary Pentecost ordinations. PRAXIS has been asked to run a training day (probably on 26 January) which will help diocesan persons for inculcating principles of eucharistic presidency into the women who are about to become presbyters. (NOL's first reaction on hearing this nationwide orientation course in presidency for the women was that the women were being treated as children—but apparently some women have been asking for this help: our guess would be that (a) the women have probably been standing near to the president for *years*, (b) they are likely to have been formed (as male assistant clergy are formed) by their existing incumbent and local practice, (c) if they need such training, so do the men, (d) the training is hardly more than a 30-minute session anyway, isn't it?).

The last bit of the jigsaw is being inserted by the Commissioners who brought before the House of Bishops a set of minimal adjustments to the text of the ordination rites, in order to make the actual ordinations and the rite used fit closely to the large numbers of likely women candidates.

CORRECTIONS RE THAT LITURGICAL COMMISSION BOOK

My editorial last month made several references to the recent Liturgical Commission symposium, but each time called it *Renewing Common Prayer*. Accidental reference to sources reveals its true name, *The Renewal of Common Prayer*. My apologies for not checking earlier.

COB

Book Reviews

Baptism—A Guide for Parents and Godparents (National Society/CHP)

Christian Marriage (National Society/CHP) (each 25 for £10)

These are four-page folding (A5 size) coloured brochures, and are clearly designed as the first literature for a parish to put into the hands of enquirers. They are refreshingly simple and genuinely welcoming, and have a happy combination of 'What will happen on the day?' and 'What does it all *mean*?'. I approached the baptism one with fearful apprehension, but was pleasantly surprised; for a publication from the official C/E press, it has a good emphasis upon the gospel character of the rite, and the Christian commitment it requires.

COB

A. J. MacGregor *Fire and Light in the Western Triduum: their use at Tenebrae and at the Paschal Vigil* (Alcuin Club Collection no. 71, The Liturgical Press, Collegeville, USA 1993, xiv/544pp., £24.50)

The Alcuin Club ceased in 1986 from publishing an annual monograph, and joined with the group for *Renewal of Worship* (GROW) in producing four 'Joint Liturgical Studies' annually. However, the Alcuin Club made new arrangements with well-known American publishers in 1991, which led to the reduction of the Joint Studies to three per annum, and the reappearance of a more substantial Alcuin Monograph for each year. This book—a very substantial one—is the first of this new series of monographs. It did not actually emerge in March 1992 as scheduled, but in the early part of 1993—and there is reason to think the time-lag may continue in the projected Alcuin Club series.

So what does the massive volume present? Arguably it is liturgical history gone mad, as, e.g. five pages on 'the position of the Easter Candle' (ch. 23) or twenty-one pages on 'The Five Grains of Incense' (ch. 25) or six pages on 'The incensation of the Easter Candle' (ch. 26—should the title of the book in fact have been *Fire, Light and Smoke . . .*?). This impression is hardly dispelled by a lengthy discussion of how the new fire should be lit (charcoal, rags soaked in spirit, matches, flint and steel (traditional, but 'requires some skill' p.211), or a lens catching the (almost certainly absent) rays of the sun)—let alone the medieval commentators who went to town on the symbolism of a spark generated from flint (pp.212-3).

Well, it is easy to smile, yet at the same time there is sober and well-proportioned introductory material. *Tenebrae* is no doubt a rarefied subject for historical study, but it reveals a kind of classic detective story—with clues about its origin in known liturgical history, with a whole cluster of related issues which need unravelling, and with evidence about its development and (arguably) decadence, followed by its renovation in the modern reforms of Holy Week put through by Pius XII before Vatican II. The same might be said about the 'New Fire', the centre-piece of this study. The story is told massively, but not without arousing interest and reflection. If the author works page by page giving a range of judicious and scholarly answers to questions I had never asked myself, yet at intervals I do find myself saying, both wistfully and even penitentially 'perhaps I should have asked about that'.

•This form of ministry is becoming more and more the norm in many parts of the C.P.S.A. It offers a framework within which other forms of ministry could develop.

•It has already gained acceptance in many parts of the Anglican Communion.

•In view of the removal of the moratorium on this form of ministry within the Cape Town diocese, we would be re-introducing a procedure formerly accepted.

•It does not raise the same complications regarding licencing/or removal of licenses as in the case of local/community priests.

•It would not be creating what many might regard as another kind of priest.

Against:

•It would be perpetuating a situation that has been judged less than ideal.

•It would avoid facing the real issues regarding the essential nature of ordination and ministry.

•The difficulties which led to the moratorium in the Diocese would continue.

THE COMMISSION AND THE PRAYER BOOK SOCIETY

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

8. We have many reservations about the doctrine contained in and omitted from the ASB and are alarmed by the use made of such criteria as 'acceptability' and 'relevance'. Acceptable to whom? Relevant for what, or to what time and place? Christianity is, after all, an historical religion, rooted in a time and place and carried by traditions. The expression of its doctrines is not governed simply by contemporary acceptability.

In particular we suspect that current liturgical formulations are affected by covert reservations about what is meant by the atoning death of Christ and the depth of man's sinful alienation from God. We wonder just how far such fundamental questions have been thought through. What is being covertly given up and is the Doctrine Commission consulted on such matters?

THE COMMISSION'S RESPONSE

8. The Commission is conscious of the danger in any book of being too influenced by the contemporary theological fashion. Clearly the ASB was, though it has been severely criticised elsewhere as much for its theological conservatism as for its theological novelty. The Prayer Book was also of course, shaped by another theological fashion, and it has its own imbalance. Part of the problem that many have with its Communion rite is its almost total lack of interest in both the Resurrection and the work of the Holy Spirit: The present Commission is very aware of the inter-action between liturgy and doctrine.

This month's booklet ...

... is Worship Series no. 126, *All-Age Worship*, by Anne Barton (who previously wrote no. 119, *Shall We Dance?*). This is a very timely production, and meets a rising need being expressed all round the country.

... and next month's

is Spirituality Series no. 47, *The Holy Spirit in Contemporary Spirituality*, by James Houston.

... and reprint

is Worship Series no. 115, *Readers and Worship in the Church of England*, by Carolyn Headley. We are also reprinting Evangelism Series no. 19, *Reaching the Unchurched: Some Lessons from Willow Creek*, by Paul Simmonds—a booklet which, though it is in the Evangelism Series wrestles with the role of worship in evangelism. and with the evangelistic (or soft touch) elements in worship.

PRAXIS

NOL has been slow in setting out the 1993-94 programme of PRAXIS, and we now make good the gap. Events to come are as follows:

6 November 1993(London) **'Penitence, Healing and Reconciliation'**

Speakers: Carl Garner and Margaret Knight
20 January 1994 (Leeds parish church) **'Penitence, Healing and Reconciliation'**

Speakers: Kenneth Stevenson and John Finney
5 March 1994 (London) **'Colour, Light and Mood'**

Speakers: Victor Stock, Evelyn Ross and David Gazeley

15 March 1994 (London) **'The Psalms and the Use of Psalmody'**

Speakers: Katherine Dell, Stephen Dean, Bro. Reginald and Christopher Irvine

14 May (London) **'Personality Types and Liturgical Style'**

Speakers: Clay Knowles and a Sister of La Retraite, Bristol

21 May 1994 (London): **'Computers—A Useful Tool for Good Worship?'**

Speaker: Trevor Critchlow

11 June 1994 (London) **'Worship—Learning from the Black-led Churches'**

Speakers: Joel Edwards and Colin Buchanan

11 June 1994 (Coventry) **'Growing in Christ—Liturgical Consultancy'**

Speakers: Anne Horton and Michael Sadgrove

8 October 1994 (Leicester) **'Worship in Small Congregations'**

Speakers: Martin Stringer and David Cutts

All meetings are timed for 10.30 till 4, and all London meetings are at St. Peter's, Eaton Square. Registration in advance is requested, to PRAXIS, 19 Maunsel Street, Westminster, London SW1P 2QN, with a fee of £10 for the first person, and £5 for each additional one in your party.

LAY PRESIDENCY ADVOCATED IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

(Part of the Report of Cape Town diocese)

In this context, it was helpful to learn how local priests function within the diocese of Pretoria. many of them are raised up by the local church, in the way that has been described, and only minister in their own and, in some cases, other nearby communities within the same parish, bearing in mind that some parishes in the Pretoria diocese have up to 40 congregations. In the case of a few other local priests, although they began their ministry in the same way, their particular gifts and experience have, eventually, allowed them to be used more widely in their parish and beyond. In other words, they function very much like the self-supporting clergy in our own diocese. The Commission has therefore recommended that we should ordain more self-supporting clergy. Some of them would be local in that they would in fact minister almost entirely within the community which raised them up. Others could be more widely used depending on their gifts and experience. All of them should emerge from, and be recognized by, the community in which they live or worship.

As indicated in the report, the Commission was aware of the difficulties which would be *posed by recommending lay presidency at the eucharist*. It would nevertheless, want to draw attention to the anomalies inherent in the present situation. We seem happy to license lay people to preach but we are not happy to give them authority to celebrate the eucharist even though the ability to *read* the service of Holy Communion is, strictly speaking, the only additional skill required. We are constantly saying we wish to promote the ministry of the laity. Yet a solution to the problems of sacramental ministry which amounts to ordaining lots more clergy would seem to indicate that we are caught within a trap of clericalism from which we cannot easily get free. In the opinion of the Commission, the issue of lay presidency is likely to be raised more and more strongly in the years to come from various parts of the Anglican Communion.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Commission felt that the ideal solution to the problem of providing an effective sacramental ministry in the diocese would be the acceptance of lay presidency at the eucharist. However, because it was aware that this would not be an acceptable route to follow in the eyes of the world-wide Anglican Communion, it stopped short of making this recommendation. Instead it recommends that the diocese should increase the number of self-supporting priests. Those selected for ordination should be persons who are recognized and, in some sense raised up, by the local community. In some cases it may well be appropriate for ministry to be more or less confined to the local community. In other instances, depending on gifts and experience, they could well be used more widely.

Considerations for and against each option

1. Ordaining Local (Community) Priests

For:

- priestly ministry would be available in many more communities, and at an affordable cost.
- significant ministry which is already being exercised in the community would be recognized. The community would identify the person who is already, in one sense, its 'priest' and the bishop would ordain that person.

- it would integrate the eucharist into the total ministry already being exercised within the community.
- community priests would need theological training but this could be flexible, appropriate to the situation, and less costly.
- such persons would already be established within their communities and acceptable to them.

Against

- There is a likelihood that this could be seen to be creating another class of priests.
- there could well be a negative reaction among the college-trained clergy to such priests.
- problems could arise in working relationships between rectors and local priests because the former, as stipendiary clergy, are appointed to a parish for a limited period whereas local priests are, by definition, permanent members of the parish.
- problems could arise if the ordained person were transferred from his/her parish or experienced a significant change in circumstance, because the licence to function as a priest would apply only to the local community. We would then be creating non-functioning priests.

2. Lay Presidency at the Eucharist:

For:

- This is in line with the New Testament practice as we understand it, and it places the eucharist firmly within the context of the local community.
- It would allow us to use the many lay people who are already exercising an effective ministry in their communities.
- It is a much more simple and straightforward solution than ordaining people just to celebrate the eucharist.
- The Anglican Church has always stressed the equal importance of the ministry of Word and Sacrament. Present practice allows lay people to preach but not preside at the eucharist. This solution would correct this imbalance.
- There are already some small groups practising lay presidency of the eucharist in various parts of the world.
- It could help the church to re-evaluate the meaning of ordination and the nature of sacramental ministry.

Against:

- It has not yet become accepted practice in the Anglican church and cannot be implemented without an extensive process of discussion within the Anglican Communion.
- This would be a threat to some of the clergy.

3. Ordaining more self-supporting priests:

For:

- Self-supporting priests; unlike local (community) priests are available to serve the diocese in more than one parish.