

News of Liturgy

Editor: Colin Buchanan

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within the diocesan family. We prepared material for a Week of Prayer to inaugurate the exercise, and are producing worship material for various stages along the way. At the request of the Readers' and Lay Assistants' Committee we drew up a brand new Admission and Licensing Service for Readers, a great improvement on its predecessor, Cathedral Evensong, etc. One of our number, highly computer-literate, produces the Intercession Leaflet which is circulated with the diocesan mailing. We are working on an Order for the Blessing of a House. This was originally requested because the large number of new Parsonage Houses (and no doubt their occupants) might benefit from being blessed using our Order.

A former member of the Committee has done a great deal of work in producing a Communion booklet for use by people with learning disabilities. This consists largely of pictures, and we hope, if it ever sees the light of day—at the moment it is with a publisher—that it will be acceptable to the whole spectrum of Anglican churchmanship. We produce an occasional journal on liturgical and allied matters, entitled *Rubrics*; a recent issue discussed the question of Children, Confirmation and Holy Communion, contrasting the practice of the Roman Catholic diocese of Salford, where all are confirmed when they are 7, with the practice in a number of our parishes of admitting children to Holy Communion before Confirmation. A future issue is promised on Worship and Evangelism.

At the Bishop's request we are glad to advise parishes which are seeking to produce their own Worship Booklets, and are compiling a set of Guidelines suggesting what might or might not appropriately be included in such publications. We are also very glad to go and sit with PCCs as they discuss their worship and related matters. Not surprisingly, it is those parishes which could most benefit from our help who fail to seek it.

Finally, and at something of a tangent to our more conventional work, we have recently become involved in the ministry of Spiritual Direction. It seemed to fit more happily on our agenda than on that of any other of the Board of Ministry's Committee. So under our auspices there is being set up in the diocese a course for people who are, or who would like to be, involved in this ministry. This is very much in the early stages, but we are confident that it will help in meeting what seems to be an ever-increasing need in today's church.

So there is much to challenge us and much to keep us busy; and no doubt there will be even more as we approach 2000 and the Child (Children?) of ASB. One thing we have not had to do of late, and hopefully will not have to do for a long while yet, in spite of a relatively new Bishop (because the Diocesan Office still has a very great many copies of it printed), is to revise the Induction/Licensing Service. *Deo gratias.*

Ralph E. Mallinson, Chair.

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Editorial

Everyone knows a new millennium is coming. Even the Church of England's Liturgical world is grouped round it, as the ASB rites (and *Ministry to the Sick* and *A Service of the Word*) all expire on 31 December 2000. And people now easily refer to 'the next millennium' or 'the coming millennium'. Indeed, whereas, when I was young, 'the millennium' was a strictly theological word (the debate being whether it was literal or metaphorical, and whether, if it was literal, the parousia would precede or follow it), now the secular world is starting to take over.

But when will it start? And for this we have to go back to a small battle good calendricists have to put up each decade. In January 1990 we wrote about 'the forthcoming decade (which starts, it will be recalled, in a year's time)'; in December 1990 we wrote 'When better to look at Calendars than as a decade passes into the night, and another one as inevitably begins'; and in January 1991 we wrote, 'well, the final decade of the second millennium of the Christian era is upon us'. In simple terms, good calendricists have always known that they would have to engage in a small flurry every ten years to keep logic at the base of the calendar, lest we be overthrown by muddle-headedness, romanticism, sentiment, or even the quick buck (to which we shall return). Perhaps for the first time ever the Church of England had a kind of special ecclesiastical interest in when the present decade begins or finishes, as it is the official decade of evangelism.

The basis is not difficult to establish for those who keep birthdays. If you reach your thirty-fifth birthday, you have completed thirty-five years *then*—and *not until then*. Strictly speaking, you were born on your birthday and had your first anniversary of your birthday a year later—and the thirty-fifth so-called birthday is actually the thirty-fifth anniversary.

So it is with the Christian era. Admittedly we are dealing with a mythical start—mythical not in that the Nativity of our Lord is mythical, but mythical if it is attributed to 1 BC, 1 AD, or even some hypothetical (but also mythical) year 0. But suppose (for the sake of our tidy calendrical scheme) that the myth entails that Jesus was born at the end of December in 1 BC (or even 0!). Then he completed 30 years at the end of 30 AD—and a century from his birth came at the end of 100 AD, and certainly not at the end of 99.

All this is known in terms of birthdays. But the superficial attraction of the numerical likeness of the ten years which make up the '60s or the 70s has led many astray. And the point I am making now is that a combination of an earmarked decade with the impending arrival of a new millennium proves to have been most meretriciously disturbing of the strait and narrow way that leads to starting a millennium with integrity.

What mean I? Well, my first alerting came through frequent mention in 1994 that we were 'halfway through the Decade of Evangelism'. This came to a head in my reckoning when the Opinion page in *The Church of England Newspaper* in its last issue for 1994 headed its material 'Halfway through the Decade of Evangelism . . .' Curious, is it not, that those who got the start right have simply been mesmerized by the figures '2000' when counting back from its beginning to decide we reach halfway on 1 January 1995.

I think I would have let those things go. But I have also become aware in the last few months that people are already making wrong assumptions about the coming of the millennium. The very word 'millennium' has been getting slowly rising publicity as it has emerged that some of the Lottery's winnings (winnings for the organizers, not for the punters) are going to 'the Millennial Fund'. When will *that* mature? Clear error about the date came also in Hugh Montefiore's column in *Church Time* in December. And the year 2000 may yet appear as uniquely God-given for the fulfilment of prophecy.

I doubt if the Christian Churches in this country could actually affect the start of the millennium for good or ill, whichever view they took. But my suspicions were vastly inflamed when *The Times* began in January to promote its millennium special offer; it advertised a cruise to the Pacific at the end of 1999, with the movements of the cruise ship so arranged that the lucky tourists would, by crossing the dateline from West to East, see the new millennium in *twice*. Readers will recognize that I do not believe they will even see it in once, and I wrote to both the organizers and the Editor to urge the inappropriateness of the offer. I had no acknowledgement, nor am I aware of any change of plans.

Well, does anything hang on it? Only logic, not the gospel. But logic goes on lurking round this Christian as part of our given humanity and I am unkeen to sacrifice it to the whims of journalists or even evangelists. I therefore put the following points:

1. If a New Year is worth celebrating (and it is in Scotland at least), then a new decade, century or millennium would seem to have greater celebratory claims upon us;
2. If a new time period is to be celebrated thus, it is actually important that we all go for the same date;
3. If we are to be tolerant of any deviation from the logical date, then we can afford to be far more understanding of those whose calculations lead them to too late a date, rather than to too early a date—but the scenario we face is exactly the opposite. Plans which have been taking shape and maturing for five years (like that *Times* offer) will not lightly yield to the truth at a late stage, and the propaganda must start early!

So, I suggest that you not only follow the liturgy programme which runs to the true end of the second millennium, but also do your bit in promoting the right climate from now on—perhaps including a letter to your MP.

And don't fall for sentiment: keep your head screwed on: and don't let the entry into the third millennium of the Christian era be spoiled by too many

DIOCESAN REPORT 2—MANCHESTER

'Plus ça change', they say in France, 'plus c'est la même chose'—in other words, we've been here before. Looking back over the past few year's work in the Manchester Diocesan Worship Committee (n.b. not the Liturgical Committee—we've never had time to explore the full significance of that!), and reading the accounts here of work in other Diocesan Committees makes one realize the truth of the preacher's slightly sad dictum, 'There is nothing new under the sun'. One of the blessings of PRAXIS is that it may help us realize that we don't all have to re-invent the (liturgical) wheel every other year.

Our major piece of work continues to be the mounting of our 'Worship 2000 Roadshow' in the Deaneries. Our aim in the Roadshow is to introduce the principles underlying recent liturgical books (and perhaps to introduce the books themselves); to enable participants to think through in Workshops some of the issues involved and then to construct an act of worship; to worship together, using whatever resources we have been able to gather locally and the material produced in the Workshops; and then to reflect on how it has all been.

We have evolved a number of formats—Friday evening/Saturday morning, all day on Saturday, Sunday afternoon/evening; Eucharistic/non-Eucharistic (one was even combined with a Carol Service, though that is not the norm!). We are always very careful to involve the Deanery in planning what sort of day to mount and in choosing what sort of Workshops they should like—for example, All Age Worship, Music, Intercessions, the Setting of Worship. We have produced 12 A4 papers on a variety of appropriate topics, and these are given to participants at the end of the day.

Reactions from participants have been favourable, but a major problem is always getting through to the clergy and encouraging them to take part. One Deanery is said to have discussed the possibility of us coming at its Chapter, and to have concluded that we would have nothing to offer them. Since then we aim to start with the Deanery Synod, or its Standing Committee. It is sad that lay people often seem to see the point when clergy do not, and any ideas about getting through to the clergy would be greatly welcomed.

We are concerned about our relationship with the Cathedral and with some Diocesan events. It has frequently seemed in the past as though we were invisible to those planning such things. We took a lot of criticism about the quality of the worship at a recent Clergy Conference at Swanwick, and we had little input in its planning and preparation, let alone its execution. With any luck things will be different next time round. Relationships with the Cathedral should improve, since the Dean is now a member, and this also means that we now have direct contact with the Bishop's Staff Meeting. Synodically we are a committee of the Board of Ministry, and that works well; the Board leaves us very much to our own devices. The budget allowed us by the Board, though, is tiny, and we are constantly aware of our lack of resources. We do not have even a part-time officer, so all our work is undertaken by already busy people on a totally voluntary basis—scarcely satisfactory, we feel.

Apart from the Roadshows we are involved in a number of other matters. Our diocese has recently embarked on *The Way Forward*, a programme to deepen commitment, to enable renewal, and to create more togetherness

We have also looked at creating a short liturgical affirmation for Celebrating a New Ministry, and this was used for the first time at a Diocesan Synod in November.

As an example, for the new Rural Dean, this would include the following:

Officiant: Brothers and sisters in Christ, *NW* has been chosen to be Rural Dean *of *N***

After prayerful consideration, and according to the practice of this diocese, I have, (or the bishop has) appointed *N* to this position of leadership, in our community of ministry.

This represents a new beginning in this Deanery because *N* brings particular gifts to our ministry together. As we stand in God's presence, we pray that grace be given to *N* to be diligent in his/her pastoral care of the clergy here and that his/her oversight will conform to your will for us. May we each fulfil the responsibilities which God has given to us, as we exercise our ministry in this part of your kingdom.

Silence is kept.

**The place may be substituted.*

***Another title may be substituted, as appropriate.*

We have also done work on a Service about the tragedy in Cromwell Street and environs in Gloucestershire. This was:

**POSSIBLE STRUCTURE FOR CATHEDRAL SERVICE ON
NOVEMBER 2nd**

Purpose

1. To acknowledge the Cromwell Street deaths as a source of pain and grief for our city.
To offer a focus of remembrance and commendation for families of those who died and for families of other missing children who are still un-accounted for.
2. To present the gospel sensitively in response to such a terrible event.

Approach

1. Construct a service at the cathedral along the lines of what a non-churchgoing family facing such a tragedy might request.
2. To adjust such a structure to form a meaningful form of liturgy which proclaims the gospel.
3. To offer some form of personal recognition/involvement for families who give names to be remembered.

Adrian Slade
Chairman, DLC

noisy parties a year in advance. It might even be worth a question in General Synod to keep the hierarchy thinking straight too . . .

You think I jest? Then just wait and see what the secular world does with the beginning of the year 2000. You think I am tithing mint and anise? No, for this generation will find much opportunity to point to Jesus Christ as the millennium comes.

Incidentally, if making plans, please note the Leap Year rule: the fourth year is a Leap Year except once every hundred years—but even that exception has its own variant, and every four hundred years (including the year 2000, the first such we have had since the Calendar changed in 1752!) there *is* a Leap Year. See ASB page 23, where it is correctly presented. This means that 31 December 2000 will be a Sunday, and the next millennium will begin as midnight strikes to bring in the Monday.

When *Crockford's* gave up its anonymous Preface after a certain sad incident in 1987, *The Church of England Year Book* started having a signed one. This year's edition, published on 27 January, has a Preface by the Dean of Worcester which includes a paragraph about the 'Toronto Blessing'—and that has seized the headlines in the nationals and on the radio. NOL modestly notes that Dean Bob Jeffery quotes our editorial on this with approval, and that is, I believe, the first time NOL has been mentioned there. *The Times* on Saturday 28 January, refers to NOL as a 'book' . . . We would not, however, endorse the sweeping judgment of Bob Jeffery that Toronto is 'mass hysteria'.

We are back at last in the diocesan business. The Gloucester report numbered '1' below is in fact an overdue relic from 1994 and the last two-year cycle. But we welcome it just the same. If your DLC has not yet replied to the suggested rota of reporting, please be in touch quickly.
Colin Buchanan

NEARLY FREE HANDOUTS

We still have available a very small amount of the CCP Almanack for 1995. Send 50p in stamps and an addressed envelope. On a similar basis we have now some copies of the original 'Boston' Statement, *Children and Communion*. This is an 8-page pamphlet, the findings of the first International Anglican Liturgical Consultation in 1985 (originally distributed with NOL in August 1985). The papers and essays associated with this were published in the Liturgical Study I edited that year, *Nurturing Children in Communion* (Grove Liturgical Study no. 44, 1985). A new volume of essays relating to the Boston Statement is currently in preparation in the USA. So again send 50p and an envelope. We have also had returned a few copies of that original no. 44 at £2.75, so order quickly.

On a slightly different tack, Gordon Kuhrt's book, *Doctrine Matters*, has been remaindered, and is also available from COB—for £1.25 with an addressed envelope. It is a symposium, with contributions from Alister McGrath, Gavin Reid, Vera Sinton and contains an examination by

COB of the ways in which tradition, as expressed in forms of worship, both conveys and subtly alters the teaching of scripture, and there is also a handling of demythologization in relation to scriptural narratives quoted in scripture. Whilst we are at it, we also have copies of *Reforming Infant Baptism*, a Hodder paperback of 1990, at £1.25 postfree. This symposium includes essays by Clifford Owen, Roger Godin, Alan Wright (who was abandoning infant baptism, not reforming it), and COB.

If by any chance you are ordering more than one of the above items, reduce the overall cost by 25p as you will save us postage. All orders to COB's address on page 12 of NOL.

TWENTY YEARS OF NOL—A QUICK SURVEY OF THE 'NEWS' ACCORDING TO NOL, 1980-1984

1980: Feb—30 Tory MPs table a Commons motion urging 'no further diminution in what should be the central and regular place of honour of the Book of Common Prayer and the Authorized Version of the Bible in the mainstream of its Worship'; Mar—Angela Tilby explains that from the BBC's point of view the impending enthronement of the then Archbishop of Canterbury is 'outside broadcasts—filmed by the sports team'; Apr—copies of Rite A (red booklet) distributed with NOL as it came into force on 1 May; May—the first catalogue of 'printer's errors' in Rite A; June—liturgical proposals for the Covenant for Unity published; Aug—advertising of ASB begins; Sep—Ronald Jasper retires from the Commission, and there are rumours of an ASB price-war . . . ; Oct—errors throughout ASB, and offers of prizes for those who spot more—and the Clerk of the Closet, John Bickersteth, himself opposed to the ASB, has prudently allowed himself to advise Her Majesty that she will come to no harm with judicious and perhaps sparing use of the ASB; Nov—it all happens (and *The Times* misses it totally); Leslie Brown writes in to say 'I am horrified that Bishops *sit* to ordain or confirm

1981: Jan—publication of *Services for the Sick* and *The Blessing of Oils and the Reconciliation of a Penitent* (COB dissenting from *Reconciliation*); Apr—first Prayer Book Protection Bill in Parliament; Jul—the Bishops tell the Colleges to sustain use and teaching of BCP; Aug—a report says that at a confirmation Bishop Ronnie Goodchild 'flung out his arms and declaimed: "The Lord is here". Silence followed. Then a voice came "No, he isn't. It is Series 2 this morning" '; Sep—publication of *To a Rebellious House?* (the national PiM report), which says: ' . . . at the moment worship does not touch the working-class or young people. If the Church of England is serious in wanting to be a church of the people, in wanting to involve those who are not at present within it, it must be open to a change in style'; Oct—Paul Welsby reports a president of the eucharist using the Gospel reading on page 883 of the ASB, which concluded ' . . . you have come into the rewards of their trouble. Any of these readings may be used in Ember weeks. This is the Gospel of Christ.'

1982: Jan—we start a series of Rite B collects to accompany ASB Sunday thomes; Feb—the editorial is on 'priestly' blessings and absolutions (and has probably been photo-copied more than any

Let us pray for all those who are engaged in the work and service of Christ,
for those who serve him in the knowledge that he demands their commitment to justice and love:
for those who serve him, not knowing him, but recognizing the beauty of justice, and the purity of love,
for all who fight against evil and work for peace,
that they may find Christ's presence as their sure defence
and by acknowledging the image of God in men and women
may find the world remade in the image and love of Christ.

(O Lord, hear our prayer)

Bishop Lord God,
our rock, our shield and our defender,
whose Son fought for our salvation on Calvary's field,
you summon your servants to follow Christ
into the place of danger;
we bring you this oil of baptism.
To those who receive it
may it be a firm sign of your protection,
a clear summons to the way of the cross,
and a sure promise of love's victory
in the shadow of death;
through him who gave himself for us,
Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Deacon We present this oil of chrism, that those who are anointed with it
may fulfil their calling to share in the royal priesthood of Christ's people.
Let us pray for George our Archbishop and Metropolitan,
for David and Jeremy our Bishops,
for the Bishops of the Anglican Communion,
for all those called to the ministry of oversight in our sister churches,
and for all those who serve as priests and deacons in this diocese.
Let us pray for Elizabeth our Queen,
and all the people of God in this country,
that the power of the Spirit's anointing
will equip them for the ministries to which they are called.

(O Lord, hear our prayer)

Bishop Source of life and strength,
you send upon your people the gift of the Spirit
to equip the saints for service;
sanctify this oil of gladness,
that those who are anointed with it
may know the inward anointing of the Holy Spirit,
and grow up into the perfect humanity of Jesus,
sharing the kingship of service,
and the priesthood of prayer,
midwives with us of the world's hope,
until the birthpangs of creation are completed
and the world knows the joys that will never end. **Amen.**

workshops about lay participants in Worship, one on *In Tune with Heaven, Celebrating Common Prayer*, and All-Age Worship. All these have been very well attended, and show a keen enthusiasm for the changes that are happening in liturgy.

We have also been working at various diocesan events. The diocese has, for the last two years, had a Maundy Thursday Service primarily for clergy. This Service has tried to equate the Blessing of Oils and reaffirming ministry. This is being done mainly through the use of Intercessions

Bishop My brothers and sisters in the Lord,
created from the dust of the earth
we are called to be steward's of creation,
fulfilling humanity's priesthood of the world.
We bring before him these oils,
that through his Holy Spirit,
they might become signs of his transfiguring power,
who redeems all that he has made.
United to Christ, our great high priest,
we offer our prayer to the Father for all that he has made.

Deacon We present this oil, that it may be used for the healing of the sick.
Let us pray for all those who work to heal,
for the health service in the counties of Gloucestershire and Avon,
for all who care in the community;
for those who work with the dying,
for the growth in ministries of care and healing,
that what is done for suffering people may be accounted as done
for the suffering Christ.
Let us pray for all those who are sick,
for those suffering in body, mind and spirit,
for those suffering from the lack of basic provision,
and for all who are dying.
For these and all whose names we know, let us pray to the Lord.

(O Lord, hear our prayer)

Bishop Gracious God,
helpmate and saviour of humanity,
who gave up your Son Jesus Christ to death,
that he might heal our pains with his wounded hands;
renew in us the ministry of his healing,
hear our prayers for all those who suffer,
and sanctify this oil, a gift of your creation,
that those who are anointed with it
may be loosed from their pain and suffering,
be granted the knowledge of your peace,
and be renewed in the joy and wholeness of your salvation;
through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Deacon We present this oil, that it may be used in baptism, a sure sign of Christ's victory over evil, and defence of his servants.

1982: other in the twenty years; Mar—a correspondent about the February editorial dubs it 'SUPER-SACERDOTAL-IUSTICEXPLODIFI-CACIOUS'; Apr—a diocesan of mitres; May—the Pope in Canterbury, apparently the first ever non-Roman service attended by a Pope (outside of Eastern Orthodoxy); Jun—COB issuing warnings about absolutions in official texts; Jul—services for use with the sick are debated in General Synod at Revision Stage, and a hymn about oils, *read by Peter Dixon from a text he happened to have in his pocket*, is permitted in an opening Note (thus threatening the defeat of the rite!); Aug—the famous Falklands Islands service has annoyed Mrs T.; Sep—royal crack-down on scarlet cassocks (at least those of a particular shade) in unroyal places ('off with his red'); Oct—the House of Bishops has deleted the hymn (and suggested the Liturgical Commission have another look at it in connection with *Lent—Holy Week—Easter*); Nov—Ministry to the Sick approved in Synod, Blessing of Oils defeated, Reconciliation of a Penitent delayed; Dec—Liturgical Commission publishes *Concelebration at the Eucharist*: by Hugh Whybrew and Trevor Lloyd (and little comfort to imitators of Rome).

1983: Jan—Movement for Infant Ordination launched; Feb—the Reconciliation of a Penitent is handled, by special reference, by five Houses sitting separately, and does not get two-thirds in favour in the House of Laity, and is then defeated in the whole General Synod, as the Laity vote there was 124-75 in favour, less than two-thirds; Mar—Grove Books is publishing *Anglo-Catholic Worship: An Evangelical Appreciation after 150 years* to mark a certain anniversary year; Apr—sure enough, the Loughborough Conference is singing *Regina Coeli* and *Faith of our Fathers*; Jun—David Frost contributes from Australia the Propers for Misogynists' Sunday; Jul—emendation of the original ordinal to enable women to be made deacon (1662 text came in August); Sep—a long letter from one David Stancliffe explaining why the requiem for the sailors of the *Mary Rose* had been what it was; Oct—the House of Bishops wants to revive Series 1 communion, by inviting the Synod to invite the H/B to introduce it . . .; Nov—enthronement of an Archbishop of York; Dec—obituary to John Robinson as liturgist.

[The next few years will be excerptively summarized in our March 1995 issue].

PS: Looking back to more recent issues, we note that in late 1992 we were expecting the non-eucharistic material in *Patterns* to be published around Easter 1993. This has still not happened. Watch this space during the rest of the millennium.

IN MEMORIAM-MERVYN STOCKWOOD

Bishop Mervyn Stockwood died on 13 January. No English Christian of the 50s, 60s or 70s could have been unaware of him. No Bishop has equalled him as a headline-stealer—an amazing amalgam of sheer exhibitionist pomp, wonderful bonhommie, far out leftist politics, a short fuse, a loving heart, an irresistible banter, and no mean theology either. Nor was he without impact on the liturgical field, and hence his obituarization here.

Mervyn's most public stance was as a 'short churchman'. He was famous for insisting that a Prayer Book ordination service (for deacons and presbyters, and sometimes up to 25 or so of each) should last but three score minutes and ten, and was even prepared to treat an address on the Retreat as *the* sermon of the ordination rite (old-timers will recall that in the 1662 orders the sermon came before all else). He was chivvied out of this time-saving exercise, but left his mark through insisting to the cathedral that the distribution of communion should take no more than seven minutes, and by presenting Bibles to three newly ordained persons at once by having three bishops stand in front of the three and 'present' three Bibles simultaneously (I don't think they were actually *given*, for there was always available the Couratin advice that all the newly ordained need do is touch a Bible proffered to him—appalling practice!). However, what is not so well recognized is that Mervyn was a founder-member of the Liturgical Commission and served on it till 1968. At the very first meeting I attended in September 1964 he kept saying 'Mr Chairman, I have now done nearly ten years on this Commission and I am *still* waiting for us to spend one whole day on the eucharist'—and we did soon after and Series 2 emerged. (When he was not complaining he switched off and reached for the College records (we were meeting at Westcott) and looked up the chapel records for when he was sacristan in the mid-thirties, and chortled over old entries). One footprint of his actual textual contributions is to be found to this day in the anamnesis of the second Eucharistic Prayer in Rite A (or in the Second Thanksgiving in Rite B): the text reads 'looking for the coming of his kingdom'. This reflects Mervyn's own eschatology—he ribbed me, saying 'I know you Tyndale Hall men—all out in the garden with your telescopes looking for the second coming', to which I had to reply 'It seems extraordinary that, in the diocese of Southwark, the kingdom may come, but the King mustn't'. He won with Series 2, but we reverted to credal eschatology in what is now the first Eucharistic Prayer, after he had left the Commission (look it up and contrast it with the second).

But Mervyn had liturgical influence far beyond the touching up (or down) of texts. He launched a (quite illegal) Southwark Rite in 1964, really adumbrating the production of Series 2, and in fact largely drafted (so rumour had it) by Arthur Couratin, so that it was a genuine relation of Series 2. He had no problem about using the text 'experimentally'—even though he also had to clear out (very painfully) a curate who insisted on using the Roman rite. It was Mervyn who first publicized (if he did not invent) the notion that the bishop is (by some metaphysical omnipresence) the president of all eucharists in his diocese. He was certainly big enough to be 'felt' as present, even when he was not visibly there . . .

Another typical Mervyn move was his greeting the Ely Commission in 1971 with a declaration (also illegal) that children baptized but unconfirmed could receive communion in his diocese. He thus set in train a movement which still runs strongly enough and well in Southwark diocese to this day—even though the General Synod threw out the 'Ely' programme in mid-1976.

Because he had been involved in the 1958 proposals for baptism-plus-confirmation-plus first communion, he started to work up this pattern in his diocese—and I would think it likely that he (along with Henry de Candole) pioneered the notion of regularly administering confirmation in the

midst of communion, so that 'first communion' was no longer a separate event (often an 8 a.m. one the following Sunday), but came within a single complex rite.

He took a strong, if slightly erratic, interest in initiation rites. I can still hear him saying 'When I first became a bishop, I let the parish clergy do the intermittent baptism you get at confirmation services—but I found they did it so badly that I took it over again myself'. I think his complaint was that the clergy pussy-footed in those days with smearing or a very sparing sprinkling—whereas all Mervyn's showmanship and even his theology dictated oodles of water and quite a splash. He talked as though he could not trust the clergy actually to hit the target with water—and it is at least possible that he himself so unnerved some that he was right not to trust them.

When we got the Series 2 initiation services authorized, we ran into trouble with Mervyn. He found that, if you have fifty confirmation candidates one of whom also needs to be baptized, you have to march all fifty to a West end font, in order to baptize the one. He simply declined to do it, and imperiously reshuffled the order so that the baptismal faith was professed 'at the front', and only baptismal candidates were then marched to the font, where the water was duly 'blessed' and the baptism followed. The Commission, of course, took the view he had played the dirty on us, and not only preserved the order in Series 3, but fought off some daft proposals of the House of Bishops in order to preserve it. Then Mervyn himself chaired the Revision Committee, which proved to be a model of efficient operation combined with enormous fun. It was a bold venture by the appointments subn-committee of the Synod to give him the job, as he never attended Synod itself and might have been viewed as both recalcitrant and even contumacious. His footsteps in the ASB initiation rites are to be found in the opening Note 10 which says the bishop determines the precise details and order of each individual confirmation service.

Some of my most vivid memories of the Commission of the 60s revolve round Mervyn. I suppose I also owe him a kind of dynastic debt—he nominated Hugh Montefiore as a bishop when it seemed no-one else would; and Hugh in turn (who incidentally drew some of his liturgical eccentricities from Mervyn) nominated me as his suffragan. So I guess I owe that indirectly to Mervyn.

I treasure (nearly) every memory of him.

COB

DIOCESAN REPORT—1 GLOUCESTER

The last three years have seen great changes in the Diocese of Gloucester. The Liturgical Committee has changed in the vast majority of its membership during the last three years, and has seen the retirement of Canon Alan Dunstan, who chaired the committee for many years guiding it and encouraging its work. We now have the bizarre situation where the Liturgical group is chaired by a Social Responsibility Adviser(!), but I'm sure that the changes the group has gone through will now not cease, and the next time we submit a presentation to *News of Liturgy* there will be further changes.

A great deal of our work over the last three years has seen an emphasis on training opportunities for both clergy and lay people. We have led