

LITURGICAL ANTIQUARIAN APPEAL

NOL has recently been loaned a copy of a book by John Glen King, D.D., 'Chaplain to the British Factory of St. Petersburg', entitled *The Rites and Ceremonies of the Greek Church in Russia, containing an account of its Doctrine, Worship and Discipline* (publishers Owen, Dodsley, Rivington, Becket and De Hondt, 1772). Whilst the book of nearly 500 pages contains in translation most Orthodox rites in regular use, it is its introductory and closing essays, its illustrations and diagrams, which are of greatest interest. Is there any reader who can throw light upon the Chaplain to the Factory, let alone upon his book or his competence in the liturgical field?

AN UNASHAMED FINANCIAL APPEAL

NOL is one of the few journals left with no scratch cards, instant riches, or cruise of a lifetime to offer you. Quite the reverse—this is an appeal for money. And, as all the best appeals say (we get plenty), please read on.

The Steering Group for IALC-5 at Dublin have had to take very hard decisions with the few funds they have. One of the hardest has been in relation to Africa. They have concluded that they must simply ensure that the Steering Group appointed to follow up the 1993 Kanamai Consultation (on 'African Culture and Anglican Liturgy') should be invited to Dublin. This is right in itself, but it omits a significant person—Canon Solomon Amusan of Nigeria.

Solomon Amusan did a Birmingham doctorate in the late 1980s on Liturgical Inculturation in Nigeria; he was a participant in both the York and the Toronto Consultations; and he contributed a first response to the Kanamai Statement with a far-reaching chapter in the Study that came out of Kanamai—*Anglican Liturgical Inculturation in Africa*. But he had not himself been at Kanamai, as we had all hoped. Why not? Because of a typical shortage of funds, along with bad communications (Nigeria has been undergoing a politically difficult period). So, because he did not get to Kanamai, he could hardly be chosen there for its follow-up Steering Group; and because he was not on that Steering Group, he could not qualify for funds to get him to Dublin. The convenor of the Dublin Consultation, David Holeyton, has asked if I, who am in touch with Solomon, would be ready to raise funds for his travel; and, if so, he can have a free place in residence at Societas. I am very keen to take this up, and therefore pass on the request to readers of NOL. I have already started by writing to two prosperous American Churches, and have received around £300 from that. I calculate we shall need another £400. Are there 80 readers of NOL who would put a fiver in the post and send it direct to me—quickly (for time is running out). Or, for larger sums, would any pledge an amount which I can collect if we can achieve the target? I will render a full account in due course, and I hope it will include Solomon's own account of participating in the Dublin Consultation! Of your mercy, post a fiver. COB

ISSN 0263-7170

40p

Postal Subscription for 1995 **£6.50** (by air **£9.00** or **US\$18**)

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News of Liturgy

Editor: Colin Buchanan

Issue No. 245

May 1995

A PRAYER BOOK FOR AUSTRALIA

The new *A Prayer Book for Australia* was published for members of the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Australia at the end of March. It is published by E. J. Dwyer under the imprint 'Broughton Books'. At this stage it is labelled 'Draft Only' and is published in paperback and is not on general sale, so has no price nor availability. Indeed journalists are aware they must be careful how they discuss it in print, as very few people in Australia itself have ready access to the text, and through sheer economics it is not really possible to open a wide debate in the Australian dioceses about the book. On the other hand quite a large amount has appeared in draft and for interim use and the general style and character are probably well known—and at a distance it appears very likely that the book will duly gain authorization at the beginning of July.

The contents are arranged under seven main headings as follows:

1. 'Sunday Services': This has 'Services of the Word' (including 'A Service of Praise, Prayer and Proclamation'), Thanksgiving for a Child, baptismal services and three orders for communion. The expectation is that the 387 pages of this section (including the Psalter) will also be published as a distinct book for congregational use, separate from the monster pantechinon volume of 900 pages.
2. 'The Liturgical Psalter': this is the existing (Frost-McIntyre) Psalter known to us in England in the ASB, and it will be recalled that it was in the parallel draft form of *An Australian Prayer Book* that the Psalter first saw the light of day in June 1977. The language has now been made inclusive—with David Frost himself doing the work professionally whilst occasionally protesting (even in these columns) that it is hard to advise people how to do with minimum damage that which you wish they wouldn't do at all—but it is harder still leaving them to commit ravages from which your advice might have spared them . . .
3. 'Daily Prayer': the daily offices in *AAPB* have been a delightful feature of that book, and these are sustained (differing for each day of the week), and a 'Service of the Light' and 'Prayer at the end of the Day' have been added to them.
4. 'The Church's Year comes next. The Calendar has a strong Australian tinge and Pacific-consciousness. The Lectionary is the three-year Roman-based one, using the Roman (and *AAPB*) principle of 'Sundays of the Year' as contained in *The Revised Common Lectionary*. There are four collects provided for each Sunday (though the term 'collect' is not used)—one a 'Prayer of the week', which can be used with the offices as well as the eucharist, and then three examples of a 'Prayer of the day' to fit the themes of that Sunday in Years A, B, and C.
5. 'Pastoral Offices' include broadly the 'occasional offices' of the BCP, but with two orders of marriage, and an abundance of funeral resources. There is also a 'Reconciliation of a Penitent' . . .

6. 'Episcopal Services': it is good to see confirmation (and kindred rites of reception) mainly appearing under this heading, rather than as 'Initiation' (which has been subsumed under 'Sunday Services'). The ordination rites are much closer to ASB than to *AAPB* or 1662.
7. The last section is labelled 'Resources' and it includes an outline order for communion, as well as a catechism, some notes on texts, and the Thirty-Nine Articles.

Each section has a pastoral and liturgical introduction. The General Introduction to the whole book by Lawrence Bartlett, the Chair of the Liturgical Commission, discusses among other matters the issue of masculine pronouns for God, and has the delightful rapping of the knuckles of traditionalists 'Liturgical laziness can produce dull repetition which does a scant justice to the revelation of God'—a rapping all the more telling because this book is in fact ready to conserve much of traditional styles of address to God. And an opening note to the whole book allows a traditional Lord's Prayer, whereas the published text in the services is the ICET/ELLC one with 'Save us from the time of trial/and . . .'. This will mean a wholesale move from 'Lead us not into temptation/but . . .', which is in existing use in *AAPB*, and the C/E ought to be sending observers to see how well the Australians accomplish it.

I hope to give more detail next month and report the General Synod debate in July or August.

Colin Buchanan

OFFICIAL REPORT

Report from the Church of England Liturgical Commission

[This is the text as the Secretary, David Hebblethwaite, has circulated it. It includes items already reported in these columns. We do not believe the price quoted below for *Patterns!*].

1. The present Liturgical Commission completes its term in March 1996. A new Commission will be appointed by the Archbishops as soon as possible after the election of the new General Synod.
2. The Liturgical Commission continues to work to the programme set out in the report *One Book or a Series of Volumes in 2000?* (GS1114) and endorsed by General Synod in July 1994.
3. A Revision Committee of General Synod continues to give consideration to the alternative eucharistic prayers proposed by the Liturgical Commission and forwarded to General Synod by the House of Bishops.
4. The second approved edition of *Patterns for Worship* is due to be published in June 1995, probably at £12 (Church House Publishing).
5. The House of Bishops Report *On The Way: Towards an Integrated Approach to Christian Initiation* has now been published. This report is likely to be debated in November—possibly in connection with specific proposals brought forward by the House of Bishops.
6. It is hoped that rites of baptism, confirmation, reaffirmation and reception, and liturgical provision for healing will be presented to General Synod in July 1995. These are part of a larger provision of initiation rites envisaged in the July 1991 Synod debate and discussed in *On The Way*.

CHILDREN IN COMMUNION—SHOULD THERE BE AN 'ADMISSION' CEREMONY?

The issue of communion before confirmation is not yet solved in the Church of England, but it is sensible to look beyond it. There are those who allege practical difficulties (what of the boy next door? and suppose they grow up without being confirmed, what then?); but there is also in the middle-distance a liturgical question. It takes this form: if children are admitted to communion at an early age, should there be a special event of admitting them? We may take as our starting point the diocesan leaflet of guidance in Southwark diocese, one of the dioceses which has been ahead of the field (and the law) in this matter:

'... The children who are admitted must be prepared; in the service of admission the congregation must promise their support to help these young people grow in knowledge ...'

There does not appear to be a full liturgical text, but it is easy to discern a presentation of candidates, a question or two from the incumbent, a call for the support of the congregation, a formal statement of admission, a blessing and perhaps a round of applause, followed by the Peace—and then the actual reception of communion for the first time. In the Southwark regulations a child is supposed to be seven years of age, and, once enrolled, is supposed to be able to receive communion anywhere. The provision of a minimum age of seven in turn leads to the naturalness of running a system of preparation, and a fairly standard pattern of teaching to fulfil that. It all fits into the diocesan guideline. There is only one major anomaly left—and we shall come to that.

It is easy to see that this might be the pace-setter for the future. But it is worth highlighting the anomaly before we all start saying this is what we had in mind all along. The anomaly is simply this: that an age of seven is as arbitrary and as unbiblical an age as the age of fourteen for the admission to communion of those baptized as infants. If the Bible has no baptized non-communicants (as NOL in cheerful and roughshod manner asserts), then a case for infant baptism is a case for communion from that beginning onwards. The Knaresborough report, *Communion before Confirmation?* (CIO, 1985), took this point and made no recommendations about age. Instead it allowed for parents to bring their children into sharing communion when they saw fit—and thus had no special starting Sundays and no quasi-initiatory rites; the suggestion was simply that 'Mention of the person in the prayers and possibly a welcome expressed in the notices or at the kiss of peace is sufficient.' The logic is that, if parents bring their children into communicant life when they see fit (including the possibility of at the actual baptism), then there can be no preparation class, no special ceremony. The children just come on stream naturally!

However, not all minds are ready for this, and Knaresborough itself provided for diocesan synods and/or PCCs to introduce a minimum age for their respective constituencies. Minds may only come to babes-in-the-arms in two stages, and we need to be ready for that. But we shall be the reader if we have not in the meantime hyped up 'first communion' too much for seven-year-olds ...

conference worship. There will also be sessions devoted to practical issues of 'staging' the rites which will explore various possibilities as far as is possible in the absence of candidates.

Without, at this stage, being exact, the intention is to devote Monday afternoon to Biblical exposition, a first sessions on funerals, calendar lectionary collects and the proposed revisions for Rites A and B; Tuesday morning and afternoon to issues connected with initiation; Tuesday evening to rites still at a very preliminary stage of revision; Wednesday morning to funerals (and also seeking a view on revised advice to bishops on the working of diocesan liturgical committees).

The overall cost for the full three days residential conference is expected to be of the order of £120. Reduced rates could be negotiated for non-residential participation or part-attendance (details would have to be supplied to me as soon as possible).

David Hebblethwaite
Secretary of the Commission

THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES

The two major international conferences of liturgists take place this summer in Dublin. The first week (7-12 August) is the Fifth International Anglican Liturgical Consultation. It appears that this year there will be a record number of over seventy participants, convened under the chairmanship of David Holeyton, Dean of Trinity College, Toronto. The previous Consultations have taken place in this order:

1. Boston, USA, July 1985—theme 'Children and Communion'.
2. Brixen, North Italy, August 1987—theme 'The laity in liturgy' (and also a submission about official recognition by ACC).
3. York, England, August 1989—theme 'Inculturation of the Liturgy'
4. Toronto, Canada, August 1991—theme 'Christian Initiation'

(There was also an 'intermediate' (and less than representative) consultation at Untermarchtal in South Germany in August 1993, at which papers preparatory to this year's Dublin Consultation on 'The Eucharist' were read).

With this year's eucharistic theme in view, the Untermarchtal papers were published last year in the Alcuin/GROW Joint Liturgical Studies series, no. 27. *Revising the Eucharist*, edited by David Holeyton, and participants at Dublin are to prepare themselves by reading this Joint Study (obtainable of course from Grove Books Limited).

The reason why no full Consultation was held in 1993 was financial—there being so little money available for 'Third World' participants (though a Consultation without them is in danger of misrepresenting its own agenda). So what funds there were were carefully saved to help people without funds to come to Dublin. Even so, it appears that little money is available, and NOL is launching its own appeal—see the notice below this item.

The Anglican Consultation precedes the week (14-19 August) of Societas Liturgica, the international interdenominational society linking liturgical scholars across continents and language-groups. Its Congress this year has the broad title of 'The Future Shape of the Liturgy'. It is not too late to book—write to the Societas Liturgica Secretariat, Emmanuel College, 75 Queen's Park Crescent East, Toronto, Ont. M5S 1K7, Canada.

7. The intention is initially to publish rites of reconciliation in the form of a discussion document with an accompanying set of essays (it is hoped in Autumn 1995).
8. Revised proposals for the revision of the Calendar, Lectionary (The Revised Common Lectionary—supplemented) and Collects will be submitted to the House of Bishops in June with a view to having their first debate in General Synod in July 1995. After wide consultation the Liturgical Commission is recommending a return to Sundays after Trinity. The provision of Collects will include two prayers from each designated day: an opening prayer and a prayer after communion.
9. The Liturgical Commission has begun work on the revision of the Holy Communion Services Rites A and B. It is not envisaged that this should be a radical revision. It seems likely that rites will be framed so that they can be used with any authorized eucharistic prayer.
10. The Liturgical Commission has identified the need to address various issues linked with creation and the liturgy. Any work in this area would be for the new Commission.
11. Preliminary discussions are in hand to further possibilities for the promotion of liturgical formation—a concern that has preoccupied the Commission for some time.
12. Work continues on the revision of the funeral rites. This will be linked with work about to begin on revision of the marriage rite. The intention is that these proposals will be linked as 'pastoral rites' for submission to the House of Bishops and subsequently to General Synod.
13. Work will begin after 1996 on revision of the Daily Office, the Ordinal and other parts of ASB.

March 1995

Next Month's Publication is . . .

. . . Joint Liturgical Study no. 31, *The Comparative Liturgy of Anton Baumstark (1872-1948)* by Fritz West, an American Roman Catholic Liturgist. Baumstark himself is famous to English students for his *Comparative Liturgy*, his 'methodological masterpiece', published in English in 1958 though dating from 1932. This Study considers the whole of Baumstark's life, including over thirty years of liturgical studies.

. . . and this month's offer is

a set of three Kenneth White titles on church architecture and reordering, viz.:

- Grove Liturgical Study 3, *Shrines for the Saints* (1975) (£2.75)
- Grove Liturgical Study 4, *Centres for the Servants* (1975) (£2.75)
- Booklet on Ministry and Worship no. 69, *The Attractive Church* (1979) (£1.95)

Write to COB's editorial address (see page 12 below)—one set only available.

CLARIFICATIONS—ARCIC-2 ON MINISTRY

I continue the critique I began last month of *Clarifications on Eucharist and Ministry*, a 1994 publication of ARCIC-2. All the procedural points I wanted to make I made then. One that has been put back to me is that it is all stale news—that the clarifications were first published in 1993, with full press coverage, and in 1995 it is not news at all. I gladly apologize to readers of NOL for the delay—I was only in receipt of the publication (on our own General Synod Council for Christian Unity) in late 1994, and I have not heard it debated or discussed elsewhere either before or since that point, until, that is, a chance remark by another member of CCU alerted me to the text. If my experience of *not* hearing much about it, let alone of not studying the statement, is typical, then it may be that debating it at this stage can yet be helpful. I shall be asking on CCU how the Church of England is to handle *Clarifications*.

In the Ministry and Ordination section ARCIC-2 begin by noting that the Holy See asks for a clearer affirmation of the following:

- (a) only a validly ordained priest, acting "in the person of Christ", can be the minister offering "sacramentally the redemptive sacrifice of Christ" in the eucharist;
- (b) the institution of the sacrament of orders, which confers the priesthood of the New covenant, comes from Christ. Orders are not "a simple ecclesiastical institution";
- (c) the "character of priestly ordination implies a configuration to the priesthood of Christ";
- (d) the apostolic succession in which the unbroken lines of episcopal succession and apostolic teaching stand in casual relationship to each other. (*Clarifications*, page 8).

At first sight this is enough to make even a flying bishop quail. Certainly neither the ARCIC-1 statement on Ministry and Ordination, nor its *Elucidation*, affirms exactly what the Holy See now says the Commission should affirm and perhaps that omission was built into the very fact that the Holy See now asks for more. Can this agreement of ARCIC-1, already pretty taut, be stretched further into this set of Vatican demands without coming apart at the seams? ARCIC-2 duly set about the stretching.

The point where protestants might find most mental alarms clanging is in the paragraph on the 'will and institution of Christ' (page 9). The paragraph seems to claim a twin-source tradition—'what Jesus is recorded as saying and doing [in his earthly life]' and 'his implicit intentions which may not have reached explicit formulation till after the resurrection, either in the words of the risen Lord himself or through his Holy Spirit instructing the primitive community.' It could just be that the second source here is post-resurrection *biblical* material, but there is no mention of the material concerned being bounded by scripture; indeed, because most of the evidence from which latterday Catholic doctrines of apostolic succession have been constructed are post-biblical, it is very likely that there is here a covert claim that such evidence does express the 'will and institution of Jesus Christ'. The Commission then cites Jesus' promise that 'the Holy Spirit . . . will teach you all things', and this too looks as though it is buttressing a *sotto voce* insistence that the teaching and practices of the second, third and fourth centuries are authoritative and comparable to the first source, the Gospel record. And it is a proper question for the Churches to consider, as to whether all the historical record is beyond cor-

Philipp Harnancourt writes a chapter entitled 'Te Deum Laudamus . . .' and enters at some depth into *how* we should praise God, and what that involves psychologically. The editor himself comes next, with 'Liturgy: Memorial from the Past Liberation in the Present', a laying bare of the way we identify with the original disciples of Christ in our relation to him in liturgy. Lastly comes Klemens Richter on 'Liturgical Reform as the means for Church Renewal'. The eucharist constitutes the local church's identity and fosters its unity, and the author sees an important feature of reform as an enabling and identifying of the cultural distinctiveness of different groups. However, his main concern is that this has not gone far enough.

These were originally academic papers, and they have not lost that atmosphere. But none could mistake the practical edge to all that is advocated.

COB

LITURGICAL COMMISSION RESIDENTIAL CONFERENCE (Selwyn College, Cambridge, 25-27 September)

The conference will begin with lunch on the first day and end with lunch on the third day. It will be set within a framework of daily morning and evening prayer and the Eucharist which will draw on proposals for revision of the ASB offices and Eucharistic rites which (so far as the Eucharistic rites are concerned) are not yet in the public domain.

It is envisaged that the Commission's proposals for revision of baptism and confirmation in ASB together with proposals for rites of wholeness and healing and proposals for calendar, lectionary and collects will be introduced for the first stage of liturgical business at the July 1995 General Synod. This means that at the time of the conference the period during which proposed amendments can be submitted to a revision committee on these matters will be in progress. Other aspects of the Commission's current work (funerals, reconciliation and rites to support the programme of Christian nurture canvassed in the report *On the Way*) will by the date still be at a much less formed stage, and yet other rites (revisions of Rites A and B, marriage, ordinal) will still be at a comparatively early stage of formation. It is the Commission's intention that views and ideas generated during the course of the conference will be able to feed into the process.

The first major item, however, will be a theological exposition based on Biblical texts led by Canon John Sweet. All aspects of the Commission's working begin with a theological serious consideration of the Biblical record and the tradition, an approach to which the Commission hopes the experience and participation of diocesan committees will add.

The approach to the conferences of 1985 and 1990 was to compress whole seasons of the church's year into the compass of a few days, but current work on initiation rites makes that less easy to achieve since one cannot 'conjure up' candidates for baptism and confirmation. There are however aspects of these proposals which might be incorporated into the

sad that the rubrics command that the president receives communion first followed by the couple and their families. Whatever happened to servant ministry? The words of administration are 'The body/blood of Christ' which will have older Methodists worried again. The post-communion prayer, blessing and dismissal do not reflect the theme of marriage, which to my mind is rather a pity.

The provision for the blessing of a marriage previously solemnized is derived from this marriage service and so specific comment on it is not necessary. If you would like a copy of this document, it may be obtained from: Methodist Publishing House, 80 Ivatt Way, Peterborough, PE3 7PG. Comments are invited on this service. No doubt comments from other than Methodists would be welcome.

The appraisal of this non-Methodist is that this is a general revision of the marriage service—I would have liked to see something a *bit* more radical, though I know the compilers thought anything *too* radical would not be acceptable/usable. I hope the Church of England takes note from the Methodists what *can* be done.

Charles Read

Angelus A. Haüssling (ed.), *The Meaning of the Liturgy* (Liturgical Press, Collegetown, imported by Columba, 1994, 145pp., £10.99.

Angelus Haüssling is the Abbot of Maria Laach, the German Benedictine Abbey associated so closely with the twentieth century Liturgical Movement. The title he has given these papers deliberately reflects the original title, *The Spirit of the Liturgy* (1918), with which Romano Guardini set out so much of the between-the-wars agenda for the Movement. The papers were originally read at a conference in Munich for the Catholic Academy of Bavaria, when the speakers were asked to reflect particularly upon liturgical renewal as inspired by Guardini and 'mandated' (the back-cover blurb) by Vatican II. Guardini does not, however, figure strongly in the papers—indeed I suspect that, across the six chapters, Herwegen and Casel are stronger points of historical reference than Guardini.

Richard Scheaffler writes on 'Therefore we remember . . .', and explores some of the implications of time in relation to our eucharistic worship. Much of his interest lies in eschatology, and a portion of his paper investigates the philosophical features of understanding time. Clemens Thoma tackles (from a Christian standpoint) 'Memorial of Salvation: The Celebration of Faith in Judaism', and this is clearly intended to provide a backdrop to the Christian studies which surround it. Philip Schaeffer contributes 'Eucharist: Memorial of the Death and Resurrection of Jesus', and, makes a case for a closer relating of the 'passion' (in which he includes the resurrection) to the sacramental signs, with perhaps a lessening of the weight on sheer 'presence'.

rection by scripture, but rather stands as a quasi-autonomous second source of our knowledge of Jesus' 'will and institution' alongside the scripture. If so, then any amount of doctrines of the ordained ministry may flourish—and have done so in 'Catholic' circles. But the Thirty-Nine Articles or the present Canon Law of the Church of England would give pause to this methodology, and Anglicans ought not to let it pass unchallenged. And the very fact of dependence upon the second source suggests strongly that scriptural authority alone would never get you there.

That said, the Commission gives the Pope what he wants in a slightly threadbare form. They just about meet (a) by saying that only an episcopally ordained priest can preside at communion—and in the eucharistic celebration 'the self-offering of Christ is made present'. They meet (b) by saying that orders conferred within the church are given in accordance with the institution of Christ (as shown in the twin-source pattern above). They manage not to identify the sacrament of orders with 'the priesthood of the New Covenant', which, with the Letter to the Hebrews open before them, would have been difficult. They meet (c) simply by saying that ordination is irrevocable, unrepeatable, and they do not quite handle the 'configuration to the priesthood of Christ' stuff. They meet (d) by saying 'yes'.

In the upshot the Anglicans on ARCIC-2 become very vulnerable if any Province should open a door to lay presidency, and they themselves sail very near the wind on priesthood (which probably should be debated in Latin or Greek to avoid the English-language confusion over 'priest'). They appear to make episcopal succession of the *esse* of the church, which is supposed to be an open question in Anglicanism. And they go over the brink in that twin-source basis for belief. I should think the Pope would be fairly happy about it all, and it is doubtful whether it is even addressed to us.

COB

[We are inviting ARCIC-1 and/or ARCIC-2 members to write in to commend *Clarifications* to Anglicans, and hope to have some such contribution to print in coming months].

TWENTY YEARS OF NOL Two more years of the record

1989: Jan—Barbara Harris to become a bishop in Feb; Feb—General Synod promulgates the Ecumenical Canons; Mar—advance notice of a conference to mark the 500th anniversary of Cranmer's birth; Apr—explanation of how the Archbishops had given specific permission (under Canon B5B) for a new eucharistic prayer from the Liturgical Commission to be used experimentally in two inner Birmingham parishes on a recent Sunday; May—publication of the Southern African *An Anglican Prayer Book*; Jun—New Zealand Book has completed its waiting year without anyone going to the Appellate Tribunal (and will be published shortly); Jul—Parliament rejects the Clergy (Ordination) Measure; Aug—inculturation is the theme at York of both *Societas Liturgica* and the Third International Anglican Liturgical Consultation; Sep—full text of the IALC Statement on inculturation; Oct—review of Ronald Jasper's *The Development of Anglican Liturgy 1662-1980*; Nov—publication of *Patterns for Worship*, the watershed into a new liturgical era; Dec—COB participates in the consecration of new Mar Thoma bishops, including the laying on of hands *onto the staff* . . .

1990: Jan—Prince Charles clobbers ASB (COB recalls the Prince had ASB prayers at his own marriage); Feb—Series 1 marriage and funerals denied extension of their licence by the House of Laity; Mar—COB has first crack at ‘Pour out your Holy Spirit over . . .’; Apr—*Promise of His Glory* published; May—Stephen Sykes made bishop by 1662 rite; Jun—memorial service for Ronald Jasper in York Minster; Jul—Synod now approves Series 1 Marriage and Funerals for a ten-year licence, and gives first debate to *Promise*; Aug—ACC-8 in Cardiff affirms the IALC structures; Sep—the countryside report recommends less communion services in rural areas; Oct—the new Synod will start by considering the ‘nuptial blessing’; Nov—half-life of ASB heralded; Dec—JLG A *Four-Year Lectionary* appears.

PROGRESS ON REVISING EUCHARISTIC PRAYERS

The Revision Committee considering on the Synod’s behalf the two eucharistic prayers introduced at the behest of the House of Bishops into General Synod in November has met frequently since mid-January. It would be inappropriate and untimely to speculate at this point about what might be the character of revised texts when General Synod meets in July; nor can the proceedings be reported in detail. However, a few innocent tit-bits may stimulate the appetite for what is to come in July. Here then are some random bits:

Firstly, we continue to discuss what would or would not count as a eucharistic prayer for use when children are present (it will be recalled that the House of Bishops said neither of its two prayers fulfilled the requirement).

Secondly, distinguished members of Synod have appeared and asked us to say more about sin (we have!), or to stick to the existing Rite A position of the epiclesis (we won’t, I guess).

Thirdly, we have had exciting slugging-matches about the need or otherwise to have an identical narrative of institution in each prayer and that has run on into debates about ‘at supper with his friends’.

Fourthly, and quite memorably, we have been picketed from within as to the merits of writing ‘Blessed’ as ‘Blest’ . . .

The weightier matters will be reported when the revised texts see the light of day—the intention being to complete the revision on 19 May and then to agree a report by post. NOL will publish whatever it can next month. When the texts do go for their Revision Stage in Synod in July, they can only be challenged at points where Revision Committee had to consider the text (whether or not they changed it). If the Synod makes changes the Steering Committee does not want, then the Committee can introduce fall-back amendments on a second Revision Stage (presumably held within the same group of sessions in July). Then the revised text receives provisional approval, and it is referred to the House of Bishops, and the bishops decide the final form of the text and send it to Synod for final approval. This last stage, requiring two-thirds majorities in each of three Houses, should come at the late Autumn session, the first meeting of the newly elected Synod—and the prayers might possibly be authorized until 31 December 2000. We shall see.

Book Reviews

The Marriage Service/Blessing of a Marriage Previously Solemnized
(Faith & Order Committee of the Methodist Church)

The Methodist Church is currently revising its orders of service and now has a draft proposal for marriage services. The first thing to notice about these proposals is that they are not ‘staged’ in the way in which contemporary Roman Catholic proposals are. So what we have here is a marriage service/blessing of a civil marriage but nothing for engagements, anniversaries, reconciliations, elopements etc.

Revising weddings is a tricky business because, no matter how innovative you want to be, as couples tend to want to play safe. This Methodist revision is therefore at the same time innovative and cautious.

There is an acknowledgement that the couple may enter the church together, in place of the usual entry of the bridal party alone. This is not spelled out but is closely envisaged by the author.

The structure of the service will be familiar to anyone who uses the ASB marriage service. A confession has been added at the beginning of the service, prior to the statement of the purpose of marriage (though there is no absolution provided. The statement of the purpose of marriage has been rewritten and I wondered whether the language used was a bit too abstract and a bit too culturally middle class (lots of ‘enrichment’ and ‘encouragement’ type of language).

Because of the silly state of the law regarding weddings, this entirely modern language service still has to include an archaic form of the vows and the legal declarations. The promises of intent are fuller than in the ASB, and Kenneth Stevenson will be pleased to see that the Ministry of the Word comes earlier rather than later in the service. However, the passages printed out are rather short, and three of them are out of context (using Biblical passages referring to love other than love between men and women. Doesn’t anyone nowadays know the difference between *agape*, *philia* and *eros*?).

The giving away has become ‘presentation for marriage’ and both bride and groom have sponsors. The exchange of rings comes after the vows, rather than later on (so the vows and the registration are still separated in this service). There is a pledge for the couple to say together after the exchange of rings and there is a suggestion that the minister may wrap a stole around their joint hands. Older Methodists will think that their church has gone over to Rome, or at least to Canterbury.

The blessing of the couple is accompanied by the laying on of hands, and, sadly, the archaic Lord’s Prayer is the one printed first—maybe in the final version they should use parallel columns or, better still, not print this archaic version at all!

Provision follows for a nuptial eucharist (but older Methodists will be reassured that it isn’t called that). The eucharistic prayer provided here could be used (illegally) by Anglicans at wedding eucharists. I find it rather