

TWENTY YEARS OF NOL Two more years of the record

- 1991:** Jan—obituary to J. G. Davies, and first diocesan report in first twelve-page issue; Feb—launch of PRAXIS; Mar—new Liturgical Commission; Apr—George Carey's enthronement (denounced in advance as Philistine!); May—*The Worship of the Church as it approaches the Third Millennium* published from the previous Liturgical Commission; Jun—retrogressive motions on initiation from the House of Bishops announced in Synod July agenda; Jul—in the event Synod nearly accepted 'communion before confirmation', the House of Bishops alone defeating it; Aug—International Anglican Liturgical Consultation in Toronto (taking opposite view to C/E H/B at most points!); Sep—Grove Books publishes Toronto Statement; Oct—Synod in November to debate liturgical policy; Nov—advertising Grove Books' twentieth birthday in January; Dec—2000 clergy issue open letter against interfaith worship events.
- 1992:** Jan—Oliver O'Donovan, liturgy and ethics surface at that birthday; Feb—report that the House of Bishops has sent eucharistic drafts back to the Liturgical Commission; Mar—first mention of the Worship-Master; Apr—publication of *Multi-Faith Worship?* from the Board of Mission; May—*In Tune with Heaven* published; Jun—draft new Liturgical Canons; July—review of Paul Bradshaw's *Search for the Origins*, and the arrival of 'lumpers' and 'splitters' . . .; Aug—Morris Cerullo and claims to healings; Sep—tribute to Jimmy Crichton on the 60th anniversary of his priesting; Oct—publication of *Celebrating Common Prayer*; Nov (well, we all know what happened in November '92); Dec—publication from the Commission of *The Service of the Word and Affirmations of Faith*.

LITURGICAL COMMISSION MEMBERSHIP

Two casual vacancies on the Commission have been filled to run simply till the end of the Commission's quinquennium on 31 March 1996. These are:

Bro. Tristram SSF
The Dean of Hereford

Both these are members of General Synod, and they are appointed specifically to provide enough members of the Commission on Synod to give the required proportion on the Steering Committees for liturgical business (and Bro. Tristram has been appointed to the Calendar and Lectionary Steering Committee, and the Dean to the Initiation services one). They had better be re-elected to Synod itself this Autumn (though one suspects they have a reasonably good grip on their seats . . .).

We announced two years ago that the Bishop of Birmingham had been appointed to the Commission—we now understand that he resigned after a very short interval.

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News of Liturgy

Editor: Colin Buchanan

Issue No. 248

August 1995

Editorial

The synodical news in the Church of England again bids fair to swamp all the other contents of this NOL, though synodical news from the Anglican Church of Australia has got a foot into the door also. It is likely that each of the items reported here will be around for many months ahead, with others to come: prayer and departed (a very constructive if semi-private consultation was duly held at York on 7 July), extended communion (the House of Bishops' document, GS Misc 452, has duly been published), admission of the unconfirmed to communion (the next stages after the House of Bishops' resolution in June reported last month will presumably also lie with the House of Bishops), and all that the Commission has for us at the Selwyn College, Cambridge, conference from 25 to 27 September. *News of Liturgy* was born amid the welter of papers which marked the years from 1974 to 1979, and finds itself once again with textual proposals fluttering around it like confetti, and a task of objective yet selective reporting to fulfil each month in order to chart clear ways through the liturgical tickertape. All outside contributions gratefully received.

However, all that is preamble to announcing that this month's editorial is not about the synodical business. Instead we greet the publication on 6 July of *Patterns for Worship* (Church House Publishing, x/342pp., hardback, £15). Never has a work taken so long to be published—the contents were 'commended' by the House of Bishops in October 1992, and CHP told us to expect publication during 1993! That is the downside, but the upside looks impressive—the first major liturgical publication CHP have undertaken on their own, a print-run of 7,500 almost sold out a fortnight after publication, and a reprint in hand. All the parochial clergy received a mail order form with their payslip from the Commissioners at the end of June (£18 postage included from Church House Bookshop), and that has apparently had a high take-up also. One wonders whether the profits will be ploughed into the Liturgical Commission (which, it must be recalled, cannot afford to attend its own annual meeting of diocesan liturgical representatives without milking those who come), or will reduce the General Synod apportionments to the dioceses, or will even help pay for the next Lambeth Conference (as, once upon a time, we were told was happening when the first Series 2 communion booklets in September 1967 sold for 9d., not 6d. as we had been led to expect).

But all this puts off inspection of the contents. *Patterns* has a 12-page Introduction and a 17-page coaching essay called 'The Basic Outline', which most helpfully guides readers through the kinds of choices available, helps them to construct services of the Word and also to compile eucharistic rites, and in the process teaches about structure and flow. Then the main Resources section follows (it is over 150 pages), but here too there is help—particularly in 'The Ministry of the Word' chapter, and its discussion of lectionary principles. Section 4 is 'The Commentary'. 50 or so pages of three dimensional description of the Resources material in use in four different imaginary parishes. And Section 5 is 'Sample Services' set out on the same principles as were the samples at the beginning of the original *Patterns* in Autumn 1989. The Commission's dream is being fulfilled even as you read this—for on 10 August six of these samples (there are 17 in the parent book), go on sale in packs of 20 copies (£5 plus £1 postage from Church House

Bookshop). The six are 'A Service of the Word', 'For all the Church Family', 'An Evening Service of the Word', 'Holy Communion', 'Believe and Trust', and 'A Service of Healing' (nos. 1, 3, 5, 7 (or 8), 16 and 17 in the big book). I got a small smile from receiving a mock-up of 'Believe and Trust' (subtitled 'Celebrating Baptism at Holy Communion'), as the Commission has now turned its own back on the words 'believe and trust' as an inspection of the new (draft) initiation services will show! But perhaps their own sample services will bring them to a better mind.

There is finally an index of scripture references of great breadth and richness (would that they had included page numbers as well as the devious codes for finding the material, however). These invite the reader to return to the Resources section and relish the responsive readings of the biblical sources. My favourite remains (perhaps because of my time of life):

When the sound of the mill is faint,
when the voice of the bird is silenced,
and song notes are stilled,
when to go uphill is an ordeal
and a walk something to dread:

**Lord, we remember you, our creator.
You sent your Son to win the victory over death for
ever.**

Colin Buchanan

PS: I find (after many disclaimers) that I no longer hold the copyright of Holy Scripture. So please take it and use it without hesitation.

THE OVER-ABUNDANT SIX

The Sunday afternoon of General Synod saw the Revision Stage of the six eucharistic prayers, led off by Archdeacon Tim Raphael, the chairman of the Revision Committee. The debate was in prospect a trial for not only the six prayers, not only for the Revision Committee, but also for the Standing Orders which have now sat for many years awaiting their testing to destruction. The Standing Orders provide that there may be *two* Revision Stages, a first in which members of Synod may move the reference of the texts by re-committed back to the Revision Committee to secure certain stated ends, and a second in which the Revision Committee itself brings actual amendments before the Synod for authorization. Ideally, these two stages ought to be at most 48 hours apart, with time for the Revision Committee's work between them. On this occasion, however, a clear message had been given that a second stage could not be fitted into the York agenda, and, if motions for re-committal of the texts were carried, the second stage would have to come in November—after the next election to General Synod and therefore before a different House.

The Synod had, it seems, grasped the procedural problem. Whether as a result of this, or from the very opposite of it (total ignorance), or from sheer contentment with the texts, not a single motion for re-committal had come in. The result was that a Committee armed to the teeth to defend its dangerous and subversive multiplication of eucharistic prayers found itself crowding a parapet which few were attacking, even whilst (as did emerge) there was instead a threat of a tunnel being dug under cover of night to undermine the foundations. Against such no blunderbusses on the parapet would prevail, and even the expert marksmanship of the

Who, when his hour had come,
on the night before he went up to the cross
to make full atonement for the sins of the whole world,
offering once for all his one sacrifice of himself,
took bread and gave you thanks ;
he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying,
Take, eat;

this is my body which is given for you;
do this in remembrance of me.

In the same way, after supper
he took the cup and gave you thanks;
he gave it to them, saying,
Drink this, all of you;

this is my blood of the new covenant
which is shed for you and for many
for the forgiveness of sins.

Do this as often as you drink it,
in remembrance of me.

[Let us proclaim the mystery of faith]

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

Therefore, in obedience to his command,
we commemorate and celebrate
his saving passion and death,
his mighty resurrection and ascension into heaven
and we eagerly await his coming again in glory.

We thank you that by your grace alone
you have accepted us in Christ;
and here we offer you a spiritual sacrifice,
holy and acceptable in your sight.

Through him, receive this our duty and service,
and grant that we who eat and drink these holy gifts
may, by your Holy Spirit,
be one body in Christ,
and serve you in unity and peace.

In your grace and mercy,
bring us to the joy of your eternal kingdom
with all the company of the redeemed.
May we praise you in union with them,
and give you glory through your Son, Jesus Christ.

Through him, with him, in him,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,

either

all glory and honour is yours, gracious Father,
for ever and ever. Amen.

or

we worship you, Father eternal,
in songs of never-ending praise;
**Blessing and honour and glory and power
be yours for ever and ever, Amen.**

THE THIRD AUSTRALIAN ADDITIONAL THANKSGIVING

We print here the text of the redrafted 'Third Additional Thanksgiving' resulting from the processes in the Australian General Synod described on page 9 above.

The Lord be with you

And also with you

Lift up your hearts

We lift them to the Lord

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God

It is right to give our thanks and praise

The following Preface is omitted if a Seasonal or other Proper Preface is used.

It is indeed right,

it is our duty, our joy and our salvation,
that we should at all times and in all places
give thanks to you, almighty and everlasting God;
through Jesus Christ your only Son our Lord.

For he is the true high priest,
who has freed us from our sins
and made us a royal priesthood
to serve you, our God and Father.

Therefore with angels and archangels,
and with all the company of heaven,
we proclaim your great and glorious name,
for ever praising you and saying:

Holy, holy, holy Lord,

God of power and might,

heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest.

[Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.]

Holy and gracious God,
all creation rightly gives you praise.
All life, all holiness, comes from you,
through your Son Jesus Christ our Lord
whom you sent to share our human nature,
to live and die as one of us,
to reconcile us to you,
the God and Father of all.
Hear us, merciful Lord;
through Christ accept our sacrifice of praise;
and, by the power of your Word and Holy Spirit,
sanctify this bread and wine,
that we who share in this holy sacrament
may be partakers of Christ's body and blood.

Archdeacon of Barnstaple would be equally wasted on an empty-looking landscape.

Tim Raphael led off with kind words about his Committee, and indicated that he judged that 'the Synod and the House of Bishops have been working from different agendas'. We are approaching a period of 'testing and discernment'. There are six prayers—we have come a long way since 1980 when we had four all very like each other. And he spelled out their characteristics (readers of NOL are referred to the June edition). He also spoke further about the Trinitarian shape, which is the current way of commending an epiclesis in the Eastern position. And he dropped a broad hint that the role of the House of Bishops at the end of the process was to make smoothing changes only.

In the debate various people made small points which, without any motion for re-committal, could hardly be incorporated (and should have come earlier by submission to the Revision Committee). But the stick of dynamite came from the Bishop of Bristol. He told us on behalf of the House of Bishops of the concern there—concern about

- (a) 'Liturgical memory' (much assisted by repeating the same forms frequently);
- (b) Common Prayer (not assisted by different parishes doing different things);
- (c) Not wanting to disturb the timetable (hence no episcopal motion for re-committal);
- (d) Protection of the unity of the Church;
- (e) The ghost of Josephine Butler (who has been in the ASB Calendar through the House of Bishops over-ruling the text provisionally approved in Synod—the Synod threw her out by 120—117, and the Bishops restored her by 22—21 ...)

Well, said the Bishop of Bristol, the House knows, concerning point (e), that it is on delicate ground, but in defence of the other points the House might yet reduce the number of prayers at the final reference to the House in October. This was the tunnelling to place high explosive under the tower—a tunnelling which the defenders have few powers to resist.

One or two agreed with the Bishop of Bristol. But members of the Revision Committee—COB and Bernadette Burbridge—both defended variety and called on the House of Bishops to think again about its threat. This brought the Archbishop of York forth from the corner to reflect on how the House of Bishops could assert its authority. The issue is not, he said, about variety, but about the character of Anglican worship. At any rate the Bishops must take responsibility for the outcome (and this sounded as though he were pushing the explosive to the far end of the tunnel ready for detonation).

All was not yet over. The sharp-shooting Archdeacon Trevor Lloyd followed. Yes, he conceded to the Archbishop, yes, you can blow us up from your tunnel. But would it not be better if you came out into the open and we had an honest above-ground contest? Could not the Bishops take a fuller part in the whole revision process? Is not the liturgy 'owned' by the whole people of God and not just by the Bishops?

And so it went to the vote, and received provisional approval overwhelmingly. And now it goes to ... wait for it ... the House of Bishops for the

final reference, and that House must fix the final form which goes to the new Synod in December for final approval.

And *still* hardly a soul has even mentioned 'Trinitarian structure' or engaged in any comparison of the merits of one prayer with another. Even the House of Bishops was unable to give much clue as to whether, if numbers were to be reduced, it would be this prayer—or that—which would be chopped. Presumably the one for use with children is sacrosanct, but in respect of the others, and in default of discussion, any could perish when the explosive goes up. (Concerned observers could do worse—much worse—than write to their bishops, either about the acceptability of six, or at least about the importance of excising according to demerit . . .)

Colin Buchanan

For the sake of the record, there now follow the changes made to the Opening Notes of Rite A in the ASB and to paras. 32-37.

AMENDMENTS TO RITE A

As proposed in the Report of the Revision Committee on Eucharistic Prayers and provisionally approved in Synod

1. Note 13 (ASB p.116) is amended to read:

Proper Prefaces and Insertions. *The Proper Prefaces for the Eucharistic Prayers in this rite are set out in section 76. They are obligatory when this is indicated in the seasonal propers but may be used on other suitable occasions. The Sunday Prefaces (31), (32), and (33) are for use with the Fourth Eucharistic Prayer and the Order following the pattern of the Book of Common Prayer. On special occasions, other Proper Prefaces or Insertions may be used at the points indicated in the prayer. These should be selected from authorized or commended sources or may be composed for a single occasion.*

2. Sections 32-37 are amended to read:

THE PREPARATION OF THE GIFTS

32 A hymn may be sung. The collection may be taken and presented.

The holy table is prepared and bread and wine are placed on it. Prayer may be said over the bread and wine.

THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

THE TAKING OF THE BREAD AND CUP AND THE GIVING OF THANKS

33 The president takes the bread and cup.

(These words may be used:

We celebrate together the gifts and grace of God.

**We take this bread,
We take this wine
to follow Christ's example
and obey his command.)**

34 The president uses an authorized EUCHARISTIC PRAYER.

3. The last line in section 46 is amended to read:

Other authorized words of distribution may be used. One alternative may be found in section 66.

THE NEW 'A PRAYER BOOK FOR AUSTRALIA' GOES THROUGH

The General Synod of the Anglican Church of Australia usually only meets once every four years, and that time came up at the beginning of July—and 'APBA' was the main item on the agenda. We were just able to report its acceptance in a one-liner last month, but we can now report more.

There were clearly many skirmishes before the Synod even met, not least in the pleas of David Silk, Bishop of Ballarat, for a eucharistic prayer that was more (shall we say?) catholic-friendly. The phrase that passed into use was a 'fair go' for Catholics. Then came the first-stage in Synod—on Tuesday, 4 July. The opening debate on the Book led to an acceptance 'in principle' (rather like an English 'Provisional Approval'). This then took the process into a committee stage in the full Synod. In that they were due to handle the 800 amendments which had been submitted in advance. Late in that day David Silk proposed 'his' additional Thanksgiving, and the Synod asked the Liturgical Commission to scrutinize and revise it and bring it back the next day—a task begun late that night.

The next morning the Commission put its re-draft in David Silk's hands. The report in front of me says at that point 'fellowship is strained but unbroken' . . . It then went to an informal group to see if they could agree a re-touching during that day. They finally got there at 10 p.m. Then, on the next day, Thursday 6 July, the prayer was officially adopted by the Synod as an amendment. The Third Additional Thanksgiving (closely following Hippolytus, and apparently the one nearest to Silken acceptance anyway) went out and the informal group's re-write of the Silk prayer came in. In respect of this re-write *Church Scene* reports of Silk himself 'Having argued his case strongly and cogently, he was gracious in what ended up as a virtual consensus'. The text of this in its agreed form is here printed overleaf on pages 10 and 11.

Meanwhile the Synod had been working its way through all the other services in its amending and revising process. At a late stage it added as a sub-title 'Liturgical Resources Authorized by General Synod', thus giving a suggestion rather lightweight authority. Finally, by tea-time on the Thursday, the Canon authorizing the Book was formalized. The issue then was whether the Book would be authorized by 'ordinary bill' or by 'special bill'. A 'special bill' would have had to go down to the dioceses for endorsement before coming into force—and would have taken up to eighteen months even if successful. An 'ordinary bill' required special majorities. The votes were cast at 5.20 p.m. (on written ballot-papers), and were counted whilst the Synod was at evening prayers. Then came the result:

Bishops 22-1 in favour; Clergy 87-12; Laity 84-15; Total 193-28

Whatever majority they needed, they had got it! It sounds as though emotion ran high thereafter. The closing eucharist of the Synod followed the new rite. The change in the Lord's Prayer had gone through without any amendment being submitted or comment delivered. The feminist issues had been kept within bounds ('A Song of True Motherhood'—actually based on Julian of Norwich—had been in the front-line of conflict, and ended up deleted—we may yet print it here). The resultant 900-page Book should be available fairly soon. David Silk had his photo (with some Australian liturgical notables) on the front page of *Church Scene*, which would certainly give English controversialists a sense of *deja vu*.

CALENDAR AND LECTIONARY—GENERAL CONSIDERATION

The Calendar and Lectionary report occupied most of the last morning of Synod, i.e. 11 July. A review of the Report itself will be published here separately in a later month, so this is strictly only a round-up of the debate, brilliantly led by Michael Perham.

As was easy to forecast, the debaters fell into two groups: those either pleased or displeased about the change from the two-year thematic Sunday Lectionary to the three-year 'semi-continuous' (and thus unthematic) RCL one; and those with animadversions upon the merits or demerits of this that or the other saint or worthy in one of the league tables. A third *motif*, with which I greatly sympathize, was wrath at the one notable adjustment made to the RCL provisions—where the Commission, with only special pleading for its case, had changed the 'Sundays after Pentecost' into the 'Sundays after Trinity'. No doubt the Revision Committee will have to wrestle with that one!

Because the arguments about the two lectionaries are becoming well known—and because little argument is possible *in re* Pentecost (but we are not giving up)—perhaps the saints deserve our attention here. I noted the following:

Mgr. Billy Steele (the RC observer, the first observer ever to speak in a GS debate under new Standing Orders so permitting) welcomed names which unite us—such as the Martyrs of Uganda.

Valerie Bonham said the exercise was like a wedding-guest list, and she was glad to be inviting Harriet Maunsell (of Clewer) to the festival, and sorry we had so far left off Marion Hughes (first 'professed religious' C/E since the Reformation), not to mention T. T. Carter (also of Clewer).

Michael Saward regretted the inclusion of Michael Ramsey ('he should be commemorated, but not at the instigation of his contemporaries—after all, on this basis how long are the two [archiepiscopal] eminences at the far end of this chamber going to have to wait?') (Much laughter followed).

Paul Avis put in a plea for Coleridge; the Bishop of Lincoln deprecated the change of date of (saintly) Bishop King ('there are still faded notices on the back of organs instructing the wardens to ensure that a trap goes to the station to meet the Bishop'); Julian Litten put in pleas for Conrad Noel, A. H. MacKnochie, and Frank Weston (whose eponymous nephew also made a speech); Canon Mellor of Truro wanted Petroc and Henry Martyn—and Perrim.

The debate moved on to collects (now, by definition, not theme-related). Michael Perham fielded every ball which had been smote, whether on the on side or the off—a brilliant performance.

Now let all those with bright ideas, including a couple of hundred further saints for the various divisions of the sanctity league, write in to the secretary-general by 5 January 1996.

COB

Moving House

It is this month that Grove Books Ltd. moves to Cambridge, to the premises of Ridley Hall. Note address, phone and fax numbers on page 12.

Next month's Publication . . .

is Joint Liturgical Study no. 32, by Alan Kreider, the Mennonite scholar who teaches in Manchester. The pre-Nicene Church did not expect unbelievers to come to its services (except on intermittent police-raids), so was there any connection between its worship and its evangelism? The issue is explored on a wide canvas and from many angles.

This month's conferences

From 6 to 12 August the Fifth International Anglican Liturgical Consultation meets in Dublin (to consider the future of eucharistic revision). It is followed by the Congress of *Societas Liturgica* from 14 to 19 August. See page 6 overleaf re the attendance of our NOL Bursar.

Correspondence

Dear Colin,

Re: Eucharistic Prayers

Thank you for the recent NOL with the 'SIX' eucharistic prayers.

Personally I yearn for a number of eucharistic prayers—quite a large number in fact—which might have the same opening responses, and the same lead-ins at each point where the congregation join in saying the prayer.

With these, I would not have to announce or publish which number prayer we were using (always an intrusive and rather prosaic 'rubric'). The congregation could listen and join in silently until they heard their cue.

There could be a book of eucharistic prayers, all authorized, to which further prayers or amendments could be added as required. The full ASB need not contain them all. In addition there could be some which only had the congregational spoken or sung responses plus cues. In the 'gaps' there might be a rubric which states that 'here the priest gives thanks for etc.' depending on which section of the prayer he or she was to say.

Another advantage would be the speed at which different prayers could be authorized. Are we really going to cross 'I's and dot 'T's until 2,000 and then freeze the result? We always need new prayers *now*.

With this approach unpopular prayers would quickly drop from use and be excised from 'presidents' editions whilst the congregational book (let) remained the same.

At a recent liturgical conference in Salisbury I asked this question of a member of the Liturgical Commission. Since he had no content to his rather dismissive reply I wonder whether I may have a point. Do I?

Yours sincerely,

Edward Mason
Churchdown, Glos.

SOLOMON AMUSAN—NOL BURSAR

NOL wishes to thank readers for their contributions to bringing Solomon Amusan to the International Anglican Liturgical Consultation in Dublin from 6 August. The appeal began with two dollar payments from generous Americans, realizing about £280, and setting us well on the way. Since then readers of NOL have added over £500, and Australian readers of COB's column in *Church Scene* have added around £65. Thus, at the time of going to press, we are well past £800. The ticket costs around £750 from Lagos to Dublin and back, and the hope has been to put another £100 into his hands for spending purposes (it will be a rare chance for him to buy theological books, let alone take anything home for his family, let alone buy a cup of Irish coffee . . .). The fees for the Consultation and for the Congress of *Societas Liturgica* are being met from elsewhere. So we are virtually there—a few more fivers still welcome. If you had meant to give all along, now is the day of reckoning, today is the day of generosity.

We acknowledge now, in a form in which we hope people can recognize themselves, the gifts received so far. If you believe yourself to have contributed, but you are not recorded below, then please write in quickly.

Sums of £20 and above: CA, VA, GD, PD, NH, BR, PZ and anon;

Sums of £10 up to £19: DB, MB, GB, GC, JC, PD, HF, FG, RH, DH, MM, DN, PO, JR, HS, JS, HT, ST and anon;

Sums of £5 up to £9: RB, JB, PF, CG, DG, PH, RI, HK, RL, VL, L, PM, CP, JR, AS, MS, DS, GS, CS, JS, ST (and PCCs at Arnside and Hawkshaw)

The saga relates to the political and economic problems of Nigeria. It proved virtually impossible to tell Solomon that we were raising the money. ACC (to whose good offices he and we stand much in debt) bought the tickets for the requisite dates, but we have all faced a complex problem about communicating with Solomon. At the time of writing, the tickets are being taken out by courier, and my secretary, after 48 hours of hitting unpleasant noises on the telephone, finally got through to him and was able to tell him the tickets were on their way (and he was delighted). The only missing bits of the link are now that we do not yet know whether the tickets have actually reached him—and to be honest, when communications are so bad, the best evidence I am expecting is a smiling Canon in Dublin.

STOP PRESS—tickets are there; visas still needed.

I hope in next month's NOL to have a few words of thanks from Solomon himself, and perhaps his own account of one or both of the conferences. My own thanks for the (exactly calculated) response to the first-ever financial appeal by NOL. We may yet do it again.

COB

INITIATION DEBATE

On 8 July 1995, General Synod for the first time debated the proposed initiation rites for Holy Baptism, Confirmation, Reception, Reaffirmation and Healing—part of a larger package of initiation rites expected from the Liturgical Commission. In his introduction to the services, the Bishop of Salisbury gave a rationale for them and pointed out some of their notable features. Among these, interestingly, was the inclusion of the optional post-baptismal Clothing—at which point an infant should be divested of its dirty baby-gro and only then dressed in its white christening robe (start building your font-side baby-changing stations)!

The ensuing debate was lively, mainly focussed on the baptismal rite and far too extensive to cover in detail here. On the whole, however, people were generally positive about the rites and the flexibility contained within them, the variety of seasonal material, and the unambiguous placing of the Signing of the Cross before Baptism.

However, the proposed rites were 'carpet slippers', when they needed to be 'Doc Martens', suggested Pete Broadbent. They were too cosy and fudged various issues when what is required is something more hard-edged. This was a recurring theme and various others agreed or added to his concern about the use of 'renounce' rather than 'repent' at the Decision, the absence of a statement of faith required of infant candidates' parents, and the low profile of the Holy spirit.

Laments were heard at the loss of several ASB congregational responses: 'Fight valiantly . . .' (the militaristic image has been changed to one of 'walking'), 'This is our faith . . .' (replaced by the Apostles' creed—the profession of faith made by everyone together, not just the candidates), and the Welcome (which has, in fact, been included in a weakened form at the peace).

Concern was voiced by a few over the complexity of the language, while others questioned the implicit theology that infants could be baptized by virtue of the church's faith rather than that of their parents. The issue of the relationship of baptism and confirmation continues to be confused and some creation theology might even be heretical! All these things will have to be looked into.

Synod gave their approval to the texts, and they will be passed on to a revision committee. Suggested amendments need to be in by 5 January 1996.

Gilly Myers

[As a participant in the debate, I was grateful for this observer's comments. As with the Calendar and Lectionary, we hope to publish a fuller critique of the report in the coming months—there is, for once—time in hand. COB]