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News of Liturgy

Editor: Colin Buchanan

Issue No 347

November 2003

EDITORIAL

I have two or three persistent correspondents who want to know when I am going to fulfil undertakings given them to reopen questions about the nature of 'blessings'. These are, it hardly need be said, formal blessings. The informal ones ('Count your blessings/count them one by one/count your blessings/see what God has done') are not easily integrated into liturgical studies—and may, as a matter of spirituality (and, possibly, prosperity), be more use than liturgical blessings anyway. But, as is usual in NOL, we cheerfully devote ourselves to the angels-sitting-on-a-pin issues and neglect the great matters of judgment and providence.

The traditional issue with blessings was: who can give them? And the clear catholic answer was: only priests, if the form is to be the classic address to the recipients in the second person with God invoked (with a subjunctive verb) in the third person—it has been largely a matter of grammar. So 'The Lord bless you and keep you' from the original 'Aaronic blessing' (Num. 6.24) required a priest (if not an Aaronic one) if it was to be utterable in liturgy. This limitation impinged on the liturgy in the 19th century in that the marriage service in the Prayer Book at two points has blessings of bride and groom, and so the catholic response was to say that deacons could not officiate at marriages. On other occasions, if a non-sacramental service was to finish with a blessing, then the lay reader or deacon would be charged to say 'bless us'—which left God in the third person, the verb in the subjunctive, but the object in the first person plural, which apparently makes all the difference. (Interestingly, blessings of people do not arise in 1662 baptism services, as the services are simply an insert into morning or evening prayer—though blessing water is discussed in the next but one paragraph.)

Being ill-qualified for such limitation catholicly, I officiated at up to four weddings on any one Saturday when I was a deacon (1961-62!). The issue arose again when the Commission was compiling Series 3 marriage service in the 1970s. The Revision Committee of Synod sought legal advice and were instructed that anyone in holy orders could officiate—and, at that stage, had by law to use the Prayer Book rite. This is how it had always been, I suspect, until the catholic movement pressed the priestly privilege position; and, on this basis, it was not that the use of the service was restricted to priests by the blessings in it, but that the provision of only this service by law meant that, in the Church of England's theology, this was the test case, and deacons could pronounce any blessing that priests could. All this was further confirmed a decade later, when women were first made deacons, and, in casting about for things for them to do in this marooned state of orders, bishops found they

had to allow them to officiate at weddings. (You will have already spotted that it will not do, in a 'nuptial blessing', to change 'you' into 'us'—for the BCP blessings of the couple and the ASB blessing of them on page 293 are specifically of them *as a couple*, living together and bonded in bed and at board, and it would not do for the deacon to include herself in a triad of such cohabitation by praying that God would so unite 'us' that 'we' should all three thus live together . . .) The ASB took the whole principle a stage further and provided that, at emergency baptism, which may be conducted by a layperson, the baptism was necessarily to be followed by a blessing said by the officiant (see ASB page 280). And, in grammatical truth, that is all that is involved in a layperson conducting morning or evening prayer and saying 'The Lord be with you' or distributing communion and saying 'The body of Christ keep you in eternal life'. All is blessing in its grammatical form. And, wonderfully, the New Zealanders picked thirty years ago the response in the Bible to 'The Lord be with you' and provided from Ruth 2.4 a congregational response 'The Lord bless you'. I have to say that I think the grammatical rallying-point is in tatters. The informal 'God bless you' to someone who has sneezed shades so quickly into the formal—and they are grammatically of a kind—that there is no clear line to demarcate the priestly territory.

The liturgical purists will tell you that the real way of giving a blessing in scripture is by thanksgiving to God, and that thus the bread and wine are 'blessed' in the Great Thanksgiving, and that thus should the water of baptism be 'blessed' in the *benedictio fontis*. There is an element of this in the *berakah*-form of the Roman-type 'offertory prayers'. The problem there is that, if they are a true 'blessing' of the elements, then probably they anticipate the main eucharistic prayer and the elements are already consecrated—and, if they are not a true blessing, then they appear slightly bogus.

Typically, handling the officiant and the grammar may well be tithing mint and anise. I commend the Grove Booklet, no B27 in the Biblical series, *Blessing: Biblical Meaning and Pastoral Practice*, by Keith Gruneberg. This is looking at the upshot—the good that is sought in and for the recipient of the blessing. That is where the Bible's emphasis lies—and it is probably far broader and healthier for the purposes of meditation than I have managed to be.

Happy kingdomtide.

Colin Buchanan

PS: I found myself among the thousands who watched the last Concorde go over at the end of last month. The plane's distinctive sound has punctuated the late afternoon most of the time I have lived in South East London (though I have to remark that appreciation and wonder would have been short-lived if there had been one coming in every two minutes through the day, which heavy initial sales of the plane might have precipitated—to that degree Hugh Montefiore (who opposed the plane on noise grounds) was absolutely right). I also noted that the planes got a ceremonial fire-float spray (in red white and blue?)—see my editorial of June 2002. Furthermore, my own vicar, John Ackland, used to be in charge of BA cabin staff, and was on the first commercial New York flight, and has kept me posted. But, sentimental old idiot

AN APPEAL FOR STATIONS

Ian Tarrant writes that he is working on a booklet about walking a trail with 'stations' for themes, meditations, scripture passages, or seasonal reflections. Are there people out there who have had a go at it? For it count as 'worship' it probably should be a corporate activity rather than an individual's personal spiritual journey, but any experience (or even untried theory) would be gratefully received by Ian. E-mail ian.tarrant@nottingham.ac.uk—or write to 2 Florence Boot Close, Nottingham NG7 2QF.

AND ON TO PRAXIS NEWS OF WORSHIP

The Succession

You should have received a flyer about 2004 with your October issue of NOL—and a copy of the existing *Praxis News*. In 2004 this will still be edited by Gilly Myers, but will be twice the size and will wrap in many of the distinctive features of *News of Hymnody* and NOL. This should include news on a wider front, book reviews, correspondence and comic lines. It will also have that which NOL has studiously (because it is old-fashioned) avoided—illustrations, and perhaps even cartoons. Rightly or wrongly, COB is being treated as somehow a characteristic of NOL which is to be conserved, and understands he will present a column in the four times a year enterprise. It is planned for publication in March, July, September and December.

Subscribing

You have to take responsibility for this yourself. The mailing list has to be compiled from scratch from those who proactively subscribe. When NOL has ceased—ie in January—no-one is going to send you reminders. This is more or less it.

The form that came with the flyer is now reproduced here overleaf. You can cut it out, or photo-copy it.

By subscribing to *Praxis News of Worship* you will also become an affiliate of Praxis and will receive the following:

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afternoon session, and that NOL was itself absent from the morning's proceedings? Perhaps through your pages I might advertise the date for the DLCs Consultation in 2004: 30 September. It is firmly in the diaries of Commission members.

Yours as ever

Jeremy Fletcher (a noted notable)
York Minster

[COB responds with humble apologies to the unnoted notables—and agrees the named two are indeed notable. He also apologizes for being present (as was spotted) for the afternoon only of the day—he was detained at a dental hospital! Could that have affected his attention-level in the afternoon?]

WHAT THE SPELLCHECK WON'T TELL YOU

Jeremy Fletcher adds to the letter of his above the following:

I was about to print an order of service including this version of the 'Servant Song': 'Bother, Sister, let me serve you', which would have been an interesting comment on gender politics had I kept it in.

THE VASEY MEMORIAL LECTURE

St John's College, Durham, postponed at short notice in May the advertised lecture on 'Liturgy and Imagination' by Bridget Nichols. However, we are now unable to give advance notice, as it has already happened in October. We got but a few days notice this time, and it occurred on 29 October.

Next month's publication . . .

. . . is Joint Liturgical Study no 56, *Infant Communion—The New Testament to the Reformation*, by Mark Dalby. The topic has been well worked over among Anglicans in the last three decades, and the 1991 Toronto Statement of the fourth International Anglican Liturgical Consultation urging the admissibility of all the baptized to communion has had quite a bit of publicity, and has made some impact (though the two Lambeth Conferences the editor has attended have been very reactionary in this area). A good boost came in the old Grove Liturgical Studies when David Holeyton published his Alcuin Club lecture, *Infant Communion -Then and Now* (Grove Liturgical Studies no 27, 1981). While this Study (which is still in print from the Company) had a strong historical element, including the Holeyton specialized field of the Hussites, it left much to be added. Mark Dalby, who provided an earlier Joint Study on *Anglican Missals* (JLS/41, 1999), has now filled many of the gaps with a learned but very readable monograph.

though I must be, it was most of all a reminder of NOL's mortality. How so? Well, it got a mention in issue no 3 in March 1975. This was at the late stages of flying trials, and early stages of seeking landing permissions. And NOL issue no 3 reported (a little late) from *Hansard* the debate in the House of Commons on 4 December 1974 on the Church of England (Worship and Doctrine) Measure 1974. One snippet (not untypical of the level of parliamentary contributions) came from a John Cope, MP for Gloucestershire South, a constituency which took in Filton where Concorde was based: 'In my constituency...we accept literally the description of the Almighty as "lover of concord".' So NOL and Concorde start and finish in roughly co-eval fashion, for all that one speeds and other trundles. And, if these columns have not yet given you the message, please note that the December NOL is our last flight.

CONSECRATING A BISHOP ON ALL SOULS DAY

NOL would add its (not-very-liturgical) pennyworth to the other comments. Our concern is not only concerning the recipient of episcopal orders on that day in New Hampshire, but also with the Presiding Bishop. On 16 October he participated in the Primates' Statement from Lambeth Palace, including

'We also re-affirm the resolutions made by the bishops of the Anglican Communion gathered at the Lambeth Conference in 1998 on issues of human sexuality as having moral force and commanding the respect of the Communion as its present position on these issues.

' . . . If his [Gene Robinson's] consecration proceeds, we recognize that we have reached a crucial and critical point in the life of the Anglican Communion and we have had to conclude that the future of the Communion itself will be in jeopardy.'

The Presiding Bishop then presided on 2 November at the consecration in New Hampshire. Would he not have done better to dissent from the Statement? Or did he perhaps warn the other Primates that, whatever he signed, he would still preside on 2 November?

THE HOUSE OF BISHOPS

The 'Summary of Decisions' of the House of Bishops on 7-8 October includes the following:

Draft Ordinal. It simply says the House 'considered the latest draft'—and thus the Commission will have a chance to consider the House's comments and return a final draft to the House in January, with a view to it coming to Synod for its first round there in February.

Additional Collects. The House approved the return of the text (unchallenged in General Synod in July) for final approval, and thus authorization, in February.

Weekday Lectionary and Amended Rules. The House approved the introduction into General Synod of a complex package of proposals. These will have their first go in February; but they are unlikely to rouse vast emotions . . .

FUTURE MEETINGS—DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Praxis are running three North of England training mornings on Lent, Holy Week and Easter. These run from 9.30 am to 12.30 pm, and come as follows

Saturday 24 January (All Saints, Blackwell, Darlington)

Saturday 7 February (St Nicholas, Gosforth, Newcastle) Saturday 7 February (St Andrew's, Penrith)

Workshop choices: *either* New texts for Sunday worship
or Walking the Way with children
and *either* Music to stir the soul—with RSCM
or Resources for small groups

For more information and bookings (£8 per head, but £4 for concessions, groups, Praxis people, etc) contact

Dana Delap, 9 Wanless Terrace, Durham DH1 1RU

0191-384-3854 E-mail: dana@dunelm.org.uk

THE HORSE'S MOUTH—GREEN WITH INFORMATION

David Green's E-mail of 28 October 2003 reads as follows:

I am writing with news of Common Worship.

ANNUAL LECTIONARY 2003-2004 AVAILABLE TO DOWNLOAD

The popular CSV files of the Annual Lectionary have now been made available for another year free of charge, following the success of the experiment in 2001-2002 and 2002-2003.

You can find out more at: [http:// www.cofe.anglican.org/commonworship/resources/indexdownload.html](http://www.cofe.anglican.org/commonworship/resources/indexdownload.html) and click on the link to the weekday lectionary.

VISUAL LITURGY 4.0 - AVAILABLE AND UPDATED!

Visual Liturgy 4.0 for Common Worship has now been available for a few months. The brand new, more user-friendly version, features *New Patterns for Worship* in full and hymn based lectionary suggestions from the RSCM's Sunday by Sunday publication. A new Services planner allows users to work with multiple services at once while style support is also available for creating service sheets.

In addition, a free update has been released online that provides one or two fixes to known issues and also adds the Series One Marriage and Funeral material to your copy of VL. Go to the RESOURCES section of the Visual Liturgy web site to find out more and download the update.

The Visual Liturgy web site can be found at: <http://www.vislit.com/>

NEW CARDS FOR FUNERALS AVAILABLE SOON

I am pleased to announce that Church House Publishing will shortly be publishing two new products in the official Common Worship range. The Common Worship: Burial of Ashes card and the Common Worship: Committal (for a burial) card are

I realize we can't easily change the Common Lectionary but there is a strong theological bias in it, especially the gospel readings. I am glad that we have a pattern of monthly communion so we have more choice in the readings we use on the other Sundays!

Stephen Leeke

Vicar of St Martin's, Cambridge.

Dear Colin

A few facts to add to your resume on oil.

The diocese of Peterborough had a full 'oil' mass on Maundy Thursday at least from 1963—the year I returned to the diocese. + Cyril was dressed in a linen 'pinny' and the entire Roman rite was used, producing three oils. Catholic clergy from neighbouring dioceses turned up in force! It was held at the anglo-catholic shrine of St Mary, Wellingborough, and this venue was continued by Bishop Feaver. William Westwood made the rite peripatetic and the venue moved round the dioceses—including going to party-political evangelical churches. Our present bishop moved it to the cathedral.

Previously Bishop Kirk 'did' the oils, every year, all three, at Nashdom Abbey, from around 1940, and there was a system whereby catholic clergy could send their vessels to Nashdom, which would post them back the same day, fully charged, in time for the Vigil Mass, which in those days was first thing on Saturday morning. (In those days the GPO was reliable.) Then SOME bishops began to do two or three oils, and news of who did what was circulated to the catholic constituency.

... I also most warmly share your reservations about the use of oil at baptisms and confirmations, and indeed other additives ... I would favour a return to water alone in baptism and the laying-on of hands alone for confirmation, which is why I currently urge the use of the rites of the Book of Common Prayer!

As ever in Domino

Frank Pickard

Northampton

[COB responds: I'm delighted to catch up with the pre-Vatican II pre-history of Latinate English bishops. But I think Frank Pickard's last line is a *non seq.* as well as a disaster.]

Dear Colin

You rightly point out the low turn-out of Commission members at the last DLCs day. I would add however that the 'notables' included Dana Delap (a member of the Commission) and John Harper (Director General of the RSCM and a Commission consultant). And am I right in thinking that your report refers to things from the

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Colin

Re: The giving of a paten and chalice within the ASB ordination rites

When and how did [this porrectio] enter our official texts, and is it now general or universal among the dioceses? And are the standard words in all?

[He then encloses the service booklet from a Michaelmas ordination this year in a West country diocese, where, after the giving of the Bible, comes:

The Bishop gives to each of the newly ordained priests a paten and chalice, containing bread and wine, saying

Receive this offering of the holy people of God which is to be offered to God. Realize what you are to do, imitate the mystery you are going to handle, and conform your life to the mystery of the Lord's cross.]

The bishop's fivefold repetition of the formula, said slowly for the five candidates in turn, seemed to emphasize the strangeness of the middle clause, most of all . . . The whole formula strikes me as being the weakest part of the service as a whole . . . It grew almost oppressive with the heavy stress on the word 'mystery' ten times over. Would NOL have anything to offer on this among its final elucidations?

Yours as ever

Michael Ward
Ledbury

[COB responds: this, provoked by the rumours of a forthcoming new ordinal, seems timely. So what can readers of NOL offer to stoke up the interest before NOL ceases?]

Dear Colin

I agree with what you reported Tom Wright as saying, that the Kingdom Season is confusing and misleading (NOL Oct 2003). However, speaking as a parish pastor, I do welcome the fact that it gives some opportunity to consider biblical eschatological teaching, of which there is plenty, before being plunged into the candles, carols and nativity plays. The use of 1 Thess. in year A, Hebrews in year B and 2 Thess. in year C is helpful. But sadly this opportunity has been squandered in the gospel readings, which focus on the crucifixion in two of the three years for Christ the King [which doesn't sound like a Sunday anyway!!] Year A is better with the parable of the sheep and the goats.

The use of the beatitudes for All Saints Day and Sunday is also a mistake. If they are used before confession occasionally it will feel like a well-worn passage rather than an insight which links the saints to the season. The story of the rich young man [Mark 10 17-31 and parallels] would be better. It has themes of obedience, self-denial, treasure in heaven and persecution and its ending ('in the age to come, eternal life') could lead naturally into the eschatological Kingdom Season. In effect this culminates in Advent Sunday which still is 'Second Coming Sunday' but the rest of advent seems to focus on John the Baptist and Mary.

laminated and designed for use outdoors. While a publication date and prices are not yet confirmed, I hope to announce more details within the next month.

Laminated to guard against all kinds of weather, the cards come in a three-fold arrangement with each panel measuring approximately 250mm high x 150mm wide.

NEW WEB SITES FOR CHP AND CHB

With our apologies for moving slightly off-topic, we thought you would like to know that on 4 November, Church House Publishing and Church House Bookshop will be launching new versions of our popular web sites—chpublishing.co.uk and chbookshop.co.uk.

The fresh, attractive, and user-friendly new design combines with a powerful new catalogue and search facility to provide visitors with a state-of-the-art experience in Christian online shopping. New features for the site will include an affiliate scheme that enables customers to create their own 'lists' of recommended titles and then earn fees on purchases. The scheme will be open to churches, organizations and individuals. It's the perfect way to distribute an academic reading list, make vocational recommendations, suggest titles for a Lent course, or even for a book group!

From 4 November onwards, visit:

<http://www.chbookshop.co.uk/>

and

<http://www.chpublishing.co.uk/>

FINAL WORDS

The Common Worship web site can be found at

<http://cofe.anglican.org/commonworship/>

If you have been forwarded this message and would like to subscribe for yourself or if you wish to unsubscribe from this list please email me at david.green@c-of-e.org.uk.

If your email address changes, do let us know so that we can update your details. If you have any queries please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Best wishes

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[COB adds: *Visual Liturgy 4* costs £120. It includes a User Guide (which is itself priced at £10). The demonstration in Southwark revealed an amazing versatility. Would those who have been using it regularly this Autumn—especially those deliberately putting it through all its paces—please write in quickly and contribute to our bumper final issue.]

BOOK REVIEWS

Keith F Pecklers S.J., *Dynamic Equivalence: The Living Language of Christian Worship* (Pueblo, USA, 2003, xxii/238 pp, large pb, US\$29.95, imported by Columba, Dublin, £21.50)

This is the book which gave rise to the fuss in *The Tablet* to which I drew attention in the last two issues. The author is professor of liturgy at the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome, and has written before on the Liturgical Movement. While I have not come across his writings before, I now cheerfully acknowledge that he is fully on top of his subject and writes with a comprehensiveness and grasp which elicit admiration.

His subject is the whole sweep of the history of the coming of vernacular liturgy to English-speaking Roman Catholics. Its first chapter goes right back to the New Testament, to the adoption of Latin by the church in Rome, to developments in the East, to medieval preaching, and, interestingly, to 'The Council of Trent and the Vernacular Question'. The adherence to Latin in the West was not only a defensive reaction against the criticism of the Reformers, but was reinforced by doctrinaire views, as, e.g., those of the 'trilinguists'—the theologians who held (on the crudest 'biblical' grounds) that only Hebrew, Greek and Latin were sanctioned and worthy for the approach to God. However, there were many cracks driven into the fabric in the four centuries following Trent—vernacular manuals to guide the prayers of the laity, vernacular translations to enable them to follow the rite closely, vernacular hymn-singing, even vernacular texts used by priest-celebrants (though in notably Jansenist circles). Vernacular breviaries were also found in Europe and were presumably in use by the clergy. And English-speaking Roman Catholics also got the benefit—and Pecklers records 'James Crichton contends that most probably Goter [who published in the first half of the eighteenth century and taught the more famous Richard Challoner] was unaware of pope Alexander VII's prohibitions against vernacular translations of the Missal.' Amusingly, whether Goter was aware or not, Crichton concludes 'he saw the pastoral need and he met it.' A non-Roman reader can only draw from this that the Pope had not seen the pastoral need and had not met it.

The link between these early chinks of light and the actual outcome at Vatican II is provided by the Vernacular Society, a pressure group born in the USA in 1948, after a two-year pre-history provided by the St Jerome Society. Membership was 17 in 1948, 2753 in 1953. Pecklers remarks that in 1955 the 'membership roster and international mailing list reads like a Who's Who in Theology and Liturgy' (p 51). There was a strong sense in the 1950s that they were making headway, not least through the approval in Rome in 1954 of 'The Constitution regarding the English Ritual for the United States', which gave considerable ground for American dioceses which so wished to use the vernacular in various parts of the rites. The struggle is amusingly brought out in the description of the international Assisi Conference in 1956, where 'translators had been forbidden to translate anything regarding the

vernacular during the public talks and discussions'—but Godfrey Diekmann was in one of the translator's booths and joined in from there when the topic arose, as it inevitably did.

At the point where the history looks about to enter into the debates of Vatican II, Pecklers take a step back and devotes chapter 4 to the ecumenical pressures and exchanges which had touched the use of Latin ever since the Reformation. Clearly in the USA many leaders had reached the conclusion that literally millions of anglo-saxons were being held back from becoming Roman Catholics because of the barrier created by Latin. There were also discussions opening as to whether the Protestants had got hold of good translation, or whether liturgical texts (for example) might need to be redone from scratch. But then, in chapter 5, Vatican II sweeps into view, and the vernacular comes with it. In with much detail of persons, meetings, movements, and American particulars, there are gems for the reviewer, not least, in my judgment, the formation of ICEL. This actually occurred before the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy was promulgated, though of course when there was a full knowledge of its contents. English-speaking bishops from ten nations, meeting in Rome in October 1963 during the second session of the Council, set the enterprise in hand, and it has served them well. But Pecklers' story is in the years 1963-67 back in the plethora of the formation of competent bodies in Rome to guide the implementation of the Constitution, so that the precise role of ICEL does not easily appear. And finally he jumps into present-day controversies, particularly the newly reopened issue as to what is to count as fair and true translation. It's a great read.

COB

Keith F Pecklers, *Worship* (Continuum, London/New York, 2003, vi/224 pp, pb, price nk)

A second crack for this author (and there is a third one around, entitled *Liturgy in a Post-modern World*, which is a symposium of papers given at a conference last year). This book is largely historical, working on a much wider canvas than the issue of the vernacular which occupies *Dynamic Equivalence*. To a non-Roman he appears as someone who half-envies the Anglicans at the Reformation, believes most post-Tridentine moves to have been mistakes, and rejoices in the twentieth century recovery from the 'decline'.

Yet, the observer also sees him struggling for reform within a very limited compass. His liturgical movement insights draw him to reject eastward-facing celebration, and they give him a concern lest liturgy is boring to the young. He sounds marginally defeatist. For his programme appears to be 'Light up the mass, and the people should come'—though he clearly does not think it is yet lit, so his recipe cannot be fully tested.

COB