

ANGLICANS TOGETHER

NEWSLETTER No. 17 October 2001

Letter to Members

Since the last edition of the Newsletter, the Election Synod has been held and Dr Peter Jensen has been elected, consecrated and installed as the Archbishop of Sydney. I have written to Archbishop Peter and congratulated him on his election. In part I said, 'in the diversity that is the Anglican Church, as represented by Anglicans Together, you can be assured of our support as the Archbishop of Sydney. May your period of leadership be one that brings great blessing from God.' I look forward to working with the Archbishop and the fresh emphasis that he brings to the office.

Before the Election Synod, Anglicans Together hosted a very successful 'sell-out' Dinner at Meriden School. Three wonderful After-dinner Addresses by Dr David Galbraith, Mrs Denise Thomas and the Reverend Dr Mark Harding were given on the subject, "Our Diocese, Our Future, Our Contribution". Condensed versions of two of those addresses are included in this Newsletter.

One concrete development that has arisen from the Dinner, is our decision to establish an on-line Anglicans Together Journal. It will be a broad, inclusive, contemporary, theological journal. It has been given birth through the original concept of Dr Stephen Moore. I look forward to it being an influential contribution to the Anglican Church in Sydney and beyond. The web address will be anglicanstogether.org

With the upcoming Synod I invite you to support the work of Anglicans Together by renewing your subscription and encouraging others to join. A Subscription Form is included in the Newsletter. While financially we are presently secure, your continuing support will ensure that a broad-based Anglicanism will foster and grow in Sydney.

John Cornish

Anglicans Together members at Synod are invited to gather at the Catholic Club for dinner on the first Friday evening of Synod.

..."the man who can never see anything but his own point of view, who is completely intolerant, who totally lacks the gift of sympathy, who never makes any attempt to understand the mind and heart of others, will never make a pastor or evangelist or even a friend....."

William Barclay

Twin Towers, Terrorist Tragedy and Christian Response.....

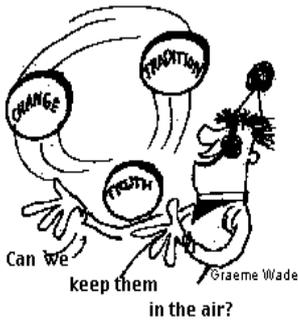
A great deal has been written and spoken about the terrorist attacks on New York. Amongst others, Britain's senior religious leaders have also spoken out. Archbishop Carey, Cardinal O'Connor, Chief Rabbi Jonathan Sacks and Dr Badawi, Chairman of the Mosque Council of the U.K. issued a joint statement condemning the evil act and stressing the need "to nourish all that we hold in common and to resist all that would drive us apart".

Sadly, a minority of British Muslims have strongly opposed Dr Badawi and support a holy war. Dr Peter Riddell, a reliable Evangelical student of Islam and Director of the London Bible College Centre for Islamic Studies warns that radical policies have a strong appeal for some. Certainly there are Christians suffering at the hands of Muslim extremists.

Nonetheless, Rabbi Dan Cohn-Sherbok has recently rightly drawn attention to Hans Küng's book, "**Global Responsibility**" (SCM Press - \$30) which simply says we need to talk.

Perhaps an even more important book for the study of inter-faith differences and an understanding of continuing differences between Christians (and Anglicans) is his later and (I think) his greatest book, "**Christianity - Its Essence and History**" (SCM Paperback: \$71.45). This is one of the most outstanding books I have ever read, far less known than it should be. One I highly recommend.

The above books and other major theological publications can be purchased through *Open Book*, 15 Blaxland Road Rhodes, NSW. (10% discount to clergy). *University Co-op Bookshop Ltd* is helpful in getting requested books, and give discount to cash-paying members)



The Mission of the Diocese of Sydney versus Anglican Order

Mark Harding,

Dean, Australian College of Theology

Abridged from an address given at Anglicans Together Dinner - 30 May 2001.

I joined Anglicans Together in 1993. I joined because I believed there was a danger that we would lose sight in this Diocese of the great treasure that is the Christian tradition we have inherited from the past. My fear was that we would exchange a healthy engagement with the diversity of Anglicans worldwide for an enclosed and blinkered mentality. That was 1993.

In 2001 Anglicans Together remains even more relevant than it was 8 years ago.

I know four of the five candidates pretty well as friends and colleagues. I have the utmost regard for the integrity of the five, and believe that they would each exercise his responsibilities according due honour to the office. Although there are considerable differences of emphasis among them, even competing visions, the Synod is presented with a wholly internal choice of candidates.

It is not like this anywhere else I suspect in the Anglican world. This can be seen in the slate of candidates for the election to the episcopate in any diocese. In organisations, secular and ecclesiastical, all around the world a high value is placed on bringing in new blood.

We are entitled to ask, then, why there are no candidates thought electable for Sydney who come from outside? ***The message we are sending is that we are so protective of this Diocese's evangelical heritage that it cannot be entrusted to anyone outside.*** I have heard and read people in this Diocese saying that the mission of the Diocese demands an internal choice, and, above all, the right choice, the right leader.

Michael Horsburgh's article in the Bulletin last week was right in its assessment of what makes this Diocese tick. He is absolutely correct to say that inability to engage with other views is a mark of the immaturity of this Diocese. Indeed, there is a fear that there are evangelicals in this Diocese who are to be more feared than liberals or anglo-catholics.

The great issue of this last synod has been lay presidency. ***Lay presidency amounts to a declaration of independence from the Anglican communion.*** Lay presidency arises from the belief that each local church is totally self-sufficient and autonomous.

Anglican Order, on the other hand, provides external referents for congregations and for dioceses; checks and balances; links with the

wider communion and the great tradition; tangible representatives of the unity we enjoy in Christ. But the promoters of lay presidency want you to believe that parishes and even the diocese itself is in no need of others external to us.

In this era of growing world-wide interconnectedness, this Diocese wants to reinvent itself as a village.

In an era when networking is our delight and our life, this Diocese wants to talk to itself.

What should you look for in an archbishop in such times? Because we are not in possession of the plenitude of truth, which candidate will honour the articulation of sincerely held diverse viewpoints?

Which candidate will honour other dioceses even though they are different to us, and do good to them and receive from them? Which of the candidates will recognise that the gospel is preached in other dioceses too? *Who will honour the corporate connectedness guaranteed in Anglican Order?* Who will stare down those parishes that sponsor the setting up of independent Anglican churches in other dioceses?

I urge you to cast your vote for one who will counter the culture of self-sufficiency; who will maintain the gift that is the network of Anglican order and interrelatedness. I urge you to cast your vote for a man who will challenge the blinkered mentality of many; who will openly support and affirm a diversity of viewpoints, even the viewpoints of the outsider.

A Recent Publication

For those wishing to extend their understanding and knowledge of the roots of the Anglican Church as having its links to the early undivided Church, a valuable publication has just appeared. *"Fathers and Anglicans - The Limits of Orthodoxy"* is by Arthur Middleton, Rector of Boldon, Diocese of Durham, Honorary Canon, Durham Cathedral and Tutor, St Chad's College.

"Tracing the development of the use of the Fathers in Anglicanism, Arthur Middleton shows how the particular character of the Anglican settlement - with its interplay between Scripture, tradition and reason, together with its constant, if sometimes clumsy, will to profess only the faith of the undivided Church - has fostered a proximity with Orthodoxy that cannot be ignored.."

In the Foreword, the *Bishop of London, Richard Chartres* writes: *"Fathers and Anglicans* helps us to re-appropriate a vital part of the Anglican approach to the living reality of Christ. This book deals with the very great significance attached by classical Anglican divines to developing a 'patristic

mind' which is neither afraid to reason nor ashamed to adore.....The questions which confronted the sixteenth century are not the ones which are most urgent for us.....Our questions are very different. How do we interpret the spiritual vitality of other faiths? As we seek the light of the gospel on these challenges the experience of the theologians of the undivided Church struggling to communicate the gospel in a pagan culture is fresh and relevant.

We are indebted to Fr Middleton for tracing the story of how Anglicans since the Reformation have sought to develop the 'patristic mind'."

Publisher: Gracewing, Herefordshire.

ISBN 0 85244 450 8 rrp - \$69.95

A new Archbishop for our Diocese - and our Future.

Denise Thomas, AM FACE

Principal, Meriden School, Strathfield

Abridged from an Address given at the Anglicans Together Dinner prior to the Archbishop's Election.

So what are the qualities desired in our next Archbishop? Let me put forward these thoughts for your consideration.

I would have to begin by saying that in an Archbishop *I* would hope for a man *or woman* with a heart for God, who would serve God's people. Of course I realise that as things stand in this Diocese it must be a man.

It must be a man who values women's ministry. Someone who does not subscribe to the 'equal but different' philosophy - but someone who believes that it is Biblically valid for women to be ordained as priests and to teach both men and women. Someone who sees that this is right not only on grounds of common humanity but on theological grounds.

One who recognises strength and value in other traditions than his own, one who celebrates that diversity that is within Anglicanism. Someone who will see himself as representing all Sydney Anglicans.

I would want someone who would not divide us from the national church or the Anglican communion, someone who would foster better, warmer, richer relationships between Sydney and other Australian dioceses.

I would want someone who is ecumenical; someone who appreciates that we can learn from other churches and that one should develop good relations and fellowship and collaboration with them for God's good.

We need a godly man, a mature man. A good preacher and teacher of Biblical truths who also values reason and tradition.

We need a strong man. Strong in character as well as in body.

It would be good if he had a sense of humour.

An energetic man, not afraid of hard work, one who is a good administrator and who can build a good team around him to whom he will delegate things, to enable him to be visible and involved in personal ministry and to play a role in the national and even international stage.

We need a compassionate man.

- One who encourages cross cultural ministries.
- One who lives his theology.
- One who shows the 'fruits of the Spirit' in his personal dealings and in his approach to the wider community.

A man who appreciates the 'ordinariness' of most people's lives.

A few weeks ago I was in London. I read an article in The Times marking George Carey's tenth anniversary as Archbishop of Canterbury. In it he remarked on the transcendental reality at the heart of ordinariness. He said his own parents, both bright, never had opportunities. His father was a hospital porter. His parents had no capacity to explore life. They did not even have a motor car. He believes there was something precious and special about their ordinariness. He says we all have a responsibility - the Church, the media, governments - to enlarge people's lives.

He says he always wears his dog collar to the FA Cup Final. "I believe it's important for the Church to be seen on occasions like that. There's no point in going in disguise. And I find that, rubbing shoulders with all sorts of people, one can get into conversations with them, and because they know I won't reveal their secrets, they tell me things about their private lives. You enter into the loneliness of someone else's life and it's a great privilege."

As the Head of an Anglican Girls' School there are certainly qualities I would look for in an Archbishop.

I know my colleagues and I always appreciated the strong personal support offered by Archbishop Donald and Archbishop Harry; the opportunities they provided for discussion at Bishops court; the personal support by telephone or by letter. I hope this will not lapse.

I would want our new archbishop to see Anglican schools as centres of ministry - vitally important ministry - which he would encourage staff and students at Moore College to see as a valid and valuable chaplaincy ministry.

He would encourage them not to see school chaplaincy or any other chaplaincy for that matter as second class ministry or a soft option.

Finally I rather like Archbishop Runcie's words quoted in the last newsletter -

"It is part of an archbishop's task to prevent the Church trying to sting itself to death, like a

demented scorpion, and instead to gather the church, and remind it of the priority of allegiance to its common Lord."

Anglican Websites of Interest

Other websites can be accessed through these addresses.

Anglican Church of Australia Official Website:
www.anglican.org.au

Anglican Communion Official Website:
<http://anglicancommunion.org/site.html>

This site gives access to the ACNS (Anglican Communion News Service). You can subscribe free and be placed on their email list.

Anglicans Online - Independent:
www.anglicansonline.org/

The Episcopal Church, USA:
<http://www.ecusa.anglican.org/>

Worship That Works/Selected Sermons:
www.ecusa.anglican.org/worship-that-works

Anglican Church Diocese of Sydney:
www.sydney.anglican.asn.au/

Anglican Diocese of Brisbane:
www.anglicanbrisbane.gil.com.au/focus

Anglican Diocese of Melbourne:
www.melbourne.anglican.com.au

St George's College, Jerusalem:
<http://stgeorges.edu.anglican.org/>

Lay and/or Diaconal Presidency

Lay and/or diaconal presidency will no doubt be on the Synod agenda again, some time soon. These comments are offered in the hope of illuminating rather than confusing the key issues.

As I see it, the key issue for opposition has nothing to do with preserving priestly prerogatives or resisting change.

It seems appropriate to me, that lay/diaconal celebration of the Eucharist be permitted in extraordinary circumstances where no priest is available within the time of need. I see this as part of the church's duty of sacramental care.

The Sydney proposal would allow a layperson or deacon to celebrate, while an ordained priest is ordinarily and easily available - if not present.

Two assumptions drive the argument here:

- (1) that Word and Sacrament are inherently 'equal' (so it is wrong to 'elevate' one over the other); and
- (2) that the local congregation is sufficient unto itself.

In what way are Word and Sacrament inherently 'equal' or even commensurable? The Word is for

believers and unbelievers alike; the sacraments of Baptism and Eucharist are for believers exclusively. This is why those who are in 'malicious and open contention' with neighbours, 'or other grave and open sin without repentance' - precisely those who need to hear God's Word! - should (at least in theory!) be refused Communion.

If Word and Sacrament are inherently 'equal', then in principle every service which includes preaching should also include Communion. How do parishes which conduct preaching and worship services on a Sunday morning, but not Communion, justify such 'inequality'?

Lay/diaconal presidency proponents decry the need to 'import a priest from outside' for the sake of obtaining someone ordained a priest, but who need not have any connection at all (pastoral, geographic) with the people concerned. Admittedly, there are times when this requirement is indeed both irksome and burdensome. But there is a deep underlying principle at stake here, the antithesis of congregationalism: that we are organically connected to each other in the Body of Christ. On this principle, no congregation is sufficient unto itself, and the need to 'import' acknowledges our wider unity and interconnectedness. By contrast, splendid congregational self-sufficiency is ultimately the path to schism.

So why not invite someone from another Anglican parish to preside? It solves the problem of isolationism, but maybe that is not the best solution. 'Ordination' now becomes a factor.

Why ordain anyone, at all, ever?

First, ordination is the Anglican Church's way of meeting a need. No one is worthy to administer either sacrament, full stop. Article 26 enunciates the principle that those who minister the sacraments do so 'by [Christ's] commission and authority'. The Church is caught in a dilemma ñ no one can; yet somehow we must. So when the Church gathers for an ordination, it conveys 'Christ's commission and authority' to one unworthy of it. Their call has been tested beforehand, and is validated at the ordination. Ordination resolves the Church's dilemma.

Second, ordination sets the ordinand apart. At ordination the deacon or priest or bishop is such 'in the Church of God' and is accredited by 'the Church' (at least, in the denomination) to exercise ministries appropriate to their order(s). No layperson can claim a comparable authorisation. It is not that ordination necessarily conveys holiness or even basic competence! But the prayers of the

Church gathered purposefully cannot be set at naught.

It is ordination that makes the difference. That is why the layperson from another parish is a solution but not the best solution.

A final note - why does this not prohibit a layperson from preaching? Because the prophetic tradition has always allowed the Word of God to speak through any means available (eg Amos 7.14f; Balaam [Nm 22-24]), but closely guarded its cultic purity (Nm 16; 1 Sm 13.7-14). Any departure from this guarding requires rigorous argument and compelling defence. So far, I am not convinced.

So I prefer diaconal presidency to lay presidency, when a priest is not reasonably available. And I take deep offence at the Sydney proposal to allow a layperson to preside when an ordained priest may be easily available or even present. Because ultimately, it sweeps aside the prayers of the faithful - are 'Christ's commission and authority' so easily swept aside?

*Canon James McPherson
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