



# NEWSLETTER

No 40

November 2009

ISSN 1836-5116

## President's Reflections

**This column was commenced on the weekend between Synod meetings and finished the day after it concluded. Not surprisingly, the first three days of synod were dominated by discussion surrounding the \$160 million deficit in the Diocesan Endowment and the consequent cuts to the annual budget for the next triennium.** The

whole of Tuesday evening was devoted to this matter; beginning with a presentation from the CEO of the Glebe Administration Board (GAB), *Mr. Steve McKerihan* and the Chairman, *Mr. Phillip Shirriff*. They gave a full and detailed account of the losses and presented graphs showing the income derived over the past seven years from their strategy of high levels of gearing (up to \$140 million borrowed for investment). This presentation was followed by a prolonged question time as synod members tried to make sense of the magnitude of the loss and why it had happened.

The rest of the evening was given over to a debate on a motion from *Mr. Kell* and *Mr. Tong*, members of Standing Committee which sought to focus on the global financial crisis as the cause of the losses and to affirm that the strategy of borrowing to invest was not only within the authority of the GAB but also clearly reported on a monthly basis to Standing Committee and annually to the synod. There were several major amendments to this motion, moved by *Mrs. Susan Hooke* and seconded by *Mr. William Edwards*. These amendments attempted to do four things:

1. **place responsibility for the losses on the investment strategies of the GAB rather than the global financial crisis *per se*.**
2. **affirm that the investment strategy and the risks associated with it should have been reported more clearly to the Synod, given that most synod members are not expert in reading financial statements.**
3. **direct Standing Committee to review the rules and practices relating to financial governance within Diocesan bodies and in particular to review the investment strategies and results of the GAB.**
4. **express the synod's regret that the resources of the diocese were not managed more prudently.**

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There were other amendments brought by *Mr. Edwards* which attempted to censure the GAB and the Standing Committee for their role in the financial losses and for failing to preserve the real value of church trust property.

The debate was conducted in a courteous manner and the President allowed it to continue until everyone who wanted to speak was heard. It soon became clear that the synod was not going to support any kind of censure motion but the strategy of gearing did come under considerable scrutiny and some members expressed the view that there were ethical issues involved here that should have been considered. (The Archbishop in his Presidential address had confessed that he had at one time entertained some doubts about the ethics of the investment strategy but had decided on reflection that it was morally sound). Although most of the amendments were lost or considerably watered down, the GAB was sent a clear message that they would henceforth be under much greater scrutiny from the synod and that risky investment practices would not be tolerated. Corrective action has already been taken by the GAB in the form of an independent review by an outside organization which has made a number of recommendations for reform. Synod has asked to see a report on the implementation of these reforms when it meets again next year.

As well as our Vice President, *Susan Hooke* a number of Anglicans Together members participated in this debate. Many also asked sensible, probing questions.

Since our last Newsletter, Anglicans Together has organised a number of events. On the last weekend of August, 30 adults and one lively four year old gathered at Stanwell Tops for a Weekend Away. We enjoyed excellent food, good company and stimulating talks by retired *Bishop Graeme Rutherford*. Starting with the premise that the Trinity is at the centre of our faith, Bishop Graeme's **three talks focused on the Trinity in Worship, the Trinity in Community and the Trinity in Evangelism**. On the latter topic he emphasized the importance of compassionate action as an essential part of our evangelism, suggesting that without action, no-one listens and without words, no-one understands.

The *Rev'd Sue Emeleus* led morning Bible studies on Mark's Gospel which were greatly appreciated. Sue has extended her thoughts on Mark's Gospel and they are published in this Newsletter (see pp 6-7). Although numbers were smaller than hoped everyone who attended

the weekend greatly enjoyed it and we were sufficiently encouraged to make a booking at the same site for the last weekend of October 2011.

**On the 15<sup>th</sup> September we were very pleased to welcome our Primate, Archbishop Phillip Aspinall** to speak to us in Christ Church St. Laurence Parish Hall. A good crowd enjoyed some refreshments in the Parish Hall before the Archbishop's address. His talk focused on his recent visit to the Episcopal Church's 76<sup>th</sup> General Convention and the passing of Resolution D025 that recognizes the inclusion of gay and lesbian persons in all levels of the Church's life and orders of ministry. Also discussed was the Covenant which has been proposed by the Archbishop of Canterbury in an attempt to give some new focus for unity within the Anglican Communion and the mixed response that is receiving. (His Address is on the AT website [www.anglicanstogether.org/](http://www.anglicanstogether.org/)) The talk was followed by some searching questions and much discussion.. One response to the Primate's Address is found in the article by the *Very Rev'd James Rigney*, Dean of Newcastle Cathedral, included in this Newsletter.

In the closing moments of Sydney's Synod a motion was passed declaring "that Synod welcomes the creation of the province of the Anglican Church in North America (ACNA)", and the motion went on to affirm Sydney's support for this break away group of churches. While I respect the strongly held views of those who have made this decision to separate from the Episcopal Church, I could not support this motion. Schism, in my view, is always an occasion for sadness-it means the rift in relationship is now permanent and that conversation has ceased.

Anglicans Together remains committed to doing its part in the Church in Sydney to keeping conversation going between Anglicans of all persuasions. That is why we have encouraged members to be involved in Synod and to keep alive a voice for moderation and respect for other traditions even when we disagree with them.

**History would suggest that schism only breeds further schism and it is a sad commentary on the Gospel we proclaim if we cannot keep talking to each other. The American Lutheran scholar, Dwayne Priebe, warns us that 'whenever we draw a line in the sand which includes some and excludes others, Jesus will always be found with the outcasts.'**

*Philip Bradford, Parish of Hunter's Hill*

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**Vale Graham Wade (1931-2009)** a Christian, practicing Anglican and a man generous with his talents. In the 1960's he worked with the Australian Board of Mission staff to produce one of the earliest and best 'bio-documentary' missionary films, 'This Man', depicting the dilemma of a young Solomon Island man caught between his old culture and the new, being introduced by the Christian Church.

**Graham Wade** delighted the congregation at the *All Saints Church, Hunters Hill* Family Services with his 'Rolf Harris' style Christian presentations of popular Bible stories.

A cartoonist, with a keen and insightful sense of humour, Graham produced wonderful cartoons commenting on Anglican Church life in Sydney Diocese. Over twenty of these were published in the *Anglicans Together Newsletter*.

## **SYDNEY DIOCESE AND THE GFC**

*Rector's Letter in the August -September Magazine of the Anglican Parish of Epping*

**The Global Financial Crisis (GFC) has affected us all in many different ways, particularly in our investments and our superannuation. The Diocesan See Fund has lost more than most, over \$100 million dollars.** The loss will hamper the future development of the Anglican Church in Sydney for many years to come. I understand grants to various ministries will be cut by three quarters. There will be much pain.

As most of you know, I am from time to time asked by media organizations to comment on Diocese of activities. ABC and the Morning Herald asked me to offer comment concerning what the Archbishop stated in an email dated 4<sup>th</sup> June to the clergy of the Diocese, announcing the extent of the loss the Diocese See Fund had incurred as a result of the GFC.

**Basically, the Diocese had borrowed money to buy shares. I believe that such a policy is unbelievably risky...**

to the Sydney's Both the Sydney Herald

Basically, the Diocese had borrowed money to buy shares. I believe that such a policy is unbelievably risky and the people responsible for playing the Stock Market were far too enthusiastic. They were using other peoples' money. Borrowing money in a market that is going up leads to great profit, but also when the market turns, as it did, then the result is great loss. Such a borrowing loss means that you not only have to repay the loan but also the shares that were purchased with money are worth nothing like the price at which they were purchased: thus the result is the magnification of the loss. You have lost twice over.

If a parish seeks to borrow money to undertake a special project such as building a new rectory, then the parish has to go before a plethora of Diocesan committees to get approval for the loan. I would ask which Diocesan committees the persons responsible for applying for the loan to buy the shares go before, apart from themselves? The Diocese frowns upon raffles to raise miniscule amounts for good purposes, but in this instance the raffle was worth more than one hundred million dollars.

People ask me from time to time why it is that I speak to the media. I speak because the business of the Church must be open and transparent. One email I received asked me to explain why it was that I dared to speak to the secular press. It was not the thing to do to speak to the outside world. I thought that Connect09 was about making contact with the society in which we live. Also in the secular world are the people who make up the parishes of the Diocese and they would have not known of such losses had not the secular press taken up the issue.

**The Archbishop has written in the Southern Cross (SC July 2009): "It is uncomfortable to have our affairs so open to scrutiny and comment in the secular press, but this is far better than secrecy and lack of disclosure".**

I believe that the Church should be setting the standards when it comes to openness and honesty. It should not be hiding away from scrutiny. Secrecy only leads to unsatisfactory results, deception and doubt.

**Jesus said, "Again you have heard that it was said to your ancestors, ... Let your 'Yes' mean 'Yes,' and your 'No' mean 'No.' Anything more is from the evil one."**

Such openness is demanded of secular organizations. The Church must be more than scrupulous in all its dealings.

The Church, even as it seeks to promote honesty in our society is itself riddled with a lack of honesty. The Church is made up of frail human beings. I believe that if I have an opinion, it should not be aired behind someone's back. I should have the courage of my convictions and I should speak the words I wish to say in the open. Too often, church members are too frightened and sometimes too insincere to speak up in public. Too often they are bullied into keeping quiet. Too often people only say in front of those who matter, what those who matter want to hear. The people in power are fed what they wish to hear. Remember the king sometimes has no clothes! Having a different opinion is not saying that I totally disagree with everything you say. None of us has all the answers. We need to hear other opinions to make the best decisions.

The Archbishop, in the SC edition mentioned above, also said: "I am glad that we are a church with strong lay participation and synodical government."

While I believe in synodical government, I believe that the Diocese of Sydney's synod is far too big and ponderous to manage the Diocesan affairs. That has been shown by the fact that the Standing Committee of the Diocese is charged with the day-to-day administration of the Diocese. I also believe that because it is too big, the agenda of a dominant group is the agenda that gets attended to.

Whenever I put my name forward for an election, the resultant vote is always approximately seventy percent against and thirty percent for my election. On one particular occasion, when there was a vacancy on the Barker School Council, on the list circulated, I was the only person who had been nominated. Just before the election another candidate appeared and was duly elected. People with views other than that of those in control are criticised for speaking in public, when in fact they are not given the opportunity to speak in the courts that matter in the Diocese. It is very difficult to get a letter printed in the SC if you do not hold the "party line." Participation in the government of the Diocese is limited basically to those people whose names appear on the Anglican Church League How-to-Vote ticket.

**The Anglican Church is a wonderful gift that has been passed down to us by God through our forefathers and foremothers. We most not allow the church's agenda to be limited to one point of view.** Traditionally we have been a church where debate has always been possible. Different points of view even existed in the early Church. Paul and Peter did not always see eye to eye. The Councils of the Church down through the years have been lively affairs. There is nothing wrong with airing different points of view. Democracy depends upon debate; even more so does the Anglican Church. **Anglican Christians should have the courage, and not be frightened, to speak up in public so that the boundaries of the kingdom of God will be expanded.**

*John Cornish,  
Rector, St Alban's, Epping*

**NEWSLETTER published by  
Anglicans Together Inc**

Opinions expressed are those of the contributors.  
Editor: Moya Holle, PO Box 429 Glebe NSW 2037

**ANGLICANS TOGETHER DINNER**

**Friday 20th November, 2009**

**7.00pm for 7.30pm**

PREMIERS at NSW Leagues Club,  
165 Phillip Street, Sydney

Guest Speaker:

**Bishop Barbara Darling,**

*Diocese of Melbourne*



**Address Title:**

**"Sydney and Melbourne Anglicans from 1836 to 2009;  
Historical and personal reflections"**

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**BOOK LAUNCH**

You are invited to the launch of

**Montgomery of Tasmania**

*Henry and Maud Montgomery in Australasia*

by  
**Robert Withycombe**

**Monday 16 November 2009 at 5.00 pm**

**by Professor Stuart Piggin**

The Chapter House, St Andrew's Square,  
Sydney

"In comparison with the fame of their son, *Bernard, Viscount Montgomery* of Alamein, **Henry and Maud Montgomery**, leaders in their own right, are largely forgotten. Henry, fourth Anglican Bishop of Tasmania, 1889-1901, proved a dynamic force in the national church, still relevant today"

Published by Acorn Press [www.acornpress.net.au](http://www.acornpress.net.au) Rrp \$49.50

**ANOTHER NEW BOOK TO READ**

**'Another Way to Love'**, Edited by *Tim Costello* and *Rod Yule*, Acorn Press & World Vision, 2009 rrp \$24.95

Every now and then a book appears that illuminates and clarifies the Christian Way. One came to me to read the other day: *'Another Way to Love'*. The two editors, Tim Costello and Rod Yule, with the help of others, illustrate and "open up" the now well-known title, 'World Vision'. The theme of the book shows a different type of 'call', and **Archbishop Desmond Tutu** summarises it: "*Christians shouldn't just be pulling people out of the river. We should be going upstream to find out who's pushing them in.*"

A book worth reading and putting into practice; it's the way to a more healthy Christian society. Read and inwardly digest.

*John Holle, Glebe*

# WHAT IS SPECIAL ABOUT ST LUKE'S MOSMAN?

**St Luke's began in 1897 as a small timber branch church of St Clement's, becoming a separate parish in 1909 and moving to the present site at Spit Junction in 1910.**

Each of our seven Rectors has played a part in developing our unique "style". The first was *Fred Reeve* (1909-37). Almost 1000 of his sermons still exist, each meticulously typed on both sides of a quarto page. He blue-ticked each sermon each time he preached it. Many have two or three ticks; some have four or five!

Our second Rector, *Ernest Cameron* (1937-63), had an invaluable hobby: photography. His photographs provide a wonderful record of parish life during his long incumbency, particularly the construction of our present church in the 1950s. Unique in its design, it was opened in 1958 and in the words of its architect, Professor Leslie Wilkinson, it is "a blend of Gothic and Georgian, with a touch of the Baroque".

In 1963, parish nominators looked for a man who would "**maintain the traditional churchmanship at St Luke's... a combination of liberal Evangelical theology with a moderately Anglo-Catholic liturgical style**". Our third Rector, *Noel Delbridge* (1963-73) did exactly that while significantly expanding outreach both locally and abroad.

His successor, *John Seddon* (1973-2002) was our fourth and longest-serving Rector. The old church opened as a Parish Centre, women's, children's and youth ministries flourished and the notion of the parish as a family developed. John affirmed and celebrated the St Luke's tradition as an authentic Anglican expression of the faith.

*Lyndon Sulzberger*, (2002-2007) further developed family ministry. He loved the Catholic tradition which had formed him but, like his predecessors, also had an Evangelical zeal and care for souls. Like them, he valued high-quality music in liturgical worship. The installation next year of a fine Fincham organ reflects the importance St Luke's places on good music in worship.

The interim Rectorship, (2007-08), was notable for *Ray Williamson's* sermons, reflecting his scholarship and his profoundly Christian view of humanity, world affairs, the Church and social issues. A highlight at this time was the "Reverend Doctors' wedding" - the marriage of *Ray and Erica Mathieson* before Erica's move to Canberra.

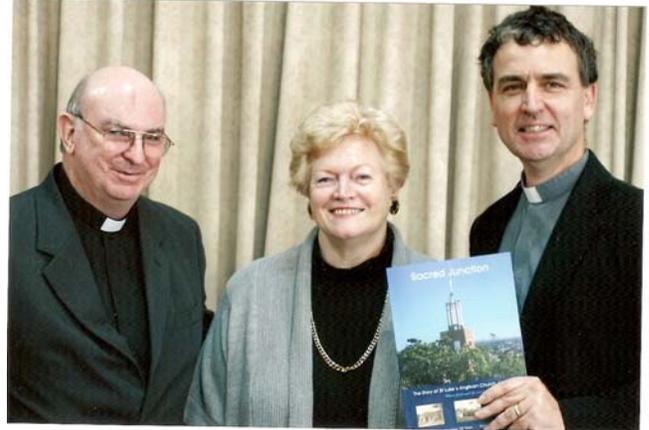
In looking for a new Rector, we wanted someone to continue St Luke's traditions, provide sound biblical preaching, and foster lay ministry and our commitment to mission and social justice. We found one. *Bruce McAteer*, Rector since 2008, has had a busy return to parish ministry as he seeks to meet these challenges.

**The 2008 Strategic Plan calls for a vigorous ministry strategy to reach young families while meeting the pastoral needs of older parish members.** A new stewardship program has been introduced, Music and Education Associations established, and the Rector's

commitment to a *shared ministry* between the priesthood and laity is reflected in all aspects of parish ministry.

Other activities include a *Thank God It's Thursday* group involving hospitality, fellowship and refreshment; a Theology Group for those interested in theological, scriptural, ethical and Christian history issues; an *Eco Watch* Committee and a Reconciliation and Social Issues Group which fosters understanding of Indigenous Australians and other social issues, a long-standing relationship with the Biala Aboriginal Girls Hostel, a feature of its program. This year has seen increased social activities, visiting preachers, and continuing ecumenical relations with neighbouring churches. Outreach projects include the Christmas Bowl Appeal, *Revd Lu Piper's* work in New Guinea, Tikodane in Tanzania, and the work of ABM, CMS and BCA.

Centenary celebrations included the launch of a parish history, *Sacred Junction*.



*St Luke's Rector, the Revd Bruce McAteer, author, Denise Thomas, and the Revd Stephen Delbridge at the launch of St Luke's Centenary History*

There were services to commemorate the induction of the first Rector, *the Rev'd Fred Reeve*, with the former Archbishop of Melbourne *Peter Watson*;



the annual Easter Communion at Balmoral, Family BBQ Church with *Revd Graham Tutt* and his puppet friend *Gilbert*, and Patronal Festival with *Bishop Richard Hurford*; a lunch to celebrate women's ministry, a Centenary Fair and a harbour cruise.

**In 2009, while giving thanks for the past, we seek as a parish to strengthen our foundations and to rise to the challenge to live out our mission into the future.**

*Denise Thomas, Parishioner*

# ANGLICANS TOGETHER WEEKEND AWAY

Stanwell Tops Conference Centre – Friday 28 - 30 August 2009

Anglicans from many different parishes in the Sydney Diocese came together for a time of refreshment and teaching at Stanwell Tops Conference Centre at the end of August 2009. This enabled participants to enjoy the company, discussions and fellowship with other Christians who were comparative strangers to each other.

The first session was a Bible study on St Mark's Gospel ably led by the Rev'd Sue Emeleus who introduced us to the mystic and elemental personhood of Jesus shown through the three-fold structure of this Gospel.

After morning tea we gathered again for the first of two addresses by Bishop Graeme Rutherford focussed on Evangelism which examined the stilted definition when this becomes 'frenetic activism or evangelistic fervour.' Instead he explained evangelism as 'God's mission,' not ours, whereby we help to bring the 'eternal round of love' (the Kingdom) to all creation by building communities of justice with compassionate action and care for the earth. The Kingdom in this sense is more about being 'liberated from anxiety' than filling the pews in a church.

So what does it mean to be an Evangel? How best to share the Good News with others in appropriate ways to their circumstances? By making connections with people, finding out what are their interests, passions and needs – asking what would be *Good News* for them and how we can best serve them. In planning needs-oriented evangelism we need to be mindful to *let the event fit the people* - not vice versa.

With the prime example of Jesus' way of relating, we are to *make friends* with each other and others who may be outside our usual community and realise that we are all drawn into fellowship with God in different ways. The responsive church teaches us to rethink the age old question of 'who is my neighbour.' Sometimes we miss those who are nearest...right under our noses.

**Evangelism is the work of the Holy Spirit amongst us. We don't need to drive the Spirit crazy with our wanton ideas about how things should be in the Kingdom.** Many of us recalled having our own evangelism helped by such processes as Alpha groups. However Bishop Graeme warned us to avoid the one-only method ('*mono-method mania*') Instead try to develop a place of introduction and nurturance for the people we want to attract. A church without a nurturing entry point - a place where people can feel comfortable enough to express doubts and ask questions '*...is like a hospital without a maternity ward...no wonder there are no babies!*' - quoted from *The God Next Door* by Simon Carey Holt.

**Bishop Graeme suggested three tracks that need to be woven together in making church a place where people are eager to come:** Theology, Spirituality (spiritual practices) and Ethics for living all need to have a place in the mix of our liturgy and practice as Christian people living out our Faith. To give a balanced and nurturing programme in the style of Jesus' teaching we need both biblical literacy and formation of physical and spiritual exercises (*spiritual gyms*). **Using a Trinitarian metaphor, he suggested that a healthy rounded church has a balance of Worship, Withdrawal**

(Contemplation) and Action. '*Without action, no one listens. Without words, no one understands.*'

After this session we gathered into small groups and addressed a list of questions on Community centring on our lives as *evangelists in the making*.

This was a good way to get us all talking together. To answer the question, "Who has been an evangelist to you in your congregation?" became a moving tribute to many friends made in the faith. The questions may be useful to use individually or in groups:

1. Would you describe your church community as healthy?
2. What healthy qualities in your church's life excite you enough to want to invite others to share in it?
3. What is there in your church that remains to be converted?
4. Would you describe your church as one where people are expected to observe and receive or to participate and contribute?
5. How diverse is your church community? (E.g. age, background, culture, ethnicity) Does the church reflect the wider community? If not, what are the reasons for this and how might these factors be overcome?

Free time was given after lunch for a bush walk or rest before reconvening for three different workshops:

Franciscan spirituality and hospitality  
Greening the Church  
Finding God in Intimate Relationships.

## DAY 2

**The Rev'd Sue Emeleus started our day with the second Bible study on St Mark's Gospel. She noted that throughout this gospel, Jesus is presented as the powerfully active participant in all the stories.** As he acts, something immediately changes...until the end when he is handed over in the Garden of Gethsemane when, instead of "doing" he is "done to." This, Sue noted, shows us the depth of the Passion of our Lord in passivity, suffering, and in the *stature of his waiting...* (*passion* being the root word for *patience* and *patient*.) From this paradox we learn that the power of God to transform is not dependant on being *in control*. We reflected on the transition from being *achievers* to *receivers* in life passages such as retirement and ageing, something that in our action-focussed lives we may find very hard to put into practice. Sue cited stories from her chaplaincy days at Children's Hospital and how difficult it is to give pastoral care to parents who are waiting endlessly for medical interventions or the ebbing life of a child who may be dying.

**The second session on Worship was led by Bishop Graeme** starting with the prayer:

*Slow us down, Lord!  
Ease the pounding of our hearts by the quieting of our minds.  
Steady our hurried pace with a vision of the eternal reach of time.  
Give us, amidst the confusion of our day, the calmness of the everlasting hills.  
Break the tension of our nerves with the soothing music of the singing streams that live in our memories.*

*Remind us each day of the fable of the hare and the tortoise, that we may know that the race is not always to the swift; that there is more to life than increasing its speed.*

*Slow us down Lord.*

He reminded us that the unique feature of Christianity is that...*at the heart of creation is Love*. He reminded us that the *toxic individualism* in our culture needs to be converted into 'we' not 'me' and to quit shopping for 'my kind of church. Ask yourself, 'Do I think of myself as a member of a family of believers sometimes operating alone?' Our work is to be building bridges over the things that divide us...e.g. the sexuality debate can all too often becomes a culture of hate and division. We need not to be debating so much as hanging in there, so that God, through us, can extend His unconditional love in all circumstances. *The church is to be an undreamed of possibility of love...* (Bishop Segundo- South American bishop)

**He concluded with the moving poem 'A Table That is Round'**

**Again we broke into small groups and addressed ourselves to a challenging list questions on Worship:**

- 1. If someone asked you why you attend church, what would you say?**
- 2. Would you feel comfortable inviting them to your church? If so, why? If not, why not?**
- 3. What would it take for them to become genuinely interested?**
- 4. Is your church just another little club for like-minded people who happen to enjoy singing, religious emotion and sermons? Or is there anything in the life or worship of your church that would make an outsider looking in want to have what you have?**
- 5. What aspects of your church's public worship have most helped you sense the presence and reality of God?**

A summary by two English visitors: *Stephen Burns*, a theological scholar at UTC seconded from Charles Sturt University, and his wife *Judith Atkinson*, an ordained minister.

Stephen eloquently described Liturgy as an '*encounter in Word and Sacrament of the free-floating experience of unlimited hospitality.*'

The word 'Liturgy' means 'participation of the people' Ideally the Clergy becomes the Promoters of this, the People become the Actors and the Audience is God. Active public 'service' needs us to be robust and intentional so that it makes a difference for society and is a witness to goodness, truth and God amongst us...*the constant unfolding of the presence of God to all who come and outsiders*. Judith then gave us some wonderful examples of practical love in action in a very poor parish in UK where they lived.

We celebrated the Eucharist in the circle before having the final lunch together.

The whole weekend seemed to go very fast and was a pleasure and inspiration to attend....a mosaic of experiences and insights that we could take home with us and mull over for the benefit of our congregations. Thanks to all the participants and organisers.

**Report by Bridget McKern, South Hurstville**

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## THOUGHTS FLOWING FROM THE ANGLICANS TOGETHER WEEKEND "Thinking about Mark's Gospel" By Sue Emeleus

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**Most people in the first century were illiterate. So-called 'books' of the New Testament, especially the Gospels, were meant to be read aloud.**

A group at St Patrick's College, Maynooth in Republic of Ireland read it that way. A member of this group, *Michael Mullins*, who subsequently wrote an excellent commentary on Mark<sup>1</sup>, said that for many it was the first time they had had a **transformative** rather than a merely **informative experience** because, read as a whole, the gospel draws the listener into the drama of conflict, the resolution of suspense, the fulfilment of prophecies, the realisation of things foreshadowed and the uncovering of things hidden throughout the story<sup>2</sup>.

Each of the four gospels constitutes a unified whole whose individual parts cannot be understood separately without an understanding of the whole. The elements are arranged in an overall pattern like the panes of a stained glass window which are arranged together to present a single overall picture. Mark's Gospel should be read on its own terms. In this lectionary Year of Mark, the other gospels should not be used to 'fill out' or 'improve' Mark. Their theological perspectives should not be imposed on Mark.

Mark doesn't portray Jesus' death in heroic, noble or stoic fashion (as John does).<sup>3</sup> This kind of violent death was anomalous...*yet here it is in Mark, precisely the main event, to which every other detail in Mark is directed and around which the whole story is composed.*<sup>4</sup>

The earliest preaching seems to have been presented around a two point proclamation: *you (or they) put Jesus to death; but God raised him up.* (See Peter's speeches in Acts 2<sup>23f</sup>, 3<sup>13f</sup>, 4<sup>10</sup>, 5<sup>30f</sup>, 10<sup>39f</sup>, and Paul's speech in Antioch Acts 13<sup>28-30</sup>). By the time Mark's Gospel was written, Christians had been hearing such sermons for thirty or forty years, just as many of us have been hearing the same message over and over again for a very long time. **The gospels aren't ordinary stories, and they aren't biographies.** People had some understanding of the death and resurrection of Jesus, but Mark tells us he is writing about '**the beginning of the gospel...**'. Is he filling in for his listeners the earlier and larger parts of Jesus' life which will enable the preaching they have already heard to make more sense? He divides Jesus' life into three sections, the ministry in Galilee, the ministry on the way to Jerusalem and the ministry in the last week. I would like to refer to the third section in order to comment on our Anglican liturgy. (At the 'Anglicans Together Weekend' we looked at the way Mark divides everything into groups of three, including three crossings of the Lake.)

From the moment when Jesus appeared in public, events seemed to follow rapidly, one on another. Eleven times Mark uses words such as *at once*, or *immediately*. Mark usually gives a brief description of a scene or situation, then he reports an action or comment which decisively changed that situation; and then after a brief reference to the changed situation, passes on to a new scene or incident. It is the activity of Jesus which

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<sup>1</sup> Michael Mullins, *The Gospel of Mark: A Commentary* (Blackrock, CoDublin: The Columba Press, 2005).

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 12

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

maintains the momentum. Constantly he moves from place to place, from situation to situation, and it is always his intervention by word or deed that changes the situation.<sup>5</sup> Jesus' presence is an active and instantly transforming presence. As well as making Jesus the subject of many verbs in a short space of writing, Mark tends to report scenes through Jesus' eyes, or from Jesus' point of view. *Jesus saw them casting their nets...Jesus saw the Spirit descending...Jesus saw him sitting there...Jesus took them with him...Jesus found them sleeping.*<sup>6</sup> Mark also frequently mentions Jesus' inner activity of thought and feeling.

*He had compassion on them...He wondered at their unbelief...He knew that power had gone out of him*<sup>7</sup>

Such descriptions may not, of themselves, be remarkable. What is remarkable, however, is the point at which this kind of writing suddenly changes. Vanstone in his book which has become a classic, points out that the sudden change is at the point at which Jesus is handed over by Judas in the Garden. After that Jesus is no longer the active and initiating agent of what is done: he is there as the recipient, the object of what is done.<sup>8</sup>

***From the moment when Jesus is handed over in the Garden, Mark reports no single incident through Jesus' eyes, and attributes nothing that happens to his initiative and activity. We learn nothing about what Jesus thought or felt, of how he reacted inwardly. It is literally true, that from the time Jesus is handed over until the time of his death, he appears in Mark's Gospel to do nothing whatever. For the most part he does not speak, and when he does speak, his words are always disregarded, ineffective, inconsequential or misunderstood.***<sup>9</sup>

Paul in several places uses the verb which Mark uses when he wrote that Jesus was *handed over*, handed over to become the recipient of other people's thoughts and actions. When Paul says in Galatians

*the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me*<sup>10</sup> he is using the same Greek verb as in the Judas story, so that he *handed himself over* for me. Similarly, when Paul says to the Romans:

***who loved me and gave (handed over) himself for me*<sup>11</sup> it is the same Greek verb again. Finally, again in Romans, Paul says:**

***He that spared not his own Son but handed him over for us all.***<sup>12</sup>

So Mark's Gospel is leading to the event in which Jesus is handed over, finally moving to his death. What was it that Jesus did for us? He was handed over to become passive, waiting, dependent on the decisions of others. Isn't that the situation which we find most difficult? *Gordon Livingston*, a doctor whose son was diagnosed with leukaemia, accompanied his son Lucas to hospital and immediately felt helpless, vulnerable, even imprisoned.<sup>13</sup> He was a medical doctor who was used to taking control of the situations of his patients. Now

he is the one who waits.

I have never forgotten *John Taylor's* sentence,

***Whatever else he is, God is Christ-like.***<sup>14</sup>

**God is Christ-like, and from the moment Jesus is handed over by Judas, the passion begins. (*passio*, to be done to, is the Greek word from which our word *passion* is derived.) This Jesus is not almighty, powerful (in the usual sense of that word). The most common words used in our service of the eucharist are: *almighty, almighty God and King, almighty God and Father, the almighty, the kingdom the power and the glory are yours, God of power and might, God almighty.***<sup>15</sup>

The word *frustration* usually implies not merely a person's awareness of dependence, but resentment of that dependence. Such awareness gives rise to dissatisfaction and anger, as well as resentment. When we speak of frustration, we may disclose the assumption that

*the waiting role, the condition of dependence, the status of patient is improper to us*<sup>16</sup>.

*Rabbi Jonathan Sacks* sub-titled one of his recent books *The Ethics of Responsibility*<sup>17</sup>. Most people would identify with his interpretation of the story of Moses because it affirms the above quotation from *Vanstone: The status of patient is improper to us*. After Moses had destroyed the first tablets containing the Ten Commandments, he went up the mountain again and constructed a second set of tablets. It was on this second set that God again wrote the Ten Commandments. *Sacks* points out that Moses' face was radiant when he returned from this second encounter with God because he had participated with God in the making of the tablets. When he had only been the recipient of tablets which God had made, in whose making he had no part, his face was not radiant. When a person is purely passive, taking no responsibility for what is happening, *Sacks* is declaring the person to be lacking in dignity, in humanity. *Sacks* commenting on an essay of another rabbi, says *To be human is to be creative, a master of fate, not its slave.*<sup>18</sup>

**I think Mark, the theologian who may well have been partly commenting on the theology of Paul, would disagree.** (Is this, perhaps a difference between a Christian and a Jewish understanding of God?) Mark might suggest that when we are dependent on others, when we wait in frustration and helplessness, we are becoming like the Christlike God who was handed over to enter his passion. Why then is there so little mention of this in our liturgy? The situation is even worse in the best loved hymns. Participating in such liturgy, and singing such hymns about the almighty sovereign God may be a very important component in my feeling some day that I cannot continue to use those words.



<sup>5</sup> W.H. Vanstone, *The Stature of Waiting* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 2004 (1982)).

<sup>6</sup> *ibid*, 18

<sup>7</sup> *ibid*, 19

<sup>8</sup> *ibid*, 20

<sup>9</sup> Vanstone, *The Stature of Waiting*, 21

<sup>10</sup> Gal 2:20

<sup>11</sup> Rom 4:25

<sup>12</sup> Rom 8:32

<sup>13</sup> *Gordon Livingston, Only Spring: On Mourning the Death of My Son* (Sydney: Hachette, 1995).

<sup>14</sup> John Taylor, *The Christlike God* (London: SCM press, 1992). 5

<sup>15</sup> From the Service of Holy Communion, Second order, 1978.

<sup>16</sup> Vanstone, 2004, 50

<sup>17</sup> Jonathan Sacks, *To Heal a Fractured World: The Ethics of Responsibility* (London: Continuum, 2005).

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid*, 81

# 'WHERE ARE WE NOW'?

## A Personal Reflection on Archbishop Philip Aspinall's Talk to Anglicans Together

(See full text of the Primate's Address on the Anglicans Together Website: [www.anglicanstogether.org/](http://www.anglicanstogether.org/))

### Anglican Atoms

**Archbishop Philip Aspinall, in his recent talk to Anglicans Together in Sydney, likened the state of Anglicanism to an atomic structure in which particles circulated in tension around a core. The tension is necessary for the structure to exist.**

To continue this image from physics, I found that attending the talk was like watching two bodies pass near each other. The presence of each body exerted a certain influence on the other but neither collision nor connection took place.

Within one orbit the Archbishop shared his experience of attending the ECUSA General Convention and reflected on the current position of debate in the Communion on same-sex relationships and on the proposals for an Anglican Covenant. In the other orbit faithful Anglicans in the Diocese of Sydney shared their concern for the pastoral issues and matters of theological integrity which daily touch their lives and the lives of those among whom they live and witness.

### Support and Resource

Dialogue, which is at the heart of our theological and ecclesiological activity, is valuable not only because it enables negotiation but also because it enables us to more fully understand who we are and what our position is. The process of negotiation and the theological complexity of the material is demanding. This fact no doubt lies behind *Archbishop Aspinall's* admission that he has not had time to look closely enough at the *GAFCON Jerusalem Declaration* (published on 29 June 2008) to be able to comment on its significance. The current situation is a reminder that at a certain level of engagement the language of process absorbs those who participate in it and distances them from other parts of the Church whose voice is not heard and whose thinking and prayer are often inadequately resourced.

In this respect it was good to know from the Primate that the Australian Church is aware that its media resources are not effective in sharing information with the Church as a whole. Reports such as *Faithfulness in fellowship: reflections on homosexuality and the church. Papers from the Doctrine Panel of the Anglican Church of Australia* (Mulgrave, Vic.: John Garratt Publishing, 2001) which bring together the theological reflections of Australian Anglicans need to be more widely available if they are to serve as points of departure for our future deliberations and actions.

### Consensus

The aim for which the Primate said the Communion was working was 'consensus', arrived at as the result of prayer, further study, and the practice of generous attention. As I listened I asked myself whether that really was the result we were aiming for. I was reminded of the analogy of rescue from a burning building. Your house is on fire and you run inside to rescue your child. In the smoke and confusion you come out holding the cat. It's a nice cat and you're fond of it, but it wasn't really what you'd wanted. But all you can do is stroke the cat. Consensus is a bit like the cat: it's a nice thing but not what we're looking for. It is not justice or integrity or truth.

**Consensus proves that the Communion can work as a structure for negotiation and regularization. However, it does not show that the Communion has necessarily allowed**

**us to move closer to acting in a manner that the gospel demands.**

Reflecting on *Benedict Anderson's* idea of 'the imagined community', *Frank M. Turner* has recently examined claims made for the Anglican Communion. He writes:

*Over the past twenty years proponents of what is called "The Anglican Communion" have sought to establish a similar imagined ecclesiastical community among various provinces around the world whose churches derived in some fashion from the Church of England. ...The so-called Anglican Communion exemplifies a religious version of Anderson's "imagined community." At its most banal, the Communion exists to justify bishops travelling about the world on funds contributed by the baptized. At its worst, it has come to represent an imagined community several of whose Episcopal spokespeople now seek to persecute and degrade or relegate into a second track churches who have opened themselves, their process of ordination, and their episcopate to gay and lesbian people. In this respect, this ecclesiastical imagined community replicates in its drive to exclusion the persecution that ethnic minorities have experienced at the hands of dominant nationalist groups from the early nineteenth century to the present day.*<sup>19</sup>

*Turner's* view may be extreme in its dismissal of the actual and potential merits of the Communion but it does remind us that 'the Anglican Communion', and its various 'instruments' are relatively recent developments which have acquired a theological gravity and intent that derives less perhaps from a natural development of their role than from an attempt to develop disciplinary and regulative mechanisms to perpetuate the Communion.

### Guilt and Justice

When asked about the value of the Communion the Archbishop reminded us that Anglicans who were being persecuted looked to the Anglican Communion as a global witness to provide them with support. Any weakening of the Communion would weaken that support. An argument from responsibility and the fear of guilt should not cause us to overlook the range of oppression that Christians experience. For example in September 2006, the Standing Committee of the Church of Nigeria, issued a *Message to the Nation*, taking up ten political controversies in Nigeria, among them a bill regarding same-sex relationships: "*The Church commends the law-makers for their prompt reaction to outlaw same-sex relationships in Nigeria and calls for the bill to be passed since the idea expressed in the bill is the moral position of Nigerians regarding human sexuality.*" The bill in question, as well as criminalising same-sex marriage, also proposed to criminalise "Registration of Gay Clubs, Societies and organizations" and "Publicity, procession and public show of same-sex amorous relationship through the electronic or print media physically, directly, indirectly or otherwise", on penalty of up to 5 years of imprisonment. The proposed legislation was formally challenged by the United States State Department as a breach of

<sup>19</sup>

[http://www.episcopalcafe.com/daily/anglican\\_communion/the\\_imagined\\_community\\_of\\_the.php](http://www.episcopalcafe.com/daily/anglican_communion/the_imagined_community_of_the.php)

Nigeria's obligations under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

"This bill masquerades as a law on marriage, but in fact it violates the privacy of anyone even suspected of an intimate relationship with a person of the same sex," said **Georgette Gagnon**, Africa director at Human Rights Watch. "It also threatens basic freedoms by punishing human rights defenders who speak out for unpopular causes."

Similarly the worsening situation of gays and lesbians in Rwanda poses a serious threat to the security and freedom of individuals in the country, and warrants immediate attention. Particularly alarming has been the recent use of the media to advocate violence against individuals because of their sexual orientation, and a seeming increase in arbitrary detention of individuals on the same basis.

The degree to which the Anglican Church in countries like Nigeria and Rwanda has been implicated in oppression – while in no way diminishing the dangers faced by Christians in many parts of the world, makes it difficult for the Communion as a body to occupy the moral high ground with much security. The justice dimensions of the current situation, while by no means the only issues at stake, need to be placed in the context of the question of whether we would be better placed to pass judgement on injustice if our own practices and principles clearly modelled justice and unequivocal equality.

### **The Primate's Position**

It is clear that I found many of the Archbishop Aspinall's comments disappointing, but I remain conscious that it was as Primate and not as *Philip Aspinall* that he spoke. While I would not presume to know what he 'really' thinks and whether that differs in any degree of content or significance from what he said, I am also conscious that his every utterance is scrutinised in the search for some point on which to criticise or undermine him; and that what I am writing is an example of the same phenomenon. His position traps him in a perpetual spotlight, one that is all the more intense perhaps when he is speaking in the heart of the Diocese of Sydney.

Prayer for him and all in positions of authority in the Church should therefore always include the petition that they be bold to proclaim the gospel in the face of the pressures brought to bear on them. Our practice as a Communion should echo *St Paul's* advice in Romans 12.9-13: *'Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honour. Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers.'*

But for all of us it is also important to remember Paul's injunction earlier in the same chapter: *'Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God – what is good and acceptable and perfect.'* (Romans 12.2)

*The Very Rev'd Dr James Rigney, Dean of Newcastle*

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### **A TABLE THAT IS ROUND**

*It will take some sawing to be round-tabled,  
Some redefining, some redesigning  
Some redoing and re-birthing of narrow-long Churching  
Can painful be  
For people and tables.*

*It would mean no daising and throning,  
For but one King is there,  
And he was a foot-washer  
At table no less.*

*And what of narrow-long ministers  
When they confront a roundtable people,  
After years of working up the table  
To finally sit at its head,  
Only to discover that the table  
Has turned round?*

*They must be loved into roundness,  
For God has called a people,  
Not 'them' and 'us'.*

*'Them and us' are unable  
to gather round  
for at a round table there are no sides  
and ALL are invited  
to wholeness and to food.*

*At one time our narrowing churches were built to resemble  
the cross*

*But it does no good for buildings to do so  
If lives do not.*

*Round-tabling means  
No preferred seating,  
No first and last,*

*No better, and no corners for 'the least of these'.*

*Round-tabling means being with, a part of, together and one.*

*It means room for the Spirit and gifts,  
And disturbing profound peace for all.*

### **Ormiston Gorge**

rock cold sheltering on the sandy spot  
stranger to you, the cacophony of  
pincushions of grass, growing up  
the slopes of blinding colour. Too  
heightened to absorb. pools of  
glace dead fish left high and  
dry. races of rocks. tumbled  
down cliff faces hanging like  
curtains, underneath layered.  
truculent young trees spring from the  
crevices. ants rock -climbing, stranded  
by my legs. gritty sand, dead leaves.  
rock wallaby hidden in the face of  
the cliff surefooted. impossible. will  
you fall. how do you hop. fig trees,  
pines, a spider's web tangled through  
the grass and the glitter of quartz  
this cascade of rocks a gorge  
seared impossibly in the face of the earth.  
dragon fly flying by.

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# THE ANGLICAN COMMUNION AND THE CHURCH OF ROME

**The Archbishop of Canterbury wrote on 20th October 2009 to the Bishops of the Church of England, and the members of the Primates' Meeting of the Anglican Communion as follows:**  
**The Vatican has announced today that Pope Benedict XVI has approved an 'Apostolic Constitution' (a formal papal decree) which will make some provision for groups of Anglicans (whether strictly members of continuing Anglican bodies or currently members of the Communion) who wish to be received into communion with the See of Rome in such a way that they can retain aspects of Anglican liturgical and spiritual tradition.**

I am sorry that there has been no opportunity to alert you earlier to this; I was informed of the planned announcement at a very late stage, and we await the text of the Apostolic Constitution itself and its code of practice in the coming weeks. But I thought I should let you know the main points of the response I am making in our local English context – in full consultation with Roman Catholic bishops in England and Wales – in the hope of avoiding any confusion or misrepresentation. I attach a copy of the Joint Statement that I agreed to make alongside the Archbishop of Westminster, the President of the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales. It can also be found on my website.

It remains to be seen what use will be made of this provision, since it is now up to those who have made requests to the Holy See to respond to the Apostolic Constitution; but, in the light of recent discussions with senior officials in the Vatican, I can say that this new possibility is in no sense at all intended to undermine existing relations between our two communions or to be an act of proselytism or aggression. It is described as simply a response to specific enquiries from certain Anglican groups and individuals wishing to find their future within the Roman Catholic Church.

The common heritage of the achievement of the ARCIC agreed statements, and the IARCCUM principles for shared work and witness (in *Growing Together in Unity and Mission*, 2007), remain the solid ground both for our future co-operation as global communions, and our regional and local growth in common faith and witness. For those who wish to enter into full communion with the Roman Catholic Church in the near future, this announcement will clarify possible options, and we wish them God's strength and guidance in their discernment. Meanwhile our ecumenical relationships continue on their current cordial basis, regionally and internationally.

+ *Rowan Cantuar:*

**Joint Statement by the Archbishop of Westminster and the Archbishop of Canterbury:**  
[www.anglicancommunion.org/acns/news.cfm/2009/10/20/A\\_CNS4662](http://www.anglicancommunion.org/acns/news.cfm/2009/10/20/A_CNS4662)

## THE ARCHBISHOP OF BRISBANE & PRIMATE OF THE ANGLICAN CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA

Wrote as follows to clergy in the Diocese of Brisbane:

The Vatican announced on 20 October that Pope Benedict XVI has approved an Apostolic Constitution (a formal papal decree), which will make provision for groups of Anglicans who wish to be received into communion with the See of Rome. The decree provides a single canonical structure which allows former

Anglicans to enter full communion with the Catholic Church while retaining aspects of Anglican spiritual and liturgical tradition. Pastoral oversight and guidance will be provided for groups of former Anglicans through a Personal Ordinariate whose Ordinary will usually be appointed from among former Anglican clergy.

There are two new aspects in the announcement. The first is that it contemplates receiving groups into full communion whereas in the past the emphasis has been on individuals. The second new aspect sees groups being allowed to retain distinctive elements of Anglican spiritual and liturgical identity.

How this will work in practice remains to be seen. The full text of the Apostolic Constitution along with a code of practice is yet to be released. Much is still unclear, such as which aspects of Anglican spirituality and liturgy will be retained and what will be the effect on Roman Catholic ordinands if candidates for ordination in the 'Anglican stream' are allowed to marry.

*The Reverend Dr Charles Sherlock*, a member of ARCIC 1991-2005, has written a paper entitled "Anglicans and Rome: where to from now for both?" that discusses these and other questions about the application of the Apostolic Constitution. (A copy of his helpful paper is attached).

I don't anticipate that this development will affect the Anglican Church of Australia to any great extent for two reasons. First the people most likely to be affected probably left the Anglican Church some years ago. Secondly, those taking up this opportunity will need to agree to be reconfirmed, in the case of laity, or re-ordained, in the case of clergy, as well as conforming to the full range of doctrinal and moral positions of the Roman Catholic Church, including its teachings on papal infallibility and contraception, for example. I think most Anglicans really want to be Anglicans notwithstanding disagreements over the ordination of women, prayer book revision and any number of issues.

There might be a few groups who may grasp this opportunity but I don't think they will be large or many in number. If this development provides a means for groups of former Anglicans to come together with the Roman Catholic Church, then that is a good thing and a contribution to the ecumenical goals we share.

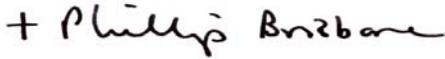
The consequences of the Apostolic Constitution may be felt more by the Church of England. It already has distinctive structures such as flying bishops who cross diocesan boundaries ministering to those who do not agree with the ordination of women. Whether numbers of these parishes seek to take advantage of the options offered by the Apostolic Constitution remains to be seen. If sufficient numbers did enter into full communion with the Roman Catholic Church the shape and outlook of the Church of England and to some extent the Anglican Communion may be altered somewhat.

In a letter to the Primates on 20 October 2009 the Archbishop of Canterbury says that it is now up to those who have made requests to the Holy See to respond to the Apostolic Constitution. In the light of discussions with senior officials in the Vatican, he feels that this new

possibility is 'in no sense at all intended to undermine the existing relations between our two communions or to be an act of proselytism or aggression.' He also says that our ecumenical relationships will continue on their current cordial basis, regionally and internationally (a copy of the letter is attached).

There have been strong relations with the Roman Catholic Church for more than 40 years built through theological dialogue and cooperation. I expect relationships between the two will continue to be rich and productive. For now we will need to be patient and see how things unfold.

Yours in Christ



Archbishop

The full text of "Note of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith About Personal Ordinariates for Anglicans Entering the Catholic Church, 20.10.09" can be found at [http://212.77.1.245/news\\_services/bulletin/news/24513.php?index=24513&lang=it](http://212.77.1.245/news_services/bulletin/news/24513.php?index=24513&lang=it).

## ANGLICANS AND ROME:

### WHERE TO NOW FOR BOTH?

By Charles Sherlock, ARCIC member 1991 - 2005

Archbishops Rowan Williams (Canterbury, Anglican) and Vincent Nichols (Westminster, Roman Catholic) made a rare Joint Statement in London on Tuesday 20 October, making headlines. It concerned a forthcoming Apostolic Constitution approved by Pope Benedict XVI. This sets out a structure for 'groups of Anglicans' to come into full communion with the Roman Catholic Church, while 'preserving elements of distinctive Anglican spiritual and liturgical patrimony'. Available details are in a 'Note' from the Vatican *Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith* (CDF).

Why the media interest? Individual Anglicans have been moving to Rome for years. Each is treated personally: male Anglican clergy (which have included married ones) have to accept being (re)ordained as priests. Rome is not interested merely in those who cannot accept women as priests, but looks for a genuine sense of vocation to ministry in communion with the Bishop of Rome.

**This new Apostolic Constitution shifts the ground from individuals to groups.** A few one-off groups have moved (eg the Anglican diocese of Amritsar, India). But now a 'single canonical model' is to apply across the board.

This is probably the most significant Anglican-Vatican event since the visit of the then Archbishop of Canterbury, Michael Ramsey, to Rome in 1966, which inaugurated formal dialogue. This time, however, it seems that Rowan Williams was caught by surprise, having only a fortnight's notice, and with no opportunity to respond before the Constitution was finalized in Rome.

The three 'flying bishops' of the Church of England, who have pastoral charge of those who cannot accept women as priests, welcomed the news. Groups such as the (officially non-Anglican) Traditional Anglican Communion (TAC) have been 'nurturing hopes of new ways of embracing unity with the Catholic Church', as the archbishops acknowledge. CDF describes this as a 'world-wide phenomenon', and presents it as

'another step toward the realization of the aspiration for full, visible union in the Church of Christ'.

It is now up to such groups to 'respond to the Apostolic Constitution'. *Forward in Faith* (UK) suggests that interested English parishes look to January 18, 2010 (the Roman feast 'Chair of St Peter' – 'Confession of Peter' for Australian Anglicans) as a suitable date to decide to apply.

### Some questions

Each ex-Anglican group will be governed by a 'Personal Ordinariat' (usually a bishop, who must be unmarried), akin to the 'Military Ordinariates', which cross diocesan lines. A raft of questions arise.

Will these Ordinariats be a permanent element in the Roman Catholic Church (such as the Maronites)? Could this be a way in which a whole diocese (The Murray?) or Province (Nigeria?) might move to Rome?

The Ordinariats may establish 'a house of formation' to train ordinands, who will be 'prepared alongside other Catholic seminarians', states the CDF: this envisages ongoing long-term institutions. Will such 'Anglican Ordinariat' seminarians be able to marry, before (as with Eastern rite Catholics) or after ordination? What effect will the presence of 'conservative' married clergy in significant numbers have on 'liberal' celibate clergy?

How might the Anglican Communion be affected? In North America, most interested groups have already left: the horse has bolted, and change would just shut the door. In Australia, the TAC has maintained a presence in the Torres Strait since the 1998 schism, but is also outside the Communion. On the other hand, the deep unhappiness in Ballarat and The Murray is unlikely to be resolved by corporate defections, which would put those dioceses in peril. Might some participants in the 2008 alternative-Lambeth GAFCON move to Rome?

It is the Church of England which is most likely to feel the consequences of the Apostolic Constitution. 'Conservatives' have a distinctive structural place in that Church, to the level of parallel episcopal structures. If many *Forward in Faith* parishes (or 'flying dioceses') moved, the make-up of the Cof E would shift. The Anglo-catholic stream in the national, established Church would be diminished and 'liberalised', while 'reform'-minded Evangelicals might consider leaving, if not for Rome then for Orthodoxy or non-conformity.

Large-scale moves in the Church of England could alter the shape of Anglican Communion – and possibly liberate it. But would the Anglican Communion which remains be trusted by Rome to continue in active dialogue? Or would the dialogue be reduced to the 'let's be friends' level, rather than its 'work towards visible unity' heritage?

### Which is where this matter becomes personal.

#### ARCIC – betrayed, fulfilled or side-stepped?

Since 1971, the *Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission* (ARCIC) has worked hard to produce Agreed Statements on all matters dividing the two traditions – eucharist, ministry, church, morals, authority Mary. This body of work is described by the CDF as providing the 'framework' within which 'this new provision should be seen'.

Further, *Cardinal Levada* (Prefect of the CDF) says that

It is the hope of the Holy Father, Benedict XVI, that the Anglican clergy and faithful who desire union with the Catholic Church will find in this canonical structure the

opportunity to preserve those Anglican traditions precious to them and consistent with the Catholic faith.

I am such an Anglican – or I would not have accepted the invitation to be part of ARCIC.

I welcome the significant use by Benedict XVI of the word ‘clergy’ in this context. I am also glad to read the archbishops’ intention to continue ‘shared meetings and close co-operation’ between Church of England and Roman Catholic bishops in England, whatever happens.

Yet the archbishops state that ‘without the dialogues of the past forty years, the recognition [of such groups by Rome] would not have been possible’. And they claim that ARCIC’s agreements ‘make clear the path we will follow together’.

But ... as a member of ARCIC since 1991, involved deeply in its work, I find myself struggling with these claims.

It is good that an *ecclesial* approach is being taken. That the new Constitution steps beyond individuals is welcome: a more formal sense of the nature of the Anglican tradition as a communion of *churches* is taken, even if implicitly. Yet many of the bodies under discussion are not in communion with the Archbishop of Canterbury, or have chosen to live in impaired communion with those who are (eg *Forward in Faith*, or the emerging body in the US)!

*Does the Constitution imply that the ‘real’ Anglican Communion is less part of the Church Catholic than ARCIC (at least its Anglican members) has presumed?*

And what are the ‘elements of distinctive Anglican spiritual and liturgical patrimony’? I’d love to see all Anglicans using their *authorized* rites (with spiritual creativity). But this does not happen now, and such rites are commonly not well-regarded by the groups likely to be interested in moving to Rome! As Archbishop Michael Ramsey emphasized often, Anglicans do not see themselves as having a ‘distinctive’ identity, but living with a sense of the provisional (of which more below).

The Anglican churches I know continue to struggle with how best to respond to receiving, celebrating, living out and passing on the catholic faith, according to the scriptures, in the diverse contexts within God sets us. My spiritual pilgrimage has been one of ‘even joy’ rather than major ups and downs: yet my life embodies some of the issues involved – I am, after all, married to my parish priest. Perhaps I am learning that the very real struggles which take place privately in dialogues such as ARCIC are now having to be lived out in public.

One thing I have learnt is that theology is best done from the future backwards rather than only from the past forwards. (I recognize, of course, that how the future in Christ is envisaged is to be shaped according to the scriptures.) That such an ethos pervades the last ARCIC Agreed Statement – *Mary: Grace and Hope in Christ* – delights me. I gave this text my glad and full assent, in the hope that it might help all who are in Christ open to one another more fully.

The spirit of openness to the future, lived out in the present on the basis of what God has given in the past, is an ethos to be treasured. It can be found in many Christian traditions, but it is the air which Anglicans are used to breathing, and must not be let go lightly.

Such an orientation underscores the importance of living *pro-visionally* – ‘for the vision’, in energetic Christian hope, yet with humility, open to shifts of perspective, to repentance, and above all living by faith rather than sight.

## A personal hope

In view of this hope, could the Apostolic Constitution be seen as an act of *provisionality*? A lot will depend on its tone and wording.

Phrased in overly-confident ‘Romanista’ style (‘Mother Church teaches her children ...’) it will communicate an institutional, bureaucratic message about unity. It will reinforce the suspicion that ecumenical endeavour means ‘return to Rome’, rather than the vision of every Christian tradition being converted to the unity which Christ wills. Written with humility, on the other hand, open to further developments, it may just be a sign of the provisional which ecumenical endeavour, and this aching world, so desperately needs.

**PS: Could groups who want to act on the Apostolic Constitution please read through the whole body of ARCIC’s work? It is more biblical, care-full and challenging than many seem to presume. The same hope applies to the CDF and other authorities in Rome, not least the appeal for reform of the papal office made in *The Gift of Authority*.**

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## **COMING CONFERENCES**

***From Augustine to Anglicanism:  
the Anglican Church in Australia and  
Beyond***

*A scholarly conference open to those in postgraduate study and beyond with special reference to the 150th celebrations of the Diocese of Queensland.*

**Old Bishopsbourne House, St Francis’ College  
Milton, Queensland**

**FEBRUARY 12th - 14th 2010**

**Call for papers - send abstracts - 500 words or less  
by November 10, 2009 to:  
[conference@anglicans-in-australia-and-beyond.org](mailto:conference@anglicans-in-australia-and-beyond.org)**

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## **CBE (CHRISTIANS FOR BIBICAL EQUALITY) INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE 2010**

**Friday June 11 to Monday JUNE 14, 2010** Jasper Hotel,  
489 Elizabeth Street, Melbourne.

**Speakers: The Rev’d Graham Cole, Chicago; Dr Cheryl Catford; Dr Oluwafnmilayo (Funmi) {Para-Malla, Nigeria; the Rev’d Dr Kevin Giles, Melbourne.**

Further information: [www.cbe.org.au](http://www.cbe.org.au)

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## **MOWATCH NATIONAL CONFERENCE 2010**

**VENUE: St Joseph’s Spirituality and Education  
Centre, 8 Humphreys Rd, Kincumber South**

**TUESDAY 24–THURSDAY 26, AUGUST 2010**

**THEME: “Women of Faith –  
Imaging God to the World.”**

### **KEYNOTE SPEAKER:**

**Dr Paula Gooder**, Canon Theologian, Birmingham Cathedral; Visiting Lecturer, King’s College, London; and Senior Research Scholar, the Queen’s Foundation, Birmingham.

### **OTHER SPEAKERS include:**

**Bishop Kay Goldsworthy, Bishop Barbara Darling,  
Bishop Brian Farran and the Rev’d. Dr Jane Shaw.**