

### A NEW PROVINCE - TWO NEW ARCHBISHOPS - A NEW BISHOP

#### **CHILE BECOMES THE ANGLICAN COMMUNION'S FORTIETH PROVINCE**

*Archbishop Justin prays over  
Archbishop Hector Zavala*  
Photo Credit: ACNS



The *Iglesia Anglicana de Chile* – the Anglican Church of Chile – has been inaugurated as the latest Province of the Anglican Communion (40th Province) in a service of joy and celebration in the capital, Santiago.

It had been part of the Province of South America, but was given permission to have Provincial status after sustained growth.

**During the service Bishop Hector (Tito) Zavala Munoz was installed as Archbishop and Primate of the new Province of Chile.**

He became Bishop of Santiago when Chile was split into four dioceses in preparation for the move towards Provincial status. This followed the 'go-ahead' by the Standing Committee of the Anglican Consultative Council and after the backing of a majority of the primates of the Anglican Communion

The Secretary General of the Anglican Communion, *Dr Josiah Idowu-Fearon*, described it as “a privilege” to be at the inauguration service in Santiago.

*“There is nowhere like Chile in the Anglican Communion. I am delighted it is becoming our 40th province. It has an exciting vision for the future.”*

*“It shows the Church is growing - that the Anglican Communion is growing,” And it is one of the great examples in the world of planting new churches.”*

#### **Fijian priest elected Archbishop of Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia**



*Archbishop-elect Fereimi*

Photo Credit: Anglican Taonga

The Vicar of St Peter's, Lautoka on the Fijian island of Viti Levu, *Fereimi Cama*, has been elected Bishop of Polynesia. The 63-year-old Archbishop-elect is a former Dean of Holy Trinity Cathedral in Suva.

When consecrated and installed, he will also become one of the three Archbishops and Primates of the Anglican Church of Aotearoa, New Zealand and

Polynesia. The election was announced by that Church's two existing Primates; Archbishop *Don Tanihere* and Archbishop *Philip Richardson*, who have responsibility for the Church's Maori and Pakeha Tikangas, (cultural streams).

#### **Mark Short elected 11th Bishop of the Diocese of Canberra/Goulburn**



*The Reverend Dr Short* is currently National Director of The Bush Church Aid Society.

Educated at Moore Theological College, Sydney and the University of Durham, UK, Mark was ordained a priest in 1997.

He is married to Monica and they have two children.

The Consecration and Installation Service will take place in the Cathedral of St Saviour's, Goulburn. The Diocese includes south-eastern NSW from Batemans Bay to the Victorian border, west to Wagga, Junee and Young, and includes the Australian Capital Territory.

# ***‘ORA ET LABORA’***

## ***Greetings in Christ,***

***‘I will be your God and you shall be my people’***



**The Exodus of the Israelites from Egypt to Canaan was not completed under the leadership of Moses, who only got to see the Promised Land but never entered it.** The Bible describes the conquering of the land as being achieved by Joshua, who was portrayed as a shrewd military commander who led the people in what might be described as a ‘holy war’ – which included genocide.

Such a concept may not sit comfortably with us today and the accounts of the conquering of Canaan and the conduct of the army would not seem to be all that Godly to our way of thinking. However, it is interesting to note that there is little historical or archaeological evidence available to confirm the account. That Canaan was settled by the Israelites is not questioned, however historically it would appear to have been more of a gradual and partial achievement.

**If anything, the book of Joshua is more about affirming the relationship between God and the Israelite people.** While the Law was outlined in the five Books of Moses, the Book of Joshua extended this theme by reminding people of the effect and consequences of the covenant God made with Moses in the wilderness. Indeed, the idea of the covenant between God and his people was a major factor that shaped both the identity and the motivation of God’s people. Loyalty and obedience are therefore important themes that run through the Book of Joshua, which finds its culmination in Joshua’s

affirmation of the Covenant and his call to be faithful to God:

*“And if you be unwilling to serve the Lord, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your fathers served in the region beyond the river, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell; but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.”*  
(Joshua 24:15)

### ***COVENANTS ANCIENT AND MODERN***

**In the Ancient Near East (ANE), there were three types of covenant:**

1. Suzerain or vassal treaties between a person of higher status and a lower one, which were often made between a conquering king and those that he conquered,
2. Parity treaties between two parties of equal status, and
3. Land grants from a higher status person to a lower status person.

Such covenants were formal agreements witnessed by both parties, proclaimed by public reading, and sealed by an oath and sacrifice.

**The Mosaic Covenant (Exodus 19-24), includes the Ten Commandments** and has many features similar to a suzerainty covenant; including a prologue, stipulations required of those living under it, public reading, and resulting blessings and curses (according to whether one is faithful to it or not). It was out of the Mosaic Covenant that came God’s recognition of Israel as a nation.

However, the covenant made through Moses was not the first one, nor the last. There were two important earlier covenants described in Genesis; one made with Noah (Genesis 9) and the other with Abraham (Genesis 12-17).

**The Covenant with Noah arises after the great flood that almost destroys the entire earth.** Noah and his family, along with representatives of all living species, survive because he is faithful to God. God decides never again to destroy the earth and makes a covenant, not only with Noah, but with the whole of creation; declaring never to repeat such destruction. This covenant is a universal one and focuses on the relationship between God nature and humanity within it. It is therefore inclusive.

**The story of the Covenant with Abraham is of a different category, as it is made between God and Abraham and to his descendants.** It includes some of the more formal features of an ANE covenant such as the granting of land, the promise of offspring, blessings and curses and the requirement of circumcision as a sign of participation in the covenant. The Abrahamic Covenant is also significant because of its application to the three great religions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam – all of which describe themselves as being in some way ‘descendants of Abraham’.

Throughout the Old Testament, covenants are made and renewed in recognition of the relationship between God and people. Indeed,

the covenant with King David (2 Samuel 7) becomes the basis for the expectation of a Messiah who will usher in God's reign on earth. This expectation is picked up in the New Testament and the idea of a '**New Covenant**' that is made through the Messiah, Jesus Christ (Hebrews 8:6-8:13).

The idea of covenant is therefore an enduring one that has described the nature of social and religious relationships down through history. In the modern era, secular covenants have also been created (such as those of Marxism, Fascism and Capitalism), as a means of ordering relationships in society. These covenants are about the management of power, status and resources, and have tended to provide a pseudo-religion for their adherents, each having their own creeds and rituals.

**Chief Rabbi of the United Kingdom, Lord Jonathan Sacks, is critical of these modern political and economic covenants** because of their commodification of social relationships. In a speech at the 2008 Lambeth Conference he said:

*"In the short-term wealth and power are zero-sum games. That means if I win, you lose; if you win, I lose. Covenantal goods are non-zero-sum games, meaning, we both win, the more I give away the more I have – we both win; and that has huge consequences...."*

*... and so, the question is where will we find covenantal goods like love, like friendship, like trust, like influence? You won't find them in the state, you won't find them in the market, you will find them in marriages, in families, in congregations, in communities – you will find them in society, so long as you remember that society is something different from the state.... You see there are two words that sound as if they were almost the same, but they are*

*actually very different. I mean the word contract and I mean the word covenant.*

*What's a contract? A contract is an agreement between two or more individuals, each pursuing their own interest, and they come together to make an exchange for mutual benefit; and so, you get a commercial contract that creates the market, and you get the social contract that creates the state.*

*A covenant is something different. In a covenant, two or more individuals, each respecting the dignity and the integrity of the other, come together in a bond of love and trust, to share their interests, sometimes even to share their lives, by pledging faithfulness to one another, to do together what neither of us can do alone.*

*... A contract is a transaction, but a covenant is a relationship. Or, to put it slightly differently, a contract is about interests, but a covenant is about identity; and that is why contracts benefit, but covenants transform."*

*(Sacks J, Address: 'The Relationship between People and God', 28 July 2008)*

**Sacks' speech offered a radical critique of how we order western society and described the dead-end of a civilisation based on self-interest, be it mutual or otherwise.** He called for a recovery of the idea of 'covenant', which seeks to reconcile people who are in conflict, renew commitment to God, and thereby engender respect for all people. Drawing on the Covenant with Noah, he described this as a 'covenant of fate' in which all humanity participates, because it speaks of our human condition.

***BELIEF, TRUTH AND VALUES***  
**So how do we discover the truth that lies in relationships?**

Despite humanity's best efforts, non-mathematical truth often remains elusive. As much as we

may try to objectify social phenomena, such truths are not value-free for they are dependent on what we will allow into our decision-making process. In other words, we create a system or process by which we seek to determine the truth, but that process always remains a human construct and is dependent on its general acceptance in the community to have any status. For instance, convinced by his intelligence agencies, President **George Bush Jnr** believed that Saddam Hussein possessed weapons of mass destruction and invaded Iraq to prevent them being passed on to terrorists. He convinced others of this belief and therefore led a 'coalition of the willing' to capture what was proven not to exist.

Moreover, the proliferation of information is making it more difficult to determine the veracity of all sorts of statements and claims to truth such that any sense of objectification is becoming extremely elusive and that which is popularly held up as 'reality' looks more like entertainment! **Information, as a commodity, appears to have reached its own dead-end and the rise of cynicism is its sign.**

As human beings, however, we still need to hold to the idea of truth and knowledge. We understand intuitively that we have come to know more and more about how our world operates and have thereby built up knowledge and, by extension, the determination of certain conclusions as truth. This truth is held intersubjectively; which is to say, it is knowledge based on experience, which has been tested by a large number of people and found to be consistent, yet it is also held provisionally. To be sure, it is our collective memory. Such an approach is an activity of the community and requires the gift of humility - it is a covenant approach to knowledge.

A problem that is often identified with both religion (and pseudo-religion) is its arrogance; which is its overvalued sense of the entitlement to be heard, approved and obeyed. Claims of exclusivity, the possession of absolute truth, aggressiveness and the condemnation of those who are different all work against the Gospel of Christ. A more relational way is offered in the Letter to the Ephesians:

*“I ... beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace”.* (Ephesians 4:1-3)

#### **A COMMUNITY IN PROCESS**

**The institutional church, as we have it, is a modern-world construct.** Nevertheless, it is now facing huge challenges in providing the spiritual leadership that it once did. Internal divisions over the nature of belief, truth and ultimate meaning, are undermining Christ’s call for it to be a transforming power in the world (John 13:34-35). Furthermore, church structures have failed to develop and maintain the trust that is expected from God’s people. This is because of church abuse of power and bullying, the mistreatment of minorities, greed and corruption, and the mismanagement of resources. In this respect, the church reflects more a self-serving earthly institution devoted to mammon, rather than a reflection of the heavenly kingdom of grace.

God’s people have been called to live in covenant, which is a relationship of trust. Through that trust, God’s presence in the world is multiplied through many loving and selfless acts which, as Rabbi Sacks says, is about character, transformation and the mutual benefit of all people. **By focussing on the covenant with Noah, we**

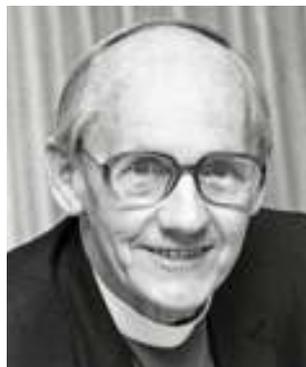
**are reminded that God’s love is directed to all people and by looking at Christ, we are reminded of the sacrifice that love requires in fulfilling this mission.**

**As the followers of Christ, we are called to live both in this world, seeking its transformation, while at the same time being conscious that we belong to another world, which is the Kingdom of God.** As we move through life there is a need to be mindful of what God wants of us. In this respect, we seek God’s will, confess our faults, seek reconciliation and renewal, and by these actions experience and exhibit the love of God – which is covenant in action. So, the question remains *‘Whom do you serve?’*

**The Reverend Andrew Sempell**  
Rector, St James’ Church Sydney

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### **DONALD WILLIAM BRADLEY ROBINSON (1922-2018) - 9TH ARCHBISHOP OF SYDNEY**



The following is an extract from the Eulogy given at his Funeral Service in St Andrew’s Cathedral, Sydney by his daughter Anne Robinson.

“Some here today will be pleased to know that this is not a sermon – though my father would have been perfectly relaxed if it was – but it does have three points!

**Don Robinson was a man of words and a man of His Word**  
**He was a man of order with an impish twinkle in his eye;**  
**And he was a man of hospitality and contentment**

#### **A man of words and a man of His Word**

**Don Robinson** was the son of a clergyman **RB Robinson** (*‘Archdeacon Robbie’*) and **Gertrude Ross**. **Gert** was the product of convicts.....

When World War Two broke out in the Pacific, **Don** was studying Greek and English at Sydney University. Soon he, with other Greek and Maths students, were quietly recruited into Military Intelligence....

His war service demonstrated his adeptness with words, and after the war he resumed his university studies, and having saved up his army pay, went off to Cambridge to study theology.....

**Don Robinson** was a firm believer that a person confident in his own beliefs is not threatened by the opposing view.

As a student and, later, after ordination and two parish curacies, he began what perhaps many here would say was his greatest period of influence: as a lecturer and then Vice Principal at Moore College for over 20 years. This was where his linguistic bent shone so brightly.....

He encouraged people to think, not *what* to think

#### **A Man of Order – and Impish Humour!**

**An Australian Prayer Book** was adopted in 1977. What has been called an ‘imperfect unity’, is very much the work of two men from opposing traditions: **Don Robinson** and **Brother Gilbert Sinden**, an Anglo-Catholic from Adelaide, although we Robinson children like to think we had a big part to play in its formation as Pa trialled the Collects on us in our family prayers.

Dad and **Brother Gilbert** became firm friends, able to reach agreement not compromise. Their relationship appeared strange to others: one moment, they could be in heated debate, going at it hammer and tongs; the next minute, laughing and sharing a joke. **Don Robinson** was a man who truly believed that His God was a God of relationships and who could happily hold in tension a generosity of spirit with intellectual rigour

#### **He might have been impish but he was a Man of Order.**

After being at Moore College as a lecturer and Vice-Principal for two decades, **Don** was appointed Bishop in

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# SOME NEWS FROM SYDNEY SYNOD – OCTOBER 2018

*Lyn Bannerman*, Parish of Christ Church St Laurence, Sydney



## **BATHURST DIOCESE – SYDNEY TO SUPPORT FINANCIALLY**

**Bathurst Diocese is in dire financial straits**, largely attributed to an extreme over-commitment to finance a couple of new schools (now purchased by Sydney Diocese).

**The Synod agreed to provide financial support of \$250,000 per year towards the costs of a Bishop and his Registrar for that Diocese for a period of six years, on the condition that any fresh Bishop appointment in that period has the written support of the Archbishop of Sydney.**

Sydney Diocese now has significant capacity to influence the directions of that Diocese. The current Bishop will retire in April 2019; our Archbishop will offer two suggested names for their consideration; their Synod will consider these and others, if they wish, but the final choice MUST be approved in writing by the Archbishop of Sydney. Moore College will send annually a mission team to that Diocese, and there is an expectation that some Moore College graduates will move to rural vacancies in the Diocese.

**The Reverend Andrew Sempell** (St James, King St., Sydney) moved that some many millions be offered to that Diocese as the amount of \$250,000 is trivial, given the dire situation. **Fr Andrew** expected this amendment to fail but it gave him the chance to point out that unless the Endowment of the See is restored to a firm financial position, the Diocese will still be broke in six years' time.

Another lay representative sought to provide the Bathurst

Diocese financial assistance without any conditions, as a gift of Love and Grace. Conditions imply no trust; compassion requires no strings attached. Both amendments were lost.

## **GLOBAL ANGLICAN FUTURE CONFERENCE (GAFCON) AND THE PROPOSED SEPARATION OF SOME PARISHES FROM THE AOTEAROA, NEW ZEALAND AND POLYNESIA PROVINCE.**

**In summary, Synod noted with deep regret the recent decision by the Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia to allow the blessing of same-sex civil marriages.** The Synod, among other things –

- gave thanks for the courageous leadership of biblically faithful Anglicans in New Zealand and Polynesia remaining true to the teaching of Christ irrespective of the relational and material cost, and called upon parishes in this Diocese to pray for these faithful Anglicans,
- noted that GAFCON, Australia has launched an appeal (through Anglican Aid) to provide emergency financial support for these ministers and their families, and encouraged the parishes and people of this Diocese to consider making a contribution as a practical expression of fellowship with New Zealand brothers and sisters.

Our Archbishop, in expressing his concerns, said: *“As Bishop Donald Robinson once told me, the most important part that the minister plays in solemnising a marriage is to pronounce God’s blessing and God does not bless sin.”*

Archbishop Glenn spoke of his recent visit to New Zealand.

Concerned parishes plan to disaffiliate, taking their property with them, and form a new parallel Anglican Church across Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia. Such parallel jurisdictions are not unknown now in the Anglican Communion. Synod agreed to divert some of its Budget to the disaffiliating parishes and individuals and parishes were invited to contribute financially.

## **GAFCON MEETING, JERUSALEM**

**The Reverend Dr Peter Jensen also reported to Synod on the latest GAFCON Conference**, which met in Jerusalem in June this year.

This movement started as a group of Churches around the world concerned that some Anglican Provinces were acting in various ways in defiance of the Lambeth Decision in 1998, which affirmed that there are ‘only two expressions of faithful sexuality: lifelong marriage between a man and a woman or abstinence.’ Nearly 2,000 met from 50 countries consisting of 1,950 Anglicans (316 Bishops, 669 other clergy and 965 laity).

**Dr Jensen described GAFCON as the next major reformation of our Church since The Reformation.** Despite its beginnings, **Dr Jensen** insists this is a broad based movement concerned with the spread of ‘gospel truth’. It is interesting to note that Sydney’s adherence to the so-called ‘Biblical truth’ of complementarianism is not an agreed GAFCON ‘doctrine’, as women priests belong to this new ‘reformation’ movement.

Synod further resolved to express "its fellowship with Anglicans within the GAFCON movement independent of their 'recognition' by the Archbishop of Canterbury".

### **RESPONDING TO DOMESTIC ABUSE: POLICY AND GOOD PRACTICE GUIDELINES**

These have been finally approved and are being sent to professional publishers for lay out and presentation, to be distributed to all parishes, clergy, senior lay people. This is one of the best pieces of work from Synod, thanks to several hard years of work by **Canon Sandy Grant** and **Archdeacon Kara Hartley**.

Also we must acknowledge the contribution by the **Reverend Mark Tough** (St Clement's Lalor Park) for his assistance in establishing an inclusion in Synod's budget, for the first time, the capacity to provide grants to clergy spouses who are in great financial need because of leaving domestic abuse. And thanks to the extraordinary dedication of journalist, **Julia Baird**, who first raised concerns and never gave up.

### **SACRIFICIAL LEADERSHIP/SUBMISSION OF WOMEN IN MARRIAGE**

**Susan Hooke** (St Peter's Cremorne) moved the following amended motion, the amendments guaranteeing its passage without debate:

"Synod, noting that it has been sadly aware for some years of the misuse by some husbands of the biblical teaching on marriage to justify abuse of their wives, requests the Diocesan Doctrine Commission:

**to acknowledge the extreme urgency of addressing prevention of domestic abuse of women within our Diocesan churches; and therefore to bring to Synod in 2019, and no later, its conclusions on the**

**referral to it, by Standing Committee, concerning how "the Biblical material on..... the nature of marriage, including the relevance of submission and headship, intersects with domestic abuse, its prevention, and the care of victims in our minds".**

We hope this motion will open the door to a significant debate in Synod next year on the 'complementarian' view of marriage (the wife submits to the husband's sacrificial leadership), its relationship to domestic abuse and the alternative view of marriage, based on love, respect and mutual honouring of each other.

### **REMARRIAGE OF DIVORCED PERSONS**

The following motion was moved by **Lyn Bannerman**, (Christ Church Saint Laurence) and seconded by the **Reverend Phillip Bradford** (St Luke's, Enmore):

"Synod, noting that it is the prerogative of the Archbishop or a Regional Bishop, in accordance with the laws of this Church, whether or not to approve the remarriage of a divorced person, requests the Archbishop and Regional Bishops to consider approving the remarriage of a divorced person, where that person has been abused physically or emotionally by their former spouse."

As the motion makes clear, we must await a decision from the Archbishop. The debate lasted over two hours with the Secretariat (who must keep minutes) noting the unusually large use of procedural motions, on top of each other, with the usual attempt at a gag. The constant re-scheduling of this agenda item, by the managers of Synod business, seemed designed to never let it reach debate (thereby falling off at the end of Synod as unresolved business) but the **Reverend Mark Tough**, (St Clement's Lalor Park) moved a procedural motion on the last day of

Synod, saying that this was a case of procedural unfairness. He read a statement quoting from an affected ex-clergy wife. This was an emotional plea to have the matter heard. The matter was restored to the Agenda and was heard as the last major item of Synod business.

Speeches in favour included matters such as:

this is an important pastoral matter and we owe a decision now to our own abused women, including clergy wives, to whom an apology was offered last Synod; "it's time" as for 34 years the Doctrine Commission has failed to reach a conclusion despite a number of active reviews since 1984; the consideration of issues around 'desertion' and 'reconciliation' have been well addressed in the agreed *Guidelines on Responding to Domestic Abuse*; and "it's a no brainer".

The 'No' side, including the Principal of Moore College, argued essentially that such a divorce is complex scripturally and theologically and more time is needed. There was a message from some speaking for the 'No' case that women must endure – a kind of sainthood idea, with rewards in the next world.

One amendment which sought to refer the matter again to the Doctrine Commission just lost on a count of raised hands: 227 votes for the amendment and 257 against. **Finally the motion won with a secret ballot: 325 for, 161 against and 1 informal.**

At the end of debate, the Archbishop said he was grateful the matter had been brought to Synod, and he would respond as soon as possible.

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#### **ANGLICANS TOGETHER NEWSLETTER**

published by

**ANGLICANS TOGETHER INC**

Opinions are those of contributors.

**Editor: Moya Holle**

PO Box 429 Glebe NSW 2037

# Reflections from Synod 2018

*The Reverend Dr Stuart Piggin Synod Representative, Parish of Hunters Hill*

To be frank, Synod is not unmitigated joy. This year was no exception, except that it felt different to me from any Synod I have attended.

**Normally, the Sydney Synod is a very political affair. But this year, the atmosphere was different, as the realization seemed to dawn on all present that the Church in is in trouble, and the solutions are not obvious. 72% of Sydney Anglican parishes are declining. Some of those parishes are the biggest in the diocese and they are neither holding their numbers nor meeting their budgets.**

Until just a few years ago we Sydney Anglicans were holding our own, even increasing in absolute numbers attending our churches although we have been falling behind as a percentage of the population. But in recent years, absolute numbers have declined.

In the face of these challenges, there was a becoming humility in the Synod on behalf of those who normally tell the rest of us what to do and how to do it. Triumphalism was not on display.

An example of this was a motion moved by Lyn Bannerman 'to request the Archbishop and Regional Bishops to consider approving the remarriage of a divorced person, where that person has been abused physically or emotionally by their former spouse.' While having some vocal opposition, and ultimately considered by secret ballot, the motion was passed overwhelmingly.

**There was animated discussion of a claim that the**

**reason why people were leaving churches was because they had abandoned the Prayer Book and proper liturgical services such as we have here at Hunters Hill.**

In the past, the Prayer Book and liturgical services have been given as reasons for decline. So, it was a mark of how serious things are that such a debate was held in Synod and that all options and possibilities are being considered.

In the past *Anglicans Together* has been a vocal, and yet somewhat powerless group in the face of the conservatives. But now they might be open to constructive proposals?

Of course, you are thinking that you know the reason for the sudden decline, namely the appalling revelations emerging from the Royal Commission into Institutional Sexual Abuse and the widespread view now that Christianity is harmful? It is not yet time to address that view as demonstrated by the decision to exclude the representatives of churches at the national apology for sexual abuse held in Canberra while the Sydney Synod was being held.

**It is rather a time for repentance and for ensuring that churches are safe places for children and for women.** Much of the attention of Synod was devoted to approving procedures to ensure that safety. These procedures are the product of listening to victims, consulting experts in the field, and receiving guidance from lawyers who so well represented in synod.

I am confident that the matter is now being addressed with great diligence, and we shall emerge from it like the *Ancient Mariner*, sadder but wiser, and subject to much more training in how to comply. And

poorer – because it costs money and resources to do those things properly. It is expected that Parish costs will rise because of the parish property and liability insurance program, additional costs associated with the running of the Professional Standards Unit, and a levy on the income we earn from our properties.

**Of course, it was not all doom and gloom. There were heart-warming moments in Synod such as the work of Aboriginal pastors in Campbelltown, the elevation of "Provisional Parishes" to the status of Parish, after significant hard work and growth, and the good work being done to create churches in the new areas of Western Sydney.** According to *Glenn Gardner*, Executive Director of NCNC (New Churches for New Communities) this work in new areas has been considerably helped by funds from Parishes like ours (Hunters Hill contributed a great deal through the large receipts policy). You may say, well that is not helping us much? Yes it is – we are all on the same side, as Jesus said in Mark 9.40.

**I was encouraged by the decision of Synod to give financial assistance to the Diocese of Bathurst,** bankrupted by some unwise investments in schools, by declining rural populations, and by the need to provide redress and compensation for victims of sexual abuse. Sydney Diocese will provide financial support of \$250,000 per year towards the costs of a Bishop and his registrar for the Anglican Diocese of Bathurst for a period of six years.

Not everyone agrees with me that this was an unambiguous good, because there was a condition,

namely that the *Archbishop of Sydney* has to approve the appointment of the next bishop. This is seen by some as a regrettable move away from diocesan independence, but I don't think diocesan independence has been an unmixed blessing. Barriers between dioceses have blocked movement of clergy and financial support from wealthy dioceses such as Sydney to needier dioceses such as Bathurst and Riverina. If the Archbishop of Sydney respects the distinctive culture of those dioceses, such as their support for women priests, that may not be a big problem.

**There was much attention in Synod paid to the development of the 'GAFCON movement' in which Peter Jensen, a former Archbishop of Sydney, has played such a big part.** This is a movement which has won the support of the majority of the Anglican Communion even though it threatens to break off traditional links with the Archbishop of Canterbury.

But many of the GAFCON churches are very Anglican and many of them support the ordination of women. It has been good for Sydney clergy and laity to meet with these committed Anglicans, and especially encouraging to meet with those who are enjoying explosive growth in the global south.

**My view on all this?  
We are facing an unprecedented challenge.**

We really have to get serious and make every step a winner. We must consult widely, get the best advice, and keep all our members fully informed. We will survive this tsunami through our love for one another and through the unity of all the saints.

**But this is a very exciting time, because it will require more than mere human effort to reset**

**our course. We will have to rely on God, and on Jesus who promised to build his church.**

The faith which Jesus has given us when he brought us to himself is a faith which actually gets better from the sort of stress we are now in. The Bible is full of it:

*"We rejoice in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance"* (Romans 5:3).

*"Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance"* (James 1:2).

*"You have been distressed by various trials, so that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honour at the revelation of Jesus Christ"* (1 Peter 1:7).

**Precisely because this is such a challenge, it is a very exciting time in our history.**

*(Continued from page 4)*

Parramatta in 1973 and then in 1982 was elected Archbishop, a position he held for 10 years until his retirement.

For some, *Robinson the Archbishop* contradicted what they thought they knew of as *Robinson the Theologian*. They misunderstood our Dad. If he was a linguist who interrogated words and their meaning as a theological lecturer, as Archbishop he was a Constitutionalist. Although he had opposed the adoption of the Church's Constitution 20 years before, when he became Archbishop he believed it was his duty and responsibility to uphold it. He was a man of Order – much to the frustration of those who didn't understand him.

**He was a man of compassion, hospitality and contentment.**

Ma and Pa's home was one that always welcomed the stranger, or someone in need of a meal. When we were growing up in Newtown, a cup of tea and vegemite sandwich was the routine for the rough sleepers ('tramps' we

called them then) who came on a very regular basis to our door.

*Don Robinson* lived his faith to the end. He might have had dementia but he knew all the verses of his favourite hymns, and would almost to the last join in with his clear tenor voice, sometimes singing in harmony. *Martin* recalls once he was reading from Genesis 21 and Pa took over and with complete clarity, reciting the final verses.

*Donald William Bradley Robinson*, linguist, inspiring teacher to generations of students, administrator of immense integrity, a man who shared his Saviour's love for all people! Loving husband and father. Impish grandfather.

**IT IS WELL.... IT IS WELL....**

## LAMBETH CONFERENCE God's Church for God's WORLD

*The Archbishop of Canterbury is preparing to invite more than 900 bishops from around the worldwide Anglican Communion to the Conference, which will take place in Canterbury, England, in the summer of 2020.*

*Archbishop Justin* said the Conference is a hugely important event and would be setting the Vision for many years to come – "a confident witness to the world around us" - Listening to God through Scripture and Prayer. The key text – the book that will be studied is the *First Letter of Peter*.

For the first time, there will be a joint programme for bishops and spouses.

Official Website: [lambethconference.org](http://lambethconference.org)  
See the Archbishop speak on YouTube.



Archbishop Justin Welby and Mrs Caroline Welby

## **RECTOR OF CCSL CALLS FOR A POSITIVE PROCLAMATION OF THE GOSPEL**

An Agenda Item debated during Synod was on the Diocese's future Policy regarding 'Property Use' - Sydney Diocesan Church Property: churches, buildings, halls schools owned by the Sydney Diocesan Church Property Trust.

The concern, which the Policy addresses is that, if a church refuses to allow use of its hall by, say, a gay couple to hold a wedding breakfast, or a yoga class that includes meditation, such a parish may be caught by anti-discrimination legislation.

Legal advice to the Diocese is that the best protection against such prosecution is to have a very clear statement for property use, grounded in the Sydney Diocese's theological principles (doctrines, tenets and beliefs). The Property Use Policy defines these - grouped according to doctrines of salvation, the human person, marriage and human sexuality, and Christian freedom.

An original ban on 'smoking ceremonies' has been dropped pending consultations with indigenous communities. An apology for offence caused was issued.

Relevant papers, including the range of activities deemed inappropriate are at Pages 421-428 of the Synod papers:

[https://www.sds.asn.au/sites/default/files/Synod%202018.Consolidated%20Books%201-4.pdf?doc\\_id=NTcxNzU=](https://www.sds.asn.au/sites/default/files/Synod%202018.Consolidated%20Books%201-4.pdf?doc_id=NTcxNzU=)

The following speech, in opposition, was delivered during the debate. The Policy was adopted to be reviewed in 2019.

**“Archbishop, Members of Synod.**

***Daniel Dries, Christ Church St Laurence.***

I rise to respectfully speak against this motion. I do so because I fear that our diocese is rapidly developing an image crisis second only to the Liberal party in the seat of Wentworth. Although that may sound like a flippant remark, it is something of which I am often reminded when walking down the street in a clerical collar.

A church should not be concerned with opinion polls and popularity per se, but when our reputation in society inhibits our ability to share the gospel, I believe we should be very concerned indeed.

Anglican churches should absolutely prohibit activities on church property which contradict the theology and doctrine of our diocese. However, what concerns me about this policy is that its language is so dominated by what we as a diocese oppose, that it completely fails to identify what we stand for.

In terms of our church halls, we must remember that many of us are not responsible for the construction of these buildings. Many of our halls were built by previous generations of faithful people, and were offered to the local

communities as schools and places of meeting. Of course this was in a time when our churches and communities were much more intertwined. I fail to see how this policy, even in its amended form, will restore this relationship.

As someone who spends a lot of time driving around the greater city of Sydney, it seems to me that most of our churches and halls are firmly locked 5 or 6 days each week. What message does this send to our local communities?

I am not concerned about public opinion for its own sake, but if we continue to damage our reputation within society at this rate, we will become completely ineffective. Our voice in society is already not nearly as audible as we would like to believe.

We have spent much time in recent synods discussing levies, partly for the building of new churches, and yet we are in decline as a diocese. What is the point of building new churches if our reputation means that no one wants to come to them? Our reputation and engagement with society is so important.

While Jesus called people to repentance, he constantly engaged with society. The resurrected Christ did not sit in a darkened tomb waiting for good people to come to

him. He engaged dangerously to share the good news.

Again, I don't think it is appropriate for activities to take place on Anglican Church property that are inconsistent with our faith and doctrine. However, why are our empty church halls not being used to house refugees or victims of domestic violence? It's unrealistic... Like it or not, this is what it would take for society to take us seriously. Like some of yours, my own parish hall is used as a homeless shelter, and I believe it is one of the most important ministries we undertake each week.

This policy doesn't prohibit homeless shelters, however, I'm struggling to understand why this document, simply entitled 'Property Use Policy', lacks any serious encouragement for parishes to use their property to establish better relationships within local communities, to say nothing of more effective stewardship?

For better or for worse, society thinks we are completely out of touch. In opposing this motion, I would simply urge members of Synod to consider very seriously our reputation in society, and our ability to share the gospel in a city in which the church only seems to speak in the negative. “

# “*But from the beginning....*”

Sermon preached at St Luke’s Enmore

20th Sunday after Pentecost, 7 October 2018 Reading: *Mark 10. 2-16*

by Philip Bradford, Acting Rector



## ***“Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?”***

This is the question *Jesus* was asked by the Pharisees and it is a question that has troubled the Christian Church ever since. This passage from Mark’s Gospel can’t be avoided and demands some explanation.

**Divorce is a topic which affects many families and because the Church’s traditional teaching regarding divorce has been the source of so much pain one cannot avoid addressing the issue.**

How are we to read this text today?

**Mark tells us that when the Pharisees asked *Jesus* about divorce it was a ‘test question’.** In other words there was an agenda behind the question that we need to understand. The question was dishonest in that there was no debate at the time as to whether divorce was legal-everyone accepted the fact of divorce.

However, what was in dispute were the grounds for divorce. *Deuteronomy 24.1* declared that if a man found something objectionable about his wife he could write a certificate of divorce, put it in her hand and send her out of his house.

The question being debated was how to interpret the words ‘something objectionable.’ The followers of *Rabbi Hillel* believed a woman could be divorced by her husband for almost any reason, including burning the dinner. *Rabbi Akiba* went one step further and even permitted divorce if the man found another woman more beautiful than his wife. At the other extreme the followers of *Shammai* argued that only adultery was a sufficient cause for divorce. The

liberal views about divorce were obviously popular with some men but left women extremely vulnerable and without any redress. *Jesus* would have been very aware that a culture of easy divorce was not in the best interests of women.

**However, as well as getting *Jesus* embroiled in a legalistic dispute over grounds for divorce there may well have been a more sinister motive behind the Pharisees’ question.** In the opening verse of chapter 10, Mark tells us that *Jesus* and his disciples were in the region of Judea beyond the Jordan. The reference to the Jordan brings to mind *John the Baptist* whose ministry had been in the Jordan region. What brought about *John’s* imprisonment and death? It was his criticism of *King Herod* for taking his brother’s wife, *Herodias* and marrying her. *Herodias* had divorced her husband, *Philip*, in order to marry *Herod*. (Roman law allowed a woman to divorce - Jewish law did not). So it is likely that the Pharisees were hoping that *Jesus* would fall into the trap of saying something treasonable that would lead to a fate like that of *John the Baptist*. This may be the reason that *Jesus* finished his remarks about marriage and divorce not in the public arena but in closed session with his disciples.

Whatever the precise nature of the trap being laid, *Jesus* could spot it a mile away. **His answer avoided arguments about fine points of the law and directed his interrogators away from the law to the will and intention of the creator.**

Divorce, *Jesus* declares, was never part of God’s original plan for his creation: it was a concession to

accommodate human weakness and frailty. God’s purpose from the beginning was that marriage would be the physical and spiritual union of a man and a woman bringing about a new entity - two becoming one. *Jesus* quotes Genesis, “*a man will leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife*”, which over the centuries was changed into the patriarchal notion that a father gives away his daughter in marriage as though she were a commodity to be traded.

*Jesus* affirms that the union for which we yearn sexually, emotionally and spiritually is best achieved and sustained by fidelity to one partner in a life-long union. *Jesus* was deeply aware, as we are, that there are hundreds of ways in which this divine plan may be thwarted and marriage relations damaged. Even those of us who regard ourselves as happily married are often conscious of how far short we fall of the high standard that God asks of us. In the sensitive area of our intimate relations none of us gets it right all the time. But in an egocentric society that often treats marriage vows lightly it is sometimes helpful to be reminded of what God intended from the beginning.

***Jesus* refuses to compromise God’s original intention because he is proclaiming the ethics of the new creation where the harmony and unity God desires will be made into reality.**

This passage has often been interpreted in a legalistic way that takes *Jesus’* words out of context and turns them into a blanket prohibition of divorce. So for a long time the Church refused to allow the re-marriage of divorced people under any circumstances and

in doing so caused much suffering and distress. There are still various caveats in place about who may be re-married and our own diocese has a very muddled and in my view unsatisfactory approach to this issue. Any re-marriage proposal is supposed to be approved by the bishop and not all our bishops are of the same mind on this question.

**The issue was discussed in our Synod this year with a motion affirming that if a person has divorced because of domestic violence then this should be taken into account when the bishop is deciding whether to approve an application for re-marriage. Strangely some members of Synod couldn't even give assent to that proposal. However, it was overwhelming passed with a secret ballot.**

Sadly many divorced persons have not always found a welcome within the church. All of us stand in need of God's grace and forgiveness and church should be the place where all are welcomed.

**Mark follows *Jesus*' words about marriage with some teaching about children.**

It is provoked by the disciples' action in sending away children who are being brought to *Jesus* for a blessing. Why the disciples felt it necessary to dismiss the children is not made clear. Perhaps it was because they thought children were of little consequence. Children were at the bottom of the social order. Perhaps, too, the disciples were still entertaining visions of future glory when *Jesus* would be acknowledged as Messiah and they would share in his exaltation. Surely *Jesus* didn't need to bother with children.

***Again the disciples fail to understand the nature of the Kingdom of Heaven. Jesus rebukes his disciples and welcomes the children warmly. But Jesus' words and actions say much more than 'be nice to small children.'*** He

uses the incident to teach an important truth. He says ***"it is to people like these that the kingdom of God belongs."*** What did he mean? Well, he didn't mean that children are welcome because they are sweet and innocent. If you believe that, then you have never spent a day with a two and a half year old. No, *Jesus* was saying that the Kingdom belongs to them because children come as they are. They have nothing on which they base a claim. They have no achievements nor possessions, just a willingness to receive whatever is offered. Children come with empty hands. Adults so often approach God with titles, qualifications, impressive CV's, years of faithful church attendance, perhaps even our years of faithful marriage. We sometimes are tempted to think that these things give us a certain entrée into the kingdom. Valuable though these things may be, they do not earn us membership in the Kingdom of God. That is received as a gift. That is why *Jesus* says you will never enter the Kingdom of God unless you become like a little child. We are not asked to be childish but child-like; to open our hands to receive the gift we can never earn. That is the way the New Testament understands faith. Without faith we can never please God.

This passage is often read at services of 'infant' baptism. It is appropriate because we believe that even tiny children can be welcomed into God's family. **Baptism is a gift to be received by faith - in the case of infant baptism, the faith of parents and godparents.** In baptism, the child is received into God's family not because of any achievements on the part of the child or his or her parents but simple in response to God's invitation accepted by faith.

The fact that *Jesus* had a special regard and love for children should encourage us to do all we can to protect and nurture the young. In

parts of the world we know that thousands of children are being exploited and abused as child soldiers, or sold into slavery, suffering physical and sexual abuse. Large numbers of children in our wider community suffer various kinds of abuse or neglect and Christians should be in the forefront of those who are advocates for their care and protection.

**Jesus said: "Let the children come to me; do not prevent them for it is to people such as these that the Kingdom of God belongs."**

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**HISTORIC ANGLICAN-ORIENTAL ORTHODOX AGREED STATEMENT ON THE HOLY SPIRIT (ACNS)**  
The historic Agreed Statement between Anglican and Oriental Orthodox theologians on **the Procession and Work of the Holy Spirit** was published at the meeting of Anglican Oriental-Orthodox International Commission (AOOIC) this month in Lebanon.  
The agreed statement is part of a series of work which has helped to heal the oldest continuing division within Christianity, a schism that goes back centuries.  
At the core of the Agreed Statement is the controversial '*Filioque*' clause – appended to the Nicene Creed by the Latin Western tradition causing a schism between the Oriental Orthodox Churches and the western Churches. It was inherited by the Anglican tradition. The clause says that the Holy Spirit proceeded "from the Son" (Jesus) as well as the Father.  
***The Agreed Statement says that Anglicans should omit the clause.***



## From Whitby to Sydney – the Tale of Two Synods

Susan Hooke, Member of Sydney Synod



**The important issue at the Synod of Whitby 664AD was to determine how to calculate the correct date of Easter.**

The problem: the Irish were using a lunar table prepared by *Victorius of Aquitaine* on a 95 year cycle; the Roman missionaries in England, the up to date and more accurate tables of *Dionysius the Small*\*.

The discussion was reasonable when it was realised by both groups that more united them than the details that divided. The English date was accepted by all. How friendly - how Christian. The Synod achieved its objectives.

Fast forward to Synod of Sydney 2018. Despite what you may think and hear, our Synod is not a debating society or a talkfest or a glee club or a boys brigade or a Bible study. At times you would be excused for thinking it was all of the above. Our Synod is our parliament, created and governed by legislation of the NSW Parliament.

**The Anglican Church of Australia Constitutions Act 1902 states:** *it is the role of Synod to make ordinances concerning all matters and things of order and good government of the church.....no ordinance or rule is to be in contravention of any law or statute in force for the time being. The Anglican Church of Australia Constitution Act 1961 attaches our Constitution which states in Fundamental Declaration 3 : The Church will ever obey the Commandments of Christ. Matt22: 37-40 ...'thou shall love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all they soul and with all thy mind.....thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.*

The next verse, which I consider links the commandments

to our governance states, *'on these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets'*. This verse cannot just be considered retrospectively, it must apply to future laws and actions as do the two commandments.

**With over 480 members, Synod is an unwieldy group meeting once a year.** Much of its work is delegated to Standing Committee, an elected body of Synod Representatives, meeting monthly. Standing Committee relies for much of its input from a further layer of delegated committees.

Did our Synod comply with its governing Acts? Not completely. Did we show love for all our neighbours? No. Did we achieve stated objectives? Not all. Was the discussion reasonable? Not all.

We have increasing problems with our Synod: an overloaded agenda; inadequately prepared background material; members wasting time with irrelevancies. Issues are not approached with the due diligence required under our legislation.

For example, we did not get time/opportunity to:

- Interrogate the budget for the next three years to understand why Moore College is receiving \$1.3m-1.5m over next 3 years when it has reserves of \$11m.
- modify the Large Receipts Policy to enable parishes to deduct reasonable expenses from all property before the imposition of the 15% levy.
- obtain satisfactory answers as to why a committee was trying to find an explanation in the Bible as to whether women in 2018 can sit on boards of Diocesan institutions and committees.

To be fair, there were a few excellent presentations. **Canon Sandy Grant** and **Kara Hartley's** Policy on Responding to Domestic Violence could not be faulted. It was presented clearly and passed without need for clarification. The time wasting arises where presenters have not done adequate homework, where Standing Committee has not picked up errors and ambiguities.

We have as much need for good governance as our banks. The consequences of failure to meet high standards can be equally devastating. We know that from experience. We need to rethink our structure. All members of Synod have a responsibility to press for better outcomes.

**Why could spectacular outcomes be achieved in Whitby and not in Sydney?** Do we understand that more unites us than divides?

Perhaps, the big difference between the two Synods was that Whitby had a hostess - **St Hilda, Abbess of Whitby**. Perhaps Sydney should look for a saintly hostess.

\*Taken from *High King of Heaven: Aspects of Early English Spirituality* by Benedicta Ward. <http://silouanthompson.net.2009/02/whitby/>



O God of peace, by whose grace the abbess Hilda was endowed with Gifts of justice, prudence and strength,.. Give us the grace to respect and love our fellow

Christians with whom we disagree, that our common life may be enriched and your gracious will be done, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.