

ANGLICANS TOGETHER

NEWSLETTER

No. 23 June 2004

ANGLICANS TOGETHER ONLINE: <www.anglicanstogether.org>

Chairman's Column

Pentecost is a time of new beginnings and surprising new out-pourings of the God beyond all names and shapes. Pentecost reminds us that we cannot put a fence around God. Once we try to force God into our preconceived ideas then we have turned God into a god of our own making, like the golden calf of the pilgrim Israelites. God forces us to move on in our journey. We cannot stay where we have been. We cannot go back as the Israelites wished to do when the going got rough for them, in spite of Moses telling them that they were going to God's Promised Land.

It seems that the group that is in control of the Diocese of Sydney wishes us to go back. I have heard in Synod speaker after Synod speaker say that their intention is to take the Diocese back to Reformation times to complete what was not completed by their Puritan predecessors.

*(The)"Puritans (are) the more extreme English Protestants who, dissatisfied with the Elizabethan Settlement, sought a further purification of the Church from supposedly unscriptural and corrupt forms along the Genevan model. They demanded express Scriptural warrant for all the details of public worship, believing that all other forms were popish, superstitious, idolatrous, and anti-Christian. At first they attacked church ornaments, vestments, surplices, rochets, organs, the sign of the cross, and ecclesiastical courts, and put corresponding emphasis on preaching, Sunday observance, and the 'tablewise' position of the altar"*¹

That definition very much seems to fit the agenda of the controlling party of the Diocese. Throughout the Diocese, stained glass windows are called idolatrous, choirs and their associated musical style are hounded out, there are attempts to remove reredoses, liturgical vesture is abhorred (even surplices are abhorred), religious paintings and icons are removed, there are arguments concerning the correct language to be used, such as whether to call the table around which the community gathers a holy table or an altar. Preaching is honoured as all-important and as the exclusive way in which the Word of the Lord can be received. The Bible is to some extent worshipped as God in printed form and placed in the principal position in churches, as against the Anglican tradition of balancing the hearing of the Word with the

sacrament of the Lord's Supper. **The Elizabethan Settlement ensured that there would always be tensions between all the parties that make up the Anglican Church.** The current situation in Sydney is that only one party truly knows the mind of God on all matters. That could be seen as idolatrous. No one person or party has all the answers. True Anglicanism and Christianity need many viewpoints to draw closer and closer to a better understanding of the reality of the God beyond names and shapes. Conflict and debate were an integral and unavoidable part of early Christianity. It remains no less so today.

I am concerned that associated with what I have written above, the Diocese is subcontracting its ministry to commercial groups that are not answerable to the Canons of the Diocese. For example on Thursday's in the Cathedral there is a meeting called the City Bible Forum, run by a commercial organisation called Ecom. In addition, a company called MTS Ltd is to run a training course in the near future, in the Chapter House. Neither is an Anglican organisation; neither is controlled by the Diocese; neither come under episcopal supervision. While these maybe extremely reputable organisations, they are completely independent.

They can do as they wish. If an ordinary parish wished to set itself up independently, it would soon feel the wrath of the full force of the law. Try seeking to invite a Roman Catholic

bishop to preach in your church on a Sunday.

As I wrote in the last edition of this Newsletter, parishes that are of a slightly different tradition to the current regime and are seeking a new rector must be very careful of Puritan attempts to take over the parish. One parish since I last wrote has had a new rector come in and already he has begun to change the tradition of that place. It was a faithful evangelical Prayer Book parish previously. I have heard it rumoured that there is a plan to reduce the number of parishes of a different churchmanship to that of the style now in favour to the Puritans to six. This was told to a member of a parish currently seeking a new rector by a member of the Diocesan nominators. I have spoken to my bishop about this but he is of the opinion that I am mistaken. I hope I am. When parishes begin the process of finding a new rector, it is essential that they should seek the

ANGLICANS TOGETHER DINNER
FRIDAY 22 OCTOBER 2004 7.00 for 7.30 pm
Guest Speaker - Dr Muriel Porter OAM
(Further information on page 11).

advice of the other 'stole' parishes that have had experience in the process. There is strength in numbers. Parishes outside the Diocesan mainstream need a consistent, unified and strong approach.

I am also concerned that the 'stole' parishes whose future seems secure are currently showing little support for similar parishes that are less well-endowed and less influential. Such parishes should stand-up for the difference in which they believe, liturgically, theologically and financially.

Earlier in the year, the Bishops of Australia met in conference to discuss a number of issues that concerned them all. **One such issue was the consequences that would result if at the next General Synod a decision were taken to allow women bishops.** One suggestion is that there be the provision for 'alternative episcopal oversight' for those parishes that do not wish to have a woman as their bishop. As this was on the agenda, a number of clergy and one layperson of the Diocese, of whom I am one, wrote a polite letter to the Primate. In the letter, we asked that, if consideration was being made for those who did not want a woman bishop to be given special treatment, we would like the same to be given to parishes in this Diocese who, for example, do not want Lay Presidency at the Eucharist. **Lay Presidency at the Eucharist may come into reality at the next session of the Synod of this Diocese.** As such discussion was taking place, we wished to expand it to consider some specific Sydney issues. It was in no way an attack on the bishops of this Diocese, who act properly in applying diocesan policy, but an attempt to ensure that the consciences of all are protected. It was a request for all matters to be considered so that justice could be had for all.

John Cornish

1. The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church p1146, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1985.

Eucharist in the Southern Highlands of NSW

For those who might not be aware, a regular Eucharist has been celebrated at my home in Mittagong since February 2001.

When I moved to the Southern Highlands in 1998, I was aware that in coming here the Anglican parishes in the Highlands were more of an evangelical nature than that I had been used to and, whilst there were regular Sunday Eucharist, the emphasis was (as is generally the case with our Sydney Diocese friends) more on word than sacrament.

I initially became involved in the parish of St Simon and St Jude at Bowral and assisted with organ playing at some services. I also found my organ playing services were needed at St Peter's Campbelltown, Holy Trinity Berrima and the Uniting Church in Bowral on occasions!

Whilst all these parishes have been very welcoming and some (certainly in the case of St Jude's, Bowral)

have large congregations, I and some other of my friends living in the Highlands (all of whom had connections with Christ Church St Laurence, Sydney) felt that we should seek some way of having a Eucharist in the Highlands in the tradition we had been used to before moving here.

I had intentions of having my new country house blessed by Father Austin Day (whilst he was still well enough to do this). The house also has a loft area which my friends and I decided could possibly serve as a chapel. It seemed like no time at all that we had an altar, hangings, liturgical robes and vessels (a chalice and paten provided by Father Austin) and cruets.

The house was blessed by Father Austin on February 23rd 2001 and he celebrated the first Eucharist here in the chapel. Since that time we have managed to invite many retired and other clergy to celebrate for us once or twice a month.

After Father Adrian Stephens became Rector of Christ Church St Laurence I invited him to come and celebrate for us. We then decided that we would settle on the first Saturday of each month for a Eucharist and Father Adrian would come down each time. With the recent arrival of Father Ron Silarsah as assistant priest at CCSL the travel down here each month is now shared with Father Adrian.

There are parishioners of Christ Church in the Blue Mountains would like a similar service and this is expected to commence in the near future.

We see the ministry in both the Southern Highlands and Blue Mountains as an extension of the parish of Christ Church for those parishioners (and others) living in these parts of God's kingdom.

We invite anyone living in the Southern Highlands who would like to come to the monthly Eucharist in Mittagong to contact Chris Styles, telephone 4872 3003. You would be most welcome. We have a light lunch and fellowship after the service to which we invite you to stay. We like to have some idea of how many are coming to cater accurately, so would appreciate if you would phone first.

Chris Styles

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St Mark's Church, Granville

- A 2004 snapshot

Most people know of Granville as the scene of Australia's worst ever railway disaster, 18 January 1977, when 83 people were killed. St Mark's hosted Memorial Services for the 20th and 25th anniversaries.

Many Sydney-siders think of Granville as a western suburb with a large immigrant population. Certainly the streets of Granville are busy with students heading to the local TAFE, and shops from a variety of national origins.

The local housing is mostly simple workers, cottages, from the time when Granville provided housing for the workers of Clyde Engineering and other local industries. Many of the Granville houses are now early steps towards a new life in a new country, with a new language. There has been some significant new building of larger homes in the district, over the last 2 years, and the South Street shops now look more appealing - the trend is "up". But we await the development of Parramatta Road!

Church and Rectory stand out in the community. The Church is 1880s Edmund Blackett. The Queen Anne style Rectory dates from 1903. For those who know the code, the Rectory is "high church". Every chimney has crosses facing in each direction; the timberwork is ornamented with crosses and multiple trefoils symbolising the Holy Trinity.

Through its history, St Mark's has been predominantly "high church". A 1912 photograph shows the Rector wearing an ornate stole over his cassock, surplice, and (oddly, by today's standards) academic hood. St Mark's proudly maintains this ethos, with Sung or Choral Eucharist (APBA) every Sunday. Vestments are alb and stole with cope; dalmatic and tunicle on high occasions. We also have a Saturday evening Eucharist of a more informal style (as per the Outline Order for Holy Communion, p813 of APBA).

Lent is solemnly observed. On the Sundays, we have a small contemporary Stations of the Cross service. On a Wednesday evening Eucharist is followed by a study group. Holy Week is observed conscientiously: Maundy Thursday, Thanksgiving for the Institution of the Holy Communion (including foot washing); Choral Devotions on Good Friday; and Paschal Candle with Renewal of Baptismal Promises at the First Eucharist of Easter.

The lunchtime Midweek Eucharist on saints' days has been discontinued - mostly because of the increasing age of those who came and because St Mark's is relatively isolated from people's work.

There are up to ten different nations of origin represented in the congregation. Some people have been coming to St Mark's for 60 years, and some for 6 weeks. We have a good age spread, though not many young families. People come mostly from suburbs to the south, west and north of

Granville. Many come because they dislike the freer style of their local parish and are seeking a more traditional and liturgical service. St Mark's effectively functions as a "regional church".

The "regional church" effect makes it difficult to connect effectively with the local community; midweek contact outside of church (eg school, supermarket, sports fields) is lacking. Support for midweek events is consistently strong; studies on a theme or a Bible book tend to be 6 weeks duration.

St Mark's gives very generously to Anglicare through tinned food and other non-perishable donations. ***A basket is kept at the altar, to suggest that those who are fed spiritually should ensure those in need can have access to bodily food.*** We donate 2% of our general offertory to ABM, BCA, and Anglicare. This is in addition to the generous other support these agencies receive from St Mark's parishioners (eg via BCA boxes).

At St Mark's, we seek to develop a robust inclusive contemporary Anglican catholicism, as a viable alternative to the Sydney mainstream. We value the fellowship we have with other parishes and clergy of similar mind, in Sydney and beyond.

In keeping with this highly technological age, friends and enquirers can reach us on our website -

<http://www.granville.anglican.asn.au>

Please keep us in your love and prayers.

Fr James McPherson, Rector

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A Swiss Parish Invoice

The following invoice was unearthed from the parish archives of Boswil, Switzerland and translated into English.

In 1873 the parish engaged a painter to refresh the frescoes of the old church, and on completion of the work he submitted the following invoice.

Modified the seventh commandment and	3fr.
lacquered the Ten Commandments	45
Cleaned up Pontius Pilate, put new fur	2fr.
on his collar and polished his person on	33
all sides.	
Enlarged the Heavens and added some new	3fr.
stars. Ameliorated the fires of Hell and	86
gave to the devil a reasonable face.	
Modified St Madeleine, who had	3fr.
completely deteriorated	16
Cleaned the Wise Virgins and repainted	1fr.
them here and there.	30
Better marked the path of the Heavens	0fr.
	16
Lacquered Potiphar's wife and removed the	1fr.
filth from her neck.	32
Moved back the End of the World, having	4fr.
seen that it was much too close.	88
Cleaned the Red Sea from the fly	2fr.
excrement that covered its surface.	

This article was printed in the Parish Magazine of St Mary Magdalene, Mitford by Font and Wansbeck, Northumbria.

The Gospel (?) according to the Simpsons

The Simpsons is an animated sit-com centred on the life and adventures of a lower middle class family living in Springfield, USA. The show premiered in 1989 in its present half hour format. It has now logged 15 seasons and over 300 shows without showing signs of waning popularity or diminishing spontaneity.

The Simpsons belong to a family that might be described as dysfunctional. Homer is 'oafish', selfish, and crude. Bart is a younger, but more cunning, version of Homer - scheming, anti-authoritarian, and reckless. Lisa, a supremely gifted 8 year old, is regularly embarrassed and at times crushed by the insensitivity of her father and older brother. She expects that she will need counselling in later life. Marge stoically attempts to steer Homer and Bart in less damaging directions.

Not surprisingly some parents do not allow their children to watch the show. Its relentless spoofing of family values and institutions is deemed too subversive, too negative, even nihilistic. The show is perceived to undermine the kinds of social values parents want to inculcate in their children.

From the beginning the Simpsons has been happy to satirise distinctive Christian values and those who officially uphold and mediate them to the wider, non-committed society. Christian culture, specifically that associated with American fundamentalism, is a frequent target of the writers. Springfield's most prominent spokesperson for the Christian faith, the Reverend Timothy Lovejoy, joylessly and judgmentally pastors a church ('First Springfield') to which all but a few of the characters in the show belong.

The Flanders family, prominent in the Lovejoy flock, are the Simpson's neighbours. The families therefore serve as models of contrasting foundational values. The Flanders are intentionally committed to a Christian way of life, living in conformity with the culture of which Reverend Lovejoy is the public representative. The church context affords the writers opportunities to comment upon this significant aspect of western culture as a repository and disseminator of traditional Christian morality and the Christian worldview. The Simpsons, also regular church attenders, reflect the kind of messiness of family life that characterises most families in the USA and Australia. The Simpsons sometimes say grace, and at times they pray and discuss religious issues, but the life of the members family lacks a consistent commitment to a Christian culture. The Flanders, on the other hand, boast 'Shroud of Turin' beach towels, 'Davey and Goliath' children's videos, the 'Good Samaritan' board game, and 130 cable channels 'all locked out'. That the Simpson family is not fundamentalist goes almost without saying. Lisa

could well be described as an agnostic. In more recent years she has become a Buddhist adherent.

Despite the show's bitter satire, the family's dysfunctionality and the damaging and potentially disastrous outcomes of many of Homer's enterprises, enduring social and distinctively Christian values are upheld and affirmed in subtle ways episode after episode. The characters do love each other unconditionally and together intimately experience the grace of God. In his better moments, Homer is brought to the position of articulating profound truths we identify with the revelation of God in Christ about the nature of the life we share in family life and in community with others. Though self-centred by nature and inclination, Homer is at times the recipient of rare illumination into the meaning of life as a life given up for others. On the other hand, after 15 seasons the characters have not developed - nothing has been learned in a cumulative sense. Homer is still as capable of the most appalling self-centredness in 2004 as he was when the show first aired in 1989. However, by this means the creators and writers of the show are able to confront their audience repeatedly with the values which they affirm.

I believe that the writers use the show as a vehicle for the articulation of their own sense of what ultimately matters in life. They do have a message to mediate. I comprehend that message to be the Christian gospel - that God loves all human beings unconditionally and purposes to bring them to himself. For example, Marge Simpson's unconditional love of Homer, even at his worst, is a parable of God's love of the self-centred and self-sufficient that is perfectly exemplified in Christ.

On the other hand, Reverend Lovejoy typifies the kind of religious assessment of Jesus (common in Jesus' Jewish and Graeco-Roman context as well as today) that responds to his message of the unconditional and unmediated love of God with a re-imposition of strategies designed to protect religious boundaries and the vested interests of religious functionaries.

Surprisingly, in the Simpsons we hear again the voice of Jesus summoning us to a life of love, joy and freedom in the service of God and of others. Throughout the ages, and in the modern world no less, Jesus throws down a challenge to the membership of the institutional church to be the repository and the exemplar of this message.

The Rev'd Dr Mark Harding
Dean, Australian College of Theology



Purple Postcards - from the Edge

Fremantle in October!

Should be delightful there in late Spring, as the General Synod delegates gather to discuss the future of our church in this great land. In the relative media peace of the West, we'll have yet another go at deciding whether we Australian Anglicans can face the idea that a woman could, 'Be to the flock of Christ, a shepherd.'

The Anglican newspaper, 'Market Place' has already declared that This Church "Isn't Ready for Women Bishops". It makes the point that it can discern no 'fervent energetic debate in parishes, dioceses or among the public'. I don't know what it's like in other dioceses, but for Sydney, Allan Reeder is probably right. Energetic public debate is not the way we do things in Sydney Diocese. We tend to prefer quiet nods and winks about what's IN and what's OUT.



Reeder also **asks if MOW is dead**. Where is the undoubtedly brilliant leadership of yesteryear in this new debate about women in the Episcopate? Well I can't answer for the great founders of the MOW - I suspect many of them are any or all of the following: - disappointed, disaffected, derisive or dead - but I can say that most of their successors in Sydney are currently all of the above except the last.

However, we are not totally despondent, because this is not just a Sydney issue. Other Anglicans are involved. There are two Australian dioceses who have formally welcomed the concept that a woman can be an Anglican bishop. **So we are joining enthusiastically in a nationwide MOWatch postcard campaign to get the message out.**

The average Anglican in the pew, quite reasonably, has almost no knowledge of what their particular hierarchy is doing, or how indeed the whole system functions. Getting them involved in expressing an opinion that is contrary to what they were told in church is very difficult. Yet all the surveys the wider church has done show that the average Australian Christian supports the fully ordained ministry of women. This is particularly so for people who have actually had the experience of such ministry.

In the coming months, Sydney MOW will be sending out "bishop's purple" postcards, proclaiming that:-

**A WOMAN'S PLACE
IS IN THE HOUSE**

OF BISHOPS

They will be sent - not just to voting delegates - but to everyone we can think of who may be influenced to, at the very least, mention the issue to someone they know in the church. There is a space for a

specific message. We will try to target our messages appropriately, but I do like the idea of a friend, who simply wrote one to another friend saying: -

"*This is a concept I agree with.*" Yours etc.
Now that's not hard to do!!

It may be that some form of the proposed Canon gets through. One gets the impression, that our own 'power brokers' won't mind having an excuse - by being the defeated minority on this issue - to increase their reputation in some places overseas as the defenders of the true faith! **However, I suggest that the proposal for 'an alternative Episcopal ministry to be provided for those whose conscience will not allow them to accept the ministry of their female bishop', SHOULD BE DEFINITELY OPPOSED.** We went down this track in Sydney in 1996, with the Mason-Baird motion to accept women as priests, on the proviso that '**they weren't in charge of a Parish**'. At the time, I thought it was a reasonable compromise to accommodate these famous delicate consciences that some people have on this issue. I learnt my lesson at that Synod and don't recommend going there again. **Either a person is an Anglican bishop or not.** The purpose and value of a hierarchy is stability and accountability. If any parish can decide that they can opt out of accepting the Bishop that their Diocese has chosen, then that Diocese is no longer a community and the traditional structure collapses. Heaven knows, I would love to have been able to call Bishop Jamieson from across the Tasman as my bishop these past years. However, she wasn't and I couldn't and that was that.

Fremantle provides us with an opportunity to begin a reconciling process bridging the gap between the present Anglican Church and modern society. In Melbourne, we are approaching the 'critical mass' stage, when women priests are numerous enough to be regarded without surprise. **When we begin to see the whole leadership spectrum of the Church, including women as well as men, the rest of our alienated community may begin to believe that we do represent the Jesus in whom there is no distinction of race, status or gender.**

Elaine A. Peterson
Convenor, Sydney MOW

[Members of Anglicans Together, not MOWatch members, will not have received an order form for the postcards. Cards can be bought from MOWatch Inc. PO Box 31, Briar Hill, Victoria 3088. \$5 for a pack of 20 cards. In Sydney ring 9747-3276.]

True Wisdom

You have been given great intelligence; and so great wisdom is required of you. Much has been given to you, and much will be required of you. But in all things I am your head and helper. For when Heaven has touched you if you call on Me, I will answer you. If you knock at the door, I will open to you. You are given a spirit of profound knowledge, and so have in yourself all that you need.

From "**The Wisdom of Hildegard of Bingen**" compiled and introduced by Fiona Bowie. Lion Publishing 1997

Do we need to be rewarded for doing the right thing?

Although many people regard their faith as the wellspring of their moral values, it is not necessarily so. It is perfectly possible to distinguish between religious questions - Why are we here? How can our lives acquire 'meaning'? - and moral questions - How should we live as a community? Why should we accept responsibility for other people's well-being?- and, indeed, in a secular society, many people think these questions should be kept quite separate.

Believers who connect their religion to their morality (and, after all, wasn't it James who said '*faith without works is dead*'?) sometimes take the extra, more dangerous step of thinking that God has an active role in dispensing human justice. This leads them to blame God when things go wrong for them, or to rail against God for the injustices of the world, or - most dangerous of all - to believe that if they are 'good' in a religious sense, bad things won't happen to them. Some religious fundamentalists, for instance, believe that God 'blesses' them with good health, or marital happiness, or even material prosperity as a direct reward for their piety.

But the melancholy truth is that 'good' people are no more or less likely to suffer pain and tragedy than 'bad' people. Devout parents produce deformed babies, just as non-believers do. Deeply religious people contract cancer, are maimed in car accidents, and lose their jobs. The question '*why did God let this happen to me, when I'm a good [ie. religious] person?*' represents a failure to grasp the role of religious faith; though, to be fair, it's not very different from the question often asked by non-religious people: '*Why is this happening to me?*'

In other words, when it comes to the blurry line between religion and morality, consideration of rewards and punishments can easily confuse the issue.

It's true that some of the moral choices we make do seem to be loosely based on the idea of rewards and punishments: we'll be rewarded by happiness (or, at least, by some peace of mind) if we do the right thing; we may be racked by guilt if we don't. Weighing up such private consequences is a legitimate part of how we decide what's right and wrong for us, in any particular situation.

But if we introduce the idea of rewards and punishments as a reason for acting well, we will have not only added a dimension to the moral decision-making process that we don't need - one that might actually complicate and confuse the issue - but we will also have missed the whole point of being good and living well, which is that we ought to do the right thing because it is right, not because we will be rewarded.

If you're operating according to a system of presumed consequences in the afterlife, this might make you behave like an angel, but it might also make you feel somewhat above the struggle, morally superior, perhaps even invincible - especially if you belong to the kind of religious group that believes your faith has 'saved' you from eternal damnation, regardless of how you might behave on a day-to-day basis. The idea that God will forgive your bad behaviour may be comforting, but, paradoxically, it can actually encourage bad behaviour.

Anticipation of religiously motivated rewards and punishments is a particularly shaky basis for moral choice. What if your faith wavers? Does that mean 'right' and 'wrong' lose their clarity for you? We shouldn't need carrots to encourage us to do the right thing, nor sticks to discourage us from doing the wrong thing.

We should need neither the promise of heaven nor the threat of hell to motivate us.

*This is an edited extract from "Right & Wrong: How to decide for yourself".
Hugh Mackay's new book, published by
Hodder Headline. Reproduced by permission.*

In fact, the whole idea of rewards and punishments - temporal or eternal - is ultimately irrelevant when we are confronted by moral choices. Deciding what's right and wrong is a serious business, not to be confused by considerations of '*what I can get out of this*'.

If you offer your children a reward for 'being good', they may learn how to win a reward, but they may not learn what 'good' is, and they will certainly not learn about the intrinsic value in doing the right thing. **Perhaps we need to re-examine the wisdom that lies behind that old, old maxim: *virtue is its own reward*.**

*Hugh Mackay
Parishioner, St James Church, Sydney*

St Kieran Colenso Book Depot and Library

John Bunyan writes -
Donations to the Via Media Project last year made possible the opening of the Depot on March 27th. (Donations are still welcome!)
The Opening followed a sung Matins and a lunch at S.Peter's, Campbelltown, (celebrating the 45th anniversary of my ordination as deacon).
The Centre can be visited by appointment - (email: jrbpilgrim@bocnet.com.au or phone 46.272.586).
A report on the Project, and a list of more than 200 additions to the library can be posted out. - Send a stamped addressed envelope to 7 Richard Avenue, Campbelltown North, 2560.

Available soon: List of new books for sale; the first list (350 biographies) of books available on loan, and a list of new and 2nd hand books on worship and liturgy for sale.

"The Spirit of Early Christian Thought"

by Robert Louis Wilken,

Professor, History of Christianity, University of Virginia

Published by Yale University Press. 2003

Bearing the subtitle, '*Seeking the Face of God*', this book is a rare delight. Mature scholarship and calm devotion combine in limpid prose over some 320 pages (plus 40 more of notes) to take us into the thought world of Christian antiquity. Rather than attempting to be a compendium of developing doctrine, it ably demonstrates ways in which the Church's thinkers sought to deepen understanding of Christ and the Gospel in encounter with Greek and Roman thought especially as expressed by intelligent critics.

We Anglicans, like some other Christians, can too easily bypass the first few centuries of the Christian era, forgetting *inter alia* that it was then that the Canon of Scripture came to be discerned and the Creeds were hammered out. Some even seem to think that the Holy Spirit was quiescent from the sub-apostolic period until the glories of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

Wilken, in a non-controversial way, invites us to listen to Irenaeus, Origen, Basil, Gregory of Nyssa, Augustine, Maximus the Confessor, and other notables. There may be lessons for us all here. Lest anyone be tempted to think otherwise, it is made abundantly clear that Christian thinking was profoundly biblical. In the introduction Wilken writes, '*But what has impressed me most is the omnipresence of the Bible in early Christian writings*'. Some longer quotations may help give the feel of this attractive and comprehensive work.

"*The Christian Religion* is inescapably ritualistic (one is received into the church by a solemn washing with water), uncompromisingly moral ('be ye perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect', said Jesus), and unapologetically intellectual (be ready to give a 'reason for the hope that is in you', in the words of 1 Peter). Like all the major religions of the world, Christianity is more than a set of devotional practices and a moral code: it is also a way of thinking about God, about human beings, about the world and history. For Christians, thinking is part of believing. *Augustine* wrote, 'No one believes anything unless one first thought it believable. . . Everything that is believed is believed after being preceded by thought. . . Not everyone who thinks believes, since many think in order not to believe; but everyone who believes thinks, thinks in believing and believes in thinking'. From the beginning the church has nurtured a lively intellectual life."

"The intellectual tradition that began in the early church was enriched by the philosophical breadth

and exactitude of medieval thought. Each period in Christian history makes its own unique contribution to Christian life. The church fathers, however, set in place a foundation that has proven to be irreplaceable. Their writings are more than a stage in the development of Christian thought or an interesting chapter in the history of the interpretation of the Bible. Like an inexhaustible spring, faithful and true, they irrigate the Christian imagination with the life-giving water flowing from the biblical and spiritual sources of the faith. They are still our teachers today."

Robert Wheeler

Rector, St Peter's Church, Cremorne

Marcus L. Loane: a biography

by J. R. Reid,

Acorn Press, Melb: 2004; 154 pages, rrp \$34.95.

This book awakened memories so vivid I kept pausing to fill out each brief comment in my mind. And that became my enduring problem as a reader; there was an urgency for more information and more commentary. Yet the book impelled rapid attention to the end; a couple of hours uninterrupted reading and it was over – each chapter far too brief, each page compressed, almost diary-like. I often knew the next part of the story but was anxious to see it unfold.

And everywhere I made new discoveries and sometimes had beliefs and theories overturned. *This biography is an essential part of the challenge to unravel the history of the diocese of Sydney from the 1950s to the present. But it is only one part of a much more complex whole.* We need to set it beside Broughton Knox's

biography (hopefully soon to be published) and Janet West's insights into *Bishop Hilliard*. Beyond these, reminiscences about *Archdeacon Denman, Bishop Pilcher, Jim Wylde, Jack Dain, John Denton, Charlotte Rivers, the Delbridge family, Stuart Barton Babbage, Donald Robinson, Mary Andrews, and John Reid himself*, to name just a few, will all be critical to understanding both the diocese and this fascinating man who brought so many of us to conversion.

The biography is about *the first Australian Archbishop of Sydney, Marcus Lawrence Loane, 1966 to 1982*. He was above all, a man of the Reformation and a man of the Bible. Anyone who knew him will recall his passionate preaching that linked text to Protestant theology. He continues to have the capacity to drive home an appeal to the conscience and to awaken commitment to Christ.

The book addresses Loane's attention to detail, his careful construction of addressees and sermons, his specific concern for the precision of Reformed

BOOKS TO READ

Reviews

by Robert Wheeler
and Bill Lawton

doctrine and his memory of people and events. Those of us who trained at Moore College during his principalship and then later as diocesan clergy recall his prodigious memory for the precious details of our lives and his generosity to our children.

I remember him as a man who awakened in me a love for Christ and his teaching and who gave me, and others like me, opportunities to develop my own theological directions. Too young to be ordained, he encouraged me to spend a fourth year at Moore College, where I read Barth's Dogmatics and Tillich's lesser works. He knew this and never criticised my judgement. This was characteristic of man whose strong opinions could still embrace others.

And here is a quality so clear in John Reid's book. Marcus Loane was always broader in his sympathies than the media sometimes depicted him. This was so clear when he became Primate and embraced this multi-faced denomination across Australia. John Reid makes clear how frequently Loane spoke about his Protestant convictions yet worked amicably and supportively with those who differed from his theology. ***He was a great evangelical and a great Primate.***

Marcus Loane was kind, encouraging, discerning – brittle, elusive, abrupt. You knew when you had transgressed but you also knew when you were accepted, though in neither case had many words passed between you. Here, perhaps, was the centre of his weakness. He breathed the language and style of another generation. His lectures on St Paul were like a continuation of the 19th century divine, Dean Farrar, but the power to convict and convert were there; you sat spellbound through a lecture that fitted precisely into 50 minutes. Each cadence shaped the next step of St Paul's journey. You felt you were a companion of Paul, and captivated by a greater presence. But afterwards there was no discussion and no more application than the moment of your own great awakening. The lecture, like the preaching was self-contained - brittle, elusive and abrupt.

As I read this biography, I kept waiting for John Reid to speak about David Brainerd. Lectures were sprinkled with reference to Brainerd's devotional life, but I had to wait till p.139 for the briefest of references. Brainerd was a way of looking at evangelicalism at its revivalist edge. College conventions and the wider meetings at Katoomba drew on the same illustrations, the same piety, the same speakers and the same intensity of devotional life. Loane was Principal of Moore College at the time the East African Revival Movement hit the Sydney University campus and many of the parishes. Evening prayer meetings at Moore College could occasionally be heard in full voice across the 'triangle'.

This is an aspect of Loane's influence that I longed to read more about in the book, because it is in such contrast to the years that followed. The prayer meeting may sometimes have been neurotic, but the

intensity of devotion could not be denied. And with it was a commitment to evangelism. Reid shows this in his exploration of the Graham crusades. I recalled each moment of this story since I had stood beside Loane in the tally room at Randwick racecourse on the first evening of the 1959 Crusade. He was swept away by the avalanche of people giving their lives to Christ.

All this is a key to Loane's life ministry. And it highlights his single-mindedness to conversion and sanctification teaching at the expense of an equally committed urgency for social change. ***Loane worked to keep alive the evangelical succession from the first colonial chaplains to Bishop Barker to Archbishop Mowll.*** The same rhetoric has been used by others since, but Loane's successors have been less whole-hearted. At the same time, the diocese has continued to emphasise personal faith with insufficient attention to social change. The diocese continues to be locked into 'Gospel preaching' as distinct from 'Gospel living'.

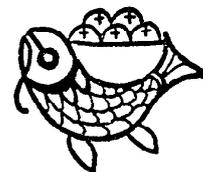
Reid's text needed to be more whole and more complex here. Loane saw the invasion of a perverse doctrine of the church and the resultant loss of Christian presence in society. It is hard to understand why Loane didn't challenge it more openly and more rigorously. ***Moore College remains a centre for major theological study and students continue to emerge with varied biblical and pastoral outlooks – but where is that charismatic leadership in college or diocese that touches the frame of ordinary Australians and allows 'reconciliation' to be the mark of biblical Christianity.*** The emphasis on 'heavenly gathering' leaves no place for the daily struggle around gender, sexuality, ethnicity and alternate spirituality that makes us search for our acceptance in a world where judgement is all too obvious.

John Reid is to be commended both for writing this all too brief biography and also for allowing us to glimpse his own heart for change and fresh awareness of a diocese that needs to be re-born for wholeness in itself and the society beyond.

The Rev'd Dr. Bill Lawton
National Chaplain, Mission Australia

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The Church in the Local Community

The Mosman/Neutral Bay Interchurch Council (referred to below as ICC) is one of the oldest local ecumenical groups in New South Wales.

The participating parishes at the present time number 10 - (2 Uniting Church, 3 Roman Catholic, 3 Anglican, 1 Presbyterian, 1 independent Pentecostal), can elect three lay delegates to the Council. One clergy representative from each parish is an ex officio member.

The desire to get to know people from other churches and to experience different forms of worship has laid the foundations for a strong local 'ecumenism', and a well established programme of activities demonstrates the co-operative relationship that exists between member churches. This relationship was strengthened in 1996 when member churches signed a covenant agreeing to pray for each other regularly.

"Covenanting" has been described by Paul Crow¹ as "a concept of visible church unity that seeks to be responsive to the diversity of traditions within the unity Christ gives to and wills for the church". The formation of the National Council of Churches in 1994 was an act of covenanting, giving expression to the desire to acknowledge the unity that existed between the churches at that time.

Then in 1996 some churches began to engage in the covenanting process as an act of commitment to one another. The covenant signed by member churches of the ICC was a reaffirmation of this commitment and a recognition that they had taken a significant step in their journey towards unity. A visible sign of the churches' commitment to each other was the purchase of a candle to which is attached the ICC logo, beautifully drawn by local artist Carlos Barrios. It resides for a month in each church and appears at all official ICC functions.

Traditionally each year the ICC holds an ecumenical service to mark the *Week of Prayer for Christian Unity*. Also at the beginning of the year hosts a very popular Dinner. Tickets are eagerly sought for this function which, for the past three years, has been held at the Mosman Bowling Club. These are just two occasions where member churches are able to pray and to eat together. In the past the opportunity to learn together was provided by combined Lenten study groups. In 2000 the Council introduced an additional opportunity for members to eat and pray together and to get to know each other better:

'*Visiting Sunday*' is an occasion when each congregation supplies 2 delegates to attend the morning worship of another church. During the Service these delegates are welcomed by name by the presiding clergy. A barbecue is held at midday at one of the churches to which all worshippers are invited. **A shrub is presented to the host church to thank that church for its hospitality and to**

remind members of the unity that exists between them and of the opportunities for growth in that unity.

Recently Mosman Council decided to reintroduce its annual *Civic Service* and invited the Interchurch Council to work with it in developing the framework for the service. Members of the ICC were pleased and thankful that its existence and work in the community had been acknowledged and recognised by Mosman Council.

There is a concern among member churches for social justice issues, especially issues relating to refugees. For the past 2 years *Refugee Sunday* has been marked by an ecumenical service held in the late afternoon at one of the churches. A small group was set up to look at issues of concern in depth. This is in abeyance at present time as it was felt that a more positive outcome could be achieved by the ICC members co-operating closely with an existing group which has been formed at one of the member churches.

Member churches acknowledge the need for reconciliation between each other and our indigenous brothers and sisters with special prayers being said at their services during the *Week of Prayer for Reconciliation*.

The churches of the Mosman/Neutral Bay Interchurch Council have begun the long journey towards unity. We pray that the time will come when we will all be one in Christ our Saviour.

1. Paul A. Crow: *Covenanting*. *Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement*. Ed. Nicholas Loffky et al. 1991, WCC, Geneva
Carolyn Lawes,
Parishioner, St Peter's Church, Cremorne

An Ecumenical Home Discussion Group *"Meeting Jesus AGAIN for the First Time"*

The historical Jesus & the Heart of Contemporary Faith, by Marcus Borg.

Since it was published a decade ago, thousands have found this book a way to reconnect with God; go deeper and grow.

Following the enthusiastic response to the Lent-Easter Group, a second Group will meet at our home on six Friday evenings, beginning 3rd & 10th September 2004; 7.45 for 8 pm start till 9.30pm. To avoid the school holiday period the Group will then probably meet on, **October 15th & 29th and November 5th & 12th.**

Cost for book: \$25 (rrp \$26.95) plus \$2 postage/packing. It will be important to read the chapters before the discussion.

For good discussion, numbers are limited, so enrol ASAP.

To enrol and order a copy of the book. **Contact:**

Clive H Norton, 7 Dulwich Road, Chatswood West (12 min from trains/buses); Phone 9411 8606; Fax 9410 2069; Email: chnorton@bigpond.com

*O God, bless my homestead,
Bless thou all therein.
O God bless my kindred,
Bless thou my substance.
O God bless my words,
Bless thou my converse.*

A Celtic Prayer

THE ANGLICAN CHURCH

Some Comments on its Structure

The Anglican Church of Australia is a member of the worldwide Anglican Communion. There is no central administration of the Anglican Church. There is no Pope, President or Chief Executive. Instead it is unified by tradition, belief and agreement. The titular head is the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Most Reverend Dr Rowan Williams. The Archbishop is by tradition the most senior bishop of the Anglican Communion. The Anglican Church in Scotland, the USA and in some other places is called the *Episcopal Church*. Some churches use the word 'Anglican' or 'Episcopal' in their name, but may not be part of the '*Anglican Communion*'.

The Anglican Church was originally spread around the world through British colonization. Hence the name '*Church of England*' was used in many places and especially here in Australia. As British Colonies became independent from England, so did their churches. After the end of the colonial era, the **Anglican Church** continued to spread via *missionary work*. There was never a post-colonial attempt to regenerate a central administration with actual authority over the churches outside England. In the early Colonial era, **the overseas churches were held to be under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of London**, but when they received their own bishops they could be independent.

The Anglican Church of Australia belongs in the family of the worldwide Anglican Communion. Formerly known as 'The Church of England in Australia', it gained autonomy in 1962 and its name changed to '*The Anglican Church of Australia*' in 1981. Archbishop Peter Carnley is currently the Primate (head) of the Anglican Church of Australia. Again, this is only a titular position. The present Primate is also the Archbishop of Perth.

Nationally the Anglican Church is governed through its own Constitution. It meets every three years at General Synod - its 'parliament' - to pass legislation and discuss matters of common concern. Its Standing Committee acts in the interim. The National Anglican Church has its own legal court of appeal, the *Appellate Tribunal*, consisting of church leaders and senior legal identities.

Within Australia, there are five provinces - NSW, Victoria, SA, WA and Queensland, each with an archbishop, known as the Metropolitan, as head. Within those five provinces are 23 dioceses, headed by a bishop known as a Diocesan. There is also a separate Diocese of Tasmania. The larger dioceses are divided into regions, each with an assistant bishop(s), archdeacons and rural or area deans. **Although there is a national constitution, each Diocese is independent and cannot be forced to enact any legislation that it does not wish to enact.** The Bishop of each Diocese is independent.

The ministry of the Anglican Church centres on the historic and indivisible 'three fold order' of deacon, priest and bishop. The laity (non-ordained worshipping Anglicans) is increasingly involved in the life and decision-making of the church. The 'distinctive diaconate' is gaining currency for those deacons whose vocation is to servanthood (pastoral) rather than priesthood (liturgical).

The Diocese of Sydney, even though it has an Archbishop (the Most Reverend Dr Peter Jensen) as its Bishop, is not called an Archdiocese. There are five 'Regions' in a geographic area, reaching from Broken Bay in the north to just north of Batemans Bay in the south; to Lithgow in the west and Norfolk Island in the east. Each of these Regions has an Assistant Bishop to assist its operation as well as an Archdeacon, (an administrative position). The Bishop of North Sydney, who is our Regional Bishop, here in Epping, is the Right Reverend Dr Glenn Davies. **The Diocese of Sydney is extremely conservative and Evangelical in outlook.** The Anglican Church League is the political party that has gained complete control of the operation of the Diocese, through its control of appointments and elections in the Synod.

The parishes are governed by the rules, or canons, of the Diocese of Sydney. The Diocese owns the property. The Archbishop licenses the clergy. The Rector of the parish is appointed by the Archbishop on the advice of the Presentation Board, made up of five representatives from the Parish, 4 appointed by Synod and the Chair of the Board (either the Bishop or Archdeacon of the Region. A Rector has tenure. If a parish cannot pay Parish Cost Recovery Charges (Diocesan tax) it loses its right to be a parish and its chance to choose its next Rector.

Each year the Parish is required to hold an **Annual Vestry Meeting** (AGM) at which the business of the Parish is discussed with the members of the Parish. It is also the time when the office holders of the Parish are elected. The Churchwardens are responsible for the finances and the upkeep of the property. The Parish Council is elected by the meeting along with the Rector's appointments and meets once a month.

An ordinary Vestry Meeting can be called at any time to discuss any special business of importance to the Parish.

John Cornish

Rector, Parish of Epping

(An extract from an address given on 17th February 2004 at a Combined Parish Council Meeting of the Anglican Parish of Saint Alban's and Saint Aidan's; Our Lady Help of Christians Catholic Parish and Chester Street Uniting Church - all of Epping.)

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Rediscovering Evelyn Underhill

Evelyn Underhill, (d.1941) - *Spiritual Writer*
(An Australian Lectionary - June 15)

A daughter of a distinguished barrister, she was educated at King's College, London, of which she was later made fellow. She was reared an Anglican, and her spiritual life began in 1907 while visiting a Franciscan convent. *Mysticism*, her first book appeared in 1911, followed by "*The Mystic Way*" (1913). She experienced Christianity personally and made a commitment to the Church of England. From 1911 her life was religious work; personal cases, social work, addresses, retreats and books. Two volumes (*The Spiritual Way* and *The Path of the Eternal Wisdom*) she published under the pseudonym "John Cordelier. She produced critical editions and translations of a number of mystics and contributions to periodicals. *Practical Mysticism* (1915) and *The Essentials of Mysticism* (1920) were guidebooks. Her great work was *Worship* (1937; Fontana Library 1962) which includes the Orthodox Churches and their liturgy. This outstanding book is one that should be read and studied, particularly in the liturgical climate of the Anglican Church today.

Evelyn Underhill's approach to and understanding of mysticism was not "airy-fairy". It was grounded in a deep reading of the scriptures and a searching understanding of the Divine as seen in the Christ and revealed through the Holy Spirit.

In her preface to *The Mystic Way* - subtitled - A Psychological Study in Christian Origins - Underhill states "It is the object of this book to trace out that type of life, that peculiar quality of consciousness which is called "mystical" from its earliest appearance within Christianity; to estimate .. the true character and origin of the Christian mystic and

define the qualities which differentiate him from those other mystics who have evolved along other lines of spiritual development, Oriental, Neoplatonic or Mahomedan."

"*The Mystic Way*" includes sections on '*Mysticism and Human Life*'; '*Mysticism and Christology*'; '*St Paul and the Mystic Way*,' concluding with a Section '*The Witness of the Liturgy*'.

Her chapters dealing with St Paul, as mystic, are thought-provoking. In many studies and the perennial exegesis of St Paul's writings, the fact that he was a mystic is glossed over or ignored.

Underhill writes "Paul has himself declared that the process of Christian development is a process whereby the follower of Christ is "*transformed into the same image from glory to glory*".

"St Paul's proceedings after his conversion are no less characteristic of the peculiar mystic type. His first instinct was an instinct of retreat." (See Acts 9:9). Then Paul writes in 2 Corinthians 3:18, "*Because for us there is no veil over the face, we all reflect as in a mirror the splendour of the Lord; thus we are transfigured into his likeness, from splendour to splendour; such is the influence of the Lord who is Spirit*".

Underhill goes on to declare "It is no new thing to claim St Paul as a mystic; or at least as an exponent, amongst other things, of what are called "mystical" ideas. The problem of the part which such ideas play in his message has often been attacked; in various ways, leading, as one might expect, to contradictory conclusions."

A reading of Underhill's two chapters on St Paul helps develop a more rounded understanding of Paul, the great Apostle.

As Anglicans we can be proud and delight in the remembrance of *Evelyn Underhill, Spiritual Writer*.

Moya Holle

ANGLICANS TOGETHER DINNER

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Member of General Synod and General Synod Standing Committee

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**Dr Muriel Porter OAM*, a Sydney-born Anglican, has for the past 22 years lived in Melbourne, where she is heavily involved in the national and diocesan life of the Anglican Church. She is a member of Melbourne Synod, Melbourne Diocesan Council, General Synod and General Synod Standing Committee, and also serves on the national Doctrine Commission. In particular, she has been a leader in the debate over the ordination of women since the mid 1980s, and serves on the General Synod committee bringing legislation for women bishops to General Synod in October.

A journalist, author, and academic, Muriel writes regularly on religion for *The Age*.

Muriel is married to an Anglican priest, the Revd Dr Brian Porter, senior chaplain at Melbourne Grammar School; they have two adult children.

THE INAUGURAL CABLE LECTURE

will be held on

**Friday 10 September at 6.30 pm
in St James' Church, King Street, Sydney**

The Parish Church of St James' has established an **Annual Lecture** "to commemorate the life and work of the late Dr Kenneth Cable AM, distinguished historian and Anglican scholar".*

Emeritus Professor Brian Fletcher, former Bicentennial Professor of Australian History, University of Sydney, will speak on:

"**Australian Anglicanism and Australian History: the need for a synthesis**"

Historians of Australia have, for the most part, ignored the role of Anglicanism when writing the history of the nation. This is at once a disservice to the Anglican Church and to the understanding of Australian history. The lecture seeks to show how the two can be related and to bring out the importance for church and nation of establishing these links.

The lecture is free and all are welcome.

For further details go to the St James' website:
www.stjameschurchsydney.org.au

* **Kenneth John Cable, AM: 1929 - 2003**

Kenneth John Cable, AM, university lecturer, consultant historian and prominent Anglican layman, died 5 September 2003 aged 74. He is survived by his widow Leonie, two daughters and four grandchildren, but he lives in the memory of countless students and colleagues worldwide.

Ken's early career was studded with prizes. Dux of Sydney Boys' High at 16 and top of the state in History at the 1945 Leaving Certificate, he took First Class Honours and the University of Sydney Medal in History in 1950. He was awarded the Giblin Fraser travelling scholarship and studied at King's College, Cambridge (1952-6). He returned to lecture at the fledgling UNSW and then from 1958 at Sydney University, where he became senior

lecturer in 1964, associate professor in 1968 and head of the department of History in 1987. He retired in 1989.

His most significant body of published work appears in the *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, where he was a member of the editorial board and NSW section editor. His articles (75 in all), spread over all the 16 published volumes of that work and more will appear posthumously, including Anglican bishops, clergy and lay persons, cricketers and professors and administrators of the University of Sydney. Each is a little gem: succinct, fastidiously accurate, witty at times and knowledgeable. In March 2003 he was awarded the ADB medal for long and distinguished service.

His projected histories of Sydney University and the Anglican Church in Australia never appeared, though in 1987 (with Stephen Judd) he published *Sydney Anglicans*.

His eye for detail is especially evident in his card index of over 11,000 Anglican clergy who served in Australia since 1788, undertaken first in collaboration with the Rev'd Noel Pollard, then with Leonie, his wife.

A committed Anglican and a high churchman, Ken played a very straight bat (and he loved his cricket) in the party squabbles which beset his church. He periodically published updated editions of his history of his parish church, St James' King Street. At various times he held a seat on Sydney Synod. For years he taught Australian church history at Moore College.

Ken was blessed with a capacious memory, a ready turn of phrase and a gift for public speaking. His well of common sense and his ability to adopt a dispassionate view, made him a trusted advisor in many fields, academic, ecclesiastical even personal. His advice was never sought in vain.

Extract from an obituary by **Dr Ruth Frappell**, Past President, Royal Australian Historical Society, published in 'The Anglican Historical Society' - Diocese of Sydney - Journal, December 2003

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