

'ORA ET LABORA'

Greetings in Christ



A General Synod Task Force has recently released its report on the 'Viability and Structures of the Anglican Church in Australia'. It is a large and comprehensive document that reviews diocesan viability and how the Church might be better structured for the future.

It is a reminder of the challenging times we face, with a Nineteenth Century model of Church operating in the Twenty-first century.

Of course, it is not the first such review, but it is hoped that the Church might take the report seriously and find the capacity to institute some changes.

Its reception at the Sydney Diocesan Synod (as the last item on the agenda on the last day) was somewhat underwhelming. Nevertheless, no amount of denial is going to see the problems go away. Part of the response did acknowledge that there are more problems than just viability and structures, and that there are some other underlying issues for the Church apart from its administration. We will wait to see what happens.

THE PURSUIT OF KNOWLEDGE, TRUTH AND SALVATION

One of the challenges for the Mission of the Twenty-first century Church is its approach to knowledge, truth and salvation. The world constantly changes and one of the strengths of the Christian

faith to date has been its ability to adapt to new circumstances. In this respect it has demonstrated its capacity to transcend ethnicity, culture and class to bring the Gospel of Jesus Christ into a diverse world. Yet, it is now struggling to achieve this in those places permeated by the latter effects of the enlightenment and its child, post-modernity. How might we respond?

God provides for our needs in a variety of ways, including through the Scriptures as well as by ways of the reflections and thoughts that the people of God have had down through the centuries. This is often called the 'tradition of the Church'. From the early Church to today, Godly people have thought about their faith and shared it with the wider community. In turn, the community of faith has adopted these ideas as part of its corporate memory through creeds, doctrines and theologies.

Admittedly, errors have been made and the Church has sometimes taken paths that led it away from its spiritual calling to pursue more worldly concerns. This is a constant risk in any human institution; however, keeping focused on what

God has revealed to us serves to restrain error and keep us on the path to salvation. For this reason the Church tends to be slow to change.

Writing at the beginning of the twentieth century, the philosopher *George Santayana* claimed: *'those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it'* (Life of Reason, Vol 1). This is a reminder of the importance of knowing who we are and where we have come from. The Scriptures, the traditions of the Church, its histories and narratives, and its theology contribute to corporate and individual understanding. While, on the one hand, we need to be disciplined spiritually, physically and emotionally, yet we also need to be disciplined mentally if we are to develop a greater understanding of the Christian faith and its application to the world.

Now, knowledge is a fine thing in itself, but it has no transforming power if it is not used. A practical understanding of our faith helps to understand why we do what we do and keeps us focussed on our mission. The business of *'making the world a better place'* is therefore

not only about bringing freedom, justice and equity into people's lives, but is also about sharing the good news of our faith with others so that they too may come to know the hope, joy and salvation of the Gospel. This is the work of evangelism.

Jesus often talks about *'the kingdom of God'*. This phrase refers to the rule of God in our lives; in other words, it is about God being the source and guide of what we think and do. God's rule over our lives binds us together as a community of faith and reveals to us God's call and purpose. Moreover, Jesus taught that we are not called to lord it over one another but rather to serve others, which is part of the ministry of hospitality. **The kingdom of God is therefore not like the kingdoms of this world but rather is a disciplined life worked out through service to God and others.**

The Church is called to be a reflection of the kingdom of God. Through participation in the life of the community of faith we are encouraged and empowered by God's Spirit to enter into the business of doing God's work and being transformed into the likeness of Christ. Of course, we know it is not easy and things don't always go according to plan, but by working together and being willing to admit our mistakes, learn from them and know forgiveness, we can grow and change. **The Church has therefore been called to be a sign of God's presence to the world; indeed to be a sign of God's grace. For 'where goes grace, there goes the kingdom' – indeed, without the grace of God we tend to merely peddle our own interests. It therefore begins with us, for when we change then the world changes also.**

HONEST TO GOD?

Modern thinking has moved more and more to a rationalist explanation of all things. However when coupled with 'deconstructionism' (a philosophical critique that questions

assumptions about certainty, identity and truth), it has challenged the nature of meaning and introduced *the idea of relative truth* (arguing that truth is culturally dependent and therefore changes between societies and individuals), and has also suggested the possibility of there being no truth at all.

Unsurprisingly, the church has been caught up in this secular shift. Indeed, it has been shaped by it; willingly becoming more rationalist on the one hand, or by reacting to secularisation on the other hand by becoming either more dogmatic or more mystical. Whatever the effect, the church has been confronted by this secular wind of change and struggled to make any headway against it.

Intellectually, the Church's Mission for the past century has been played out predominately in a defensive phase against secularism. Indeed, it has not always shown intellectual integrity in this work, especially through its reactions to the development of scientific knowledge. To be fair, there have been a number of scholarly explanations written about the Christian faith, yet despite these, the number of practicing Christians in the 'enlightened' first-world has continued to decline.

It would seem that for many people in the western, post-modern context not only is God dead but so also are the concepts of meaning and truth. Part of the malaise of our world arises from the suspicion of truth and the rise of anomie and apathy – after all, if everything is relative then does anything actually matter anymore – or whatever?

Certainly, life is complex and people cannot hope to understand every aspect of the operation of the world around them. Yet, complexity does not negate the need for truth nor does the existence of competing perspectives on the nature of the world and the place of humanity within it. If truth is

understood as the best, critically derived explanation that we have about a phenomenon, then it stands – it is not relative (and not the result of a popularity poll), but it may be provisional.

The inquiring mind seeks a better understanding of the world and the possibility of greater truth. To refuse to take the journey toward truth is to choose to remain in ignorance which leads to bigotry and intellectual laziness. Yet, the truth seeker also needs to undertake the work of discernment and may ultimately have to take a stand for truth. Such a person may be perceived as a threat to the lazy god of relativism, and it may cause him or her to become a social pariah in the eyes of others. **Such was the journey of Jesus – 'the way, the truth and the life'.**

Without some enduring concept of truth it is difficult to justify the concept of morality. The amoral, the sociopaths and the wicked may well celebrate this; however society cannot function without moral truth. Activities such as murder, theft, incest, paedophilia, violence and dishonesty (to name a few), can only be properly condemned because of truth rather than some mutual social contract that applies only to those who choose to participate in it. Moreover, we cannot hope to correct the mistakes of society unless we accept that some things are *'right'* and others *'wrong'*.

The real issue at stake is probably the process of determining truth. What is acceptable practice and what is not in the establishment of truth? For the 'hard' sciences it seems to be quite straightforward because of the use of the scientific method. It is less precise with the humanities (and theology) yet still necessary. We tend, then, to entertain probabilities rather than certainties – a situation that frightens the wits of religious fundamentalists!

An example is the law, which is vital for the operation of a modern secular liberal democracy. Laws

provide the ‘social glue’ that binds the broad community together by placing limitations on people’s behaviour and giving expression to the ideals and beliefs that are current in a community. In so doing, law has a capacity to rise a little above many of the social divisions based on class, politics, religion and race. It may also reinforce the Christian concept of freedom; which, rather than being license to do as one desires, is an acknowledgement of the liberty to seek the truth, to choose the pursuit of goodness, and to participate in the welfare of all people through loving service and self-sacrifice. Nevertheless, the law is limited when it comes to understanding meaning and purpose.

The determination of truth is a work done in community where ideas are developed, tested and reworked. It is also recognised that truth can be understood in relational terms when applied to the activities of humanity. When Pontius Pilate asked, ‘*What is truth?*’ Jesus did not respond with a philosophical argument but rather with himself, in all innocence (John 18:38) - a bold act of defiance in the face of injustice.

Religious truth is therefore more than just a set of ideas and philosophies but also touches on who we are in relationship with God and each other. Theology includes both a systematic collection of ideas about God and humanity as well as

the experiences that link us with those ideas.

Theology is therefore about truth (as held by the community of faith) on the one hand, and integrity to that truth on the other when lived out through a commitment to both. Moreover, theology is a dynamic thing in an ever-changing world and so remains always a work in progress. It needs to be open to criticism but also have the capacity to engage with other disciplines in the marketplace if ideas.

*The Reverend Andrew Sempell
President, Anglicans Together*

PRAY THIS ADVENT ON YOUR I-PHONE

Members of Anglican Communion Churches worldwide are being invited to celebrate ADVENT through prayer, meditation and by contributing to a global Advent calendar on *Instagram*.

ADVENT — November 30 to December 24 — is the season when Christians observe a time of expectant waiting and preparation for the celebration of the birth of Jesus at Christmas.



The Anglican Communion Office and the Society of Saint John the Evangelist (SSJE) are teaming up to offer Anglicans and Episcopalians around the world a daily word, meditation and a beautiful image sent to their email inboxes.

PLAYING AROUND WITH TIME

Cleverly the Brothers use technology that allows their daily

Advent email to arrive in people’s inboxes at 5am wherever in the world the recipient is.

“5am is about the time we get up to pray,” said SSJE’s Brother Jim Woodrum.

“Of course you can look at your email after 5am, but we want to make sure it’s there when you wake up.”

Though people are used to the idea of monks involved in prayer and meditation, they might be surprised to know that monks have camera phones too.

“We are hoping that people will join us in praying with their phone this Advent,” said Br Jim. “After reading the meditation, we’d love for people to snap a picture that reflects the theme or their response to it and post it to Instagram.”

#Adventword

Participants are invited to take a photo with their phone or tablet to share their interpretation of the word for that day – these include #Abide, #Thrive, #Become, #Imagine – and post the picture to Instagram adding the day’s tag plus #Adventword.

“People need help with their daily

spiritual practice,” said Brother Geoffrey Tristram, SSJE, Superior. “During Advent, we anticipate the coming of Christ, an event that awakens our deepest desires and longings. This Advent, we are inviting you to join us in looking clearly and honestly at our lives and taking action.”

Director for Communications at the Anglican Communion Office, **Jan Butter**, said,

“It’s all too easy for Christians to be consumers in today’s world—especially during the Advent season. Here we have a chance to not only receive during Advent, but also take part in a global action; to give back to other Anglicans and Episcopalians worldwide by sharing our photos with each other.

“This is also a chance for people who might never have connected with an Anglican religious community before to benefit from the deep thought, meditation and prayer that emanates from such communities all around the world.”

Visit <http://communities.anglicancommunion.org/> for a list of other Anglican Communion religious communities.

Another Tragedy for the Melanesian Brotherhood

A Novice Melanesian Brotherhood *Jackson Lodo* was killed in an unprovoked street attack in Honiara, Solomon Islands on the evening of 30 October, while walking back to Tabalia, where the Community is based. His companion, a third year Novice, was also violently assaulted but managed to escape.

The funeral for Jackson was held on 1st November. The Head Brother *Matthias Tovotasi*, and the Primate of the Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand & Polynesia, *Archbishop Philip Richardson* have asked people to pray for the victims, the religious community and the victims' families.

The Melanesian Brotherhood is a unique Anglican Religious Community – the largest in the world, whose over 400 members take vows of poverty, chastity and obedience for three to seven years, and then return to their villages. It is based primarily in the Solomon Islands, but has expanded into other parts of the world, particularly in the Pacific and the Philippines.

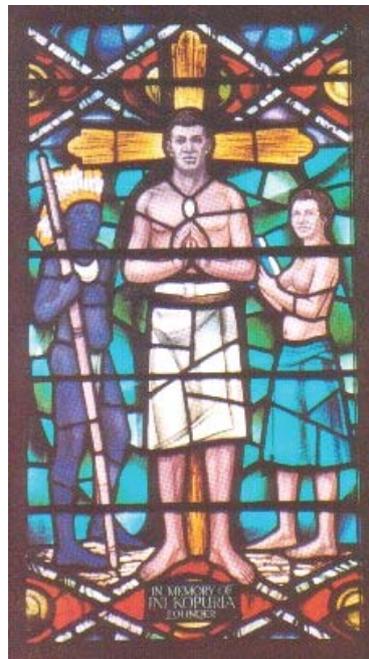
From 1999 to 2003, during the devastating civil conflict throughout the Solomon Islands, which left hundreds dead and thousands homeless, the Brothers played a key role in promoting peace. Seven Brothers were murdered while seeking to bring reconciliation between two warring groups.



The Archbishop of Canterbury, *Justin Welby*, when visiting the Province of Melanesia in August this year, dedicated the newly completed Memorial to the seven Melanesian Brothers who were killed in 2003 while working for reconciliation.

“Inspiring community following Christ”

The *Melanesian Brotherhood* was founded in 1925 by *Ini Kopuria*, a Solomon Islander from Guadalcanal. He received an experience of Christ, which was to change his life. He believed that Christ spoke to him and told him that he was not doing the work that Christ wanted him to do. He realized, with the encouragement of the Bishop, *John Manwaring Steward*, that God was calling him to start a community of native Solomon Island men who would take the Gospel of Christ to all who had not received it.



Pictures: left: Archbishop Justin Welby praying at the Memorial to the murdered Brothers.

Above: Stained glass window, chapel at Tabalia: Ini Kopyria (centre) Non Christian heathen (left); female companion (right)

SOUTH SUDAN ANGLICAN CHURCH PROMOTES NEW PEACE PARADIGM

The *‘Peace Mobilisers’* is an independent peace and reconciliation body in South Sudan meant to **“build bridges across political and social divides and promote healing and reconciling among all South Sudanese.**



The Anglican Church in South Sudan has joined other stakeholders in the region to address the country's continued conflicts by using a team of community *‘Peace Mobilisers’*.

They are a group of about eighty well-trained community and faith-based practitioners from across South Sudan, brought together for a training a training program .

Archbishop Daniel Deng Bul of the Episcopal Church of Sudan and South Sudan, said *“Peace in our country is paramount, but building the unity of our people will be challenging and will need commitment and courage.*

“But we are a big group, a battalion of peace and we can make peace in this county if we make a step together and we listen together.

The Bishop of Wau Diocese of South Sudan, believes that this approach is effective and could be the solution to bringing lasting peace in the region.

He said: *“We believe that this is a very effective approach in bringing peace to South Sudan because the mobilizers will be based in the communities and so they will be listening to their communities’ narratives, which is part of the healing process.”*

Photo Credit: South Sudan Committee for National Healing, Peace and Reconciliation

THE TYRANNY OF THE MAJORITY AND THE ELEPHANT

At the 2014 Anglicans Together dinner, *Archbishop Glenn Davies* chose as the theme of his address “*Transparency, Diversity and Grace – a vision for the Diocese*”.

The room was full of Anglicans from many Sydney parishes who listened with anticipation to the Archbishop’s Address, which was based on Paul’s great description of the Church as the body of Christ in *1 Corinthians 12* in which the various members are interdependent on each other.

After the address the first question was from Associate Professor Michael Horsburgh who used the term “the tyranny of the majority” in questioning, in the light of the Archbishop’s theme, the control exercised by the majority ‘faction’ in the Diocese.

In response, the Archbishop used the technique, beloved of debaters and scholars, of deflecting the question by expressing bewilderment at the term “*tyranny of the majority*”, and then proceeding to discuss whether majorities in Synod votes should be 51% or, at times, something more.

The problem was that this ignored the elephant in the room – the issue was not about majorities in Synod votes, it was really about the Anglican Church League’s ticket which ensures that there is no diversity in the Diocese’s elected offices, no acknowledgement of the gifts of those who do not share in all respects the ACL’s theological position.

If the Archbishop’s views, as expressed in his Address, are to be translated into action, then either there should not be a ticket or, if there is one, it should recognise, following *1 Corinthians 12*, that there are diverse gifts of those in the Diocese – and hence some place

should be found for them in its elected offices.

The reality is that, almost certainly, not a single person in the room at the dinner (ironically with the single exception of Michael Horsburgh himself) had been elected, could be elected, or ever would be elected to the 45 Boards, Councils and Committees found on pages 40–58 of the Diocese’s *2012 Year Book*.

The ‘*elephant in the room*’ was that there is, indeed, a tyranny – a disenfranchising in the Diocese of those who do not meet the Anglican Church League’s assessment of a suitable person for election.

In any organisation, where people are disenfranchised there are negative effects. A ghetto mentality arises, people are suspicious, paranoia arises, and differences are emphasised rather than what there is in common.

The Archbishop’s call for unity in diversity, in love and under grace, was indeed one that needs to be heard, and for that reason was well received by those at the dinner. But the call will be mere words unless it is accompanied by action.

That action could include a recognition that there should, indeed must, be a place on the boards, councils and committees of the Diocese for some lay and ordained persons whose theology differs from, what is known as, Sydney Anglicanism. The likelihood of this is – forgive me if I say it, very unlikely.

A Sydney Anglican

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Kenneth Herbert Short (1927-2014)

Bishop Ken Short, died last month after a lifetime of significant contributions to the Church, both in the Diocese of Sydney, and in the wider missionary sphere.

He was born in Kenya to missionary parents Joyce and Cecil Short.

When they returned to Sydney, Ken was educated at Trinity Grammar School, Summer Hill and then Barker College, Hornsby.

Ken Short trained at Moore College and then served as a missionary in Tangayika (now Tanzania) training African students for the ministry. After ten years he returned to Sydney, becoming General Secretary for the Church Missionary Society in NSW. For a time he was Rector of St Michael's Vaucluse.

In 1988, Short was appointed an Officer of the Order of Australia, General Division, and in 1989 he was made a Chaplain of the Order of St John.

The invitation came in 1975 to be Bishop - first in Wollongong and then in Parramatta. Here he used his gifts for teaching, organising, leading and supporting other pastors.

In 1979 Bishop Short became Chaplain-General of the army - first bishop to the armed forces, adding a huge responsibility to an already demanding job..

Ken Short’s final ministry was as Dean of St Andrew’s Cathedral, Sydney in 1989. Here he and his wife Gloria ministered lovingly to a large and varied congregation.

A Thanksgiving Service was held for Bishop Short at Kiama Anglican Church.

DIOCESE OF SYDNEY SYNOD - 2014

The first session of the 50th Sydney Synod met over five days in mid-October. (Link to **Synod Proceedings Book for 2014**, is below).

It was the first time in my experience that the Synod Communion Service was held in the Cathedral, not in the conference hall. Communicants could chose the Common Cup, or to remain in their seats for individual service. It felt inclusive, and was a recognisably Anglican service, assisted by the choir from the School. It was a fine start to the Synod, which was courteous and friendly; excellently chaired by the Archbishop, Glenn Davies.

THE PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

began with an acknowledgement of the original owners of the land, the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation, while also acknowledging that the land belongs to God, as Creator, and that in His goodness He has given it to human custodians to be used for His glory.

The President announced the appointment of the Reverend Peter Robert Lin as Bishop of the Georges River Region commencing in 2015. Peter has spent all of his stipendiary ministry in the parish of Fairfield, with Bossley Park, first as Catechist, then Lay Stipendiary Worker, Assistant Minister and from 2001 as Incumbent. The appointment has been made possible because of a generous guarantee of funding for 3 years from some businessmen. Deep appreciation was expressed to Bishop Tasker and Archdeacon Cox who have been caring, on a voluntary basis, for the Georges River Region over some years.

SOCIAL ISSUES

During his address, the President made prayerful acknowledgement of the plight of Christians in Iraq and Syria, and the courage of their

leaders, such as *Canon Andrew White* in the city of Baghdad. Prayers and financial support, for example through the Archbishop of Sydney's Anglican Aid, are sought. During Synod a number of resolutions were made concerning this and other social issues. Some of these were: *support of a parliamentary report on problem gambling, and encouraging Anglican organisations to divest of investments in companies with identifiable and significant subsidiaries connected with gambling; a plea for removal of children from detention; a greater refugee intakes of Christian and other minorities from Iraq and Syria; regretting government cuts to overseas aid and seeking instead further increases; pleading increases to social housing stock, and affordable housing and commending the progress by Anglicare Sydney with its Reconciliation Action Plan.*

ELECTIONS

Being the first year of the Triennium, it was the time for Synod to elect people for the many positions on Diocesan Boards and Committees. For some years now, we have regularly reported that only Anglican Church League's (ACL) nominees get elected. The ACL strategy is aimed at ensuring only those, who think in accordance with the very particular Sydney view of the world, sit on all Diocesan boards and committees. This year, we advise that two ACL nominees were not elected. We congratulate the *Rev'd Justin Moffatt*, who will be one of the representatives for the South Sydney Region on Standing Committee, and *the Rev'd Matthew Yeo*, who is now on the Department of Evangelism and New Churches Board. This is a welcome change to the ACL's stranglehold – a tiny step maybe towards greater diversity of Sydney Anglicans in positions of influence. The *Rev'd Andrew*

Sempell, St James King St., failed in his bids for Standing Committee and General Synod. We are encouraged by the successes to work harder on seeking support for the *Rev'd Sempell*, and others who bring more diversity in thinking.

SOME HAPPENINGS AT SYNOD.....

As usual, Synod was boring, interesting, fun, depressing and frustrating. At times we smiled when we should have cried.

Being the beginning of a new triennium, there were many new Synod reps. An increase in youthfulness is good, except.... It seemed to some that the influence of the Diocese's theological teachings is producing even greater numbers of 'exclusive-thinking' young people. 'We in Sydney hold all truth, and there is no room for, or goodness in, or even, heaven help us, possible truths in diversity?' For example an element of a motion, encouraging individual and parish support of the **Ecumenical Council** (E.C.), was struck out as it was pointed out to Synod that some of the E.C. member churches are not well known to us; nor would we necessarily approve of such things as a liturgy referred to on their website called "taize". This ignorance (indeed fear?) of the broader church by theologically trained folk is scarily insular, and the younger members coming through are bred into this mould.

ALUMNI ON SCHOOL BOARDS

It is no wonder then, that the majority of Synod see non-Christians as dangerous and having nothing worthwhile to contribute as alumni members on School Boards, nor as people to be trusted to abide by a promise to respect the Christian ethos of their school. Yes – a motion to change the long standing School Board membership arrangements won – so, in future, alumni (holding mostly less than

30% of Board seats) must sign a specifically defined statement of faith - not just promise to support the Christian ethos (this will be phased in by June 2020).

Arguments for the main motion included: the hope of conversion of many school children, but the presence of non-Christian alumni (while supportive of the Christian ethos) is in conflict with that goal; unity is needed on Boards, not the potential of conflict, noting Jesus' saying that *'if you are not with me, you are against me'*; what matters most is the Gospel - high quality of education is important and both can be achieved.

Arguments against included: the valuable contribution to date by alumni, for example business acumen and financial management skills, noting that not all wisdom resides in Christians; the ultimate purpose of schools is to educate (not be a church) – again a matter on which alumni can make a valuable contribution; alumni's small representation goes nowhere near giving them control of the school; no evidence of problems caused by existing alumni has been provided, despite requests.

Those who attended the Anglicans Together Annual Dinner in September heard the Archbishop state his opposition to changing the current arrangements. One of the speakers against the motion at Synod also spoke of the Archbishop's opposition, which he has expressed in letters to school boards who raised concerns with him. Clearly his election is not guaranteeing the Archbishop a smooth ride on any reforms he might wish to make. The Archbishop can refuse, if he wishes, to sign into effect an Ordinance, but he does not have this power in the case of a policy, which the alumni matter is.

MISSION 2020

The President addressed two issues relating to the decline in the Church: the Revised Mission for our Diocese, *MISSION 2020*, and a

paper from General Synod relating to the state of the Australian Anglican Church, entitled *Report of the Viability and Structures Task Force*. (See separate article)

In his address, the President provided some statistics to bring home the urgency of a fresh Mission. These included: *'from 2001 to 2011 the percentage of Anglicans decreased from 21% to 17%'*. The President acknowledged the serious impact on the Church's reputation of the revelations of child sexual abuse by clergy. *"While we cannot undo the past, we can declare our abhorrence that servants of Christ have acted in such un-Christlike ways and we can show compassion to the victims of abuse."* Despite the President, in his Address, commending the Drafting Committee and the final text of **Mission 2020**, the debate on the text was interminably long, and depressingly narrow in thinking, as the words and phrases were agonised over for meanings. 'Very Sydney', I suppose. The final statement is at page 137 of the Synod Book. **It is now for parishes to consider how to implement it in their local setting. A Strategic Research Group has been set up to advise, inter alia, on strategies and possible resources.**

RANDOM MATTERS THAT EMERGED - in 'Answers to Questions' or in 'Resolutions':

- **A revised Policy concerning large property receipts** was deferred until next Synod, providing time for parishes to provide comment. **This is a significant policy affecting any parish with income from rent, or who may be contemplating selling some property one day, and such parishes are encouraged to actively contribute to the consultation;**
- **'Bishopscourt'** has not yet been sold and meanwhile the Archbishop and his wife will be moving in, after minor

renovations, on the understanding they will move out if sold. It remains on the market until October 2017, at which time, if unsold, the issue returns to Synod;

- In 2012, 2013 and 2014 the Dioceses of Armidale, North West Australia, Tasmania and the Northern Territory received **project grants** (maximum \$50,000) from the **Synod fund "Work Outside the Diocese"**. The Archbishop advised that other Dioceses are welcome to apply for such a grant;
- **The Archbishop advised, in relation to a question about women preaching**, that all women clergy who hold a licence from the Archbishop are licensed to preach, but the question of who actually preaches is for Rectors to decide. It was noted that the pastoral responsibilities of women deacons is limited, however, by the complementarian theology of the Diocese.
- A Resolution was passed without debate - **that Synod requests Standing Committee to establish a 'working party' to consider the wisdom of clergy keeping their 'marriage licence' if same sex marriage becomes a reality;**
 - A Resolution - passed without debate - called, in summary, for **a report be made to Synod on whether activities derived from Eastern religious practices and beliefs, including yoga, tai chi, some martial arts, and dragon boating**, are inconsistent with the gospel, and if so, should not be offered by our churches or Diocesan organisations, or allowed to be held on their premises. It was noted that some Christians believe such activities are contrary to the gospel, and lead those involved to inadvertently worship idols and false gods, and access evil spiritual forces;

- A resolution, passed without debate was that: **Synod requests that the Standing Committee establish a committee of lay and clergy representatives to bring recommendations to the 2015 session of Synod on ways of providing pastoral care to people attracted to others of the same sex;**

- **Two Ordinances amended this year related to tightening up further protection of children:**
 - a) clergy who have not completed the NSW Government's Working With Children Check can now be de-licensed by the Archbishop, or refused a license and
 - b) there are significant additions to what constitutes offences

against children (grooming to name just one), and streamlined processes for dealing with complaints against unpaid church workers (as well of course existing processes in respect of clergy).

Lyn Bannerman, Synod Representative, Christ Church St Laurence

<http://www.sds.asn.au/assets/Documents/synod/Synod2014>

QUESTION TIME - SYDNEY SYNOD

In a past life as a High School Principal, I remember a perceived wisdom that one should not ask policy questions of the "The Department", unless one was pretty sure the answer was the one you wanted. Nevertheless, Sydney MOW Committee had been encouraged to try to "engage again with Synod". So I volunteered this month, to take the opportunity and ask a question!

My question was:-

Is there a diocesan policy which-

a) discourages the preaching or teaching by qualified women to adult congregations which include men"? and

b) if so, on which Biblical texts is this policy based?

It seemed like an opportunity to put this matter on more public record. We hear constantly of parishes where women are not allowed to preach to mixed congregations. However our new Archbishop has given Anglicans Together the clear understanding that the matter of female preaching is entirely a decision of the Rector.

The following day of the Synod, the President replied: "I am informed that the answer is as follows:

'Except in the context of the approval of Ordinances from time to time, which permit women to preach, Synod has never adopted a policy concerning preaching or teaching by women.

Women who are ordained receive a license from the Archbishop. Licenses issued by me to women include the following: "...with reference to the pastoral responsibilities pertaining to a Deacon, including preaching sermons, subject to the principles of church order contained within the Holy Scriptures but not including the exercise of authority which the apostle forbids in 1 Timothy 2:12, assisting the presbyter..." (My underlining.)

All women clergy who hold a license from the Archbishop are licensed to preach. Lay women involved in preaching and teaching in Anglican congregations receive a license in accordance with the Deaconesses, Readers and Other Lay Persons Ordinance 1981. However the polity of our Diocese is to authorise rectors to decide who preaches in their church."

Well, there we are....

It's OK if the Rector wants it. Dear old 1Timothy 2:12 appears again, but my reading of the text of this answer, is

that only half that verse now matters. Women can preach, as long as they are not in charge. No women priests!

Well that's two thousand years of progress for you.

Elaine Peterson.
St Luke's, Concord Burwood

DAIRY NOTE FOR 2015

PUBLIC LECTURE

A public lecture is to be sponsored by Sydney MOW on Saturday 21 February 2015

The speaker will be the *Reverend Dr Keith Mascord*, former Lecturer at Moore Theological College, currently working as a Parole Officer, Dept, Corrective Services

His topic will be:

"Breaking the Stained Glass Ceiling: A Risky but Rewarding Renovation".

Keith will suggest some ways through the exegetical and hermeneutical impasse currently preventing movement on the Women's Ministry issue in the Diocese of Sydney.

The venue and time is to be announced.

Mid-December look for information on a Flyer which will be sent to your Parish church, posted on the MOW website, Facebook Page or phone **Lu 9953-6828; Elaine 9747-3276.**

TRAVELING WITH A GRANDSON IN ENGLAND

BY Susan Hooke, Cremorne

Recently in the UK, travelling with our eight year old grandson, we had booked into a Bed and Breakfast at *Denton*, chosen from the internet because of photos of a charming thatched cottage in a lovely garden with a stream 'close to Oxford'.

We found *Denton* to be just 'half a mile' from *Cuddeston* village where we dined the first night at the excellent local pub, 'The Bat'n Ball'.

After dinner there was still sufficient daylight to drive past *Ripon College, Cuddeston* and notice the new chapel. Making enquiries of our hostess as to whether we could visit early the next morning. She said in other circumstances it could be arranged through her very good friend, the wife of the College Principal, *Canon Professor Martyn Percy*. However, he was retiring and they were moving out in the morning.

Down to breakfast and who should walk through the door but the good friend, *Dr Emma Percy*, who very willingly facilitated our visit to the chapel.

Ripon College Cuddeston (RCC), for those who are not familiar with this College, it is today the largest provider of Anglican Ordination in the United Kingdom. *Ripon College Cuddeston* is a merger in 1975 of two famous Colleges – *Cuddesdon College* founded in 1854 by *Bishop Samuel Wilberforce* and *Ripon Hall* founded in 1897

Today many students do live in, some with their families, but many more students and others attend part time courses and seminars.

The *Edward King Chapel* was dedicated in February 2013 by the *Bishop of Oxford*. The building of this prize winning chapel was enabled by the sale

two years ago of the the *Begbroke Priory*. This had been the home of the *Community of St John Baptist*. The last five *Anglican Sisters of the Community* have now moved into accommodation within the *College*.

One of the Sisters kindly took us through the Chapel. From the outside, it appears rather enclosed but walking into the interior, flooded with light, one is overcome with its peaceful spiritual feeling. My words cannot adequately describe the beauty of the interior.

I recommend you go to the website: www.rcc.ac.uk/about-us/edward-king-chapel or Google 'Bishop Edward King Chapel, Oxford', and appreciate the beauty through photographs and detailed description.

"This chapel with its use of light, space, glass, wood and stone captures our hope for the church and the world, and for the shaping of religious and spiritual life."

The Revd Canon Prof Martyn Percy

Canon Professor Martyn Percy has just been appointed *Dean of Christ Church, Oxford*, which was our next visit. Here we saw a college 'chapel' of another dimension with over 500 years of history. I asked our 8 year old which he preferred. His response, 'Granny, it's hard to choose. They are both amazing'.

Dr Emma Percy is Chaplain of *Trinity College, Oxford*, and has recently published 'What Clergy Do: Especially when it looks like nothing' (SPCK 2014). I shall read it with great interest!

Our B&B was *Willow Cottage, Denton*. Highly recommended, but a car is essential.



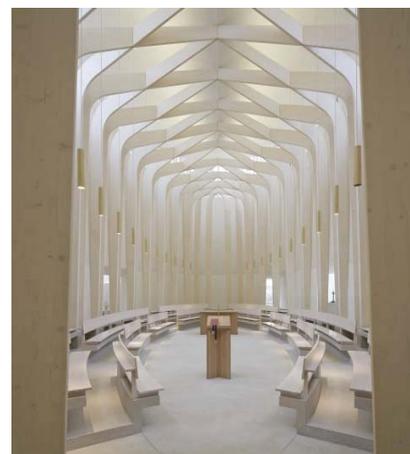
King Edward Chapel Exterior



View of main chapel facing the altar



View of timber lattice structure and lime plastered ceiling



View facing the lectern

Where will We be in Ten Years Time?

Report of the Viability and Structures Task Force of the General Synod

This large Report prepared for General Synod is well worth reading, as it grapples with the huge questions of the viability of dioceses and unity in the Australian Anglican Church.

See the full report at: <http://www.anglican.org.au/general-synods/2014/Documents/>

The questions being asked are: “How can we maintain 23 largely independent but vastly different sized Dioceses (huge variations in geographic spread; and in population densities, declining in regional and rural areas, and ever expanding in coastal metropolitan areas)?”

“What to do about the resulting vast differences between the individual dioceses regarding financial and other resources?”

“What is our response to the community’s amazement as it learnt, as a result of the Royal Commission into Institutional Child Sexual Abuse, that the Anglican Church in Australia does not speak with one voice, or govern with one set of rules, unlike the Church of England in the United Kingdom?”

Disturbingly, the Report indicates we have currently, five Dioceses in deep trouble financially and another three in a very fragile state. Declining attendances in most Dioceses. No ready answers. Growth is clearly difficult. Sydney’s Mission over the past ten years to increase by 10% failed badly with overall numbers continuing to fall.

At the Diocese of Sydney Synod in October 2013, this Report was not given the priority it deserved.

The President, *Archbishop Glenn Davies*, said, in his Address to Synod: “*The Anglican Church of Australia is at a crossroad. For over 30 years it has been slowly declining and the time has come for a revolution if it is to be a strong*

and sustainable church for the future. The Report pulls no punches, with an abundance of statistical data that is chilling reading for those who think the Anglican Church of Australia is in good shape.”

The Archbishop noted that, as the Metropolitan of NSW, he be discussing this Report with the Province of NSW, noting as well his ongoing discussions with the Bishop of Bathurst concerning the major financial crisis there.

However, it was not until the last night of Synod before any brief debate took place. Some speakers, not surprisingly, had a Sydney-centric view of the Church, and a sense of protectiveness of Sydney’s power and resources emerged. Other speakers acknowledged the importance of dioceses as the central coordinating units. **The ongoing Sydney argument was again that the Anglican Church here and worldwide, - is essentially two denominations, two mind sets, defined by theological difference, the doctrine of “penal substitution” being the key plank of difference. It was described graphically as two tectonic plates rubbing together.**

So long as we focus rigidly on differences rather than the many qualities that bind us together, little progress will be made. The Resolution eventually passed by the Synod agreed that work was needed but the focus should be best pursued on a Provincial basis.

Sydney must engage Australia wide. Share successes. Analyse failures honestly, even if it is painful work accepting that the fault is likely to be with us. Stop coming out with the old excuses *that ‘we are doing everything right, we have the message but people are not listening’.*

The Reverend Dr James Collins stood as one of the last speakers and he drew attention, very lovingly, to the plight of parishes he had experienced in rural Tasmania where the few remaining Anglican souls are the light and salt of their dwindling, struggling communities. He pleaded that the arrogance that comes from strength should not affect Sydney’s response to the challenges of our fellow Anglicans elsewhere.

The President thankfully ended the discussion with that intervention – it left Synod on our last night on a loving note but no clear direction to ensuring our future.

This General Synod Report had requested responses by the end of October. Sydney has proposed responses by 31 December 2014. All parishes are welcome and encouraged to make submissions which are to be sent to Robert Wicks, St Andrews House, Sydney.

Lyn Bannerman and Susan Hooke

The golden wheel

The light of early morning is waving us
a lightness of air,
The celestial goddess is a warming,
radiating goodness of the unharmed for
Trains and trainers are lying silently in
tracks.
Sleeping Jacarandas are budding from
word into flower: leaves,
Creeping a void back into velvet
Examinations are season, and we have
feasted at Diwali
Breaking the heavens open, and
watching the
Search of the earth for every sacrament
of heart.

© Noel Jeffs November 2014

REMEMBRANCE DAY – 2014

At Christ Church St Laurance,
Sydney on Remembrance Sunday,
9 November 2014, a Solemn
Evensong and Te Deum was held



in the presence of *His Excellency General The Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (Ret'd)*, Governor of New South Wales, and *Mrs Hurley*. The first reading was read by *His Excellency, the Governor* and the second by *Rev'd Jonathan Cox RAN*, Chaplain HMAS Watson. The Occasional Prayers were led by the *Rev'd Greg Clarke*, Chaplain 6th Aviation Regiment and the Commitment to Peace, at the end of the service, was led by *the Rev'd Mark Wills*, RAAF, Director of Chaplaincy – Air Command.

The Officiant was the Rector, the *Rev'd Dr Daniel Dries*. The sermon was preached by *Fr John Sanderson*, the Senior Assistant Priest, CCSL, and Chaplain, Special Operations Command.

In his sermon, Fr John reminded us that Remembrance Day is a “...day that was intended, by those who had survived the Great War, to be of solemn national mourning, where a community grieved, and re-dedicated themselves to the ways of peace.”



Fr John also said that “...peace and love, and the pathways to them, are what set people free”; and that when “...peace and love liberates us we shine as a light to those around us and so our presence then liberates others.”

The service was followed by a supper in the Hall where there was opportunity to meet with the guests.

Photographs – courtesy **David Adkins**



The Parish of St Mark's South Hurstville, as is its annual custom, held a Service to commemorate Remembrance Day on Sunday 9 November. The Rector, the *Reverend Peter Greenwood* presided at the Service, which commenced, following a reading from Revelation 7:16-17, with a Procession from the rear of the church, singing 'Onward Christian Soldiers'.

The Address was given by *Dr Douglas Golding*, Lay Preacher. Parishioners were joined by more than twenty local Returned Services' men and women. Amongst the guests was the Dean of Sydney, the *Very Reverend Philip Jensen* and his family.

St Mark's Parish has had a long and close association with the local South Hurstville RSL Sub-Branch Club. Traditionally the Rector is the Honorary Chaplain for Returned Services' personnel, presiding at Anzac Services and the traditional Anzac Dawn Service, at which the local Roman Catholic and Uniting Church clergy participate.

The adjoining Parish Hall building, opened in 1960, is a War Memorial - 1939-45. The St Mark's War Memorial cabinet is located in the narthex of the church where the Book of Remembrance is held.

Through the campaigning of a parishioner, *Wilfred Ewens* the cabinet has been restored and refurbished and now all known Service men and women from the local area are remembered there. Another parishioner *Rex Merten*, a Master Jeweller and Craftsman, fashioned in finely wrought nickel silver and bronze, a very striking representation of the traditional Lion - symbol of our Patron, St Mark, - overlaying a plain cross. In addition, Rex commissioned three bronze insignia representing the divisions of the Australian Armed Forces.

Sadly, RSL numbers participating have lessened over the years – natural attrition. However, St Mark's Parish Family always extends a warm welcome, renewing friendships made over many years.

Information provided by Parishioner *Wesley Fairhall*,

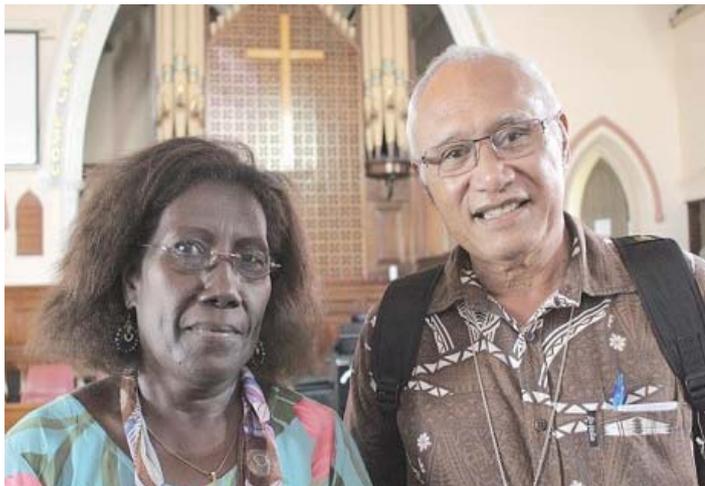
ANGLICAN LEADERS SPEAK OUT IN BRISBANE DURING G20

Leading figures from the Anglican Communion spoke out on a range of economic and development issues before and during the weekend G20 meeting in Brisbane, Australia.

The G20 is a forum for the governments and central bank governors from 20 major economies that are said to account for around 85% of the gross world product, 80% of world trade and two-thirds of the world population

On the sidelines of the meeting were people from countries not all represented in the G20, reminding world leaders that global growth should not come at the expense of the world's poorest people.

The Anglican Alliance Regional facilitator for the Pacific was in Brisbane during the event. *Tagolyn Kabekabe* works with communities



in the Solomon Islands who are experiencing the erosion of their homelands, poisoning of their food gardens by salt water and increasing exposure to extreme weather events.

Tagolyn represented the Anglican Communion, in particular those in the Pacific directly affected by climate change, at the C20 meeting – a civil society forum that met in June to feed into the G20 discussions.

The Primate of the Anglican Church of Australia, *Dr Philip Freier*, issued a statement in which he warns global leaders that “failure to

address these issues of economic security and justice will lead to more international conflict and reduce the possibility of human flourishing”. [His full statement is below]

Mr Greg Henderson, Anglican Board of Misions, organised opportunities for people in Brisbane to meet *Archbishop Winston* and *Tagolyn Kabekabe*.

He says that it is important for Australians to recognise that climate change is a justice issue, "because its impact is being felt most seriously by communities who have the least power to address the causes of anthropogenic warming".

The Anglican Archbishop of Polynesia says some G20 leaders refuse to admit the damaging effects of climate change on Pacific Island states.

The Most Reverend Doctor Winston Halapua made the following remarks during a sermon in Brisbane.

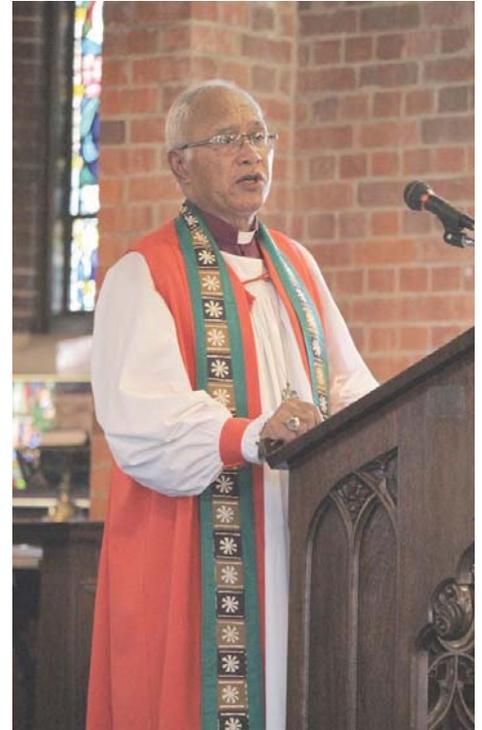
"Humanity's greed and merciless abuse of the planet Earth, our only common home, is causing immense damage," Archbishop Halapua said: "Climate change is impacting on the sea level rising, and causing unpredictable storms, uncontrollable floods."

"For some of us from the Pacific Island states, the truth is as plain as writing on a wall, our land and livelihood are drowning while others refuse to see."

Archbishop Halapua was in Brisbane to represent the 85 million-strong global Anglican

Communion as part of the Oceans of Justice campaign, a worldwide campaign led by the Anglican Alliance calling on the G20 to discuss climate change.

Anglican Board of Mission arranged



the Archbishop's visit to St Augustine's Anglican Church in the inner northeast suburb of Hamilton, Brisbane, and a number of other events throughout the week leading up to the G20 meeting.

The climate change issue, although not originally on the main agenda for the meeting, was addressed in the final G20 leaders' communique released on Sunday afternoon.

Anglican Overseas Aid and ABM worked together to bring the Archbishop's message to a wider audience. However the Archbishop's comments received only low-level media coverage. Information about the weekend's activities can be found **on Anglican Overseas Aid and ABM social media accounts.**

<http://www.sbs.com.au/news/article/2014/11/16/humanitys-greed-driving-climate-inaction-archbishop-polynesia>