

newdirections

February 2007
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serving Evangelicals and Catholics seeking to renew the Church in the historic faith

Taking time

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Bishop Andrew Burnham on the meaning of reception

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A group of lawyers and clerics will each month put their heads together to give a 'legal opinion' on a particular issue that has been or may be a cause of concern to church people.

If readers have their own problems they wish 'solved,' could they in the first instance write to the editor, who will pass their question on.

Being short, they cannot cover everything, but being brief they will be comprehensible.

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The next issue of **newdirections**
is published on 2 March

It has taken some time for the gloom in the second half of 2006 to dissipate. We could not have predicted how depressing that July Synod would prove to be. The Archbishop of York's disapproval of Cardinal Kasper, the Bishop of Durham's flippant display of biblical exegesis, and the casual abandonment of the moves towards women bishops – it was not the Church of England at its best.

The failure of the TEA proposals was a cause of unexpected disappointment to many clergy and laity of our constituency. Many men and women had, after much prayer, discussion and reflection, girded up their loins for the final crisis, and could echo without rancour the words of Our Lord, 'If you must do it, do it quickly.'

Even more extraordinary, however, than our own gloom was the manner in which it was *not* shared by the rest of the church. Was *Watch*, for example, as a prominent campaigning organization, upset that the women bishops project had been put on hold? One must suppose that individual women were disappointed, but the only evidence was silence. And the rest of the supposed vast majority in favour? No one appeared the slightest bit worried that the revolution had been delayed *sine die*.

The only people (so it seemed) unhappy with the present interim compromise were those who oppose the innovation. It is not for us to explain the apathy that has overcome the proponents, but it does need to be highlighted, for it does nothing for the proclamation of the Gospel.

We welcome the appointment of the Women Bishops Legislative Drafting Group, and we pray for the Bishop of Manchester and his colleagues as they begin their work. We would urge them not to be held back by the seeming lethargy of the majority.

They are all busy people, with other responsibilities within the Church of England, but their shared task should not be onerous. The task, in itself, of drafting legislation is not a difficult one. Our own constituency has – though we say it ourselves – been open and helpful in putting forward workable suggestions. There are reasons to be hopeful.

It is the tragedy of the Archbishop of Canterbury that he is not quite a constitutional monarch. How convenient it would be (for him and for the rest of the Communion) if, like Elizabeth II, he could change opinions as she does when changing realms or governments. She can be a Presbyterian in Scotland

and an Anglican in England, inoffensively and simultaneously. The Queen's Speech is socialist when her government is Labour, and less so when it is Conservative.

If only the ABC could be a traditionalist in Nigeria, a liberal in the US, a fence sitter in the UK, and another sort of traditionalist in Papua New Guinea! But an Archbishop, alas, is a pastor and teacher, and not a mere figure-head or clan totem. What he himself thinks is integral to who he is and how he discharges his office.

Hence, as we see it, the complaints of the Bishop of Bethlehem, Pennsylvania (see *Correspondents*, p. 20). No one doubts that Rowan possesses all the necessary Celtic equipment of charm, verbal fluency and obfuscatory emollient. But none of this can suffice when opposing parties are seeking a lead from him, and will accept no lead which is contrary to their own previously declared positions or objectives.

Provincial autonomy (see *The Way We Live Now*, p. 17) cannot embrace any advice or opinion which is in any way contrary to the democratically adopted view of the province. But such a 'polity' – an in-word with TEC – demands just this 'constitutional monarchy' which Catholic ecclesiology cannot supply, and Rowan has no intention of conceding.

Poor Rowan is condemned, it would seem, to the position to which Oscar Wilde relegated George Bernard Shaw: 'He hasn't an enemy in the world, and one of his friends like him.'



Two invitations have recently arrived on the editor's desk.

The first, to a celebration of the 150th anniversary of the Community of the Holy Cross on May 3 in Southwell Minster, reminds us of all we owe to the religious communities which sustained the Catholic movement in the Church of England with example and prayer from its inception. We salute Revd Mother and the Sisters CHC for all they have meant and achieved in their long and fruitful ministry.

May 5 sees the celebration at the Church of St Agatha, Portsmouth of the thirtieth anniversary of the consecration of Robert Mercer CR as the fourth Bishop of Matabeleland. Bishop Robert, afterwards Bishop of the Anglican Catholic Church of Canada, is a hero of the faith. It will be a privilege, amidst the current trials and tribulations of the Church in Central Africa and in Zimbabwe to celebrate with him and in his person, the great Catholic tradition of the church in those parts. **ND**



Slow unravelling

Bishop John Broadhurst reflects on the unravelling of the Anglican Communion, and the causes of the current crisis in order and morals

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In 1972 I was elected to the very first General Synod. I was its youngest member and considered myself to be progressive and radical. To my intense surprise I found that I rapidly fell into the habit of voting 'No'. At first I found this problematic and it troubled me greatly. It took a long time for me to realise that the problem was in the parliamentary model that the General Synod had adopted. There is a real conflict between the view of a church subject to scripture and tradition and the parliamentary model. Is the church a democracy or a theocracy?

The problem with the General Synod is that everybody's views are held to be equal. It is perfectly possible to make a major contribution with no theological understanding or education. I have often been amazed that reports or recommendations made by the Doctrine Commission, or the Faith and Order Advisory Group, or ARCIC, have been completely ignored or overruled by large numbers of the membership of the Synod.

The Synod believes that it is the custodian of the truth. Technically the Church is subject to its historic formularies but in reality the decisions of the General Synod define those formularies. We are in a kind of Alice in Wonderland world.

Michael Ramsey, in whose archiepiscopate the General Synod was formed, was not responsible directly for its initiation. He was responsible for a subsequent and ultimately even more dangerous development. For a period I was an elected member of the Anglican Consultative Council. When Hong Kong ordained women the Anglican Consultative Council had to deal with the issue. It was Michael Ramsey who decided and recommended that this was a local matter and was not to undermine universal and international relations. From that moment the Anglican Communion had a ministry which was no longer universal (i.e. catholic) but was in one sense simply local. Priests from one part of the communion were no longer acceptable in other parts of the Communion and indeed, even today when the Church of England has women priests, women bishops consecrated abroad are not allowed to function as bishops in this country. We had ceased to be a Communion and become in a sense a federation.

The consequences of this are not limited simply to the issue of the ordination of women. They affect the church in matters of faith and morals just as they affect the church in matters of order.

The issue of morals is one which is the cause of the second major crisis in the Communion. I have always understood homosexuality to be disordered, but I am not one of those who consider homosexual sin to be worse than any other. The crisis that affects the Communion is not around personal morality but rather around the assertion that the Church must conform scripture and tradition and its common life to contemporary social

views. Civil Partnerships and other social developments challenge the Church's basic presuppositions.

I have attended two General Conventions of the Episcopal Church. They are extraordinary occasions. At one I sat in the Assembly as they discussed pension rights for gay partners. They were not at all troubled by a man coming to the microphone holding the hand of his boy friend pleading for such rights. This is a Church which is intensely intolerant of anyone who does not accept the contemporary social view.

I was also present at the meeting of conservative Primates in Kampala some years ago. Here I found a group who had a very different view of the Church and world. The African and Asian Bishops have a much more robust view of the scriptures and tradition. Their view would be that individuals should conform themselves to the tradition and not the other way round. In a world of emerging evangelistic Islam, the attitudes that come from TEC put the Church under serious pressure in many parts of the world.

The African Church, moreover, is growing rapidly while the Church in the west is, in the main, shrinking equally rapidly. I find myself quite amazed that liberal Christians are unwilling to make the connection between liberal theology and decline. Sociological surveys have repeatedly demonstrated that this is not mere opinion but solid fact. But few liberals seem to be troubled in the slightest by that reality.

I have extensively visited America and Australia and in both countries find the Anglican Church in a very weak state. Large numbers of people have left the Communion. You only have to look in your church newspapers here to see that nearly every week congregations and clergy are leaving the American Episcopal Church. More recently, the Primates of Rwanda and South East Asia set up a group called the Anglican Mission in America. This group is mainly evangelical and again has taken a large number of orthodox congregations. Since its formation it has decided against further ordinations of women. Now we read of congregations seeking to join the Church of Nigeria and other overseas Provinces. What we have in America is a large number of dispossessed Anglicans seeking to continue faithful Christian life in accord with the Anglican tradition. In Australia and South Africa there are small but growing numbers in the Continuing Church and in Australia the Diocese of Sydney is extensively planting in the declining liberal dioceses.

The Lambeth Conference had asked for equal treatment for both sides in the ordination of women issue and for restraint on the issue of homosexuality. Though from time to time The Episcopal Church appears to respond verbally, all the signs are of increasing momentum for the liberal agenda.

Nowhere do we see common faith and order among those who call themselves Anglicans. In what sense is the Anglican Communion still a reality? **ND**

Rowan in reception

Bishop Andrew Burnham considers the notion of reception in the light of Dr Rowan Williams' interview last November and the generally misinformed press coverage it provoked



In a press release on Thursday, 16 November 2006, we heard that 'the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Rowan Williams has dismissed as 'wilfully misleading' newspaper reports that he is doubtful over the ordination of women to the priesthood, has ever felt that the ordination of women priests had been 'wrong' or believes that a revisiting of the question is likely, necessary or desirable.' This row followed an interview with the *Catholic Herald*, in which, according to headlines in *The Daily Telegraph*, the Church 'could think again over women.'

As always, it is as well to go back to the sources. What he said to the *Catholic Herald* was that he 'could just about envisage a situation in which over a very long period the Anglican Church thought again about it.' Thus far we have the ability of the able academic to see all sides of a question and the sensitivity of the pastor with responsibility for those of different views. Dr Williams went on, 'I would need to see what the theological reason for that would be and I don't see it at the moment. I don't think, practically, there's going back. It is a matter of containing and managing the diversity.'

News stories develop a life of their own and, in the event, it was not the Archbishop's apparent equivocation over the ordination of women as priests that proved controversial, so much as his alleged lack of enthusiasm about the contribution of women clergy. He quickly apologized for having given that impression and, to be fair, those who know him know that he is a warm supporter of women priests, in theory and in practice.

Those who know their ecclesiology know that the Archbishop was trying to give expression to the delicate doctrine of reception, a doctrine not easily or widely understood. Moreover, he was alluding to this doctrine in a context – a press interview – where there is little scope for nuance.

'Reception' was the subject of a conference held at St George's House, Windsor Castle, 10–12 April, 2000. So divisive was the subject that though a document 'Reception and Communion in the context of the Ordination of Women and the Episcopal Ministry Act of Synod 1993' was produced, the work was incomplete. The sequel – a conference on 'Communion' – never took place. For the conference, there was a preparatory paper drawn up by the Revd Preb. Dr Paul Avis and the Revd Canon Laurence Gunner.

I think I can best draw out the complexity of the doctrine of reception by laying out nine principles:

1. 'Reception is a permanent feature of the life of the Church.'

2. 'Reception is a neutral, technical term: despite a common misunderstanding to the contrary, it does not imply that a development in the life of the Church will ultimately be positively accepted as

God's will for the Church.'

3. 'Reception entails a process of study and evaluation in which the truth, or otherwise, of a development may be spiritually and theologically discerned. It takes place both before and after any decision of the Church has been taken.'

4. 'Reception is not a political device but an ecclesiological reality. The process of the reception of the ordination of women should, therefore, be related to ecclesiological principles, especially those enshrined in the four credal notes or attributes of the Christian Church: one, holy, catholic and apostolic.'

5. 'Reception is not the concern of a single church or communion but should be seen in a fully ecumenical context.'

6. 'Without prejudice to the personal convictions of individuals, the ultimate outcome of a process of reception is known only to God. To participate actively in an open process of reception with regard to the ordination of women is therefore an act of faith. Integrity and maturity are required in order to handle contentious issues.'

7. 'The decisions of the Church of England with regard to the ordination of women in a divided universal Church presuppose that an ecumenical process of reception is required. This wider context suggests that not only boldness but restraint may be called for. The ultimate context of reception is the reunion of the Christian Church, which is currently divided on a number of beliefs and practices.'

8. 'There will be different perceptions of what is occurring in a process of reception.'

9. 'As an expression of the organic vitality of the Body of Christ, reception belongs at the centre of the Church's life.'

These nine principles are themselves an elucidation not only of aspects of ecumenical ecclesiology as it has been developing over the years, but also of the Church of England's own commitments in the *Episcopal Ministry Act of Synod* (1993). Here we read, for instance:

3. The General Synod regards it as desirable that:

- a) all concerned should endeavour to ensure that
- i) discernment of the rightness or otherwise of the decision to ordain women to the priesthood should be as open a process as possible;
- ii) the highest possible degree of communion should be maintained within each diocese; and
- iii) the integrity of differing beliefs and positions concerning the ordination of women to the priesthood should be mutually recognised and respected.

In the consequent House of Bishops document, *Bonds of Peace*, we read that 'discernment...is now to be seen with a much broader and longer process

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of discernment within the whole Church under the Spirit's guidance' and that all positions are legitimate 'while the whole Church seeks to come to a common mind.' After all, the Church of England is 'a communion in dialogue, committed to remaining together in the ongoing process of the discernment of truth within the wider fellowship of the Christian Church' and must be open and in communion insofar as possible 'as we strive to be open to the insights of the wider Christian community.'

It is against this complex doctrinal background that Dr Williams' refutation of the newspapers' spin must be viewed. If anything, an objective observer – and here is a matter where an objective observer must be particularly hard to encounter or even envisage – might think that, far from undermining women's ministry, it is the position of traditionalists that the Archbishop was selling short.

'I made it clear in the interview with the *Catholic Herald* and will continue to do so,' he said, 'that I see no theological justification for any revisiting of this question and indicated in the interview three times that I had no wish to reopen it, whatever technical possibilities might theoretically exist.'

To be fair to the Archbishop, nothing less than an emphatic statement of this kind would have done the trick. He was

being portrayed as rethinking his position on women priests and bishops. This is clearly not the case. To be fair to the traditionalists, there are a number of theological justifications for revisiting the question of women's ordination, even if, theologically, the revisiting leads to no different conclusions.

the Anglican Communion is unlikely to discontinue ordaining women to the priesthood

One theological justification might be the sheer weight of Scripture and Tradition. (Neither of these supports a developed and 'received' priestly and episcopal ministry of ordained women, though both, in my view, would support the revival of a female diaconal ministry in the ancient churches.)

Another might be the ecumenical dimension, the teaching of the Catholic Church and the Orthodox Churches, as well as the teaching of many of the most vigorous evangelical ecclesial communities. (The ecumenical argument, contrary to what is sometimes alleged, is, of course, itself a theological argument.)

A third might arise from the more profound study of anthropology that everyone routinely says is still necessary. (Such a study, say liberals, would confirm the emancipation of women for ordained ministry. Such a study, say traditionalists, would realize how trivial the understanding of modernity has of the complementarity of the sexes.)

A fourth might be that, over a period of time, women's priestly and episcopal ministry is not 'received' into the mainstream of the Church. (The unlikelihood of this eventuality does not rule it out.)

What the Archbishop's remarks do confirm is that, whatever the theological justification or the technical possibilities, the Anglican Communion is unlikely to discontinue ordaining women to the priesthood and episcopate. More than that, the Communion will have to struggle if it is to maintain those who do not accept such ordinations as Catholic and apostolic in its midst.

There is a question of whether it would be healthy to maintain dissent on such a fundamental matter within the ranks. It seems to me that there are two answers and that the Church of England, at least, has so far picked the wrong one. The right answer is that it would not be healthy to maintain dissent on the matter of who is and who is not properly and rightly ordained. **ND**

A collect prays to the Lord: 'increase our holiness that our prayer may be heard' [Year 1, Week 1, Eucharistic lectionary]. Note that the prayer is for an increase in holiness and not goodness – the two should not be confused.

Remember this conversation: 'Good teacher,' Jesus was asked, 'what good must I do to inherit eternal life?' Jesus replied, 'Why do you call me good? One alone is good.' The goodness of God is inaccessible to men – so it would seem.

If the pursuit of goodness were the impossible aim of the Christian life, it would seem that the endeavour of Christian discipleship is set up for failure. This would be the case if we were called to 'goodness.' Thank God that we are called to 'holiness.' There is a profound difference between the two.

God alone is the source of all goodness. He is, as the Orthodox liturgy addresses him, 'Universal and Total Goodness, You alone are Good.' Jesus, in his reply, is spelling out the reality of God, who is wholly other and dwells in unapproachable light. It is not possible to be like God: God is God.

However, it is possible to know God

Ghostly Counsel

Goodness and holiness

Andy Hawes is Warden of Edenham Regional Retreat House

in a personal way, to experience the pure light of revelation and become aware of the absolute goodness, truth and love of God, through his gift of grace. This is given in the call to holiness. Despite the claim of orthodox spirituality that it is possible to share the Divine Life through a process of 'divinization,' it does not claim that a Christian can become divine. The divine image in each individual may be restored to a true likeness, but 'One alone is good.' There is of course 'goodness' that is a fruit of living in the Spirit; this is not the same as being 'good.'

Thus Jesus makes us aware of the

limitations of human spirituality.

There will always be a gap; the claim to intimacy and unity with the Divine must always be a guarded one. There is no escaping the reality of Christian prayer – it is hard work. As the Russian Orthodox say, the Christian way of life is 'wrestling.' This leaves us with a lesson for Lent.

The struggle of the individual to 'take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of you' is not the pointless pursuit of the unattainable. The struggle itself and repeated experience of falling short is in itself communion with the Lord, who 'was tempted as we are in every way yet without sin.' Jesus, who 'knew what was in the hearts of men,' provides a pattern and an example of total commitment to the pursuit of holiness.

The call to holiness inevitably leads to engagement with the enemies of the soul: the world, the flesh and the devil. We cannot disengage from human society, we cannot abandon all physical needs and appetites, we cannot escape from the objective reality of evil, but God is good and in Christ has given us grace to live in the present, sustained by the things that last forever.

Reading the old Adam

Owen Higgs replies to Bishop David Gillett's article suggesting that his reading of Scripture is the wrong way round, subsuming Christ to Adam

In last December's NEW DIRECTIONS the Bishop of Bolton explained why he believes the ordination of women to the presbyterate and episcopate is demanded by Scripture. This article examines his most detailed argument.

The main thrust of the bishop's article was an exegesis of Genesis 1–3, because 'the teaching of Jesus looks to the opening chapters of Genesis to provide our basic understanding of the place of men and women in the order of things.' Well, up to a point. In Mark 10.2ff (Matt. 19.4ff is substantially the same), the Pharisees question Jesus about divorce and he replies, 'From the beginning of creation, 'God made them male and female.' For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.' So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate.'

This is the only record we have of Jesus quoting from Genesis 1–3. None of the other Genesis passages which the bishop refers to are cited by Jesus. It may be significant that Jesus quotes from Genesis, but to say he 'looks to the beginning of Genesis to provide our basic understanding of the place of men and women in order of things' is to place a great weight on a little text.

Jesus reading Genesis

Did Jesus use Genesis 1–3 to provide the bishop's 'basic understanding'? The key verses are 1.27–8, 'So God created mankind in his image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. God blessed them, and God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.'

Now, what Jesus takes from this passage is not what the bishop takes from it. Jesus grounds his teaching on divorce in the way 'God made them male and female,' i.e. man and woman are created to live together. The bishop ignores the context of Jesus' remark and focuses on the creation of mankind as male and female in the image of God. This is, of course, going beyond what Jesus says – we have

no evidence that Jesus was interested in 'in the image of God he created him.' It is pure supposition on the bishop's part, that because Jesus quotes part of verse 27, we can infer Jesus' understanding of the rest of the verse (and the following fifty-one), and so know Jesus' 'basic understanding of the place of men and women in order of things.'

Indeed, the bishop's own words might have alerted him to a problem here: 'It is a theological statement of the equality of man and woman without parallel.' In other words, whatever we might think should be the case, the equality of man and woman in Genesis 1.27 is not central to the Old Testament, where Psalm 8 contains the only reference, or Jesus' own teaching.

Genesis 1 is not a foundation charter for human beings but an understanding of how God created the world

In any case, did the writers of Genesis mean that man and woman created together in the image of God are, therefore, equal? Well, yes, but equal only in the sense that they are created together. The bishop goes beyond the text to make a universal statement about mankind. Now, he is by no means the first commentator to do this – there is a long tradition in the Church of using this verse to draw out some of the implications of the incarnation. But, as scholars have noted and as Jesus' own words suggest, the main concern of this verse is the creative activity of God, rather than the making of a general and universally applicable statement about mankind. Genesis 1 is not a foundation charter for human beings (man and woman are equal) but an understanding of how God created the world (God created man and woman together).

So, there is good reason to believe Genesis 1.27 was not intended by its authors to provide what the bishop understands as 'the place and order of men and

women in the order of things' and that Jesus would not have understood Genesis 1 in the way the bishop does. Furthermore, insofar as traditional exegesis has used this passage in its own way, it has done so typically to bring out what was already there in the gospels.

Men and women together

By contrast, the bishop's only argument from the gospels is to say that Jesus included women in his ministry and that this foreshadows the restoration of the wholeness of God's creation. Then, recognizing that Jesus did not choose any women among the twelve, he argues (I think) that this was because of the culture in which Jesus lived. And he believes Jesus challenged this culture with the Genesis myth. In other words, the bishop's understanding of the Genesis myth determines what Jesus says about salvation, even though this goes far beyond what Jesus quotes from Genesis. Rather than read Christ into Genesis, the bishop reads (his) Genesis into Christ.

The analysis continues with the bold statement that Genesis 1 'can only speak of equality and complementarity, not inequality and subjection.' This begs the question what kind of equality we are talking about, and this the bishop recognizes when he writes 'equality does not lead to the ordination of women' – Genesis is not a one clause measure. But then he argues that because men and women have dominion over the earthly creation, therefore women have an 'equality in authority, leadership and representing God.' Again, Genesis is more nuanced than the bishop – the only dominion which it gives to the woman is dominion over living creatures other than mankind.

In Genesis 1–3, read as a whole, it is the man who comes first and the woman who is described as his helper (even before the 'Fall'). Even in chapter 2, where the bishop finds a joyful celebration of equality, it is the man who names the animals and woman is taken from man's side. And in chapter 3, when it all goes wrong, it is the man who is first addressed by God.

Here we come to the third of the bishop's exegetical points. Quite rightly he says Genesis 3 describes the world we inhabit. And in his understanding of

the pre-Genesis 3 world, he follows a long line of Christian exegetes who have understood the first two chapters of Genesis to describe a prelapsarian paradise. However, we have no evidence that Jesus thought this way. Indeed, we may argue that the stories in Genesis 1–3 are not so much an historical progression (after all, they include two creation stories) but mythic descriptions of the world as it is, descriptions which are, admittedly, in tension.

In other words, the Genesis creation myth should be read as an etiology, a description of how things are, rather than how they were. They function like the *Just So* stories – we are not meant to be concerned with what the elephant looked like before it got its trunk, nor are we to wonder how Eve might have given birth before the Fall. It follows that the punishment of Eve is over-read in the bishop's analysis, as well as in many scholarly commentaries. 3.16 reads better if we understand it to say only that where a woman finds fulfilment and happiness – that is, in marriage and child-birth (one foundation the bishop does not build on) – there she also finds pain and humiliation.

So, Bishop Gillett's analysis of Genesis 1–3, what he takes as foundational for a

Christian understanding of the place of men and women, has only a small overlap with what Jesus himself said. Furthermore, and, yes, many exegetes have done the same, the bishop has taken a text which receives little further biblical reflection and read into it what is not there.

Genesis is not a one clause measure

Restoration in Christ

The problem this poses for the bishop's overall argument is that the one – yes, one – New Testament text which he quotes to support his position, Galatians 3.28, is not only misused in the standard arguments for the ordination of women, and the bishop seems to recognize this, but it also fails to do what he wants of it in the context of salvation. For he argues that what was lost in the Fall is restored in Christ, but his exegesis of Genesis which provides his basic understanding of what was lost at the Fall has neither the authority of Christ nor is it a sound reading of the text – it is not scriptural.

A short article cannot do full justice to either the bishop's arguments, or the counter-arguments to them. This final point is made with that caveat in mind. He writes about the restoration of God's creation in Christ. For whatever reason, he does not balance this with the equally important point that Christ does not just restore the old Adam, he himself is the new Adam. The Old Testament finds its fulfilment in Christ, not least because in Christ there is a new creation. Christ is both alpha and omega. It is this dimension of Christ as God's last word which is most missing from the bishop's article.

This is not to deny that Christ was a man of his time but it is to say that Christ the Word made flesh has full authority over the Bible and creation. The bishop would doubtless wish to affirm this, but unfortunately, unlike those Fathers who read Christ into Genesis, the bishop has read Genesis, his Genesis, into Christ. And so Christ in time, who is God's final Word to mankind, is made into a culturally conditioned character caught in a trajectory between the old Adam of Genesis and the enlightened Spirit of today. Which is not, I think, what Bishop Gillett intended. **ND**

A most Christian day

Nigel Anthony speaks up for the Feast of the Annunciation

February, and time to finalize the calendar and parish magazine for March. I note that the Feast of the Annunciation must this year be transferred to the Monday, falling as it does on the Fifth Sunday in Lent. Loyal son of the Church though I am, I shall beg to differ. Why?

When the Church argues for the sanctity of life before birth, and against the use of abortion and even the 'morning after' pill as forms of birth control, it lays great stress on the moment of conception. Surely this is right. It is *most* unfortunate, therefore, that the great feast of Christ's conception is so rarely kept on its own day. It is more often than not transferred to the next available free day. Would we dream of doing the same thing for the feast of Christ's birth? Of course not.

That the tax year still begins on Old Lady Day may seem a quaint anomaly, and it may come as a surprise to learn that March 25 remained the official first day of the year in England until as late as 1752. But we could ask why this was so.

In terms of the calendar, 25 March is the most Christian day of the year. It was

the day that marked the conception and the crucifixion of Our Lord, that set the date for Christmas, and began the whole science of the calendar and the calculation of Easter. Of course it was an awkward date, the ancient relic which no longer fits easily into the vast and beautiful structure that developed from it.

When Good Friday fell on March 25 in 2005, it would have been inappropriate to miss out or compromise any element of the liturgy of the day, but there was an added perspective given us by the sufferings of Christ's mother. The evening devotion of Mary's Return from the Cross had a heart-rending poignancy.

This conjunction of birth and death on a single day was of immense significance to earlier Christians, expressive of the great mystery of Our Lord's incarnation and redemption. The power of its ancient collect comes from the clear and explicit juxtaposition of these two themes, 'that as we have known the incarnation of thy Son Jesus Christ by the message of an angel, so by his cross and passion we may be brought to the glory of his resurrection.'

The Feast of Christ's Conception is



always awkward. It breaks into the ordered progress of Lent, Holy Week and Easter, but wherever it falls it sheds a new light – that is to say an old light – upon the more modern framework.

This year it falls on Passion Sunday (Lent 5). We shall, even if we are alone, keep the Feast of the Conception (Annunciation) on that day, to remind us that Christ was born to die, that his death is our life, and that the remembrance of his gracious incarnation in the womb of Mary points to that moment years later when she held his crucified body in her arms, and the joy of salvation dawned upon the world.

Who is responsible?

Does inequality necessarily involve subjection?

Hugh Baker responds to Bishop David Gillett's article and identifies the characteristics of a good hierarchy

I read Bishop David Gillett's defence of female episcopacy with more sympathy than other parallel contributions in *NEW DIRECTIONS* in recent months. 'Here is someone coming at the question from where I'm coming at it.' Rather than arguing from an uncritical acceptance of 'progress', he did at least try and come to the present *ab initio*.

There is, however, an assumption in society now which tells itself 'equality – good: inequality – bad' and I think it is here that Bishop David, unconsciously, sees Scripture through modern lenses. Writing about Genesis 1.27, he says it embodies 'equality and complementarity, not inequality and subjection.' Genesis 1.27 simply states they were made male and female: it makes no statement, one way or the other, about equality of any kind, and I do not think we should read anything on that matter into it.

Nature of the hierarchy

Now, here we see the assumption: that inequality automatically produces subjection. In the world, this is always the case, and the subjection is not only from 'superior' to 'inferior': over the Christmas period, I have met two Head Teachers who want to resign because of how they are treated by their staff. They'd have been a lot happier had they worked for Gaffer Mills. The Gaffer ran a foundry, filthy and untidy even by Black Country standards.

There was no set wage structure: at the end of each week, he gave his men what he could afford, or what he felt they deserved. An old-fashioned Methodist, the Gaffer truly loved his workers and their families, and they in turn adored him: yet he remained, till his dying day, the Gaffer. This, surely, is the relationship that pertains between Christ and his Church: even it though it involves the handing out of discipline on his part, we are not 'in subjection'. We are deeply and tenderly loved: he is the Gaffer nonetheless, and it is this relationship, held together by bonds of love but based on hierarchy, which holds between us and Christ, and Adam and Eve.

It is not until the wheels come off in Genesis chapter 3 that we see the hierarchy Adam and Eve lived under. Firstly, there is the hierarchy that holds between God and Man. Man is meant to obey God; hence, when he disobeys, he is guilty, and in trouble. Secondly, Eve eats the apple; Adam is held accountable. One view of Genesis 3 holds that, when Eve ate of the apple, she lost her glory: the 'shine' of innocence and sinlessness went off her. Adam, seeing her without it, eats of the apple even so, and loses his glory too. True or not, it is he who has to account to God for the state of the Garden – because he is in *spiritual* charge of it, 'head of the wife as Christ is head of the church' [Eph. 4.22, NIV].

Responsibility

This position of spiritual accountability is held by anyone who holds any office in the Church. They cannot just shrug their shoulders and say 'That's just how they are.' God calls them to intercede for their 'spiritual offspring' in the same way that Christ, now, 'always lives to intercede for them' [Heb. 7.25, NIV]. One function, I believe, of small groups in a church is to train

those groups' leaders to pray sacrificially for those they lead: thus, we raise up a people who are deeply interceded for, able to live holy lives. If we want our church to make inroads into our ungodly land, perhaps we should note that the last time it happened, Methodist Class Leaders were held accountable for the moral condition of their Class.

If things go wrong in my church they may not, directly, be my fault. I am, however, *responsible* for doing something about it, and so accountable to my bishop and my Lord. Adam should, at the very least, have been praying for Eve and keeping her spiritually safe. That what happened between her and the serpent was outside his sight or earshot did not excuse his spiritual neglect.

Genesis 1.27 simply states they were made male and female: it makes no statement about equality

It was, I suggest, the Scandinavian sociologist Ferdinand Tönnies who most clearly mapped the decline of Christendom, and its replacement by Secular Europe, when he traced our continent's move from Community (*Gemeinschaft*) to Association (*Gesellschaft*). *Gemeinschaft* was held together by tradition, loyalty, and common beliefs, a minimum of paperwork implementing these

ties: *Gesellschaft* puts no value on these unseen bonds, and an ever-increasing structure of legislation is built to hold people together. Hosea chapter 10 begins with a picture of Israel turning away from God; by verse 4, decline has reached a point where 'lawsuits spring up like poisonous weeds in a ploughed field' [Hos. 10.4, NIV].

Gesellschaft may have rafts of laws about 'equality', and accordingly pride itself on the progress it has made compared to its 'unequal' predecessors, but its bonds are the cold metal of law, and love is no longer an arbiter of how men live together; love is side-lined, a hobby for domestic enjoyment, full of all the exploitation and manipulation that now poisons office politics and calls forth even more legislation, to impose even more heartless 'equality'.

The role of love

It is through this mirror that we now see God's Kingdom, and it seems to me that Bishop David is using this focus when he states 'The rule of man over woman...is an element of disorder that disturbs the original peace.' That men sinfully exploit women across the world is beyond doubt, and is, as he says, a symptom of 'a world vitiated by sin and alienation'. The Bible, though, speaks of two Kingdoms, not of a Kingdom of This World and a Republic of God. That our world is full of bad, exploitative hierarchies is not an argument against hierarchy: it is an argument against badness.

The earliest known credal formulation of the Church is not the statement 'Jesus is Chairman' nor even 'Jesus is President': to declare such would be to say that he rules, ultimately, by our consent, and we may replace him if we so wish. The Church begins by saying 'Jesus is Lord'. This does not make him tyrannical or exploitative; but he remains the Gaffer, and it is the Church's privilege to display the love and tenderness of his Lordship to this world. How can we do that if cannot display a hierarchy ultimately built, not on legislation, but on love and trust? **ND**

Revived ecclesiology

The Church has moved from the periphery to the centre of theological study.

Ernest Skublics sketches the reasons for this change and how it has come about that ecclesiology has become so central to ecumenical progress

Half a century ago, one would have looked in vain for the word *Ecclesiology* in a typical curriculum of theological studies. At best, under some heading like *Apologetics* or *Fundamental Theology*, the Church would have been considered as a credible messenger of revealed truth. Another place to consider the Church might have been under *Practical* or *Pastoral Theology*, as a dispenser of sacraments and other pastoral services. In other words, the Church was typically viewed as a delivery system.

To conclude that there was nothing more to theological thought about the Church would be simplistic, as, of course, the 'One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church' has been an article of faith from the beginning, apparently more fundamental than the individual Sacraments, which the Creed does not even list among the 'mysteries' of the Faith. It would be more accurate to say that an awareness of the fundamental Mystery (= sacrament or reality) of the Church was taken so much for granted that a separate treatise was not thought necessary. The problem is that things taken for granted can easily sink below explicit consciousness.

A plurality in one

The fundamental reality now commonly referred to as 'the Mystery of the Church,' within which the entire economy of salvation is rooted and realized, only became the object of specific dogmatic study in the middle of the twentieth century, first as a primary treatise in Systematic Theology, and, eventually, as a vehicle to pull together and synthesize all of theology. Indeed, not only has Ecclesiology, the systematic study of the nature of the Church, become a central academic discipline, we have also witnessed a shift in emphasis in how we understand the Church.

Some of the older, delivery-system-type models tended to see the Church as an institution, sometimes quite mechanically or juridically conceived. The model shift referred to here has been a gradual retrieval of the most ancient understanding of the Church as a living organism, indeed the *Body* of Christ and a *Communion*, sharing the very life of the Trinity. This organism comes about not by human organization or law, but by the operation of the Holy

Spirit, through Word and Sacrament. We are incorporated into this divine organism, and thus divinized, sharing the life of the Trinity, replicating its structure – a plurality in one – being restored to the image and likeness in which we were created as persons-in-community.

Theology is a reflection, interpretation and articulation of this experience of becoming participants in the Mystery of Christ, the Mystery of the Church, rather than simply a study of *texts* – biblical or otherwise. Thus the Liturgy, especially of Baptism and the Eucharist, are primary sources, within which even Scripture is contextualized and understood. And quite

ecclesiology now appears as the synthesis of all theology

in contrast to the delivery-system model, where the Church 'produces' the Eucharist, we see the Church as the *fruit*, the *product* of the Eucharist. So, this recovered 'Communion Ecclesiology' is sometimes also called 'Eucharistic Ecclesiology.'

The retrieval of this ancient understanding of the Church has been both fruit and further inspiration of progressive ecumenical *rapprochement*. Its earliest harbingers were nineteenth century Russian thinkers such as Ivan Kireevsky and Alexey Khomiakov, who had initially been influenced by German Romantics, and then turned to the Church Fathers of the first centuries as their theological source and inspiration.

Route to understanding

In the twentieth century, both Roman Catholic and Orthodox theologians made powerful advances in this recovery, both depending on each other and further digging into their common sources through the study of the early Fathers. Of a long list of Orthodox theologians, teamed up in the West with the likes of Yves Congar and Henri de Lubac, the former Glasgow Professor, Metropolitan John Zizioulas is especially important.

Within the Roman Catholic Church, Communion Ecclesiology visibly becomes the official emphasis with the twin encyclicals *Mediator Dei* and *Mystici Corporis* of Pope Pius XII in mid-century,

and much more obviously in *Sacrosanctum Concilium* and *Lumen Gentium* of Vatican II, with ecumenical implications spelled out in further documents of that Council and in all the ecumenical dialogues conducted since then, especially with Orthodoxy and Anglicanism.

As a result of these developments, Ecclesiology now appears not only as a principal treatise of Systematic Theology, seeing the Church as the extension of the *Fundamental Sacrament* of Christ, but, indeed, as the synthesis of all theology, since the whole enterprise of theology is rooted in our baptismal–eucharistic–trinitarian participation and communion: the Church – which experience theology reflects on and articulates.

Current challenges

A quick look at the Anglican scene will confirm that the language of Communion Ecclesiology can be traced all the way back to Hooker, and that it is most strongly present in current documents and rhetoric, both internal and ecumenical. It does not require any in-depth analysis, however, to see that there are two crucial problems with this current language. One of them is that it has borrowed the *ecumenical* terminology and theology of the *one universal Communion of Communions*, which is the Church of Christ, and applied it autonomously to the Anglican Communion, as if that were a sufficient realization of the Mystery in isolation. The other obvious fact is that this renewed, almost hysterical preoccupation with 'communion' within Anglicanism is a symptom of even that partial communion slipping away into the land of mythology.

There has been a debate whether there is a legitimately particular *Anglican* Ecclesiology. If indeed we profess the Catholic Faith, such a thing can only be the articulation of a provisional accommodation, spelling out the normativity of restored universal communion, and the commitment to its achievement as essential to orthodox catholic Christianity.

Be that as it may, Ecclesiology in our day has certainly moved into centre stage. Seeing the Church as *the Sacrament of Salvation*, it has become a foundational component of the theological enterprise. It is probably the most encouraging key to the resolution of our current impasse. **ND**

devotional

Oh dear, February!
Aidan Mayoss CR

There is only one good thing about February. It's short! In spite of global warming we sneeze and shiver, but take heart from the indefatigable snowdrops – a natural reminder of the annual miracle of resurrection, indistinguishable from the lying snow though they might well be.

All changes on the 21st, for that is Ash Wednesday and Lent is upon us. When Easter is early, as it was last year, no sooner is Candlemass past than Lent begins and we go on being surprised; this year we have some time to get ourselves organized and prepared, for Lent – the Holy Season.

What does the Lord require of us in this and every Lent? What he always requires: 'Do justly, love righteousness and walk humbly with God' [Mic. 6.8]. Almost imperceptibly we take to ourselves the customs of the materialist self-justifying and self-satisfying world; we become corrupt, soiled, blind both to our neighbours and ourselves, and doing justly is drowned out by the din of self.

As for loving righteousness, loving God and the things of God all goes a bit cold, like the church in February. Prayer is difficult; worship, well, perhaps when it is warmer... So we think, 'I'll do something about it in Lent, as I do every Lent,' and as for walking humbly with God, any walk-

ing we are likely to do will be backwards!

Consider those three verbs, to do, to walk, and to love. The negatives are not nice to contemplate, but contemplate them we must, for all sin is a deliberate turning away from God, and it is not that this hurts God, but it makes us a hindrance rather than a help to him.

So on Shrove Tuesday, before we gorge ourselves on pancakes, just remember that in old times they were not made from ingredients carefully packed for Waitrose, but with the fat and goodies still in the store cupboard before taking on the rigours of Lent. So to the pancake mix of our own lives: it must be sorted, recognized and forgiven, a really lovely pancake that we can offer to God for his service.

The purpose of Lent is not so that that we can get into last year's swimming costume but that we shall be ready and willing to walk humbly even into that desert where there are demons to be vanquished – demons of our own construction or imagining, or put in our way by others, waiting to pounce on the weakest bits of our very selves. Jesus' Baptism was followed by his temptations. Our penitence, being made strong again by the mercy of God, does not lead on to a lovely peaceful hymn-singing time; it just prepares us in the best possible way to face the demons and laugh at them.

So then, Lent is not a wretched six weeks of doing without; rather, is it a time for doing battle with lots of different demons, inside and outside us, and if we are steadfast we shall rejoice that much louder in the Easter Liturgy, for we shall know, at first hand, a little bit more of what Jesus endured for each of us. **ND**



Show him the way to go home ... see Letters, page 23

Eccles-ology

'Treat 'em mean, keep 'em keen.'

The philosophy of one-time Minister of Education, Sir David Eccles, came to mind as my radio recently announced Ryanair's record profits. Ryan's budget travel is aided by cuts in comfort to cut costs. No frills, no lack of punters.

A lesson here for the church? For years it has sought to indulge consumers. The way to fill the pews is to give would-be worshippers everything they want. The church should be as welcoming as Pizza Express with the waiters (sorry, clergy) intoning 'Enjoy.'

We often hear of the need to cater for comfort by installing lavatories in medieval churches. Why? What are buttresses for? Indeed, in charismatic congregations enforced hopping from foot to foot would suit the worship style.

If it's not vandalising ancient buildings by installing toilets, it's kitchens to allow for after-service tea in a 'social area' at the rear of the nave. 'Just recapturing the medieval way of using a church,' say the innovators.

Nonsense. Medieval folk knew nothing of tea. John Wesley correctly linked tea-supping with gin-drinking as a cause of moral ruin, and advocated beer. Save the expense of a kitchen. All that's needed is a barrel of ale.

Also, has anyone noticed that the Age of Faith came after the Roman Empire and its hypocausts vanished and before the invention of modern central heating? Churches should abandon promises of 'a warm welcome' and provide Siberian sanctuaries.

Long before budget airlines grew rich by treating 'em mean, John Fothergill became the most successful inn-keeper in England with his version of eccles-ology – giving the customer what he wanted.

He evicted salesmen for talking shop over dinner and turned away any couple signing in as 'Mr & Mrs Smith.' Farmers had to give up their preferred steak and eat Fothergill's choices, or leave. *Confessions of an Innkeeper* and *An Innkeeper's Diary* give the secrets of Fothergill's success and are better reads than most Lent books.

For growth the CofE should do a Fothergill: turn off the heating, bin the tea urn, trash the toilets and restore over-long sermons. Treat 'em mean and get them coming back.

Alan Edwards

Christ the new Adam

The link between Christ and Adam appears in several books but not always in the same way
Patrick Henry Reardon is a Senior Editor of *Touchstone: A Journal of Mere Christianity*

When the New Testament treats of the relation between Christ and Adam, the accent is largely on contrast. We are told, for example, that whereas Adam introduced sin and death into the world, Christ brought justification [Rom. 5.12–21]. Whereas corruption came from Adam, incorruptibility came from Christ [1 Cor. 15.20–49]. Disobedient Adam succumbed to temptation in the Garden, whereas the obedient Christ submitted to God's will in the garden.

These contrasts would not be possible, however, unless the early Christians had already recognized between Christ and Adam some structure of analogy that prompted them to compare the two. It is not difficult to discern those earlier points of comparison.

Comparing the gospels

Thus, an early story transmitted in Mark, in the context of Jesus' temptations, preserved the tradition of our Lord's companionship with the animals [1.13]. This story, of course, puts the reader in mind of Adam in the midst of the animals in Genesis. Jesus' victory over his temptations by Satan thus inaugurates a new state of Paradise, as it were, in which the friendly relations of men and the beasts, disrupted since the Fall, is restored.

In Luke the Adam/Christ analogy is subtler, and we discern it in the way the Lord's genealogy is arranged. We observe two differences between the genealogies in Matthew and Luke.

First, unlike Matthew, Luke traces the Lord's lineage all the way back to Adam, not just to Abraham. This format emphasizes Jesus' relationship to whole human race, and not just the Jews. For this reason, in citing the famous Isaian text that begins the ministry of John the Baptist in all the synoptic gospels [Matt. 3.3; Mark 1.2–3; Luke 3.4–6], Luke alone quotes the words, 'and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.'

Second, whereas Matthew's genealogy of Jesus comes at the beginning of his gospel, Luke places it after the Lord's baptism

and right before the account of his temptation. This arrangement prompts the reader to make the comparison that Luke has in mind to infer: the temptations of Jesus and the temptations of Adam.

Paul's eschatology

More significantly perhaps, St Paul, even as he contrasted Adam and Christ, called Adam 'a type of him who was to come' and went on immediately to speak of 'the one Man Jesus Christ' [Rom. 5.14–15]. That is to say, the perceived analogy between Adam and Christ was the basis for contrasting them. They are both 'Adam,' wrote Paul: 'The first man Adam became a living being. The last Adam became a life-giving spirit' [1 Cor. 15.45]. And he went on, 'The first man was of the earth, made of dust; the second Man is the Lord from heaven' [15.47].

Christ, according to the Apostle, is not only the 'second Man,' He is also 'the last Adam,' 'the final Adam,' the Adam by whom the world's last age comes to be.

This eschatology pertains to the Incarnation, of which Paul had written earlier, 'when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman' [Gal. 4.4]. The 'fullness of time' is the world's last age. Although all of biblical history was a period of preparation for the Son's assumption of our flesh, that assumption radically altered the direction and destiny of history. Adam was replaced.

Moving from history to cosmology, Paul later adopted another metaphor to express this replacement – Christ as head. For Paul this expression meant more than Christ's headship over the Church. It included also his headship over all the powers of creation [Col. 2.20]. Thus, Paul spoke of God's plan to 're-head all things in Christ' [Eph. 1.10]. This rather awkward phrase is Paul's way to describe Christ's relationship to creation as a whole. Adam's cosmic dominion [Gen. 1.28], was replaced and enhanced in Christ [Col. 2.9–10]. **ND**

Sacred vision

In 1436 Cosimo de' Medici gave the Dominicans the church and convent of San Marco. Michelozzo was charged with the radical restructuring of the buildings and Fra Angelico with their decoration. Without doubt the frescoes at San Marco are Angelico's crowning work. Each cell contains a meditative image relating the events of the Lord's passion and resurrection to the members of the order. The pictures are simple, devoid of any unnecessary embellishment. The Mockery of Christ, in cell seven, is the most ambitious of the series in the way in which it adapts the techniques of the illuminated or printed book to the painted panel.

Christ is shown blindfold and wearing the crown of thorns. He holds



The Mockery of Christ

in his hands a stick and a ball – the sceptre and orb of the Ecce Homo image. But here Christ is seated, reminding us of the Last Judgement or the Pantocrator. Behind him is a raised panel on which are painted his tormentors in abbreviated symbolic form. These symbols, as in the traditional image of the Man of Sorrows (cell 26), derive from the conventions of medieval books of hours (see Eamon Duffy's recent book, *Marking the Hours*, pp 132–133).

On a step below the central figure two others are in meditation, neither of them regarding the image behind them. The Virgin looks away, lost in contemplation. St Dominic is looking reflectively at the very Book of Hours from which the picture is taken.

Unchristian regulation

Thomas Cordrey continues last month's discussion on the forthcoming Sexual Orientation Regulations and the threat they will pose to Christian values

On 9 January 2007 over 3000 Christians from all denominations assembled outside Parliament for a peaceful torch-lit demonstration against the Northern Ireland Sexual Orientation Regulations.

While the crowds held banners proclaiming 'freedom to believe' and 'freedom of conscience,' singing hymns and praying, the House of Lords decided by 199 to 68 to keep the Regulations in force – the size of this majority not quite so impressive in light of the heavy whipping on the Lib Dems and Labour peers who turned out in force. Only the Conservatives and Cross Benchers were allowed freedom of conscience on the issue.

What were the grounds for opposing this innocuously-titled Statutory Instrument? The Lawyers' Christian Fellowship have written extensively about the threat posed by this law to the freedom for churches, Christian organizations, schools, charities and individuals to live and act according to the teaching of the Bible.

The operation and impact of the SORs are disconcertingly hard to explain, but upon close scrutiny their potential effect is clear: they constitute the use of secondary legislation to promote an unchristian moral view over a Christian one. Perhaps you think that this is nothing new. Well, the concomitant precedent set by the Regulations is that they render illegal full adherence to biblical teaching about homosexual practice and, in certain circumstances, will require Christians actively to condone homosexual practice. The alternative will be breaking British law.

Using powers created by the Equality Act 2006, the Government proposed a new law making it illegal for anyone who provides goods, services, facilities, premises, education or public functions to discriminate against that person on the grounds of their sexual orientation

i.e. whether they are homosexual, heterosexual or bisexual.

Where is the difficulty? Christians are commanded to love all their neighbours (sexual orientation having nothing to do with it) and as Christians we earnestly desire the repentance and salvation of all people, heterosexuals and homosexuals alike. However, the Bible is clear that the only rightful sexual relationship for which we were created is a relationship between a man and a woman in the context of a legitimate marriage. Consequently, any law which forces Christians to promote or assist sinful sexual behaviour (whether homosexual or heterosexual) forces Christians to sin themselves. It is perhaps important to point out that our concern would be the same were a law to propose that Christians should be forced to condone and promote adultery.

Several scenarios were alluded to in ND last month; but consider a Christian voluntary organization that provides services to the local community with funding from the local government. This could be a homeless shelter, a drop-in café, a drug rehabilitation project or a community centre. If that organization claimed the freedom to refuse to provide its services in a manner which could promote or assist homosexual practice, even if it never needed to act on that freedom, then it would almost certainly (see Regulation 16(8)) have its funding removed and possibly therefore be shut down.

This is not a case of a Christian centre refusing to serve a cup of coffee to a homosexual person. Far from it, such a centre (one would expect) would lovingly welcome all people who sought, in good faith, the goods and services it provided. But should a homosexual group wish to use the centre for an event clearly promoting homosexual practice, the centre would need the freedom to gently and

respectfully decline.


Do you think this scenario sounds unlikely? At the LCF we hear of numerous situations like this – at the time of writing, the latest such case (featured in The Times, 2 December) occurred when a Christian family centre, for vulnerable Eastern European families living in London, was threatened by its local council with withdrawal of funding unless they agreed to recant their position on homosexuality (which was 'we welcome homosexuals but we will not promote homosexuality').

Consider a Christian-run printing shop. If someone asked them to print material promoting gay sex, under the SORs, it would be illegal for them to refuse to do so. Does this sound unlikely? The LCF has dealt with two cases of Christian printers in this exact situation in the last few months.

The England, Wales and Scotland SORs are being finalized at the moment. If the Northern Ireland Regulations are any indicator, there is much to be concerned about. Although there are likely to be exemptions for churches, allowing ministers to refuse to bless homosexual partners and preventing the need for church halls to be hired out, upon request, to homosexual groups, there are gaping holes in the protection of freedom of conscience for Christians.

The problems fall into four main categories: the lack of protection for faith schools, the lack of protection for Christian organizations in receipt of public funding, the lack of protection for Christian commercial organizations and the lack of protection for Christian individuals (the exemptions in Northern Ireland only apply to organizations).

One overarching problem facing Christians which is illustrated by these Regulations, is the 'public private divide' which the state appears determined to impose upon believers. The SORs in effect say that you are free to be taught and to believe that homosexual practice is sinful, but you are not free to maintain this position with integrity for the other six days of the week. If you provide goods and services you are not free to refuse to promote homosexual practice.

The latest information can be found at:
<www.lawcf.org> 



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Ten glorious years

Great celebrations in St Davids Cathedral to mark the tenth anniversary of the ordination of women priests in the Church in Wales. The Right Revd Carl Cooper, Bishop of St Davids, said in a press release: *'Ever since the ordination of the first women priests in 1997 it has been my privilege to minister with a number of close, female colleagues. The last 10 years have demonstrated that our Church has been enriched, blessed and made more whole by women's priestly ministry. It now feels as if the Church of the past was incomplete. I am looking forward to the honour of presiding at the Eucharist this coming Saturday in St Davids Cathedral (13th January), together with my women colleagues, to celebrate the historic decision taken a decade ago and all that it has achieved. We will be joined by many clergy and people from around the diocese.'* Unfortunately (rumour has it) 'many clergy and people from around the diocese' had a prior engagement. The 30DAYS office understands that the Bishop was joined for the great occasion by a total of something like six dozen people, clergy and lay.



Whatever became ...

... of leading Welsh opponent to the ordination of women, Fr Carl Cooper? Writing in the *Western Mail* on the eve of the English vote in November 1992, he opined: *'The Church in Wales (and indeed the Anglican Communion) has always claimed to be part of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. Therefore if we are to see God's authoritative voice at work in His Church, then this must be seen in the whole Church and not just a miniscule part of it!! ... One of the saddest things in this whole debate is the effect it is having on our Church. The Church is being torn apart. Worst of all many clergy and people, out of loyalty to their own conscience, feel bound to leave the Church which they have supported and loved since birth. This is happening in Ceredigion today!!'*



Clothed in cogency

One person who, in the end, did not feel bound to 'leave the Church' was Fr Cooper. For, if you hadn't already guessed, Fr Carl Cooper and Bishop Carl

Cooper are one and the same. Writing in his January press release, he explained the reasons for his change of heart: *'Why did I change my mind? There are 3 reasons: 1) My own Church decided to ordain women to the priesthood. Either members of the Church in Wales believe that our Church is competent to discern God's will for us, or it isn't. Even those who take part in a debate by opposing the proposal are part of the ultimate decision. We must all own it, support it and rejoice in it. 2) I came to see the inconsistencies in the theological standpoint I had espoused and proclaimed. However, no theological standpoint is ever perfect and without flaw. 3) The 'No' vote in 1994 brought home to me the pain and anguish we were causing to our sisters in Christ. I could no longer justify denying the validity of their calling.'* It is always refreshing to read powerful and cogent arguments for a change of mind and 30DAYS readers will no doubt be able to decide for themselves the extent to which these qualify!



ftlog

Many thanks to Jonathan Wynne-Jones and the *Sunday Telegraph* for news of an exciting Lenten initiative from the Archbishops of Canterbury and York. We are all being encouraged to text the word 'Lent' to 64343 to begin receiving daily suggestions by text for actions from 19th February through to Easter Monday. Suggestions will include giving up your place to someone in a traffic jam or a queue, leaving a £1 coin in the shopping trolley for someone to find, saying nice things about someone behind their back and going into a charity shop and offering more for goods than they are worth. 'It's all too easy to feel we are powerless to make a difference,' the Archbishops say. 'But the truth is, with God's help we can change the world a little bit each day.' At 10 pence per text, and with half the profits going to the C of E, it's an opportunity no 30DAYS reader will want to miss! But, for the sake of the very many faithful who make a point of giving up their mobile phones for Lent, 30DAYS will publish its own list of suggestions of messages to help make a difference next month. ruup4it? A bottle of Forward in Faith Easter Champagne 4 the most facile printable offering; pls text yr suggestion by msg str8 to 30days@forwardinfaith.

com or by pc to 2A The Cloisters, Gordon Square, London WC1H 0AG.



On the ball

The diocese of Southwell & Nottingham is advertising for a Sports Ambassador, to work with individuals, groups, churches, clergy and youth workers. The brainchild of former Oxford Hockey Blue, Tony Porter, Bishop of Sherwood, the successful candidate will – according to the Church Times – 'need to have the credibility accorded by some sporting prowess of his or her own in order to open doors'. Before his consecration, Porter was Chaplain to Manchester City FC (13th in the Premiership as we go to press); presumably his experience there will already have told him that footballers who can open doors unaided are probably few and far between. Nor will there be much point in turning to cricketers, who always seem to be out no sooner than they are in, or to rowers, for much the same reason. The world of snooker might be a possibility, what will all those balls, but 30DAYS hopes that the lucky person will come from an altogether more taxing sport. For if it's credibility in the average pew that is needed, it has just got to be Bridge! The World Bridge Federation is already affiliated to the International Olympic Committee, and pressure is mounting for the sport to be included in the London 2012 Games. What better way for the C of E to kill no end of birds with one stone – in the sporting sense, of course!

And finally ...

The following announcement from the pages of the Church of England Newspaper needs no comment:

Correction: The Rev Canon John Christopher Stone, Bishop's Domestic Chaplain; and Bishop's Media Adviser (Rochester): to be Rector, Gravesend St George; Bishop's Communications Consultant; and County Chaplain, St John Ambulance (same diocese). This appointment was recently listed correctly, but in error under the heading of 'Death', for which we apologise.

Copy for 30 DAYS should reach FiF office by the 10th day of the month:
30days@forwardinfaith.com

Our friend Junia

John Hunwicke returns to that favourite New Testament character the Apostle Junia, but comes to a different conclusion to most people and explains it all with great care to his bemused questioner

So what's all this about Junia? Isn't it a disaster for us? Modern scholarship has revealed that the apostle Junias of Romans 16.7 is really a woman called Junia, so there was a woman apostle. Therefore, since bishops are successors of the apostles, women bishops are OK. Two of the greatest theologians of the third millennium, Tom Wright and David Stancliffe have said so!

No. Modern scholarship has revealed nothing of the sort.

So he's still a bloke and everything's all right?

No. She's definitely female. But that's no thanks to modern scholarship. And don't worry: everything is all right.

Now I really am lost!

Take your time. The point is that the great tradition of East and West, of Catholic and Orthodox Christianity, has always held that Junia was female. Check in your King James Bible, or – if you're into Greek – your *Textus Receptus* (the standard text used for centuries among the Orthodox). Read the Fathers. Almost nobody thought she was a male called Junias, until Martin Luther muddied the waters. Even then not many people took much notice of his view. In almost every Bible version, she stayed female until the twentieth century.

Then who on earth spread around the idea that she was a man?

'Modern Biblical Scholarship,' believe it or not! The Revised Version, probably influenced by the great J.B. Lightfoot, seems to have started the trend in 1881, and in 1927 the Nestlé edition of the Greek New Testament – the version which was supposed to be the modern, cutting-edge edition of the New Testament – established her sex-change. This was carried over into the United Bible Society Greek Testament of 1966, produced so that vernacular translators would have a 'reliable' Greek text to work from.

You mean they actually changed the Greek?

Not quite. Whether the Greek *Iounian* is the accusative of a masculine *Iounias* or of a feminine *Iounia* depends, not on the letters, but *solely* on the sort of accent the

word has. The early Greek manuscripts did not have accents at all. As soon as accents became fashionable, without exception the scribes put the feminine accent on this name, and nearly all the Fathers who mention Junia(s) assumed she was feminine.

Gosh, Lightfoot, Nestlé and chums must have had really watertight evidence for changing her gender!

Quite the opposite. They had absolutely no scholarly basis whatsoever for doing so. Remember that 'modern biblical scholars' of those days (present-day ones aren't always much better) were rarely more cheerful than when rubbishing ancient traditions, and presuming, at the drop of a hat, that they knew better than the Christians of eighteen hundred years.

So you're saying there was a woman apostle?

Hang on. That's a question which is still up for grabs. Junia (together with Andronicus) was 'of note among the apostles'. Does this mean 'well-known as one of the apostles' or 'somebody the apostles knew well'? The closest example in ancient Greek to the words and idiom in Romans 16.7 is in a play by Euripides,

which was still famous in St Paul's time, where the goddess Aphrodite is described as 'of note among mortals'. Goddesses are not mortals. So this is an *exclusive* use: Aphrodite was well-known among the members of a group (mortals) that she (as a goddess) did not belong to.

So that lets us off the hook, then?

Well, it was not my view that we were ever on a hook, as I'll explain in a moment. But our opponents point out that some patristic writers took the phrase as *inclusive*, meaning that Junia was well-known as a member of the apostolic group. In any language, there's often a risk of ambiguity about this sort of phrase. 'Tony Blair is well-known among politicians' could mean either that fellow politicians know him well, or that he is a politician whom non-politicians know well, or both. But a historian in two thousand years' time, with no other contextual information about Blair, would be ill-placed to judge what it meant. Ditto with Junia.

What do you think? Can we find some context?

Look at the whole of Romans chapter 16. It's a list of people St Paul knows in Rome and to whom he is sending greetings. If Junia really were a senior member of the apostolic group, verse 7 reads oddly.



THE GUILD OF ALL SOULS NEW CHANTRY PRIEST AT WALSINGHAM

The Revd Fr ALLAN DAVID BUIK

has been appointed by The Guild of All Souls to be the new Chantry Priest to succeed Fr Geoffrey Miller who has retired from that post. In addition to being in charge of the Chapel of St Michael and The Holy Souls at Walsingham Fr Allan will also be licensed as Priest-in-Charge of the C Parish of Holy Trinity, Hempton and Pudding Norton, Fakenham, and will assist the Priest Administrator at The Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham.

The Guild welcomes the opportunity to be able to work more closely with The Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham in the grounds of which The Guild Chapel stands.

The Bishop of Richborough will celebrate a Mass at 12 noon in Holy Trinity Hempton Parish Church on Saturday, 24th February during which the Bishop of Lynn will licence Fr Allan.

Afterwards the Church wardens will welcome Fr Allan and guests to a buffet lunch in the adjoining Church Hall.

At 4pm there will be Benediction in the Guild Chapel followed by tea in the Shrine Refectory to enable Fr Allan to be welcomed officially by members of the Guild and the Shrine as well as members of the Parish of Christ Church, Tunstall, Stoke-on-Trent, where Fr Allan have been Incumbent since 1991.