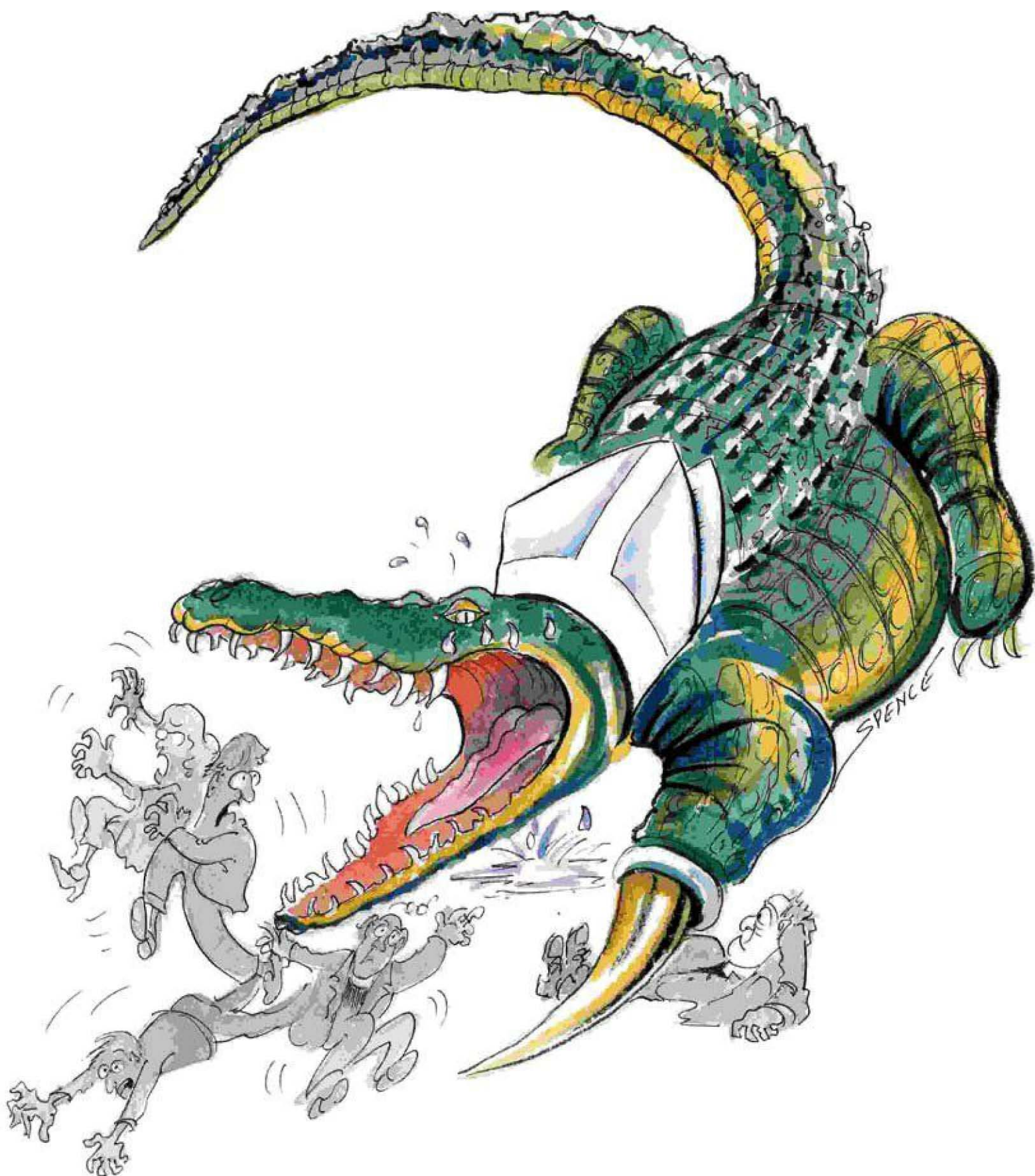


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July 2008  
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**Subscriptions**

NEW DIRECTIONS is sent free of charge to all members of Forward in Faith. Individual copies are sold at £2.50.

All subscription enquiries should be addressed to FiF UK Office at the address above.

Subscription for one year: £25 (United Kingdom/EEC), £30 (Overseas).

Priests from Anglican Provinces in Third World countries and students in theological training in the Anglican Communion will receive a free subscription.

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# A Code of Practice will kill the church

*If General Synod were to pass a Single Clause Measure it would mark an end of the Church of England as we know it*

**W**omen bishops are not the issue. The Church of England, through its Bishops and Synod, has in effect already decided upon this step. Though we firmly disagree with the principle, we fully accept the logic of the decision, and have, consistently and openly over the past few years, urged both Bishops and Synod to get on with it. Women bishops are not the issue, and there is no value in delay. It only hinders the mission of the church.

The sole question is the manner in which the legislation is to be formulated, and the provision to be made for those who in conscience cannot accept this fundamental change to Church Order. How will the Church of England

introduce this far-reaching self-modification?

The first option that will be presented to General Synod in July is the Single Clause Measure. This certainly has the merit of simplicity and neatness. What is done is done – with no second thoughts, no equivocation, no compromise, and above all no reference to the past.

All that went before is now irrelevant and is put to one side by a Single Clause Measure. We start again from now. It is, without question, neat and simple; it is also, in its own terms, coherent. However, a church without a history is an unsettling concept, as the Manchester Report has so admirably understood.

## What is the point of a Code?

**E**very proponent of the Single Clause Measure has sought to dress it up with a Code of Practice, to provide some form of (temporary) provision for those who cannot accept the innovation. Some have even gone as far as to debate whether a Code should be statutory or non-statutory, as though this would make any effective difference whatsoever.

We are against a code because it does not – and cannot – recognize the integrity of our theological position. Since the issue is theological, it cannot be settled administratively. We do not want a Code of Practice of any kind, for it would be utterly irrelevant to our needs. Its only purpose would be to act as a sop to the consciences of those proposing the Single Clause Measure, allowing them to pretend that they are being generous and meeting us half-way.

We would respectfully point out that where provision for a minority is concerned, an appropriate outcome can only be one that satisfies the needs of that minority. An honest refusal of any provision would be far better for all concerned than make-believe and hypocrisy.

Since a Code of Practice would deny solemn undertakings made in the name of the Church

by the Bishops and Synod in the recent past, it could in no way inspire trust in the present. It would, rather, be an invitation to open warfare and bitter resentment, which would result in court action and huge financial penalties for many years to come.

All this, however, is relatively unimportant. Not only do we acknowledge that, if the Synod is truly determined to introduce women bishops, their introduction should not be delayed; but we also acknowledge that 'what we need' is not the principal problem to be resolved. Within the Church of England we are in the minority – what happens to us, as individuals and as parishes, is *not* the most important issue.

What matters more is the CofE itself, and its future. Not for its own sake, of course, but for the mission of Christ's Church. Will the apparent coherence of a Single Clause Measure help the preaching of the Gospel? The answer is no.

We all recognize that we stand together at a crossroads, a moment of decision that will have far-reaching consequences for decades to come. A Single Clause Measure (with or without the fig-leaf of a Code of Practice) would alter the Church of England forever.

## The end of trust.

**A**s the Manchester Report makes clear, solemn and binding promises were made. It is understandable that many now wish those formal obligations to be rescinded, for the sake of greater coherence and uniformity. However

the Church of England could not expect to be taken seriously, if it had shown itself unable to take its own pronouncements seriously.

Professor McClean's assurance to the Ecclesiastical Committee of Parliament, the then



if tolerance  
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Bishop of Guildford, the Rt Revd Michael Adie's commitment to Synod, the confirmation of that commitment by Archbishop George Carey, all made it absolutely clear and unequivocal that the undertakings were permanent and not capable of being rescinded.

A Single Clause Measure (with or without the sweet talk of a Code of Practice) would send out a dangerous signal of promise breaking. We too understand that promises are often hard to keep, but a church that seeks to preach the Word cannot easily break its own words and expect still to be believed.

## ***The end of our self-understanding***

**T**he freedom and independence of the Church of England can sometimes embarrass its members, but it is part of our shared understanding that Anglicanism has a unique history that makes it somewhat different from the great Churches of East and West as well as the leading Protestant denominations.

This *via media* has been possible because the three-fold order of the sacred ministry has remained so remarkably stable throughout its turbulent history, despite periods of strong indifference and even opposition from within. The sacred ministry of the Church of England has been founded upon Scripture and shared within the one Catholic and Apostolic Church.

Even the most low-church Anglican, with little use for a bishop in their own parish church, nevertheless cherished that order within the Church of England as a whole. It mattered to the zealous missionaries of the nineteenth century on the other side of the world that true bishops followed their progress and anchored the church in the tradition and understanding of the past.

The status of our bishops mattered to them, and

## ***The end of the ecumenical trajectory***

**E**cumenism may have changed over the past few decades. Local ecumenical projects may lack something of the hope and dynamism of the last century. Nevertheless, no one is seriously suggesting that we should abandon those earlier hopes. Our Lord's command that we be one is exactly that – a command.

The structures of ecumenism are continually being modified and improved; inter-church dialogue persists and deepens; visits between church leaders are still seen as important statements of our common calling. The ecumenical imperative has not lessened. 'It is a road from which there can be no exit,' as Pope Benedict has said.

The introduction of women bishops will, we know,

## ***The end of the Anglican Communion***

**O**nly four provinces of the Anglican Communion have women bishops. It is likely that a few others may have them in the medium-term future. Whatever the precise number, it is clear that the Communion is sharply divided and will remain divided for a very long time.

The Windsor Report and the process which followed it may be flawed, but they have sought to keep the Communion together, to maintain the highest degree of unity possible. In this, they have relied upon two things. First, there is the mutual acceptance

Some have suggested that these undertakings were only 'perceived' as being permanent. This only makes things worse, suggesting that obfuscation and deceit are part of the normal, intentional discourse of the Church of England. A church that rejects or 'does not mean' its own solemn undertakings is on dangerous ground.

A Single Clause Measure does not seem an entirely honourable option. Ever since the famous Seventh Homily of 1547, Church of England people have been taught that 'every Christian man's word should be so true that it should be regarded as an oath,' and been proud to uphold that honourable tradition.

they matter to us, for we were, are and must always be an episcopal church. True bishops have a share in the Catholic and Apostolic character of the wider Church. Ordinary members of the Church of England have always known this, however much they may mistrust a more overtly Catholic understanding of the office.

A Single Clause Measure would remove this crucial link with the tradition received. It would say that episcopacy is entirely ours, and no longer shared with the Church that went before us. It would say that the past has no place in the new Church of England. The ordinary man and woman in the pew will know that they have lost something of real value.

Bishops are not simply the cleverest, most ambitious, or even the most saintly clergy raised to a higher managerial role within a clericalized church. They are not mere super-clergy. They are successors of the Apostles. They are part of an institution, national and international, contemporary and historical, that transcends its immediate churchy and clerical concerns. An Englishman knows this, and would resent the office being cut off from its past.

harm our ecumenical relations with the great Churches of East and West. The Archbishop of Canterbury has written to Cardinal Kasper and has said, 'I fully realize the level of ecumenical difficulty that will be created if we proceed to the episcopal ordination of women.'

A Single Clause Measure (with or without a Code of Practice, that in this context could be seen by implication as somewhat insulting) would sideline the Church of England in all discussions with the Churches of East and West. Relations with Rome, though never easy, have always been founded on the understanding that the Church of England shares in the Catholicity of the Universal Church. So visible and definitive a rejection of Catholic Order would end the ecumenical trajectory of the past hundred years.

and co-existence of the two integrities, both being 'loyal Anglicans' and both having a full place within the Communion. But second, and just as important, is the expression of this mutual acceptance and co-existence within the Church of England itself.

The bonds of unity within the Communion, and the various structures which have grown up to support and maintain this unity, are fragile. However, it is not structure alone that holds the Anglican Communion together, but history. The central role of the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Church of Eng-

land over which he presides is essential.

If the two integrities are to be maintained in the Communion, they must find some expression within the Church of England. This may not have been set down in any formal terms, but it is true nevertheless. Both sides of the great debate can still find a place within the CofE and under the leadership of the Archbishop.

If this were to be removed, the Anglican Communion would not long survive. Anglicanism would not survive the removal and denial of its history.

A Single Clause Measure (and a Code of Practice would in this context be a mere local irrelevance) would make the clearest, most irrevocable signal that

## The end of English liberalism

**T**he English liberal tradition has always been – and not only in its own eyes – liberal in its practice and interpretation. While continentals may have insisted that all right-thinking people sign up to the great manifesto, the English have been much happier to live and let live, to allow even to encourage the fuzzy edges.

English tolerance was for a long time part of our self-understanding. All things are permitted, unless explicitly forbidden. The Church of England has had many faults but in large measure has sought, deliberately and instinctively, to maintain and to express this tolerance within its own life.

With more and more unbending laws and regulations (so it seems) emanating from continental Europe, faced with a government unable or unwilling to make exceptions to these rules and ordinances, the Church of England is appealed to, even in a secular age, as an institution embodying the older values of tolerance and forbearance.

We may vent our frustration upon the manifest muddle, complain about the inconsistencies of treatment, and demand firm leadership. Yet how many either within or outside the Church of England truly

## The end of comprehensiveness

**I**f there is one word that sums up most powerfully the character of the Church of England, it is 'comprehensiveness'. For all that it is mocked, abused and misunderstood, it remains the bedrock of the ideal of a reformed, national Catholic Church. For all the failures over the centuries, this vision of inclusiveness (to use the slightly devalued modern synonym) has never been rejected. Until now?

Messy and untidy, undecided and a little bit lazy and hypocritical, parochial and complacent; one could continue the list of faults forever, but nothing can take away that vision of the inclusive people of God. Liberals, Catholics, Evangelicals, low, high, broad, state – it is part of what we understand to be

## The danger of the Single Clause

**T**he Manchester Report is right, 'The Church of England now faces some very serious decisions. They go to the heart of what sort of Church it wishes to be.'

The importance of the July vote is not about whether provision should be made for the minority. It is about what the denial of that provision – for this is what a Single Clause Measure entails – would

the Church of England had abandoned its role of leadership, example and mediation. If the Church of England, at the historic centre, cannot hold the two positions together on one small island, then how can the diverse Communion possibly hope to do the same across such vast distances and cultures?

A Single Clause Measure would make a narrower and more coherent church in this country, and in so doing would end the historic attempt to keep distant provinces together. The Anglican Communion is not imposed; it is voluntary. If the historic centre does not wish to live with difference, and makes a clear statement to that effect, it will be a great deal more difficult for others to do so.

wish it to lose its long history of tolerance?

Which is worse? The vicar who does not believe in God, or the Church that throws him out? We all draw the line in slightly different places, and we may all catch ourselves in inconsistency and contradiction, but as English men and women we have grown rather proud of this institution that can tolerate such intolerable thought and practice.

A Single Clause Measure (with or without a Code of Practice – do not all EU Directives come supplied with an abundance of such codes?) would kill this tolerance forever. To insist that all must sign up to the great manifesto, not on a matter of theological abstraction, but on a matter of practical and visible order, would be a harsh message of exclusion.

If tolerance cannot be tolerated, over something that was believed by all Church of England people not fifty years ago, then the past has been cut away. It is not the judgement that the minority are wrong, but the insistence that they should be eliminated once and for all, that is deeply unEnglish. This indeed would be 'the tyranny of the majority' against which the English liberal philosopher John Stuart Mill so forcefully wrote.

the nature of the Church of England. A failed ideal, but an ideal nevertheless.

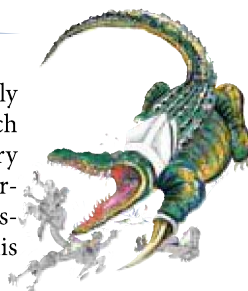
A Single Clause Measure (with or without a Code) would destroy this more comprehensively than anything else. There is a lot to be said for a confessional church, but this is not what the Church of England was ever intended to be.

A post-Single Clause church would be a tighter, smaller ecclesial body. It would be more coherent, less messy, with a clearer idea of itself; but it would no longer be the Church of England as we have known her. It would have turned its back on its vocation for inclusion, and lost its most distinctive characteristic, of comprehensiveness.

mean for the majority.

A Single Clause Measure (with or without the silly charade of a Code of Practice) would cut the Church of England off from its seventeen centuries of history and tradition, and turn it into something very different and manifestly diminished. For the sake of its distinctive mission, we must pray that Synod rejects this motion decisively. **ND**

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# Practical objections

*John Shepley sums up the practical failures of a Code of Practice which will create far more problems than it could possibly solve*

A single clause Measure with a Code of Practice has long been the aim of *Watch, Gras* and all those who have found the Act of Synod restrictive and offensive. It is, at first sight, a neat solution to a pressing problem. But simple solutions, in such circumstances, are not necessarily the most workable. One cannot legislate opposition out of existence.

To replace the 1993 Measure and the Act of Synod with a non-statutory Code of Practice would be to replace legislative and quasi-legislative provision with a Code which relied entirely on the good will of those administering it. A Code *depends* on good will; but it cannot create it where it does not exist.

Firstly, it would reflect badly on a Church which had given solemn assurances upon which serious decisions had been taken about future allegiances, careers and vocations.

Men have been ordained to the priesthood on those assurances, others have given a dozen years of faithful service on

the strength of them.

They (and others) will surely ask whether, having been betrayed by the Church they serve on this matter, they can trust it on any other. The deficit of trust would undermine the very fabric of the Church's life, and last for decades.

Secondly, the end of trust would begin a period of instability, perhaps even open warfare, between factions which would inevitably extend to other bones of contention.

Making a particular viewpoint illegal does not make it disappear: it may instead only encourage it as a cry of rebellion. So much of the life of the Church of England depends upon a spirit of mutuality and co-operation: this would simply disappear.

Thirdly, there is the considerable financial cost. Sooner or later clergy, whose position had been rendered untenable by the removal of legal provision, would seek redress in the courts. Constructive dismissal and judicial review would prove expensive and protracted.

The church has so far proposed no financial provision for those who would be forced out, no doubt because it could not afford to do so a second time. But can it afford the legal costs which would almost certainly accrue? The assurances made in the name of the Church of England by those with the authority to do so back in the Nineties would be eminently bankable in a court of law.

Legal costs apart, however, there would still be a cost in terms of the Church's evangelism and mission. One of the arguments for women priests and bishops has always been a missiological argument: that we must do these things so that the Church will be credible to the world in which it ministers. But a Church that was at war with itself about its own orders would be unlikely to exhibit that credibility.

A divided Church would be speaking to a divided world; for inadequate provision in the eyes of opponents, you can be sure, will not end the battle but exacerbate it. **ND**

Spiritual direction is a ministry in which dis-ease figures greatly. Sometimes this is the dis-ease caused by guilt produced by past actions and omissions; sometimes it is the dis-ease caused by present unresolved conflicts or anxieties; sometimes it is the spiritual dis-ease and confusion caused by physical illness. In the holistic approach of Christian spirituality, the spiritual life of an individual is embedded into a dynamic physical and emotional context. Because of this, I often find myself exercising a ministry of healing. Indeed, it would be true to say that the whole endeavour of Christian spirituality is the quest for wholeness and healing.

It follows that when an individual approaches a time of physical or emotional trial, open to the means of grace, the Lord provides an opportunity for a closer walk with God – a deepening in faith, hope and love. Although the first port of call might be a doctor's surgery, the second should be that of a priest or a trusted Christian friend.

Here is some practical advice about prayer and healing. The first thing is not only to pray for oneself but also to

## Ghostly Counsel Prayer & Healing

*Andy Hawes is Warden of  
Edenham Regional Retreat House*

ask others to pray for you. Make sure that you are on as many prayer lists as possible! This opening up of your need will be met by the generosity of God. The second thing is to make a determined effort to keep your spiritual life going. Illness, by its nature, means that we can manage less. My advice is that a time of prayer or Bible study should not be one of the first things to go. If you are struggling with this, share your difficulties with others and trust the Lord to give you the help you need.

The third is to make a regular Communion. The parish priest will be more than happy to arrange this for you at home. Far too many people

think that it is too much bother for the priest, or think it is something of an admission of failure to ask for a home Communion – nothing could be further from the truth. Be assured that receiving Holy Communion in your own home is as real, effective and prayerful as in church, and in many cases more so. Fourthly, if you are full of anxiety and fear, open your heart to God in prayer or make a confession to a priest. There is wonderful healing grace in the confessional. Finally, if it is not offered, ask for prayer with the laying on of hands and prayer with anointing. God surely works in the ways he has promised to do.

For those of us who are in rude health, it is important that we keep the sick and housebound at the heart of personal prayer, and as a cause for prayer and service by the whole Church. We are after all one body and when one member is sick or in trouble, the life of the whole body is weakened. If we are faithful in sickness as well as in health, the Lord draws near to us and he will bring good out of our troubles – if we look to him as the source of life and goodness.

# Less like a Church

*John Richardson offers an evangelical perspective on the impact of the Manchester Report 'single clause' option and is in no way encouraged by the prospect*

**F**or those, such as *Watch*, advocating the Manchester Report's 'Single Clause, Code of Practice' option as the way ahead on the consecration of women bishops, there is just one question that should be asked: 'Do you accept that men opposed to women's ordination will continue to be consecrated as bishops in the Church of England?'

The answer must surely be 'No.' Indeed, given the tiny handful of such consecrations which have taken place in the last few years, despite the 1993 Episcopal Ministry Act of Synod, any other answer would have to be seen as reflecting either self-delusion or the intention to delude others.

## Exclusion

That Act established that 'no person or body shall discriminate against candidates...for appointment to senior office in the Church of England on the grounds of their views or positions about the ordination of women to the priesthood.' Yet there is no doubt that it has been consciously and deliberately ignored.

This being the case, the abolition of the Act of Synod, and the other legislation established in the Priests (Ordination of Women) Measure, must spell the end of an episcopate which includes the 'two integrities' established by the Act. And this would entirely change the nature of the Church of England. In C.S. Lewis's words, the body which resulted would be 'much more rational' but not near so much like a Church."

A key feature of a church is surely that no one should be excluded whose views are consistent with its understanding of the faith. And in the Church of England, this has hitherto been defined as a faith consistent with Scripture – consistent in the sense that nothing which contradicts Scripture is required to be believed or practised.

## Widening divisions

As is well known, however, opponents of women's ordination generally believe that this indeed contradicts, or at least bends close to acceptable limits, our understanding and application of Scripture. Equally, there are those who, whilst holding identical views on Scripture's authority, do not find the same difficul-

ties. That this is recognized is part of what it means to acknowledge two 'integrities'. This being the case, it should be obvious that, at very least, the church should continue to include people of both integrities at every level.

Resolution J6, for example, passed at the 1977 National Evangelical Anglican Congress, whilst acknowledging the failure to give women 'their rightful place as partners in mission with men' nevertheless continued, 'Leadership in the Church should be plural and mixed, ultimate responsibility normally singular and male.'

Thirty years later, such a view would be held by a minority even within Evangelicalism. Yet this change seems to have been driven by sociological rather than theological considerations. Indeed, the letter written by *Watch* and others, and signed by several hundred women clergy,

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## adherence to Scripture will have been deemed a secondary consideration in determining policy

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speaks explicitly of the need to eliminate 'discrimination' against women. When pressed, it is clear that advocates of this approach are deeply uncomfortable with the Bible's own language and with its traditional understanding and application.

## Lack of diversity

Again, the divisions between the Church of England and other churches are being widened. But for those who respond that this has not previously been a problem (for example, during the Reformation), it should be pointed out that, in the process, those other churches are not being subjected to the same analysis as the Church of England. Hence whilst the Church of England 'must' have women bishops because to do otherwise would be to perpetuate discrimination and render our mission to the nation hopeless, few voices are (yet) being raised saying the Church of Rome must do the same if it is to be taken seriously.

The Church of England has been torn

by the ordination of women and will be further torn by their consecration as bishops. A degree of tearing is inevitable because ordination is not an opinion but an action, and a church which tries to accommodate those acting in mutually incompatible ways is always bound to experience some tension. Nevertheless, the one advantage of the traditional Anglican 'fudge' is that a remarkable degree of co-existence has hitherto been achieved.

As the Manchester Report itself points out, however, the single clause approach would spell the end of such accommodation, at least in this regard: 'The Church of England that emerged at the end of the process might possibly be more cohesive. It would undoubtedly be less theologically diverse.'

However, a key feature of that lack of diversity would be the inevitable absence of episcopal representation by those who continue to hold the traditional, historical and (in their understanding) biblical view of the church's leadership. And an episcopal church which excludes from the episcopate those who hold certain views has thereby enshrined opposition to those same views.

Thus, whilst the Church of England undoubtedly includes many who are essentially 'Baptists' on the issue of infant baptism, it would be unlikely to consecrate an anti-paedo-baptist to the episcopate. Being a covert (or even overt) Baptist does not exclude one from the Anglican Church, but this is an issue on which the Church has decided views. Adopting the single clause option would put women's ordination on a par with infant baptism.

## Anglican anathemas

We might instructively contrast this, however, with things which evidently do not exclude one from being a candidate for the ministry: sitting light to the physical resurrection of Jesus, reserving or adoring the sacrament, being in a non-celibate same-sex relationship, being divorced and remarried, and so on. All of these are things which, though varying in moral and theological significance, are either contrary to Scripture or to the church's Articles and Formularies. Yet all are held or practised by people currently

in ordained ministry. By contrast, not agreeing to the ordination of women will join the relatively select list of Anglican 'anathemas.'

The difference, of course, is that with respect to the above list of functional *adiaphora* the church either remains formally committed to the alternative view or at least does not exclude those who hold it.

Thus a person may believe that remarriage after divorce is forbidden in the Bible (indeed, given the words of both Jesus and the Apostle Paul, it is hard to see how they could think otherwise), despite the Church of England's recent officially libertarian stance and frequent turning of a blind eye. But they would know that whilst they might be deemed 'old-fashioned' or 'hard-line', they would not be formally excluded from the episcopal ministry.

By contrast, disagreement with the ordination and consecration of women will, henceforth, mean being increasingly limited to the margins of the church. Thus, on a matter on which tradition is unequivocal and Scripture at best open to interpretation, the Church of England will, remarkably, have found the rare ability to narrow its theological views to the point of exclusivity.

### Worrying consequences

The fallout, in every sense, is to some extent unpredictable. The following, though, at least seems likely.

First, and perhaps most importantly, adherence to Scripture will have been deemed a secondary consideration in determining fundamental policy and practice. Not all supporters of women's

ordination sit light to what the Bible has to say, but many do, and their views will have been privileged. That they will regard themselves as having won the day must have clear implications for the future development of the Church of England.

Secondly, those who continue to hold the traditional view, whether Catholic or Evangelical, will have to decide a course of action. Resolution C parishes and clergy will be faced with the prospect of

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### the most likely result for Evangelicals is compromise and assimilation

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losing their current bishops, something virtually all will regard as unacceptable.

This will lead, thirdly, to the internecine wrangling that history shows high-handed and ill-conceived actions inevitably produce. The church will thus find itself holed below the waterline in terms of evangelistic effectiveness for the next decade or so. Instead of getting on with mission, its members will inevitably get on with arguing and tearing one another apart.

Fourthly, in the rump which remains, a counter-Scriptural, egalitarian feminist agenda will have gained the centre ground. Those Evangelical supporters (and, perhaps, opponents) of women's ordination who endorse or accept the new arrangements will find themselves faced with a triumphant liberalism

whose next aim will undoubtedly be the inclusion of same-sex relationships and the modification of our concept of God (the latter is clearly stated on the *Watch* website).

### Radical shift

The most likely result for Evangelicals, therefore, is compromise and assimilation, theologically and functionally. With 'hard-line' Conservatives no longer coming forward for ordination, the Evangelical leadership in the middle ground will broaden even further. Many who were previously unpersuaded about homosexuality will soften their opposition, whilst some of their continuing traditionalist friends seek to maintain fellowship with them and others drift further apart.

Meanwhile, increasing numbers of women appointed as bishops, very few of whom will be recognizably Evangelical, will understandably make the necessary changes in policy and appointments to reflect their own theological dispositions.

### Decisive shift

Ultimately, the ethos of Anglicanism will have shifted decisively, not just because of what was decided, but because of how it was decided, by excluding people from the episcopate on the grounds of their faithfulness to Scripture, whilst allowing those who are demonstrably less faithful to Scripture and the church's Articles and Formularies to continue unchallenged. As a consequence, we may in the future wonder if the Church of England will be not merely less like a Church, but less like a Christian body at all. **ND**

## Sea Sunday

**T**he sea historically causes much separation. Hence perhaps, when we are assured in the Book of Revelation that there shall be no more sea, the reference is to Church unity. Those lines of Matthew Arnold sum matters up: 'Yes, in this sea of life enisled, With echoing straits between us thrown, Dotting the shoreless watery wild, We mortal millions live alone.' This is by the poet of an island nation: I wonder if it would mean as much to a Swiss or Austrian, or a resident in the American Middle West.

Is a nation's religious bent so dependent on geography? The split between Catholic and Orthodox may suggest not, but that between the Church of England and the rest suggests the opposite. You may

say that Greece, that great archipelago, should have dozens of Churches, whereas it has one. True, but the Greeks had to cope with the Ottoman Empire. Greek individualism shows itself in many other ways. There is a saying to the effect that one Greek is enough for a political party, two Greeks for an argument, and three for a café. Credit to the Greek Orthodox Church for holding such people together.

Matthew Arnold goes on to write that God 'bade between their shores to be The unplumbed, salt, estranging sea.' What a wonderful image, vast and bitter.

I choose to live by the sea, because, however devouring, it excites me. It abounds in natural food and exciting possibilities, swimming or messing about

in boats. There is danger, of course: remember that epitaph in the Greek Anthology: 'We are the graves of those who were shipwrecked in the great storm; but sail you on, for on the day that we died, the other ships sailed on.' Remember what Red Sea did to Pharaoh's cavalry, how the Mediterranean threatened yet saved Jonah and Paul. Remember Galilee, highway and source of food, yet terrible in a storm.

We are on the verge of Sea Sunday, when I suppose we mostly pray about the physical dangers of the sea. Yet remember those other dangers. Spare a moment, as you gaze across the North Sea at the Catholics and Lutherans, to ask yourself why very few of us are either.

*Paul Griffin*

# The Oxford heritage

This month sees the celebration of the 175th anniversary of the beginning of the Oxford Movement. **Jeremy Sheehy** looks at the Movement's origins, impact and legacy

**T**here is something about anniversaries which excites people. The celebration of the millennium was very special. Institutions celebrate their centenaries. Silver and golden wedding anniversaries are marked with especial events. Most of us like to have our birthdays remembered. And so it is appropriate that we mark the 175th anniversary of the beginning of the Oxford Movement, the name given to the religious campaign which led to the modern Catholic Movement in the Church of England and indeed in the wider Anglican Communion.

The Oxford Movement did not just lead to the Catholic Movement in the Church of England; it shaped Anglicanism and therefore English Christianity decisively. We keep this anniversary this year on Monday 14 July, in accordance with John Henry Newman's view that John Keble's Assize Sermon on 14 July 1833 was the real beginning of this Movement.

## The early years

The Oxford Movement is so-called because its first leaders (Newman, who became a Roman Catholic in 1845; Hurrell Froude, who died young in 1836; John Keble, who preached the sermon and went on to be an exemplary and much-loved parish priest at Hursley; and Edward Pusey, who joined the Movement only after it had got going but became its most significant leader after Newman had moved aside and Keble had immersed himself in Hursley) were all leading members of the University at Oxford, where the Movement had its first developments, triumphs, and indeed disasters in the 1830s and 1840s. But before long, the men and women who had been influenced by the early stages of the Movement were moving out from Oxford into the rest of the land. And they took the Oxford Movement with them so that it became a national (and subsequently international) movement within Anglican Christianity.

Let me emphasize, as others have done, that to begin with the Oxford Movement was not about making services more 'high church' in the sense of increasing ritual and ceremonial. Pusey does not seem to have liked music in worship and Keble was never very happy with ceremonial developments. It was about getting people in the Church of England to grasp the doctrine of the Church. It was about proclaiming the truth of the Church as part of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the truth that Jesus intended his Apostles to form a community, a society, a people (Michael Ramsey's *The Gospel and the Catholic Church* (1936) is still worth reading for the way it explains this).

## One, Holy, Catholic

And because the Nicene Creed said this Church was One, that meant being interested in what other Christians who were not Anglicans believed and practised, and sometimes adopting their ideas, even if this interest was thought by some to be un-English and disloyal. It is, for instance, comical to read nowadays the things that were said by bishops in the nineteenth century about those who first tried to restore religious community life in the Church of England.

Because the Nicene Creed said the Church was Holy, that meant setting before men and women the call he nineteenth

century it was revolutionary to suggest that upper middle-class young men might go and be curates in the worst slums of Victorian London, or that nicely brought-up young ladies could go and join a religious community at work in those slums. The clergy would need to be trained for their work, and active and appropriately professional in it, not simply saying a couple of services each Sunday and spending the rest of the time as lesser members of the gentry, and so the theological colleges of the Church of England developed, very much as a consequence of the Oxford Movement (even those which were brought into existence so as to be Evangelical strongholds came into existence because the Oxford Movement had shown the Church of England the advantages of training the clergy before ordination).

Because the Nicene Creed said the Church was Catholic, that meant the leaders of the Oxford Movement insisting, as few had insisted since the seventeenth century, that in terms of the great divide between Western Christians in the sixteenth century between the Catholic and the Protestant forms of Christianity, the Church of England was Catholic, sacramental, ecclesial, believing in our co-operation servant-like with the work of salvation.

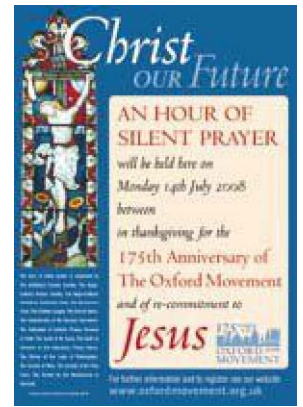
At a stage when the English character was still shaped (some might say scarred) by the way in which the stories of the Spanish Armada, the Popish Plot, and the persecutions of Mary Tudor were told (to say nothing of the centuries of the oppression of Ireland), telling members of the Church of England that they were really Catholic Christians was radical.

## An influential inheritance

Because the Nicene Creed said the Church was Apostolic, that meant the Oxford Movement looked back for authority and guidance, not to the sixteenth century and to its religious debates and controversies, but to the early Church. It is indeed arguable that the importance the leaders of the Oxford Movement gave to the concept of the apostolic succession and the stress on the three-fold ministry (of deacon, priest and bishop) is part of the reason why we have too often demonstrated the symptoms of an over-clericalist Christianity and have sometimes seemed as though we were rather better at producing clergy inspired by the ideals of the Oxford Movement than at producing lay-people similarly inspired.

Most of you, like me, will know that you have been moulded by this inheritance. For me, that has been the case since before I can remember. You only need to see a picture of the church where my parents were married and I was baptized to know that. Overwhelmingly I am grateful for it, although I can also, I think, recognize that some of the areas where I am weakest or most easily outside my comfort zone are also a result of this inheritance.

For many, you will have entered into this inheritance in the course of life attracted by something about it. All of us could gain much by joining in the acts of prayer that will mark the 175th anniversary of the Oxford Movement on Monday 14 July 2008. **ND**



# Out of Manchester

*Tony Delves sets aside the politics of the Manchester Report and asks what sort of response we should make to the challenge it poses to our understanding of being faithful Christians*

**F**rederick Engels once said the quickest way out of Manchester is drink. The Manchester Group offers many choices but not this one! Their Report, though, might excuse us for being driven to it. This is not a criticism of the Group or the Report. It is skilful in its clarity, its economy, its dispassionate and even-handed analysis. It models what is needed now.

So why do I want to reach for the bottle? Partly because the issues and their resolution are so complex. Partly because there is a sort of surgical feel to the choices which makes you realize this *is* going to hurt! But perhaps most of all it is the absence of vision, promise, hopefulness, which makes you wonder if *any* satisfactory outcome is possible.

This is *not* the fault of the Group. Such issues lie beyond their very specific brief, but I would be surprised if their discussions were not animated by those other, bigger, considerations. The Report hints at this in its very last paragraph [105], 'The Church of England now faces some very serious decisions. They go to the heart of what sort of church it wishes to be.'

There the Report ends. Here our task begins. We need to take up the challenge of that question, to explain to all who are willing to hear why adequate provision should be made for us, and why it is necessary, desirable and viable. Two tasks for us stand out among all the others: Discernment and Witness.

## Discernment

Discernment means listening for the voice of the Lord and entering his peace. The first is the way, the second the reward. It may sound obvious, but the storms of passion have a way of drowning it. Because in the synodical system politics is so important, there is always the tendency to reduce everything to manoeuvre and calculation.

For all of us, the imminent choices demand a tremendous act of faith. We may appear to others like the Cats Protection League, or a Steam Railway Preservation Society, but we retain the conviction that, in God's providence, there is purpose in our existence and work to be done for him. Discernment sounds mystical but, like most things spiritual, it is more like hard work!

Recently a petition was sent to the House of Bishops, said to be from up to half of all women clergy. The signatories said they would rather not have women bishops at all at this time if it meant conceding Statutory Safeguards to us. It repays careful reading. The letter speaks eloquently of the depth of misunderstanding which fifteen years or more has done nothing to heal. It also reveals a depth of real personal pain.

Our feelings may be as passionate but not personalized in this way. Listening to these voices, in their own terms, not ours, makes it clear how deep is the present fracture. It is a situation in which dialogue is virtually impossible. This has serious implications for all projections of Special Arrangements, however many variations are produced.

## Witness

The Report makes clear that this is the time for choices. But on what grounds are the choices to be made? This is as much a dilemma for us as it is for the General Synod and Bishops. One way of advance is to ask in the first instance not 'How do we solve this problem?' but 'How do we respond to God's opportunity?' An awareness of gifts helps us to focus opportunity, and it is to our gifted constituency we must witness, on pain of their being lost.

What gifts do we bring? How and where can these gifts best be used now, to his glory? These questions relate to some other basic issues. Firstly, why should the Church of England make any provision for us at all? Secondly, if those provisions inhibit the full and free exercise of those gifts, what does stewardship of them entail?

## A contribution ethic

What are we bringing to the Church of England that justifies the insistence on new structures? That is not the point. The point is that we may fairly claim to have been graced in those gifts, which we contribute to the common good. Here is my list.

1. Gifted people – laity, religious, clergy. Within the Integrity there is a wealth of scholarly, pastoral, spiritual and artistic gifts. Can the CofE afford to lose them, and similarly gifted people yet to come?

2. The Religious. It was the Sister-

hoods and Communities, of women in particular, who re-established the Religious life in the Church of England. Some say the crisis in vocations to the Religious life means their hour is past. Their history shows a new hour and fresh forms are never far away. Does the CofE value this living tradition?

3. Pastoral skills. Many of 'our' parishes are UPAs, our pride and our glory. Our understanding of priesthood, and our rootedness in incarnational theology, still produce an effective priesthood second to none. We have always been good 'down town' and prepared to go there. Does the CofE want us there or not?

4. The Tradition. Our co-ordinates are longer and wider than any other wing of the CofE. Schooled by the Fathers, taught by the wider church, East and West, we have variously opened windows, built bridges, started conversations. Does the CofE want to lose this organic link with wider Catholic Christendom?

5. The Liturgy. This is the centre of our common life. We have an understanding of liturgical life based on scholarship and experience which has benefited the rest of the CofE immeasurably. It matters crucially in ecumenical and missiological terms. It is something we do well. As someone has written, 'The evangelizing power of noble catholic worship should never be forgotten or underestimated.'

## Joined-up thinking

We need to talk more, and more widely, about what we as a constituency can bring to the whole, because it is seriously at risk. The loss would be not just a CofE matter, but a needless, self-inflicted wound which fails the Gospel.

The soundest way of resolving our difficulties is, paradoxically, to move beyond them, to ask more searching questions about much bigger issues.

The Manchester Report points the way when it says the Church of England must decide what sort of church it wants to be. There are many answers to this question, but the most vital relate to mission and evangelism. Does the church not need the gifts we are prepared to bring? If so, we must be given the tools. **ND**

# devotional

## Gallant and high-hearted happiness

Anne Gardom

**'G**allant and high-hearted happiness'. This phrase was like a tune on the brain. It had rattled round in my head for years before I found out where it came from, and the beautiful prayer of which it forms a part. It is the prayer of the Most Distinguished Order of St Michael and St George, which was founded in 1818 by the then Prince Regent to honour men and women who have served their country with distinction abroad.

### The Prayer

Grant us, O Lord, the royalty of inward happiness and the serenity which comes of living close to thee. Daily renew in us the sense of joy and let Thy eternal Spirit dwell in our souls and bodies, filling every corner of our hearts with light and gladness: so that, bearing about with us the infection of a good courage, we may be diffusers of life, and meet all that comes, of good or ill, even death itself with gallant and high-hearted happiness: giving Thee thanks always for all things.

### Inward resources

Many members of the Order will have lived lives far from home, often in the public eye, often in circumstances of danger or difficulty. This prayer asks both for the inner resources of faith and seren-

ity, and for their manifestation in outward conduct and attitude. It has always seemed to me to be a blueprint of how a Christian can try to live a life of courage and joy in a complex and often threatening world.

It is a prayer with an active ring to it, as befits the people for whom it was written. They are busy people in a busy and demanding environment, so it includes a plea for inward resources, as well as the energy and courage to play one's part in the world.

### A practical blueprint

It asks for inward happiness and serenity – a royal gift, so that we may be able to live our lives of faith and hope, and moreover, it asks that the Eternal Spirit may fill us with his light and joy. How wonderfully attractive such joy can be (and not merely a mindless optimism!) when we see it illuminating and energizing everyday life. It is indeed the 'infection of a good courage'. The word 'infection', usually with such negative associations, is here stood on its head and is an infection we can all spread and we all need!

Finally, we come to the phrase I have carried with me all those years, rather like a small boy with a pebble or a precious conker in his pocket, turning it over from time to time. We all have to meet the 'good or ill, even death itself' in our lives. Everyone knows this, and every human being, of faith or no faith, has to find their own way of living and dying. The final words of this prayer give us a vision of how we may live our lives bravely and gratefully 'with gallant and high-hearted happiness, giving Thee thanks always for all things'. **ND**



Trust me. I'm a Code of Practice.

## Anglican rock

**I**f someone cut me in half, 'CofE' would run through me like a stick of rock. In December 1992, I felt I would be better off dead than leaving the church of my Baptism. Thank God for the Act of Synod, flying bishops and their ministry.

Now, old uncertainties wake me up in the night. What will become of me and my kind? My whole being is Anglican. As a chorister I came to know Matins, Evensong, Holy Communion and many psalms by heart by the age of eleven. It shaped my experience of God and my understanding of it. I have always thought of God to the sound of church bells.

I do actually believe, in the depths of my heart, that being Anglican is my best chance of living an orthodox faith as an Englishman. Even amid the present confusions I can live a life of prayer, worship and service, rooted in apostolic faith and order, richly expressed in my native culture. This is the tap root of my soul.

Despite extensive exposure to Rome and Byzantium at home and abroad, both options are non-runners for me. They are altogether foreign in look and accent. Part of the problem is being English. I don't suppose the Welsh, Ugandans or Canadians feel the same.

To leave the church would be to divorce me from community. As a country parson, my ministry is to everyone everywhere from cottage to castle. I am indigenous, deeply rooted; it would be a miracle to transplant me. What of my family, nuclear and extended? I would dread a spiritual divorce with my wife (who would never move) or my children and brother.

Then there is my life as a priest. I did make promises (the Lord being my helper) and I did say that I understood that the people I served were 'bought with the price of Christ's own blood'. Is my conscience too high a price to place on my priestly ministry? Could I deny all that has gone before?

Those who expect me to swallow the single clause or move on do not begin to understand how deep the challenge of conscience goes. I am afraid I will have no choice but to stay and fight (in a very CofE kind of way). Those who would rejoice at my going (and I can think of a few) do not understand either the nature of conscience and its conviction or what it means to be CofE.

Andy Hawes

# In God's image

*The purpose of time in our understanding of God's love*

**Patrick Henry Reardon** is a Senior Editor of *Touchstone: A Journal of Mere Christianity*

**S**aid He Who Is, let us make man according to our image. There is no need to do so, but let us do it anyway. And since we do it freely, let a free creature be the object of our act.

This creature must be free, but his freedom should have some purpose beyond simply being free. This is likewise true, after all, of our own freedom. In choosing to make man according to our image, we do not choose for the sake of choosing, but for the sake of love. We freely make man in order to love him.

More than this, we make man in such a way that he will know himself to be the object of our love. For this reason, we will endow him with a heart, an impulsive principle that will find no rest except in the discovery of this love.

## Slowly unfolding revelation

Let us make man in such a way that we will 'grow' on him. We shall reveal ourselves to him bit by bit, not all at once. Thus, we shall place time as a component of his existence. Man will learn to love us through a new experience that he will call chronology, and this sense of chronology will be a component of his existence. Man's chronological sense will teach him the significance of time.

Because events happening in time will be the medium for the revelation of our love, we will take steps to make certain that man's attention is drawn to the sequence involved in his existence. We will construct man's world in such a way that he will be encouraged to observe the passage of time, to record its periods, to measure its course, and to reflect on his own consciousness of it.

To make this easier for man to do, let us place him on a ball that spins at some distance from a source of light, which he will call the sun. As the ball spins, half of it will always be in the

light, half in the darkness. Man will observe the regular transitions between light and darkness, and in due course he will start counting these transitions. This arrangement will provide him with an elementary chronology.

Let us make this arrangement more interesting, however. In addition to the ball's spinning in the presence of the sun, let us also set it on a course rotating around the sun. Because this rotation will be more gradual than the ball's spinning, it will escape man's attention for a while, but he will eventually observe the thing. Indeed, we will place other balls out in space, each with its own spin and orbit. These complications will encourage man to measure time more completely.

## Making the world more interesting

In due course man will work out mathematical equations involving all of these observations, thus refining his ways of recording time.

In fact, while we are doing this, let us give this spinning ball just a wee flip of the finger, so that it will spin with a slight wobble. Thus, the transitions between light and darkness will be marked by variations, and the ball's rotation of the earth will have seasonal characteristics. These variations will have no effect on the measurement of time, except to make the whole process more interesting. Because the passage of time will thus be adorned with variety, man will notice it all the more.

We calculate that six days should be enough time to accomplish all these preparations and to provide the physical setting in which man will spend his life. After that, we should really put in a day to rest from our labours. Once man begins his journey through history, after all, it is unlikely that we shall either slumber or sleep, because man will need our constant attention.

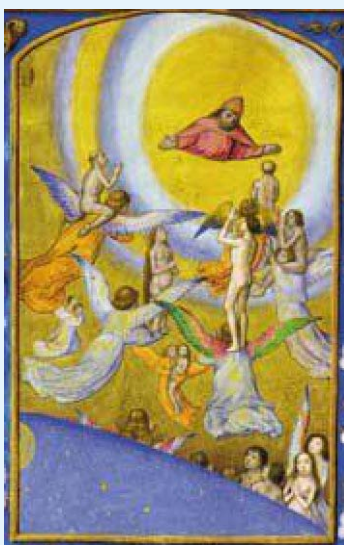
For now, however, let us begin. Let there be light! **ND**

## Sacred vision

**I**t is one of the problems of science, and philosophy, that too much imagination gets in the way of truth. The 'big bang' is a wonderfully expressive concept, and a large part of the reason this modern cosmology is so widely accepted. Unfortunately the image is so widely accepted that more complex problems of physics surrounding the 'naked singularity' are now more difficult to discuss, not less.

The problem is not, however, a new one. The metaphysical understanding of the resurrection of the body, and the re-creation of our new self in the kingdom of God, has for two millennia been a challenge for theologians. Generally, such theological philosophy has been soberly and precisely presented.

Nevertheless, since the subject is the human person, and human persons are naturally interested in the promise of eternal life, some concessions to the imagination must be made. Artists are called upon to express the Christian hope in a way that



## Souls of the blessed

engages the heart of the believer.

In this book of hours from Ghent in the late 1470s, we see a more sensitive depiction than we might expect, very different from the richly detailed Victorian presentations of heaven.

Each person is completely naked, in a simple pose of prayerful adoration. They are all weightless, so that while some are carried or stand on the shoulders of their angel, others are lifted on a hand, or in one case clasped like a child.

The angels' robes, and above all their wings, are gorgeously coloured, as they bring their precious charges through the circles of light. Above them is the figure of the Father, his arms open in welcome.

This is no Garden of Eden style paradise, as though heaven were an actual place. There is only the simplest depiction of a world beyond creation. All is focused on the persons, human, angelic and divine. This is the love and the hope to which we are called.

*Anthony Saville*

# A greater whole

The second part of **Bishop Martyn Jarrett's** talk on Anglican ecclesiology and the arguments for and against living with its flawed ecclesiology

*Delivered before the publication of the Manchester Report, to a chapter of the Society of the Holy Cross, and before the present concerns over the wording of a General Synod motion, this talk offers a different and less political perspective on some of the issues facing loyal Catholic Anglicans.*

**A**gainst all this there are some firm and positive reasons for seeking to remain within the Church of England. The claim of the Church of England, at the time of the Reformation, was to appeal to the primitive Church. The Reformers were not intentionally innovators. The Reformers, rather, considered themselves to be recalling the Church of England to what the early Church had believed and practised and to see that as the yardstick for measuring the life of the Church of England.

We know now, of course, that Cranmer and his colleagues were much mistaken about what the early Church had actually believed and practised. Cranmer's Prayer Books are a thousand miles away both from what we now know the early Church to have believed about the Eucharist and from that Church's eucharistic rites.

## The primitive Church

Thus, for instance, the Caroline Divines felt no difficulty in recalling the Church of England to believe in the Real Presence and in Eucharistic Sacrifice. The Tractarians, similarly, recalled the English Church to a wide number of practices and beliefs reflecting those of the primitive Church. It is true that they mistakenly thought that a great number of these beliefs had been, in fact, embodied in the Anglican Settlement.

It is interesting to note, though, that when such a prominent Anglican Catholic as Darwell Stone was challenged about continuing with beliefs and practices contrary to what could be proved from Anglican formularies, he said the important thing was to appeal beyond them to the understanding of the early Church.

The whole understanding of doctrinal development, championed by John Henry Newman, was not yet a significant theological insight available to many previous generations of Anglicans. Nor did they live, as we now do, in a consciously ecumenical age where the churches of

Christendom consciously are seeking a consensus on what is the authentic understanding of our common received faith. For all his openness, John Henry Newman's doctrine of the Catholic Church ultimately sought to demonstrate how non-Roman Catholics were outside the true Church.

## Moving together

By contrast, much modern Roman Catholic theology struggles to emphasize the way in which Christians of other traditions relate to the Church in which Rome understands the Catholic Church to subsist. Furthermore, those state-

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## in some parts of the Anglican Communion, individual Anglicans are struggling to remain faithful

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ments from the Roman Catholic Church, emanating from the time of Pope Paul VI and picking up on a theme from the Maline Conversations nearly a century earlier, and that talk of an Anglicanism that is united with but not absorbed in the Roman Catholic Church, all suggest a reason for moving forward corporately rather than for individual submissions.

In a nutshell, it could be argued that our particular vocation as Anglican Catholics is to help our fellow Anglicans to discover and to recover what it means to be authentically Catholic in faith and order. If we were to achieve that, then we would all be well on the way to the corporate reunion for which we long, and which the ARCIC process has helped so much to move forwards.

If there is a case for staying, then it is in such considerations that the argument is to be found.

## Flawed ecclesiology

The snag is that, for many of us, the admission of women in the episcopate would stretch to the limit our capacity to live within a somewhat flawed ecclesiology which we are busy trying to heal. Whatever other compromises the ordination of women to the episcopate

would demand of us, it would also mark the beginning of a church no longer validly ordered in the way that we would deem to be necessary.

At least when the Church contained within its ministry non-episcopally ordained presbyters from Protestant mainland Europe, it would be possible to discern who such people were. Likewise, with the admission of women to the order of priesthood, you and I can choose to avoid the ministries of those of whom we are not sure that they are true priests in the Church of God.

Admit women to the episcopate and in time it becomes very difficult, if not impossible, to discern who is and who is not a true bishop and a true priest within the Church of England. To put matters crudely, you and I could not even practise the impaired Communion that we experience at present because we would not usually be able to recognize where in that impairment of Communion anyone stood!

## God's call

A friend whom I greatly respect says that, even then, he would regard it as sinful to leave the church where God had called him to be. I have some sympathy and we have to recognize that, already in some parts of the Anglican Communion where little or no provision has been made for those who share our viewpoint, individual Anglicans, not least members of our Society of the Holy Cross, are struggling to remain faithful.

It is a similar position to that faced by those first non-Jurors who, in their age, would not join in a continuing Anglican Church. All they could do was to remain faithful to death, trusting God to carry on his truth in ways that he chose and they could not, as yet, perceive. As I say, I have a great sympathy for this position but, ultimately, I am not entirely convinced. God may call his Church to be a faithful remnant but still God calls that Church to mission.

A church without a guaranteed sacramental ministry arguably cannot sustain its work in advancing God's mission. For me it would be a position of last resort and, in such circumstances, I would take a great deal of persuasion that God were not calling me into a more authentic expression of his Church elsewhere. **ND**

**12 + 7 = 26**

Elsewhere in this issue of NEW DIRECTIONS, Stephen Marsden draws attention to the arithmetical skills of *Watch*. But it is not only at St John's, Waterloo, the HQ of Mrs Rees' merry band, that the calculator is on the blink. Take, for example, the website of Westminster Abbey, and the page there devoted to the Canon Steward, Jane Hedges – one of the more prominent of the 'nearly half' (*sic*) of the CofE's women clergy who put their name to the infamous letter. Written in 2006, her potted biography runs:

*Canon Jane Hedges has been in ordained ministry for 26 years, having served seven years as a deaconess, seven as a deacon, then as a priest since 1994.*

OK, calculators (or fingers) out! By our reckoning, 1994 to 2006 equals 12 years; add 7 years as a deacon, and that gives you a total of 19 years, not 26! So who on earth thought that the lay ministry of a deaconess counted as 'ordained'? Answers on a postcard, please.

**Academe**

Meanwhile, we see that the Revd Dr Jane Shaw and the Revd Professor Christopher Rowland at Oxford have undertaken to direct a research programme funded by the Panacea Society of Bedford. A look at their website <www.panacea-society.org> is, er, interesting – they believe in a Father-Son, Mother-Daughter foursome in the Godhead, not to mention a sealed box of prophecies which is only to be opened under certain strict conditions, such as a request by twenty-four bishops of the Church of England 'in a time of grave national danger'. Crumbs!

**What's in a name?**

As well as the *Watch* petition for lay people of no particular belief to sign in favour of women bishops and no provision, there is of course one for 'male clergy and retired bishops' to sign. A week into June, it had no less than 894 signatures. Two of them were from what one has to assume are ladies – a Margaret and a Jane – but anyone can make mistakes, especially on the internet. Some who haven't made any mistake, though, are those

famous clergy siblings, the Anonymous brothers. When last we checked, four of them had signified their agreement that we should be off, and we imagine Mrs Rees is even now trying to round up the rest of them! (Quite how many that will amount to we're not certain, as Crockford's seems not to list any of them...)

**Democracy in action**

The recent episcopal vacancy in the diocese of Molde, in the Norwegian church, has been filled. Parishes throughout the diocese were asked to submit their preferences from a shortlist, and a clear victor emerged. The state authorities then decreed that the second-placed candidate was to be the new bishop, on the grounds that there weren't yet enough women in that post. Great rumblings in the diocese about the abuse of democracy, never mind the (very) few who don't like the innovation in the first place. Still, it could never happen here, could it?

**Forward in Faith in Glasgow**

An advert recently spotted on the website of the Scottish Episcopal Church: 'Rector – St Aidan's Clarkston – We are a small but enthusiastic congregation of moderate catholic tradition in a pleasant area on the south side of Glasgow. We seek a dynamic Rector to lead us forward in faith and mission.'

FiF's Regional Dean for Scotland has written to the Primus to thank him for this new degree of openness in the SEC, and to assure him that he knows just the man for the job!

**1993 and all that**

The 30DAYS team, preparing itself for the York General Synod, has been having a look at the website of the Open Synod Group. Most of the links on the home page don't lead anywhere (yes, we know there's a joke in there somewhere) but what really caught our eye was a recent newsletter, with an article by someone called Canon Christopher Hall. One sentence in particular deserves the widest possible circulation: 'The Act of Synod in 1992 was intended to protect those

who might then claim that the Church of England was not that from which they accepted holy orders, *not those who have accepted those orders subsequently*' (our emphasis) Unfortunately, nowhere does our copy of the Act of Synod 1993 (not 1992, but if you're rewriting history, who cares about dates?) say anything to suggest that it does not apply to those ordained subsequent to its passing – perhaps Canon Hall could let us have sight of his, so that we can see precisely what else was intended that the rest of us don't know anything about.

**Crystal balls**

A peek into our future, courtesy of the Revd John Beverley Butcher of Pescadero, California, writing in the House Rag of The Episcopal Church, *Episcopal Life*, where he encourages his readers to let go of the Nicene Creed in the Sunday Eucharistic liturgy; he calls the Creed 'a speed bump' that impedes the 'natural flow from the ministry of the word into prayer.' 'Since 1979,' he writes, 'I have quietly resumed the natural flow of worship by omitting the creed; none of the members of my congregations have missed it. I would encourage others to let go of the creed and feel the freedom.'

**Stop Press**

30DAYS just took itself off to the website of *Watch* (no URL – you don't want to go there!) to have a look at the Press Release (*sic*) which Stephen Marsden writes about elsewhere in this issue of NEW DIRECTIONS. But as soon as we clicked on the relevant link, the following message appeared: 'The file is damaged and could not be repaired'.

What on earth can it mean? Perhaps the wealth of statistics (*sic*) it contained just proved too much for the sisters' system to cope with. Unless, of course, someone spotted all the arithmetical errors – no, that can't be right! They'd have issued a clarification, wouldn't they? After all, Mrs Rees wouldn't want anyone to be misled – would she?

*Copy for 30 DAYS should reach FiF office by the 10th day of the month:*

*30days@forwardinfaith.com*

# Notting Hill riots

**George Austin** looks back at the 1958 race riots in Notting Hill and the efforts of enterprising individuals to deal with the aftermath, and finds an encouraging message in the fact that community relations have been largely restored

**T**wo centuries ago, Notting Hill was on the western edge of London. There was a racecourse whose northern tip is still marked by the curve of Blenheim Crescent and Elgin Crescent. Notting Hill dropped down on its western flank to Notting Dale, described in an article a century ago as the 'Avernus of Kensington', the gateway to the infernal regions. It was the place where the poor settled, coming into London hoping to find the streets paved, if not with gold, then at least with a better life than they had known. In the Fifties, it was said that you could still catch a West Country burr in some of the accents.

Gypsies settled there too, at first in caravans and then in the tiny cottages. One, Cinderella Smith, had come as a child and celebrated her hundredth birthday during my time as curate at St Clement's Notting Dale. I mentioned this years later when two travellers came to the vicarage door in Bushey Heath and they said in hushed tones, 'You *knew* Cinderella Smith?'

## Poverty and immigration

It was a tough area with much poverty. One street, which ran from north to south through the parish, had a roof-high wall cutting it off from the more affluent Norland Gardens just by Holland Park Avenue. Coming from Lancashire, I could not at first take in the fact that the terraced cottages mostly were each home to two families. Nor that 86% of a street of large four-storied Victorian houses contained at least one person with a criminal record. There was crime and prostitution but rarely a mugging and never a drug problem. And if few came to Church, most people were friendly and good-hearted.

With the influx of immigrants from the West Indies in the late Forties, in the SS *Windrush* and later ships, these too settled in Notting Dale, energetic to work and not welcome to many already there. Political correctness demanded that they be described as 'coloured' rather than 'black', and they provided fertile soil for the political far right.

On a Saturday night in late August 1958, it all came to a head. The next day the vicar, Fr Ronald Arthur, was saying the 8 o'clock Mass and I was alone in the

vicarage when the telephone rang. It was a journalist asking if I was preaching on racism that day. Why? Well, didn't I hear the noise of last night's rioting? I explained that in Notting Dale it was always noisy on a Saturday night (in fact we were often roused some time after midnight by Jimmy Mac pounding on the door to explain that he wouldn't be at Mass the next morning because he was too drunk).

## Nature of the disturbance

In fact it was the beginning of the Notting Hill race riots, the first major disturbance of its kind after the Second World War. There it was – not much more than a decade after the horrors of Nazi racism had been revealed in Dachau and Auschwitz and the rest. But by comparison with later riots in the UK it was a mild affair.

## it was a clever speech, encouraging violence without actually putting it into so many words

The police did not – and did not need to – wear protective armour and there were no petrol bombs. I was able to stand, in cassock, at the top of the steps of a Victorian house occupied by West Indian families with a baying mob at the foot and know I was unlikely to be attacked. Had it been in today's climate, I dare not have done it. One evening I saw a young well-dressed West Indian with a briefcase attacked and kicked to the ground before the police could get to him. Yet a few minutes later I was by Ladbroke Grove station where outside at a bus-stop people of differing races waited peacefully together.

The Notting Hill riots were probably mainly spontaneous rather than planned, but they soon became the focus of groups like the National Party under Colin Jordan (who had a shop in the area) and Oswald Mosley's British Union of Fascists, who used it as an opportunity to foment racial hatred.

Mosley had been imprisoned on the Isle of Man as a Nazi sympathizer during

the war and then, if my memory serves me right, he stood as a candidate in the 1959 General Election in North Kensington, losing to Labour.

## The Church's role

So where was the Church in this? In truth almost nowhere, for politics were not to be mixed with religion. The Bishop of Kensington, Cyril Easthaugh, did all he could to enliven the Church's opposition, but with little success. A meeting called by him and attended by the local clergy produced some support. At one point he asked the group how many 'coloured' people were in the congregations. One prominent Anglo-Catholic of the day answered, 'Not many at all – but you know, my Lord, most of them are dreadful people.'

After that the meeting ended fairly abruptly as the bishop realized it was not going to produce worthwhile results. The few of us opposing the riots were asked to stay behind and he was able to tell us of people who would be useful to contact for help and support. One of these was Fr Trevor Huddleston, at that time prior of the Mirfield house in Holland Park only ten minutes walk away from the riot area.

Another was Dr Richard Hauser, a prominent sociologist of the day, who gave much energy and advice both during and after the troubles. Yet another, perhaps surprisingly, was Nicholas Mosley, Oswald Mosley's son but totally out of sympathy with his father's politics (he later became a Liberal peer in the House of Lords).

When Mosley held a rally in support of the rioters in a street near our clergy house, I crouched with Nick in a shop doorway as he gave me a running commentary on his father's technique. 'Jeffrey Hamm (Mosley's deputy) will speak first. He will stop suddenly and from that corner over there my father will emerge, walk across and climb on to the platform.' And so it was, with Mosley, in black shirt, belted trousers and wearing a party armband, strutting across guarded by three or four thugs. It was a clever speech, encouraging violence without actually putting it into so many words.

Heavy rain a few days later brought the