

- serving the people and their parishes -

PARSON AND PARISH

is published by

THE ENGLISH CLERGY ASSOCIATION

**PATRON: The Right Reverend & Right Honourable
The Lord Bishop of London**

Founded by the Rev'd EDWARD G. COURTMAN in 1938

**The Clergy Association has the following aims, revised in
1992:-**

The English Clergy Association, as the successor to the Parochial Clergy Association, exists to support in fellowship all Clerks in Holy Orders in their Vocation and Ministry within the Church of England as by law Established; to uphold the Parson's Freehold within the traditional understanding of the Church's life and witness; to oppose unnecessary bureaucracy in the Church; to monitor legislative and other processes of change; and to promote in every available way the good of English Parish and Cathedral Life and the welfare of the Clergy.

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PARSON & PARISH

*the half-yearly magazine of the
English Clergy Association*

— “*serving the people and their parishes*” —

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CONTENTS

From over the Parapet	4
<i>Editorial:</i>	
The General Synod	
Women bishops, terms of service and fees	
Back to the Future: Recovering Confidence in the Church of England	8
The Association's Annual Address	
<i>The Bishop of London</i>	
Growing Leaders	15
Developing Church leadership at national and parish level	
<i>John Dunnett</i>	
The new Marriage Measure	21
Establishing a Qualifying Connection	
<i>Alex Quibbler</i>	
Book Reviews	26
Chairpiece	32
Reflections on Seventy Years	
<i>John Masding</i>	

Cover photographs are from the Association's Annual Meeting

FROM OVER THE PARAPET

Editorial

It has been an eventful summer, with the Global Anglican Future Conference at Jerusalem, the General Synod in July, and then the Lambeth Conference. The York Synod, in particular, was a significant moment both for many in our Association and beyond.

Women bishops

First, there was the decision to proceed with legislation enabling women to be consecrated as bishops and to prepare a draft code of practice for those unable to receive their ministry. Our Association, while maintaining within our stated aims “the traditional understanding of the Church’s life and witness”, is not a *traditionalist* organisation, and both proponents and opponents of women’s priestly and episcopal ordination are included in our membership. And we have, of course, both female and male clerics on our books. So we have no “line” as such on this issue. But we do have a line on how parishes and individuals, both lay and ordained, should be treated; in particular, this Association exists to support “*all Clerks in Holy Orders*” and to promote the “good of English Parish and Cathedral life” including the “*welfare of the Clergy*”.

If it is right that women should be admitted to the episcopate then, clearly, they should be able to operate unhindered, without restriction or qualification; anything less would be discriminatory and misogynistic. That said, those many lay and clerical members of the Church of England who could not accept this change as a legitimate development of the Church’s orders of ministry, must be given proper structural provision — to have space in a jurisdiction apart from the geographical territory in which a female bishop functions. Our Chairman, an advocate of women bishops, has previously written in this magazine in support of the creation of a further province, and the Manchester Report itself suggested the creation of additional dioceses as one possible way forward.

Whatever our own individual stance, the Synod’s decision of “7/7”— Monday 7th July — is one of which we should be ashamed. It represents a betrayal of the earlier assurances which traditionalists were given in the early nineties — that their place in the Church of England was as honourable and legitimate as that of the proponents of women’s ordination. Indeed, the doctrine of “reception”— upon which, in part, women’s priestly ordination was accepted by the Church of

England — demanded this. We were led to suppose that here were two equally authentic understandings which would exist in parallel until such time as the wider Church discerned whether such a change in holy order was consonant with apostolic faith. This honoured place, of course, found expression in the Priests (Ordination of Women) Measure 1993 — legislation enabling parishes to pass Resolutions A or B. The ability not to accept women's priestly ministry was enshrined in statute as a matter of *right*. But all that now looks set to change. If the Synod's vote comes to legislative fulfilment then those statutory provisions would be repealed and accommodation for traditionalists relegated to a code of practice.

Codes of practice vary in their form. Some are issued subsequently, to accompany legislation, and others may be specifically required by a parent statute. But they share common weaknesses; they are permissive, temporary (capable of amendment, more easily than a statute), and difficult to enforce directly when those with responsibility sit loosely to them. It is embarrassing to be part of a Church which does not want to understand the needs of a significant minority who are simply trying to continue, in their perception, the faith of the *majority* of Christendom, both now and throughout the ages. In the coming months, whether from the House of Bishops or from the Synod itself, we hope and pray that wiser counsels will prevail, and that a proper structural provision may still yet be found. If not, and laity and clergy are effectively driven out of the Church of their birth, then we foresee troublous times ahead, and the prospect of costly litigation including possible actions for constructive dismissal — now that courts are showing a greater willingness to see aspects of employee status in ecclesiastical office holders. Which leads us directly on to another disappointment from the Synod.

Clergy Terms of Service

Against the women bishops debate, other legislative business perhaps seemed to pass unnoticed. The Clergy Terms of Service legislation, which has absorbed much of this Association's energies in recent times, received its final approval, and now goes on for consideration by Parliament. What the Ecclesiastical Committee will make of it we cannot tell.

Before the Synod assembled, and in conjunction with Church Society and many patrons of livings, our Association circularised all Synod members, urging them to vote down the legislation. In the event, only

a handful of clerics and laity voted against or abstained, and in the House of Bishops the twenty present (where were the others?) were all in favour. If these provisions complete their legislative journey then the parson's freehold will, in due course, disappear. We forecast that many of those currently beneficed will become locked into their current posts, stifling some healthy continuity of movement, until the last remaining freeholder dies or retires.

As our last magazine explained, much of the devil will be in the detail, or lack of it, in the Regulations to be made under the Measure, and which will apply to all those under "common tenure". This over-regulated, yet curiously ill-defined, approach to the clerical profession will represent a major change of ethos as we move into a more performance-related culture, where the keynote will be clock-regulated working hours, compulsion and "co-operation". More power, as ever, will go to the bishop who will determine what time a cleric may spend on duties outside the parish. Again and again we have stressed that our stipendiary priests are not simply "like everyone else"; they are not salaried employees, but exist on a modest allowance with no proper career structure, and have to live vulnerably and openly in the midst of their workplaces, often in grim conditions — unlike, say, teachers or nurses. Against such a background, this Association's view has been that the relative independence, freedom and security — which the clergy have hitherto been able to enjoy — have amounted to a compensating factor. That compensating factor the Synod has now voted to curtail. And, given that clergy will be more akin to employees, then the prospect of constructive dismissal actions — in relation to women bishops — may be more serious than before. The flip side of control, performance and regulation must, surely, be redundancy payments.

Parochial fees

It is all part of a gradual diminishing of the office of our clergy, to make them low-grade employees in all but name — not quite yet tea boys and photocopying girls in holy orders, but at any rate far removed from the substantial and independent characters who until recently have graced the pages of the Church's history. Another example of this trend is the decision, by the same fateful Synod, to bring forward legislation on parochial fees, as recommended by the report *Four Funerals and a Wedding*. That report claimed that the public were confused about the variations between parishes as to fees, charges and "extras" in the pastoral offices, that the Inland Revenue was concerned about the

audit trail of fees handed to clergy, and that clerics sometimes found it difficult to “manage” the transfer of monies (such as to the diocese, in the case of assigned fees).

So, to meet these apparent problems (as to the extent of which we are by no means convinced), the incumbent’s element in parochial fees is to be abolished, in keeping with the abolition of the freehold. Funeral directors will account directly to diocesan boards of finance and bridal couples will settle directly with the PCC treasurer, so that on each occasion, the clergy are removed from the loop and completely side-stepped. Furthermore, there is to be a central “clearing house system” for funerals — on either a diocesan or deanery basis — so that undertakers may be guaranteed ministerial availability.

If these proposals make it to the statute book then they will remove one of the few rights to inalienable income that parish priests still enjoy, and will bolster the emerging picture that our clergy are not in public office, but downgraded to the employ of the diocese or parish, while, in addition, creating a completely unnecessarily, and costly, centralised bureaucracy, at some real expense to parochial integrity.

And into the future....

Our Chairman writes in this issue about some of the interminable meddling witnessed by the last seventy years, since the founding of our Association. And our Patron in his annual address, the text of which is also reproduced in these pages, speaks of “structural fidgeting”. We seem, more and more, to be entering a brave — or foolish — new Church: a fresh expression, we might say, of overbearing intolerance and intrusive control. It is often asserted that such is the hallmark of a declining organisation. But whatever meddling, fidgeting, and bureaucratisation we see, the Church — at heart — remains God’s and the gates of hell cannot prevail against her. That Church, and her parochial life in particular, this Association seeks to continue to serve.

BACK TO THE FUTURE: RECOVERING CONFIDENCE IN THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

Our Patron gives the Annual Address

Congratulations on reaching the age of three score years and ten, a time when we are very naturally thinking of the renewal of the Association and indeed of the Church which you serve.

1938. Bishop Winnington Ingram was still bishop of London having succeeded the great Mandel Creighton in 1901. Internationally it was an ominous year. The Anschluss; the Munich Agreement; Kristallnacht and Hitler was named *Time Magazine's* Man of the Year. On a more cheerful note it was the year when the first edition of the *Beano* appeared and the English Clergy Association was founded.

The population of England in 1938 was 38.4 million and they were served by 17,139 clergy of the Church of England. (It is worth remembering that in the year of the Glorious Revolution there were about 10,000 serving a population of 5.5 million.)

The Association has already witnessed a period of changing fortunes for the Church of England. Almost immediately there was war and here in London, in Coventry and other cities huge destruction.

Post war we were pre-occupied with reconstruction. One of the inescapable aspects of episcopal ministry is that you have to fulfil the diary of your predecessors as well as your own. Fiftieth anniversaries of the re-dedication of shattered churches abound and constantly bring to mind church life of the 1950s. It was a time when as my dear friend Alastair Haggard, then a curate at St Mary's Hendon said, "Modest pastoral diligence reaped a rich harvest". Many church leaders until recently were formed in this period of bulging Sunday schools and droves of ordinands. There has been a temptation until comparatively recently to regard the fifties as a kind of norm when it was in truth exceptional in our history. There was energy and confidence on the part of a generation who had seen and defeated evil and were confirmed in their sense of the right order of things. Talented men like Nick Stacey and Robert Runcie emerged from the forces having made the plausible decision that their determination to build a new and better society was best channelled through service of the Church of England.

Your invitation caused me to re-read the report first published in 1945, *Towards the Conversion of England*. The report contains a brisk description of the depravity of the world as well as a sober assessment of the evangelistic opportunities of 1945.

In view of recent emphasis on mission it is salutary to realise that the same notes were being struck in the immediate post war period, in the first ten years of your existence as an Association. "Up to the present, those called to the ministry of the church have been trained with a pastoral rather than an evangelistic office in view." There follow some familiar recommendations.

It concludes however in a spirit of contrite confidence expressed in the words of William Temple who had then so recently died. "Remember, the supreme wonder of the history of the Christian Church is that always in moments when it has seemed most dead, out of its own body has sprung up new life; so that in age after age it has renewed itself and age after age by its renewal has carried the world forward into new stages of progress."

The authors of the Report urge that "the Church should confront the task of the conversion of England with a deep sense of expectancy of what God can accomplish through human agency but with a questioning of ourselves as His agents for evangelism."

I can remember, as you can, many priests who stayed true to that deep sense of expectancy but also many good souls who were worn out or who left the ministry because of a sense of disillusionment.

Philip Larkin identified 1963 as "the watershed year" when as he said "sexual intercourse was invented". It was a year teeming with symbolism. Pope John and C.S.Lewis died. *Honest to God* was published. John Lennon said that the Beatles were more popular than Jesus Christ. It was the beginning of a huge social revolution bewildering to a Church which had in large part felt so much at home in Churchill's Britain.

Various expedients were tried and absorbed the energies of successive generations of clergy: synodical government; oecumenical rapprochement; liturgical change; structural fidgeting with an increasing elaboration of defensive bureaucracy; much ado about ministry. Some of the changes were sensible, but the hope expressed in introducing them, that they would halt the decline in church going and rekindle the interest of the English people in Christian practice, proved in every case to be a chimaera.

There was depression and denial as the Church became steadily marginal to life throughout the continent of Europe. "Denial," as Al Gore recently remarked, "is not just a river in Egypt". There was a retreat from this reality into an in-house agenda. True, there were occasional statements about the great issues of the time and even

the conviction on the part of some that the world was waiting to hear what Synod had to say on particular issues. But the statements were rarely, with the honourable exception of the Faith in the City Report, translated into action which could re-direct the energies of the church into an agenda that was more in tune with the growing concern of the population as a whole during this period of wandering in the wilderness created by the new post *soixante-huit* establishment which came to power in the media and in education.

Obstinately, however, 72% of the population in the most recent census identified itself as Christian, despite the incessant propaganda about multiculturalism and a large proportion of the 72% claim to be members of the C of E. But what this actually means was vividly illustrated by research done by the two main political parties as part of the last General Election campaign.

I was recently visited by the person responsible in one of the main parties for 130 focus groups and for inspecting the entrails of 500 individual interviews every night of the campaign. There was a clear message that people were universally concerned about the erosion of common values and the phrase “respect for others” was constantly used. The other area of concern was the collapse of moral authority and the position of parents was a neuralgic point. The moral framework was disintegrating and moral true north had been lost. The comments are similar to the analysis advanced by the authors of the *Towards the Conversion of England* Report decades earlier.

At the same time the groups and many of the individuals were clear about who was to blame. Politicians and the media; judges and the police; schools and the teachers were all arraigned — unfairly you might think, but no one blamed the Church. No, the news was even worse than that. Although the concerns centred on common values and moral authority no one mentioned the Church either positively or negatively.

Denial, of course, is one response to this evidence or yet another round of marketing-led strategies based on the assumption that we are in possession of the truth which we are charged to communicate to our generation.

You will remember our Decade of Evangelism. The assumption behind some of the planning for the Decade was that if only we could discover the right techniques for getting our message across then the people of England would fill the churches as they had done in the 1950s.

The results were not encouraging and here are some of the changes

that took place in the Church of England as a whole during the 1990s according to Canon Bob Jackson

Adult attendance	down 14%
Child attendance	down 28%
Confirmations	down 43%
Electoral rolls	down 13%
Stipendiary clergy	down 15%
Marriages in church	down 46%

I believe however that this experience was salutary. God makes all things new. That does not mean that God is making all new things. The crucial thing is to be quiet, patient and prayerful enough to receive him in a fresh way.

For Descartes, God may be an idea in our minds but the Biblical God breaks upon human beings from without and announces himself. Abraham, leave your city and your household gods. Moses, see this bush which burns but is not consumed and take off your shoes. Samuel, Samuel, listen to my voice. Zacharias! Mary! God discloses himself and is not dependent upon our thought. Indeed “*si enim comprehendis, non est deus*”, in the words of St Augustine. “If you can contain him in your mind then he is not God”.

The Bible is full of God’s call to all human persons. Now is the time to recover a sense of the call of God in each one of us but certainly in those who have been called to be his priests. He calls us to reflect on his hiddenness and to recognise our lostness. He gives us lamps so that we can unlearn and acquire the beginner’s mind. He teaches us to look for him in unexpected places and people. He stirs us up to be watchful, to be expectant and to look for his always surprising Advent in this new wired up world rather than in a continuation of the same old trends.

The Divine Word was, of course, made flesh — not words — and Jesus Christ not only taught the truth but is the truth. He is the communication of the Father and the human face of God. He is always fresh and when he takes up his dwelling in a person then there is release from fear, spiritual energy and joy. These things are easy to say and alas the words have often become dead and formulaic but the reality can turn the world upside down. The Church if it is faithful to Jesus must be the truth and not be deluded into thinking that we can communicate the energy of the Divine Word by reading out the wiring diagram.

As our pining for all the pomp of yesterday fades, as it has done in the wasteland of the past decades, we are potentially freer to look and listen for God's future in the world. "God led the people about by the way of the wilderness." We are, please God, now sufficiently empty to be filled by him, sufficiently humble to depend on him. Now after painful wandering and much wasted energy we are prepared to earn a hearing rather than assuming that people are still hanging on our words.

This demands a great revolution in our styles of leadership and communication but I believe that we are freer now to be the church that Christ prays for in our own day.

It seems to me that Anglican self-understanding and self-respect is at a low ebb. We experience our share of a general cultural confusion and Babel. Without some clarity, however, we shall not be able to contribute our best to the global Christian unity which is to come.

We rightly place an emphasis on the need to proclaim Christian truth "afresh" in each generation but it sometimes seems as if we have forgotten that if we are confined to our own point in space and time then our understanding of the gospel will be very provincial. To make a rich response to the future we must develop a rich memory which enables us to detect what is merely passing fashion and puts us in touch with "the dearest freshness deep down things".

Memory and mission belong together. If there is simply consciousness of the exigencies of the passing moment then even if there is some acquaintance with the isolated New Testament moment, it is doubtful whether our analysis of the contemporary situation will be very profound or our understanding of the witness of the New Testament really adequate. There will be too much temptation to read the scriptures in the light of a somewhat superficial grasp of contemporary issues.

That is not to say that we need to import a load of learned lumber from the patristic muniment room or freight our sermons with copious citations from Theodore of Mopsuestia. Rather we need to recognise afresh the significance for the classical Anglican tradition of developing the "patristic mind" which is not ashamed to adore and not afraid to reason; and does not confuse witness to tradition with an arid traditionalism. When we immerse ourselves in tradition we enter the living stream which unites the Church of all the ages and in which Christ is really present to his beloved. Traditionalism, by contrast, witnesses to the exhaustion of tradition and lacks the courage to go beyond repetition of previous formulations.

The theologians of the undivided Church of the first five centuries were faithful to scripture and showed a marked reluctance to go beyond its language to attempt definition in areas where there little biblical guidance. Their approach to scripture was exegetical, historical and mystical rather than systematic. The Bible is itself witness to the living tradition of God's communication with human beings and is not to be reduced to any system of philosophical or ethical abstractions. But in seeking to illuminate the sacred text, the theologians of the Early Church were not content simply to repeat old formulations in the very different cultural circumstances in which they found themselves. To have developed a patristic approach is to have acquired through prayer and study of the Bible a capacity to discern the signs of the times and the freedom to use or discard the categories of contemporary discourse in the service of the gospel.

A good example is to be found in the work of the Cappadocian Fathers who discerned that Arianism was the most profound threat to New Testament understandings of Christ and to the Christ they encountered in prayer. In the struggle for orthodoxy they enlisted some resources from contemporary culture and in particular they selectively employed some of the highly developed categories of Neo-Platonic thought.

The appeal to the "patristic mind" and a preference for their theological approach is characteristic of the English Reformation. Cranmer in the Preface to the First Book of Common Prayer, published 450 years ago, appeals to the authority of the "auncient fathers" as a guide in liturgical matters. Queen Elizabeth I, in her letter to the Roman Catholic Princes of Europe, amplified the point "that there was no new faith propagated in England, no new religion set up but that which was commanded by Our Saviour, practised by the Primitive Church and approved by the Fathers of the best antiquity."

The questions which confronted the sixteenth century are not the ones which are most urgent for us. They were called to reflect on the later mediaeval developments of the Papal Monarchy, following the Papal revolution of the 11th century. They were called to consider the direction of scholastic theology and the domination of Aristotle in philosophy. In the comparatively short period of the crusades and Western European cultural isolation there had been some developments which needed correction in the light of scripture and church tradition, eastern and western.

Many of the particular points at issue in the sixteenth century have been settled. The whole Western Church has a vernacular liturgy and since Vatican II a new vision of the whole people of God. The temporal

power of the Pope has been reduced but the spiritual and evangelistic potential of the office has been demonstrated. Transubstantiation has been relegated to a footnote as its usefulness in explicating the “how” of the Real Presence has collapsed with the Aristotelian physics which gave it its crucial terms of “essence” and “accidents”. We no longer shun elements of the undivided Christian tradition because they seem to have been appropriated by the “other side”.

There are still some questions that linger of course, such as the issue of whether clerical celibacy is obligatory. The Holy Paphnutius at the Council of Nicaea successfully argued that it was not obligatory but a special vocation but this position still has to win universal acceptance. And we have created new questions, on the one hand defining new dogmas with a slender biblical basis and making changes in the ministerial order of the church without the general consent of the whole Church Catholic

Our most pressing questions however are very different. How do we interpret the spiritual vitality of other faiths? How do we cope with the prevalent despair about the possibility of establishing any public truth in the sphere of faith and morals? Then there are the questions arising from the attempt to disestablish nature and the real possibility that ere long we shall possess enough knowledge of the genome to be able to re-design human beings. We have huge power granted us by the discoveries of the 20th century — shall we have the wisdom to use our power well?

As we seek the light of the gospel on these challenges, the experience of the theologians of the undivided church struggling to communicate the gospel in a pagan culture is fresh and relevant.

T.S. Eliot found in the Church of England “a way of living and thinking the Christian tradition which had taken humanism and criticism into itself without being destroyed by them.” Not afraid to reason; not ashamed to adore — I believe that if we knew our story better then we would be better equipped to serve the development of the universal church in the turbulent century which lies ahead.

This is the text of the annual address given by the Rt Revd and Rt Hon the Lord Bishop of London to members of the Association and of the Patrons Consultative Group on 12th May 2008 at St.Giles-in-the-Fields.

GROWING LEADERS

*John Dunnett on the need to develop Church leadership
at both national and parish level*

In a survey conducted in November 2007 by the Church Pastoral Aid Society 2000 evangelicals were asked to prioritize a list of strategic objectives in terms of how successfully these would contribute to the ministry and health of the Church of England at this time. The list included discipleship, the production of youth and children's resources and community engagement, but, interestingly enough, none of these were identified as the most pressing needs of the Church of England at this time. That "accolade" was reserved for the development of lay and ordained leaders. This of course is nothing new, and there have been many other extensive and robust research projects in recent years that have similarly identified the role of good leadership as the key factor in enabling local churches to experience growth. In his book *The Road to Growth*, Bob Jackson wrote, "It is widely agreed that leadership is the single most important key to the growth of the church." Such a conclusion is significant for an organization like the Church Pastoral Aid Society, since its overriding concern is to offer to the Church of England that which is most strategically significant to enable local parishes and churches to be effective in mission. The story of this 172-year old evangelical mission agency is one of unremitting commitment to the urgency of mission through the local church. For many years this urgency was encapsulated in its slogan, "The gospel to every man's door" and over the decades it has been pursued through a variety of strategies: the making of financial grants, training and support of evangelists, the running of a national children's network (CYFA/Pathfinders), liturgical resources, incumbent training, summer residential camps and the appointing of clergy (patronage) to name but a few.

In recent decades there have been changes in the Church of England landscape of almost tectonic proportions. The evangelical church itself has both blossomed and (at points) fragmented. The traditional formula of "one man, one church, one parish" is no longer the norm or assumed pattern of parochial ministry. The context in which the Church of England ministers is now a post-Christendom one in which the language of authority and the metanarratives of scripture are largely unknown and generally regarded as being of "hobby" status. Dioceses have accepted the challenge to develop staff, to support and encourage youth and children's ministry in their parishes as well as to

provide resources to foster mission and parish development for clergy and PCCs. To top it all, the financial challenges of the last 20 years arising from a combination of unsuccessful Church Commissioners' investments, the pensions crisis and the fall in church attendance leaves the Church of England in a place where it is no longer possible to continue as we have always done.

These challenges are not only challenges for dioceses and local churches. They also impact the ministry and effectiveness of organizations like CPAS.

For more than a year at CPAS we have been asking what would enable the Church of England in its current context to be more effective in reaching the nation for Christ. Of course, it is possible to short circuit such a conversation and to suggest that a God-given revival is the answer (I, for one, would welcome with joy a revival akin to that witnessed by Wesley, or the Great Awakening in America, or the Welsh Revival of 1904 — and I pray and long for such a happening). However, whilst we can and should pray for such a revival, in the meantime it is still incumbent upon us to help the Church pursue the Great Commission. The question is therefore, how best can we pursue it at this particular time? It is our conviction that CPAS' best contribution at this time is in the area and field of leadership development.

Such a conclusion is based upon what are perceived to be the CPAS core strengths — but also, and more importantly, upon the conviction that the primary need of the Church of England at this time is for a certain quality of leadership. Let me offer three attributes of leadership that are needed at this particular time to inspire and rejuvenate the Church of England for evangelism and kingdom ministry.

First, it is my conviction that we need leaders with vision. Such leaders have more than passion (although I believe they will have a passion to see men, women and children come to Christ). These leaders will also have more than a sound evangelical theology and a sense of urgency about gospel witness (though I believe they will have that also). Leaders with vision are those who have a clear picture or model of how their local church can fulfill the Great Commission in their context. Such visions will be at one level very simple, but certainly communicable, clear and focused.

Secondly, the Church of England and its local churches need a leadership that can enable things to happen. I have always found it fascinating that some people simply “make things happen”. I am referring here to the ability to see how things are and how things

should be and to make the essential and operational connections between the two. If the ability to cast a vision is the first part of the equation, then the ability to strategize its execution is the second. It is my conviction that there are churches up and down the country who are passionate about a vision but who have never been helped to see that vision become a reality. At one level this is a reference to the role of management — although how such a function is worked out in an average and local PCC is certainly not likely to be through any elaborate or sophisticated professional model. But common sense and good execution are not the sole prerogative of business management — and it is my conviction that local churches can and should be enabled to strategize effectively, so the vision to see the Kingdom of God grow is given “arms and legs”.

Thirdly, leadership needs to nurture individuals and build teams. Increasingly, patterns of ministry in the Church of England are collaborative — and likely to become evermore so as the number of stipendiary posts reduces (this raises the question as to whether this is a good policy for the Church of England — not an issue to be discussed in this particular article). It appears to me that there have been two supposedly Christian approaches to this which have, far from being helpful, actually undermined our effectiveness in mission for too long. The first is that we have too often allowed the “anyone can help” philosophy of ministry. So, because we have not wanted to hurt people’s feelings, we have opened the pulpit to any who felt they had a gift of preaching, we have allowed the out of tune to lead in worship, we have allowed a place on the PCC to become a badge of honour rather than an opportunity for those with leadership ability to shape the ministry and mission of the church. As a consequence of these, we have put square pegs in round holes, allowed people to operate outside of their ability and gifting, and all too often created a “cringe barrier” to the visitor and church fringe. Secondly, we have all too often operated from an “all hands to the pump” approach to keep various ministries alive and functioning when, what the situation really warranted was a discussion as to whether such ministries should continue at all. Such an institutional oriented approach to mission and ministry has allowed centripetal forces to dominate over the centrifugal forces of mission. We have continually sucked people into a maintenance mode of church, rather than empowering, releasing and inspiring them into service, ministry and witness outside of the church institution and diary.

The need therefore is for church leaderships to help the churches’

mission and ministry be shaped by the giftings God has given. I long for the day when incumbents, churchwardens, PCCs and ministry leadership teams work together to build teams to fulfill the commission agendas recorded in the gospels: to preach the gospel, heal the sick, cast out demons and witness to the ends of the earth, rather than merely debate the parish share, the church fabric and the job description of the secretary or administrator (important although all those discussions are!). It is the responsibility of leadership within the church to ensure that this release of God's people happens, and that appropriate teams are built, supported and directed to that end.

There are of course other functions and responsibilities that must be addressed by leadership. It is right that we expect our leaders to model Christ's likeness for us, to preach and teach faithfully from the word, to pastor and minister to the congregation and to serve in a Christ-like way. At CPAS we have a vision to see such a Christ-centered, Bible-based, mission-orientated leadership grown, nurtured and furthered.

There are various ways in which CPAS can make a significant contribution to the shape and quality of leadership in the Church of England at this time, and through this leadership development to enable the church to be more effective in mission. Firstly, in response to the continued falling numbers of young people in our churches, we need to enable young people to grow in and practice leadership within the church. We need to encourage and teach them in the principles and responsibilities of leadership since they are the ones most likely to win other young people to Christ. Secondly, and building on this, there is an urgent need to re-establish the "fast track" that once existed between university Christian Unions and ordained ministry in the Church of England. Whilst the Church of England as a whole is not able to recruit the same number of ordinands as was once the case, it is imperative that we do not ignore the evidence of the second half of the nineteenth century: young men and women recruited soon after graduation for a life time of ministry in the Church of England enabled the evangelical church to grow from its fragile mid-twentieth century position to its twenty-first century position of dominance. A further strategic contribution would be to enable those involved in the overall leadership of churches to be nurtured, grown and developed in their understanding and practice of leadership. This would include enabling all those who are part of PCCs, ministry leadership teams and elderships to have training, development and furtherance in responsibilities described earlier in this article. Can you imagine how

mission in the Church of England could be transformed if PCCs up and down the land were good at creating vision, building teams, releasing people in to God's gifting and formulating effective mission plans?

One of CPAS' historic ministries with regard to leadership has been involvement, as patron, in the appointment of clergy in 513 parishes. This is clearly a significant ministry and contribution to leadership in the Church of England. It is our experience that the three-legged patronage "stool" of bishop, parish representatives and independent patrons makes a robust contribution to the process of appointing leaders. And so, far from being an out-dated or distracting process, some have argued that all parishes should be able to benefit from such a system. In parishes where the bishop is the patron, this would necessitate patronage being handed to an independent patron or body such as CPAS. Some have feared that the patronage system is being threatened by the suspension of livings. However, it is our experience that, even when livings are being suspended (for pastoral reorganization or other objectives) we are still being encouraged to play a full part in the appointment process (as indeed the Patronage (Benefices) Measure 1986 envisages) — something which continues to be received positively by the parishes involved. Looking further ahead, and wider afield, with talk of schism within both the Church of England and the Anglican Communion as a whole, one wonders whether the evangelical patronage societies will have an increasing role in representing evangelical parishes, even to the point of being a mediator or bridge in situations where relationships between individual parishes and episcopal leadership are poor, such an independent third-party playing an "honest broker" role is often much appreciated already by bishops and patrons alike within the appointment process.

In the foreword to *Understanding Leadership* (Finney, 1989), George Carey, the then Bishop of Bath and Wells, wrote: "Show me a growing church, where people are being added to the faith and growing in it and you will be showing me effective leadership... Churches and fellowships grow because of visionary leadership. Conversely, where churches lose heart and fade away... it is connected with leaders who cannot lead."

It is our conviction that the church will only become truly missional, effective in evangelism and passionate about seeing men women and children come to Christ, when the leadership of our church is enhanced and developed. For this reason, we believe that CPAS' strategic contribution at the start of the twenty-first century must be centred upon and focused around this development of leaders. We would ask

for your support and prayers as we work with local churches, dioceses and other individuals and agencies to see the growth of the leadership (lay and ordained, young and old, male and female) that is shaped like Jesus, passionate about Jesus and effective in bringing others to a saving knowledge of him.

The Reverend John Dunnett is General Director of the Church Pastoral Aid Society.

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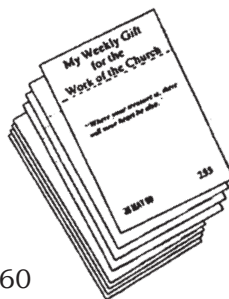
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THE NEW MARRIAGE MEASURE

*Alex Quibbler, Parson & Parish's legal agony uncle,
looks at the "Qualifying Connection" extension to
marriage following banns*

The Church of England Marriage Measure 2008 received the Royal Assent on 22nd May, and comes into operation on 1st October this year. It broadens the basis for entitlement to marriage following banns for those who have a "qualifying connection" (QC) with a parish. The hope is that the Church will open its doors to welcome many more prospective bridal couples, although there may be a disproportionate effect on those "pretty-for-weddings" churches, with consequent additional clergy workload. The change will, of course, also increase the Church's fee income — and there seems a rather coy silence about this! — contributing both to stipends and to parochial church council income, thereby helping the voluntary quota payments.

What amounts to a QC?

A QC, put simply, means that a person (let us call him or her the applicant) who does not reside in the parish or who is not on the church electoral roll may still marry in the parish church if that applicant:

- was baptised in, or confirmed from, that parish; or
- lived at any time there for at least six months; or
- habitually worshipped there for at least six months; or
- has or had a parent who, since the applicant was born, lived there or habitually worshipped there (in both cases for at least six months); or
- has or had a parent or grandparent who married there.

The Measure makes it clear that baptism at a confirmation service in another church does not give rise to a QC there, and if confirmation is being relied on for the QC then it must have been entered in the register of a church or chapel of the parish where it is desired to marry. The terms "parent" or "grandparent" include adoptive parents and any other person who has undertaken the applicant or the applicant's parent's care and upbringing. And if relying on baptism, confirmation, or marriage by parent or grandparent then it must have been according to the rites of the Church of England. So far so good.

When does time run?

It would have been helpful, for the avoidance of doubt, if the legislation had indicated at what point in time any period of six months needs to be viewed. What if an applicant has a parent who has moved, ostensibly permanently, into the parish only four months ago, and wants to be married in three months' time? Does the at-least-six-months' residence by a parent, to establish a QC, need to have been completed before the point of application for banns, or before the beginning of the actual publishing of banns, or only before the solemnisation itself? We assume, following the requirement of residence for banns generally, that it is at the point of application for banns, but clarification would have been useful (especially when some clergy still peddle the myth that the address of the parties during the three Sundays of publication of banns is all important).

What the Measure does not give:

Assuming a QC can be demonstrated, then the Measure in its opening line stresses that it gives rise to “no greater right” than would otherwise be enjoyed (by residence or church electoral roll membership). That means there is no right to insist on a particular date, day or time, no right to marriage (or to compel a priest to let his or her church be so used) if a party has been divorced at civil law and the former spouse is still living, and no right if either of the parties has acquired gender under the Gender Recognition Act 2004.

The duty on the cleric:

The tricky bit, especially for the clergy, may lie in evidencing the QC. The onus is upon the applicant to provide the information required by the priest to satisfy himself or herself that there is a QC, but in considering this information the priest is “under a duty... to have regard” to “guidance” issued by the House of Bishops. This is a curious provision, giving no indication as to the degree of satisfaction — the standard of proof — to be required (hence the fears, expressed before its passing, that this Measure might lead to arbitrariness in application). Nonetheless, the duty to have regard to bishops' guidance is a statutory one; this is important, because failure to have this “regard” could possibly result in disciplinary proceedings against the cleric under the Clergy Discipline Measure.

Guidance from the Bishops:

The House of Bishops, for its part, is also under a statutory duty to issue guidance — or, more precisely, guidance, in the ordinary parish priest's case, on the cleric's need to be satisfied that the information supplied does establish a QC and on the matter of whether or not a statutory declaration might be required. The Guidance issued goes far beyond this very exact brief. Its 37 pages can be accessed on line via the Church of England website (www.cofe.anglican.org) on the "Marriage Law Review and the Marriage Measure" page, which gives links to both the legislative text itself and the House of Bishops' Guidance.

Some of what the House of Bishops offer is, of course, a matter of commonsense. For instance, if a QC is sought on the basis of baptism, then sight of the baptism register, or of a certified copy would clearly be needed (para.40). Similarly, in relation to previous "habitual worshipping", then the cleric is advised to look at the duration; if it spanned many years then attendance thrice a year would be sufficient, but if much shorter then monthly attendance would be needed (para.61). Some of the Guidance is rather prescriptive, going beyond what is required to be issued, as in the case of the cleric being strongly encouraged to use the recommended form of application (a form which the Guidance asserts is "straightforward and user-friendly", beginning with "a warm welcome" but then continuing with 8 pages of detailed notes and questions!). There is also an atmosphere of unreality about some of the guiding recommendations, such as the enjoinder that the cleric should meet the couple in person (when many clergy have to deal with phone calls from people driving around looking at "venues" and who need some need form of immediate response). And as for the idea of "encouraging the couple to join the parish in worship" (para. 25), well, nice thought.

That said, the Guidance rightly stresses the need not to be overhasty in rejecting any application, and to obtain, first, the advice of the diocesan registrar (and let us hope that the registrars are all up to speed on this), unless it is clear beyond doubt that there is no QC. Clerics are also reminded, if the couple manifestly fall outside the QC provisions, to look at the other options — such as beginning to worship habitually and going on the electoral roll after six months, or of archbishop's special licence if there is a connection but not of the qualifying variety (para.25). In both cases, though, the Guidance

perhaps ought to have noted that these other avenues do presume that a party has been baptised, a requirement which is sometimes forgotten.

Where the Guidance gets it wrong:

The Guidance unfortunately contains some points, again beyond the House of Bishops' statutory brief, which sit uneasily with the law. These are in the matter of publication of banns. In paragraph 10, the Guidance states that the wording of banns, in a QC case should be changed to run as follows: "N of the parish of X who wishes to be married in this church by virtue of his/her connection with this parish", with wording in the normal form for the parishes of residence. This is interesting, because all clerics will know from their reading of the Archbishop of Canterbury's Faculty Office *Anglican Marriage in England and Wales: A Guide to the Law for Clergy* that the wording of banns, as required by the Marriage Act 1949, section 7(2), must be in the form of words as prescribed by the rubrics in the *Book of Common Prayer*, and that even the *Alternative Service Book 1980's* modified form may have been unlawful!

More seriously, the Guidance goes on, in the same paragraph on banns, to state quite emphatically, "the banns should not be published in any other parish, eg a parish where one or both of the couple are resident but have their names on the church electoral roll". This is bad and unlawful Guidance, trying to fetter a statutory right contained in the Marriage Act, for under section 6(4) "banns of marriage may be published" in a church which is a party's usual place of worship although not resident there. This is a permissive right, not pegged to having the marriage itself in that church, which the House of Bishops is now trying to curtail. If it was intended to repeal earlier legislative provisions then the Measure should have done so. And not only is the Guidance contrary to the law, it could be, at this point, contrary to pastoral and spiritual need, and undermining the very purpose of banns (to publish among the community that knows the applicant an intention to be married and to invite lawful objection). Take the following set of circumstances.

A bridal couple reside in parish A, on the edge of a dormitory town, in an estate of small "starter" homes inhabited largely by young professionals leading independent lives outside the area. The couple have been worshipping, for years, at a big evangelical church in parish B some distance away, and they have been on the electoral roll there

for ages. All their friends are there; it is the community of faith where they are known. Slightly surprisingly, though — yet out of respect for a family tradition — they want to get married in parish C with its small country church; it is the church where the bride’s parents were married, in a village where they used to live for many years, and where the bride herself was baptised (so a QC on three counts). Yet the Bishops’ Guidance says that banns should only be read in parishes A and C, but not in parish B where they are best known! Mercifully, this part of the Guidance does not fall in the part to which the cleric is “to have regard”, but it serves as a reminder always to tread carefully with Guidelines, Guidance or Codes of Practice!

Happy QC-establishing.

This article takes the place of the regular “In all things Lawful and Honest” column. Readers are invited to continue sending in their questions about parish law and practice to the Quibbler for forthcoming issues of the magazine. All names and addresses are, of course, withheld. Whilst every effort is made by Alex to ensure the accuracy of his responses, advice should be taken before action is implemented or refrained from in specific cases.

PARSON & PARISH

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While the magazine seeks to uphold the aims of the English Clergy Association, the view of the contributors are, of course, entirely their own and do not necessarily represent those of the Association, its Editorial Committee, its Council, or its members in general.

BOOK REVIEWS

Restoring the Anglican Mind

Arthur Middleton

2008, Gracewing £7.99 Paperback, 104pp,

ISBN 978 0 85244 695 9

Anthony Kilmister, the President of the Anglican Association, hits the nail on the head in his short Foreword to this short but richly layered and articulated book when he says that the contemporary Church of England “gives far more thought to policies than principles.” Canon Arthur Middleton, an example of that rare and disappearing breed, the parson-scholar, writes to redress the balance and to re-assert the virtues of the traditional Anglican mind and temper. Few could be better placed to present such a case, although as we survey the barren landscape, the topless towers, the roofless ruins of the Anglican Communion (whatever that is), it seems a lost cause.

Rooted in his parish in Boldon, Canon Middleton opens his case with a moving evocation of the vision of wholeness of the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church which he sees in his church in its architecture, its continuous tradition of worship, as he celebrates the sacrament of man’s salvation. This informs his aim that “we must discover again that fundamental synthesis of perspective that characterizes the ancient, undivided Church.” He acknowledges that this synthesis is no longer part of the experience of many (if not most) Anglicans. Not even most of the House of Bishops, if the stories are true. Cardinal Kasper’s paper on the concerns about the ordination of women to the episcopate was dismissed as irrelevant, as “Roman Catholic, nothing to do with us.” Yet, it is (or was once upon a time) a classic statement of an Anglican position, that fusion of Scripture, tradition and reason. Canon Middleton rightly sees Anglicanism rooted in the Tradition and in patristic scholarship and witness. Anglicanism, as classically understood, is more about patristics than protestantism, more patristic than papal. But the Cardinal’s words, and this book, will come up against the mendacious theological illiteracy of those to whom the safety of the deposit of faith has been entrusted. They may pray for unity but they legislate for disunity and expose their ecumenical hypocrisy. Humpty Dumpty seems to be their guiding light: words mean what I say they mean: doctrine is what I say it is: ministerial order is what I want it to be. The standard against which matters are to be judged is not Scripture, not the Tradition, not even reason, but against the contemporary mores of a debased society and culture.

Those of us who see much of the crop of recent bishops (with a number of honourable exceptions) as a sad mixture of middle managers and pettifogging martinets long for Dr Williams to assume the persona of Sir Alan Sugar (they both have beards) and say: "You're fired!"

Canon Middleton's language is more measured than mine and should, therefore, be more convincing. He revisits the infamous Crockford preface written by the late Gareth Bennett and shows what a prophetic and significant document it was. He does not rake over the most controversial passages but points out the significance of a section Bennett entitled "A Theology in Retreat" which should send us back to read it again. Bennett identified the decline in the distinctive theological method of Anglicanism, and presages the ills that would flow from such an abandonment.

Canon Middleton is immensely well-read and takes us with masterly assurance through Alexander Schmemmann, Eric Mascall, Richard Hooker, Michael Ramsay, Charles Gore, Lancelot Andrewes, the Tractarians ... the list goes on. All these authorities are woven into a forceful argument in defence of a great tradition. There is a measured passion in the writing that commands respect and needs to be taken seriously and requires engagement from those who seek to pursue a different course of action. But I suspect that pigs will fly before we see that.

Canon Middleton would not want us to see this admirable book as only a lament for the past, so he provides, in an Appendix, "An Agenda for Us All to Follow. It is a *cri de coeur* before it is too late. It is rooted in the Anglican method but does not shy away from the political realities of the day: "...assert the authoritative doctrinal character of our Anglican Formularies as against the liberalism so often evident in the deliberations and policies of the General Synod." But he is up against it. Only recently I was told of a young parish priest defending the ordination of women as priests and bishops to an unconvinced member of his congregation by recourse to "the infallibility of the General Synod." Whatever our view on this contentious issue (and there is a wide variety of views within the English Clergy Association) few of us would seek to stand on this quagmire of an assertion. But, I fear, that is the level of argument, this *reductio ad absurdum* to which we have come. Canon Middleton's age has given him wisdom and depth of insight: mine has brought only increased cynicism: so, thank God for Arthur Middleton.

On 5th March 1864 writing to the liberal Dean of Westminster to

decline an invitation to preach, Dr Pusey wrote, “I think that one of the great dangers of the present day is to conceive of matters of faith as if they were matters of opinion, to think all have an equal chance of being right ... [then] there is no faith at all.”

The Rev'd William Davage is Priest Librarian of Pusey House, Oxford.

Praying for England: Priestly Presence in Contemporary Culture

Editors Sam Wells & Sarah Coakley

2008, Continuum £16.99 Paperback, 109pp

ISBN 978 0 56703 230 0

The “Notebook” column in today’s newspaper is discussing Mary Whitehouse and her campaigns against sex and violence on television: “Few took her tirades seriously, except in the churches, which are largely empty today.”

The Church (so readers should understand) is an irrelevant moral voice in contemporary Britain. A few short, unrelated paragraphs later, our journalist moves on to the subject of bishops’ recent appearances in the media. Plaudits to the Archbishop of York and the Bishop of Rochester for speaking out about the collapse of Christian values, but thumbs down for the Archbishop of Canterbury from whom we have heard “not a peep”. Now (readers must presumably infer) the Church’s moral voice is not only welcome, but expected.

This apparent contradiction is just one example of a common confusion: does the Church any longer have a role in forming society’s mores? This confusion is tackled head on in Grace Davie’s essay “Debate”. In England, sociologically speaking, Davie sees two religious economies in place side-by-side: the historic, parochial “public utility” alongside the newer, voluntaristic model of church-going consumption and choice. The former model provides ways in which the Church can be “the nation’s moral compass”; the latter model does not. This morning’s “Notebook” journalist flits unconsciously between the two models, as, to some extent, do most of us at different times and in different places. For Davie, constructive public debate about religious issues is important, and becoming more so by the day, and the role of the established Church in this process is vital.

Davie’s essay is among those collected together in “Praying for England: Priestly Presence in Contemporary Culture”. The contributors to this volume are all seeking to “reimagine” the place of the Church of

England in today's society, and especially what priesthood means in our culture. It is often said that the clergy of the Church of England are more than chaplains to their congregations, but what does this mean in practice? The answers suggested in this collection of essays are all the more interesting because the priests contributing are mostly drawing from experiences in deprived urban areas. Many of the essays are indeed largely narrative accounts of priests' personal experiences. They describe the very diverse kinds of encounter that clergy have with those parishioners who are not often found in the pews. Stephen Cherry, Edmund Newey, and Jessica Martin's contributions are particularly notable. Such stories are all too rarely told, and their telling helps to remind the forgetful of the very real links that exist between parson and parish — beyond those recorded in the attendance column of the service register.

To balance the experiential writing that dominates the book, it would have been good to see more discursive theology: what there is is good, but barely scratches the surface. In this vein, Sarah Coakley and Rowan Williams respectively provide a top and tail to the collection, both of which are insightful and reflective. I was less keen on elements of Andrew Shanks's forthright essay on Honesty: he asserts that he, as an individual, can decide with whom he is or isn't in communion, and he ends his essay with the startling statement that we have "a better chance to grasp the inner truth of the gospel than any other generation, before us, has ever had". Claims like these seem to me out of keeping with the humility and the gratefulness for our historic inheritance that characterize the rest of the book.

Two recurring themes of this collection create lasting impressions. First, is the importance of prayer: specifically, public, ritual, regular prayer. Indeed, the title of the book takes on new meaning when one reads (Coakley) that "the loss of disciplined clerical prayer in a busy age is fatal... for national life." Secondly, establishment (weakened though it may be) most benefits those whose needs are greatest. For establishment is not solely a matter of seats in the House of Lords, or of our journalist asking which bishops have and haven't commented on the great questions of the day. Establishment also means that the poor, the vulnerable, the outcast, and the just plain odd know that the parish church is theirs too. And that is a benefit of which any Christian church should be most glad.

The Rev'd Russell Dewhurst is Priest-in-charge of Oxford St Thomas with St Frideswide and Binsey, and Assistant Chaplain to Exeter College, Oxford.

**An ABC for the PCC: A Handbook for Church Council Members
5th Edition**

John Pitchford

2008, Continuum £14.99 Paperback, 216pp

ISBN 978 19062 8607 1

This fascinating guide, with its lifetime of nearly thirty years, is clearly becoming a popular resource. And remarkable. Who would have thought that an incoming parochial church council member would eagerly turn to its alphabetic list of entries, opening with “Actors Church Union” and “Additional Curates Society”? Yet herein may lie its attraction.

One of the greatest qualities of this Handbook is its firm and clear advice on many matters — for example, when reading a lesson under “Holy Communion”, or the practical tips on “Flowers in church”. We are reminded, too, under “Kneeling” that if this takes place then we should actually do so “rather than pretend to kneel by leaning forward”. On a more technical and legal front, the lengthy section on Churchwardens, taking in the changes flowing from the Churchwardens Measure 2001, is good and thorough, even though one may raise an eyebrow at the author’s statement that the annual meeting of parishioners is “not usually held on the same day as the APCM”.

It is in the nature of any “ABC” that some headings which may seem obvious to some will not appear at all. For example, although there is a reference to “alms for charitable purposes” under “Churchwardens”, there is no entry for “Collections” (to whom they belong and to what they may be applied — an increasingly important issue these days when the priest is often told by family members that the collection at a funeral or memorial service will go to a particular charity, or if a school walks off with the collection following a carol service in church). An incoming PCC member might also want to know what “Benefice” means, but, again, it does not feature.

For a volume bearing the commendations of several bishops for its former editions, and with a Foreword by William Fittal, present Secretary General to the General Synod, not to mention acknowledgement of help from Stephen Slack, Head of the Legal Office at Church House, one hesitates to suggest any inaccuracies or shortcomings in the material. Nonetheless the publisher’s claim that this handbook is “completely revised and updated” and “indispensable” ought not to pass without some qualification.

First, not all the material may be as up to date as possible. Under “Protection of children from abuse” there appears no reference at all to the system of checks made with the Criminal Records Bureau, in what instances enhanced disclosure may be necessary, the place of a PCC-appointed Child Protection Representative and the role of its CRB Identity Validator. Similarly, it would have been helpful if, under “Catering” (which recommends serving alcohol), some advice as to the possible impact of the Licensing Act 2003 could have featured, together with recognition of the application of Food Hygiene Regulations to any kitchen in the church hall. These are points which a modern PCC member might well raise.

Secondly, not all the contact details will necessarily be accurate. The contact given for “Fan the Flame” has not lived at the Vicarage listed on p.73 for some six years and now serves in a different diocese. The Church Commissioners (details on p.157) are, of course, no longer at Millbank, but moved to Church House in March 2007. These were just a couple that the reviewer noticed; and hopefully they are the only ones.

Thirdly, and this is simply a niggling stylistic point, there is a need for some tidying up and consistency. A decision needs to be made as to which terms should have a capital letter.

All this said, the Handbook remains a valuable tool, with an idiosyncratic schoolmasterly charm, and simply dipping in to it will leave many a PCC member better equipped and informed.

Alex Quibbler is the Association’s legal agony-uncle.

CHAIRPIECE

John Masding on the past seventy years

Seventy years ago, this Association was founded by Mr Courtman to oppose the take-over of glebe. That that came to pass only in 1976 is a measure of the success the Association enjoyed during the years of his vigour. Like many members of the Association, or Parochial Clergy Association as it then had settled to be, he was a member of the Church Assembly. He was for many years a Church Commissioner. He remained Vicar of Mildenhall until he was 95, never having had recognition for his substantial achievements. Archbishop Geoffrey Fisher stood no nonsense from his bishops — one once told me that upon entering the headmaster's study he half-expected to be told to bend over and touch his toes. The glories of the coronation of Her Majesty united the nation in a meaningful and moving ceremonial, perhaps as never before, or since.

The speed of change in the Church of England has accelerated, madly some would say, since decline set in in the 'sixties — and possibly co-incidentally synodical government started in 1969 — your present Chairman voting against it in the dying Diocesan Conference, a lone voice. Before the Enabling Act, or, more properly, the Church of England Assembly (Powers) Act 1919, rectors, vicars, perpetual curates and churchwardens, with vestries and other more *ad hoc* bodies, reigned supreme within their own spheres. Diocesan boards of finance, and all that, had barely begun to be; they were for the fretful future.

Patrons continued, as they had done for centuries, to appoint their men to livings, some poor, others less so, and a few well-endowed; and often to make generous supplementary provision — motor cars, or even houses upon retirement should a man decide that the time had come. Endowments were still being added to — I recall adding to mine in 1971.

But once you have synods instead of conferences and assemblies, the temptation to meddle gets stronger. There's not an area of ecclesiastical law where tinkering has not happened in the last seventy years, with the speed of change tending to accelerate. The Benefices (Stabilization of Incomes) Measure 1951 purported, as its title suggests, to be helpful — as legislation usually does. But it ended the real separate investments that benefices had, and henceforth for a while, until that too was only quite recently abolished, each had merely a nominal capital upon which a nominal percentage was allowed, stabilized and fixed. Profit accrued not to the benefices of England, but to the Church Commissioners'

general funds. What had been ours of right and possession became a matter of grace and favour. Augmentation came from the diocese, aided by what are really benefices' own raided, diverted funds, and a culture of financial dependence underlined new realities of power in the Church. The endowment and glebe has gone; trusts have often been extinguished, as with my old parish when I left it, and now Synod wants to take fees into the diocesan maw — allegedly because many clergy get into difficulties in their administration, and undertakers would like to be able to deal with a central authority. So it is said.

The misuse of the Pastoral Measure's provisions for the suspension of the patron's right of presentation is notorious, done sometimes for genuine reasons, but often with the idea of getting hold of the property, or of keeping the person appointed as priest-in-charge more subservient. Team ministries did at first have freehold rectors, but now there is a term of years, expressed to be renewable but not always renewed — usually catastrophic for a man within sight of retirement age. The screw turns constantly. The toad under the harrow will be in an enviable position compared to the beneficed clergy on common tenure, if the terms of service legislation passes into law, with the oddly vague and yet threateningly prescriptive Regulations — all with the force of law. Complaints against clergy have risen, under the very unsatisfactory Clergy Discipline Measure — and with half-a-dozen complaints against bishops, too. The cost of the human resources advisers required to make work the new system of competency proceedings and ministerial review, all statutory non-voluntary stuff, will be amazing.

After fees, the next stage — still but a twinkle in the eye of some power-broker — will perhaps be to suggest that many parishes, especially small country parishes and inner-city ones, find getting a decent honorary treasurer difficult *Ergo*: were the churchwardens to bank everything into a diocesan account, that would maximize interest earned by amalgamating so many small balances — and Common Fund could by Measure be made a matter of obligation, a quid pro quo for the extra administrative burden falling upon a diocese.....

Meanwhile, the Church has bared its teeth at Her Majesty's Government. *Moral but no Compass* has been accompanied by the Bishop of Rochester's timely call to the nation. If readers would like another nightmare scenario, how about Brierley's figures projecting that by 2050 there will be 87,800 of us, and 2,660,000 Muslims in England? Their numbers are set to overtake ours, according to Mr Brierley, around 2020.

Well, what will be the response? Cathedrals, 43 of them, have experienced meddling with the ancient constitution of Dean and Chapter, or Provost/rector etc., and we now have deans constantly downgraded in listings and honour, despite the amazing work done by so many of them in raising huge sums of money, as at Ely, to save precious buildings for the nation. Ah, there's the rub. Cathedral councils may be just an interim step. One can imagine someone saying that there are not enough suitable clergy of the calibre to become deans, and so, like canonries, deaneries should be open to lay appointment where that is thought appropriate.

Sir Roy Strong calls constantly for churches to become resources for the community. Simon Jenkins has said that if the Church cannot care for them, they should be transferred to the ownership of the community. It is said that the community is better placed to look after them than some rump of a PCC.; and the *Daily Telegraph* is mounting a worthy campaign to better the position of threatened churches before things get worse.

Seventy years: where shall we stand at our Centenary? — 2038 is not far away, within the sights of the handful of younger clergy now being ordained, a rare and endangered species compared with when I was ordained back in 1965, at the height of optimism. I am told that today there are only 60 clergy under the age of thirty. Did my generation and I fail? Well, certainly we've usually let legislators pull the wool, haven't we? However, that we won with the abortive proposal to empower bishops to dismiss Churchwardens suggests that the bureaucrats need not always win. If only the country would get behind the Clergy in the way it rallied to Churchwardens, as the elected representatives of the people, the oldest elected lay public officers in England, representatives of the Parish, for so long the basic unit of community and society.

Terms of service is about to be debated at Synod, with much else, as I write this. Do turkeys vote for Christmas?

J.W.M.

QUESTION: How much does a stipendiary priest “cost”?

We are receiving details of some absurdly high figures, in one or two dioceses, as to how much a stipendiary cleric actually “costs”. He, or she, only receives a gross income of about £20,000 (with council tax, and “free” housing, though it evaporates upon retirement), yet figures such as £45,000 or £55,000 are being bandied about by some diocesan offices in their publications. We suspect that other headings of expenditure, such as DAC and faculty fees, together with General Synod costs — none of which are specifically priest-related costs — are being added in, to bolster the notion that our stipendiary clergy are exotic creatures that we can scarcely afford. Please send in your diocese’s assertions of the cost of our clergy, with their rationales, in order to get this subject a good airing, and, perhaps, to lay to rest some of the more fanciful lines of thought.

Have you visited the ECA’s website?

www.clergyassoc.co.uk

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