

THE CHAIR *The Bishop of Willesden (Rt Revd Pete Broadbent)* took the Chair at 8.30 p.m.

## Questions

Questions asked in accordance with Standing Orders 105-109 were answered as follows, those for written answer being marked with an asterisk.

### Business Committee

1. *Dr Philip Giddings (Oxford)* asked the Chairman of the Business Committee:

What account did the Committee take of the views of the House of Clergy and the House of Laity when reaching their decision to curtail the group of sessions scheduled to begin on 10 July 2009?

2. *Mr Tom Sutcliffe (Southwark)* asked the Chairman of the Business Committee:

Why did the Business Committee not use e-mail to test the views of the members whom they represent, before taking their decision to shorten the length of these York Sessions (in a way that will effect very limited savings for parishes and dioceses), and in particular to check whether members preferred to start meetings on Saturday morning to avoid disrupting consecutive working weeks?

*Revd Prebendary Kay Garlick:* With permission, I will answer Dr Giddings and Mr Sutcliffe together.

Eight of the ten members of the Business Committee are elected by the Houses of Clergy and Laity who thereby entrust them with the responsibilities conferred on them by the Standing Orders. When agreeing two five-day periods during which to meet each February and July the Synod does not mandate the Committee to set an agenda to fill the whole five days. For instance the Committee concluded that five days were needed this February, but only four had been required the previous February. At the May meeting, the Committee looked carefully at the business offered and agreed on what was essential, what was time sensitive and what could be handled differently. It concluded that there should be a four-day rather than a five-day Synod this time. The Committee applies itself carefully and thoughtfully to its task and always welcomes suggestions on the ordering of Synod. The possibility of Saturday starts is something on which we should be grateful for views.

*Mr Tom Sutcliffe (Southwark):* Will the Business Committee please make arrangements in future which can be simply and rapidly done to a defined deadline to use e-mail for a quick testing of the waters in the Houses of Clergy and Laity in instances where the House of Bishops has had an opportunity to express an opinion affecting a decision that the committee will be making?

*Revd Prebendary Kay Garlick:* All members of Synod have opportunities throughout the year to make suggestions to the Business Committee at any time. We are always prepared to accept e-mails, letters, even verbal suggestions, and we always discuss

them. I think it would be extremely difficult to e-mail all members and wait for a reply from everybody and then to collate a reply from 400 people that makes any kinds of sense.

*Dr Philip Giddings (Oxford):* Did the committee consider, since it had the views of the House of Bishops in advance of its meeting, consulting the Standing Committee of the other two Houses, given that the short notice of this decision would have had a significant impact on their members?

*Revd Prebendary Kay Garlick:* The Business Committee were told about the suggestion from the House of Bishops only at our meeting in May. The Bishops met, I think, the day before we did: we did not know about it until our meeting. As I say, we listen to everybody who sends something in, but clearly if it is the whole House telling us something, we listen to that as well.

3. *Mr Clive Scowen (London)* asked the Chairman of the Business Committee:

What has been the net overall saving to (a) the Archbishops' Council and (b) the dioceses, resulting from the decision to end the group of sessions on Monday 13 July instead of Tuesday 14 July, having allowed in particular for the costs associated with members electing to stay overnight on Monday and any late cancellation charges levied by the University of York?

*Revd Prebendary Kay Garlick:* There has been a net saving of £22,000 on the central budget for this group of sessions, which includes all accommodation costs for members and staff at York and the cost of facilities. This figure takes account of late cancellation charges. Dioceses cover their members' accommodation and travel costs, but we do not have a central record of members' travel expenses, which are reimbursed directly by the dioceses.

*Mr Clive Scowen (London):* What proportion does that £22,000 bear to the total cost of organizing Synod in York?

*Revd Prebendary Kay Garlick:* I do not have the total cost here but I can find that out and let you know. I think if you listen carefully, it might even come in an answer later.

4. *Mr Tom Sutcliffe (Southwark)* asked the Chairman of the Business Committee:

Recognizing the objectives that prompted Randall Davidson to try and convert the Representative Church Council into a National Assembly including the voices of 'wage-earners, students and teachers' in the electoral process for the House of Laity, bearing in mind Arthur Balfour's prophetic warning to him about 'the increased strain within the Church and between its parts' that increased autonomy might mean, and considering how the Business Committee in paragraphs 4 and 5 in the Preface to its current Report on the Agenda (GS 1729) is seeking opinions from all and sundry including current General Synod members on 'what Synod is, and is not about', thereby demonstrating with clarity why the re-establishment of General Synod's own Standing Committee is a fundamental and urgent necessity, will the Business Committee ensure that this Synod's scrutiny of and legislation for governance does not radically overshadow its original function in underpinning - as a truly

representative forum, or in Hensley Henson's words 'the most representative body of Church people that can as yet be devised' - real spiritual independence for our Church?

*Revd Prebendary Kay Garlick:* I am grateful to Mr Sutcliffe for responding to the Committee's invitation to comment on what the Synod's priorities should be. In our discussions we will of course need to take into account the historical perspective, as well as noting the changing shape and needs of the Church today. I am at this stage unable to promise to ensure any particular emphasis in the way ahead, but hope that Mr Sutcliffe's question will inspire others to engage with the issue.

## **Crown Nominations Committee**

5. *His Honour Judge John Bullimore (Wakefield)* asked the Chairman of the Crown Nominations Commission:

Is there readily available an up-to-date statement of the practice and procedure of the Crown Nominations Commission, which incorporates any developments which have occurred over the last few years, so that members of the Church of England and others may readily see how the Commission sets about its task of selecting an individual to be a diocesan bishop?

*The Archbishop of York (Dr John Sentamu):* The most recent document which sets out the whole process for the nomination process for diocesan bishops is the *Briefing for Members of the Vacancy in See Committees*, which has been amended in the light of the changes made to the process by Synod last year. This is available on the Church of England website at <http://www.cofe.anglican.org/info/asa/senappt>.

With your permission, Chairman, may I hand in and tender a hard copy for the benefit of His Honour Judge Bullimore as exhibit A, CNC?

6. *Revd Canon Dr Alan Hargrave (Ely)* asked the Chairman of the Crown Nominations Commission:

Following its report in July 2007 (GS Misc 868), will the Crown Nominations Commission be considering the General Synod's request in 2002 to hold interviews as part of the process for nominating diocesan bishops?

*The Archbishop of York:* The central members of the Commission have this issue under active consideration. A survey has recently been conducted of diocesan representatives who have been members of the last five commissions to ascertain their views on the benefits or otherwise of interviewing. This will be reviewed in the autumn by the central members. I would anticipate being able to make a more formal report on this item at the February group of sessions.

*Revd Canon Jonathan Alderton-Ford (St Edmundsbury and Ipswich):* One of the reasons that was given for not going ahead with interviews was that some candidates are considered for a number of posts in sequence and therefore it would be stressful to them. Would it be possible for the report to consider making potential candidates do video diaries of themselves so that those of us who do not know everybody in the

Church of England, if we are called upon to do this again, can have some idea of who they are and what they are like to camera?

*The Archbishop of York:* I am not so sure that that will meet the spirit of what the Synod actually wanted because the Synod really wanted the possibility of interviews and, although you could have this virtual stuff, I am not certain about it, but we are inquiring and we will come back with a report which will detail some of those questions. I think the spirit of the Synod is for interviews and, if that is what it is, interviews ought to be or ought not to be, otherwise you are always liable to end up with disputation, and I would be very sad if somebody said that his face in the light did not look good, so we had better not have him. I think we want to see the people in the flesh or not at all.

## Liturgical Commission

7. \* *Revd Dr John Hartley (Bradford)* asked the Chairman of the Liturgical Commission:

Can an analysis of the choices of Old Testament readings in the Additional Weekday Lectionary (pages 14-28 of GS 1724) be provided, stating how many passages in the scheme have been chosen from each of (a) the Pentateuch, (b) the 'Historical books', (c) the 'Poetical books', (d) the Prophets, and (e) the Old Testament Apocrypha; and can the Commission indicate whether any general principles about these proportions were discussed beyond those mentioned in paragraphs 9-18 of their report?

*The Bishop of Wakefield (Rt Revd Stephen Platten):* The attached table gives a breakdown by book, and offers sub-totals for the books of the Old Testament and Apocrypha according to the categories indicated by Dr Hartley.

Whilst our aim has been to provide a reasonable coverage of Scripture, the principal intention has been to provide passages which stand alone and which have a mission focus. It also needs to be borne in mind that the genre of individual passages may be different from that assigned to the book as a whole. (For example, the historical and prophetic books include poetical passages.) During Ordinary Time there is normally some prophecy, some history and some Wisdom literature in the course of each week. However, much of the history is best read as part of *lectio continua* (the principle on which the existing Weekday Lectionary is based). Only those passages from the 'historical books' which can stand alone and which provide a good story within a reading of no more than twenty verses have been included. On the other hand, books like Isaiah and Proverbs provide a wealth of passages which can be easily extracted into a lectionary of this kind.

The intention has never been that this Alternative Weekday lectionary would replace a rigorous continuous reading of Scripture. The clergy of parishes and cathedrals who use this lectionary will still be reading the Bible in course at the other Office and indeed use of this Additional Weekday Lectionary is, in any case, entirely optional.

This lectionary is principally designed for use in those places where occasional visitors form a substantial proportion of the congregation. For these, who come perhaps once a week, once a month or perhaps only on one occasion, the balance of readings by book, category of book or genre of passage is perhaps less important than

it would be for clergy and laity who say the Office daily (for whom the existing Weekday Lectionary is intended).

<b>Bible Book</b>	<b>Number of Passages</b>
<i>Old Testament</i>	
Genesis	32
Exodus	28
Leviticus	5
Numbers	4
Deuteronomy	8
<i>Pentateuch</i>	<i>77</i>
Joshua	2
Judges	3
Ruth	3
1 Samuel	10
2 Samuel	12
1 Kings	11
2 Kings	6
1 Chronicles	3
2 Chronicles	1
Ezra	1
Nehemiah	5
Esther	0
<i>'Historical Books'</i>	<i>57</i>
Job	10
Psalms	N/A
Proverbs	29
Ecclesiastes	7
Song of Solomon	1
<i>'Poetical Books'</i>	<i>47</i>
Isaiah	68
Jeremiah	26
Lamentations	3
Ezekiel	8
Daniel	6
Hosea	9
Joel	4
Amos	3
Obadiah	0
Jonah	3
Micah	7
Nahum	0
Habakkuk	2
Zephaniah	1
Haggai	0
Zechariah	8
Malachi	2
<i>The Prophets</i>	<i>150</i>
<i>Apocrypha</i>	
Ecclesiasticus	12
Baruch	3
Wisdom	2
<i>Apocrypha</i>	<i>17</i>

<i>New Testament</i>	
Matthew	47
Mark	31
Luke	50
John	46
Acts	18
Romans	26
1 Corinthians	19
2 Corinthians	13
Galatians	6
Ephesians	12
Philippians	5
Colossians	7
1 Thessalonians	8
2 Thessalonians	1
1 Timothy	4
2 Timothy	4
Titus	2
Philemon	0
Hebrews	15
James	5
1 Peter	8
2 Peter	3
1 John	3
2 John	0
3 John	0
Jude	0
Revelation	14

8. \**Revd Sister Rosemary CHN* (Religious Communities) asked the Chairman of the Liturgical Commission:

In the Order for the Laying on of Hands with Prayer and Anointing (Pastoral Services, p. 92), the rubric states, 'If Anointing is administered, the minister must be authorized for this ministry as required by Canon B 37'. This Canon implies - rather than states - that the minister should be a priest. What is the reason for the restriction in the rubric, given that the oil to be used will have been blessed by a bishop or priest?

*The Bishop of Wakefield:* The ministry of anointing is authorized by Canon B 37 'Of the ministry to the sick', which is clear in speaking of that ministry being undertaken by a priest. There is no canonical basis for other ministers to anoint. The rubric merely points to the Canon which authorizes this ministry.

### **Church Commissioners**

9. \**Mr Gerald O'Brien* (Rochester) asked the Church Commissioners:

How much have the Church Commissioners spent on see houses and associated properties and their environs in the last five years, and how much of this expenditure was on premises in

- (a) the diocese of York;
- (b) the diocese of Bath and Wells?

*The Third Church Estates Commissioner (Mr Timothy Walker, ex officio):* The Commissioners do not publish the running costs of individual see houses. Based on the costs included under bishops' housing and office premises in 2008, the Commissioners' total expenditure on see houses, Lambeth Palace, and associated properties and their environs in the last five years was:

2004 - £2.5m  
 2005 - £3.9m  
 2006 - £6.5m  
 2007 - £5.8m  
 2008 - £7.3m

Expenditure at Bishopthorpe Palace follows years of significant underfunding and includes the replacement of services and fittings dating from the 1960s.

The Palace at Wells has over the last few years been one of the Commissioners' more expensive houses and this underpins our decision to support investment to try to increase visitor numbers and reduce carrying costs.

*Mr Gerald O'Brien (Rochester):* On a point of order, Question 9 was one on which I asked for an oral reply. I have received a written reply. The written reply says that the Commissioners do not publish the figures that I have asked for. I do consider this an abuse of Question time. Would you be prepared to ask the Third Church Estates Commissioners actually to answer the Question that was asked?

*The Chairman:* You have had a reply. I think what you must do is take up your concerns with the Church Commissioners outside the meeting. I apologize if it was the case that you asked for an oral reply and received a written reply.

10. *Mr Nigel Chetwood (Gloucester)* asked the Church Commissioners:

What is the current interest rate levied on shared equity on housing for retired clergy, and are there any plans to charge a rate nearer to the current rate charged by the Bank of England?

*The Third Church Estates Commissioner:* The initial interest rate on these loans is 4%. Every April the interest payable on each loan increases in line with the weighted average increase in full service Church and State pensions. The Commissioners' Assets Committee reviews the initial interest rate annually, having regard to the return our actuaries advise is required to meet our distribution plans. The Committee decided to leave the rate unchanged at the most recent review in March.

11. *Mrs Mary Judkins (Wakefield)* asked the Church Commissioners:

As cathedrals, like the one in Wakefield, rely very much on Section 23 funding from the Church Commissioners to enable their mission and ministry to flourish, what assurance can the Commissioners give that this funding will be safeguarded for the foreseeable future?

*The Third Church Estates Commissioner:* I can give the assurance that, despite the economic downturn, the Commissioners expect to maintain their planned level of support of cathedrals in 2010.

Decisions about planned support for all beneficiaries, including cathedrals, in 2011-13 will be taken next year when the Commissioners' triennial actuarial review reveals the total amount of money available to be distributed. At that point the Commissioners and Archbishops' Council will reach agreement, after consultation, about the relative priority which should be given to all the Commissioners' different spending categories. Discussions on this have already begun with a series of conferences involving diocesan bishops, deans, and DBF chairs and secretaries.

12. *Mr Barry Barnes (Southwark)* asked the Church Commissioners:

In the light of the disclosure by Members of Parliament and senior executives of the BBC, when can we expect a full breakdown of the expenses of the members of the House of Bishops?

*The Third Church Estates Commissioner:* The Commissioners already publish each year the total office and working costs of every diocesan and suffragan bishop. The report also analyses in some detail bishops' expenditure under different headings (e.g. staffing, equipment, travel).

The publication of the 2008 figures is expected in the autumn.

## **Pensions Board**

13. *Mr James Cheeseman (Rochester)* asked the Chairman of the Pensions Board:

In view of the fact that there are many people in the Church who find it difficult to understand why such large contributions have to be made towards clergy pensions, would the Board please give urgent consideration to the production of a very simple pamphlet to explain the reasons for the benefit of those who are not knowledgeable about financial matters?

*Mr Jonathan Spencer (Chairman of the Pensions Board):* The Task Group report, on which we will receive a presentation tomorrow afternoon, attempts to explain why the cost of the clergy pension scheme has increased significantly since its inception 12 years ago. We appreciate that these are complex issues. The Pensions Board is keen to ensure that Church members do understand the position as fully as possible. We should be happy to produce a simple leaflet which could be distributed to parishes via the diocesan office and put on the Church of England website.

## **Archbishops' Council**

14. *Revd Canon Michael Webb (Newcastle)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Is the Archbishops' Council able to assure the Synod that, with the outsourcing of Church House Publishing's publishing function to Hymns Ancient and Modern, the new-media work of CHP (including *Visual Liturgy*) will be continued?

*Mr Philip Fletcher:* The outsourcing agreement with Hymns Ancient and Modern Ltd that came into force on 1 July identifies a range of core publications, notably in the areas of liturgy and reference, which will continue to be made available and updated

as required throughout the initial five-year term. Both *Visual Liturgy Live* and the *Crockford* online subscription service – the two most significant new media projects Church House Publishing has produced hitherto – are part of that core, and will be continued.

15. *Revd Canon Michael Webb (Newcastle)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Under the terms of the agreement to outsource CHP's publishing function to Hymns Ancient & Modern, will the Archbishops' Council retain the right to publish any product that it considers important to publish, even if it is expected that such a product will not be commercially viable?

16. *Mrs Gillian Ambrose (Ely)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Church House Publishing has been a key producer of resources for ministry with children and young people in the Church of England. How is the Archbishops' Council going to ensure that such quality Anglican resources remain available to the Church in the future?

*Mr Philip Fletcher:* With permission, I will answer Canon Webb and Mrs Ambrose together.

The agreement with Hymns Ancient & Modern ensures ongoing availability of a core list of existing titles, including some in the area of children and youth ministry, such as *My Baptism Book*, *My Communion Book* and *Through the Eyes of a Child*. Two planned resources for Confirmation due out next year will be completed.

Looking further ahead, if Hymns Ancient & Modern deem that any proposal is not commercially viable, there is still scope for it to be published under the CHP imprint provided that a subsidy is made to reduce the financial risk to an acceptable level. If no such subsidy is possible, the Council retains the right to offer the proposal to another publisher, or indeed to make it available on a non-commercial basis, for example on the Church of England website.

*The Bishop of Durham (Rt Revd Tom Wright):* Will the Archbishops' Council be able to say whether they will be considering SPCK in the category that has just been mentioned, i.e. among the other publishers that will be considered, and would they also be prepared to explain why they did not consider SPCK in the original bid, just as they did not in 2000?

*Mr Philip Fletcher:* Certainly in the circumstances I have outlined where Hymns Ancient & Modern is not proceeding, then obviously the opportunity is there for another publishing house. On the approach to other publishers issue, including SPCK, the key issue that is confronting the Council is about how we get best value for the Church and how best to continue to meet the Church's and the Council's core publishing needs.

The decision to explore the outlines of a possible agreement with Hymns Ancient & Modern on a confidential basis without at the same time inviting other proposals was not taken without a great deal of advance thought by those of us who were involved

and the judgements that the sub-group of the Council, then the Council itself, eventually reached was that the proposed agreement was the best way forward because it represented a natural development of the successful arrangements already in place with Hymns Ancient & Modern for a wide range of publishing services. It also made it easier to maintain confidentiality. Throughout we sought to ensure that the best financial value and value in terms of the quality of the product would continue to be delivered, taking careful professional advice as we went.

*Mrs Gillian Ambrose (Ely):* Given that Jesus was a teacher, why do we not consider educational publishing as one of the core functions of the Archbishops' Council and indeed this Synod?

*Mr Philip Fletcher:* Publishing and producing material that the Church can use at large is obviously a key role for the Archbishops' Council. In thinking about what we do, it is important that we look at what is already available, and educational resources are available from a variety of sources. I would like to take the opportunity to pay tribute to the staff of CHP, who have provided a very good quality service. There is no criticism of the staff in the decision that has been taken. CHP have produced high quality material and, as I have already indicated, there is scope to continue to make high quality material available under the CHP imprint either, hopefully, financially viable or, if not, if a subsidy could be made available.

17. *Dr Philip Giddings (Oxford)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

How many dioceses list on their diocesan websites the names and communications details of members of their diocesan synods and of their elected representatives on the General Synod, and can a list be published on the notice board of the dioceses which do not?

*Mrs Anne Sloman:* The Communications Office has drawn Dr Giddings's Question to the attention of diocesan communications officers and is collating replies. With data protection and electronic privacy laws, dioceses need the permission of elected representatives before publishing personal contact details, unless the intention to publish was made clear at the time of election. The Communications Office is running two workshops on Communicating Synod for members during this synod. Liaising with their diocesan communicator is one of the key messages.

18. *Mr Martin Dales (York)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Following the General Synod debate on surface water drainage charges in February 2009, what progress has been made in dealings with the Government towards rebates or exemptions for churches and other charitable bodies?

*The Archbishop of York:* In our continuing correspondence, ministers have stated that churches and others should not face disproportionate or unfair increases in charges. Their preferred solution is for the water companies to work with the regulator, Ofwat, to ensure that charging schemes are fair and in line with Government and Ofwat guidelines.

This is a start. We will watch developments closely, but remain convinced that a durable, national solution lies in the hands of Government – this morning I had a very

detailed conversation with the Secretary of State for Rural Affairs – and most likely for us in the reinstatement of the former exemption or introduction of social tariffs for churches and community buildings. The Churches' Legislation Advisory Service, on behalf of the Churches collectively, has suggested to the consultation on the draft Flood and Water Management Bill that, failing a satisfactory negotiated solution, legislation would be appropriate.

*Mr Martin Dales (York):* In his response to the 45,500 people who signed the Downing Street rain tax petition, the Prime Minister said, 'We have made it clear that increases in bills of this magnitude are not in line with guidance'. If that is still happening, particularly in the Northumbrian Water area, could he ask the Prime Minister why the Government's guidance is so blatantly being ignored by Ofwat when even Ofwat in a letter to MPs only this week accepts that social objectives are implied but not perhaps explicit in the existing DEFRA guidance?

*The Archbishop of York:* I raised that matter with Hilary Benn this morning about Northumbria. In fact a letter was sent and then we had a conversation. He assures me that he is investigating, because if that is what is happening to the general utilities, then that is not in accordance with the guidance. I am hoping to get a reply from him very quickly.

*Mr John Freeman (Chester):* Is His Grace aware that United Utilities have been given clearance that having had a year's moratorium, they can now slide in the charges at the exorbitant levels they were going to over two or three years and so we are back to square one?

*The Archbishop of York:* That is not the assurance I was given by the Secretary of State. If they do that, they are going to face a real showdown. I do not think it will go that way.

19. *Mr Martin Dales (York)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Is the Church of England going to be involved in the Scout Association lobby of Parliament on surface water drainage charges on St Swithun's Day next Wednesday July 15th and, if so, how?

*The Archbishop of York:* The Bishop of Southwell and Nottingham, in his capacity as Chairman of the Churches Legislation Advisory Service, will be representing the Churches, to outline the impact which water charges will have on churches, as well as Scout groups and other charitable voluntary and community organizations. The Scout Association is asking group leaders to lobby their local MPs on the day, and I would strongly encourage churches to do the same.

20. *Mr Peter LeRoy (Bath and Wells)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

What response did the Archbishops' Council give to the Board of Education's recent strategy document *Going for Growth - Transformation for children, young people and the Church*, and how does it intend to prioritize and to deploy sufficient resources to this key, strategic area for gospel outreach - as underlined by the findings from the Good Childhood inquiry?

*The Archbishop of York:* The Council welcomed the strategy document *Going for Growth* and the vision for the Church's mission among and with children and young people it expressed. In the light of the spending review and the likely financial retrenchment that that will entail, it asked the Education Division to carry out further work on identifying priorities within the strategy and the costs of resourcing and implementation.

*Mr Peter LeRoy (Bath and Wells):* Has the Council analyzed the proportion of its resources, both personnel and financial, that are allocated to the Church's mission to unreached children and young people compared to its ministry primarily to adults and, if not, will it do so urgently and before it decides to cut the former still further?

*The Archbishop of York:* I could not say that I have seen an analysis about which you would want to know. Just be aware also that should we commission this, it has financial implications. In the middle of a spending review, it seems to me that the division should do what the Council asks it to do and then come back; when they return, you will be informed.

21. *Mr Nick Harding (Southwell and Nottingham)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

The Archbishops' Council has stated that 'church schools are playing a central role in the Church's mission to the nation' (Financial Review paper), and yet only 10% of the country's young people attend Church schools. How is the Archbishops' Council going to ensure that the Church continues to support and promote effective work with the remaining 90% of children and young people?

*The Archbishop of York:* The Council recognizes the work carried out across the country with children and young people in non-school settings and commends the way this work is supported by dioceses and other Christian organizations. It is clear that this will continue to be of great importance in the current climate and is confident that dioceses will want to maintain their commitment to this work.

*Mr Nick Harding (Southwell and Nottingham):* While I am grateful to hear that the Archbishops' Council believes that each diocese will maintain its commitment, can I ask for a guarantee?

*The Archbishop of York:* I am speaking on behalf of the Archbishops' Council and not on behalf of dioceses. As I walked around particularly the Northern province, I have been quite impressed by the actual work dioceses are doing in the area of children who are not in Church schools. Recently I visited Chester and it was absolutely impressive. I hope that that example will reassure you, but it would be a very rash person who were to give a guarantee, on a night when we have had a good dinner!

*The Bishop of Dover (Rt Revd Stephen Venner):* Given that this work amongst children and young people outside our Church schools, as we have said over and over again, is fundamental to our life and mission, what is the Archbishops' Council itself doing to reinforce that message across the Church of England?

*The Archbishop of York:* The Archbishops' Council's duty and role is to make sure that finance and policy are kept in the same place. I am very hopeful that when the

Education Division reports back on that particular piece of work, we will be able to inform you. Sometimes when we are trying to hold together finance and policy, we cannot suggest that the spending review does not remove national support for non-Church school work. The precise areas of reduction nationally will be determined over the next few months by the management team itself.

22. *Mr Gavin Oldham (Oxford)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

In view of the forthcoming rise in higher rate tax levels, would the Council issue a simple leaflet explaining how higher rate donors can reclaim tax, thereby increasing the amount they are able to give to the Church by up to 56% compared to the same after-tax gift from a basic rate taxpayer?

*Mr Andrew Britton:* Through the National Stewardship Committee, the Council has for several years encouraged dioceses to promote understanding of higher rate tax relief and provided guidance to them. Guidance has also been available on the Church of England website. We can indeed make a one page leaflet available to any diocese that requests it. The guidance will be updated to reflect changes to tax rates in April 2010.

*Mr Gavin Oldham (Oxford):* Does the Archbishops' Council have any idea how much tax is reclaimed from the Inland Revenue by higher rate taxpayers in respect of their gifts to the Church and, if not, would it inquire from dioceses to see whether any such surveys have been undertaken?

*Mr Andrew Britton:* I am not myself aware of any such survey. I will speak to the Stewardship Committee to see whether they think that a survey of that sort would be worthwhile.

23. \**Mr Andrew Presland (Peterborough)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Will the Council make available to members of the Synod the 36 responses received to the consultation document on the Review of Constitutions, as referred to in paragraph 3 of GS 1737, and ensure that a summary of the key points made is also provided?

*Canon Dr Christina Baxter:* Respondents to the consultation were not asked at the time whether they were content for their submissions to be made public. The Archbishops' Council is not therefore in a position to publish them but I have arranged for a list of respondents to be posted on the notice board in the concourse and members are free to approach them about their submissions. The comments we received on GS 1714 greatly assisted the review group and helped us to produce the revised proposals we shall be debating on Sunday.

**GENERAL SYNOD**  
**Review of Constitutions**

Responses to the consultation on the proposals set out in GS 1714 (presented at the February 2009 group of sessions) were received from:

Revd Canon Jonathan Alderton-Ford (St Edmundsbury and Ipswich)  
Mrs April Alexander (Southwark)

Mr Stephen Barney (Leicester)  
 Revd Canon David Bird (Peterborough)  
 Dr David Blackmore (Chester)  
 Canon Peter Bruinvels (Guildford)  
 Dr John Bull (Newcastle)  
 Dr Graham Campbell (Chester)  
 Dr Peter Capon (Manchester)  
 Canon Alan Cooper (Manchester)  
 Revd Robert Cotton (Guildford)  
 Dr Philip Giddings (Oxford)  
 Revd Dr Ros Hunt  
 Revd Mark Ireland (Lichfield)  
 Mr David Jones (Salisbury)  
 Canon Linda Jones (Liverpool)  
 Revd Stephen Lynas (Bath and Wells)  
 Revd Dr Jeremy Morris  
 Mrs Gill Morrison (Peterborough)  
 Mr Gavin Oldham (Oxford)  
 Rt Revd John Packer, Bishop of Ripon and Leeds  
 Andrew Presland (Peterborough)  
 Rt Revd John Pritchard, Bishop of Oxford  
 Ven. Norman Russell, Archdeacon of Berkshire (Oxford)  
 Revd Thomas Seville (Religious Communities)  
 Mr Clive Scowen (London)  
 Canon Peter Smith (St Edmundsbury and Ipswich)  
 Mr Tom Sutcliffe (Southwark)  
 Mr Adrian Vincent  
 Appointments Committee  
 Board of Education  
 Committee for the Ministry of and among Deaf and Disabled People  
 Deployment, Remuneration and Conditions of Service Committee  
 Faith and Order Advisory Group  
 Finance Committee  
 Stewardship Committee

## House of Bishops

24. *Revd Canon Simon Bessant (Sheffield)* asked the Chairman of the House of Bishops:

Christian Research has revealed that in 2005 10% of regular Sunday attendees at Anglican services were worshipping at larger churches (i.e. churches with a usual Sunday attendance of over 350, and in some cases over 1000). Their statistical research has tracked this growth and they predict that it will continue in the years ahead. Given this, has the House of Bishops:

- (a) debated the complex challenges and opportunities that arise from the role of a larger church in a diocese;
- (b) considered the multifarious issues arising from asymmetric ecclesiology, i.e. when one parish church is very significantly larger than others in a town or surrounding area and its missiological footprint impacts upon them; and
- (c) discussed how various bishops have sought to harness the strengths of larger churches as assets in their dioceses' mission?

*The Bishop of Bristol (Rt Revd Michael Hill):* We rejoice in the missional strength of our larger churches, and also in the bearing of one another's burdens as Scripture demands. The ecclesiology of the whole Church of England is rooted in the relationship between parish and diocese, expressed in the shared cure of souls between bishop and incumbent priest.

So the particular opportunities for mission offered by our larger churches need to be maximized, and the pathways to healthy growth smoothed, in order that the work of God can go forward across the whole diocese. Bishops are aware of this need and are working and talking together about it. There is opportunity at every meeting of the House of Bishops for sharing experience and good practice, both formally and informally.

The three points in the question, however, are well expressed and will be useful to members of the House of Bishops as they continue to consider all these questions.

*Revd Canon Simon Bessant:* Given the stated trend, the importance of the issue and the fact that several diocesan bishops, including the Bishop of Bristol, have attended the National Larger Anglican Churches Consultation, would the bishop be willing to suggest this issue as an appropriate one to appear on a future House of Bishops agenda?

*The Bishop of Bristol:* The broad answer to that is Yes, but I think that the import of the answer I have given is that bishops are aware of the strengths and the peculiarities of larger churches and are intent on working out how, as I think is the implication of the Question, these strengths can best be harnessed and how these peculiarities can best be encouraged to serve the wider diocese and not just the parish in question.

25. *Mr Gavin Oldham (Oxford)* asked the Chairman of the House of Bishops:

With the saying 'the Church exists for those who are not its members' in mind, would the House of Bishops consider inviting all parts of the Church, both central and diocesan, to assess their allocation of resources (both time and money) and liturgy to determine what proportion of them is directed to regular churchgoers rather than those who have no experience of the Christian faith, and to make appropriate adjustments to give more focus to outreach?

*The Bishop of Bristol:* There is much talk at present of a mixed economy Church. That mixed economy is certainly not meant to be a mixture of churches that seek to serve the world on the one hand, and self-centred churches that ignore the world on the other.

So the Church, from its parishes and dioceses to the National Church Institutions, must allocate resources in ways which maximize the mission of God. There is much debate about how that can best be done, and how to resource it. The House of Bishops seeks to encourage and inform that debate, as every bishop seeks to offer leadership in mission across his diocese.

However, the House will not easily be convinced that committing scarce resources to an exercise in measuring these categories of mission is either desirable or feasible,

since outreach to the unchurched, and building up the Church's members for mission, are so thoroughly interwoven.

*Mr Gavin Oldham:* Has the House of Bishops considered whether the widespread use of Eucharistic worship may present a challenge for newcomers to the Christian faith and, if not, would it explore this possibility?

*The Bishop of Bristol:* To the best of my memory, I cannot recall that having been discussed in the House of Bishops as a formal subject, but I am aware that bishops have talked about this amongst themselves. As far as I know, at present there is no particular plan to discuss the issue that you raise but that does not mean that it cannot be raised.

26. *Revd Angus MacLeay (Rochester)* asked the Chairman of the House of Bishops:

What representation did the House of Bishops have at the recent inauguration of Bishop Bob Duncan as the Primate of the Anglican Church in North America on June 24?

*The Bishop of Bristol:* None. It is not the practice of the House to arrange such representation.

*Revd Angus MacLeay:* Bishop, what is the view of the House of Bishops as to the Anglican identity of the Anglican Church in North America and are any---

The Chairman: I know you would love to get in this one, but I am afraid it is asking for an expression of opinion. Can you rephrase the supplementary?

*Revd Angus MacLeay:* Could I ask the Bishop: are any individual members of the House of Bishops in communion with the Anglican Church in North America?

*The Chairman:* That one is all right but it is not actually one that arises out of the question. It was a question but it was not the right question.

27. *Mrs Lorna Ashworth (Chichester)* asked the Chairman of the House of Bishops:

Has the House of Bishops considered the relationship of the Church of England to the new Anglican Church in North America?

28. *Mrs Alison Ruoff (London)* asked the Chairman of the Ministry Division:

Has the House of Bishops considered what degree of recognition and welcome the Church of England can offer to the new Anglican Church in North America?

*The Bishop of Bristol:* With permission, Chairman, I should like to answer the Questions from Lorna Ashworth and Alison Ruoff together.

The House has not specifically considered this matter.

*Revd Canon Dr Chris Sugden (Oxford):* Do any of the House of Bishops regard themselves as being in communion with the bishops of the Anglican Church in North America?

*The Bishop of Bristol:* I think that given the fairly recent development of ACNA, as it is now called, I find that a very difficult question to answer on behalf of my colleagues. You will be aware that some bishops sent good wishes to them. I would not be qualified to say whether that means they regard themselves in communion and I think because of the recentness of this development, the reality is that the House of Bishops at some stage will look at that and think about it, but, on the other hand, I think there is then the issue of how we deal with individual clergy from them, which of course is covered by the Overseas Clergy Measure 1967, which is a matter for the Archbishops.

*Mrs Alison Ruoff (London):* Would the Bishop give an assurance to the Synod that this urgent question will be on the agenda for the next meeting of the House of Bishops, please?

*The Bishop of Bristol:* I do not think it would be for me to give that assurance. All I can say is that I am aware that the House of Bishops and the Archbishops in particular are aware of this fairly recent development and I am quite sure that they will be concerned to look at what the ramifications of this are, not just for the Church of England but for the wider Anglican Communion.

*Revd Hugh Lee (Oxford):* Is it for the House of Bishops, for the Archbishop or indeed for General Synod to decide ultimately whether we wish to be in communion with such a province?

*The Bishop of Bristol:* Procedurally I do not know the answer to that question. I would have thought that, first off, it might be a discussion amongst the House of Bishops and it would be for the House of Bishops to decide whether or not that would be shared more widely. This is a situation that we have never quite had to deal with in recent history before, and therefore I think it is new for all of us.

*The Bishop of Durham (Rt Revd Tom Wright):* Is the Bishop of Bristol aware that earlier today at a meeting of the House of Bishops Theology Group the new canons and constitution of ACNA were tabled for consideration by the theological group of the House of Bishops so that they might then come in a considered way to the House of Bishops?

*The Bishop of Bristol:* I am truly thankful for the Bishop's question. I was not aware of that fact but welcome it in the light of the discussion of the last few minutes.

29. *His Honour Judge John Bullimore (Wakefield)* asked the Chairman of the House of Bishops:

Is the House aware of any plans to mark the 150th anniversary in 2010 of the publication of *Essays and Reviews*, which raised many questions for members of the Church of England at the time, by a further series of essays by one or more distinguished writers reflecting on issues which face today's Church, and if not, would it be prepared to encourage members of the Doctrine Commission to undertake that task?

*The Bishop of Chichester (Rt Revd John Hind):* The House is not aware of any current plans to mark this anniversary along the lines suggested by Judge Bullimore. In any

case, the Doctrine Commission is currently in abeyance. (Actually, that is an expression of opinion but I will carry on.) I am sure that the House would encourage Church of England theologians to continue the tradition of reflecting constructively on the implications for the theology of the Church of England of developments in contemporary thought. Such reflection would of course need to take full account of the doctrine of the Church of England and its sources as set out in Canons A 5 and C 15.

30. *Miss Vasantha Gnanadoss (Southwark)* asked the Chairman of the House of Bishops:

The answer to Question 16 in February 2009 indicated that it was anticipated that statistics would now be available on the ethnic background of those on the Preferment List. Where is the information available, and are statistics given separately for the 'ready now', 'ready later' and 'possible' sections of the Preferment List?

*The Archbishop of York:* The total number of clergy on the Preferment List as at 1 July 2009 was 460, of whom nine were from a minority ethnic background, which is 2.0% of those on the Preferment List.

Of the minority ethnic clergy on the List, six were in the 'ready now' category, two were in the 'ready later' category, and three were classed as being 'possible later'. It should be noted that individuals can be in more than one category.

The most recent audit of clergy diversity carried out in 2005 showed that 2.2% of the total clergy in the Church of England (excluding retired stipendiary clergy) were from a minority ethnic background and that 2.3% of those of incumbent status were minority ethnic. The report *Talent and Calling* (GS 1650) noted that there should be a similar proportion of minority ethnic clergy on the Preferment List.

*Miss Vasantha Gnanadoss:* The numbers of minority ethnic clergy are increasing in several dioceses, so the clergy audit needs revision. Will the statistics for the Preferment List now be kept up to date and published every year?

*The Archbishop of York:* I am sure the Archbishops' Secretary for Appointments, who keeps the Preferment List, would intend that they should be published every year but, in the end, what is important is that diocesan bishops who have these clergy in their diocese make the assessment, and they are the only ones who can answer the question.

*Revd Brian Lewis (Chelmsford):* Last time we had a Question on this I asked if there could also be a measure of ethnic minority who are British born and I was promised this would be taken into account. I realize the figures are very small but it is very relevant, as I am sure the Archbishop is aware, as this is a particular area we need to address.

*The Archbishop of York:* You are right and I can tell you that in the numbers that I gave you of those that are British born, the number is one.

31. *Mr Philip Ivey-Ray (Chelmsford)* asked the Chairman of the House of Bishops:

What steps does the House intend to take to secure that dioceses give effect to the desire of the Synod, expressed in the resolution it passed in February 2008, that

anyone entering a church building or attending a church service should have easy and unfettered access to a Bible?

*The Bishop of Wakefield (Rt Revd Stephen Platten):* I am sure that my fellow bishops support unfettered access to the Bible – members of the House will have voted for Tim Cox’s motion – but practical access to Scripture is a matter most effectively handled within the diocese. There are existing mechanisms such as Archdeacons’ Visitations to ensure that there is a Bible readily available for consultation in every church.

32. *Dr Anna Thomas-Betts (Oxford)* asked the Chairman of the House of Bishops:

In reply to a Question in February 2007 the Bishop of Dover stated that work was already under way on a paper explaining the current teaching of the Church on communion before confirmation, and how the practice relates to baptism and confirmation; in 2008 the Bishop of Dover confirmed that the Board of Education had commissioned a small working party to consider the issues relating to confirmation and that the working party within the Board of Education was not limited to the membership of the Board of Education nor the remit of the Board of Education but would be working across other boards and theological groups as well; can the Synod be given a progress report on the work of the working party and an estimate of when it will complete its work?

*The Bishop of Dover:* The original impetus for the work came from members of the diocesan youth officer network, who were concerned to find ways of enabling confirmation services in particular to engage more effectively with the experience of young people. A working group of diocesan youth officers has been set up by the network which is supported by the National Youth Adviser. The group is currently undertaking some research into young people’s experience of confirmation.

Together with this group, the Board identified what might usefully be included in a broader guide to confirmation from the perspective of working with young confirmands, and discussions are progressing towards a publication, along with supporting resource material.

*Dr Anna Thomas-Betts (Oxford):* Is the Bishop of Dover able to give the Synod an estimate of when the progress towards the publication that he mentioned in his reply will actually come to fruition, or should I give up? I know the latter is asking for an opinion.

*The Bishop of Dover:* I hope that it is not an expression of opinion but of hope and faith that publication may be in May 2010.

## **House of Clergy**

33. *The Archdeacon of (Ven. Ian Jagger)* asked the Chairman of the House of Clergy:

The second part of the Review of Clergy Terms of Service (GS 1564) recommended that clergy should have access to good professional advice and that the officers of the Convocations, ‘... should consider the role of the Convocations in providing

appropriate objective advice to the clergy on employment law and human resources matters'. Is the Standing Committee of the House of Clergy aware of any progress towards meeting this aspiration?

*Revd Canon Glyn Webster:* A working party appointed by the two Convocation bodies (namely the Canterbury Standing Committee and the York Assessors) in 2008 has been working on this issue under an external chairman, Canon Tony Williamson. The joint meeting of the Standing Committee and Assessors (which also includes all members of the House of Clergy Standing Committee) received a progress report last February.

The need for such advice is acknowledged to be clear, and we think it important that the arrangements are sponsored by the clergy and quite independent of the Archbishops' Council and the dioceses. Various possibilities have been explored, but some of the issues are not easy to resolve. A further progress report will be given to the joint meeting of the Standing Committee and Assessors later in this group of sessions, and discussions will continue in the autumn. I hope, therefore, to be in a position to say more in February.

*Revd Canon Pete Spiers (Liverpool):* Can I ask whether you have approached the Ecclesiastical Insurance Group, for example, to find out how much it would cost for every clergy person to be insured so that they get access to the proper legal advice that is required, should they need it?

*Revd Canon Glyn Webster:* Conversations have taken place with the Ecclesiastical Insurance Group. Indeed, one of the representatives from the organization has attended one of the working party meetings. I cannot remember how much detail we went into on that aspect of what Pete has asked but I will note the question again.

*Revd Peter Hobson (Leicester):* Could the chair of the House of Clergy say what conversations may have taken place with bishops or the House of Bishops as to their views on the desirability of independent advice for clergy in these situations?

*Revd Canon Glyn Webster:* No conversations with the House of Bishops have taken place.

## Secretary General

*Mr Clive Scowen (London):* On a point of order, Chairman, in answer to my Question 3 when I asked a supplementary, the Chairman of the Business Committee said that if I listened very carefully I might get the answer to the supplementary later on. I think that answer is the answer to Question 34. I wonder if, exceptionally, you would consider allowing the answer to Question 34 to be read as an answer to my supplementary.

*The Secretary General (Mr William Fittall):* I can summarise it very briefly. It is a 9% saving on £247,000.

34. \*Mr Allan Jones (*Liverpool*) asked the Secretary General:

- (a) What is the cost (including postage) of holding this group of sessions of the General Synod; and
- (b) What has been the saving on costs by ending the group of sessions on Monday at teatime rather than going on until Tuesday lunchtime?

*The Secretary General:* We do not have centrally a record of the costs that are met directly by the dioceses, which, in the case of York synods, are principally members' travel expenses (and, in the case of meetings in London, also include accommodation and subsistence claims). The costs covered by the central budget for this group of sessions are projected to be in the region of £225,000 (including printing, postage, etc). This is after the deduction of a saving of £22,000 in our bill to the University for ending the group of sessions early.

35. \*Mr James Cheeseman (Rochester) asked the Secretary General:

Are there any plans for the General Synod to give consideration to the possible abolition of chancel repair liability?

*The Secretary General:* No. As a result of Government legislation chancel repair liability will be binding on a person who purchases property after 12 October 2013 only if that liability has been registered against the title of the property in question before the purchase. This will mean that no-one should be at risk of acquiring property that is subject to chancel repair liability without full knowledge of what they are taking on. After 12 October 2013 the Church should be in a better position to take stock of the extent of chancel repair liability across the country and to think further about future policy in that light.

36. *Dr Edmund Marshall (Wakefield)* asked the Secretary General:

What discussions involving the Church of England have there been recently about the implications for royal marriages of the Act of Settlement 1701?

*The Secretary General:* Constitutional issues feature regularly in discussions between Church and Government representatives. The Government's attitude to Dr Evan Harris's Private Members Bill to amend the Act of Settlement in relation to royal marriages was discussed with the Church before the Second Reading debate. In talking the Bill out, the Lord Chancellor expressed the Government's sympathy for the removal of discrimination against Roman Catholics, but he also acknowledged that change would be difficult to effect given both the Government's continuing commitment to the establishment of the Church of England and the requirement to seek the consent to any change from the Parliaments of the fifteen other Commonwealth countries of which the Sovereign is Head of State.

*Dr Edmund Marshall:* Is there any mechanism for opening fresh exploratory discussions involving the Church of England, our ecumenical partners, governmental representatives and possibly the Royal Family in an attempt to bring this anachronistic legislation up to date in the modern ecumenical age?

*The Secretary General:* I think the fundamental difficulty is that the policy of the Roman Catholic Church, for reasons which we understand, is to preclude a Roman

Catholic from joining in communion with the Church of England. It is, therefore, very difficult to see how there is a solution to this problem that does not involve changing, in fact abolishing, the establishment of the Church of England. Clearly there are some in Parliament, and Dr Evan Harris would be one, who would like to secure that outcome, but I think from our perspective that that is quite a difficult dilemma, but I am sure it will continue to be one that people wrestle with.

37. *Revd Prebendary David Houlding (London)* asked the Secretary General:

With constitutional matters again under consideration and with a focus on the House of Lords, what pressure is being placed on HM Government to secure for the Church an effective voice in the legislature, through the membership of a significant number of bishops in the Upper House of Parliament, in accordance with the Synod's resolution of July 2001?

*The Secretary General:* The Government's declared position is that a substantially elected Second Chamber would continue to include bishops but that in the event of a wholly elected House there would no longer be any Lords Spiritual. The Church's concerns about constitutional reform, which of course go wider than the role of bishops in Parliament, have recently been articulated privately and publicly on a number of occasions. I cannot do better than to quote the Bishop of Durham's intervention in the House of Lords on 10 June following a Government statement on constitutional reform. He said: 'It is like somebody who, under the guise of so-called visionary leadership, decides to cut down all the old oak trees in the great park, only then to discover a few months later that the topsoil has all blown away. There is currently a real danger of us losing some of the political topsoil.'

*Mr John Freeman (Chester):* Is there anything that we as lay and clergy members of the General Synod can do to support bishops remaining in the House of Lords whatever happens?

*The Secretary General:* That is a very interesting and tricky question. The reality is that there will not be fundamental change to the House of Lords this side of the next general election and therefore I suppose the first challenge is to read the manifestos of the parties, see what they promise and see whether this is a matter that you regard as so important that it may affect your voting, but it is not for me to advise you on that. I suspect that we shall all observe some developments between now and the election. I think there will be further statements on this subject, but the reality is that no major legislation is going to go through Parliament until the other side of the election.

*Dr Philip Giddings (Oxford):* Has the Secretary General considered the possibility that the better long-term solution is the representation of members of the Church of England in Parliament who are not bishops?

*The Secretary General:* Of course there is a large number of members of the Church of England who are in the House of Lords, but they are not there in a sense as representatives of the Church of England. The fundamental question is: are we going to have a wholly elected Second Chamber, and there is a lot of pressure for that in some parts of Parliament, or are we going to continue to have an unelected House? That is the big issue. There are those who regard it as slightly strange that in a situation in which there is a shortage of public confidence in elected politicians, some

people think that the solution is to fill both Houses with elected politicians, but we shall see how the debate unfolds.

38. *Mr Roy Walker (Manchester)* asked the Secretary General:

Following the much publicized resolution on BNP membership, proposed by Vasantha Gnanadoss and passed at the February group of sessions of the General Synod, how many Church of England clergy or leading lay members of the Church are known to have already either resigned from the BNP or resigned from the Church?

39. *Mr Roy Walker (Manchester)* asked the Secretary General:

Have steps been taken to estimate the number of clergy and lay officials in the Church of England who are members of the BNP, and has consideration been given to the possibility of a voluntary register of such persons recording their membership of any political party?

*The Secretary General:* With permission I shall answer Questions 38 and 39 together. The House of Bishops Standing Committee decided to establish a small, mainly staff-level, working group under the chairmanship of the Bishop of Ripon and Leeds, tasked with letting it have by November recommendations for the action needed to give effect to the motion passed by Synod in February. No estimates exist for the number of clergy or lay staff who have been members of the BNP, though the leaked version of the party's membership list last year included no clergy currently licensed to minister in the Church of England.

*Mr Roy Walker:* I welcome this response and its suggestion that there are, as I suspected, no clergy members of the BNP. I hope that is the case. I regret, though, that the second question ---

*The Chairman:* Could this become a question very rapidly, please?

*Mr Roy Walker:* Yes. It is all one sentence actually because I put 'while' in. I regret that the second question on a voluntary register of party membership is not answered and I would ask whether the working group that I found out about a few minutes ago could also consider a register of interests for Synod as in central and local government, clergy and lay, which does not just list party politics but other personal and prejudicial interests which influence debates. I could give examples.

*The Secretary General:* Myself, I think there are difficulties about voluntary registers, particularly in this area. I think the proposal that has been suggested of a much wider register in relation to Synod membership would go a bit wide of the terms of reference of this group because they have a very specific task, which is to work out how practically across the Church we can give effect to that important resolution that was passed in February. If people wish to pursue the idea of voluntary registers more generally, then there are ways of seeking to do that.

40. *Mr Clive Scowen (London)* asked the Secretary General:

Have any representations been made to HM Government, or briefings given to Members of Parliament and peers, concerning the Equality Bill currently before Parliament, in particular relating to the likely impact of its provisions on Christian

employers wishing to recruit committed disciples of Christ who seek to fashion their lives according to biblical precepts and, if so, what in outline was the substance of those submissions and briefings?

*The Secretary General:* There is a copy on the Church of England website of the substantial submission produced by the Archbishops' Council in response to the Government's earlier consultation exercise. We produced a briefing document for MPs for the Second Reading of the Bill and I gave oral evidence to the Bill Committee on 9 June at which, with representatives of the Catholic Bishops' Conference and the Board of Deputies of British Jews, I argued strongly against the narrowing of the provisions for religious organizations in relation to employment. Our lobbying, in partnership with others, continues both publicly and privately.

*Mr Clive Scowen:* Is there any evidence that the lobbying, the representations and the briefings have had an impact on the views of members of the Government or indeed Members of Parliament?

*The Secretary General:* We are still at a very early stage with this Bill. It has just emerged from committee in the House of Commons and it is now going to go into hibernation until after the end of this session because they cannot get it through both Houses of Parliament by the end of this session, and so Report and Third Reading in the Commons will not be before November, and it then has to go through the House of Lords. We are still at quite an early stage of the process and I think it would be difficult to predict, at the moment, how it would go. I think there is no doubt that we have been heard; equally, there is no doubt that there are some quite tricky and sensitive issues here. We will see how we get on.

*Revd Brian Lewis (Chelmsford):* Referring back to your answer to Mr Scowen's first question, could you explain to us why you believe that the Equality Bill is a narrowing of the existing law, especially in the light of the Amicus decision of 2004?

*The Chairman:* I am afraid that is out of order as it is asking for an expression of opinion.

41. *Revd Paul Benfield (Blackburn)* asked the Secretary General:

By whom, and for what reason, was it decided that members who exercise their right under Standing Order 53 to attend a legislative revision committee to speak to their proposals for amendment should no longer receive copies of submissions from other members and other relevant papers that are before the revision committee when it considers those proposals?

*The Secretary General:* The Standing Orders confer no entitlement on Synod members who are not members of a revision committee to receive the submissions made to the committee or any analysis or advice prepared by staff for the committee. Past practice has not been entirely consistent but the same approach has been taken for the Women in the Episcopate legislation as for the draft Ecclesiastical Fees (Amendment) Measure. At the suggestion of the Legal Adviser, the Standing Orders Committee has begun to consider whether the provisions in Standing Orders relating to revision committee procedure should be changed and whether, in particular, they should require all submissions made to a revision committee to be made publicly

available in electronic form. Subject to the terms of the Standing Orders it is for each revision committee to regulate its own process.

*Revd Paul Benfield:* Is the Secretary General aware that at the Revision Committee for the Ecclesiastical Fees Measure those making submissions were not always clear which amendments were being considered because they did not have all the papers that the committee had before it? Is he further aware that the chairman of that committee apologized that those attending did not have the necessary papers for the efficient disposal of the business of that committee?

*The Secretary General:* The members of the revision committee always have all the papers. The question here is whether other people who have the right to come and speak to their own amendments should have access to the full papers of the committee. That is not what the Standing Orders currently provide but there is an argument, and I do follow it, that in order to be helpful to those attending, there should be greater access to papers, and that is clearly something that the Standing Orders Committee will now look at.

*Revd Prebendary David Houlding (London):* With reference to the Revision Committee on the legislation for admitting women to the episcopate, by whom and for what reason and by which precedent was it decided that members who exercise their right to make submissions to the Revision Committee should be present only when speaking to their own submissions and forbidden to be present even when matters which relate to their submission are discussed?

*The Secretary General:* The Revision Committee decided that it would do what the Standing Orders required and that means, under Standing Order 53, that somebody who has made a submission may be present to speak to it and may be present while that submission is being discussed. As will be recalled, people come and speak; they may respond to questions on their submission; and they can then stay, but not at the table, while that is discussed. That is the procedure that the committee has decided to follow. I think everybody does need to understand that the Revision Committee on this particular piece of legislation is under extraordinary pressure. There was a very large number of submissions, quite rightly, from members of the Synod. The committee is very keen to hear everybody and to honour everybody's rights, but equally this has to be an orderly process, so it has followed the Standing Orders scrupulously. I think it would be fair to say that on some much smaller committees in the past of a slightly more informal nature sometimes committees have been happy to go well beyond what the Standing Orders require.

42. *Revd Paul Benfield (Blackburn)* asked the Secretary General:

How does the Secretary General decide which legislative revision committees to attend, and what is his role when he does attend?

*The Secretary General:* Under Standing Order 123 the Secretary General is the chief executive officer of the Synod and has the right to attend all sittings of synodical bodies. That is necessarily a right that has to be exercised selectively. In the case of the draft legislation on Women in the Episcopate I concluded, after discussion with the Legal Adviser, that the scale, significance and complexity of the task meant that I

should lead the staff team providing support for the Steering and Revision Committees.

43. *Revd Canon Simon Bessant (Sheffield)* asked the Secretary General:

Given that sections 47 to 50 of the Dioceses, Pastoral and Mission Measure came into force on 31 March 2008:

- (a) How many Bishop's Mission Orders (section 47) have been made;
- (b) How many diocesan bishops have made such orders; and
- (c) How many Visitors (section 48) have been appointed?

*The Secretary General:* The statutory provisions do not require bishops to notify the Archbishops' Council or Church Commissioners when orders are made. We are not aware of any orders that have yet been made though we know informally of two dioceses where orders are in an advanced state of preparation and a number of others where they are being explored. A Visitor is appointed only once an order is in place.

*Revd Canon Simon Bessant:* Does the Secretary General, perhaps in partnership with the new Archbishops' Missioner at Fresh Expressions, have a date in mind by which to assess the effectiveness of the Measure in authorizing Fresh Expressions to Bishops' Mission Orders?

*The Secretary General:* I do not think we have a date yet in mind. It is important to remember that although the Measure is the 2007 Measure, the deadline for ensuring that the new Mission and Pastoral Committees are in place is only really just on us. We are still at a relatively early stage in this process, but I am sure it will be sensible to conduct an assessment at some point. I think that is something that could usefully be discussed with Bishop Graham Cray.

## **Clerk to the Synod**

44. *Dr Anna Thomas-Betts (Oxford)* asked the Clerk to the Synod:

What arrangements are made to protect the anonymity of speakers in a General Synod debate that is to be televised should they express a wish to remain anonymous? If there are no arrangements currently in place, will consideration be given as to how this might be achieved?

*The Clerk to the Synod (Revd David Williams):* There are no arrangements in place which can guarantee the anonymity of speakers, in a meeting to which the public has access. It would be inherently problematic to restrict public and media access to, or communication of the proceedings of, the Synod, given the nature of the Synod. I will, however, see that the Business Committee gives some consideration to the question which has been raised.

*Dr Anna Thomas-Betts:* In thanking the Clerk to the Synod for that answer, would he ensure that the Business Committee will take into consideration the significant difference between the pictures of a speaker being broadcast on national television

and the report in the printed media and also the fact that techniques such as tessellation can achieve the desired effect of anonymity?

*The Clerk to the Synod:* I think Dr Anna Thomas-Betts' question highlights some of the complexities of this issue. I am sure the Business Committee will consider it and also I am sure the panel of Chairs will need to give it some thought, too.

45. \*Mr Nigel Greenwood (Ripon and Leeds) asked the Clerk to the Synod:

What arrangements are in place to compensate staff for any extra time worked whilst the General Synod is in session?

*The Clerk to the Synod:* I can confirm that staff are allowed time off in lieu for extra time worked at Synod.

## **Board of Education**

46. Mr Peter LeRoy (Bath and Wells) asked the Chairman of the Board of Education:

How and when does the Board of Education plan to implement its recent strategy document *Going for Growth - Transformation for children, young people and the Church*, and how does it intend to prioritize and to deploy sufficient resources to this strategic area for gospel outreach to non church-going children - as underlined by the findings from the Good Childhood inquiry?

*The Bishop of Lincoln (Rt Revd John Saxbee):* Mr LeRoy will have noted the Archbishop of York's reply to Question 20 and related supplementaries. The Board of Education approved *Going for Growth* at its meeting in April and it has already begun to influence the wider planning of its work. In the light of the spending review and the likely reductions in central resources, further work is being carried out on priorities within the strategy and different ways of resourcing them.

*Mr Peter LeRoy:* Thank you for that answer. Since the abolition of the post of the Children's Evangelism Officer, formerly in the Mission and Public Affairs Division, and the transfer of those responsibilities to the Board of Education, has the Board been and will it continue to be resourced sufficiently for this significant additional outreach work?

*The Bishop of Lincoln:* Resourcing for the Education Division, as we are resourcing for other sectors of our Church life nationally, is in the hands of others. I hope the 'others' have heard your question.

47. Mrs Gillian Ambrose (Ely) asked the Chairman of the Board of Education:

Given that an independent survey earlier this year revealed that the 'tell a story, colour a picture' method is still widely alive and well in the practice of children's work, what assurances can be given to the children of our Church that those responsible for the direction and management of this work in parishes, the parish clergy, will be prepared and resourced for the task of ensuring that children's spirituality is competently nurtured and that standards of ministry with children will rise?

*The Bishop of Lincoln:* The Education Division works closely with diocesan children's advisers in the promotion and dissemination of good practice in order to raise standards of ministry amongst children. Mrs Ambrose will appreciate that it is not always those who take advantage of the opportunities given who are most in need of them. The document aforementioned, *Going for Growth*, which was adopted by the Board of Education in April this year has developed theology and principles which will underpin its work in ministry amongst, with and by children and young people, and offers a strategic framework for dioceses and parishes to reassess and develop their own practice. It is hoped that this will be widely used not only to raise standards amongst clergy but also amongst the many thousands of laypeople who freely give their time to help nurture children's spirituality in and beyond the Church.

*Mrs Gillian Ambrose:* Given that we know that experiences from infancy and early childhood so often determine the outcomes in later life, and this includes faith development as in other areas of development, what work can the Board do to set up liaisons with other organizations that can help with this task, given the threat to the work of the central Board?

*The Bishop of Lincoln:* This is very helpful. Thank you. It is the policy of the Board in all areas of its work to seek partners and to co-operate with them in order to ensure that we are not only accessing best practice as those partners may exhibit it, but also so that we too can share whatever it is we are learning in these important areas. The Board simply remains committed to ensuring that we are doing the very best for our children and young people because nothing less will do.

*Revd Richard Moy (Lichfield):* I was wondering whether the Board of Education would be a suitable or significant partner to approach in relation to recreating visual media resources for reaching out to children and young adults.

*The Bishop of Lincoln:* You can rely upon the Board of Education always to be open to all new forms of communication that will be effective. You may have already accessed the website on Values in Christian Schools which is a good example of the way in which the Board of Education and the National Society remain committed to being ahead of the game rather than simply following the trends.

48. *Mrs Mary Judkins (Wakefield)* asked the Chairman of the Board of Education:

As many of our churches (and those of other denominations) are open for school visits, especially to link in with RE units in the context of Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC), what consideration has the Board of Education given to ensuring that clergy and laity alike are up to date in current teaching and learning activities, and are enabled to apply for the Quality Mark associated with this?

*The Bishop of Lincoln:* There is considerable support for clergy and congregations in planning activities for schools through training offered in dioceses and in some cases local authorities. The Learning Outside the Classroom Quality Badge referred to in the question is a recently established kitemark and a very good way for churches to develop their best practice. The recently appointed RE Development Officers are assessing its usefulness as part of the suite of approaches to improving clergy confidence and capability.

*Mrs Mary Judkins:* As an educational officer for a faith organization, recently awarded the Learning Outside the Classroom Quality Badge, can I ask that these new RE Development Officers start the process as soon as possible rather than just assessing, in order to keep RE at the centre of the primary curriculum rather than sidelined as the Rose report suggests?

*The Bishop of Lincoln:* Congratulations on the award that you have received. Yes, I think we would want to ensure that our officers are able to deliver as effectively as possible against the background of the Rose report and other indicators we have that RE is under threat from certain quarters in certain ways.

*The Bishop of Dover (Rt Revd Stephen Venner):* Is the Chairman of the Board aware that in our Church, universities and colleges there are tremendous resources both in courses and expertise available to those who wish to avail themselves of them?

*The Bishop of Lincoln:* The Chairman of the Board of Education is so aware.

## **Church Urban Fund**

49. *Mr Philip Ivey-Ray (Chelmsford)* asked the Chairman of the Church Urban Fund:

As little attention is being given to the fact that rural poverty is outstripping urban poverty in some areas, has any thought been given to widening the Fund's objects and activities so that assistance is given to rural areas as well as urban ones, and on the same scale?

*The Bishop of Dudley (Rt Revd David Walker):* The Church Urban Fund raises money to change people's lives in England's most disadvantaged communities and over 20 years CUF has supported activity in every English diocese.

We target the worst 10% of areas as defined by the Government's Index of Multiple Deprivation system. We interpret the objects of CUF flexibly to prioritize the use of our limited resources in these most deprived communities, as empirical evidence and first-hand stories indicate that poverty is affecting the lives of more and more people in diverse locations.

CUF's recent document *Faith in Action* sets out our vision for the organization's development, paving the way for greater understanding as to how we enable the local church to respond to poverty through our building of relationships and resourcing of local solutions.

Working flexibly, to ensure that we address the greatest need across all dioceses, is a challenge, and is subject to ongoing discussion with our trustees.

*Mr Philip Ivey-Ray:* Can I ask that the part after the first comma of my question be answered as it seems to be circumnavigated in the reply? What I asked was: has any thought been given to widening the Fund's objectives and activities so that assistance is given to rural areas as well as urban ones and on the same scale. That has not been answered and I would like it answered, please, even if it is only by a Yes or a No.

*The Bishop of Dudley:* Many of the most deprived rural areas are naturally linked, I think you will find, to urban areas and the same issues are experienced there. I know in my own diocese the work that CUF has done cuts across its projects in urban and rural areas because the same issues arise in both places. You are asking a technical question about charitable objectives. All I can say is that we are reviewing how our governance structures relate to our priorities but we are in the very early stages of that and I cannot give any details at this point in time.

*The Bishop of Basingstoke (Rt Revd Trevor Willmott):* Given the fact that deprivation in rural communities is often very hidden, has the Fund done any research work, in particular in rural communities? You have connected rural to urban and I hesitate to ask: in particular in rural areas, has it done some research to discern whether there is deprivation? If it has done that research, would it make it available to all of us?

*The Bishop of Dudley:* I am not aware whether such research has been done. I can ask and find out. CUF is having a lunch-time gathering tomorrow. I am sure that any of you who wish to know more about CUF's work, even if you cannot transfer your lunch at this stage, would be welcome to come, to listen and to ask questions at that stage.

## **Council for Christian Unity**

50. *Mrs Joanna Monckton (Lichfield)* asked the Chairman of the Council for Christian Unity:

Has the Council considered the implications from the point of view of the Porvoo Agreement of the announcement by the Church of Sweden that it is going to change its marriage service to take a gender neutral form so that the same form of service can be offered to same-sex couples as to heterosexual couples?

*The Bishop of Guildford (Rt Revd Christopher Hill):* The Church of Sweden has not yet taken a decision in response to recent state legislation in Sweden providing for gender neutral marriage. The Swedish Synod meets in September and again in October and there is a proposal before it that the marriage liturgy of the Church of Sweden should not be gender-specific. In the light of a letter from the Archbishop of Uppsala advising all the Churches of the Porvoo agreement of likely developments in the legislature and the Swedish Synod, the Faith and Order Advisory Group considered the issues raised by this proposal at its last meeting and the chairmen of the Council for Christian Unity and the Faith and Order Advisory Group, that is to say the Bishop of Chichester and myself, have published an open letter to the Archbishop of Uppsala reflecting concerns about the implications of any revision of its marriage liturgy by the Church of Sweden. This of course has not yet taken place. This letter, though, over the signature of the Bishop of Chichester and myself, is now on the Church of England website and I have arranged for a copy to be placed on the notice board.

The Council for Christian Unity  
Faith and Order Advisory Group

The Most Reverend the Archbishop of Uppsala  
S-751 70  
Uppsala

Sweden  
25th June 2009

Dear Archbishop Anders,

Your letter concerning the questions facing the Church of Sweden in the matter of same-sex relationships and the law of marriage has been received and discussed by the Faith and Order Advisory Group of the Church of England. As chairmen of the Council for Christian Unity and the Faith and Order Advisory Group we are writing with some initial reflections in response to your courtesy in informing us of the situation.

We are very conscious of the limitations of our knowledge of your situation and we hope that in coming months there may be close contact between the officers of our respective churches to enable us to understand more clearly the proposals themselves and their theological and ecumenical implications.

We must however say that already, from the viewpoint of the Church of England, the existing practice in the Church of Sweden of blessing same-sex relationships was problematic, not least because the same practice in one or two member churches of the Anglican Communion has led to divisions within our Communion. Although there is a continuing debate among Anglicans about human sexuality, the teaching and discipline of the Church of England, like that of the Anglican Communion as a whole as expressed in the Lambeth Conference of 1998, is that it is not right either to bless same-sex sexual relationships or to ordain those who are involved in them.

If we understand the situation in the Church of Sweden correctly, what is now proposed appears to be a fundamental re-definition of the Christian doctrine of marriage and of basic Christian anthropology. This development might be seen as part of a wider shift within Western culture and theology to a position in which the idea of a fundamental distinction between the genders is seen as irrelevant and in which marriage is therefore seen as something that can and should be gender neutral. This position would be at odds with the biblical teaching about the significance of God's creation of human beings as male and female as this has been received by the Church of England and by the Catholic tradition in general.

FOAG also felt that the proposal, relating as it does to the wider cultural, political and social situation, raises important ecclesiological questions about the relationship of Church and society and the essential freedom that the Church possesses to order its life according to the Gospel. From a Church of England perspective it is vital for the Church to maintain a critical distance from the state and to resist what the state is doing if this is at odds with Scripture and the Catholic tradition. We recognise of course that it is easier to state this principle than to be clear how in any given situation particular churches make decisions in communion with the Church down the ages and across the world after prayer, under the guidance of the Spirit and on the basis of the study of Scripture.

This is one of the reasons why we had hoped that the Porvoo agreement would enable participating churches to assist each other in living the Catholic spirit as they face the pressures of changing social values in their own societies. In other words, international and inter-confessional church fellowship could be a means of helping us all to be both universal and local. We fear that the present developments may indicate a real weakness in the Porvoo agreement as it did not involve binding mutual consultation and joint decision making.

FOAG is acutely conscious of the immediate and negative ecumenical consequences of moves within any of the Porvoo churches to revise traditional

Christian teaching and practice in matters of human sexuality. As is well known, such developments within the Anglican Communion have not only led to severe tensions within the Communion, but have also seriously damaged existing ecumenical relations and dialogues. Changes in the understanding of human sexuality and marriage in one member church of the Porvoo fellowship would lead to an impairment of the relationships between the churches, with particular implications for the limitation of the inter-changeability of ordained ministry. Because of the role of the Archbishop of Canterbury within the Anglican Communion they could also further undermine the fragile unity of the Anglican Communion,

FOAG was interested to learn of a suggestion that possibly a majority of the Swedish bishops were in favour of ceasing to solemnise marriages in church, with blessings after civil marriage taking place instead. While attractive to some, this solution would still indicate a significant difference between the teaching and practice of the Church of Sweden and that of the Church of England in a matter where many consider the unity of the Church requires a common mind.

As I have already said, FOAG is very conscious that all churches are faced with similar issues about changes in Western culture. The issues facing you are our issues too and we hope that the difficulties of the present situation will enable us to be much more purposeful in our standing alongside each other. So both for this reason and because there is so much we do not understand about your situation, we hope for continuing and deepening contact and dialogue on the issues raised by recent developments.

With all best wishes

Bishop Christopher Hill  
(Chairman,  
Council for Christian Unity of the  
Church of England)

Bishop John Hind  
(Chairman,  
Faith and Order Advisory  
Group of the Church of England)

51. *Mrs Joanna Monckton (Lichfield)* asked the Chairman of the Council for Christian Unity:

In the light of the considerable difficulties experienced in the Anglican Communion following the consecration of a practising homosexual as a bishop, has the Council considered the implications of the recent decision by the Church of Sweden to appoint a practising lesbian as a bishop?

*The Bishop of Guildford:* The Council for Christian Unity has not had the opportunity to reflect on this recent development. When it does so it will need to consider the similarities and differences between the Anglican Communion and the communion established by the Porvoo agreement. However, in both contexts, the interchangeability of all ordained ministries is subject to the disciplines of the Churches involved, which in the case of the Church of England is the discipline set out by the 1988 General Synod motion and in the 1991 report of the House of Bishops, *Issues in Human Sexuality*. The Council for Christian Unity has proposed that there should be a consultation next year in which the Porvoo Churches share the work that they have done on human sexuality and the doctrine of marriage, in order to see where there is common ground and where there are genuine differences between them.

## Ministry Division

52. \*Revd Canon Dr Alan Hargrave (Ely) asked the Chairman of the Ministry Division:

In the light of the significant income shortfalls experienced by theological colleges, courses and schemes in the year 2007-8, what support mechanisms has the Ministry Council put in place to ensure that those courses which have neither reserves nor an established supporter base will continue to be able to offer part-residential training to meet the needs of the Church?

*The Bishop of Norwich (Rt Revd Graham James):* The low level of reserves held by the training institutions remains a continuing concern to the Finance Panel. Currently theological colleges and courses are provided with adequate, if not generous, funding based on standard staff to ordinand ratios and expected other costs. In setting the level of funding the Finance Panel has to keep in mind both the needs of the institutions, and the financial pressures on the wider Church. Governing bodies must also exercise proper stewardship and cut costs and staff when necessary in order to stay within the resources, including any transitional funding, available to them. In the event that the governors were unable to meet their commitments, the Ministry Council would consider giving, and indeed in the past has made, an emergency loan and look to see if restructuring or merger with another institution was possible.

53. Dr Peter Capon (Manchester) asked the Chairman of the Ministry Division:

What steps will the Ministry Division take to ensure that moving the cut-off point for those entering training from 31 July to 31 May does not become a disincentive to able young ordination candidates?

*The Bishop of Norwich:* The move of the cut-off point from 31 July to 31 May should not have any discernible effect upon able, young ordination candidates. Such candidates will simply attend Bishops' Advisory Panels earlier in the year. This ought to be merely an organizational matter for the DDOs to ensure that candidates are sponsored and booked into Bishops' Advisory Panels in good time. Indeed, far from being a disincentive to candidates, the move of the cut-off point will give candidates a longer period of time to prepare themselves for their training. There ought to be good educational and formational outcomes, desired not least by some college and course staff themselves.

*Dr Peter Capon:* Starting in January this year, an able candidate from the Manchester diocese was fast tracked to a Bishops' Advisory Panel last week and the Bishop of Manchester tells me that he has been recommended to start training in September. How would such a candidate get through a Bishops' Advisory Panel in time in 2011?

*The Bishop of Norwich:* It would depend on when he appeared. I do not actually take the view that the Holy Spirit is particularly active in the summer months. I was a DDO myself for seven years and I know how much DDOs work to deadlines. We are just bringing them forward a bit more; that is the truth of it. I do not think it has much effect on the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit seems to have a disproportionate call of clergy to London and the south-east. I think that also needs questioning.

*Revd Professor Richard Burridge (London University):* Without wishing to speculate on the activity of the Holy Spirit at different months of the year, I would ask what the effect of moving the deadline to earlier is on these young ordinands we are trying to encourage to come forward. They come mostly from universities and prior to 31 May they are very often engaged in something called finals, which makes it quite difficult for them to get to conferences. The habit of going forward in June and July is not to do with the Holy Spirit but in order to give them time. Will, therefore, special concern be given to the fact that you have asked us to put forward younger ordinands who may not be able to attend by that cut-off point because of their exams?

*The Bishop of Norwich:* I recognize that issue but I do not think it is very advisable for young ordinands, or an older ordinand, to be pushed through the process of selection extremely quickly. We are selecting for a whole life-time of service and when that is done far too quickly, it often ends in tears.

*The Chairman:* Some of us would not be here!

*The Bishop of Norwich:* You are tempting me into an opinion!

54. *Revd Moira Astin (Oxford)* asked the Chairman of the Ministry Division:

What training do selectors have to help them discern the vocation to the priesthood of people who worship in Ecumenical Partnerships, where they may be less familiar with the structures of the Church of England?

*The Bishop of Norwich:* Bishops' Advisers are briefed about the church context from which candidates come and that is taken into account in the discernment of their vocation. However, if candidates are being sponsored for nationally deployable ministry and it is envisaged that their future ministry could take them well beyond their present LEP context, Bishops' Advisers would expect candidates to have some knowledge and understanding of the structures of the Church of England. This knowledge is gained through reading and discussion, and often DDOs direct candidates to placements in churches different from their own as a way of widening their experience prior to attending a Bishops' Advisory Panel. It ought to be expected and is expected of all candidates that they should be able to give some account of what it is about the Church of England that attracts them to it and its ministry.

55. *Revd Mora Astin (Oxford)* asked the Chairman of the Ministry Division:

What training is given to selectors at Bishops' Advisory Panels about Fresh Expressions to help them discern the vocation to the priesthood in the Church of people whose experience of the Church of England is in less traditional forms of church?

*The Bishop of Norwich:* Bishops' Advisers are briefed about Fresh Expressions where candidates' experience of church may be less traditional. The vocations of such candidates are often sparked and nourished by their experience of Fresh Expressions. Bishops' Advisers value that as well as the enthusiasm and the energy which such candidates can bring. However, if candidates are being sponsored for a ministry which is nationally deployable it is important that they have an understanding and appreciation of the Church of England in all its rich diversity and they must be

prepared to work within it. Many candidates from less traditional backgrounds will have been encouraged by their DDOs to undertake a placement in a church different from their own as part of the discernment process. At the very least, candidates should have done some reading about the different strands of tradition within Anglicanism and be able to reflect upon them.

*Revd Moira Astin:* How much training do selectors receive and how much helps them to understand the different language and experiences that people who come from outwith the classic strands will have? Is all the emphasis going to be on those candidates to be able to express their Christianity in the way that people from the older economy of the Church can understand?

*The Bishop of Norwich:* Bishops' selectors have a standard 24-hour period of training upon appointment but of course they are themselves appointed by their diocesan bishops, and one of the things we expect is for the advisers themselves to have a breadth of experience of the Church. That is also gained by the experience of advisory panels themselves. The candidates, in my experience at advisory panels, actually educated the advisers as well. This process of discernment and exploration is a two-way process.

*Mr Mark Russell (Archbishops' Council):* I am still here! Bearing in mind that bishops' selectors select people for pioneer and ordained ministry, how can the Division ensure that more selectors are not just actually briefed on Fresh Expressions of Church but come from Fresh Expressions of Church, so that not just do they understand the skills and aptitudes needed by a pioneer minister, they can spot one when they see one?

*The Bishop of Norwich:* I am not sure that just because you come from a pioneer ministry you are able to spot in quite the same way. That assumes rather a lot really, but I must not start giving opinions; I know I am not allowed to do that. One of the things the Ministry Division does not do of course is appoint the advisers. What it does do is ask the diocesan bishops to produce a range of advisers who have different experiences of church themselves, and it is the task of the senior selection secretary to produce for each advisory panel a group of selectors who come from different areas of experience in the Church because the selectors do not act individually; they work as a team, and that is very significant in terms of the process of discernment.

*A motion for the extension of the sitting by not more than 15 minutes was put and lost.*

56. *Mr Nicholas Harding (Southwell and Nottingham)* asked the Chairman of the Ministry Division:

Given the variable quality of the preparation and delivery of all-age worship throughout the Church of England, what assurances can be given that training in good practice forms a core part of the training for clergy and lay ministers in IME 1-3, IME 4-7, and CME?

*The Bishop of Norwich:* With regard to IME 1-3, the Ministry Division ensures that a substantial introduction to worship in traditional and contemporary forms is a core part of training. This is checked through quinquennial approval of the training offered and through inspection. In addition, the Church's learning outcomes indicate how

dioceses should build on that training in IME 4-7. Within CME the priority given to all-age worship varies according to diocesan priorities. However, the 2008 quinquennial review of continuing ministerial development prepared for the House of Bishops gives a picture of current CME provision and is available on the Continuing Ministerial Development page of the Church of England website. All providers of training for all-age worship can call upon others with appropriate experience in this field (e.g. diocesan and national staff) to help develop their provision.

*Mr Nicholas Harding:* Briefly, in view of the time, how much of that is compulsory?

*The Bishop of Norwich:* It is compulsory in terms of IME 1-3; for IME 4-7 it is compulsory, but it will depend on what the diocese provides, although it should have regard to the learning outcomes, which do relate to the way in which worship is conducted and devised. Beyond that, with the mature clergy around here, we do not like to be compulsory.

57. *Revd Hugh Lee (Oxford)* asked the Chairman of the Ministry Division:

In July 2007 the Bishop of Derby told the Synod, ‘The Bishops’ Committee for Ministry has set in place a process to inform itself regarding the situation at Wycliffe [Hall]. A small team of independent advisers, drawn from current senior inspectors, will report to the Bishops’ Committee for Ministry, which can then take any further action, if required.’ Subsequently the Bishop of Norwich has told the Synod that this ‘process’ would be part of the quinquennial inspection of Wycliffe Hall. Now that the report of this inspection has been published, what particular sentences in that report have informed the Bishops’ Committee for Ministry ‘regarding the situation at Wycliffe’ in 2007 and what action has now been taken or is intended as a result of this informing process, including whether they will conduct the review that the report recommends because ‘long-standing staff members, together with those who have left Oxford, are still hurting and the reputation of Wycliffe Hall is still showing the bruises’?

*The Bishop of Norwich:* I think I answered a very similar Question from the questioner during the February Synod. Synod members will wish to welcome, I am sure, the full publication of inspection reports and their availability on the web, thus enabling a more informed debate about issues in theological education. However, the recommendations of any inspection report are addressed not to the Ministry Division but to the college, which like all inspected institutions is asked to draw up an action plan as a result. As usual, the Senior Inspector will then conduct a follow-up visit and report to the Ministry Council on the progress made in relation to the action plan. Were it to be the case that the Ministry Council needed to alert the House of Bishops to further issues, it could do so. As it is, it seems to me that the recent thorough inspection at Wycliffe Hall addressed some different issues comprehensively, and the college has responded very responsibly.

*Revd Hugh Lee:* In February you told Synod that the inspectors’ report would inform the Ministry Division regarding the situation in 2007. As I asked in my Question, what particular sentences of that report did indeed inform you about what happened in 2007 or does the Ministry Division no longer want to inform itself about what happened in 2007?

*The Bishop of Norwich:* The Ministry Council has received the report; it has not discussed it in detail. It has referred it, as it ought to, to the Wycliffe Hall Council, which is responding to the recommendations. The response to the inspection report is an integral part of the report itself by the institution. It is not complete when the inspection report is published and then the Ministry Division makes some decision about it. The response of the institution to the recommendations is also what the Ministry Council will decide upon.

*Revd Canon Dr Chris Sugden (Oxford):* Is there any, even if informal, limitation on the number and indeed length of questions that can be directed at any one Church of England accredited institution and able to answer for itself in public ---

*The Chairman:* I think you are probably out of order, Dr Sugden.

*Dr Elaine Storkey (Ely):* If, because of the autonomy of theological colleges, when staff of a college do raise serious issues about its governance, not least the violation of employment law, the Ministry Division does not have the authority to conduct an investigation outside the quinquennial review and then the inspectors do not conduct an investigation within the review, what checks and balances can the Ministry Division direct us towards as evidence that we have not created within the Church of England a system of non-accountability with regard to governance of theological colleges?

*The Bishop of Norwich:* There is a good deal in the Wycliffe report about governance to which the Wycliffe Hall council is expected to respond. Of course, one of the things that this Synod has consistently done over the years, as I have reminded it, is to protect the independence of theological colleges. Synod cannot have it both ways.

*The Chairman:* That concludes our business for today.

*The session was adjourned at 10.00 p.m.*

### **The remaining Questions were answered in writing:**

58. *Ms Sallie Bassham (Bradford)* asked the Chairman of the Ministry Division:

When will the report by the HEFCE consultants in response to the withdrawal of ELQ funding be made available? Are there strategic implications for theological institutions as a result of its recommendations?

*The Bishop of Norwich* replied: The report is currently being finalized and should give a helpful overview of ministerial education in relation to UK Higher Education. It will be up to HEFCE to decide how to publish its findings, though the Ministry Division has encouraged HEFCE to publish the report. As a mapping exercise it is unlikely to have direct strategic implications for training institutions. The formal recommendations will be addressed to HEFCE itself which commissioned the report. However, it is clear that the Church's likely approach to the ELQ question will be to maximize the use of foundation degrees and employer co-funded bachelor level degrees in ministerial training. The Ministry Division has been encouraging training institutions to reconfigure the training they offer using those academic awards which

can attract HEFCE funding. The Division has been in discussion with institutions as to their choices with regard to their validating partners in higher education.

59. *The Archdeacon of Warrington (Ven. Peter Bradley)* asked the Chairman of the Ministry Division:

Is the Ministry Council aware of the consequences of the transitional arrangements of the new block-grant scheme for allocating Vote 1 money to colleges and courses on new regional courses in their first three years of operation, and what changes does it intend to make in the interests of fairness and all training institutions working on a level playing field?

*The Bishop of Norwich* replied: The block grant funding system provides a transparent and level playing field between the training institutions and removes any suspicion of secret deals and special pleading. Transitional funding, when given, recognizes that institutions take time to adjust to changes in ordinand numbers, both up and down. In addition, the Finance Panel has provided further support to institutions involved in structural change. For example; the Southern North West Training Partnership has received an additional £50,000 to facilitate its start-up costs. This additional funding has been made available from Vote 1 and from trusts administered by the Ministry Division. The Finance Panel plans to keep the effect of transitional funding under review but given the pressures on Church finances it is unlikely that more generous provision could be made at the present time.

60. *Revd Canon Kathryn Fitzsimons (Ripon and Leeds)* asked the Chairman of the Ministry Division:

How many people have been ordained to the distinctive diaconate in the last five years?

*The Bishop of Norwich* replied: I regret that these statistics are not readily available and could only be provided if a great deal of analysis was done on Advisory Panel reports and other material. However, the staff of the Ministry Division believe that the numbers ordained to the distinctive diaconate are relatively small.

61. *Revd Angus MacLeay (Rochester)* asked the Chairman of the Ministry Division:

How many ordinands and from which theological colleges/courses have failed to find a title post for this year as of 1 June 2009?

*The Bishop of Norwich* replied: There are currently nine ordinands unplaced: two from Trinity College, four from Wycliffe Hall, two from Oak Hill and one from Cranmer Hall. The candidate from Cranmer is currently looking at a parish in Oxford and one candidate from Wycliffe is attending a second interview in Chichester diocese.

62. *Mrs Alison Ruoff (London)* asked the Chairman of the Ministry Division:

In view of the concern throughout the Church of England that many ordinands have had difficulty finding posts in which to serve their curacies, this year in particular, would the Ministry Division be able to forecast with greater accuracy the needs of dioceses in conjunction with diocesan bishops, and could these numbers be made

available at a much earlier stage for those involved in the training of ordinands, particularly residential theological colleges?

The Bishop of Norwich replied: Of the 339 ordinands seeking posts 315 have been placed. Some ordinands have decided to defer ordination or undertake further training so that currently nine ordinands are unplaced. The Ministry Division is assisting dioceses in deployment planning so that it may have a clearer understanding of the number of curates dioceses will require in the future. This information could be made available to theological institutions.

### **Central Readers' Council**

63. *Mr Nigel Holmes (Carlisle)* asked the Chairman of the Central Readers' Council:

Why has *The Reader* magazine, which is the principal channel of communication to our 10,000 Readers, carried no report of the debate on the future of Reader ministry last July, nor reviewed the report GS 1689 published in June 2009, nor described the findings of the questionnaire which informed that report?

The Bishop of Sodor and Man (Rt Revd Robert Paterson) replied: *The Reader* magazine did, in fact, mention the Synod debate in the issue that contained the questionnaire to which Mr Holmes refers. Since then the Last Word section has dealt with the Reader Upbeat report in both the issues of summer 2007 and autumn 2008. The statistical analysis of that questionnaire guided the working party; publication of its contents was not considered because it is a working tool. It is my view, as the recently-appointed chair of the Central Readers' Council, that some work remains to be done with the Reader Upbeat report and any major feature in the magazine might suggest that the report is an end in itself.

### **Deployment, Remuneration and Conditions of Service Committee**

64. *Mrs Sarah Finch (London)* asked the Chairman of the Deployment, Remuneration and Conditions of Service Committee:

On 31 October, and then on 4 January, how many dioceses, and which ones, had failed to provide the Ministry Division with full details of the number of sponsored ordinands they had placed in title posts, the ordinands they had released, and vacant title posts available in their diocese, with the result that the House of Bishops was unable corporately to address the issue in time?

*The Bishop of Ripon and Leeds (Rt Revd John Packer)* replied: We do not hold this information as the details are received by e-mails which are deleted once the relevant information has been extracted. Data received at these stages is tentative, as placements fall through and others emerge throughout that period and beyond. The placement of deacons has been kept fully under review by DRACS, the Ministry Council and the House of Bishops. As the Bishop of Norwich has said in reply to a previous Question, it has been possible to place almost all the deacons in 2009. I hope that dioceses will make every effort to take those curates due to be ordained in 2010.

65. *Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark)* asked the Chairman of the Deployment, Remuneration and Conditions of Service Committee:

A number of dioceses in England (e.g. Oxford) have adapted the existing Church of England application form for clergy appointments, bringing it into line with best HR practice from the wider employment world. Questions about gender, age, marital status, family and health have been removed and such of this information as may be relevant (e.g. health issues) are handled separately and confidentially by bishops and archdeacons. Will dioceses generally be advised to adjust their application forms similarly?

*The Bishop of Ripon and Leeds* replied: The Church of England (except in certain closely defined circumstances) is not exempt from the requirements of the anti discrimination legislation when it comes to making parochial appointments. Reviewing the clergy appointments process was not included in the remit of the review of clergy terms of service, and it has not made any changes to the rights and responsibilities of those involved in the appointments process. However, the Terms of Service Implementation Panel is aware that good practice in making appointments will be one of the ways of ensuring that new arrangements work effectively and will produce some revised advice on good practice in making appointments, including revision of the application form.

66. *Revd Hugh Lee (Oxford)* asked the Chairman of the Deployment, Remuneration and Conditions of Service Committee:

How many dioceses have discussed and/or adopted the guidelines recommended in the DRACSC June 2009 report *Dignity at Work: Working together to reduce incidents of bullying and harassment* or have adopted other bullying and harassment policies, how many allegations of bullying or harassment have been made to diocesan authorities in the last 12 months, and how many of these have been investigated formally or informally?

*The Bishop of Ripon and Leeds* replied: Over 500 copies of the *Dignity at Work* booklet have been circulated and several dioceses have been in touch to tell us that they are developing local policies. It is to be hoped that in time all dioceses will develop their own local policies. Dioceses are not required to inform DRACSC of allegations of harassment although the committee would like to be informed of generic issues so that it can keep its advice under review.

67. *Revd Stephen Trott (Peterborough)* asked the Chairman of the Deployment, Remuneration and Conditions of Service Committee:

Are there any plans to offer stipendiary clergy regular medical checks while in service?

*The Bishop of Ripon and Leeds* replied: I expect DRACSC would see this as a matter for dioceses. We are aware that several dioceses now have occupational health advisors and we would encourage all dioceses to consider such provisions. We have not been asked by the dioceses to consider proposals for any national scheme.

68. *Revd Stephen Trott (Peterborough)* asked the Chairman of the Deployment, Remuneration and Conditions of Service Committee:

Is the Committee aware of the current position in relation to St Luke's Hospital for the Clergy, and if it is, can it confirm what the position is?

*The Bishop of Ripon and Leeds* replied: St Luke's Hospital is an independent institution and DRACSC has not been involved in the decisions that the trustees have had to take. It is sad that their ambitious plans have foundered in the present economic circumstances. However it is good news that many of St Luke's honorary consultants have agreed to continue to offer their time and talents to advise the clergy and thus enable the charity to continue its valuable work in some form.

## **Mission and Public Affairs Council**

69. *Mr Andrew Presland (Peterborough)* asked the Chairman of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:

What steps is the Council taking to ensure the continuing freedom of churches and other faith groups to employ youth workers in terms that are consistent with the teaching of their faith, following the recent statement by Deputy Equalities Minister Maria Eagle that such people will be covered by the provisions of the Equalities Bill?

*Dr Philip Giddings* replied: The Parliamentary Unit produced a briefing document for MPs for the Second Reading of the Equality Bill and the Secretary General gave oral evidence on behalf of the Council to the Bill Committee on 9 June. During that session he argued strongly that the proposed restrictions on the freedom of religious organizations to employ people who lived lives consistent with their teaching were unreasonable and disproportionate. Lobbying, in partnership with other Church and faith representatives, continues both publicly and privately.

70. *The Bishop of Beverley (Rt Revd Martyn Jarrett)* asked the Chairman of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:

What steps has the Mission and Public Affairs Council taken, particularly in the light of widespread concern today about whether the constitution serves us well, to promote the near unanimous call in 2003 of the General Synod for political parties to adopt proportional representation by single transferable vote as part of their policies for promoting true democratic participation in the government of our society?

*Dr Philip Giddings* replied: The Synod's resolution in 2003 (copy on notice-board) covered many aspects of our parliamentary democracy as well as voting systems. Matters such as this are raised from time to time in our informal private meetings with ministers and Opposition spokespeople. Research on voting does not in fact show a correlation between proportional representation and electoral participation and it remains to be seen what proposals for electoral reform will be put on the table by the political parties. Given the present very uncertain political context this seems a prudent moment for standing ready to comment on such concrete proposals as may arise rather than assuming that any particular outcome is likely.

*Below is the text of the General Synod resolution referred to in the Question, which was carried, 226 voting in favour and 6 against:*

26 February 2003

‘That this Synod, concerned at the fall in voter turnout at elections and at the perceived marginalization of Parliament in the nation’s political processes

(a) recognize the role of the print and broadcast media in shaping public attitudes to political discourse, and urge the media to exercise responsibility in the performance of their function;

(b) call upon Her Majesty’s Government and the leaders of the main political parties

(i) to work together to enhance the effectiveness of our parliamentary institutions;

(ii) to encourage and enable, by legislative and administrative action, and especially by introducing proportional representation by the single transferable vote for elections to Parliament, all members of our society to play a full part in our democracy;

(iii) to abandon the use of the closed party list election system; and

(c) affirm the value of public service as an important part of Christian witness, commend such service as a Christian vocation, and call upon dioceses, deaneries, parishes and our ecumenical partners to support that vocation with prayer and practical action.’

71. *Miss Vasantha Gnanadoss (Southwark)* asked the Chairman of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:

Why were there no links to any Church of England resources on the CTBI webpage about the European elections in the period before the close of registrations on 19 May? (There were links to a briefing paper from the Baptist, Methodist and United Reformed Churches and to a news release from the Methodist Church, dated 20 April, both of which dealt explicitly with the BNP.)

*Dr Philip Giddings* replied: MPA worked closely with colleagues at Lambeth and Bishopthorpe on the Church’s approach to the recent European and local elections. We had to balance speaking out publicly to combat political extremism with the realization that to do so could give the oxygen of publicity to the very extremists we oppose. The pros and cons of issuing an explicitly Anglican response and working ecumenically were also considered.

The consensus was that a statement by our two Archbishops (made on 24 May to coincide with the distribution of postal ballot papers) was the most effective form of intervention. The Archbishops’ statement, with a number of similar comments by other bishops, and several regional ecumenical statements, featured strongly in the Parliamentary Unit’s e-bulletin to MPs and members of the House of Lords prior to the elections.

72. *Mr Colin Slater (Southwell and Nottingham)* asked the Chairman of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:

What steps are being taken to encourage parishes fully to participate in - through speakers, prayer and other appropriate ways - Prisons Sunday and Prisons Week being planned by the Churches' Criminal Justice Forum to take place in November?

*Dr Philip Giddings* replied: Prisons Week (running from 15 to 21 November) is being planned, as usual, by the Prisons Week Committee, an ecumenical body including representation from the Prison Service Chaplaincy and a number of other organizations including the Churches' Criminal Justice Forum. The Committee has produced a prayer leaflet on the theme 'Hold Fast to Hope' and is making available resources for parishes. These include sayings and stories about hope, an ecumenical order of service compiled by Prison Advice and Care Trust, a sample sermon, three dramas based on the story of Zacchaeus, and a reading list. The leaflets will be available by post and online. Further details may be found at [www.prisonsworld.org/2009](http://www.prisonsworld.org/2009). Communication with parishes is taking place through diocesan networks and Church newspapers. Christians involved in prisons and the criminal justice system are being asked to encourage parishes to participate through worship, prayer and other local events.

73. *Mr Nigel Holmes (Carlisle)* asked the Chairman of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:

Following the debate on climate change last July (resourced by GS 1705), has the Church of England allied itself in any way with the anti-nuclear pressure group 'Stop Climate Chaos'?

*Dr Philip Giddings* replied: The July 2008 GS debate requested that 'the Archbishops' Council explore the feasibility of becoming a corporate member of the Stop Climate Chaos campaign for an initial period of three years with the option for continued membership for a further three years following an evaluation of the work of SCC'. A decision was taken earlier this year that in view of the deteriorating financial climate it would be inappropriate to seek corporate membership at this particular time. Nevertheless, where there are interests in common, co-operation does and will occur. The nature of that co-operation is decided upon case by case. The Archbishop of Canterbury, for instance, will be presiding at the ecumenical service of 5 December that is being organised under SCC's umbrella as part of a wider campaign on climate change that day.

74. *Revd Prebendary David Houlding (London)* asked the Chairman of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:

Following the debate in February on the plight of asylum seekers,

- (a) what representations have been made to HM Government on behalf of the Church to address the problem of destitution on our streets; and
- (b) what is the current status of Zimbabwe in relation to being a 'safe country' to which refugees can be returned?

*Dr Philip Giddings* replied:

(a) We have continued to work with the *Still Human Still Here* coalition which leads the dialogue on destitution with the UK Borders Agency. The Archbishop of York has met with the Home Secretary; other bishops have met with the Immigration Minister to raise destitution issues from a regional perspective. We will be feeding those issues raised and the experience of those supporting asylum seekers into the forthcoming consultation on support and the Simplification Bill.

(b) The human rights situation in Zimbabwe remains unstable, and the everyday conditions are desperate for the vast majority of Zimbabweans. The political situation remains tense despite the introduction of a more inclusive government and the Zimbabwean Prime Minister being pressed by Amnesty International and others to make human rights a priority. For the time being, return should be a decision for the individual asylum seeker, not a matter of force, or coercion through destitution.

75. *Dr Edmund Marshall (Wakefield)* asked the Chairman of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:

What action is the Church of England taking in support of Christians who are subject to persecution in the Indian state of Orissa?

*Dr Philip Giddings* replied: The Church of England through the Bishop of Leicester and the Archbishop of Canterbury has made a public statement, a statement to the Inter Faith Network for the UK, representations to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and personal communications to the Moderators of the Churches of North and South India. The letter to the Churches of North and South India is to be found on the Archbishop's website.

*The Archbishop of Canterbury's statement on Orissa, issued following the Lambeth Conference*

August 2008

The Archbishop has released the following statement on the situation in Orissa.

The Archbishop of Canterbury, who is currently on holiday following the Lambeth Conference, has expressed profound distress at the extreme violence being used in Orissa in recent days against the lives and property of Christians there. Such violence cannot be justified and this, together with the murder of Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati, should be especially abhorrent to people of faith, whether Christian or Hindu. He has called for intense prayer for the suffering churches and for an end to the violence and harassment. He hopes that Christians and people of faith around the world will make known their horror at this violence, their support for the rebuilding of lives and the churches, orphanages and schools destroyed, and for work towards future reconciliation.

*Archbishop's letter to Moderators of the Churches of North India and South India*

Friday 14 November 2008

The Archbishop wrote earlier this week to the Moderators of the Church of North India and the Church of South India to express his solidarity with Christians during the current troubles.

The text is as follows:

My dear brothers,

Greetings in the name of Our Lord. I was delighted to receive news of the election of Rt Revd Purely Lyngdoh as Moderator of the Church of North India at your Synod last month and look forward to welcoming you at the forthcoming Meeting of Primates and Moderators. Conscious of the statement issued by the Synod, I write now to assure you of my prayers and deep concern for our brothers and sisters in Orissa and elsewhere in India in the light of the present harsh circumstances. The depth and extent of the sufferings of so many people has been a source of profound sorrow and distress here and around the world.

Back in September I made a statement about the murder of Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati, and consequent brutal attacks on Christian churches and villages in Orissa. When I did so it was in the context of a period of violence, particularly against Christians, earlier in the year and I expressed my hope that people of faith around the world would make known their horror at this violence, their support for the rebuilding of lives and the churches, orphanages and schools destroyed, and for work towards future reconciliation. Rather than improve the situation in Orissa seems to have deteriorated and, indeed, to have spread to several other states, such as Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Kerala. I understand that more than 50 Christians have been killed, and many tens of thousands have become refugees. The scale of the violence inflicted on innocent victims, most of whom are amongst the poorest of society, is truly shocking.

We can, justifiably, admire the achievements of the Indian nation, of which you and your people form an integral part, in terms of its status as not only the world's largest democracy but also a model for rich religious diversity, and respect between most of the major faiths of the world. Yet, your Prime Minister, Manmohan Singh, has condemned what is happening as a 'national shame' and asserted that 'Christianity is part of our national heritage'. I too feel that if a small minority community (less than 3% of the population) continue as the target of attacks - attacks which often seem to be organised - then India will have lost its place as an international beacon. It is essential that the state and national authorities ensure the protection of the right, enshrined in Article 25 of the Constitution, to 'freedom of conscience, and the right freely to profess, practice and propagate religion'.

In this country we seek to maintain positive and respectful relationships for the good of society with Hindu communities and organisations who are a minority here. I enclose a copy of my message to Hindu communities on the occasion of Diwali from which you will see that I express my hope that light will prevail over dark and good over evil. Around the world we have seen the dreadful effect of violence that has been motivated by ambitions for political power. I am saddened by the spectre of Hinduism being abused by those with such motives and know there are Hindu leaders in India who have sought to distance their religious tradition from the current outbreak of violence.

The demands of our Faith lead us to insist that ambitions for political power and economic progress cannot be at the expense of harmony between citizens, and commitment to the poor and minorities, of whatever background or creed. In solidarity with you, and alongside so many of your sisters and brothers in the

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Anglican Communion, I shall continue to call for reconciliation where there has been division and hurt and for work towards peace and the rejection of all resort to violence. For this to happen it seems vital that central and state governments bring the situation under control and initiate judicial processes, which will distinguish truth from rumour and enable appropriate justice to be brought to those who have committed crimes of violence or intimidation. In Orissa Christian villagers need rapidly be given the security to return to their villages and to worship in peace. Inappropriate pressure to reconvert is as unacceptable as inappropriate pressure to convert.

I should be grateful if you would share this message of prayer and solidarity with your fellow bishops and appropriate local leaders in the relevant states. I stand ready to act in partnership with you and them to bring an end to these atrocious events [and] should welcome your advice on what would be most positive in the present circumstances.

Yours ever in Christ,

+Rowan Cantuar: