

THE CHAIR *Revd Rose Hudson-Wilkin (London)* took the Chair at 5.32 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.

Current Financial Crisis

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

What action is the Council taking to ensure that the Government take full account of the extensive role already being played by Churches and Christian charities, such as the award-winning Christians Against Poverty, in their current efforts to maximize the role of the third sector in providing debt advice to those affected by the recession?

The Archbishop of York (Dr John Sentamu): In the papers for this group of sessions members will find plenty of evidence of our efforts to help the Government to understand the Church's role in this field. There is action at all levels – parishes, dioceses, national charities and central institutions – to respond to the hardships of this recession, and there is evidence to suggest that Government are now recognizing the part we can play. Stephen Timms MP, Financial Secretary to the Treasury, in a recent IPPR lecture, called for faith communities to be 'the basis for a broad coalition of hope'. The Church of England's unique reach into every community and its commitment to every member of society equips us to express our big vision by local demonstrations of commitment and transformation.

2. *Mr Terence Musson (Truro)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

In 1998 I called for the Church to set aside Rogation Day as a day of prayer and fasting for the plight of the farming industry. In view of the recession, would the Council urgently call for the nation to set aside a day for prayer, fasting and repentance, as called to do in 2 Chronicles 7.14?

The Archbishop of York: I welcome Mr Musson's call for prayer, fasting and repentance. As Christians, we are called to do this regularly. While certainly the current recession will focus minds

on the economic crisis, the scandal of global poverty where a child dies every three seconds from preventable causes should already provide us with sufficient cause to pray, fast and repent.

The forthcoming season of Lent gives us an opportunity to reflect and pray about our own sin and for those most directly affected by the recession, but let us do so in the sure faith that if we turn to God in sorrow for our own part in this then, in the words of the Chronicler, 'God will hear from heaven, and will forgive our sin and heal our land'.

3. *Mr Clive Scowen (London)* asked the Chairman of the House of Bishops:

Has consideration been given, by the House of Bishops or otherwise, to calling the Church and/or the nation to (a) prayer about the deepening financial and economic crisis; and (b) repentance of the idolatry which may have contributed to it, on Ash Wednesday or during Lent? If so, what was decided? If not, will such consideration now be given?

The Archbishop of York: As I have said in answer to a previous Question, as faithful disciples we are called on to pray, fast and repent on a regular basis. Certainly the period of Lent provides us with an opportunity to reflect and pray about our own sin and for those most directly affected by the recession. However, I believe the path ahead must encompass a wider vision than one that simply cures the economic ills of the world, as grave as they may be. I hope to say more about this in my introduction to the debate on Thursday.

Mr Clive Scowen (London): Does not the Archbishop feel that in an unprecedented economic crisis, which is causing distress and fear among so many of our fellow-citizens, a national call to prayer and repentance would be a powerful witness to the nation that our God is profoundly concerned about economic matters and can be trusted to lead us through the current crisis if we will but repent of our worship of money and depend on him?

The Archbishop of York: I am one of those who believe that in the middle of a crisis we need to take a very deep breath, see the will of God, and discern it clearly within the community. We can always call for it; it is whether or not the nation will go behind it. I am one of those who strongly believe you should not launch into the deep unless you know the troops you have behind you. Otherwise you find yourself naked and alone.

Revd Dr John Hartley (Bradford): Are there any circumstances in which a national day of prayer would be called for by the House of Bishops?

The Archbishop of York: I am not a prophet nor a prophet's son, so I will not prophesy!

4. *Mr Clive Scowen (London)* asked the Chairman of the House of Bishops:

In the light of the promises spoken through the prophet Malachi (Malachi 3) and the teaching of St Paul (2 Corinthians 8 and 9) will the bishops, as leaders and teachers of the Church, give particular attention in the current economic situation to encouraging Christians whose financial resources are uncertain, restricted or diminishing to see generous giving as an integral part of their Christian discipleship which God can be trusted to honour?

The Archbishop of York: Giving for me is not just for the good times; it is part of our daily Christian discipleship and expresses our faith and trust in God. To refrain from such teaching during a recession would imply wrongly that giving is from surplus or that it is only for the rich. St Paul describes the Macedonians' giving 'out of their poverty' as a priority, and with joy. Generous giving of time, skills, hospitality and our finances is a priority for committed disciples, whatever our income. Of course, nobody should be put under undue pressure, and as church communities we must be looking to help the less well off in these circumstances.

A report from the Stewardship Committee on generous giving, which places it firmly in the context of discipleship, mission and lifestyle, is expected to come before Synod in July.

5. *Revd Canon Timothy Barker (Lincoln)* asked the Chairman of the Pensions Board:

Given current economic indicators, what consideration is being given to the likely impact of the next triennial revaluation of the Clergy Pension Fund?

Mr Jonathan Spencer: The next triennial valuation takes place at the end of this year, with the results available in spring 2010. Normally, any change to the contribution rate would take place from April 2011. In the light of the recent sharp reductions in share values, the Board asked its actuaries to provide an interim assessment of the financial position as at 31 October. The deficit on the scheme has risen significantly. The current exceptional volatility in the markets made it hard to predict what conditions will prevail when the formal valuation does take place. There may also be

some easing of the regulatory approach in response to the current financial situation, though any additional deficit will have to be recovered over a period. The Pensions Task Group has been reactivated to consider the options, and the Pensions Board will consider whether any interim increase in contributions from 2010 will be needed no later than June 2009.

Church Commissioners

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

What was the budget for repairs and renovations to see houses and their grounds in 2008 and what criteria are used to assess the priorities of competing claims for funding from this budget?

The Third Church Estates Commissioner (Mr Timothy Walker, ex officio): Audited figures for repairs and renovations of see houses and related costs in 2008 are not yet available, but the agreed budget was £8.5 million. This sum includes the Church Commissioners' contribution to provincial episcopal visitors' housing costs and to Lambeth Palace and its library. We anticipate the budget being marginally underspent.

Priorities are assessed according to urgency and the operational needs of the house by a team of professional in-house staff who know well all the properties concerned. Such works are usually carried out during a vacancy in the see.

Mr Gerald O'Brien (Rochester): How much of the £8.5 million agreed budget was spent on the see house and grounds in Wells?

The Third Church Estates Commissioner: I cannot give a detailed answer to that but I will write to you with the figures. We believe the see house in Wells to be suitable and are working with the trustees and the HLF to make the long-term future of the castle sustainable. We believe that investment by the Commissioners will ultimately reduce the long-term costs of holding the property.

Archbishops' Council

*7. *Miss Emma Forward (Exeter)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Can the Archbishops' Council explain the reasons for the higher than anticipated costs for external lawyers, referred to in paragraph 6 of GS Misc 902 as being one of the main reasons for the forecast that Vote 2 expenditure will be £70,000 above the level reported to the Synod last July?

Mr Andrew Britton: The higher than budgeted external legal costs are one of several reasons for the forecast additional expenditure identified in GS Misc 902. The majority of these costs related to obtaining specialist advice on updating employment policies in the light of changing employment law and good HR practice.

8. *Revd Canon Andrew Nunn (Southwark)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Following its decision to make funding available to the Lambeth Conference Company to enable it to meet the costs of the Lambeth Conference, what progress can the Archbishops' Council report in terms of the company's success in raising funds for that purpose from other sources in the Anglican Communion and its constituent churches?

9. *Revd Canon Simon Killwick (Manchester)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

What is the current position on the funding of the 2008 Lambeth Conference by the Council and the Church Commissioners?

Mr Andrew Britton (Archbishops' Council): With permission, I will take these Questions together.

The Archbishops' Council and the Church Commissioners agreed in August to make up to £600,000 each available by way of interest-free loan to ensure that the Lambeth Conference Company would be able to meet its outstanding financial commitments. In the event, successful fundraising and lower than expected expenditure meant that the company did not need to draw down more than £194,000 from each of the two bodies. It has now repaid a total of £100,000, leaving £144,000 outstanding on each loan. At its last meeting, the Council was briefed on continued fundraising efforts around the Communion. At their next meetings, the Council and the Commissioners also expect to receive the report of the inquiry which was initiated as a condition of the loan.

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

What analysis, if any, has been carried out to establish whether the financial savings made by delaying the appointment of incumbents in an interregnum are more than cancelled out by reductions in giving arising from reductions in church attendance levels, given the evidence cited in Archdeacon Bob Jackson's book *The Road to Growth* that attendance numbers tend to decrease significantly once a post has been vacant for about six months?

Mr Andrew Britton: There has been no central analysis on this. For members of the Council's staff to do so would be very difficult as the necessary data for the analysis are not held centrally. There are no known data available at national or diocesan level on the giving levels of those who drift away from a church during a long interregnum and, in researching this, it could be expected that there would be wide variation by parish.

Revd Stephen Lynas (Bath and Wells): Would you be prepared to see some evidence from the diocese of Bath and Wells which indicates conclusions somewhat different from that of Archdeacon Jackson, and would you be prepared to pass that evidence on to the original questioner?

Mr Andrew Britton: I would be very interested to see any evidence on this important matter and I would be very happy to pass it on to anyone who would read it with interest.

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

How many parishes have had to seek individual registration with the Charity Commission, and will the Archbishops' Council provide an estimate of the total man-days incurred across the Church in preparing and submitting applications for registration?

Mr Andrew Britton: The Archbishops' Council estimates that about 2,100 PCCs have regular income over £100,000 and as such are required by the Charities Act 2006 to register with the Charity Commission. It is estimated that the process will require about 140 days of work from NCI and diocesan staff. Time taken at parish level will vary, but an approximate estimate is about 15 hours' (two days') effort per registering parish.

Mr Gavin Oldham (Oxford): According to my calculation, that means that about 4,340 man-days, or about 18 man-years, have actually been employed in this area. Bearing in mind that when the Government were first looking at this legislation there was an offer to do it all centrally, would the Archbishops' Council explore belatedly what options there may be to make this process more

efficient? I will not, for obvious reasons, ask for an expression of regret that we did not take the Government's offer, because that would be to ask for an expression of opinion.

Mr Andrew Britton: This is a matter which the Stewardship Committee staff would be interested in looking at once again, but I think it is fair to say that they have given considerable help and guidance to the parishes in performing this part of their duty as trustees and, speaking quite personally, I think it is appropriate for parishes who have income on that scale to report their own position to the Charity Commission as they are responsible as trustees for substantial sums.

Mr Robin Stevens (Chelmsford): Is it not a fact that the Church nationally has made arrangements with the Charity Commission for registrations to be done on line because all the churches have similar constitutions, according to the PCC Powers Measure 1956, and therefore the whole registration has been simplified, as we said it would be some years ago?

Mr Andrew Britton: That is my understanding.

12. *Miss Prudence Dailey (Oxford)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

When will the publication of the text of the Book of Common Prayer on the Church of England website be completed?

Mr Andrew Britton: Some elements of the Book of Common Prayer (including Holy Communion, Morning and Evening Prayer, the Lectionary and the Ordinal) have already been published on the Church of England website. The remaining work of converting and checking the text of the Book of Common Prayer for publication in HTML format on the site is expected to be completed by the end of June this year.

13. *Revd Canon Jonathan Alderton-Ford (St Edmundsbury and Ipswich)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Has the Archbishops' Council considered whether, at a time when new modes of communication are being developed and mainstream broadcasters are abandoning public service broadcasts, it is not time for the Church of England to support independent Christian broadcasters in order to maintain vital media access?

The Bishop of Norwich (Rt Revd Graham James): The Archbishops' Council, through the Communications Office, has argued strongly for the continuation of public service broadcasting on major channels and welcomes Ofcom's recent proposals to ensure that PSB is as widely available as possible.

At the same time, in addition to working with mainstream media to reach the widest possible audience, the Communications Office continues to work closely with independent Christian broadcasters such as Premier Christian Media and United Christian Broadcasters. In fact, the office has co-operated closely with Premier in organizing their reception, *The Media and the Message*, in the Harvey Goodwin Suite at lunch-time on Wednesday this week.

Canon Peter Smith (St Edmundsbury and Ipswich): Are not the recent changes made by the BBC to their religion and ethics department a cause for great concern to the Church and nation and make this decision more depressing?

The Bishop of Norwich: The news of significant structural change to the BBC religion and ethics department reached me last Friday. I have since been in touch with the head of religion and ethics and we are seeking further clarification about what is intended from the Director General. I am sure the Communications Office will make any information available to all members of Synod, once we are sure about what is actually proposed.

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

In view of the economies of scale and local reach that the deanery possesses (average population size c. 72,000 people), would the Archbishops' Council consider publishing guidance for deaneries on how to market the activities of their constituent parishes more effectively within local areas?

Revd Prebendary Kay Garlick: There is a range of advice for parishes and deaneries seeking to market their activities available through the Media Centre pages of the Church of England website. These pages also link to the communications training programme which offers not only ready-made courses but also bespoke training. The Communications Office works closely with the network of diocesan communicators, who offer professional advice in their dioceses.

15. *Revd Canon Timothy Barker (Lincoln)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

As many parishes are developing patterns of weekly worship that include a variety of services led by laypeople on Sundays and weekdays, and given that, under the Marriage Act 1949, ‘the banns [of marriage] may be published ... by a layman during the course of a public reading authorized by the bishop of the diocese of a portion or portions of the service of Morning or Evening Prayer, the public reading being at the hour when the service at which it is usual to publish banns is commonly held or at such other hour as the bishops may authorize’, will the Archbishops’ Council (a) seek to allow greater flexibility in the reading of banns of marriage that gives due weight both to the pastoral need of the couple being married and to practical circumstances of parishes, and (b) ensure that clear guidance about the reading of banns is available to clergy and ministers?

Revd Prebendary David Houlding: The Archbishops’ Council will discuss with the Ministry of Justice what legislative possibilities there might be for addressing the issue which Canon Barker has raised. As to guidance, the Archbishop of Canterbury’s Faculty Office publishes a useful booklet entitled *Anglican Marriage in England and Wales – A Guide to the Law for Clergy*. The booklet, last issued in 1999, contains clear guidance as to what is required in relation to the publication of banns. A new edition is currently in preparation and is expected to be available by Easter; it will take into account the new ‘qualifying connection’ under the Church of England Marriage Measure 2008.

I would also like to take this opportunity of reminding members of the good practice recommended in a number of areas relating to marriage in the Weddings Project, recently commissioned by the Council and now up and running and available on the website.

The Dean of Guernsey (Very Revd Paul Mellor): In view of the fact that many people are confused about the legality of banns read in Guernsey and in the United Kingdom for marriage, will the new publication make clear that English banns are not acceptable in Guernsey nor Guernsey ones in England?

Revd Prebendary David Houlding: I have heard the question and of course I am not familiar with the law in the Channel Islands, but I would suggest that you apply your question to the Faculty Office at No 1 The Sanctuary and I am sure that they will give you the answer that you are looking for.

The Bishop of Winchester (Rt Revd Michael Scott-Joynt): On a point of order, Madam Chairman. It may well be that this is a Guernsey issue. Would Prebendary Houlding agree that it is a peculiarly

English view of the Bailiwicks of Jersey and Guernsey to speak of them, as if they were a single entity, as ‘the Channel Islands’?

Revd Prebendary David Houlding: I am grateful to the Bishop.

16. *Miss Vasantha Gnanadoss (Southwark)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops’ Council:

The answer to Question 23 in November 2008 implied that, ‘over the next few months’, statistical information on the ethnic background of those on the Preferment List would become available, as recommended in *Talent and Calling*. What is the target date for such information to be available, and will statistics be given separately for the ‘ready now’, ‘ready later’ and ‘possible’ sections of the Preferment List?

The Bishop of Leicester (Rt Revd Timothy Stevens): This exercise is currently on-going and I would anticipate that we will have this information available for the July group of sessions. The way in which the information is presented will have to be decided nearer the time. As the questioner will be aware, we are always concerned to ensure that individuals cannot be identified in the presentation of statistics, and so the organization of the information will depend on the data return.

Revd Brian Lewis (Chelmsford): Will the Bishop consider including information relating to British-born and those who have come from other parts of the Anglican Communion?

The Bishop of Leicester: We can certainly give consideration to that in the SAGE group, and I am sure the Archbishop’s Secretary for Appointments has heard the question.

17. *The Bishop of Bristol (Rt Revd Michael Hill)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops’ Council:

Has any consideration been given to how the Church of England might best respond to the recent appeals by the Bishop of Jerusalem and the President-Bishop of the Province of Jerusalem and the Middle East for humanitarian assistance for the work of the El Ahly hospital in Gaza?

Dr Philip Giddings: The El Ahly hospital has provided a crucial response by the diocese of Jerusalem and the Middle East to the current distressing situation in Gaza. Its provision of important medical and surgical care to people of all religious backgrounds has been hampered by damage to buildings and shortage of medical supplies. The diocesan bishop believes that these needs can best

be met by the hospital itself setting the priorities for reconstruction and replenishing supplies, and so he has appealed for financial help, an appeal incidentally endorsed by the primates of the Communion in their statement last week. As the Clerk to the Synod has indicated, an opportunity will be provided at the communion service on Wednesday morning for Synod members to respond to this appeal. USPG: Anglicans in World Mission has agreed to co-ordinate and channel the appeal, and envelopes will be provided to enable members to gift-aid any offering.

We hope that General Synod's highlighting of the appeal will encourage members to draw the attention of their parishes and dioceses to this vital humanitarian cause.

The Bishop of Rochester (Rt Revd Michael Nazir-Ali): What is the role of the Church Mission Society as the founding society of this hospital in providing assistance to the hospital at this time?

Dr Philip Giddings: I will ensure that Synod is provided with an accurate answer to that question, which is not available to me at the moment.

18. *Dr John Dinnen (Hereford)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Following the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, will the Archbishops' Council work with Jewish and Muslim peace groups to seek human rights for all in the Holy Land (Israel/Palestine)?

Dr Philip Giddings: In December last year, the Archbishop of Canterbury reaffirmed the Church of England's commitment to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The Church of England has for many years worked on a variety of issues with Jewish and Muslim organizations in this country, particularly the Council of Christians and Jews and the Christian Muslim Forum. In particular, close working relationships have been maintained with both organizations in relation to issues, including human rights issues, arising in the Holy Land. We have also offered sustained support for the Anglican diocese in Jerusalem in its work for reconciliation and justice, particularly where this involves religious and other leaders across the religious communities.

Dr John Dinnen (Hereford): I am pleased that the Archbishop of Canterbury has reaffirmed the Church of England's commitment to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. I have heard this weekend that £2 million worth of shares in Caterpillar, manufacturer of armoured bulldozers for the Israeli defence force, have been sold, following our vote in February 2006. Were the shares sold

because of the Caterpillar armoured bulldozers being used as weapons to destroy Palestinian homes and hence damaging their human rights?

Dr Philip Giddings: I cannot give an answer to that question without notice but I will ensure that those who do know the answer will communicate with the questioner.

19. *Mrs Mary Judkins (Wakefield)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Although the graffiti panels produced at the 'Dare To ...' event in Church House have now been installed in Lambeth Palace, as part of the Youth Evangelism Fund projects, how will the Archbishops' Council ensure that more projects of this kind continue to happen throughout the Church of England?

Mr Mark Russell: The aim of the Youth Evangelism Fund is to help young people share their faith with their friends in ways that make sense to them. The Archbishops' Council has allocated half a million pounds over five years to resource this, and our national mission staff have secured a further £350,000 to date from charitable trusts. We are therefore aiming to give young people £1 million over the five years of this fund. As dioceses see how much their young people can do with relatively small amounts of money, some of them have set up their own funds to take this work even further. My prayer would be that other dioceses will do the same.

20. *Mrs Mary Judkins (Wakefield)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

What is being done to build on the excellent outcomes of work such as the 'Dare To...' day in Westminster (to communicate the ideas of young people) by those exercising leadership at senior levels in the Church of England?

Mr Mark Russell: At the 'Dare To ...' event in December we welcomed a hundred young people to this Assembly Hall so they could celebrate together and share their ideas about evangelism. We have recorded interviews with every young person who came, and we have transcribed those interviews and are sending a summary to every diocese. This is so that senior leaders can understand better what the emerging generation thinks about sharing faith, and then they can help their young people put that into practice.

House of Bishops

21. *Dr Graham Campbell (Chester)* asked the Chairman of the House of Bishops:

In view of the remarks made by a diocesan bishop on *The Big Question* programme broadcast on 11 January 2009 that ‘The Bible is not seen as the Word of God in the same way that a Muslim would see the Koran’ and ‘The views in the New Testament are not the same as the views in the Old Testament and it is ridiculous to say that the Bible is one consistent argument about these issues’, can the chairman of the House of Bishops confirm that there has been no change to the Church’s doctrine as set out in Articles VI (That Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary for salvation) and VII (The Old Testament is not contrary to the New)?

The Archbishop of Canterbury (Dr Rowan Williams): There has been no change in the position set out in the preface to the Declaration of Assent which states that the Church of England ‘professes the faith uniquely revealed in the Holy Scriptures and set forth in the catholic creeds, which faith the Church is called upon to proclaim afresh in each generation’. It is perhaps worth gently reminding Synod that the proposition that the Bible is the Word of God in the same way that a Muslim would understand the Koran to be the word of God is not to be found in the Articles of Religion, and I would be rather surprised to find its compatibility with the Articles defended.

22. *Mr Gerald O’Brien (Rochester)* asked the Chairman of the House of Bishops:

What advice or guidance does the House offer to its members about making statements in the media, in particular as to the latitude members of the House enjoy to make statements which contradict the teaching of the Bible, the Thirty-nine Articles of Religion, the Canons, the Book of Common Prayer or the Ordinal?

The Archbishop of Canterbury: The advice which the House of Bishops would offer to its members is precisely the advice it would offer to all clergy, that they are expected to act in accordance with the Canons and the Declaration of Assent which is made at their consecration. However, within this overall commitment, as stated in the House’s 1986 statement *The Nature of Christian Belief*, ‘there is always a place in the life of the Church for both tradition and enquiry’. That statement on the nature of Christian belief and the series of Doctrine Commission reports on Christian belief from the 1980s continue to provide useful guidance in this area.

Mr Gerald O'Brien (Rochester): May I thank His Grace for that helpful reply? Am I to understand from it, however, that the House's 1986 statement envisaged that an appropriate place in the life of the Church for such enquiry might be a sound-bite on a Sunday morning broadcast on television?

The Archbishop of Canterbury: I think that is asking me for an expression of opinion, Madam Chairman.

The Chairman: That is correct.

Revd Dr John Hartley (Bradford): Do the House of Bishops or its members receive advice and guidance on handling the media as part of their continuing ministerial development training, and is it part of their continuing review under the new terms of service legislation?

The Archbishop of Canterbury: Yes.

23. *Revd Hugh Lee (Oxford)* asked the Chairman of the House of Bishops:

Has consideration been given to the possibility of inviting a woman bishop from a Church in the Anglican Communion or from another Church with which we are in communion to address the Synod on how her Church has handled the transition from an all-male episcopate to a mixed-gender episcopate?

The Archbishop of Canterbury: No, but bishops met with women bishops at the Lambeth Conferences in 1998 and 2008, and in on-going dialogues within the Porvoo Churches, and will of course have discussed these issues. The relevant groups which have been set up to examine the ordination of women to the episcopate have also studied representations from such Churches, and I believe that Bishop Victoria Matthews, formerly of Canada and now of New Zealand, met with the Rochester commission on the ordination of women to the episcopate.

Revd Hugh Lee (Oxford): Would consideration now be given to inviting a woman bishop to address Synod as we debate these very important issues?

The Archbishop of Canterbury: I think that is something which the Business Committee would be well advised to consider.

Revd Hugh Lee (Oxford): Can I say that it says it is for the Presidents to invite?

The Archbishop of Canterbury: In that case, the Presidents had better think about it.

24. *Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark)* asked the Chairman of the House of Bishops:

Does the Church of England recognize the doctrine of sacramental assurance as part of the Church's teaching and, if so, on what theological or ecclesiological grounds?

The Bishop of Rochester (Rt Revd Michael Nazir-Ali): The historic formularies of the Church of England give us three grounds for assurance that we shall receive the spiritual benefits associated with baptism and Holy Communion. The first is that these benefits have been promised to us by God himself. The second is that the sacraments are celebrated using the necessary words and elements and with the intention of obeying Christ's command (Article XIX). The third is that we have repented of our sins, love our neighbours and receive the sacraments in faith, as the Prayer Book catechism teaches. Although Article XXVI teaches the necessity of discipline in the Church, it also declares that the personal unworthiness of the minister does not hinder the effect of the sacraments.

Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark): The Bishop's answer makes clear that the question of validity of order is not among those grounds for sacramental assurance. In the light of that, would it be a doctrinal or ecclesiological innovation for the Church of England to provide a structural solution for those opposed to the ordination of women –

The Chairman: That question is out of order, I am sorry.

Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark): Could you tell me why?

The Chairman: It calls for an opinion.

Revd Prebendary David Houlding (London): Would the Bishop care to reiterate the position of the Church of England which the Bishop of Manchester gave to the Synod in answer to a supplementary question some 18 months ago, that in the matter of the ordination of women to the priesthood and episcopate the doctrine of reception is a pre-requisite to sacramental assurance, and would he confirm that that is still the position of the Church?

The Bishop of Rochester: Because the Church of England has committed itself to the process of reception on the ordination of women and because it recognizes that people both for this development and against it can be members in good standing, it must make provision for those who have scruples regarding sacramental assurance in this context.

25. *Revd Peter French (Birmingham)* asked the Chairman of the House of Bishops:

When can we expect the Eucharistic Prayers for children first to be debated by the General Synod, and how long after that are we likely to have to wait for them to be authorized for use?

The Bishop of Wakefield (Rt Revd Stephen Platten): The House of Bishops is enthusiastic about this project and keen that we should soon have such Eucharistic Prayers. However, the Church's liturgy expresses the Church's doctrine and it is therefore essential to get it right, especially where the Eucharistic Prayer is concerned. Liturgy also needs to be revised in the light of experimental use, and all of this takes time. Experience with a previous set of draft Eucharistic prayers, including one intended for use with children, shows that it is unwise to ask a new Synod to approve texts that were revised by its predecessor.

For all these reasons, it is now envisaged that the draft Eucharistic Prayers will be submitted for first consideration in November of next year or the following February. Final Approval would follow in 2011 or 2012, depending on whether there was a November group of sessions and whether any re-committal motions were passed at the first revision stage.

Revd Peter French (Birmingham): I am disappointed by this answer, as I know that many church schools in Birmingham diocese will be. Three years might be a short time for General Synod but it is a long time for a child. As the House of Bishops is enthusiastic about this project, perhaps I could ask the House of Bishops to reconsider and make these Eucharistic Prayers a priority –

The Chairman: I am sorry, you are not actually asking a question.

Mr Peter French (Birmingham): I am asking the House of Bishops to reconsider.

The Chairman: No, I am sorry.

26. *Revd Richard Moy (Lichfield)* asked the Chairman of the House of Bishops:

Given that for many young people a key question is ‘Will you be there for me?’, has the House of Bishops considered the desirability of discouraging short-termism and poor pay conditions in the contracts of church youth workers and encouraging the provision of stipendiary, pensionable roles, dedicated to working with young people in each area/deanery, even if that means cutting back on clergy roles to fund this?

The Bishop of Ripon and Leeds (Rt Revd John Packer): The employment of youth workers has been primarily at the initiative of local parishes or groups, and in response to local need. There is a desire to drive up employment standards in this area, and some dioceses have good-practice guidelines. In addition, some dioceses and deaneries have chosen to allocate funds for the employment of youth workers and in these instances it has been possible for a more strategic approach to be adopted and for more uniform employment practice to prevail. There are also a number of pioneer ministry posts emerging that do offer stipendiary appointments in youth ministry.

Revd Mark Ireland (Lichfield): Richard Moy has put his finger on a key issue. Given that the Church nationally puts huge effort into the conditions of service for clergy and yet, when it comes to the employment of youth workers, parishes like my own are left to do what is right in their own eyes, could the Bishop ask the Deployment, Remuneration and Conditions of Service Committee to give attention to this matter, with a view to putting the employment of youth ministers on a more professional footing so that we invest in young leaders rather than exploit them?

The Bishop of Ripon and Leeds: DRACSC is happy to consider that though I do think that it is also important that the localness of youth workers is respected and taken account of and the responsibility of the individual parishes in their employment of youth workers is taken seriously.

Revd Richard Moy (Lichfield): Does the Bishop realize the damage that can be done to many of our young people when workers come and go every two or three years, because of a parish’s lack of resources and lack of central funding?

The Bishop of Ripon and Leeds: I realize there can be difficulties for parishes and would certainly recommend to parishes that they think very carefully through the policy of employment which they develop. We will have another look at that in terms of DRACSC.

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

In recent years a number of dioceses have launched mission initiatives such as Mission Action Planning to encourage, inspire and resource their parishes to be more mission-focused under a diocesan umbrella. Given this, has the House of Bishops (a) debated the value of such initiatives; (b) considered a review among those dioceses which have initiated such movements as to whether the initiative has been effective; and (c) pondered as to whether such initiatives are an appropriate response to the missiological implications of episcopacy, especially in regard to the concept of the bishop in mission emanating from the Lambeth Conference in 1998 and the insights of the *Mission-Shaped Church* report, GS 1523?

The Bishop of Bristol (Rt Revd Michael Hill): The House as yet has not discussed these particular initiatives although mission staff in the dioceses are addressing them and learning from one another and are sharing this learning with their diocesan senior staffs. Mission Action Planning has undoubted value, as many dioceses have now found. That value is maximized when dioceses adapt the principles of Mission Action Planning to their own context. The national missionaries' conference has discussed this matter and shared good practice, and it plans to do so again this year. Helpful research, including research into effectiveness, is available online at www.churchmaps.co.uk. Bishops continue to seek and to use any relevant and helpful material as they seek to further the mission of God in their dioceses.

Revd Canon Simon Bessant (Sheffield): Given the need to turn decline into growth and the theological and practical importance of a diocesan bishop in mission, would the Bishop attempt to put this matter on the agenda of the House of Bishops?

The Bishop of Bristol: I do not think that this bishop has huge influence over the agenda of the House of Bishops, but I can assure Canon Bessant that the issues that he raises are of concern to bishops and therefore, presumably, collectively to the House, and those who have influence have heard his comment.

Secretary General

28. *Mr Gordon Simmonds (Chelmsford)* asked the Secretary General:

What is the number of events per year (for groups of up to 10, 11 to 20, 20 to 30 and over 30) expected to be needed in the foreseeable future for events organized by the bodies referenced in GS Misc 907B, and what are the numbers of en-suite and of full access rooms they require within each size range?

The Secretary General (Mr William Fittall): The residential meetings of the Archbishops' Council, Liturgical Commission, Council for Christian Unity and Mission and Public Affairs Council all require between 20 and 30 bedrooms for members and staff, as do the ministry selection conferences. The other bodies mentioned in the paper referred to generally require between 11 and 20 bedrooms. The frequency of meetings is in most cases referred to in the paper; in the case of the Crown Nominations Commission the number of meetings in a year varies depending on the requirement; there are generally between 45 and 50 ministry selection conferences each year.

Dr Philip Giddings (Oxford): Is the Secretary General aware that the residential meetings of the Mission and Public Affairs Council provide a very valuable opportunity for elected members of this Synod to engage in conversation, debate and contribution to the making of the policy in relation to mission and public affairs put before this Synod?

The Secretary General: There is an interesting question here, which I think is about the fate of diocesan retreat houses. I think I detect in this question a little sideways reference to the constitutions review on which the chair of the House of Laity will be making a presentation tomorrow, and I would not dare myself to trespass on that territory.

The Chairman: May I remind members that Questions and supplementary questions 'shall not contain any argument or imputation' or 'ask for any expression of opinion ... or for the solution of any hypothetical problem'.

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

Given that section 52 and schedule 3 of the Dioceses, Pastoral and Mission Measure came into force on 1 February 2008, (a) how many dioceses have now set up new mission and pastoral committees, bearing mind that all dioceses have until 31 July 2009 to comply; and (b) how many diocesan mission and pastoral committees have received training in regard to their new powers and responsibilities?

The Secretary General: Dioceses are not required to report progress on establishing the new committees, though we have so far seen nine new committee constitutions and have of course drawn the 31 July date to the attention of all dioceses. Every diocese was represented at one of the three regional conferences entitled *Moving Forward in Mission* that were led last year by staff from the Commissioners and the Council, in partnership with Fresh Expressions. In addition, there have been individual training sessions for four dioceses and there is a good deal of relevant material on the Internet. National staff stand ready to respond to requests for further help.

30. *Mrs Anneliese Barrell (Exeter)* asked the Secretary General:

Who is entitled under SO 53 to attend revision committee meetings?

The Secretary General: SO 53 confers an entitlement on any member of the Synod who has submitted a proposal for amendment to attend the meeting of the revision committee while the proposal is being considered and to speak to that proposal, or, if unable to be present, to authorize another member of the Synod to do so on his or her behalf. Beyond that, it is for revision committees to reach their own decisions on who else may be present at their meetings, including whether meetings should be open to the public and the press. If the legislation on women in the episcopate is committed to a revision committee, the question of attendance will be one of the first matters that the committee will need to consider. It has already been decided that the committee would meet in the Convocation Hall.

Canon Dr Christina Baxter (Southwell and Nottingham): Would the Secretary General please tell us who pays the expenses of those who are entitled to attend?

The Secretary General: I believe that members fund their own expenses for attending these meetings, but if I am wrong in that I will put a note around. (*Some dissent*). Obviously, members of the revision committee and of the steering committee who are part of the revision committee will have their own expenses met for that, but in terms of people coming to speak to amendments my understanding is that that is not reimbursable. However, if I am wrong I will put a notice on the board. It is quite an important question and people need to have an accurate answer.

Revd Dr John Hartley (Bradford): In clarification of the last answer, I have always received expenses for attending when I have put in amendments. My supplementary question is to ask if the Secretary General could tell us the origin of SO 53 which explains why it is written in this particular

way. I am not asking for an expression of opinion but rather a brief historical summary. The reason I ask is that I have a personal feeling that it could be run differently, but that is not an imputation.

The Secretary General: Having been rather less than definitive in relation to the claiming of expenses, I am not sure I will do very well with the history. I think this is a Standing Order that has been there for a long time, and its purpose is to confer rights on people to attend, so that you do not have to be a member of the revision committee to submit an amendment; and I am sure that if this particular piece of legislation is committed to a revision committee there will be a lot of members of Synod who may wish to submit amendments. This means that they can do so, and, if they wish to, they can come and speak as of right, but as to the question of whether other people should be able to attend, members of Synod who have not proposed amendments, or indeed members of the public, that is a matter for each revision committee to decide. I do not think it has been a live issue for quite a long time, but this is potentially the most significant piece of legislation in the past 21 years and it is something the revision committee will have to look to.

Clerk to the Synod

31. *Revd Canon Simon Killwick (Manchester)* asked the Clerk to the Synod:

What is the typical cost of a debate on a Diocesan Synod Motion?

The Clerk to the Synod (Revd David Williams): The total cost of General Synod time can be calculated in various ways but in round numbers an hour and a half of Synod time, including the production and distribution of papers, staff time and members' travel and subsistence, costs in the order of £13,000, some of which is met directly by dioceses and the rest indirectly by them via the Archbishops' Council's budget. These figures exclude the cost of the initial discussion in the diocese or of any of the follow-up action mandated by General Synod.

Mr Robin Stevens (Chelmsford): Notwithstanding the answer given, would you agree that if members of Synod happen to be here it is a lot cheaper than that actually to discuss a Diocesan Synod Motion while we are all gathered here?

The Clerk to the Synod: The costs I have given are those that are directly attributable to preparation of materials for the Diocesan Synod Motion debate; they do not include the overall cost of, say, the whole Synod staff operation; but I think your thesis must hold true.

Board of Education

32. *Revd Alastair Cutting (Chichester)* asked the Chairman of the Board of Education:

Many churches have playgroups and pre-schools attached to them, often ones that have grown as part of their local ministry. Pre-schools are now highly regulated and have to have Ofsted inspections, and most are currently also being required to register their constitutions with the Charity Commission. With the Church of England's excellent and long-term involvement in education and faith schools, what advice, models and support are available to church-affiliated pre-schools from the central Church, and how might they be developed and facilitated through the dioceses?

The Bishop of Lincoln (Rt Revd John Saxbee): The statutory framework for the early years foundation stage was published by the Department for Children, Schools and Families in May 2008. It sets the standards for learning, development and care for children from birth to five years old, and many parishes now have programmes and projects already in place or at a formative stage, often in association with their church school. The Board of Education has, in these early stages, offered support and advice as requested. It will be possible, as experience is gained in a variety of contexts, and within of course the limits of the resources of the Board, to formulate guidance and disseminate good practice.

Canon Peter Bruinvels (Guildford): Is the Bishop aware that Guildford was one of the first dioceses to introduce such affiliated schools with pre-school and nursery provision? Will he or his team therefore contact them to get advice that is available from the diocese?

The Bishop of Lincoln: I was not aware of that fact but I am not at all surprised at the Guildford initiative, early off the mark; and if there are things to be learned from that experience I am sure that my colleagues at the Board of Education will be in touch with you and your diocesan staff.

Revd Alastair Cutting (Chichester): Thanks to the Board of Education for its reply but the document the Bishop referred to is a Government document and not a Church House one, and it says very little about anything that is distinctively Christian, which is what we are about. There is currently an urgency for church-sponsored pre-schools, it appears, right across the country –

The Chairman: Can we have a question, sir?

Revd Alastair Cutting (Chichester): Yes. Would the Board of Education please seriously integrate under-fives into their work, as other denominations currently seem to be doing?

The Bishop of Lincoln: Thank you. That is a very good question. It is one that we have heard and one to which I think we can respond positively, again, I say, within the resources of the Board; but I recognize that joined-up thinking suggests you are on to something.

33. *Dr Graham Campbell (Chester)* asked the Chairman of the Board of Education:

In the light of the letter from the Chief Education Officer of the Church of England to *The Guardian* of 27 January, how does the Board of Education intend to ensure that teaching and discussion of sexual relationships and sexual orientation in Church of England schools fully reflect the bishops' teaching in *Issues in Human Sexuality* and in *Marriage – a teaching document of the House of Bishops of the Church of England* (1999)?

The Bishop of Lincoln: Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) in a Church of England school is the legal responsibility of the governing body. Advice to governors is available from their diocesan board of education and the national Board. The recent response of the Board of Education to the Government consultation emphasized the importance of schools with a religious foundation preserving the right to frame SRE within the teachings of their faith. The Board would expect all our schools to reflect the teachings of the Church of England in a way compatible with the age and ability of the pupils. For members of the Synod who are not *Guardian* readers, can I just observe that the letter to which the questioner refers was to stand publicly against any form of homophobia or homophobic bullying in Church of England schools, a sentiment I am sure all members of Synod will wholeheartedly endorse.

Mr Philip Ivey-Ray (Chelmsford): My question is as a governor of a Church school. Are you aware that if it is an aided church school the rules can be much stricter about how sexuality is taught, whereas if it is a controlled school the fact of the matter is that we have to do exactly what the Government tell us. In our controlled school we are having to teach abortion as a kind of a norm, as part of religious education, which I find offensive. Are our leaders in the Church of England aware of this fact because we may need to review it?

The Bishop of Lincoln: Thank you. You can be confident that members of the Board of Education are aware of the distinction between controlled and aided schools and will seek to offer the support and advice appropriate to those different circumstances.

Ministry Council

34. *Revd Canon Dr Alan Hargrave (Ely)* asked the Chairman of the Ministry Council:

Since 1990, how many clergy, excluding those who have retired or died, have left the ordained ministry each year and no longer hold any sort of authority from the bishop under Canon C 8? Are there any statistics which outline people's reasons for leaving? If so, what are they?

The Bishop of Norwich (Rt Revd Graham James): This information is not held centrally. However, since 2004 a summary record is kept of why clergy leave the central payroll and a table of figures has been placed on the notice board. The information is derived from entries on the notifications about changes of appointment which the Clergy Payments Department receives. Of course, clergy who leave the payroll may come back to it at a later date, and often do.

The Ministry Division is working with the Research and Statistics Department on a report about clergy patterns of service which will be published later this year.

Revd Hugh Lee (Oxford): The Bishop mentioned the payroll. What about those non-stipendiary licensed clergy? Is there any information on that?

The Bishop of Norwich: Not centrally. No doubt there is in dioceses: it would be quite a task to collate it all.

35. *Revd Prebendary David Houlding (London)* asked the Chairman of the Ministry Council:

In view of the forthcoming closure of St Luke's Hospital for the Clergy, has any thought been given about how to continue providing appropriate care for the clergy and their families (and others) in times of sickness and stress?

The Bishop of Norwich: St Luke's opened its doors when the National Health Service was no more than a dream, and it provided a much needed service to clergy. The Church of England owes a debt

of thanks to all those who contributed time and money to support the hospital over many years. However, in recent years demand for its services declined as medical procedures changed and accessibility to good quality local health care improved. I understand the trustees of St Luke's are considering ways in which they will be able to use the resources released by the sale of the hospital to continue to support clergy and their families in time of sickness and stress in ways which may be now much more appropriate.

Revd Prebendary David Houlding (London): I am not sure, Bishop, whether that exactly answers my Question but I do further want to ask whether you are aware of the extreme financial situation which has developed from the sale of the hospital which will mean there will be no resources further available. I am wondering whether you would be prepared, having looked into the matter, to refer it to the Church Commissioners to see what help might be available in the circumstances.

The Bishop of Norwich: I thank Prebendary Houlding for the information and I will follow that up as best I can.

36. *Revd Prebendary David Houlding (London)* asked the Chairman of the Ministry Council:

What progress has been made in negotiations with HM Government concerning HEFCE and tuition fees for those taking equivalent or lower qualifications as part of their theological training? What impact will the outcome have on individual institutions as well as on the Vote 1 budget as a whole?

The Bishop of Norwich: The Ministry Division, working with the Higher Education Funding Council for England, secured the agreement of the Department of Innovation, Universities and Skills to a one-year postponement in the implementation of the equivalent or lower qualification (ELQ) policy with regard to ministerial students. In addition HEFCE has funded consultants to explore ways of developing ministerial education so that there may be ready access to public funding streams. The report of the consultants is expected at the end of February. In the light of the report, the Ministry Division will continue to work to introduce pathways through training which will equip the whole range of ordination candidates to appropriate standards. The overall aim in this work is to ensure that, if at all possible, there is no increase in the cost of Vote 1 on account of this change of Government policy.

37. *Mr Peter LeRoy (Bath and Wells)* asked the Chairman of the Ministry Council:

What progress has been made in implementing the recommendations relating to the guidelines for ministerial development review (contained in the *Review of Clergy Terms of Service* report, GS 1564): that it will be compulsory and annual and that ‘it will be important to provide some lay participation in advance’ and ‘provision for parish input or for the reviewer to visit the parish’?

The Bishop of Norwich: Ministerial development review at least once every 24 months will be a statutory requirement under the Ecclesiastical Offices (Terms of Service) legislation. Ministerial review guidelines were drawn up in consultation with diocesan bishops and they are set out in GS 1637-9Y. One of those guidelines is that feedback should be sought from a representative range of people who have knowledge of the office-holder’s ministry, including laypeople.

In March last year the continuing ministerial development panel published interim guidance to assist dioceses in their preparations for the legislation coming into force.

Mr Peter LeRoy (Bath and Wells): Thank you for that encouraging reply, but what action will be taken to ensure that those dioceses who operate, to quote a bishop, a somewhat cosily clerical approach to ministerial review will speedily adopt this more collaborative and professional approach? Will this be in practice a matter, to quote again, of every diocese doing what is right in its own eyes?

The Bishop of Norwich: I would like to say that the full weight of the Ministry Division will be brought to bear on the subject, and indeed that will be true. I think it is quite clear what is required in the terms of service legislation; the guidelines will be reviewed by diocesan bishops and we will attempt to review it in the Ministry Division. If the reviews are too clerical we will bring it to the attention of the bishops concerned.

38. *Revd Richard Moy (Lichfield)* asked the Chairman of the Ministry Council:

At which training colleges or institutions did our female clergy currently holding the offices of (a) dean, (b) archdeacon and (c) residentiary canon respectively train?

The Bishop of Norwich: These are the details of the college and institutions attended by female deans and archdeacons. (The information for residentiary canons is not available without a good deal of additional, detailed research.) I should point out that St John’s College, Nottingham scores

an impressive one hundred per cent record for training women deans (even though there are only two of them).

Deans June Osborne (St John's Nottingham); Vivienne Faull (St John's Nottingham)

Archdeacons Karen Gorham (Trinity College, Bristol); Sheila Watson (Edinburgh Theological College); Annette Cooper (Southwark Ordination Course); Penny Driver (Northern Ordination Course); Caroline Baston (Ripon College, Cuddesdon); Christine Hardman (St Albans Ministerial Training Scheme); Christine Allsopp (Southern Dioceses Ministerial Training Scheme); Rachel Treweek (Wycliffe Hall); Jan McFarlane (Cranmer Hall, Durham); Janet Henderson (Cranmer Hall, Durham); Cherry Vann (Westcott House); Jane Sinclair (St John's, Nottingham); and Nicola Sullivan (Wycliffe Hall).

39. *Revd Hugh Lee (Oxford)* asked the Chairman of the Ministry Council:

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 but, on 16 November 2008, the lead inspector, Ian Bunting, told staff and students that the criteria for the November 2008 inspection of Wycliffe Hall were the normal inspection criteria for colleges, and that these excluded enquiry into past events. Why was the 'process to inform itself' not part of this inspection and what alternative action is the Ministry Council now proposing in order to fulfil its promise 'to inform itself regarding the situation at Wycliffe' in 2007, so that it can take any necessary further action to restore the reputation of Wycliffe Hall after the large number of staff resignations and the allegations of bullying?

The Bishop of Norwich: As was reported to the Synod, the Bishops' Committee for Ministry brought forward the inspection of Wycliffe Hall as its primary concern was the quality of formation and training being offered to ordinands. All inspections are an investigation of the current provision of training and of the institution which provides it. However, this will inevitably involve taking recent events into account, in order to set the assessment of the provision being made within its institutional context. The Ministry Council is fully satisfied that inspection is the appropriate way to inform itself about this institution. Synod members will also be interested to know that all

inspection reports from now on, including those on Wycliffe Hall and St Stephen's House, both recently inspected, will be published in full on the Church of England website, following the House of Bishops' receiving them.

Revd Hugh Lee (Oxford): As I am sure the Bishop is not intending to contradict the lead inspector, Ian Bunting, has the Ministry Council and the Bishops' Committee for Ministry now abandoned its promise to inform itself regarding the situation at Wycliffe Hall in 2007?

The Bishop of Norwich: Well, an inspection looks into all aspects of a college's life and governance and I cannot see how this can be unrelated to the immediate history of an institution.

Deployment, Remuneration and Conditions of Service Committee

40. *Mr Nigel Chetwood (Gloucester)* asked the Chairman of the Deployment, Remuneration and Conditions of Service Committee:

Diocesan support is available in a benefice for ministry costs incurred during a vacancy. However, in a team ministry a vacancy for this purpose only occurs when the incumbent team rector moves on. So when a team vicar moves on there is deemed to be no vacancy and the parishes covered by the outgoing team vicar themselves pick up the ministry costs of retired clergy who help out. As the number of team ministries is increasing, are steps being taken to address this situation?

The Bishop of Ripon and Leeds (Rt Revd John Packer): This is not an issue that has been raised with DRACSC before. It is for each diocese to decide how ministry costs in a vacancy are supported by the diocese. If dioceses do think that national guidance is required, the consultative group of diocesan secretaries and DBF chairs can refer the matter to us.

The Bishop of Willesden (Rt Revd Pete Broadbent): Will the chair of DRACSC consider writing to those eminent people in the diocesan secretaries and DBF chairs group, suggesting that all team vicar vacancies ought be treated as if they were quasi-vacancies for the purposes of a freehold, in other words, that they would be treated in the same way as is practised in dioceses such as London? We would be very happy to give you the way in which we deal with these things, because it seems to me that it would actually be a helpful bit of guidance that you could give without too much fuss.

The Bishop of Ripon and Leeds: I think that dioceses will have heard that recommendation from the diocese of London.

Mission and Public Affairs Council

41. *Mr Thomas Benyon (Oxford)* asked the Chairman of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:

In view of the evidence that fruit machines generate problem gambling because of continuous and repetitive play, which both leads to addiction and is a gateway to higher forms of gambling, what representations has the Church of England made to Her Majesty's Government about its reported proposal to increase the limits on stakes and prizes for category C machines, which are mostly classic fruit machines?

Dr Philip Giddings: The proposal was made in December 2008 by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport after more modest increases proposed in August 2008 had been criticized as insufficient by representatives of the industry. In January this year, just last month, a response was made on behalf of the MPA Council, strongly opposing the 50 per cent increases, for the reasons given in the Question. The response also argued that the financial difficulties of the gambling industry during the recession should not be relieved at the expense of people liable to engage in problem gambling. On 26 January, the Minister announced that the higher increases would go ahead.

Given the Government's disappointing change of mind, and the Gambling Commission's surprising advice that the increases would not carry a significant risk of aggravating problem gambling, we are consulting with our ecumenical partners about further representations to the Department.

42. *Mr Gordon Simmons (Chelmsford)* asked the Chairman of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:

What actions has the Council for Mission and Public Affairs taken to encourage Her Majesty's Government to address more urgently the devastating effect of the severe drop in the UK bee population, given that bees are estimated to provide the majority of the pollination of our food crops?

Dr Philip Giddings: The problems affecting UK bees are not widely appreciated, particularly with regard to the impact on pollination. (One might say they do not have quite the buzz factor.)

[*Members:* Oh!] The MPA Council therefore welcomes the announcement made by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs at the end of January that an additional £2 million is to be made available for research in this area. To date we have made no representations to Her Majesty's Government on this issue. If we do so, our representations will be made in consultation with industry groups.

43. *Revd Canon Christopher Sugden (Oxford)* asked the Chairman of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:

What are the Church of England and its agencies doing to support the life and witness of the churches in Southern Sudan as they seek to support the new regional governing authorities as they address the rebuilding of the region?

Dr Philip Giddings: CMS, Christian Aid and other NGOs work with the ACT Juba Disaster Management Committee, co-ordinating responses to recent upsurges in violence. In Britain the NGOs are discussing with the Foreign & Commonwealth Office how this joint plan is taken up and followed through.

CMS offers programmatic support to the Southern Sudanese churches, including training pastors with Carlife College, Nairobi. In 2008 nine mission partners served alongside the Sudanese church. CMS also offers a conduit for financial donations.

Salisbury diocese's Sudan Link is part of this co-ordinated response, ascertaining local needs through dialogue with the Archbishop of Sudan's office. In the House of Lords and the media Bishop David Stancliffe is drawing attention to the recent violence and the fragility of the comprehensive peace agreement, requesting an urgent debate.

The Church of England's support will help Sudanese churches assist the new regional governing authorities meet the daunting challenge of rebuilding the region, and the primates of the Communion recently expressed their concern in a statement which is now on the Anglican Communion website.

Revd Canon Christopher Sugden (Oxford): In the light of that strong statement of concern from the primates and the Archbishop of Sudan's own call for support for the international efforts to bring peace to Darfur, will the Church of England, through its national office, in addition to the NGOs mentioned in the answer, make Southern Sudan a priority for aid, advocacy and prayer, and continue to urge the Foreign & Commonwealth Office or Her Majesty's Government to address the pressing needs of the country?

Dr Philip Giddings: The answer is Yes.

The Bishop of Salisbury (Rt Revd David Stancliffe): Is Dr Giddings aware of the importance of holding the north and south bishops together as the Church of the Sudan attempts to be one of the few patterns of common life in the country which actually spans both north and south?

Dr Philip Giddings: Yes, he is.

Business Committee

44. *Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark)* asked the Chairman of the Business Committee:

In view of the national and global significance of the 2012 Olympics, does the Business Committee have any plans for the Synod to hear about the Church's planned mission and ministry around the Games?

Revd Prebendary Kay Garlick: As Synod members will see from the Business Committee's report, this subject does not yet feature in the forecast of future Synod business. However, the Mission and Public Affairs Council may be considering whether to put a proposal for a debate or presentation to the Business Committee and may wish to consult with the dioceses of Chelmsford, London and Southwark who have taken on particular responsibility for the Church's contribution to the Church's mission and ministry for the Olympics.

The Bishop of Manchester (Rt Revd Nigel McCulloch): Is the chair of the Business Committee aware that during the Commonwealth Games in 2002 Greater Manchester collected together Churches of all denominations and provided a highly effective example of mission and ministry? In the discussions to which she refers, which may take place between some of the London dioceses,

would she agree that the London dioceses might perhaps be able to learn a little from the diocese of Manchester?

Revd Prebendary Kay Garlick: If members of the Business Committee were not aware, they are now, and I am sure that the Mission and Public Affairs Council will have been listening to what has been said.

Dr Philip Giddings: Is the chairman of the Business Committee aware that the outreach to the Olympics in London is a matter for several dioceses and crucially will be being handled ecumenically?

Revd Prebendary Kay Garlick: I suspected as much and am very glad.

Mr Colin Slater (Southwell and Nottingham): You referred to the consultations with the other dioceses in the London area. Would you also expect those consultations to include the body Christians in Sport, which has certainly had a presence at Commonwealth Games and other Olympic Games and indeed has been working in amateur and professional sport successfully in this country in terms of mission and ministry for, I guess, some 40 years?

Revd Prebendary Kay Garlick: I am sure that that too has been heard by the relevant people.

Dioceses Commission

45. *Mr Nigel Holmes (Carlisle)* asked the Chairman of the Dioceses Commission:

Given that more than half the dioceses were in financial deficit last year, has the prospect of amalgamating dioceses been discussed formally at the national or the diocesan level?

The Archdeacon of York (Ven. Richard Seed): Diocesan financial statements for 2008 have yet to be finalized. We do not yet know how many will show a deficit, and a deficit in one year may not indicate an underlying problem. The Commission is not aware of any formal discussions about amalgamating dioceses. Should any diocese wish to explore this, the Commission would stand ready to assist.

Our work is at an early stage. Our review of diocesan boundaries could result in the number of dioceses changing, if that seemed right and commanded a wide measure of support. However, although financial considerations must always be borne in mind, the motivation is to achieve the best configuration for mission.

We will seek to encourage shared administration between dioceses, with mission strategy still determined at diocesan level, where this would bring improved efficiency as well as resilience. In many cases this might be the simplest and swiftest way of achieving financial savings.

The Archdeacon of Leeds (Ven. Peter Burrows): In relation to a consideration of boundary changes, could the Archdeacon say why it has been decided to begin with Yorkshire dioceses? (*Laughter*)

The Archdeacon of York: Indeed! We consulted all the diocesan bishops about which region we should review first, and we have taken their views honourably into account.

Revd Stephen Lynas (Bath and Wells): Given that more than half the banks in the country went bust last year, is the vice-chairman of the Dioceses Commission in conversation with the Chancellor of the Exchequer and Lord Mandelson?

The Archdeacon of York: We could consider that at our next meeting.

Canon Dr Christina Baxter (Southwell and Nottingham): Would the Archdeacon ensure that the Dioceses Commission and/or anybody else who publishes figures finds out first whether a diocese has deliberately gone into deficit because it has so much reserves that it is running down (which I know is the case in at least one circumstance) rather than that it simply cannot pay? If we get figures into the public domain, people may think we are going bust when actually we are not. So would he be able to do that for us, I wonder?

The Archdeacon of York: I think we should take that very seriously and report that back to the Commission.

Mr Gavin Oldham (Oxford): The Archdeacon made a helpful remark about administration and savings. Could he tell us whether there are any powers in the Dioceses Measure which actually give the Commission the ability to compel such administrative co-ordination or whether it is entirely voluntary on the part of dioceses?

The Archdeacon of York: It is entirely voluntary. We have no such authority or powers.

Legal Advisory Commission

46. *Miss Prudence Dailey (Oxford)* asked the Chairman of the Legal Advisory Commission:

Has any advice been given as to the circumstances, if any, in which it is permissible for a bishop to suspend all livings that become vacant in his diocese on the basis of pastoral reorganization within the diocese generally and without reference to any proposals in relation to the parish or benefice concerned?

The Vicar General of Canterbury (Chancellor Timothy Briden, ex officio): I should make clear that I am answering this Question as nominee of the chairman of the Legal Advisory Commission.

The Legal Advisory Commission has not given advice on this issue and is not aware of any other central body having done so. However, section 9, paragraph 24 of the Pastoral Measure Code of Practice, issued by the Church Commissioners, recommends that the use of the power to suspend should in the main be confined to benefices where pastoral reorganization is under consideration or in progress and, occasionally, where a change of parsonage house is planned. The code also states that suspension should not be applied for any longer than is necessary and that care should be taken to allay any fears on the part of clergy, patrons or parishioners that suspension is being used to exclude the rights of patrons.

The relevant paragraphs of the code are as follows:

‘Suspension of presentation

‘In June 1992, the House of Bishops passed a resolution:

“That this House;

- (a) resolve to continue to act within the limits of the Pastoral Measure 1983 and its associated Code of Practice;
- (b) note that sector ministry posts which are coupled with a suspended benefice come within the scope of pastoral reorganisation envisaged by the Measure;

- (c) confirm its intention to work with and take account of the views of the registered patron and the parish even when presentation to a benefice is suspended.”.

‘NOTE

‘The reference by the House of Bishops to sector ministry posts being coupled with a suspended benefice will normally refer to a benefice that has become too small to justify having a full time incumbent of its own but where reorganisation is not immediately required because of an opportunity for pastoral care to be undertaken by a priest with other diocesan responsibilities.

- 9.22** The bishop is required to obtain the consent of the DPC and to consult the patron (as defined in s.87), the PCC(s), the rural dean and lay co-chairman of the deanery synod concerned before using his powers under the section to suspend (for not more than five years) a patron’s right of presentation to a vacant benefice. It is recommended that the formal consultation be undertaken by letter. The bishop is required, when he carries out these consultations, to give his reasons for proposing suspension or extension of suspension and to advise any person to be consulted that he may, within 28 days, request a meeting with the bishop or his representative, to which all those to be consulted must be invited to attend. It will be apparent that the bishop should not have made up his mind before carrying out these statutory consultations; it is recommended that his letter to those who have to be consulted should indicate that the matter is open and that he is consulting them so that he can take their views properly into account when he comes to make his decision.
- 9.23** Suspension may be terminated by the bishop with the consent of the DPC. Suspension may also be renewed for a further period or periods with the same consent and following similar consultations, but only before the expiry of the suspension period. If a suspension period is not renewed before its expiry, no further suspension of presentation to a benefice is allowed during the relevant vacancy (but see **9.29**).
- 9.24** It is recommended that use of these powers should, in the main, be confined to benefices where pastoral reorganisation is under consideration or in progress and, occasionally, where a change of parsonage house is planned (see **8.6**). Suspension should not be applied any longer than is necessary. Care should be taken to allay any fears on the part of the clergy,

patrons and parishioners that suspension of presentation is being used to exclude the rights of patrons.’

Revd Dr John Hartley (Bradford): Would you not agree with me that it would be illegal for a bishop to have a policy of suspending all livings because, before suspending a living, he has a duty to consult, and the word ‘consult’ –

The Chairman: You cannot ask for a legal opinion, I am sorry.

Revd Prebendary David Houlding (London): Is the Chancellor aware that when common tenure comes in, much of this process will be unnecessary?

The Vicar General of Canterbury: Yes.

Mr Timothy Cox (Blackburn): Could you elucidate as to whether there are any dioceses which are currently doing this, and provide a list if possible?

The Vicar General of Canterbury: The Legal Advisory Commission gives advice on matters which are not the subject of present or anticipated dispute. Certainly there is nothing that has come the Legal Advisory Commission’s way to indicate that a matter of this sort is in the offing.

The Archdeacon of Berkshire (Ven. Norman Russell): I do not know if the Chancellor is aware that his response to this Question about the extent to which codes of practice are followed by bishops may be of interest later on during the course of this group of sessions?

The Vicar General of Canterbury: Indeed, he is aware of that. Issues of compliance with codes of practice are a matter of on-going interest within the Church of England and particularly among its lawyers.

The Bishop of Chester (Rt Revd Peter Forster): Could the Chancellor explain why the advent of common tenure will make this process so different?

The Vicar General of Canterbury: Common tenure as it were overtakes the legal basis upon which the arrangements under the Pastoral Measure were in operation and therefore it represents something of a legal sea-change. It is anticipated that in future, when common tenure is in

operation, this sort of exercise is going to be much less common and indeed it will be very much easier, under the new legislation, to sort these matters out without recourse to section 67 of the Pastoral Measure.

After the closing act of worship, the Session was adjourned at 6.59 p.m.