

## **Summary of General Synod, July 2010**

*Shorter version for use in parish magazines etc*

764 words

**During the General Synod, held in York from July 9<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup>, key debates included:**

### **Women Bishops**

In February 2009, Synod agreed that draft legislation to allow women to be consecrated as bishops should be referred for revision in committee. At this latest group of sessions, the Synod voted to 'take note' of the Revision Committee's report, before moving on to the Revision Stage which involved clause-by-clause debate of the draft legislation. The Synod left the draft legislation largely unamended, reflecting its desire to continue to make provision for those who in conscience cannot receive the ministry of women as bishops, by providing for certain functions to be undertaken by a male bishop under a diocesan scheme made in accordance with a national code of practice.

If a majority of Diocesan Synods approve the draft legislation, it will return to the General Synod (probably in February 2012) for Final Drafting and consideration in accordance with Article 7 of the Constitution. The Final Approval stage, at which two-thirds majorities are required in each House, could be reached in 2012. If approved, the legislation would go to Parliament for consideration by the Ecclesiastical Committee and each House.

Other legislative business included two pieces of legislation forming part of the preparations for the introduction of 'common tenure' for clergy in 2011, including provision for maternity, paternity, parental and adoption leave.

### **Liturgical business**

Synod gave Final Approval to the Additional Weekday Lectionary and Amendments to the Calendar, Lectionary and Collects. This provides Bible readings that are

especially suitable in length and content for services at which occasional worshippers are present – for example, choral evensong in cathedrals, added five new Commemorations to the Common Worship Calendar and provided for two other anti-slavery campaigners, Olaudah Equiano and Thomas Clarkson, to be celebrated with William Wilberforce on 30 July.

### **Clergy Pensions**

Synod agreed in February 2010 to make certain changes to the clergy pensions scheme, including increasing the pension age for future service and increasing the accrual period for future service. The Archbishops' Council reported back on the statutory consultation exercise and Synod formally approved the resulting amendments to the scheme rules.

### **Diocesan Synod Motion – Job Sharing in Ordained Parochial Ministry**

Following debate on the motion from the Bath and Wells Diocesan Synod, a motion was carried requesting the Archbishops' Council to bring forward legislative proposals for enabling job sharing arrangements between ordained ministers in parochial ministry, especially by married couples.

### **Diocesan Synod Motion – Marriage Measure 2008: Qualifying Connection**

Following debate on a motion from the Ripon and Leeds Diocesan Synod, a motion was carried requesting the Archbishops' Council to introduce legislation which would enable a Bishop to give directions allowing those who have a "qualifying connection" with a particular parish (under the Church of England Marriage Measure 2008) to marry in any church within the benefice of which that parish forms a part.

### **Diocesan Synod Motion – Deaneries**

Following debate on a motion from the Coventry Diocesan Synod, a motion was carried requesting updated guidance on the legal vehicles available for assisting with delegation of functions to deaneries as a way of supporting the Church's mission and examples of good practice in doing so.

### **Private Member's Motion - Fresh Expressions**

A Private Member's Motion from the Revd Richard Moy on the need for an online library of visual and video resources for worship was debated; Synod carried a motion requesting the Archbishops' Council to identify sources of funding for the production of such a library.

### **Relations with the Church of Scotland**

The Synod endorsed the report *Our Fellowship in the Gospel*, which sets out ways in which the Church of England and the (Presbyterian) Church of Scotland can consult and co-operate as two national or established Churches.

### **Other business**

The Archbishop of York, Dr John Sentamu, gave a Presidential Address on the theme: 'The way to come closer to God is be generous and honest towards everyone'.

Synod debated and approved the Archbishops' Council's revised proposals for reducing the size of the bodies reporting to Synod; it also agreed to the formation of a new Faith and Order Commission.

At the end of what was the last group of sessions of the quinquennium, the Archbishop of York reported the dissolution of the Synod on 14<sup>th</sup> July in accordance with writs issued by HM The Queen. Nominations for elections for the next General Synod, organised by each diocese, are now open and close in early September.

Background papers for each debate, alongside links to an audio archive of each session, are available at:

<http://www.cofe.anglican.org/about/gensynod/agendas/july2010/>

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