

## General Synod: mixed messages about liturgy

*Confused modelling and liturgical double-think mark General Synod where eucharists, and morning/evening prayer were generally well offered, but were derived from service books not authorized for use in this land. Synod's motions and action implied that we are to continue in our present state of liturgical schizophrenia, which the Final Report itself recognizes as a theological tension exacerbated by officially sanctioned emblems of different visions.*

Archie Skirving and John Hill

**T**he convening circular was as thick as usual, with motions, resolutions, and reports. *Preparing the Way*, the proposal for re-structuring the Anglican Church of Canada, was the weightiest of the reports. Separate from the Convening Circular itself was a carefully written evaluation of the BAS, called the *Final Report*.

From this report came several of the motions, among which was the recommendation that no formal revision of the rites should begin prior to the 36th session of General Synod in 2001. In the interim, both the BCP and the BAS would continue to be authorized for use. This and other recommendations were debated and adopted, and the record will show General Synod's official response to the evaluation.

What it will not show is the liturgical modelling and the liturgical double-think of General Synod.

The opening service, celebrated in the presence of the Governor General, was a lengthy one in which Grandfather William Commanda of the Algonquin First Nation offered traditional prayers for visitors to his territory, the Primate offered his Presidential Address, and the Governor General presented the Canadian Registration of our Church's original Grant of Arms. All this will be in the record.

But picture, if you will, four hundred people gathered in three arms of a T-shaped room which converge on a central area that is about ten steps lower than the arms. In

this lower space, a dais supported the holy table and a lectern. Sight lines for the participants were difficult at best. Music, well-chosen and ably directed, was feebly supported by a small spinet piano. When members of our church gather from across the land to celebrate our common life, is this the best we can do? What sort of example does it set for our parishes for attention to detail and care in preparation?

The week-day eucharists, daily morning and evening prayer were generally well offered, but were derived from Anglican service books not authorized for use in this land. *Celebrating Common Prayer* is an excellent office book prepared by the English Franciscans and the liturgical commission of the Church of England; the *Prayer Book* of the Province of New Zealand is a fascinating piece of work. Neither, however, are authorized here, and neither were discussed as potential patterns for the future. The modelling of the liturgy seemed to diverge considerably from the resolutions concerning the liturgy.

This was not surprising, in some ways, because the resolutions themselves contained some puzzling signals. In addition to putting further liturgical revision on hold, Synod adopted a resolution directing the production of supplementary resources-and inclusive language eucharistic rite, a eucharistic rite embodying "Reformed theological conscience," a

(Continued on page 3)

### IN THIS ISSUE:

<b>Editorial</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Philip Carrington and Prayer Book revision</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The future of orders</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>The blessing and use of oil</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Book review: Anglican Essentials</b>	<b>10</b>



**LITURGY CANADA** is the quarterly publication of The Hoskin Group, a group of men and women interested in the continuing renewal of the Church in both liturgy and mission. This publication is © copyright. Limited portions of its content may be reprinted or reproduced without the prior written consent of the copyright owner only if appropriate attribution is included with every usage. Otherwise, its reproduction in whole or in substantial part by any means without the prior written consent of the copyright owner is forbidden.

**The Hoskin Group**

John Hill, *Chair*  
John Dunn, *Secretary*  
Judie Arrowood, *Treasurer*

**Liturgy Canada**

Gregory Kerr-Wilson,  
*Managing Editor*  
Willem Hart, *Design*  
Judie Arrowood, *Production*

**Publications Committee**

Greg Kerr-Wilson, *Chair*  
David Holeton  
Willem Hart  
Philip May

**Guest editor**

David Smart

Articles intended for publication should be sent to the Hoskin Group on a 5.25" floppy diskette, IBM format and preferably in Word Perfect format (please include "hard copy"):  
9 Royal Palm Drive  
Brampton, Ontario  
L6Z 1P1

**Regional Editors:**

*Province of Canada:*  
The Rev'd David Fletcher  
Box 63, Lantz N.S.B0N 1R0

*Province of Ontario:*  
Mail to the Editor

*Province of Rupert's Land:*  
The Rev'd Sheila Flynn  
3428 Balfour Street  
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan  
S7H 3Z4

*Province of British Columbia:*  
The Rev'd Stephen Herbert  
303 East Cordova St.  
Vancouver, B.C.V6A 1L4

**Membership dues**

should be sent to:  
**The Hoskin Group,**  
9 Royal Palm Drive  
Brampton, Ontario  
L6Z 1P1  
Attn.: Vicki Kerr-Wilson  
*Business Manager*

**Cheques** should be made payable to "The Hoskin Group"

**EDITORIAL**

**Editorial guidelines for  
*Liturgy Canada***

1. The **Hoskin Group** is a society committed to the ongoing renewal of the Church in worship and mission. Our ministry is to provide Canadian Anglicans with resources which focus the debate, inform the practice, and evaluate the experience of our liturgical life. *Liturgy Canada* as an organ of the **Hoskin Group** invites and welcomes submissions from members and other interested people who wish to contribute to the ongoing work of renewing the worship and mission of the Anglican Church of Canada.

2. Acceptance of an article is at the sole discretion of the the editor of *Liturgy Canada*.

3. Submissions to the editor may be edited for length and clarity before inclusion in an issue of *Liturgy Canada*.

4. In the event that the editor deems it necessary to make significant changes to make submissions better understandable, or to correct perceived inaccuracies, the changes proposed will be returned to the author for revision. If the author makes the revisions the article may again be edited for length and clarity only. If the author insists upon publication of the original version it will be left to the discretion of the editor as to whether the article can or should be included in *Liturgy Canada* or not.

5. The editor is responsible to the Publications Committee of the **Hoskin Group** for implementation of this policy.

**A further note**

Those submitting articles for publication are reminded that footnotes and references should be clear and accurate to avoid any implication that material is being used without adequate acknowledgement.

**Annual General Meeting**

**12:30 to 2:30 pm**  
**Friday, January 26, 1996**  
**St. Augustine of Canterbury, Toronto**

**Business to be addressed:**

•  
Election of Officers

•  
Constitutional review

•  
Publications business

•  
**Recommended directions  
for a Spring  
"Vision Conference"**

**We are seeking nominations for the Executive:** Please consider putting forward your name or the name of someone you believe would contribute to the work of the Hoskin Group. Do not hesitate to contact any of the following Hoskin Executive members:

Peter Wall (519) 432-9348  
Greg Kerr-Wilson (905) 846-2952  
Andrew Murray (905) 894-3350

The Hoskin Group Executive meets monthly in locations ranging from Toronto to Cambridge, Ontario



**The Hoskin Group**  
9 Royal Palm Drive  
Brampton, Ontario L6Z 1P1

## GENERAL SYNOD

(Continued from page 1)

eucharistic rite to facilitate inculturation (especially in First Nations communities), French “translations” of the BAS’ baptismal, wedding, funeral and eucharistic rites, and a “Service of the Word.” Another resolution calls for a Theological Commission to consider our theological identity and other key issues brought to light in the evaluation process; yet another calls for greater sensitivity in implementing liturgical change.

And then came the catch-all resolution to gather up the Evaluation Commission’s remaining recommendations. One of these recommendations anticipates revision of the BAS at the beginning of the next century to produce “a canonically authorized book of contemporary liturgies.” This is followed immediately by a recommendation that “alongside any revised book of contemporary liturgies, the *Book of Common Prayer* retain its canonical status and availability.”

Taken at face value, this latter recommendation implies that “any revised book of contemporary liturgies” and “the *Book of Common Prayer*” will continue to be two different things; *i.e.* that the anticipated revision of the BAS will not be incorporated in anything called a *Book of Common Prayer*. It also implies that the 1962 edition of the BCP, unlike any previous edition, is to be considered definitive of the prayer book tradition. And finally, it implies that we are to continue in our present state of liturgical schizophre-

nia, which the *Final Report* itself recognizes as a theological tension exacerbated by officially sanctioned emblems of different visions.

When asked for clarification of its intent, members of the Evaluation Commission denied that they intended by this recommendation any of these implications! They insisted that they merely wished to see the canonical status of the 1962 prayer book maintained in the interim – a meaning which the wording of the recommendation clearly cannot bear. On the strength of this non-clarification, Synod proceeded to adopt this recommendation!

Is it possible that our much cherished diversity has got the better of us? Can we no longer find the courage to do what past generations of Anglicans have always done, namely, to revise the prayer book in order to provide an accepted instrument of unity in our diversity?

General Synod ended on a happy note of gospel solidarity. Nevertheless, it seemed to these observers that there were some disturbing symptoms of liturgical loss of heart. Perhaps a Theological Commission is the necessary next step; but without the courage to pursue the goal of common prayer, theological reflection may only expose our inability to hand on the heritage we have received. ☒

Archie Skirving is a priest of the Diocese of Huron, John Hill is a priest of the Diocese of Toronto.

*“Taken at face value, this latter recommendation implies that “any revised book of contemporary liturgies” and “the Book of Common Prayer” will continue to be two different things...”*

---

## Philip Carrington on the possibility and significance of Prayer Book revision in the Anglican Church

William R. Blott

**P**hilip Carrington was Bishop of Quebec from 1935 to 1960. He remains known for such scholarly works as *The Primitive Christian Calendar*,<sup>1</sup> and *The Early Christian Church*.<sup>2</sup> It is, perhaps, less well known that from 1943 until his retirement he was one of the principal architects of the BCP, Canada, 1959, (ratified in 1962).

As early as 1938, when ideas about a new prayer book were being canvassed, Carrington had set out three criteria which any revision must meet that the changes are consonant with the original English Prayer Book in theology,... in beauty of expression and in appropriateness to the tradition which it is proposed to change.<sup>3</sup>

Ten years later, at Lambeth, because of the conclusions reached about the Ecu-  
menical Movement and the Church in the Modern World, one of the most important reports of the Conference was that on the Anglican Communion. The chair of the committee which produced the Report, and its author, was Philip Carrington.<sup>4</sup>

Being both catholic and reformed, the Report began, the Anglican Communion had a distinctive character, of which the Prayer Book was both “the embodiment” and “the means by which the Anglican tradition has been sustained.” An illustration of the role of the Prayer Book was to

(Continues overleaf)

*“Liturgy in the sense of the offering and ordering of the public worship of God, is the crucible in which these elements of authority are fused and unified in the fellowship and power of the Holy Spirit”.*



## PHILIP CARRINGTON

*(Continued from page 3)*

be observed in the handling of the question of authority. As the Church expanded into various cultures and developed autonomous provinces, centrifugal tendencies had led to the consideration, and rejection, of a number of solutions to the problem: a central legislature, a modified papacy, an appellate tribunal. In the end what had developed was a moral and spiritual authority derived from God and given expression in the Scripture, the Tradition, the Creeds, the Ministry of Word and Sacraments, the witness of saints, and the acceptance in charity of the “*consensus fidelium*”. “Liturgy in the sense of the offering and ordering of the public worship of God,” the Report concluded, “is the crucible in which these elements of authority are fused and unified in the fellowship and power of the Holy Spirit”.

This was not to imply a fixed and immutable liturgy though. Reference was made in the Report to Resolutions 36 and 37 of the Lambeth Conference of 1920 which stated that the BCP was the standard of doctrine and practise, but which allowed local variation insofar as the unifying features of the Prayer Book were retained. In 1948, however, with a number of revisions completed and others contemplated, this

statement was in need of a good deal more precision, and the Committee on the Anglican Communion decided that the time had come to examine more specifically the features necessary to the safeguarding of unity. This concern was given expression and impetus in a formal Resolution:

The Conference holds that the Book of Common Prayer has been, and is, so strong a bond of unity throughout the whole Anglican Communion that great care must be taken to ensure that revisions of the Book shall be in accordance with the doctrine and accepted liturgical worship of the Anglican Communion.<sup>5</sup>

Carrington’s thought about the role of the Prayer Book in

the Anglican Communion and its revision was given full expression in his address to the Anglican Congress in August 1954 at Minneapolis.

At this Congress, called to consider the vocation, worship, message and work of the Anglican Communion, Carrington was one of the speakers on the theme of vocation. The opening statement was made by J.W.C. Wand, then Bishop of London, who spoke on “The Position of the Anglican Communion in History and Doctrine”. This position, said Wand, could be summed up by saying that Anglicanism strives to give expression to the full teaching of the Bible as reflected in the age-long history of the Christian Church.”<sup>6</sup>

From this three implications followed: faithfulness to the original foundation of the Church; constant adaptation to changing circumstances; and a firm grasp of the principle of continuity.

Carrington spoke next on “The Structure of the Anglican Communion”. He began by referring to our lack of apparent structure: no central executive or secretariat or other such organization which exercised jurisdiction over the regional Churches. The Lambeth Conferences were indeed a unifying feature but their decisions were not binding on member dioceses. The Archbishop of Canterbury presided over these Conferences as host, chair, and spiritual leader, but

possessed no jurisdiction over the whole Communion.

However, in the case of the Archbishop of Canterbury, Carrington pointed out, we do “offer him our respectful homages,”<sup>7</sup> and in this manner, in the early Church great apostolic centres acquired positions of influence and prestige, and the Church as a whole came to consist of families of dioceses. Their unity was a dynamic one, growing out of a common inheritance in faith and order, and expressed in an identical pattern of church life. At an early date, the Church in this form spread to the British Isles where the pattern was preserved.

At the time of the 16th century Reformation the position taken by the Anglican Church made its adherence to this pattern clear. A number of Christian groups appeared with particular founders and special theologies. The Anglican Church, finding itself separated from other Western Churches did not, however, Carrington noted, adopt one form of theology as the basis of its structural unity to the exclusion of others. In what then did its nature and structure consist? The answer to this question brought Carrington to the heart of Anglicanism.

Theologies, [he said], arise from time to time and perform an important work in criticizing the Church and interpreting it to itself, and to the age in which it lives; but they are not, I think, primary creative factors in the Church’s tradition. The primary creative factor in the Anglican approach to the nature and structure of the Church as a whole would appear to be the idea of Gospel and liturgy, or Gospel-in-liturgy, if we may use that word in its broadest sense for the de facto historical continuum of life and faith and worship in the fellowship which forms the existential substance of historic Christianity. It is the Spirit continually clothing itself in bodily historical form, the structural features being the creation of this inner life, which is from God.<sup>8</sup>

The Anglican Communion, then, has maintained the apostolic form of unity. Its structure is an internal and spiritual one, outwardly expressed in numerous corporate forms, but always reproducing the recognizable pattern of church life.

That pattern is found in the Book of Common Prayer. In fact it is the Prayer Book, the “Gospel-in-liturgy” which “is the principal institutional factor which governs and maintains our unity”, which gives us our common standard of life and behaviour.<sup>9</sup>

However, the BCP is not in itself absolute – a final authority – because it is interpreted in the light of Christian history and with the help of associated documents such as the Thirty-Nine Articles. Essentially, said

Carrington, the Book of Common Prayer is a transcript which we have made for our purposes of the pattern of church life which was at one time the universal inheritance of all Christians everywhere. It is a medieval Western form of it which has been reformed in the light of evangelical faith and biblical scholarship. It has been expressed in the vernacular language and adapted to the conditions of the day.<sup>10</sup>

There is, however, no claim by Anglicans that the 1662 BCP is a complete or exhaustive record of the primitive tradition. “We admit there are other forms which are also valid, though they differ from ours.” The Prayer Book is one form of the pattern of catholic and apostolic church life and “it comprehends in a satisfactory way, we think, all its main features.”<sup>11</sup>

Historically as the Anglican Communion has spread and taken root in various parts of the world, the Prayer Book has undergone various revisions. This raises the question of how far variation is possible from the 1662 “standard”. There would be, Carrington said, two guiding principles. First, since the BCP is the outward expression of the structure of the Anglican Churches, acceptable variations in its form and content would be measured against “the Catholic tradition as a whole, especially in its most primitive phase in the period of the Apostles, and their successors, always referring in the last resort to the Holy Scriptures as received and used in the Catholic Church.”<sup>12</sup> Secondly, variations would have to receive recognition from the Anglican Communion as a whole. “It would appear, said Carrington, “that Anglican theory and practice thinks of ecumenical structure in terms of dioceses or families of dioceses which come into existence as they branch out from the vine of the existential Church, their basis of union being one of mutual recognition which issues in mutual admission to communion.”<sup>13</sup>

Carrington’s statement to the Congress played a direct and pivotal role in forming the Eucharistic liturgy in the 1962 Prayer Book<sup>14</sup> and in general his views were influential in the whole process of forming that book. A fundamental reason for this was that his position was recognized as being grounded not only in the Lambeth statements from 1920 to 1948, but also in classical Anglican thinking, as may be seen, for example, in the words of Alexander Knox, friend of John Wesley and conduit between the Caroline divines and the revival movements of the 19th century. Knox wrote:

*“Theologies, arise from time to time and perform an important work in criticizing the Church and interpreting it to itself, and to the age in which it lives; but they are not, I think, primary creative factors in the Church’s tradition.”*

Philip Carrington



***“Clear too is the implication that the BAS alone cannot be considered complete, lacking as it does the historical documents representing continuity with the past...”***

I know nothing settled in the whole reformed body, but the Liturgy of the Church of England. This has so stood the test of time, as to bear on its front the stamp of overruling providence. It is virtually the transcript of what the Church has said, in its converse with God, from the earliest period.... Of what, then, is the Liturgy a standard? I hesitate not to say, of doctrine as well as devotion.... It contains everything essential to Catholic theology ...[I] consider our Liturgy as the pledge of our continuity as a Church.<sup>15</sup>

For current revision work, Carrington's position has several implications. Most obviously that revision of the BCP is not an option but a necessity as the Church, moving through time, shapes itself to proclaim the Gospel in new cultural settings and historical circumstances. Clear too is the implication that the BAS alone cannot be considered complete, lacking as it does the historical documents representing continuity with the past, although this grace-filled "appendix" to the BCP is probably the right choice until some of today's questions are examined: for example, who the Liturgy is intended for and how they are prepared for doing it, and what in fact it is that the Liturgy intends to do. But, most important is the implication that Prayer Book revision is not just about providing forms of service; it is a statement about the nature and structure of the Church: it is the expression of what we believe is taught in Scripture, Tradition, and Creeds, of what we believe

about the Ministry and Sacraments. It must find acceptance and give access to communion with other parts of the Anglican Communion. It must embody, in short, the "concensus fidelium": "the faith that was once for all entrusted to the saints."<sup>16</sup> ☒

#### Notes

1. Carrington, P. *The Primitive Christian Calendar* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1952).
2. Carrington, P. *The Early Christian Church* (2 vols.) (London: Cambridge University Press, 1957).
3. Replies received by the Committee on Prayer Book Revision, May 19, 1938. Now with the Armitage Papers, Wycliffe College, Toronto.
4. "The Anglican Communion", Lambeth Conference 1948, 81-87.
5. Resolution 78, Lambeth Conference 1948, 46.
6. The Rt. Rev. and Rt. Hon. J. William C. Wand, "The Position of the Anglican Communion in History and Doctrine", in *Report of the Anglican Congress 1954*, ed. Powell Mills Dawley (Greenwich, 1954), 25.
7. Ibid. 45.
8. Ibid. 48.
9. Ibid. 47.
10. Ibid.
11. Ibid.
12. Ibid. 48.
13. Ibid. 47.
14. Blott, William R. *The Growth of a Canadian Liturgy*. unpublished Ms., Trinity College, Toronto, 128-133.
15. Quoted in Jasper, R. C. D., *Prayer Book Revision in England 1800 - 1900*, (London: S.P.C.K., 1954) 27.
16. The Letter of Jude:3. (NRSV).

---

Bill Blott is a priest of the Diocese of Niagara.

---

## The future of orders: a transcript of Bishop Walter Asbil's remarks at the 1995 Annual General Meeting

Reported by John R. Dunn

***“The re-emergence of the vocational diaconate may have a chance, providing it goes beyond the liturgical function of the deacon.”***

**L**ay Presidency  
This is a subject currently under discussion within the Communion. The Diocese of Sydney, Australia, is now poised to be able to consider its implementation. Bishop Walter did not have a feel for the way in which the issue may be decided in Anglicanism. He himself does not support the practice. Adoption of lay presidency may be the last straw for many people, especially in light of the recent changes within the Communion. He feels that it is essential that we maintain orders, because, in part, it

has been our long tradition as catholics, and it doesn't make sense to abandon it. It is not just to bolster what we have (some profound changes are, after all, occurring), but orders are a necessity of our Communion.

#### Theology of Orders

The Bishop's personal experience over 37 years of ordained ministry has been one of tremendous change. When he started out some things were a lot worse than they are now. Most of the changes, in his opinion, have been good, and he cited the ordination

of women as an example. He remarked that he first became aware of the issue of the ordination of women at McGill University in 1957.

The issue that has had the largest creative impact is our renewed understanding of baptism, especially as the basis of all ministry; and the Hoskin Group has, in his opinion, been at the forefront of this renewal. Ten years ago our understanding of the basis of ministry was quite different. Hopefully no one will come along and undermine the progress that has been made.

The bishop stated that we have not yet enunciated a theology of ministry that comes out of baptism. The Bishop challenged the Hoskin Group to struggle with, and to work towards enunciating such a theology.

### **Present Shapes of Ministry**

Clericalism remains the doctrine of the majority of the clergy, according to the bishop. Ordination is sometimes seen as a work program for theological students. This is a reversal of the true order of priorities, we need to start with the role of the ordained person in the community. This leads to questions about the necessity of the traditional patterns of ministry.

Parish ministry remains the normative shape of ministry. Other forms, such as chaplaincy, have been thought of as second best. The bishop calls this judgement into question.

The re-emergence of the vocational diaconate may have a chance, providing it goes beyond the liturgical function of the deacon. We need also to go beyond the idea of the deacon as merely a faithful lay person. The program was defeated in the Bishop's diocese, and he believes that it is not the time to place energy into the renewal of the diaconate.

One model with promise is to directly ordain people to the priesthood, rather than to a transitional diaconal ministry.

The bishop drew attention to the numerous models for the renewal of ministry within the Communion.

The Seychelles offers a model the Bishop believes to be based upon the practice of the early church. The bishop has nine parish clergy, and four part-time clergy for the 5,000 communicants of the diocese. In this model, the bishop becomes involved in even the smallest problem within a parish. This model may be emerging in Canada.

In Tabora, the parish priest is a director of evangelism and a teacher with 18-25 lay evangelists in training. Local communities send representatives to the priest for training. Lay evangelists are also gradually being sent to a training school, but the parish priest

remains the principle teacher.

In Keewatin, the priests are raised up from within the community.

In Singapore, one of the most evangelical dioceses in the Communion, the bishop meets monthly with his priests and quotas are established in a variety of areas, such as baptisms, and the establishment of "call groups." The priests are required to justify themselves to the bishop if they fail to meet the quotas.

Ecumenical groups have been tried in some remote parts of Canada, but generally, we have little experience with them. There may be some untapped potential, especially with the Lutherans.

The Church of England began with about 20 team ministries and now there are about 420. They include lay people. We have not got much experience with team ministry in Canada; some have tried it, but dropped it.

Base communities have been an important part of the Roman Catholic Church in South America. Although the hierarchy was initially nervous of them when they started about 20 years ago, they have changed to accommodate them. The essence of the model is that decisions are communally based, rather than hierarchically imposed. The Bishop is not sure how such a model might work, although he believes that some Anglican priests are experimenting with it.

Training for ministry is an issue of serious concern. The Bishop's own diocese, Niagara, has been discussing the issue with ordinands. He believes that candidates are poorly prepared for the job that awaits them, because there is too much divergence from what is needed. The bishop does not advocate completely letting go of academic training of ordinands, but stated that the business is not what it used to be, and that we must work to combine the academic side of theological training with the new realities of ministry.

In conclusion, Bishop Walter remains optimistic, despite current problems and issues. ☐

---

**Walter Asbil** is the diocesan bishop of Niagara. **John Dunn** is a member of the Hoskin Group

*"The issue that has had the largest creative impact is our renewed understanding of baptism, especially as the basis of all ministry; and the Hoskin Group has, in his opinion, been at the forefront of this renewal."*

# The blessing and use of oils in rites of initiation

Peter Wall and John L. Hodgins

*“This preliminary anointing marks the setting apart of those who are elected to baptism. The practice has continued unbroken in some Christian communities, and is emphasized in the recovery of the adult catechuminate in many Anglican dioceses.”*

**T**he recovery since the nineteenth century of the practice of anointing the sick with oil has been in response to pastoral need in light of the biblical mandate of James 5:13-16. This is now a widespread practice within the Anglican Communion.

In the most recent period of prayer book revision, restoration of the oil of chrism has commended itself in light of its biblical symbolism, historical practice, and increasing ecumenical acceptance. We should consider these three sources in our theological reflection upon scripture, tradition and reason, as they relate to Christian initiation in the Anglican Communion.

## Scripture

The bible is replete with references to the use of the “oil of gladness: for the anointing of Jewish kings and converts to the faith.”<sup>0</sup> Oil evokes a rich variety of biblical images: the anointing of kings (1 Sam. 16:13), the royal priesthood (1 Pet. 2:9), the seal of the saints (Rev. 7). Psalm 23 clearly recalls the imagery of the oil of blessing or anointing, though it is commonly recited as well in the context of anointing for healing.

The richness of this symbol of blessing is also associated in the New Testament with Jesus, referred to as *Christos*, i.e. the anointed one, and with the anointing of Christians in the Holy Spirit.

References by New Testament writers allude clearly to the symbol of anointing.<sup>1</sup> Anointing is the outward and visible sign

and seal of the Holy Spirit’s blessing. Christians insisting that Baptism is “by water and the Holy Spirit” have taken seriously the use of chrism in the sacrament of baptism as a biblical symbol for the anointing of the Holy Spirit.

## Tradition and Practice

The Church incorporated from its earliest days the symbolic anointing with chrism (olive oil mingled with fragrant balsam blessed by the bishop). Chrism signifies the Spirit’s anointing of members into the Body of Christ, the community of *Christos*. Later, chrism came to be used in connection with the ordination of presbyters and bishops, for whom the church asks the gifts of the anointing Spirit.

In both east and west the practice of anointing with oil in connection with Christian initiation has continued from the earliest period.<sup>2</sup> The anointing of catechumens who are beginning the final stage of preparation for baptism at Easter is with the oil of the catechumens, a plain olive oil, (not chrism). This preliminary anointing marks the setting apart of those who are elected to baptism. The practice has continued unbroken in some Christian communities, and is emphasized in the recovery of the adult catechuminate in many Anglican dioceses.

The first reformed prayer book of the Church of England, (1549), states in the rite for baptism that:

It appeareth by ancient wryters, that the Sacramente of Baptisme in the olde tyme was not commonly ministered, but at two tymes in the yeare, at Easter and whytsontyde, at which times it was openly mynistered in the presence of the congregacion...

The authors go on to indicate that following baptism with water, and separate from the consignation (marking with the sign of the cross), the person was to be clothed in a white garment “commonly called crisome.” After a prayer for the one who had been washed in the waters, we read the following 1549 Prayer Book rubric of instruction for chrismation:

The priest shall annoynt the infant upon the head saying:





ALMIGHTY GOD THE FATHER OF OUR  
LORDE JESUS CHRIST, WHO HATH  
REGENERATE THEE BY WATER AND  
THE HOLY GOST, AND HATH GEUE  
UNTO THEE REMISSION OF AL THY  
SINESS: HE VOUCHSAUE TO  
ANNOYNT THEE WITH THE  
UNCCION OF HIS HOLY SPIRITE, AND  
BRYNG THEE TO THE INHERITAUNCE  
OF EUERLASTING LYFE. AMEN

Chrism used at the baptismal anointing with prayer for the gift of the Holy Spirit has been included in the rationale for baptism in the American prayer book of 1979, indicating that the baptized person is:

sealed with the Holy Spirit in baptism and marked as Christ's own forever.<sup>3</sup>

This symbolic rite of sealing with aromatic chrism emphasizes the completeness of Christian initiation in Holy Baptism, including christological and pneumatic elements along with the recounting of God's action in creation. This trinitarian formulation is an essential expression of full Christian initiation. Initiation into the community of faith is then completed with the participation of the baptized person in the Holy Eucharist.

In 1980 the *Alternative Service Book* of the Church of England included the use of "oil blessed for the purpose" in the celebration of Holy Baptism. Chrism also figured in the discussions of the International Anglican Liturgical Consultations in Boston in 1985 and Toronto in 1991. Recommendation 4.6, of the Consultation in Toronto urges anointing and other post-baptismal acts which

offer valuable means of explicating the significance of baptism.<sup>4</sup>

*A New Zealand Prayer Book* (1989) allows for the use of chrism at the signing with the cross. In 1990, the Anglican Church of Australia issued a new rite for Holy Baptism which unifies the three principal liturgical ministries of the church: Word, Baptism, and Holy Communion. This rite includes the use of chrism expressing the pneumatic principle, the sealing of the baptized in the communion of Christ, the anointed one.

The following Anglican provinces allow or recommend the use of chrism for baptismal rites: Canada, Central Africa, England, Indian Ocean, Japan, Kenya, Korea, Melanesia, Mexico, New Zealand and Polynesia, Papua-New Guinea, Phillipines, Scotland, Southern Africa, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, U.S.A., Wales, and West Indies. Some others are in the process of reviewing their practices.

### Ecumenical Convergence

With the re-emergence of the catechumenate in Anglican, Lutheran, Presbyterian, Roman Catholic and other communions, much discussion of the rites of initiation has been taking place. This is due, in part, to the fact that many people in traditionally christian societies are now unbaptized. A meaningful way of celebrating the coming to faith of adults in a largely secular culture is again necessary. The symbolic use of oil in the rites of baptism is increasingly accepted in various branches of the Christian Church as a biblically rooted way to signify the sealing of the Spirit, an integral part of the rites of initiation.

The World Council of Churches Document, *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* indicates that the pneumatic element is critical to the completeness of Baptism as full initiation into the Trinitarian life of the Christian community:

In God's work of salvation, the paschal mystery of Christ's death and resurrection is inseparably linked with the receiving of the Spirit. Baptism in its full meaning signifies and effects both.<sup>5</sup>

*Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* recognizes that the churches diverge on the pneumatic significance of certain moments in the rites.

Bryan Spinks, in his article, "Vivid Signs of the Gift of the Spirit," reflects on the Lima text and compares it with recent baptismal liturgies in English. He points out that *BEM's* call for the use of vivid signs is addressed not only to those churches which do not use chrism, but to many churches, East and West, where chrism is used, but its accompanying formula makes it an obscure or ambiguous sign.<sup>6</sup>

Post Vatican II Roman Catholic practice has enhanced the use of the oil of catchumens in the RCIA catechumenal process. In Roman practice, chrism is used both at baptism and confirmation. The Eastern Orthodox practice of chrismation is considered an essential and unalterable part of the rites of initiation. Chrismation is also commonly employed at the reception into the eastern rite of those baptized in western churches [it is also often used in the reception of those baptised in other orthodox communions, ed.].

The 1978 *Lutheran Book of Worship* includes a version of the traditional prayer for the seven-fold gifts of the Spirit, imme-

(Continued overleaf)

*"This symbolic rite of sealing with aromatic chrism emphasizes the completeness of Christian initiation in Holy Baptism, including christological and pneumatic elements..."*

## BLESSING OF OIL

(Continued from page 9)

diately after the use of water, to be accompanied by the laying-on of hands and followed by a chrismation and signing on the forehead of the baptisand with the words:

...child of God, you have been sealed by the Holy Spirit in Baptism and marked with the cross of Christ forever.<sup>7</sup>

As Mitchell states, signing with oil, laying on of hands, and other initiatory rites must all be interpreted within the context of the baptismal rite as a whole, and not seen as individual rites in themselves.<sup>8</sup>

### Conclusions

There is growing Anglican and ecumenical consensus supporting the use of chrism in the rites of initiation. There is also a growing realization that such a use is based in Holy Scripture and has the warrant of the usage of the early church. The use of oil at baptism, however, should be understood not as the addition of an "extra" ceremony, but as

part of a three-fold movement of washing in water, chrismation and communion. The use of chrism at confirmation is not necessarily indicated by the research and experience reported on in this article. ☩

---

**John Hodgins** and **Peter Wall** are priests of the Diocese of Huron

---

0 BAS 616.

1 Cf. Mk. 16:1, Lk 4:18, 7:46; Jn.1:41; Acts 4:27, 10:38; 2Co 1:21; Heb.1:9; Jas. 5:14; 1 Jn 2:20,27.

2 Cf., Hippolytus, *The Apostolic Tradition* c. 215.

3 p 308.

4 "Walk in Newness of Life," in David R. Holeton ed. *Growing in Newness of Life* (Toronto: Anglican Book Centre 1993) 253.

5 *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*, (Geneva: World Council of Churches) 6.

6 Bryan Spinks, "Vivid Signs of the Gift of the Spirit? The Lima Text on Baptism and Some English Language Baptismal Liturgies," *Worship* 60 (1986) 239.

7 Cited in L. Mitchell, "Marked as Christ's Own Forever," in David Holeton, ed., *Growing in Newness of Life*, 151.

8 *Ibid.* 163.

*"to celebrate our Christian faith and discern God's will for our church amidst the challenges and opportunities of our times."*

## BOOK REVIEW

**Anglican Essentials: Reclaiming Faith Within the Anglican Church of Canada.** George W. Egerton, Editor. ABC, 1985, 320 pp., paper

Reviewed by Willem Hart

**S**andwiched between a canny preface by Archbishop Michael Peers, Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada (ACC), and a wonderful exegesis of the Letter to the Ephesians by George Carey, Archbishop of Canterbury, is a collection of essays which claim to reclaim faith within the Anglican Church of Canada. The title suggests that the ACC has lost the faith. Archbishop Peers, while thanking God for the publication of the book, seems uncomfortable with it. Archbishop Carey is more direct when he suggests that, "I have resisted the language of 'reclaiming' because that suggests that the church has somehow departed from its heritage." (p. 309)

The book is the result of a conference held in Montreal, June 16-20, 1994 "to celebrate our Christian faith and discern

God's will for our church amidst the challenges and opportunities of our times." Sponsoring the conference were the charismatic Anglican Renewal Ministries (ARM), the Barnabas Anglican Ministries (BAM), committed to evangelism and reformational spirituality, and the Prayer Book Society of Canada (PBSC) devoted to the liturgy of the Book of Common Prayer (BAS).

Like Pierre Burton's *The Comfortable Pew* of the early 60s, it is an uncomfortable book. But unlike Berton's book, which went straight for the jugular, this is an uneven book combining as it does the theologies and philosophies of three movements in the Canadian Anglican community.

While George Egerton's introduction claims that "The conjunction of catholics, charismatics, and evangelicals marks a new and historic moment in the history of Canadian Anglicanism" and "...embodies a timely spiritual and theological synergy..." such synergism is, in my view, not substantiated in this collection. And that in itself is good thing since, as George Carey writes (p.303/4) "...more than many churches, we have realized that the catholicity of the church means there is room for disagreement, differences, and variety within the

overarching theology of our church.”

The essential weakness of the book lies with trying to impose closure on too many “essentials” too soon without engaging in dialogue with those contrary minded. However, this is a book that should be read by all thoughtful Anglicans. There is much to be appreciated such as a splendid article by Donald Posterski analyzing Anglicans in pluralist Canada (p.3~52); an essay by John Webster on who Jesus is, or ought to be, for us; a fine exposition on baptismal ministry by Archie and Barbara Pell; a thoughtful reflection on sexual ethics in our permissive society by Elaine Pountney; a sane and healthy view of evangelism by a Harold Percy; and a fine testimony to the power of the Holy Spirit by Tom Maxwell.

But the prize essay in this volume belongs, in my view, to Ron Dart whose essay “Prophetic Or Civil Religion: The Anglican Dilemma” suggests that tradition can inform us if we are open to being prophetic rather than ascribing to an institution that merely affirms current trends and fashions by default. He writes, “The middle way has never been an end in itself; it has taken root in the sacred soil of the Bible, blossomed within the nurturing aspects of tradition, been tended by sanctified and educated reason, and tested by a broad understanding of human experience.” If you read nothing else in this book, read this!

While many of the essays express worthwhile and challenging ideas, many of them express a deeply pessimistic worldview that belies our confession that this is God’s world, who continues to care for creation, and that we are created in God’s image. When Craig M. Gay proposes (p. 243) that “...the relativism that seems so often to go hand in hand with the contemporary commitment to multiculturalism obviously poses a very serious threat to Christian truth,” I am not sure I can agree that it is necessarily relativist, or that it is obvious that Christian truth can be threatened at all. Gay also asks “...how it is theologically possible for Christianity to recognize cultural plurality without embracing relativism?” His confusing essay provides no answers. While he deplores individualism which, he asserts, arises out of multiculturalism and pluralism, he also suggests that the affirmation of individual human persons “is a necessary implication of the central doctrines of the Christian faith.” You figure it out.

Much of the critique of contemporary society is centered on ‘multiculturalism’ and ‘pluralism’. They are seen as Christianity’s public enemy number one and two. Those who still pine for the days of empire should consider that Christendom had the field to itself for a long time and was, demonstrably,

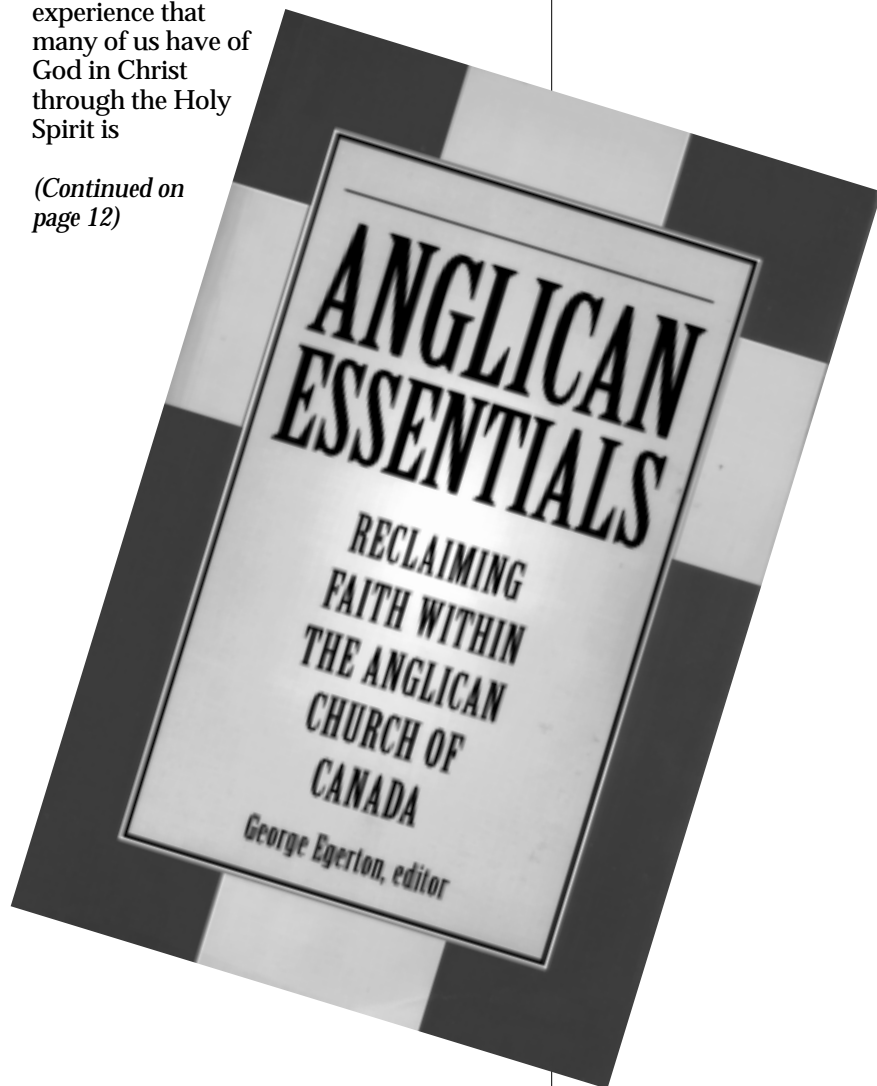
unable to capitalize on it. We blew it! When we had the chance in Canada we tried, through Residential Schools, to make nice middle class citizens out of aboriginal Canadians with disastrous results. Now we are asked to accord a measure of respect to other cultures and to accept that ‘others’ have theories about truth that vary from our own. None of that should keep you and I from living out of the conviction that salvation comes through Jesus the Christ. And if we truly live out of that conviction it will be obvious that the way of Christ leads to justice for all. But Christian witness to justice has a spotty record. Remember the crusades of the middle ages, the Inquisition and, more recently, the holocaust, Bosnia, and Rwanda – reputedly one of the most “christianized” countries in Africa. In Canada, critique of multiculturalism and pluralism took a particularly ugly turn in the aftermath of the Quebec Referendum.

*Anglican Essentials* is suffused with stipulative judgments which state a one sided thesis and then critique all other opinions that disagree with them. The experience that many of us have of God in Christ through the Holy Spirit is

(Continued on page 12)

***“The middle way has never been an end in itself; it has taken root in the sacred soil of the Bible, blossomed within the nurturing aspects of tradition, been tended by sanctified and educated reason, and tested by a broad understanding of human experience.”***

Ron Dart



***“In essentials  
unity; in non-  
essentials liberty;  
in all things,  
charity.”***

Richard Baxter  
(1615-1691),  
after St. Augustine

## ANGLICAN ESSENTIALS

*(Continued from page 11)*

often called relativism when it varies with the so called “classic view”. Thus “liberation theology” is demonized because of its Marxist roots, forgetting that Christ came to set the captives free (Luke 4.18 & 19), and in spite of – or maybe because of – the fact that it is precisely liberation theology that is giving voice to the pain of those whom the Christian West has oppressed for so long.

‘Ecofeminism’ and ‘feminist theology’ are two other demons that apparently need to be wrestled to the ground because they question patriarchalism, the exclusive ‘male’ status of God, and dare to suggest that God may be found in nature. “The words we use in liturgy are very important. For this reason most Anglicans are subliminally orthodox. But changes in symbolic perceptions may easily produce subliminal heresy that is prostrate before the altar of strange gods.” (p. 136) Have we not always celebrated the nurturing (feminine) aspects of God? And is the *Benedicite, Omnia Opera* (BCP p. 26-28) a stranger to nature?

Panentheism – the belief that there is a measure of divinity in all of us and in all things – is yet another demon that needs to be exorcised. Yet we believe this is God’s world and we pray that “we may evermore dwell in him, and he in us.” (BCP, p. 84) On pages 57-58 the authors assert that “there is only one message conveyed in the Bible – only one coherent way, that is, of

thinking together all the various items of truth that the Scriptures contain. This has to be so, because the Holy Spirit is God-given, is in fact God preaching and teaching here and now, and it is not conceivable that God contradicts himself.” This simplistic view of a very complex document comes close to affirming the infallibility (or inerrancy) of Scripture, a view to which classic Anglicanism has never ascribed. Reliable, yes; inerrant, no.

*Anglican Essentials* – and the Montreal Declaration of Anglican Essentials – invoke Richard Baxter (1615-1691) who suggested, after St. Augustine, “In essentials unity; in non-essentials liberty; in all things, charity.” It is also dedicated to the memory of a great Canadian Anglican, Bishop Desmond Hunt (1918-1993) who, according to the dedication, “refused to let Anglicans take themselves too seriously.” In the face of such lofty ideals I can only say that too many essentials in the book are non-essential that liberty is in danger of being stifled, that charity for other points of view is often missing, and that its authors often take themselves entirely too seriously. I am persuaded, with St. Paul, that nothing can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus. No amount of essential declarations will change the fact that this is God’s world and that we need to submit to His will without presuming to know all that He has in store for us. ☩

Willem Hart is a member of the Hoskin Group and the designer of this publication.

**“There’s no such  
thing as a free  
lunch?”**

**Think again! The Hoskin  
Group is happy to offer:**

**three copies of this  
newsletter to any  
parish free of charge.**

Think of it. Now you can share the insights contained in these pages with a Warden, a lay-reader, or even an interested parishioner without a title.

To take advantage of this limited-time offer please send your name, and the name of your parish and address to:



**The Hoskin Group**

9 Royal Palm Drive  
Brampton, Ontario L6Z 1P1