

Third Ordinary Session of the 43rd Synod of the Diocese of Sydney: October and December 1995

Presidential Address

By the Most Reverend R.H. Goodhew, Archbishop of Sydney

Wednesday 11 October 1995

Welcome to the third and final session of the 43rd Session of this Synod. Thank you for your participation. I hope I see many of you again next year when the 44th Synod assembles. May the Lord be gracious to each of you.

At the first session of this Synod I employed the expression *Coram Deo* - in the presence of God. I said "that a true church is not self-regulated and self-directed ... it must live under the direction of the Christ of glory and seek its life, strength and direction from him".

In particular, I directed your attention to our Master's words:

A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love one for another. (John 13:34-35)

As we begin this final session I recall for us not only his words but those of his Apostle Paul.

Now, the important thing is this: as citizens of heaven live in a manner that is worthy of the gospel of Christ. (Philippians 1:27)

May we, in this Synod, display the character of citizens of heaven and practise that "love of another kind" which the Lord enjoins upon us.

How Are We Progressing?

We are charged to preach the Gospel, nurture God's people and be salt and light in the world. Does that commission require that, from time to time, we ask ourselves "How are we progressing?". I believe this question is both legitimate and necessary. If we take our responsibilities as stewards of our Lord Jesus Christ seriously we must constantly audit our service to see if we are being obedient to our call. The Gospels of Matthew and Luke include a parable that deals with the faithful use, by servants, of their master's resources in his absence (Matt 25:14ff and Lk 19:11ff). Undoubtedly, the point of the parables (esp. Luke) is to give an explanation of the delay in the Parousia. Yet they would lose much of their power if they were not understood to highlight both the diligence and prudence expected of Christ's servants. Faithful servants cannot neglect some regular review of what they are doing if they hope one day to hear the words "Well done, good and faithful servant".

On the other hand I find myself asking if it is possible or appropriate for us to assess our service. If we do, what criteria do we use? Is such an assessment trying to do something only God can do? Does it run the risk of becoming unhelpful self flagellation? Is it an expression of a covert failure of faith?

In spite of these hesitations I think it is both appropriate and necessary, even though there are obvious difficulties.

When considering the life of the church in this Diocese I am aware of at least four areas that are open to review.

The first is where God's people spend probably 97 to 99% of their time: at home, at school or university, participating in leisure activities, or at work. Assessment of this area of personal Christian witness and service is the task of the individual Christian. Yet because these places are the area where most Christian life and witness is expressed, it must have the highest priority for the Church. We must make every effort to assist Christians to be at their best and to make their most telling contribution. We should expect to see some influence exerted on the life of our society stemming from the witness of a large number of active disciples spread throughout that community. This is a challenge both to the diocesan leadership represented by the membership in this Synod and to every church member.

The second area where our life is expressed is in the individual churches and parishes into which the Diocese is divided. Assessment here may be a little easier: the entity under consideration is more clearly discernible, but it is not without difficulties. There are some obvious indicators of performance like attendances and finances. Their validity, as the only or even the most appropriate measure, is open to challenge. There are subtle effects which they will not measure but they are important. They provide one set of criteria which we should use in our evaluation of our corporate ministry. I hope parishes will supply the Archdeacons with the returns that provide information necessary to chart what is happening in individual parishes and in the whole Diocese. Over a period of time they give a picture of what is taking place within the Diocese. They indicate trends and patterns which are vital to our planning for development and growth.

To be prayerful, purposeful, intentional and thoughtfully focused on kingdom work is a basic requirement for each church and parish in the Diocese whether large or small. For that reason I have spent much time over the last two years visiting around the Diocese and talking with the lay and clerical leadership of the parishes. My purpose has been to encourage and support local leadership in the task of being prayerfully intentional in the work of the kingdom. The bishops and archdeacons in each of the 5 regions of the Diocese have this role as the primary part of their brief. I urge you to involve them in assisting you in the work of your parish. The various departments and ministry organisations of the Diocese exist to enable the ministry purposes of the churches to be advanced: Call on them and expect them to assist you.

Church leadership must consciously aim at growing people who evidence "love that comes from a pure heart, a good conscience, and sincere faith" (1 Timothy 1:5): people who live in a manner that is worthy of the gospel. This is the work of the Spirit of God. He alone can give that sort of life and growth. That said, I believe that any modern congregation that wishes to fulfil that ideal and touch the lives of others will need to be prayerfully intentional and regularly review the effectiveness of its strategies.

A third area to be considered in evaluating the life of the church in the Diocese is that of the departments, agencies and organisations which are related to this Synod or assist in the ministry exercised in the Diocese. Many of these receive funding through the Appropriations Ordinance. Their work is impressive. I thank God for what I see being done through them. They seek to serve Christ in the lives of people young and old, to advance the mission of the Diocese, and to serve the needs of our parishes. To do all this effectively in a society as dynamic as ours, they need to be focused and intentional as they adjust to rapidly changing situations.

The sub-committee of Standing Committee that goes by the name of the Diocesan Executive Board has, as one of its responsibilities, the task of seeking to implement the ideas generated by the Report of the Archbishop's Commission in 1992. That report recommended ways in which those organisations and agencies could be more efficiently funded and focused on their tasks. That work is progressing though it currently awaits the decisions of this Synod with respect to regionalism. Decisions taken on that matter could have implications for the agencies which serve the Diocese.

The fourth area is this Synod, in the decisions which it makes, and the work of the Archbishop and his staff, as they perform those roles and tasks which belong to the episcopate.

In this area there are at least three matters which, in my judgement, require intentional planning and regular review. First are the activities associated with being dynamically Anglican now and into the future. We need to be clear as to who and what we are, and the way in which we express our distinctiveness. The Synod has an important role in this sphere. So does the Archbishop as he determines whom he will ordain and license. Second is the need to ask ourselves whether we are structured in the most appropriate way to reach into our society to accomplish our mission. The Synod is awaiting reports from two committees which bear directly on this. Third is the growing number of fine men and women who are offering themselves for training for ministry. It may be that our existing structures, patterns and resources will not be able to cope with those whom God is raising up. We may need to be considering fresh ways to make the best use of this human resource that God appears to be offering us. I commend to bishops, archdeacons, those who have a part in training people for ministry, rectors, and lay leaders, the Report 8/94 Planting and Developing New Churches for careful study and thoughtful implementation.

The vision of being Observably God's People, Pastorally Effective, Evangelistically Enterprising, Genuinely Caring and Dynamically Anglican, which I have previously articulated, is a grid that can be used to develop specific goals and strategies in each of the four areas of the work of the Diocese of which I have spoken. Consequently it provides criteria for evaluating progress across each of those areas. I encourage you to make positive use of it.

I have asked, "How are we progressing?" and I have encouraged us all to evaluate and review ourselves and our ministry, our Diocese and our churches. Whilst making that appeal I also wish to give thanks to Almighty God for so many indications of His goodness and mercy: for abundant evidence of people being won to Christ and growing as disciples. I enthusiastically commend his people in the Diocese for so much faithful and fruitful service being offered in God's name. We all must be greatly encouraged. There is exciting vitality and growth in many quarters. There is patient devotion to evangelism and nurture in areas which are difficult and often unresponsive. This is a testimony to faithfulness and perseverance. Creativity and energy display themselves in a range of initiatives, some small, some extensive. People are trying on a variety of fronts. For all this we must give praise to God.

Facing the Future

Life is not static. Change is a vital component of our life, no matter how we dislike its disruption of our ordered and secure existence. We need to reflect on some of the issues involved in our necessary accommodation to change in our mission and outreach.

We are facing a challenging and demanding time in the history of the Anglican Church of Australia. Anglicans brought with them to Australia the history, theology, liturgy and patterns of the English Church. That has served us well in this Diocese. We have maintained a vigorous ministry within the framework set by the Book of Common Prayer, the Articles, the Ordinal and the ethos which they generated. The circumstances of our times are placing pressures upon us, and upon what we have inherited from the past. At the present moment we are aware of this as a Church with a Book of Common Prayer. I have discussed this before. The fact that I return to it is a measure of its importance. I am of the opinion that ordered worship that has a degree of commonality is a distinctive feature of Anglicanism and arguably constitutes an unalterable principle of worship referred to in section 4 of our Constitution. It represents not only an attempt to make public worship pleasing to God, but also an element in the total teaching ministry of this church: people learn from what they do and say regularly. Corporate activity influences individual action, at least in the area of prayer and doctrinal belief. We must continue our search for innovative and effective ways to enable people to hear God's Good News. We must do so, remembering that we are responsible for the formation, nurture and support of those who are endeavouring to follow Christ faithfully from the beginning of their Christian walk to the end of their days. So I ask, "Are we forced to sacrifice completely order and commonality to pursue our evangelistic mandate, and to nurture those who have responded now at the end of the 20th century?"

We will be much the poorer if our public worship loses touch with the reiteration of the great themes of salvation history which the pattern of a Church Year provided, or if we no longer make substantial use of the Psalter, the Old Testament and the full range of New Testament material. We will be weaker if we neglect common prayers which are biblical in shape and content and economical in expression. Faithful, consistent and anointed teaching and preaching from Scripture is the foundation of local church life. This, supported by constant prayer, feeds and supports God's people. Yet the patterns in which this takes place are also influential.

One thing which the Prayer Book gives the lay person is some assurance of the character of public worship in which he or she is required to participate. It also gives some protection from idiosyncratic interests which we clergy may develop. I received a letter recently from an older but very active Anglican, a committed evangelical and evangelist. The writer expresses a deep interest in contemporary worship, but laments the prevalent tendency in services only to involve the congregation in prayer by way of an "Amen". The writer also talks of being lead in extemporaneous prayers that are poorly conceived, and expressed in a way which may be fitting for private intercession, but is embarrassing as a public activity. The same writer claims to share with many contemporaries a sense of being "starved for worship": a sense that the vertical dimension of public worship has been lost or significantly muted.

In mentioning this I do not want to be critical or appear lacking in support for attempts to be relevant to people of our own times. I do want to emphasise however that we must always consider the long term consequences of our present practices. Next year in Synod we will consider whether or not A Prayer Book For Australia is a resource which we wish to be available for use in this Diocese. Notwithstanding the decision we make on that matter, I challenge our own Liturgical Committee to engage in a long term process of producing contemporary material that will contribute to the ongoing work of liturgical revision. I look to Moore College and our other training components, like C.E.F.M., and rectors training their assistants, to assist those who are, or will be, responsible for the conduct of public worship, to do it well. I ask those of you who are responsible for the conduct of public worship in our churches to work hard at the task of making those occasions encounters with the living God both for believers and not yet believers.

Every member of the clergy will have received a pastoral letter from me recounting something of what took place at General Synod in the consideration of A Prayer Book For Australia. A Pastoral Letter or Ad Clerum is a traditional mode of communication from the Bishop to his clergy for their information and, where appropriate, for the contents to be shared with church members. I mention this because the lay representatives here may or may not have seen that letter. If any Synod representative wishes a copy of that Pastoral Letter I am happy to make it available. I have requested our Doctrine Commission to look carefully at APBA and to inform us if, in the Commission's opinion, it adheres to the doctrines and principles of worship of this church. I have also requested the Diocesan Liturgical Committee to assist the Doctrine Commission and itself to look carefully at APBA. The fact that the final amended version of APBA has not been seen by any of us, and was not available in time for this Synod, means that serious consideration of it must, of necessity, be postponed until 1996.

After the Synod representatives have been elected early next year, I plan to call a series of meetings around the Diocese. We will then be able to discuss the contents of APBA more helpfully when every Synod representative has been provided with a copy. This will allow representatives to make an informed decision about the book in October next year. It is my intention to give permission for the trial use of APBA. Not to do so would make proper evaluation difficult.

Cross Cultural Ministries

Bishop Piper expressed recently a further challenge for our future. He wants our church to be a Church of Australia: one which is shaped not only by our Anglo-Saxon background and history, but by the background and history of all those people from different ethnic groups that make up the Australia of today and tomorrow. Many of them are seeking to be part of our fellowship even now. I think he is correct. It gives promise of being a demanding exercise, stretching well beyond the time of many of us here today. His observation brings to our attention the issue of ministry amongst the increasingly diverse cultural groups within the Diocese.

The multi-cultural nature of Sydney is evident to all. New South Wales, and particularly Sydney and Wollongong, are the largest centres for new migrants to Australia. Roughly 18% (about 1.05 million) of the citizens of New South Wales were raised speaking a language other than English. In districts like Fairfield and Canterbury over 60% of the population have English as their second language. Temples and Mosques are beginning to feature clearly in our suburbs. Migrants from all corners of the globe live alongside us. We cannot regard ourselves any longer as a Church for Anglo-Celts with a small ethnic fringe on the edge. In September last year Geoffrey Maslen wrote an article for the Good Weekend on forecaster Phillip Ruthven. Addressing the situation in Australia in the year 2010 Ruthven's scenario is:

Some 25 million people now inhabit Australia and the number is rising as 300,000 immigrants arrive each year, most from the Asia-Pacific basin. We are already a neo-Eurasian nation and by mid-century we will be Eurasian, then Asian by the time the 22nd century arrives.

What should we do now to ready ourselves for that future? Our mandate is to share the Gospel with all nations by both evangelism and witness. Success is guaranteed because of the sure word of Christ that people "will come from east and west, north and south and sit at the table in the Kingdom of God" (Luke 13:29). In response to that vision and the command of Christ many of our most able men and women have gone overseas to preach the Gospel. Now, God has done a remarkable thing. He has brought the overseas to us here at home.

For more than eight years the Anglican Home Mission Society has actively promoted Cross Cultural Ministry in the Diocese spearheaded originally by Mersina Soulos, but now with a staff of five under the Director of Parish Support and Development. It has also been the concern of individual churches who have formed specific ethnic churches and fellowships.

We have five Chinese clergy and eight Chinese congregations with two more congregations planned for 1996. This is the fastest growing area in our Diocese and it is in the hands of Chinese Anglican Clergy. We appointed the Rev. Irene Mok as an Evangelist to the Chinese in the Diocese.

The Vietnamese congregation under Rev. Vinh Pham has moved from Dulwich Hill to begin a more independent life at Greenacre and there are proposals to re-establish Italian work in association with Bossley Park. We have two clergy of Italian background.

The Maori chaplaincy continues to flourish, and work amongst Moslems is undertaken by two ordained ex-Moslems and two lay workers.

Ministry to people who speak Spanish is taking place in the Eastern Suburbs and the South West. There are three clergy from India active in the Diocese as well.

As migrant people from non English speaking backgrounds are converted, many will seek ordination to serve amongst their own people. The Ordination Chaplains are being asked to consider what training and assessment will be required for such people to offer appropriate ministry for the immediate future. While migration continues, the need for Christian witness to non-English speakers will remain.

When we consider the second and third generation of non-English speaking background people, there will be two streams: those for whom being Australian is the priority and those whose ethnic origins loom largest not least because of ancestral constraints. We will need to provide ministries to each of these streams.

Several models for Cross Cultural Ministries are being used in the Diocese. These include English as a Second Language (ESL) classes conducted in about 40 parishes. These classes help to build bridges of friendship to people of non English Speaking backgrounds and many are enabled to hear the Gospel. A second model is international congregations in English which provide a more attractive church where several nationalities exist in an area. A third model involves churches which have one specific non-English group in view. This model has three different expressions: bi-lingual services, usually with the non English speakers working with a translation/translator and often using headphones in church; parallel congregations, in which the non English speakers meet separately with an ethnic leader but share common membership of that local church; finally where an ethnic congregation uses our facilities but virtually acts independently. Lastly there are homogeneous ethnic churches. The most obvious example is the Maori Congregation which is regarded as a chaplaincy and extra-parochial.

The Cross Cultural Team in Parish Support and Development believes that ethnic churches under their own national pastor without the oversight of an Anglo-Celtic Rector and congregation will be the most likely to grow and become self sufficient. The Team considers that it would be a positive step forward if church property, like a Church, a Hall and Rectory, no longer needed by Anglo-Celtic congregations, could be 'given' to these ethnic Anglican congregations. The Anglican Church in Toronto, Canada, has apparently given four such facilities to the Chinese Anglicans with notable success.

Soon we will need to consider how these independent or self-sustaining ethnic congregations and their clergy are to be adequately represented in this Synod.

If projections are realised (particularly for Asian migration into Australia over the next 50 years) we cannot continue to view their place or that of any ethnic group in our Church, as something out of the ordinary. Being a church for all Australians means we must give early and positive expressions of a substantial kind to that aspiration.

Indigenous Australians

While reflecting on ethnic ministry we must give sustained consideration, and demonstrate comparable concern, for the life of indigenous Australians within this church. Aborigines and Torres Strait Islander people must be enabled to bring their history and commitment to Christ to enlarge the vision and life of our church. We must act in a way that makes this possible. The history of white Australians in their dealings with Aborigines has some ugly chapters. If the church which accompanied those who perpetrated so many unconscionable actions against the original inhabitants of this continent is to be a spiritual home for their descendants, we will need to address their concerns more seriously.

Redfern and Mt Druitt are the major centres of indigenous population in Sydney, though there are other places in the Diocese, for example, La Perouse and the far South Coast. The parish of South Sydney, with financial assistance from Vision 2001, has spearheaded our work in Redfern. The Home Mission Society has plans for outreach and pastoral ministry in the Mt. Druitt area.

I challenge all our parishes and organisations to work with and on behalf of the indigenous people in our midst. We must continue to seek the advice of their leadership as to the best ways for us to facilitate their own indigenous Christian ministry and outreach. We must also engage in advocacy work alongside them when community, social and legislative actions demand it.

Missionary Concern

Though we face an increasingly complex mission field here at home, we still must remember that there are vast unreached populations beyond our own shores.

Some of our missionary bodies report that it seems harder to gain sustained interest and support from the churches than it was at previous times. There may be many reasons for this. Some say younger people are not attracted so much to the support of societies as they are to the support of individuals. Others think that we have grown complacent, or that we are so concerned with mission at home that we have withdrawn our eyes from the world beyond our shores. Whichever of these is true, or if none is, the challenge still remains: we have a responsibility for the evangelisation of the world beginning at our own front door.

May I beg each one of you here to encourage your brothers and sisters in your churches to be committed and generous in time, money and prayer to the work of spreading the gospel at home and abroad. Each congregation in the Diocese should have an active association with at least one overseas worker and endeavour to support that person in prayer, interest and money.

It concerns me that the Bush Church Aid Society has, in more recent years, found fewer people from this Diocese willing to take up appointments for a period of time in other parts of Australia. As a consequence it has had to look more to other dioceses for candidates. I am glad that other people take up these challenges, but if my perceptions are accurate then I am disappointed. I hope that our interest in seeing strong evangelical witness in other parts of Australia will prompt people from this Diocese to offer for a period of service with the Society.

I pray that we, as a diocese, will maintain as our highest priority, the preaching of Christ to the nations beyond our shores and across our own continent.

The Australian Church

I would like to make some comments about the Anglican Church in Australia and our life within it.

The Anglican Church was introduced onto Australian soil in Sydney. Sydney was the seat of the first bishop when Australia was created as a separate diocese. It is the most populous of the Australian dioceses with each of its five regions being larger than a number of other dioceses in the Australian Church. Statistics indicate that more Anglicans worship in this Diocese than any other in the country. Initial land grants and wise stewardship may have made it the best resourced diocese in the country. In terms of numerical growth it is second to none within Australia. It has a world wide reputation for its distinctly evangelical character, a reputation applauded by some and lamented by others. Richard Johnson, the first Chaplain was an Evangelical and, while not all my predecessors in the See may have been happy to carry that specific label, that tradition is, nonetheless, the firm mark of Sydney. It is an heritage and tradition of which we can be rightly proud. I am committed to maintaining and advancing that evangelical heritage in this Diocese.

In his introduction to *Australian Anglicans and Their Constitution*, John Davis wrote:

... division, even fierce division, is by no means new to the Anglican Church in Australia. The question of what is to be done with issues that divide has been with this church almost from the beginning. Interestingly, almost all of them have been to do with accommodating the Diocese of Sydney.¹

Not much has changed! The ordination of women to the priesthood, the discussion of lay administration of the Lord's Supper, talk about commencing congregations in other dioceses, and possibly, the adoption of A Prayer Book for Australia, all are issues which keep the pot bubbling. In 1993, with the prospect of the passage of the Bill for General Synod Canon No. 18 of 1992 in view, which would facilitate the ordination of women as priests, Archbishop Robinson asserted that should the Canon pass - and it did -

The ACA will no longer be a credible "witness and keeper of holy writ" (Article 20), no longer unequivocally apostolic, catholic and reformed. Dioceses which do not conform will be islands of traditional Anglican order within a broader association. There will be much in common, but the capacity of the ACA to be the authentic representative of apostolic, catholic and reformed Christianity in this country will have ceased; it will have lost its vocation.²

Since *Scandrett v Dowling* there are those who believe that a new situation has arisen. They believe that the legal judgement given implies that our Constitution, Canons and Rules are only binding in so far as they relate to matters of property. It was always understood in this Diocese that the provisions of our Constitution by which we had regulated our association with one another carried the force of a common law contract and that parties could, if they believed there was need, have a matter concerning issues other than property determined by the Courts. In the apparently demonstrated absence of a capacity to have other matters determined by the court, many now consider that the whole basis of our relationship has changed. We do not have the same obligation to adhere to the terms of the Constitution. That view does not command universal support.

If, in 1996, our Synod should decide not to adopt the Canon approving A Prayer Book for Australia for use in this Diocese, a further major difference will have emerged in our relationship with the rest of the Anglican Church of Australia.

There is another difficult matter which requires some comment. In this year's Appropriations Bill the Standing Committee has recommended the payment of an amount slightly less than that levied by the General Synod for the Statutory Assessment and an amount significantly smaller for the Special or Voluntary Assessment. Representatives of this Diocese have made repeated calls upon the General Synod to reduce its expenditures and exercise greater control on the activities which call for increased spending. They have also made the point that a voluntary assessment is voluntary and a diocese is at liberty to decide what if any it will pay by way of such an assessment. This is perfectly legitimate.

However, given our relative wealth, it is not difficult to see that our actions in this financial area are interpreted by many in the national church, not so much as a criticism of financial policies, but as a way of expressing a general disapproval for the national church.

Given this widely held understanding of our actions, and the other matters to which I have referred, how are we to relate ourselves to the rest of the Australian Anglican Church? We are connected to our fellow Australian Anglicans by many things common to our history, practice and theology as well as by our Constitution.

I do not know what it would have taken to have caused Paul to forsake the church in Corinth and to abandon his deep desire to see them perfect in Christ. Nor am I certain of the measure of disagreement which would cause us to forsake our association with the other dioceses of the Anglican Church of Australia.

What I do know is that we ourselves are not perfect and that any advantage we believe we possess is due to the mercy of God and to nothing else.

Fundamental truths which directly affect salvation can never be negotiable, or compromised. It seems equally plain however that unnecessary division and fracture does not accord with the mind of God.

In 1993 I drew the Synod's attention to some words of Bishop Tony Nicholls from the Diocese of North West Australia. It was in connection with the process of Prayer Book revision, but some of those sentiments are appropriate here. He wrote generously, but challenging saying:

Sydney is the spiritual powerhouse of the Anglican Church and must not turn its back on the rest of the denomination..... Be sure that Sydney will not escape the influence of the world, the flesh and the devil by cutting itself off from non-evangelical dioceses! ³

It is my desire and intention to maintain and advance the evangelical character of this Diocese and its witness. I want us to live under the authority of the Bible as the inspired Word of God, to press upon women and men the necessity for a real, as opposed to a formal, experience of spiritual rebirth, to preach the uniqueness of Christ as Lord and Saviour and, as a consequence, maintain the sovereignty of God and of grace in salvation, justification by faith alone, the essential work of the Spirit in regeneration and sanctification, the coming of the King to judge the world in righteousness, maintain a "true and catholic doctrine" of the sacraments and feel obligated to preach the gospel to every creature knowing that there is salvation in no other Name.

However I do not think we do this best by locking ourselves in an evangelical enclave isolated from every other stream of thought and life in the Anglican Church. If we do, I think there is every chance we will turn in on ourselves and devour one another. Inevitable steps after a formal breach of relationships would be, first, the isolation of those within this Diocese not thought to be really evangelical, then divisions between 'soft' and 'hard' Evangelicals, between Prayer Book Evangelicals and non-Prayer Book Evangelicals, divisions between Evangelicals who assert this and others who assert that.

Moreover we would deny our brothers and sisters in other parts of Australia, who share our convictions, that sense of encouragement and support which comes from knowing they hold common ground with a large and strong unit in the Australian Church. Believe me I am no uncritical supporter of our national church, but I do see virtue in that form of local diocesan autonomy with 'federal' associations which is currently provided in our Constitution.

I believe that we must first and foremost hold ourselves to be Christians; men and women committed to following Christ as he is revealed in Scripture and in the manner set before us by the Apostles. We must continue to seek to be renewed from that source. We could do worse than Cranmer who expanded the title of his work on the Lord's Supper, "A Defence of the True and Catholic Doctrine of the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of our Saviour Christ" with the words "grounded and established upon God's Holy Word, and approved by the consent of the most ancient Doctors of the Church". Commenting on this Dr. James Packer wrote:

Cranmer held that the Fathers had, on the whole, been faithful expositors of the biblical faith,...Thus he was able to appeal to both Scripture and the Fathers in the same breath...This was no mere controversial device for anti-Roman polemics; it reflected a scholar's verdict that the Fathers had demonstrably been expounding the essence of biblical catholicism, and that therefore they fully deserved the regard traditionally paid them as authoritative guides in doctrine.⁴

We need to engage with the Bible on the issues which come before us and seek to understand and apply them in the fellowship of those who have gone before us and those who share a common loyalty to Christ with us now. We are part of a wider fellowship by virtue of an election and call made effective through the preaching of Christ and our response of faith and obedience. We must not too readily draw diminishing circles of fellowship unless absolute necessity demands it. We ought not too readily apply strictures imposed on individuals in Scripture to whole dioceses within the Anglican fellowship in this country. There is, no doubt, the possibility that a bishop, with the strong support of his synod, could sanction ideas and practices which move far away from the faith and practise of this church and cease to be, as we have accepted the notion, Christian. Until we believe that such a point has been reached, I consider that we need to extend fellowship and seek mutual encouragement and exhortation from those who share with us in this church in Australia.

We are those who have made our home in the Anglican church. I think Alister McGrath is correct when he writes that Anglicanism is an historical contingency but an historical contingency which, in the last two centuries, has proved to possess qualities which the modern church happens to need badly.⁵

I remember reading somewhere a comment by C.H. Spurgeon about the Bible. He claimed it was like a lion, it did not need to be defended it simply needed to be let loose. I feel that way about evangelicalism and the truths which it asserts from the Scriptures: they are more effective when lived and expressed in the midst of those who may not share them, than when they are placed behind walls to defend them from possible contamination. It is true that evangelicals in other dioceses find the going hard at times, just as non-evangelicals tell me that they find it to be amongst us. Yet in spite of those experiences, and more perhaps because of them, we ought to continue to engage with each other rather than retreating into isolation.

Isolation means the luxury of addressing stereo-types with impunity, never needing to look a real person in the eyes and discover what he or she actually thinks, feels, or does. It means denying ourselves the opportunity of praying with those with whom we believe we disagree and sharing our contentions together before God.

Equipping the Equippers

Returning again to the life of our own Diocese, a further challenge for the future is the quality and capacities of those who offer leadership in our churches. God calls individuals to himself. Each one of his people is immensely precious to him. As the Bishop says in the Ordering of Priests to those to be ordained:

Have always therefore printed in your remembrance, how great a treasure is committed to your charge. For they are the sheep of Christ, which he bought with his death, and for whom he shed his blood. The Church and Congregation who you must serve, is his spouse and body.

The selection, training, placement, encouragement and oversight of those who offer this service to God's people is one of the chief tasks given to a bishop in our church. I take it very seriously. I promised the people of the Diocese that I would be their bishop and in seeking to fulfil that promise I would, as far as I was able, give them, in this Diocese, the best leadership that I could.

I believe that God has been very good to us in so many ways. There are fine men and women in ordained ministry. There is an encouraging flow of people offering for ministry training emanating from our churches and especially from outstanding work undertaken by the chaplaincies on the campuses of our Universities. He has given us first rate training facilities and we thank him for the love and hard work that has been aimed at giving us people who are well versed in the truth of God. Our After College Training has received favourable comment from people involved in similar work overseas. Yet I think we can and must seek to do even better.

With that in mind I have appointed Archdeacon Paul Perini as Archdeacon for Ordination and Ministry Development. It will be his task to work with all our existing resources for developing and supporting ordained ministry, so that we will have an integrated and purposeful approach covering the period from selection to retirement. The demands upon people in ordained ministry are considerable. It is in the best interests of God's people that they be assisted at every point to be the best that they can be.

Archdeacon Perini's task will include:

1. the co-ordination of the Archbishop's Ordination Selection Panel;
2. the co-ordination of the Archbishop's Ordination Chaplains;
3. liaising with the Principals of Moore College and Deaconess House;
4. liaising with the Director of C.E.F.M.;
5. liaising with Rectors concerning the training in parish of catechists and curates;
6. working towards the improvement of selection and training processes of men and women so that they will give more competent and godly leadership to the churches in the Diocese;
7. working towards processes which will facilitate the refreshment and the development of ministers in the middle of their ministry and towards the end of their ministry; and,
8. advising the Archbishop as regards selection and training.

I ask your prayerful support for Archdeacon Perini as he assumes this demanding responsibility.

Women Preaching in Church

Given the fact that women are ordained to the diaconate in this Diocese, and the debates about the nature of ministry by women in our churches, we cannot avoid ongoing reflection on this issue. I appreciate that the practice of women preaching in churches is of continuing concern to some members of the Diocese. I do not necessarily wish to say anything more than I said when I addressed you on this matter last year. For my part, I feel at liberty under Scripture to continue the practice of licensing women to preach in congregations where they are requested to do so. Bishop Barnett and the Rev. Narelle Jarrett have each contributed recently to this discussion and I refer you to the issues raised by these writers. I recognise that not everyone will share my point of view. Rectors know that it is their choice whom they invite to preach from amongst those who hold my license to do so.

I am concerned for the level of anxiety which exists amongst women in the Diocese on this question. I again commend Archdeacon Nicolios to your support and prayers in the demanding role which she has in the promotion of ministry by women in the Diocese. With the conclusion of this Synod our moratorium on the discussion of women in ordained ministry will come to an end. It may be that issues of this kind will be reopened then. Whatever the outcome, please bear in mind the feelings of those women who earnestly desire to serve Christ obediently in a full time capacity in the life of our Diocese.

Lay Administration of the Lord's Supper

The Preaching and Administration of Holy Communion by Lay Persons and Deacons Ordinance 1995 has been before us since March, in the form that it reached at the conclusion of the second reading debate. You will be aware of the additional report which I requested from our Doctrine Commission containing both a majority and minority opinion. The minority opinion is not one that can be lightly dismissed either on the grounds of lack of scholarship or evangelical convictions. There have been some extremely influential minority reports in the course of Christian doctrinal history!

As resolved by the Synod, the Bill has been referred to the Appellate Tribunal. The Tribunal has held one preliminary inquiry meeting. At that meeting a request was received from our Standing Committee to delay consideration of the Bill until after this session of this Synod.

I do not know what the outcome of the reference might be nor what you, as a Synod, may wish to do with the Bill at this point in time. Whatever you resolve as a Synod will carry great weight with me. I have no illusions about my capacity to be the sole judge of what is best for the life of the church. However you will be aware of the particular responsibility that devolves upon me by virtue of my election to this office. A bishop ought not to think of himself as divorced from the mind of his Synod. On the other hand he is not elected to be a rubber stamp for the Synod. He is elected to be the guardian of the faith and order of this church and, to the best of his ability, make decisions which serve that end.

I have sought on previous occasions to give some account of my inclinations on lay and diaconal administration of the Lord's Supper. I do not wish to bore you with repetition, but some brief outline of my thinking may be helpful to you. At least it may assist you in understanding any decisions I may make in the future as a result of your actions in this Synod and provide a guide for your prayers for me.

I must confess that I am not greatly moved by the arguments advanced thus far under the headings of the "parity of Word and Sacrament". As to the "priesthood of all believers", it is my understanding, that while proclaiming this truth, Reformed Theology also asserted that it was proper to recognise distinctions in function and responsibility within the life of the church. As an ordained clergyman in this church for nearly 40 years, I have never thought that our church taught that any intrinsic superiority or sacerdotal capacity attached to those commissioned to be presbyters. If others teach it, or the uninstructed infer it, refutation and sound teaching appear to me to be the best way forward. My personal commitment to the notion of the "parity of Word and Sacrament" has never seemed to me to preclude the multiplication of those able and gifted to preach, beyond the number of those who may administer the sacraments. One is much more the result of God-given gifts and abilities, and blessed we are when their number is increased. The other has more to do with function and position. It was from Geneva rather than Rome that I learnt that Pastors teach, administer the sacraments and exercise church discipline, while Teachers teach but do not perform the other functions. Whether Calvin was correct in dividing the office of Pastor and Teacher in Ephesians 4 is a matter of debate. That he did so distinguish is beyond doubt. In Book 4 of the Institutes he wrote:

Next come pastors and teachers, whom the church can never go without. There is, I believe, this difference between them: teachers are not put in charge of discipline, or administering the sacraments, or warnings or exhortations, but only of Scriptural interpretation - to keep doctrine whole and pure among believers. But the pastoral office includes all these functions within itself.⁶

Diaconal "presidency" would solve problems for our women deacons functioning in situations like hospitals and institutions such as Deaconess House. It would also make them more employable in parishes I am told. Such a move would, I think, make the diaconate something different from what is envisaged in the Ordinal associated with the Book of Common Prayer. If women deacons preach and celebrate the Lord's Supper, what strong arguments exist to preclude them from being ordained to the presbyterate? It might be argued that 'priesting' is with a view to the charge and care of a congregation, something which may not be appropriate for a woman. But that is not always the case. Could it with reason be asserted that since not all men who are ordained as priests are appointed to such a charge, women could be priests too, able to administer the sacraments and preach, but not be placed in charge of a parochial district? Further, since we are prepared to adjust our concept of 'deaconing' to allow those thus ordained to conduct the Lord's Supper (a provision hardly contemplated in the Ordinal), is it not possible to envisage priests who are not appointed as Rectors of parishes but serve as members of parish teams? The issues are complex.

I am not opposed to change that is necessary or advanced on good grounds. I am concerned for our women deacons. We may need, at this point, to rethink the nature of our orders of ministry. If such a need has been demonstrated sufficiently to this Synod, then I feel that, in our denomination, the proper thing is to move through the channels provided for deliberation on such issues. It does affect others and it affects our relationship with others. We ought not to be afraid to make bold moves, but we have responsibilities to others even if we think that they are not always as assiduous in showing concern for us.

There is a motion on the business paper inviting the Synod, in the light of "cost and other factors involved", to reconsider its earlier decision to refer the Bill or Ordinance to the Appellate Tribunal. The Synod is being asked whether or not it wishes to commit itself to the costs that may be involved in having a case or cases argued before the Tribunal. You will make up your minds on the cogency of the arguments advanced in debate. Should the question be withdrawn, and I am informed that this may or may not mean that the Tribunal can or will decide not to consider the question, I will become the final arbiter of what happens if you offer me a Bill for my assent. In the light of that possibility, you probably have a right to know something of the way in which I look at the matter now.

The expansion of the present Bill beyond the limited situations proposed in earlier reports makes it more of a problem for me. If I had really thought that our existing order was contrary to Scripture and sound doctrine, I might not have accepted ordination within it in the first place, or continued to function in it if I had become convinced that it was in serious error in the way it orders ministry. I can understand evangelical bishops in diminishing rural areas looking for ways to provide sacramental ministry to their small congregations which avoid unacceptable and probably illegal practices like reservation. I would want to support such experimentation, but I find it hard to see a similar need existing in our own Diocese. Our received order has served vigorous evangelism and effective nurture well. It has produced the good things for which we thank God at the present time. Those are the concerns which must be a primary consideration for us. If I recall correctly, the voting patterns at the last session fell out at about 60% in favour and 40% against. My sense is that any responsible bishop or parish clergyman must think very carefully about the welfare of such a substantial minority on an issue which does not appear to lie at the heart of the Gospel.

What I have said previously with sincerity, I say once more: I will listen carefully to what the Synod may say and take account of what it does. I hope you will continue to pray that God will guide me to act wisely and not give up on remembering me constantly before God if my future actions on this matter, whatever they may be, do not agree with the position you firmly espouse. Who knows, if we look to God, there may be solutions that hitherto none of us have yet considered.

Regionalism

Our synodical decisions on regionalism will have an important bearing on our future as a diocese. The bill for the ordinance is in your hands. There are aspects of this restructuring which will need to be resolved by thoughtful debate in the next few days. These include the powers and functions that devolve to the regions; the extent of their capacity to receive and disburse funds; regional representation on the Standing Committee; and the responsibility for ministry development in their areas. Each of these is important and will have implications for the future. The main Bill and the others which support it are before you in the form finally settled by the Standing Committee. The principal Bill represents a majority opinion of the Standing Committee, but not a unanimous one by any means. There are significant groups that have major disagreements with some provisions of the Bill.

I remind you of some of the pressures represented in this Bill. In my opinion regionalism exists because our Diocese has exceeded the size that allows for the cultivation of those relationships which are inherently associated with, and usually expected of, an episcopal ministry pattern. Such a system has at its heart the proximity and availability of the bishop as the chief pastor of a group of churches in an area or city. What the ideal number is I cannot say. Research done in Wollongong a few years ago suggested that, in Australia, the figure might be about 50 parishes. To place episcopal ministry nearer the local churches we have created 5 areas with a bishop for each. In size each of those areas roughly approximates that suggested criterion.

The population and geographic location of both Wollongong and Parramatta pose particular problems. If you have never lived and worked in say Nowra or Lithgow, Sutton Forest, Wollongong, Penrith, Blacktown or Parramatta, you may find it hard to understand the sense of isolation from the centre of the Diocese which is experienced by church people in these places. They have a feeling of powerlessness: that other people, well removed from them, determine how ministry will progress in their locality. None of the protestations of those of us more centrally situated about our appreciation of their concerns, suffice to relieve their complaints. We cannot continue to ignore concerns which have been voiced powerfully and persistently over many years. Our resolve not to create new dioceses of these two regions has been conditioned by theology, ministry and finance. The theological concern expressed has been the fear that new dioceses would inevitably lose their evangelical character. Ministry issues have related to the desirability of one training college, the capacity for clergy to move over a wider area, and the flexibility that regional boundaries represent in contrast to diocesan boundaries when there are demographic changes that suggest a relocation of resources and effort. Financial considerations have centred on better management being available to an undivided Sydney than to a reduced Sydney and two new dioceses. Access to a large central endowment and the supply of funds that this makes available has been important for both Parramatta and Wollongong.

Since we have resolved to remain one diocese, we must do what we can to overcome the difficulties entailed in that decision. The desire to have significant regional representation on the Standing Committee of the Diocese is not, in my view, an attempt to promote sectional interests at the cost of the whole. I think it reflects a desire that the Standing Committee, as the Synod in recess, should approximate the Synod in its composition. The parts wish to be substantially represented, not simply for the sake of the parts, but that the whole may benefit from the contribution of the parts.

Parishes and diocesan organisations will all have a keen interest in this matter. May God guide us to make wise decisions.

Ministry to Children

Children's ministry in the Diocese must always be an important priority for us. Ours is a Christian tradition which affirms the gift and blessing of children as participants and heirs in the covenant promise. We have therefore a duty of care to nurture Christ's people who are still children. Many have faith which is often real and vital. They must have instruction and guidance to ensure that they are able to enter fully into the biblical and theological inheritance that is uniquely theirs.

Ministry to our children requires no less preparation and support than that required for those who would minister to Christ's adult people. Consequently, the ever constant need is to recruit, train and support those at parish level who can undertake this central gospel mandate. Our children will have faith and right belief and practice of life only to the extent that we energetically pursue our responsibility of care and nurture.

How are we doing in children's ministry?

To answer that question, the Working Party into Children's and Youth Ministry, which I commissioned, has initiated a major research survey into children's and youth ministry in the Diocese. The Education Commission has undertaken this quantitative and qualitative research on behalf of the Working Party. The substantive results are becoming available to us now and will be available for strategic planning by the end of the year.

I thank everyone who co-operated and contributed to the research survey. The data will provide an invaluable resource as we seek to minister effectively to children and youth in the Diocese.

The preliminary design questionnaire and first statistics provide an alarming first answer. We will have a more complete and accurate picture within weeks.

According to ABS figures, there are approximately 265,000 children of those who indicate that they Anglican. There are 1.152 million children within diocesan boundaries.

The best we are doing in parish-based programmes, with this quarter of a million children, is that we are reaching just under 8% in the Wollongong and Parramatta Regions. Over all regions we have just 6% of this Anglican pool involved in our children's activities.

This figure does not include our contact with children through School Scripture. Our schools, both government and non-government, provide the most obvious contact with greatest number of children. There are 752,437 children in NSW government schools and 20,000 in Anglican schools within the Diocese.

We must remember that 72% of Anglican parents choose, or have no other real option than to send their children to government schools. The 1880 Public Instruction Act, in return for withdrawal of funding for the 60 Anglican parish schools (when there were just 90 parishes), gave the churches right of access for an hour a day for religious instruction. Only two parishes ever exercised this opportunity to the full.

Anglicans lost the heart and vision for this strategic opportunity. The 1990 Education Reform Act still provides access to children for an hour a week. We cannot return to, or reclaim, the lost opportunity of the past, but we must ensure that we maintain what is still open to us.

With opportunity is also obligation. We have a duty to Anglican parents that their children realise the full potential of SRE as a contributor to their Christian growth and formation. There is no less an obligation to ensure that the school curricula be as amenable to Christian truth as possible.

There is a clear trend towards federalisation and nationalisation of education. With it comes increasing politicisation and ministerial control. This places even greater demands on the church as it seeks to influence these developments.

In addressing children's ministry in the Diocese, we face the profound realities that the significant majority of our lay and clerical leadership came to Christian commitment as children and youth; young families will attend those churches which cater for their children and youth; wherever people have purposefully engaged in children's ministry, whether in traditional ways like Sunday schools or uniformed clubs, or through innovative

and new strategies, there has been significant numerical growth.

Friends, we must not be blind to either the extent or timing of the opportunity to fulfil Christ's command to include children in His kingdom. From childhood, we must lead them to live their lives as His disciples and pursue vocations that honour Him, and to use the gifts he has given them to accomplish his purposes.

Youth Work

During this current year the Synod has made additional funding available to the Youth Department to seek to double the number of young people in church fellowship groups over a three year period.

To reach the 600,000 young people in Sydney, the AYD is working to vision and equip the churches of the Diocese to double the number of young people attending their church. The first youth strategy for the AYD and the Diocese is to raise the commitment level of our current youth so that they will evangelise and undertake ministry in their everyday life. During 1994/95 over 40 parishes have undertaken Disciples Group training.

During 1996 the Youth Department will employ a youth evangelist. Disciples Groups will be able to help the new converts grow to Christian maturity in their local church.

These youth strategies will help the Youth Department comply with the vision which I articulated of (i) strengthening junior high youth ministry in parishes; (ii) forming Christian character in young Anglicans that results in a life lived consciously in the presence of God; (iii) providing short term team ministry opportunities for keen young people. Youth Ministry Unlimited, a programme to make this possible, commenced this year.

If you are interested in developing youth work in your area please contact the Director of the Youth Department. If we have a concern for the future, we must have an ongoing concern for youth.

Low Fee Schools

I continue to encourage a policy to establish Low Fee Anglican Schools in the developing areas of the Diocese, particularly Western Sydney. Anglican schools have made a major contribution to education in the past, but they are concentrated in the eastern and northern areas of Sydney and generally are not accessible to Anglicans on moderate incomes. I believe that we should address this imbalance.

More than ever, I believe there is a need to provide a good education with a basis of Christian values as an alternative in the market place. The Sydney Morning Herald reported recently (30/8/95) that 'Catholic schools in NSW are attracting growing numbers of non-catholic students as more parents opt for a Christian education'. Clearly the need is there for an Anglican option too. It can provide a focus for Christian education and on a wider level become a healthy competitor and so discourage other models, particularly in the State system, from moving too far away from Christian values. In addition, I believe that the schools can provide an important link with the community to enhance gospel outreach and church growth in these new areas.

The Sydney Anglican Schools Corporation is continuing to advance this strategy, but it is finding considerable difficulty with Government regulations. The Commonwealth Government has set up a Review of its New Schools Policy under Professor McKinnon. The current regulations will not allow a new Anglican school to start at the higher levels of funding and the Schools Corporation has presented arguments to Professor McKinnon to revise them. His report is not due for completion until March next year, though a progress report may be provided earlier.

I have written to both Professor McKinnon and the Commonwealth Minister, Mr. Free, to vary these regulations because their present effect is quite discriminatory. The Catholic Church, because it has a formal system of schools, is the only non-government agency that can start new schools and also attract the highest category of funding - Category 10. The Seventh Day Adventist which also has a system can start a new school at a level above 6, but the Anglican Church, no matter how poor the area, cannot start a new school with any more than Category 6 funding under the current rules. This, in effect, forces our schools to have fees at least \$500 p.a. higher.

The Anglican Schools Corporation has done a lot of work to identify viable sites for new schools and has negotiated to secure land for at least three. It has even sought and gained government approval to start the schools and could begin the first in 1997, but is reluctant to do so under the present regulations with their restriction on funding to Category 6.

Public opinion favours the establishment of new Anglican schools and, therefore, I ask the members of Synod to join me in petitioning the Commonwealth Government to vary its regulations which effectively allow only two groups in our society to start low fee schools. We wish to provide a service to the community through new, accessible Anglican schools in the growth areas of the diocese.

Sesqui-centenary

On 25 June 1847 Letters Patent were issued for Bishops Tyrell, Perry, Short and Broughton. This marks the creation of the Dioceses of Newcastle, Melbourne and Adelaide. Broughton of Sydney was made Metropolitan of Australasia which included Tasmania and New Zealand as well as the three newly created dioceses.

In 1997, each of the three dioceses newly created in that year will be marking 150 years of life with special celebrations. I have convened a small steering committee comprising Bishop Watson, Archdeacon Skillicorn, Dean Jobbins and Deaconess Rodgers to work with me in planning our diocesan events for that 150th anniversary.

The General Synod is planning a National Anglican Conference for early 1997 on the theme of Anglicans engaging with Australian society. I have accepted the position of Chairman of the Planning Committee and I commend this conference to you.

The conference theme prompts me to encourage the Diocese to think strategically about our role in society. Our chief task is to preach Christ and to call people to repentance and faith. Changed societies come from changed people. But as well as that we must also seek to do good to all which, I believe, means doing all we can to sustain good things in the life of our community. We need to be genuinely caring for our neighbours.

I want to challenge you as leaders in your local Christian communities to encourage those men and women of ability in our churches to be active as salt and light in our society. I am constantly impressed by the calibre of Anglican Christians whom I discover in influential roles in the life of Sydney. We must encourage business people, scholars, teachers, professionals of all kinds, and participants in local community groups, people who know Christ, to bring their influence to bear on the public life of our cities.

There are issues regularly touching upon our community life upon which men and women who know God have a valid contribution to make. I want to encourage you to make it. People do listen to well reasoned and informed contributions and we have people who can do this. This is a role not to be left to the clergy alone. We need gifted and well placed lay women and men to be leaders and spokespersons for things that are aimed at the well being of community life. We must be much more understanding and supportive of those who, out of loyalty to Christ, seek places in Government at Local, State and Federal levels. We all too easily aid the process by which political life is held up to derision. It is difficult work, it lends itself to being influenced by lesser motives, but it is a process which we must seek to invest with as much goodness, fairness and righteousness as can be obtained in a fallen world.

Euthanasia

That leads me to a specific topic of public concern. The community has been forced to think seriously about the question of euthanasia by the actions of the Northern Territory Government and by proposed legislation in the NSW Parliament and in the A.C.T. The issue is one which concerns the whole community and it has particular concern for us as we seek to maintain what we understand to be God's perspective on human life and the way in which we deal with each other throughout life.

We were recently visited by Professor Margaret Somerville, who is a Full Professor in the Faculties of Law and Medicine and Director of the McGill Centre for Medicine, Ethics and Law at McGill University in Montreal, Canada. Professor Somerville commented that she thought Australia was infected with a "euthanasia virus". Her reason for the remark is the extreme nature of the proposals currently being canvassed in Australia. In her judgement they run well ahead of what is currently practised or being proposed in other parts of the world.

The debate is sometimes clouded by a misunderstanding as to what is meant by euthanasia. It is not about turning off machines when life can no longer be supported, nor is it about accepting unwarranted intrusions into the life of a patient to maintain life at any cost. It is not about dying with dignity or without pain or about the ability of people to indicate that they wish not to be treated any further, things which those who oppose euthanasia would want to support. It is about planned and purposeful killing; taking the life of another person. It is about assisted suicide.

It is not necessary here for me to justify the special regard we have for human beings in the Christian faith. We know that God hedges human life about with strong statements against murder and killing of the innocent. It is important to maintain a society where life is valued, and where compassion and pity express themselves not in a lethal injection, but in care and medical practises which take people through the closing stages of life with dignity and without pain.

Professor Somerville argued that a "paradigm shift" was taking place which presented two totally incompatible world views. One sees human beings as elaborate machines which can with propriety be turned off when they reach a "use by" date or no longer function with their optimum efficiency. The other sees humans as elaborate machines about whom there is a mystery: a dimension of the unknown; an element that asks questions about meaning and purpose and shrinks when no such meaning can be found. We believe this is because we were made for God. Yet even if the community does not share our developed convictions as to the will of God, it can recognise what a society, which deliberately abandons age long sanctions for the protection of life and expresses compassion in killing, might be like in a 100 years time. The sombre joyless hue of the cover of my copy of P. D. James' *The Children of Men* was well chosen by the publishers. A society dominated by death and the planned quietus will have a different tone.

I commend two things to the Synod. First your individual opposition to this type of legislation. Second your support for efforts to make good palliative care and good medical practise the norm in our society. In this latter area there is a part for each of us to play in making sure that people known to us do not die in isolation and loneliness. I commend the work of the Social Issues Committee on this topic. Please make every possible use of the resources which have been sent to parish clergy. I also recommend the video *A Gentle Death?* which has been produced jointly by Anglican Media and the Social Issues Committee. It will not only be a resource to be used in parish groups. It can also be used in your homes and loaned to your neighbours.

We must take every available opportunity to show our opposition to euthanasia becoming legalised in this State. Be sure you inform your political representatives of your opinions, and of your intention to closely monitor and observe their actions and speeches in the Parliament.

One matter connected with the debate on potential euthanasia legislation in our State of NSW has arisen since I prepared this address. I cannot disregard this opportunity for comment. The Speaker of the NSW Legislative Assembly has decided to exclude representatives from churches from participating in a parliamentary forum convened to consider issues relating to euthanasia. I strongly agree with those commentators who have protested at this decision. There is no doubt that it epitomises the apparent disinterest of many of our elected representatives in the ethical aspects of community questions and of the perceived values which ultimately underlie and undergird them. Euthanasia cannot be discussed simply from medical, scientific or even legal perspectives. What must also be discussed are the questions of value and understanding of human life which are received and held generally in this community. Euthanasia is not just a technical matter, nor should it be decided by legislative pragmatists with an eye on voting support. It is a human issue, and questions of life, death and meaning have profound moral, ethical and spiritual implications for both individuals and the wider community.

It is final sacrilege of this post modern age to hold that human life and death can be discussed without recourse to ethical considerations as though life is empty of meaning and finally disposable at the impetus of coldly rationalist medicine and science.

I am supportive of the idea of a parliamentary forum, and I applaud the initiative of the speaker Mr. Murray in arranging the one to be held on Monday 16 October. However I appeal to him to reconsider his decision to exclude church representatives and to reverse it. He may wish to reconsider whether there are other groups in the community who should be included. Should he invite representatives of the aged, indigenous and the disabilities communities? If not, why are they excluded?

Sexual Misconduct

I have spoken to you before about this matter and about our need to promulgate protocols covering sexual harassment within the life of the church. The distress that flows from broken trust is often crippling and demands appropriate action on our part. To draft adequate protocols and put in place what may be needed to allow them to function has not proved to be an easy task. The requirement to deal equitably with both alleged perpetrators and victims has required considerable thought and discussion and a fitting resolution has taken time to emerge. I have now received the first draft of a report with recommendations that I believe has the prospect of taking us forward. After a final review, I will submit the report and its recommendations to the Standing Committee for consideration. My hope had been that I could have all this done in a reasonably short

space of time. That has not proved to be possible and I apologise for the delay. It appears that it will be late this year or early next year before the process can be completed. I hope at the next meeting of the Synod I can report that we have a just, sensitive and workable regime in place.

Violence

We were all horrified by the murder of Peter Savage, a pupil of Trinity Grammar School, one of our own schools. Our hearts go out to Peter's mother, a former CMS missionary, to his brothers and family, and to the whole of that school community. The Standing Committee, when it met in August, recorded its shock and sadness at the news of the murder and assured the Savage family and the school community of its prayerful support during their very difficult time of sadness and mourning.

Many people are alarmed at the apparent increase of crime in present day society. Certainly international surveys show that Australia is as violent a society as other advanced western democracies. Surveys of the NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics suggest that Australia is not becoming a more violent society for between 1983 and 1990 the number of actual assaults has remained unchanged. What has changed is public awareness of the rate of crime, and often violent crime, and the number of drug related offences which are occurring. Addicts need money to feed their habit and many appear ready to go to any lengths to do so.

I was pleased to read recent statements from Mr Carr, the Premier, in which he indicated his determination to introduce severe penalties for murderers and big-time dealers in high grade heroin or cocaine. There are suburbs in Sydney, most notably Kings Cross and Cabramatta, where trafficking in hard drugs is still a severe problem. I believe the leaders of drug rings, those who plan, organise and finance the drug trade, are those who must be sought out and given the severest penalties by our judiciary. They earn their huge incomes at the expense of the lives and the hope of young Australians. It is a situation which cannot be tolerated any longer.

I believe we should give our utmost support to community rehabilitation programmes which assist drug addicts to become freed of their dependency. I notice the trial scheme in the Australian Capital Territory which is giving a controlled supply of heroin to addicts in an attempt to free them from the driving urge to get money in any way to feed their habit. We have yet to see whether such a scheme achieves its desired end and we also need to consider whether the introduction of such schemes is likely to increase drug use by apparent community endorsement in the setting up of the programme.

What I do know is that we all desire a society where people of all ages, from the elderly to the schoolchildren, feel free to walk our streets without fear of violent assault and attack. Every action by our police and politicians which contributes to that end must be strongly endorsed.

Billy Graham in Australia

Dr Billy Graham will be in Sydney over the weekend of 9-10 March 1996. This is a special visit to be paid by this world renowned evangelist to this country. In all probability it will be his last. It is a great honour that he has accepted the invitation that I issued to him on behalf of the churches in Sydney to come and preach Christ here once more.

The combined churches are planning to make this a great event in the Sydney Domain. I ask you to begin to pray for this and to plan to bring friends to hear Dr Graham preach Christ. The programme is designed to be something of a 'Festival in the Park'. It will have something for everyone: for youth, children, families and all the rest. The Organising Committee is chaired by Mr Bruce Baird and a number of Anglicans are associated with him on the Executive Committee. You will hear a great deal more about it in the immediate future. I ask you to give this wide publicity and your wholehearted support and involvement.

Drought

The drought conditions in New South Wales still cause grievous concern for those who live and work in the country areas of the State. I visited recently the Diocese of Armidale to participate in their Synod. This provided an opportunity to meet people directly affected. Gifts from city people have been greatly appreciated. The recent welcome rains which have done some good for the pastures have done little if anything to relieve the long term situation. Frosts that followed the rain have destroyed an estimated \$80 million worth of wheat crop. An enormous loss to those already hard hit.

It was gratifying to hear how support from one Sydney parish was helping to sustain work in an area where, without such support, it might not be possible to continue ministry on a full time basis. Bishop Chiswell used the contributions sent from my appeal fund, which you so generously supported, to help farmers to buy water.

We are currently conducting a further appeal to help the drought affected areas of the State. Your support really counts for something.

Retirement of Canon Bryce Wilson

The Rev. Canon Bryce Wilson will retire this year from his position as General Secretary of the Anglican Home Mission Society. He has filled this position since 1990. He was Director of Welfare Services from 1982 until 1987 and was Associate General Secretary from 1987 until his appointment as General Secretary in 1990.

Canon Wilson has served the Church in this Diocese since his ordination in 1954. In the leadership of the Home Mission Society he has displayed devotion to Christ and an ability to develop effective patterns of operation within the organisation.

I have personally appreciated Bryce's support and assistance. I speak for all the Diocese when I say to him, thank you for your dedication and hard work. We all join in wishing you and Betty a long and enjoyable retirement.

Devoted Stewards of Christ

I do not wish to let the opportunity pass to express my gratitude and thankfulness for the life and work of those devoted and loyal servants who have passed from our midst since we last met, the Rev. Sidney Sayer Ashfold, the Rev. Canon Eric Arthur Joseph Barker, the Rev. Harry Bates, the Rev. Albert Frederick Dryden, the Rev. Wayne Thomas Gott, the Rev. Arthur Maxwell Kimmorley, the Rev. Philip Edward Kitchin, the Rev. John Matthews Hall Lousada, the Rev. Roy Cecil Lovitt, the Rev. Canon William Noel Rook, the Rev. Canon James Edward Whild, Deaconess Mary Fuller, Deaconess Elsie Hodges and Mrs. Marie Gilmour. Their lives have reflected the unfailing dedication that we as Christians are proud to follow.

Now to Conclude

This session will close my first Synod as Archbishop. For me the time has passed quickly. It has not been without its challenges, but I hope you share with me the excitement of seeing God at work in our midst. HE IS, and that should make it worthwhile for all of us. We can work with vigour and hope because he is God and fulfils his purpose in the world. Let us renew together our commitment and give our best strength to living "in the presence of God" and "in a manner that is worthy of the gospel of Christ". May it be so.

Thank you.

Endnotes

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