

Questions and Answers under Standing Order 27

1. Pymble (1)

The Rev Elwyn Sheppard asked –

- (a) What has taken place in the parish of Pymble with regard to attempted reconciliation with the Rev David Gilmour?
- (b) What has happened with regard to ministry in the parish of Pymble since the dismissal of the Rev David Gilmour, and what disciplinary action has been taken with the parishioners who violated Hebrews 13:17?

To which the Archbishop replied –

- (a) Strictly, this question is out of order under Standing Order 27(2) because it makes an inference or imputation. However, on the assumption that the questioner is referring to steps in any reconciliation between the parishioners and Mr Gilmour I make the following comments –
 - (i) the successive acting rectors of the Parish have, as a high priority, spent time with parishioners to assist them in dealing with the situation which occurred at Pymble;
 - (ii) a clinical psychologist was made available, at the expense of the Parish, to counsel individual parishioners;
 - (iii) Mr Gilmour continued to attend services in the Parish for some months after he ceased to be rector;
 - (iv) the Regional Bishop and the Area Archdeacon have had periodic communication with Mr Gilmour.
- (b) It is not clear what the questioner means when he asks about “ministry in the parish of Pymble”. I take it that he is asking about the provision of priestly functions in the Parish. Since Mr Gilmour ceased to be rector, I have licensed, successively, 2 acting rectors. A new rector has been appointed and will commence his duties in January 1996.

The second part of this question is out of order under Standing Order 27(2) because, among other things, it contains an argument, namely that certain persons have acted in a manner which violates Hebrews 13:17.

2. Women Deacons (1)

Mr Keith Mason QC asked –

- (a) How many deacons have been ordained in Sydney since 1987?
- (b) How many of these are women?
- (c) How many female deacons are no longer serving in the Diocese of Sydney?
- (d) How many female deacons are currently in full-time parish appointments?
- (e) How many women, lay or clergy, hold licenses to preach in the diocese?

To which the Archbishop replied –

I am informed the answers are as follows –

- (a) 176
- (b) 29
- (c) 6: 4 of whom are now in other dioceses and the other 2 have retired.

(d) 7. In addition, 11 hold positions as full time chaplains, 2 as part time chaplains and 3 have part time parish appointments.

(e) 62

3. Standing Committee Membership

Mr Graeme Marks asked –

What is the regional spread of the whole Standing Committee - expressed in percentages but not including the Archbishop (clergy and lay being included together and diocesan office holders “regionalised”)?

To which the Archbishop replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

There are currently 49 members of the Standing Committee, other than the Archbishop.

If the Regional Bishops and Archdeacons are classified by their Region and the other members of the Standing Committee are classified according to the Region where the church to which they are licensed, or are a member, is situated the result is –

	%
Georges River	8
North Sydney	41
Parramatta	10
South Sydney	26
Wollongong	15
	—
	100

4. Standing Committee Ordinance 1897 Amendment Ordinance 1995

Dr Laurie Scandrett asked –

(a) In the bill for the Standing Committee Ordinance 1897 Amendment Ordinance 1995 is there a clause determining whose responsibility it is to decide which Region a “Qualified Lay Person” may represent? For example a “Qualified Lay Person” could live in one region, attend church in another but be a lay representative for a parish in a third region.

(b) Could responsibility for the determination be made by –

- (i) the “Qualified Lay Person” themselves, by declaration; or
- (ii) the Committee of Elections and Qualifications (or other such body); or
- (iii) the Diocesan Secretary; or
- (iv) some other body?

To which the Archbishop replied –

I am advised that the answer is as follows.

The bill for the Standing Committee Ordinance 1897 Amendment Ordinance 1995, set out on pages 232 to 235 of the Standing Committee’s report to the Synod, does not provide any express guidance as to when a Qualified Minister or a Qualified Lay Person is from a Region.

The Standing Committee intended that, for the purposes of the bill, a person would be from a Region if –

- (a) in the case of a Qualified Minister, that person was licensed to a parochial unit in that Region at the time of that person's election; and
- (b) in the case of a Qualified Lay Person, that person was a member of a church in that Region at the time of that person's election.

A clause to that effect had been included in the bill considered by the Standing Committee but was inadvertently omitted prior to its printing for Synod. An amendment to reinstate the clause will be placed on the amendment sheet.

5. Appellate Tribunal Referral

Canon Peter Kemp asked –

- (a) Is it true that at the preliminary hearing of the Appellate Tribunal in relation to the Preaching and Administration of Holy Communion by Lay Persons and Deacons Ordinance 1995 held in Sydney on 2 August 1995 Mr Neil Cameron, representing the Diocese of Sydney, announced that he would challenge the right of Professor Michael Horsburgh to appear before the Tribunal?
- (b) If this is so and since Mr Cameron was representing this Synod, on what ground did Mr Cameron propose to base such a challenge?

To which the Archbishop replied –

I am informed the answer is as follows.

It is not true that the Diocese's representative, Mr Cameron, announced that he would challenge the right of Professor Horsburgh to appear before the Tribunal. Rather, Mr Cameron indicated that, in the absence of instructions, he reserved the right to challenge Professor Horsburgh's right to appear before the Tribunal.

At its meeting on 28 August 1995 the Standing Committee received letters from Professor Horsburgh and Mr Cameron in relation to this matter and resolved to direct our representative not to oppose any application by any person to be a party to the proceedings before the Tribunal.

6. Sexual Abuse Guidelines

Professor Michael Horsburgh asked –

- (a) What are the factors delaying the production of guidelines for dealing with sexual abuse and harassment committed by clergy and church workers in the Diocese?
- (b) When will such guidelines be available?

To which the Archbishop replied –

The answers to these questions can be found on pages 34 and 35 of the Presidential Address to Synod, copies of which have been circulated to Synod members.

7. Pymble (2)

The Rev Elwyn Sheppard asked –

- (a) How has the Standing Committee dealt with the \$80,000 earmarked by Synod last year for David Gilmour's costs?
- (b) Have Mr Gilmour's superannuation or long service leave entitlements been adversely affected by his removal from the Parish of Pymble?
- (c) (i) Was any financial assistance offered to Mr Gilmour after his removal?

Questions & Answers for the 1995 session of the 43rd Synod

- (ii) Is it true that the Pymble Parish Council indicated they would assist in those arrangements but have now withdrawn that promise because they cannot afford it?
- (d) As the Synod funds central administration, can the Synod be assured that a clergyman who loses his license will be first informed by Church authorities that he can no longer conduct marriages rather than being told first by the Registrar of Births Deaths and Marriages that his name has been removed from the List of Marriage Celebrants?
- (e) What circumstances must be satisfied before Mr Gilmour is given authority to conduct marriages, when invited, according to the rites of the Anglican Church?

To which the Archbishop replied –

I am informed the answers are as follows –

- (a) This question is out of order since it asks for information which is already publicly available. In its Supplementary Report to the Synod, the Standing Committee reported that a settlement with Mr Gilmour of \$65,000 has been negotiated and the money paid to Mr Gilmour's solicitors at Mr Gilmour's request.
- (b) This question is out of order since it seeks an opinion.
- (c) (i) Yes
 - (ii) The Parish contributed a sum which was offset against the financial assistance I provided to Mr Gilmour.
- (d) This question is out of order as it seeks an assurance about the future.
- (e) A member of the clergy must hold the licence of the Archbishop or the bishop of another Diocese before he can be authorised to conduct marriages according to the rites of the Anglican Church.

8. Southern Cross (1)

The Rev Maxwell Bonner asked –

- (a) In the light of the nature of the worldwide publicity received by the actor Hugh Grant this year, why did the September issue of the Southern Cross newspaper publish a review of his M rated film "Nine Months" and, on the front page, further draw attention to the review and with a photograph?
- (b) Is there any evidence that secular film reviews promote godliness and piety?
- (c) In the light of scriptures like Philippians 4:8 and the long tradition in evangelicalism advising caution in and, frequently, total abstention from questionable amusements and since film reviews are often written by senior staff of "Southern Cross", does "Southern Cross" believe such reviews promote the well-being of the Church and the glory of God?

To which the Archbishop replied –

I am informed the answer is as follows –

- (a) The review of *Nine Months* was run - and flagged on the front of *Southern Cross Newspaper* - in order to offer a Christian response to what was already proving to be a widely viewed film and to serve as a guide for Christians wanting to choose suitable viewing.

As the review said, "The fundamental theme - commitment vs. selfishness - is about coming to terms with your responsibility towards others, rather than your claim on a comfortable life, and there is a strong pro-family sentiment. Unfortunately, it's still not one for the kids. Although much of the humour seems pitched at youngsters, swearing and sexual innuendo have been thrown in seemingly to tempt older audiences, and the M-rating is a shame. At

last we have a mostly gentle, amusing and positive film to see, and we still can't bring the family along."

- (b) No comment can be made about secular film reviews. However, *Christian* reviews have proved and are proving helpful in equipping Christians with the tools to critique and evaluate the film medium, as well as to help resist the process of conforming to the values of this age.
- (c) Strictly this question is out of order since it contains expressions of opinion. However, from a 1992 survey, more than 85% of *Southern Cross* readers and subscribers regularly viewed secular films or videos, and the large majority of these readers found the reviews to be helpful.

9. Women Deacons (2)

The Rev Ian Crooks asked –

Of the 7 women deacons in full-time parish ministry in the Diocese mentioned in question 2 answered on 12 October, how many receive a full-time stipend?

To which the Archbishop replied –

I am informed the answer is 7.

10. Clergy Licences

Dr Laurie Scandrett asked –

What situations dictate whether an ordained person (not licensed to a parish) is issued with a "General Licence" or an "Authority to Officiate"? What is the difference between a "General Licence" and an "Authority to Officiate"? What, if any, are the typical restrictions or conditions that may be included in either of these licences?

To which the Archbishop replied –

The issue of a general licence or an authority to officiate is the responsibility of the Archbishop.

In broad terms –

- (a) a general licence is normally issued to a member of the clergy in the Diocese who has a particular non parochial appointment, such as a lecturer at Moore College, or who has retired in good standing; and
- (b) other appointments are made by way of an authority to officiate.

11. Southern Cross

The Rev Gary Nelson asked –

- (a) Is Synod able to obtain or have the means of obtaining, the actual readership of the Southern Cross rather than how many are distributed?
- (b) What is the cost for publication of the Southern Cross newspaper and quarterly?
- (c) What means does Synod have to evaluate the changes in style and production of the Southern Cross?
- (d) Does Synod have appropriate means to express dissatisfaction with Southern Cross other than in reducing the allocation of money in the Appropriations Ordinance?

To which the Archbishop replied –

I am informed the answers are as follows –

- (a) No - the actual readership of *Southern Cross Newspaper* is not known. Parishes in the diocese are contacted in order to maintain as accurate as possible a distribution base with minimal wastage. Approximately one third of all parishes have so far been contacted, and current estimates are that around 90% of the copies distributed are being read. Many single copies are read by more than one person.
- (b) The budgeted production cost for *Southern Cross Quarterly* and *Southern Cross Newspaper* is \$305,000 for 1995, including printing, distribution, salaries and all on-costs, approximately one third of which will be recovered from advertising and subscription income. In 1996, the amount of costs so recovered is projected to be significantly higher.
- (c) Readers' surveys are conducted regularly, and the results are considered by the Anglican Media Council. Consequential changes are made whenever necessary.
- (d) Yes. The Anglican Media Council governs all the work of Anglican Media, and gladly considers all matters brought to its attention, whether of support or of criticism. The Publisher and Managing Editor are also available to discuss matters relating the publications.

12. Women Deacons (3)

Canon Robert Forsyth asked –

How many women deacons in parochial appointments are supported wholly by the parish involved?

To which the Archbishop replied –

I am informed that the answer is 2.

13. Canon Law Commission Report

The Rev Dr Glenn Davies asked –

Noting paragraph 14.011 of the 1981 Canon Law Commission Report which states the opinion that “no clergyman (unless the Diocesan Ordinance otherwise specifies) could be proceeded against in respect of an offence which might arise under some ancient Canon Law (or even under the 1603 Canons themselves)”, is there any ordinance operative in the Diocese of Sydney which specifies otherwise?

To which the Archbishop replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows.

This question is out of order under Standing Order 27 since it seeks a legal opinion. However in relation to the matters which may give rise to a charge against an ordained person, the questioner is referred to section 54(2) of the 1961 Constitution (page 138 of the *7th Handbook*), the Offences Ordinance 1962 (a copy of which may be obtained from the Diocesan Secretary) and the Church Ministry Ordinance 1993 (pages 260 and 261 of *The 7th Handbook*).