

HIGHLIGHTS

OF THE CHURCH IN WALES GOVERNING BODY APRIL 2007

Women in the world and in the Church

Archbishop Barry's Presidential Address to the Governing Body of the Church in Wales

In the year that sees the tenth anniversary of the Ordination of Women to the Priesthood in Wales, Archbishop Barry reflected on the place of women in society today. "Every single religious tradition has in the past denigrated women and seen them as second class citizens," he told members of the 200-strong Governing Body in his Presidential Address. "Institutional Christianity has for the most part enforced a patriarchal mindset." For example, "the Christian Church was invariably on the wrong side of the debate when it came to the emancipation of women and giving them the vote."



Violence against women

The former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan said "Violence against women is perhaps the most shameful human rights violence and it is perhaps the most pervasive. It knows no boundaries of geography, culture or wealth". Archbishop Barry quoted statistics to show this is a UK problem, with one in two women experiencing some form of domestic violence, sexual assault or stalking. An average of two women a week are killed in Britain by a male partner or former partner. "We may have abolished slavery but there are still people who are in chains in our world and they are for the most part women and children. Women make up four-fifths of the poorest people in our world. Globalisation promises further relegation of women to low paid or part-time labour whilst they still have the primary responsibility for bringing up the young."

Women in the Priesthood

Archbishop Barry is the only serving bishop left in Wales to have ordained women to the priesthood in 1997. "I am extremely glad that the Church in Wales took this step because I happen to think that the priestly ministry of the whole church



Some of those ordained in St Woolos Cathedral, Newport on 11th January 1997, with Bishop Dominic

has been enriched and women have brought to the priesthood new and different gifts. My experience has been, that even when parishes have been a bit hesitant about the prospect of a woman cleric, once there, the acceptance has been overwhelming."

"Those who are opposed to the ordination of women have for the most part been gracious, courteous and kind to women priests in neighbouring parishes, deanery chapters and diocesan events. Bishop David Thomas, whilst obviously holding on to his own theological convictions, has been

especially so." However, Archbishop Barry knows that there have been occasions when that has not been the case, and "should not happen at all in the Church of God, where we ought to accept diversity in unity and where we should be gracious and courteous to one another. Discrimination may not be intentional but it does happen and it has happened to me simply because of the views that I hold on women priests and I know on the odd occasion that I have been snubbed or ignored how painful and undermining it can be. How much more so to those who are women."

Women in the Episcopate

Archbishop Barry is totally convinced by the theological arguments as to why women should be ordained as bishops. "On the human side the priest/bishop represents the Christian community to God and since that community consists of women as well as men, it is right that it should be open to women as well as men. On the divine side since the priest/bishop represents the risen Christ who redeemed both men and women, ordaining women is a testimony to that redemptive inclusiveness."

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Women in the Episcopate



The Governing Body met at the University of Wales, Swansea, on 11th and 12th April 2007

"I do not personally see how having agreed to ordaining women to both the diaconate and priesthood the Church can logically exclude women from the episcopate, since the Church in Wales believes in a three fold order."

Women in decision making

In September 2006, the GB passed a motion asking for a review of the representation of women in the structures of the Church in Wales. "It surely cannot be right in a church where most of the worshippers are women, only a third of the membership of this Governing Body consists of women, with two dioceses having no elected women clerics, another just one and a further two dioceses two women each. In a Representative Body of twenty-five there is one woman, in the Provincial Standing Committee of twenty-three there are two; in the Appointments Sub-Committee none; in the Business Sub-Committee one out of eight; in the Human Resources Committee two out of eight; and in the other three RB Committees none at all." "There is something drastically wrong here and we men would not put up with that position and we as a Church will have to address the issue as a matter of urgency since it does not reflect the membership of the Church in Wales."

Trident



The September 2006 GB overwhelmingly supported a private member's motion deploring the Government's decision to maintain and renew

the Trident nuclear weapons programme. A letter was sent to the Prime Minister; his response this time was that the UK is already setting an example to the world as far as nuclear weapons are concerned because the British Government has already declared a 20% reduction in its nuclear warhead stockpile. But he went on to say, that since no other nuclear weapon state is, or even considering divesting itself of its nuclear weapon capability, Britain cannot do so either. Archbishop Barry thought it would be setting an excellent moral example if it were to do so.

Since then, Parliament has endorsed the Government's plan to replace Trident—with a curtailed debate and no real opportunity for dissent offered. "In our name and without much consultation the Government has decided to renew a weapons system that is morally reprehensible."

Homelessness and housing



Archbishop Barry has in the last year been chairing a Commission into homelessness and poor housing in Wales, set up by Shelter Cymru; it published an interim report at the end of March 2007 and the full report will be published later in the year.

Housing is a major problem in Wales. In 2005:

- over 19000 people were homeless, 6000 of whom were children;
- 35000 children were living in poor housing;
- 43000 children were living in overcrowded conditions;
- 40% of young working families were unable to buy even the lowest cost home;
- mortgage evictions increased by 49% in 2005 over 2004;
- Wales is now the least affordable area in Britain outside London and the Home Counties.

"We believe that homelessness and poor housing are the most important issues in Wales because they affect every other aspect of life such as health, social services, crime and education," said Archbishop Barry. "Tackle the former and you find that you ease the pressure on the latter." The teams of Wales Assembly Government officials concerned with housing and homelessness are committed to tackling the problem and have taken huge strides forward with limited capacity and resource. "But the issue of affordable homes and homelessness still remains a low political priority for the Assembly as a whole, at least judged by the overall resources allocated, compared to, for example, education and health."

The Commission is stressing to the Assembly that there is an urgent need to address the serious shortage of affordable homes in Wales, with planning on a regional basis, recognising that tackling the issue requires leadership and a change of culture at all levels.

GAZA DENTAL PROJECT

The Church in Wales Jubilee Fund, established in 1998 to fund international development projects, has now been wound up, and replaced by the **Gaza Mobile Dental Clinic Project**.

Bishop **David Thomas** explained the reason why the Bench of Bishops decided to continue to support the Dental Clinic:

"When it was announced that the Jubilee Fund would be closing at the end of 2006, a lot of people (among them members of the GB) expressed the hope that our commitment to supporting the mobile dental clinic in Gaza would nevertheless continue. This project had clearly caught the imagination of people here in Wales, and with good reason...The mobile dental clinic is one little ray of hope in the situation in that area, a sign that there are other human beings – you and I – who really do care, who really do want to help...Though its purpose is to make healthcare available to as many people as possible, that Mercedes van driving round the camps and other refugee settlements speaks silently, and therefore with eloquence and integrity, of care and compassion being shown in the name of Our Lord Jesus Christ."

The Church in Wales remains the only reliable source of funding for the Dental Clinic—£16,000 per annum. Cheque should be made payable to *Gaza Dental Project* and sent to Louise Davies, Church in Wales, 39 Cathedral Road, Cardiff, CF11 9XF.



Archbishop launches new website

With the press of a button, Archbishop Barry sent online the new Church in Wales website, replacing the present which was designed seven years ago. The website provides information about the Church in Wales, its beliefs, its structures and its activities. New Diocesan websites are also being launched, complementing the Provincial site, and providing more local information. The Church in Wales website can be viewed in Welsh or English. It is the result of the work of a small group, and in particular the dedication and expertise of the Provincial Creative Resources Officer, **Matt Knight**.



www.churchinwales.org.uk

The new website includes:

- Sections on Baptism, Confirmation, Marriage, and Funeral services, with details about the service, 'frequently asked questions' sections and – where applicable – suggested readings and music.
- Material on what the Church believes about important issues.
- Sections on Prayer, on Healing, and on the heritage of the Church in Wales.
- Easy to understand introductions to the important parts of the Church in Wales structure.
- The ability to sign up to separate RSS feeds to be notified of News and Events in the Church in Wales, Press Releases, or a weekly biblical reflection.

Reports, discussion papers, information sheets and some liturgical publications produced by the Church in Wales are available for download from the website. Within the next few months an on-line shop

will be in operation for all Church in Wales Publications.

Speaking at the launch, the Bishop of St Davids, the Right Reverend **Carl Cooper**, said:

"As a church, we have a duty to find new and fresh ways of communicating the Gospel message. I am excited by the possibilities that the internet opens up to us, and believe that the new website will be an important part of how we as a Church communicate our message."

The chairman of the Provincial Website Group, the Archdeacon of Margam, the Venerable **Philip Morris**, commented:

"The new website is the result of a lot of hard work by the working group. Our priorities with the new website were to produce a website that not only meets the highest technical standards but which can be accessible to all, regardless of their background. We are pleased with the results and look forward to continuing to improve the site in the future."

Mr Nigel Williams, Deputy Chairman of the Standing Committee, reported:

- The September 2007 and April and September 2008 meetings of the Governing Body will be held at Lampeter. A decision has yet to be made on the venue for the April 2009 meeting.
- A review is being conducted of the agendas and business of the GB, and how this can be developed particularly to bring forward outward-looking items more proactively rather than relying on Private Members' Motions.



- For the first time in the history of the GB voting cards for members were used. The three orders of Bishops, Clerics and Laity were identifiable by the use of differently coloured voting cards.
- A revised handbook for New Members has been produced to explain the procedures and principles of GB meetings.
- The Honourable Mr Justice John Griffith Williams has stood down as President of the Disciplinary Tribunal, and His Honour Judge Hugh Jones has retired from membership. Mr Gerard Elias QC has been appointed President, and Mr Andrew Keyser QC to membership of the Tribunal.
- As a result of the resolution passed at the September 2006 GB, a Group has been commissioned to look at the issue of the status of women in the work and structure of the Church in Wales. The Group has been invited to review the representation of women in the work and structures of the Church in Wales, and to make recommendations to the Standing Committee by December 2007 about ways in which the Province can work towards the achievements of the Millennium Development Goals in these respects.





Q *The Church in Wales Constitution Chapter VII, sections 6 et seq, concerned with procedures for finding a new incumbent for a 'vacant cure', seem to be framed on the assumption that nothing formal can be done prior to the incumbency actually becoming vacant.*

We are now, however, in an era in which clerics retire. With normal full-term retirements, impending vacancies are now well known in advance.

Could perhaps the Bench of Bishops and the Standing Committee be invited to review the pros and cons on this issue, so that – if no change is thought desirable – we may be reminded of some of the reasons for retaining the status quo?

- Dr Peter Padley (Swansea & Brecon)

A I agree that where an incumbent has given the statutory three months' notice of retirement or resignation that it is unreasonable to delay a new appointment. This is the opportunity for the present procedures to be reviewed.

- Bishop Dominic (Monmouth)

Q *As of the 1 March 2007 how many people receive a pension from the Church in Wales in the following categories:*

1. retired clerics receiving:

- (a) a full pension*
- (b) 75-99% of a full pension*
- (c) 50-74% of a full pension*
- (d) 49% or less of a full pension*

2. retired clerics' widows(ers) receiving a pension based on their spouse's:

- (a) full pension entitlement*
- (b) 75-99% pension entitlement*
- (c) 50-74% pension entitlement*
- (d) 49% or less pension entitlement*

and how many clergy are entitled in the future (God willing) to receive a Church in Wales pension?

- The Revd Colin Amos (Llandaff)

A The numbers in each category at present are:

1(a) 73; 1(b) 62; 1(c) 61; 1(d) 162.

In addition 63 retired clerics are receiving more than a full incumbent's pension (retired bishops, deans etc). Total 421.

2(a) 72; 2(b) 77; 2(c) 25; 2(d) 44; with 35 widows receiving more than a full incumbent's pension. Total 253.

There are 595 clerics accruing pensions, and 265 who have retained pension benefits after moving to other provinces.

It would be expensive for the Pension Fund to be ring-fenced against unforeseen events. However there is an actuarial review in December 2007 when the whole issue of pensions will be considered including the question of ring-fencing.

- The Venerable Malcolm Squires (St Asaph)

Welsh and English of equal validity

Although the Church in Wales does not have a statutory obligation to provide a language scheme (as set out in the Welsh Language Act 1993) the equality of the Welsh and English languages has been recognised by the Church in Wales from Disestablishment. In 2000 the Standing Committee adopted Guidelines for Good Practice in the use of language by the Church in Wales's provincial bodies. These did not constitute a formal language scheme, but were felt at the time to provide appropriate guidance for the provincial Church.

Subsequently the Bench of Bishops asked the Provincial Language Officer, alongside the diocesan language officers, to work with the Welsh Language Board and others to develop a scheme for the Church in Wales as a whole, drawing from good practice to provide the province, dioceses and parishes with a structured approach for considering their own use of language in taking forward the Church's mission and ministry. The Bench of Bishops and the Standing Committee commended a draft Welsh Language Scheme to the Governing Body.



*The Revd Gwyn ap Gwylim
Church in Wales Language Officer*

The **Bishop of St Davids** introduced the Scheme to the Governing Body. The Church needs a Scheme because the current position across the Church in Wales is inconsistent; the Diocese of Bangor has a validated scheme; none of the other diocese do. However, the Scheme does not

“ *All the provisions of this Scheme are in accordance with the Welsh Language Act 1993, which stipulates that in the conduct of public business in Wales the English and Welsh languages should be treated on a basis of equality, 'so far as is both appropriate in the circumstances and reasonably practicable'.* **”**

provide for uniformity across the Province; it is the right of all to use the language of their choice. It is recognised that services in the Welsh language are not possible in all churches. However “a sensitive linguistic strategy will help all people in Wales respond to the Gospel and to participate in the life and ministry of the Church in the language of their choice.”

The Scheme has been discussed with the Welsh Language Board, which is content to give its approval to the draft. The Scheme will be reviewed annually and a report on its progress will be made to the Welsh Language Board. Any revision will be based on the reviews and on feedback from the Welsh Language Board.



Dioceses and parishes will have to examine their practices and consider that is reasonable and practical in their situation. While there will be variations between parish practice, all parishes are encouraged to make as much use of the Welsh language as possible. In all cases, the external notice board of churches should, over a period of time as they are renewed, include the names of the Church in Wales, diocese, parish and church in both languages. Advice to parishes on any language issue will be provided by the Language Officer, the Revd Gwyn ap Gwylim (☎ 02920 348263 📧 language.cmm@churchinwales.org.uk).

The **Archdeacon of Gower** welcomed the Scheme as a contribution to the effective mission of the Church in the Province. Interest in the Welsh language and the number of Welsh learners is increasing in the urban areas. “We are a bilingual family set in a bilingual nation.”

Raising the Standard in Church Schools

The Bench of Bishops has commissioned a review of the statutory education work undertaken across the Province of Wales. The Review Group will gather information, data and opinion from the faith and education communities in Wales, producing a draft report in early 2008, and a final in the summer.



The Church in Wales as an Education Provider

- 172 primary and secondary schools
- 25000 children and young people attending a Church in Wales School
- 5000 teachers and support staff
- 2000 school governors

The **Bishop of St Asaph**, introducing the Review, emphasised the richness and diversity of Church schools in Wales, small and large schools supporting the highest standards of teaching and learning. The National Curriculum is taught alongside the Gospel proclamation of faith as teachers and support staff live out the Christian vocation to teach and produce children with Christian values at heart.

The Review is being undertaken because education in Wales is moving apace. We need to be sure that the impact of our schools is as good as it can be. The Review comes at a time when many are challenging the involvement of the Church in statutory education. The Deering Report in England emphasised that “church schools are at the centre of the Church’s mission to the nation”; the Welsh Review will be a challenge to the Church in Wales to ensure our schools are in the same position.

The Revd **Edwin Counsell**, Church in Wales Education Officer, outlined some of the difficult questions the Review Group would be asking: are our Church schools selective? what is our impact on children’s learning? where are the children on Sundays? The Group would be gathering information from schools, churches

Terms of Reference

To review the contribution of the Church in Wales to the education of our nation, making proposals for the further development of this role and relationship with Wales as a learning country.

In assessing the contribution to lifelong learning in Wales today, the Review Group should consider:

1. The role of the Church in Wales as a stakeholder in education in Wales, including the dioceses and their use of Diocesan Trust funds.
2. The impact, standards and effectiveness of Church in Wales schools in serving the children and young people of Wales and their communities.
3. The impact of Church in Wales schools on the Church in Wales.
4. The personal and professional development of teachers and school leaders.
5. Structures of training, pastoral care, support and nurture in further and higher education.

and families. Working Groups will look at primary schools, secondary schools, further and higher education, initial and on-going teacher training, and education and the local community in Wales.

Education is the most powerful weapon you can use to change the world.

- Nelson Mandela

“Trinity College, Carmarthen, has been training teachers especially for church schools in Wales since 1848,” said the Revd **Mary Thorley**, head of the Department of Education Studies at the College. Over the years the College has expanded providing a diversity of courses; of the 2000 present students, 450 are involved in teacher training. The College will play its part in the Education Review, looking at itself critically as part of the education life of the Province. The Review will help the Church in its mission and outreach to the young people who will be the movers and shakers in the next generation. “It is an opportunity to make a difference in the name of God.”



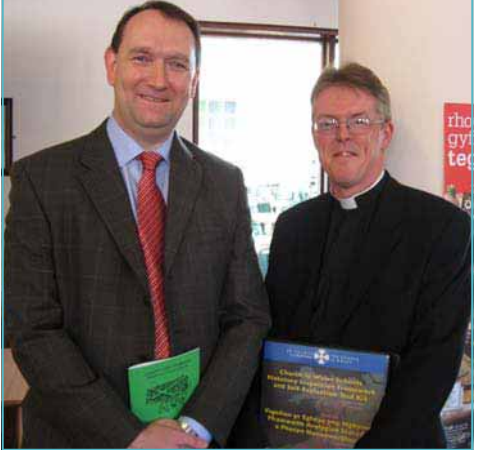
Q In the last ten years the number of residential and nursing homes has increased, and a number of purpose built homes are being opened catering for 50 and more people. The majority of these homes are now profit-making concerns and many are run by large companies. We understand that the Welsh Assembly require these homes to provide spiritual resources for their clients.

We, as a church, have always felt that there is a ministry to these homes, but we are also aware that many parishes have to bring in outside assistance (often from retired clergy) to fulfil this ministry. We understand that in some parishes this is almost a full-time ministry. As far as we are aware, the managers of many of these homes offer nothing in the way of expenses to the clergy for fulfilling these statutory requirements, so that the parishes, and in some cases their incumbents, are paying the expenses themselves. We ask if the Church in Wales has any policy regarding this matter and, if not, whether it should consider formulating a policy

- The Revd Canon Roger Brown (St Asaph)

A The care of residents in nursing homes is recognised as part of the pastoral ministry of parishes. A group is working with the Wales Assembly Government to produce a policy on spiritual care and guidance in the NHS; when the policy is approved it may be extended to residential homes. Therefore it would be premature for the Church in Wales to produce a policy. In many parishes lay people are involved in this ministry and are licensed to take the Sacrament to residential homes; services are taken on rota with other denominations, so the burden is not solely on Church in Wales clerics.

- Bishop Dominic



Mr Ian Millar, Chief Executive of Denbighshire County Council, Chair of the Education Review Group, with the Revd Edwin Counsell, Church in Wales Education Officer

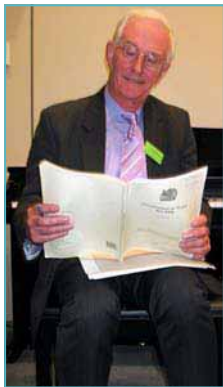
GOVERNMENT OF WALES

One of the most important Acts in Wales since the Act of Union comes into force on 9th May. Mr **David Lambert** (Llandaff), Research Fellow in Public Law in Cardiff Law School, advised the GB of the implications for the Church of the legislation contained within the Government of Wales Act 2006.



The National Assembly will now be able to make laws within various 'Fields' which can make the same provisions as Acts of the United Kingdom Parliament. Enabling powers - called 'Matters' - to make these laws will be given by Parliament. The Assembly will not only be able to make laws which are different to laws contained in Acts of Parliament, but also to disapply Acts which would otherwise contradict the Assembly's laws, or amend or add to such Acts. The extent of the Fields show that the impact of Assembly laws will have considerable effect on many aspects of daily life in Wales. Among bodies that will be particularly affected will be the Churches.

Particular Fields, for example rural development, ancient monuments and historic buildings, education and training, and tourism, gives an 'extraordinary opportunity' for the Church to really influence proposed legislation, Mr Lambert emphasised. The Church in Wales is able to propose areas for legislation, talk to Assembly members, and make representation at standing committee stages. The Church must take the initiative in setting up processes for influencing the Assembly, and stop laws it thinks unacceptable and unreasonable. From May 9th we will have a brand new Assembly with a brand new Act and a brand new written Constitution for Wales. "The Assembly needs help to draft legislation. We have as the Church so much knowledge in so many fields. If we don't help, I fear the consequences—and we would only have ourselves to blame."



David Lambert

DIOCESAN PRESENTATION: MONMOUTH



Promoting Growth—that's the challenge facing the Diocese of Monmouth, said Bishop **Dominic** in his presentation to the GB. "It is not just to sustain a diocesan

organisation, but to renew the Church, to make new Christians and to build the kingdom of God."

"We agreed as a diocese that we needed a two-winged approach—to minister in traditional ways, and also to explore new ways of being the Church."



- A Parish Development Advisor, the Revd John Leach, was appointed to help parishes discover ways of doing things differently;
- All stipendiary clergy went through a 2-year leadership programme—as a result some have changed their leadership styles with encouraging results;
- Deaneries have produced Mission Plans to identify needs in the light of the reduction in the number of clergy. These have been incorporated into a strategy document, *Hope for Monmouth*, launched at the 2005 Diocesan Conference.



The document highlights conditions for growth and a vision of what kind of diocese Monmouth wants to be. The Deanery plans are summarised, and then plans are outlined as to how to make the vision a reality—a course on evangelism, establishing 'cutting edge' mission projects, such as a youth church in Newport, training partnerships with St Michael's College, Vocation Days etc.

The diocese is formally linked with

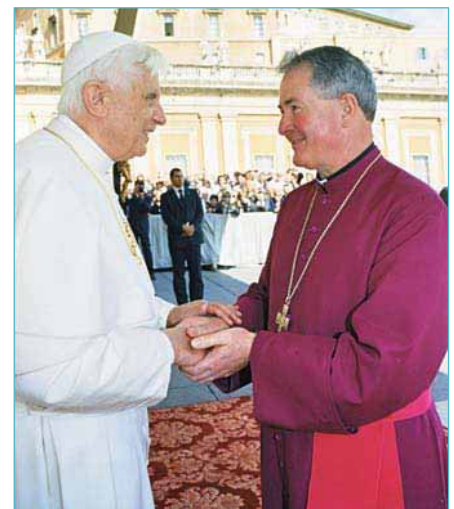
The Diocese of Monmouth covers what used to be called Gwent and has three distinct areas—the urban areas of Newport and east Cardiff, the beautiful rural areas of the east, and the Valleys, still recovering from the collapse of the coal and steel industries.



the Diocese of Highveld in South Africa, and there have been many two-way visits. This year, people in the Diocese of Monmouth were encouraged to go without a meal on Ash Wednesday and each Friday in Lent and for the money saved to be given to help feed undernourished children living in an informal settlement in the Highveld where between 30% and 50% of the people have HIV/AIDS.

Church members are encouraged to engage with political, social and secular issues. A church in Newport is used for a drug users rehabilitation centre.

Young people services (YES) are attracting hundreds on a regular basis. Vocations to the ordained ministry are on the upturn. There is a greater emphasis on all-age worship and creating a culture of welcome in our churches. Above all, it has been encouraging to see parishes changing their focus from one of survival to one of missionary outlook, as they produce their Mission Action Plan and put it into operation.



Bishop Dominic calls in on the 'local bishop' during last year's clergy pilgrimage to Rome

Supporting persecuted Christians

While we are all too familiar with the poverty and disease throughout the world, and in various ways try to alleviate that suffering, we are less aware of the terrible and unjust plight of Christians in countries opposed to the Gospel. A Private Members motion proposed by Mrs **Terrie Smith** (Monmouth) and seconded by the Revd. **Jonathan Williams** (Monmouth) drew the attention of the GB to Christians who suffer discrimination, oppression and persecution as a consequence of their faith. It was passed *nem.con*.

"We all have different crosses to bear," said Mrs Smith, "but when we look at the wider world, we can see what some Christians are suffering on a far wider scale than we do." There are areas where Christians, in the minority, are suffering as a result of proclaiming the Gospel, where converts are imprisoned, tortured, even executed. "We do not always hear about this. If we knew about their situation, it would help us understand and pray." "When we read of the suffering of persecuted Christians, we can be stirred out of our lethargy and apathy. These persecuted Christians stand up for their faith and make new converts—are we willing to stand up for our faith?" "This motion calls on us to do something positive for persecuted Christians—to pray with understanding."

The Revd Jonathan Williams reminded the GB of the comments of people on hearing of the 'banning' of Christmas in parts of the UK—"Isn't it dreadful the way Christianity is being persecuted in this country?" "But these attacks on the Christian faith are nothing compared with what our brothers and sisters in Christ face in other countries." He called on members of the GB to keep informed, to make sure people in parishes are informed, to remind people what real persecution is all about—and pray that persecuted Christians may have the knowledge of the presence of the crucified Christ with them, and the strength to continue to stand up for their faith.

Mrs **Gillian Knight** (Swansea and Brecon) supported the motion because she had heard at first hand of the astonishment of some of the persecuted Christians at the unawareness of their brothers and sisters in Christ of their situation.

The Venerable **Glyndwr Hackett** (Monmouth) suggested parishes be involved with those helping asylum seekers. "These are people who desperately need to be befriended. Make contact with them and hear stories of how people have lived through persecution."

The Motion

That the Governing Body draw the attention of the Church in Wales to the persecution of Christians in certain countries and make parishes aware of the work of organisations which seek to support those suffering such persecution.



www.opendoorsuk.org

Open Doors is the world's largest international Christian persecution charity providing Bibles, training, community development projects and support for persecuted Christians



www.barnabasfund.org

The Barnabas Fund seeks to support Christians where they suffer discrimination, oppression and persecution as a consequence of their faith.

Responsibility for Ministry Training Costs

In April 2005 the GB approved the block grant funding arrangement for dioceses, which included ministry training costs. However, in June 2006, the Bench of Bishops raised a number of concerns and felt that since ordinands were being trained for ministry in the Church in Wales and not for one particular diocese, that it would be fairer for the costs to be shared across the Church through the Representative Body. On this basis, the GB agreed that the cost of training for Ministry be taken out of the block grant arrangements from January 2009 and revert to payment 75% by the Representative Body and 25% by the diocese. The level of block grant to each diocese would be reduced accordingly.

St Michael's College, Llandaff

The GB received the written report of St Michael's College, Llandaff. The College has built well on the rapid changes in the previous year. A

management review in the autumn of 2006, and new staff appointments, means that the College is beginning to find its new identity. The College has now devolved into five areas of work, each with its own budget and staff team. These are: residential training; non-residential training;

conference facilities; ministry development; and chaplaincy studies. The five areas are co-ordinated by a strategy team chaired by the Principal. The College has 16 residential students, two non-residential ordinands, doing a degree full-time and three foreign students working on higher degrees.



WORSHIP AT THE GOVERNING BODY



The Diocese of St Asaph led the worship at this Governing Body. The opening Bible Study was given by Canon **Tudor Griffiths** on Ephesians 2:11-22, reflecting on breaking down the barriers and being set free in Christ. He quoted an East African saying "At the Cross, the ground is level."

Collection

The collection of £752.65 at the GB Eucharist



is to be given to the family of Fr Paul Bennett, vicar of Aberdare St Fagans, murdered outside his vicarage on 14th March.

A Fund has been set up to assist the family, and donations can be sent to the Fr Paul Bennett Memorial Fund, 39 Cathedral Road, Cardiff, CF11 9XF.

The Governing Body next meets on 19th & 20th September 2007, at the University of Wales, Lampeter.

Equality—or division?

Ten years after the Governing Body passed a Bill allowing the ordination of women to the priesthood, the Bishops of the Church in Wales initiated a period of discussion within the Church to help them prepare a Bill to enable women to be ordained to the episcopate in Wales. As part of the process of discernment, a discussion took place at the April 2007 GB, with no motion and no vote.

In an opening statement supporting the proposal, Canon **Richard Pain** (Monmouth) recognised the contribution women have made to the ministry of the Church – but they are not represented in senior positions. He outlined four reasons why he thought women should be ordained as bishops:

- The ecclesial norm is that any priest is eligible to become a bishop. Women bishops would complete the pattern, maintain the integrity of orders and rationalise an ecclesial abnormality.
- Women are seen as eligible for any other ministry—it is extraordinary that the Church does not offer full equality.
- The perceived inequality blunts the message of the Gospel, portraying a message of prejudice.
- Some provinces within the Anglican Communion have already ordained women as bishops, and others are considering. The Church of England is working towards a legislative process.

Canon Pain used Scripture, Tradition and Reason in his argument for women bishops. In the pre-Fall, men and women are held equal in honour and in role; Christ restores creation to its original state; the ordination of women to the episcopate is one step towards restoring the new order. The

Anglican Church is a reforming, reasoned and balanced Church, and opening the episcopate to women is natural to its tradition. Women already give good leadership in other areas of society, and reason dictates that women should be allowed to be made bishops because of the principles of equality and justice.



For: Richard Pain



Against: Pat Davies

In an opening statement against, Miss **Patricia Davies** (Llandaff) saw it as essential that the validity of the Sacraments should be protected. This is achieved by the three-fold ministry, traditionally restricted to the male gender by the majority of Christians. The Reformation maintained the traditional apostolic ministry in the Anglican Church; scriptural record that Christ did not choose women apostles cannot be explained away. “It is not for us as a small province to change tradition.” The unity of the Church is preserved by the harmony of priests with their bishop in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. The bishop is the focus of unity; therefore all must be able to recognise the bishop, consecrated in apostolic succession from male apostles.

If the Church in Wales were to go ahead, it would impair our relations with other Anglican and episcopal churches, with grave consequences for the mission for the Church. While Miss Davies fully believes that any work in the Church that can be done

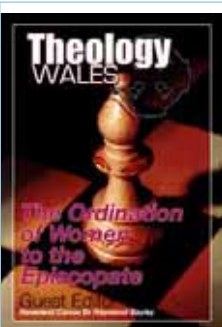
The Timetable



- April 2006: Statement from Bench of Bishops initiating a period of discussion within each diocese between September 2006 and April 2007.
- August 2006: Special edition of *Theology Wales* circulated to all parishes.
- April 2007: Discussion at the Governing Body.
- Summer 2007: Bill prepared.
- April 2008: Bill brought to Governing Body for consideration and decision.

by a lay person should be open to men and women alike, the ordination of women to the priesthood has already caused significant difficulties for many – and they would not be able in conscience accept the sacramental ministry of a woman bishop. Provision would need to be made for a Provincial Assistant Bishop in an enhanced and jurisdictional role.

There were 28 contributors to the wide-ranging discussion, for and against, which followed, picking up on the points raised by the opening speakers. Canon **Madeleine Brady** (Bangor) recognised that this is an issue that will not go away, and does not want such positive discrimination against women—but the whole profile of women in the Church needs to be sorted first. Concern was expressed by a number of speakers about the position of those who could not accept the ministry of a woman bishop if legislation was passed. “Full constitutional provision must be made for that significant minority within the Church as part of the duty of care,” said Fr **Colin Amos** (Llandaff).



The special edition of *Theology Wales* on the ordination of women to the Episcopate may be viewed online and downloaded from the new Church in Wales website by clicking on Resources and then Back Issues.

HIGHLIGHTS

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