

"Everyman" Worker Retires



A painting of Chief Commissioner Stacey Kruck O.B.E., and his wife Hazel, was presented to them, upon their retirement, by Representatives of the Everyman's Welfare Service.

Photo Ramon Williams

John Merriment

At its meeting on the 24th May, 1983, the New Areas Committee of the Sydney Diocese passed a resolution concerning the late Rev. John Merriment whose funeral had taken place earlier that day at St. John's Cathedral, Parramatta.

John Merriment died after a short battle with cancer. He had been Resident Minister in the new housing district of Tregear since 1971. The address at his funeral was given by the Rev. Peter Watson under whom he had served as Curate for five years.

Prior to entering the ministry, John was a plumber. He carried with him into the ministry a down to earth approach to people. This caused him to be greatly loved in the parish of Tregear, which includes half of the suburbs of Mt. Druitt.

One of the strengths of John's ministry was his work with teenagers. Over his twelve years at Tregear, many young people had come to a personal faith in Jesus and had grown toward Christian maturity as a result of his ministry with them.

The resolution passed by the New Areas Committee was:

"This Committee expresses to God its gratitude for the ministry of the late John Merriment within the District of Tregear. Mr. Merriment exercised a godly ministry in that District and will be remembered for his humility, courage, faithfulness and friendliness. We share with his wife Kay and family together with the congregation of Tregear a great sense of grief and loss."

The accountancy profession church service

An inter-denominational church service for the accountancy profession was held at St. Andrew's Cathedral, Sydney at 7.00 p.m. on Sunday, June 5, 1983.

The service was conducted by the Dean of Sydney, the Very Rev. Lance R. Shilton. The Bible lessons were read by Mr. Len Spencer B.A., F.A.S.A., National Vice-President of the Australian Society of Accountants and Mr. Michael Sharpe B.Ec., F.C.A., National President of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Australia and a member of the Accountants Christian Fellowship. Both Mr. Spencer and Mr. Sharpe are professing Christians and each are actively engaged in their own church.

The preacher was the Rev. Brian F. V. King A.C.A., B. Comm., B.D., T.H.L., Dip.RE., Rector of St. Paul's Wairoonga. Mr. King, before entering the Ministry, was in practice as a Chartered Accountant in Sydney.

The success of the service encouraged officials to make the service an annual event. A complimentary tape recording of the service was sent to all country members of the Fellowship.

Mr. Whyte reported that since the inaugural meeting of the A.C.F. on February 15, 1980, the Fellowship has grown and is making its impact in the accountancy profession. Item 1 of the Constitution states:—

"The object of the Accountants Christian Fellowship is to promote fellowship among Christians engaged in, and preparing for, accountancy in Australia, and by so doing seek to extend the Kingdom of God."

The mailing list exceeds 130 and the number is growing rapidly. A nominal annual subscription is levied to meet the running costs of the Fellowship.

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Welsh preacher to visit Australia

The Rev. Hywel R. Jones is visiting Australia with his wife, Nansi from mid-August till mid-September.

Mr. Jones was born in South Wales in 1937 and graduated from the University of North Wales, Bangor, in 1960 in Hebrew and Semitic Studies. He studied theology in the University of Cambridge, graduating B.A. in 1962 and M.A. in 1967.

Converted in 1952 at the age of 15, he heard the call to the ministry and was ordained in the Presbyterian Church of Wales in 1963, and served in the pastorate of Llandudno on the north coast. He succeeded from the Presbyterian Church of Wales in 1965, and later succeeded the Rev. Iain Murray at Grove Chapel, London.

Mr. Jones is now the minister of Wrexham Independent Evangelical Church, affiliated with the Evangelical Movement of Wales. For two years he lectured in the Old Testament in the Bible Training Institute of Glasgow. Presently he is lecturing on Biblical Studies in the London Theological Seminary and in the Theological Training Course, established by the Evangelical Movement of Wales.

The Rev. Hywel Jones is a scholar of no mean standing, and is a strong champion for the great doctrines of the evangelical faith. He has given lectures at the Annual Conferences of the British Evangelical Council, of which he is a member and chairman of the Study Conference, as well as Consulting Editor of the B.E.C. Theological Journal, "Foundation". He contributes articles to the monthly English paper, "Evangelical Times", of which he is one of the Directors. He is also on the Council of the Evangelical Library, at which he gave the Annual Lecture in 1970 on Thomas Cartwright. He is a modern Puritan with a message for today.

Mr. Jones is coming to Australia at the invitation of the Evangelical College of Biblical Studies, the Bible Union of Australia (Vic.), and several independent evangelical churches.

1983 ARPA AWARDS

The Australian Religious Press Association awards for 1983 were made at the annual dinner held in Brisbane on June 4th.

Judges for the awards were Mr. K. Kavanagh, the editor of The Courier Mail and Mr. Bob Howarth of the Daily Sun.

Both judges spoke of their interest in the overall high standard of the entries. Sydney publications — The Catholic Weekly and Southern Cross won Section 3 — for the Best Editorials for a newspaper and magazine.

The editorial from Southern Cross, the monthly magazine of the Anglican diocese of Sydney, titled "Christian Response to War" was written by Bishop Donald Cameron. Bishop Cameron is a member of the newly appointed Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC II). He is bishop responsible for the northern region of the diocese.

The inaugural Gutenberg award for overall excellence in religious journalism was won by The Catholic Leader — from Brisbane.

Chinese visit

A delegation from THE CHINA CHRISTIAN COUNCIL, led by Bishop K. H. Ting will be visiting Australia from March 15-29, 1983 as guests of the Australian Council of Churches. The ACC was invited to China in April, 1982 and in this reciprocal visit a group of up to ten Chinese Christians will be visiting Australian Churches.

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Letters

Do you like receiving letters? I certainly do. They are a wonderful means of keeping in touch with family and friends who often live so far away.

A friend gave me this little poem:

Letters are a friend's best way
To brighten up another's day;
And as I write I think of you
It brightens up my own day too!"

How true that is. When we write we are saying to our friends we care, care enough to share with you our joys and sorrows.

Some people say, "I don't get many letters". But "how often do you write", I ask!

It takes time to write. In fact it takes time to do almost anything helpful and worthwhile. A few minutes spent writing can bring hours (even days) of joy to someone far away and lonely.

"I wrote a little letter
It didn't take a minute
I sent my love, and really
That's all that there was in it.
Back came a grateful word to say,
Thanks for your note — it made my day!"

There was a man who lived long ago. He was in a Roman prison. He spent a good deal of time writing letters. His letters and others make up a large part of the New Testament. I'm glad Paul and others took time to write because through them God chose to make His love and ways known to us.

Someone has said that the Bible is "God's love letter to mankind". I'm glad God took the time and the initiative to guide men to write so that I can be warned, comforted, and encouraged.

Yes, letters are good to receive. They all deserve a reply. Spend some time to encourage a friend by writing to them. Make time to be encouraged yourself by reading and thanking God for His letter to you.

Peter Brain

Visit of Ronald Sider to Australia — September 12-25

Ronald Sider, prominent American author and evangelical, will be visiting Australia in September this year. He will be in Melbourne from September 12-17 and in Sydney from September 18-25.

Coming from a Mennonite background, Ronald Sider's work represents an evangelical viewpoint which focuses strongly on social responsibility and Christianity. He is author of *Rich Christians In An Age of Hunger and Living More Simply*. His most recent book, *Nuclear Holocaust and Christian Hope* is an articulate plea for non-proliferation policies. It attacks the traditional Just War and Deterrent Theories as a justification for maintaining the nuclear arms race and it commends the involvement of Christians and church leaders in the anti-nuclear movement.

Mr. Sider is also an outspoken critic of Ronald Reagan's policies on Central America, especially Nicaragua.

During his visit to Sydney Ronald Sider will address a number of meetings including one on the Christian response to the threat of nuclear war. It is hoped that the Australian launch of his book *Nuclear Holocaust and Christian Hope* will coincide with his visit.

Ronald Sider's views stand opposed to those often espoused by the Moral Majority and similar movements.

The Australian



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Religion in Education in NSW Government Schools Minister Acts Committee set up to advise Director General

The N.S.W. Minister for Education, Mr. Ron Mulock, has announced plans to set up a consultative committee on Special Religious Education in Schools. He made the announcement in response to a set of questions presented to him by the Church Record.

Editorial

In the Australian Church Record of April 4 this year we printed an Editorial entitled *Please Minister*. In it we asked why the Report on Religion in Education in N.S.W. Government Schools, received by the Minister of Education in November 1980, was still waiting to be acted upon. The Editorial pleaded with the present Minister for Education to implement those recommendations relating to Special Religious Education immediately and to follow up the Recommendations on General Religious Education with further discussion.

We sent a copy of that Editorial to Mr. Mulock on March 30th with a request for an interview at his earliest convenience.

Story

The Australian Church Record featured a front page story as a follow up to that Editorial in the issue of May 16th. An appointment for an interview with Mr. Mulock was cancelled at the last minute because we were assured that the Minister would make an important announcement as soon as he had cleared it with the Premier. It was suggested to us that this would occur within the following two weeks. Instead of the interview Mr. Mulock issued a statement to us which we printed in that story.

On 16th May our office sent a copy of the story of May 16th to Mr. Mulock with a further request for an interview. In that letter the Editor wrote, "Thank you for the statement you sent us just prior to



Mr. Mulock, Labour Member, NSW Government.

publication. As you will see from the report, it left many questions unanswered in our minds and we intend to follow the matter up."

That letter was followed up by a phone call on 8th of June seeking an

appointment. Further calls occurred until 24th June when the Editor phoned Mr. Mulock and presented a series of questions which were to be printed in our edition of July 11th along with any answers he might care to give.

Between the story of 16th May and the 24th June the Church Record sought to discover from other groups what was happening. The Inter Church Consultative Commission, acting on behalf of the various denominations, told us that nothing further had happened. A spokesman for them was critical of parts of the Minister's statement to us. He told us that the bodies claimed by the Minister to have opposed the Report had objections to the General Religious Education proposals but that the I.C.C.C. had no knowledge of any objections to the Special Religious Education proposals. (It should be noted that the I.C.C.C. has no knowledge of the Anti Discrimination Board's comments since that Board refused to communicate with them on the matter!)

Questions

As a result of the frustration being felt by the various church bodies and encouraged by the response from our readers to both our Editorial and the follow up story we put the following questions to the Minister on the 24th

June:

- 1) Why will the Minister not grant us a personal interview?
- 2) Does the Minister acknowledge that: Recommendations 13 — 35 pp 107-110 and Recommendations 36 — 70 pp 110-115 can be treated separately?
- 3) If so, can the Minister give any reason why this has not happened?
- 4) If responses were received up until January 1982 why in the 18 months since has no further discussion been held? (Why has the I.C.C.C. no knowledge of any objections raised?)
- 5) When will the Minister disclose the nature of those objections to: the I.C.C.C. The Australian Church Record?
- 6) What has happened in the past two months about the Minister's promise (written) to set up a Consultative Committee? We were told (verbally) that something would happen within two weeks!
- 7) Is the Minister prepared to discuss each recommendation with us to justify his claim about resources being required? If not why not?
- 8) What has been the response of: the Churches through official channels the public since our story?

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Moore College Quits Sydney College of Divinity

Moore Theological College has withdrawn from the proposed Sydney College of Divinity. The College has acted because the broadening of the purposes of the proposed College could lead to Moore having to compromise its theological position if it remains involved.

Planning

The Sydney College of Divinity has been in the planning stages for about eight years. When the N.S.W. Parliament passed legislation which forbids Colleges from awarding degrees without the approval of the Higher Education Board of N.S.W. representatives of all the major theological Colleges in N.S.W. came together to plan a central organisation which would satisfy the Higher Education Board.

The College agreed to draw up a scheme which would enable the various Colleges to supervise their own degree programme under the supervision of a body which would ensure standards. That body is to be the Sydney College of Divinity.

Moore College was a keen supporter of this concept and has been involved from the beginning of discussions. Not only has the Principal, Canon D.B. Knox regularly attended the meetings of the interim committee but its Vice-Principal Dr. W. Dumbrell, served as Secretary to the Committee until last year when he went overseas.

Twelve months ago negotiations were completed and a document drawn up which the representatives from each College agreed was acceptable. This delineated the College and its methods of working. It was further decided that the best way to bring the College into being was to incorporate it under the Companies Act.

At that stage the Principal of Moore College and the faculty of the College recommended to the Moore College Committee that Moore should be a part of the Sydney College of Divinity, to be

Widening of objectives

However, when the Memorandum and Articles of Association were drawn up Moore College claimed that they had been widened. "In the opinion of Moore College," Dr. Knox told the Church Record, "the Memorandum and Articles as drawn up do not reflect the unity of purpose which had been agreed on. The College has changed its direction."

Dr. Knox told us that it was the implications of these widened objectives that concerned the College. He said that Moore College supported the original purpose of the College which was to set up a supervisory body to ensure proper standards. This body he said should have four functions.

- 1) to ensure that the curriculum of participating Colleges falls within the scope of Christian theology.
- 2) to ensure that the standard of teaching is worthy of a degree.
- 3) to ensure that faculty and library facilities are worthy of a degree granting institution.
- 4) to ensure that the examinations are of a worthy standard for a degree.

Dr. Knox said that this was the only object of the College originally. Now other objectives have been added.

In explaining the reasons for Moore College's withdrawal from the proposed College Dr. Knox stressed that the College had built its reputation on its firm stand for the Gospel and for the principles of Reformed Theology. He said that, under the new proposals, it would be possible for Moore College, through the Sydney College of Divinity, to be

involved in activities which were inimical to the Gospel. He said that unless activities were based on the reformed doctrine of salvation and on the inspiration and authority of scripture they would please neither the College nor its supporters.

Further, he told us, the objectives can be widened in the future by a 75% vote of members. Moore College had requested that any changes should be based on a wider consensus — a majority of 75% including at least one vote from each member institution. This was not accepted.

Disappointed

The Chairman of the Interim Council of the Sydney College of Divinity, Fr. John Hill, told us that he was disappointed with the Moore College withdrawal. He said that he expected that the College would go ahead but with reduced credibility. He said that he did not expect the Higher Education Board to see the withdrawal of Moore as making the College non-viable. Rather, he expected, they would see the six remaining Colleges as being of sufficient stature and prestige to allow acceptance of the College.

Mr. Hill told us that the remaining Colleges did not have the same fears as Moore. He said that they did not see any problems with the objectives which they saw as being implied from the start. "We find it difficult," he said, "to see these as changes." Mr. Hill stressed that the Articles were drawn up in an enabling form rather than a prescriptive form to allow future change without undue difficulty. He said that the College would not be able to operate if individual,

strongly held views, were overridden by the other Colleges and so he did not feel that Moore had any cause to fear.

"Pluralism was not what Moore wanted", he told us.

Difficulties

The Church Record asked Dr. Knox to explain to us the possible difficulties that could arise if Moore remained in the Sydney College of Divinity. He cited the proposal that the Sydney College of Divinity do those things considered desirable to promote professional training as a source of possible problems. "What if the Sydney College of Divinity decided to sponsor a lecture series by someone whose view of theology was unacceptable to us. We would be associated in advertising, could be asked to preside at the lectures and even be expected to propose a vote of thanks to the lecturer," the Principal said. "Our supporters would not accept that," he added.

Moore College will continue its association with the Australian College of Theology. Its degrees are recognised by the Higher Education Board.

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INSIDE

Part 1 of a New Series:
"The Gospel in the City"

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Moore College
Library

Editorial

GOSPEL AND CULTURE

The feature article on Australian culture and the Christian response to it raises the problem of "why do Christians swim against the tide by continuing to engage in missions?"

Pluralism, or multi-culturalism, is now with us as a fact of life, but it is also with us as an ideology. That is, pluralism must not only be recognised as a description of the real situation, it must also be promoted and practised. We must not only respect and appreciate other peoples' cultures, but also not criticise or try to change them.

Polytheism produces Tribalism

Now across this popular belief Christians from all sorts of ethnic backgrounds tramp — or so it appears — with hob-nailed boots, talking of deficiency in the human condition, and worst of all, **change**. Why? Because the gospel proclaims that multi-culturalism is not the last word. The gospel tells of **one God, one faith, one people, one church**. The gospel says that both God himself and his purposes for man have not changed — in fact, they have been most definitively re-affirmed in Jesus Christ.

Multi-culturalism, or pluralism, is in the end just tribalism in a modern western garb. It is polytheism which produces tribalism. And certainly that is the palpable case in the metropolis of Sydney. Further, as with all gods, they are projections of man's own self-centred ambition. This is true when we speak of the more obvious tribal deities of Indian, Turkish, and Italian groups in the community; and it is especially true of the tribal deities of the Anglo-Saxon group. In fact, Anglo-Saxons have become so fragmented by the self-loving, individualistic realise-your-own-autonomy philosophy which now characterises their thinking, they almost have a separate deity for each member of their tribe. The Hindu pantheon pales by comparison!

One God, One Kingdom, One People

Now against this multi-culturalism cuts the gospel which speaks of one Lord — Jesus Christ, one kingdom — the kingdom of Christ, one people — his people; and the absolute necessity for all to repent, flee their tribal gods, and embrace the one true God, by faith, and his purpose for creation in obedience.

We are encouraged, surely, by the perceptions and the efforts of the faithful ministers who bring the gospel and its call to repentance to the people of our pluralistic society. There are no glib answers as to the future direction of this work, or how in practice one works out the unity which Christ has given us. But the priorities are there, and also the belief that in Jesus this outward bonding together in love and service will finally take proper shape. Further, because this homogeneity, which is part of God's purpose, is in his Son, its realisation is not to be equated with all Australians joining the Anglo-Saxon ethnic group. The pressure that the gospel thus places on the Christians in the Anglican denomination is enormous. We must pray that it is the gospel itself, and its revelation of the plan of God for mankind, which will inform decisions made about the possible future relationship between the Anglo-Saxon tribe and pluralism. The One True God does not share his glory with any other.

The One Gospel

The second issue that our article raises concerns the vital questions of "what is the Gospel?"

It is fair comment to say that in evangelical circles the substitutionary aspect of the atonement has been allowed to become the only aspect we concentrate on. In spite of the fact that the old Inter Varsity Fellowship's (now A.F.E.S.) doctrinal statement in the 1930's could affirm both a representative and substitutionary atonement, the former has in practice become lost.

The gospel is about Christ. To preach the gospel is to preach Christ — the Lord, his kingdom, the cross. The imbalance caused by the selection of the element of substitution to the detriment of representation has fostered a private, individualistic Christianity which has been weak in the doctrine and practice of the church — church as fellowship, the community "motivated by love, and service for the good of others as its objective."

The Gospel is about God's act of salvation in Jesus Christ. It is an act of justification, the sole activity of God's righteousness, not ours. This justification by Christ is not only an imputed righteousness which forgives — and most certainly it does, but also a righteousness which re-orders us back into the plan and purpose of God: one people in one kingdom under one Lord. The grasping of the full breadth of God's reconciling act, a more fully blown understanding of both the representative and substitutionary aspects of the atonement, will change and deepen the way we live together in Jesus.

Further, as the description of our Australian society as broken and fragmenting shows, this message of reconciliation in Christ has the potential to touch an exposed nerve. The opportunity appears to be there. The key is repentance.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Sir,

I have recently returned from China to see your editorial of 18/4/83 on the Christmas Bowl Appeal: as an Anglican who for over 20 years has been on the Australian Council of Churches committee involved, I would like to comment on what I thought was basically a very fair and challenging editorial.

First, a large slice of the project money spent in Australia is on refugees: assisting them to get out of refugee camps and into Australia, engaging welfare workers to help them find jobs and accommodation or cope with personal and family troubles, aiding them to establish their own self-help groups and to sponsor their own close relatives.

Second, like you I have often had doubts about the money spent on Development Education. Each time I have aired these doubts, however, I am confronted with letters and remarks from Christians in 3rd world countries saying they want us to spend more on development education as they feel many Christians in western countries give from generous hearts but with little understanding of what 3rd world Christians are really struggling with. Personally I respond much more readily and warmly to appeals calling on Christian compassion to help overseas persons in distress but am forced to agree that we in

Australia should not ignore the perceptions and wishes of Christians in the countries we seek to help.

Yours sincerely,

Charles Price

Dear Sir,

I was most surprised to see in your front page article of the June 13 issue the words "Rev. Holloway", not once but twice.

One is more or less used to this unfortunate misuse in local papers, and even occasionally in the daily press, but to see it in the ACR is indeed a surprise. Fowler's Modern English Usage, although no longer modern, classifies this usage as an 'illiteracy', while the more recent Current English Usage says that Reverend should never be prefixed to the surname alone. The Concise Oxford also gives the correct usage.

But perhaps ACR knows of some reason unknown to me why these authorities are now to be ignored. I should be glad to know the reason, as the reasoning given in Fowler behind the stated usage seems sound and reasonable to me.

Yours sincerely,

Ronald T. W. Pain

Minister Acts continued

We still would like to ask the following general question:

Since morality and religion form an integral part of the educational process both historically and philosophically will the minister please define:

- his view
- his party's view

on the place of religion in education and be prepared to clarify his statements if necessary? If not why not?

Response

On Monday June 27th the Minister for Education announced to us that the consultative committee he had promised to set up was now to be established.

He said:

"The establishment of a consultative committee on Special Religious Education in N.S.W. Government Schools was in line with recommendations of the Report on Religion in Education in N.S.W. Government Schools."

Mr. Mullock said church groups were in favour of establishment of the Committee.

He said it would be a valuable point of contact to allow consultation and exchange of views between parents and the community. Also, it was in line with the Government's policy of community involvement in education.

Mr. Mullock said the Committee would advise the Director — General of Education and would have the following terms of reference:

- Provide information on the current state of Special Religious Education in schools using networks and channels available to committee members.
- Serve as a reference point to supply advice on general problems arising from the implementation of Special Religious Education in schools.
- Act as a clearing house for new ideas and innovations in implementing Special Religious Education.
- Advise on the co-ordination of opportunities for the participation of Special Religious Education Teachers in appropriate training courses.
- Consider and suggest ways of facilitating relationships between parents and Special Religious Education personnel, and
- Consider and advise on further action regarding the remaining Special Religious Education recommendations in the Report.

Mr. Mullock said the Consultative Committee would represent the major religious groups in the community as well as teacher and parent organisations. These groups will be invited shortly to submit nominations.

He said four major bodies concerned with education had expressed serious reservations about some recommendations of the Report. The opposition of these bodies: The Federation of School Community Organisations, the Federation of P. and C.

Associations, the New South Wales Teacher's Federation and the Anti-Discrimination Board, had made agreement difficult on decisions for future directions.

"It is my view that any move should be a gradual one taking into account the views of all interest groups", Mr. Mullock said.

Interview

At the same time that the Minister issued that statement to the Church Record he agreed to an interview with our Editor. That interview will take place just after this issue is printed and will be reported in our next issue.

The Chairman of the Inter-Church Commission, Canon Alan Langdon, has studied the Minister's statement and he told us:

The Minister's announcement is most welcome news. The establishment of a consultative committee on special religious education implements recommendation 70 of the religious education report. It will enable the remaining religious education recommendations to be re-examined and appropriate action to be taken without further delay. This will be an encouragement to all the churches and religious groups to increase the effectiveness of their special religious education contribution to public education to which many of them are already devoting considerable resources of finance and personnel. At the same time we trust the Minister will promote further public discussions with the goal of resolving the more complex and controversial aspects of the general religious education recommendations especially those related to secondary schools, the Minister is assured of the further co-operation of the inter-church consultative commission and the other religious groups in the establishment of the consultative committee on special religious education, with the terms of reference as outlined.

We have also been told that other denominations who have been informed of the Minister's statement are thrilled that, at last, something is about to happen.

The Minister's statement still leaves some questions which need answering. The Church Record will take those up in our interview with Mr. Mullock.

Moore Quits S.C.D. continued

Fr. Hill told us that the Sydney College of Divinity would not set up a structure which locked Moore out. He said that Moore would be invited to keep a watching brief and would be welcome to come into the College when it is finally set up.

The Church Record has noted from correspondence that the Moore College Principal, staff and committee have been very reluctant to make this move. They see it as a matter of great conscience that impinges on all that the College represents.

THE GOSPEL IN THE CITY

Today we begin a series of articles seeking to investigate some of the problems facing Christian ministry in contemporary Australia. The series is designed to attempt two things — to expose the real situation in Australian ministry, to stimulate an open and ongoing dialogue. We hope you will become part of the process.

But why "the city" as the focus? Simply, because that is where the vast majority of Australians live. We have picked Sydney as our subject primarily because that is the area the ACR knows best, but also because it is most likely that Sydney's peculiar characteristics foreshadow the Australia of the future. No doubt you will question and apply what we say about this capital to your own locality. We look forward to your correspondence.

No. 1 Towards an Understanding of Australian Society

Due to reasons of geography and time, the following is a composite interview. Each subject was interviewed separately without the benefit of listening and reacting to the others. This will explain some of the tensions and differences between the answers. We hope these prove fruitful for continuing debate. The ACR is most grateful to all those who took part.

Vast Changes

ACR: What general changes do you observe in Australian society, especially urban society?

Lawton: The biggest change I see relates to the women's liberation movement. I think the feminist movement is the most powerful lobby group in our community. Coming second is the homosexual lobby group. Why? Because between them, though they may not be powerful in numbers, they have shaped our way of thinking about moral and social questions. They have had a very big impact on the development of certain resources like the women's refuge centres, rape crisis centres, and as far as the homosexuals are concerned I think they have forced Australians to moderate their public opposition to the homosexual movement. I doubt whether they would have had much effect on the private view.

Flower: First, the great demographic change in this area. The tremendously high concentration of ethnic groups compared with the diminishing concentration of what we would traditionally say would be the Anglo-Saxon or Celtic community. Secondly, it appears to me that we seem to be seeing a diminishing of the incentive of people. It's perhaps a thing which may have been fostered by the hedonistic society in, which we live.

Howell: I'm contrasting the kind of society I find here with what I found in a much more homogeneous suburb of Hurstville Grove where I lived before. I think that in this particular area of Paddington and Centennial Park there are several fairly clear groupings of people. One I find especially noteworthy is the single young adults; who live in this area, who either rent or who bought units or flats or houses, who are usually very highly mobile and do not have many roots in the actual suburb itself but only within their own social stratum.

Barnett: If we are thinking about the time frame of the last quarter of a century when my perceptions are in clearest focus, I think Australians appear to have much higher material expectations than in the period before then. Also, while we have been faced with very serious unemployment and the creation of a class of unemployed people, many of us have had very little to do with them. Many of us expect to travel abroad every few years, have a holiday in the snow, swimming pools in the backyard, a couple of cars, not just an oven but a microwave oven, etc. — and of course the electronic media and advertising highlights this lifestyle.

Further, I think that in the same way the universities and university students are much more apathetic, less idealistic than they were in the 60's and 70's when we had the demonstrations about the Vietnam war. To be in the university campus today and to talk to university students one finds relatively few ideals as the central motivating part of people's lives. Even on the very important women's issues, for many these remain superficial and are related to things like calling certain women 'chairpersons'. In other words, what I am saying is that the kind of material preoccupation and the expectations of middle and upper middle Australians have I think, infected people in the tertiary education position.

Church Irrelevant?

ACR: What importance do you think the Christian church has for Australian society, from Australian society's point of view?

Howell: I think they probably perceive us as slightly irrelevant. There would be certain points at which they would expect the Christian church to have some effect on Society. Traditionally, I suppose in their thinking we fit into the moral-keeping, welfare-providing role, and perhaps with some what I shall call the important moments in people's lives like the birth of a new baby, marriages, funerals — although the first two are quickly declining in people's interests.

I would also mention the folk called "trendies" — I am not sure how right that label is — who often are married and are renovating a terrace house in Paddington. They are usually on the upward move as far as careers are concerned, they are very affluent and see almost no function for the Christian church in society.

Barnett: By the young Australians that I come in contact with at universities the Christian church is seen as irrelevant; quite a non issue.

And the Gospel?

However, at the same time there is a great interest in the Christian gospel among Australian tertiary students. I suspect that in the last 10 years there has been a greater interest among this group of people in Christianity than there has been in our lifetime. And I think that they are interested in the gospel for the reason that people have always been interested in it. Namely, that it does present important answers to the fundamental questions of life. It does provide for a world view, an alternative, a credible and good and clean alternative to the sordid world view that most thinking people perceive to be reality in the political spectrum. The kind of Christianity I perceive these people to be interested in is what I would call straight Biblical Christianity. It doesn't have to be packaged specially for University students. It has to be credible and consistent of course, and it is very important that the people who bring it are credible people, but where that is the case there is a ready response.

Local Image

ACR: What profile or image do you think the suburban church cuts, or is able to cut, for the Christian gospel?

Lawton: I find that hard to answer because I think it varies district to district. There are some areas in the inner city where the local church fulfils little function religiously, while denominations attempt to make a social contribution. There are other areas where it has been claimed that the ministry touches the heart of middle class guilt. Right across Sydney you will find churches and congregations with an evangelistic outreach and an effective preaching programme.

Flower: I think in general the suburban church doesn't cut a great image. However there are areas where the local church is certainly very significant in what it's doing in the outreach it makes, in the quality of the people that go out from there.

Howell: I guess realistically the image that it portrays is that what we have to say is for those who are interested, but for those who don't feel the need, well, we have nothing to say.

Not One City

ACR: It now seems hard to understand under a single idea the "style" of living we see in a city like Sydney. For example, Craig Macgregor in a National Times article points out that we can no longer think of

Sydney under one homogenous umbrella. Since we began to pass 1½ million people we've become more disparate, and now that we are 3½ million we have many Sydneys within Sydney.

How do you view our urban society?

Lawton: It's always been a stratified society. People who want to argue for a homogeneous society ignore the facts of the past. Within five minutes walking distance of one another we have had the extremes of wealth and poverty living side by side. What has happened since 1945 is that the influx of migrants into the country has also helped to stratify us in other ways. We are a very varied society, and the policy of multi-culturalism has accentuated this.

Barnett: I think Macgregor's assessment is a sensible one. Sydney is a city without a natural geographic centre. It doesn't have civic focal points that mean anything to anybody: it doesn't have a town hall that is a town hall; it doesn't have the sort of

Biographies

Deryck Howell is Assistant Minister at St. Matthias, Centennial Park, an inner Sydney suburb. Formerly he was the minister at Hurstville Grove. Bill Lawton has been a missionary with B.C.A., Rector of three Sydney churches, and is now a lecturer at Moore Theological College. Neil Flower has worked as youth secretary of C.M.S., and the last 9 years as Rector of Soldiers' Memorial Church, Cabramatta, in the western region of Sydney. Paul Barnett is Master of Robert Menzies College, Macquarie University. He has been Rector of St. Barnabas, Broadway and Holy Trinity, Adelaide.

political leader that smaller states with smaller capital cities might have. It is extremely pluralistic compared to Adelaide, with far greater extremes. There is no sport that unites Sydney in the way that Australian rules unites Melbourne, so I think Sydney is a series of different spheres that don't relate.

Howell: Within our pluralistic environment of the Eastern Suburbs I observe about half a dozen different groupings of people.

There are the very affluent long term residents; the so called "trendies" who have restored terrace houses — they've moved here in say the last ten to fifteen years; and the single adults, many of whom would be renting in the area, are in their twenties to thirties, and usually work in the City. There are also smaller groupings. Families at the other end of the social scale, some of whom are still on fixed rentals. There are various migrant groupings. The homosexual community is also a distinctive grouping. It tends to come from the single adults and some of the working class group.

Flower: There are very wide differences here in Cabramatta, from fairly poor people to some quite reasonably affluent people, and various other stratas in between — ethnic groups, various special interest groups.

Class and Sub-Cultures

ACR: Do you think "class" a useful concept in understanding our modern situation?

Lawton: I think it's an outmoded concept. It conjures up views of Australia in terms of working class labour-capital conflicts, which to some extent still occur. But what you have now is a clear division in society on the grounds of education and opportunity.

Barnett: I think there are a number of classes, some of which overlap, and I am worried about the emergence of an unemployed class which I think is a reality. Further, I suspect that the unemployed youth are much more likely to be concentrated in areas of socio-economic deprivation. It is interesting

that in the more affluent suburbs unemployed young people are much more likely to find part time work — gardening and odd jobs, and so on.

Flower: "Sub-cultures" is a better way of describing Cabramatta society than "class".

Pluralism vs Uniformity

ACR: The older relative homogeneity of Australian society seems to have gone and public figures now talk of "pluralism". But there still seems to be a tension between pluralism on the one hand, and a conformity and uniformity on the other. For example, the sources of public information — TV, newspapers, etc. — are quite culturally limited and uniform.

What is your estimation of this description?

Lawton: One of the characteristics I discern about Australian society is that it is racist. We've had a long tradition of racism in our antagonism to Asian migration. In 1947 we unwillingly turned our attention from northern Europeans to southern Europeans, and against our racial antagonism multi-culturalism was forced upon us. Further, we only recognise this as a reality when ethnic groups combine to assert themselves. We have ethnic newspapers and ethnic radio. There's been a Government recognition of this. But there's not been a great deal of Australian willingness to accede to this except in superficial things such as changes in eating habits, clothes, music. At heart, Australians express an unwillingness to accept a pluralist society.

Barnett: I think that the print media continues to have its influence, but I don't really think the Sydney Morning Herald for example, influences lots of blue collar workers or unemployed youth or Aboriginals or people from ethnic groups. I would suspect that TV programmes, the Australian produced soaps, are probably very influential in forming attitudes and behaviour on the wider front.

Flower: I don't think very many people really come to terms with pluralism. Come Anzac Day, come Christmas, come other such Public Festival days, we wave the flag, we ra-ra-ra and we all tend to think that we're all very Anglo-Saxon and we have got a lot to bind us together. Then comes other days and some people are quite shocked to think that we are no longer a homogeneous society.

I think that the ethnic groups in Cabramatta handle the cultural pressure for uniformity very well, but it's still very early days. Once an ethnic group moves into an area, while they are still very much the minority, they are prepared to go along with fitting in with the host society. Once the group gets larger, and I don't know where the cut-off point is, then a group can almost snub its nose at fitting in, and often: does.

Church and Pluralism

ACR: How do you think the Australian church can cope with pluralism in the local situation?

Lawton: We seem to be becoming a cultural and ethnic ghetto of our own. Unless we can break out of that pattern there are many areas in Sydney in which we cannot survive and are not surviving. We need to have a more aggressive evangelistic and social policy which takes us into the needs of other ethnic groups. We would need to stop trying to impose our traditional Anglican ethos on these areas but be prepared to be broader in the way we minister to them, and to minister outside the structures that serve our English style community.

Continued on page 4

Barnett: I think it is a very important matter. I think Anglican leadership has to work out whether we have a ministry outside of our traditional Anglican orbit. We may well decide that we want to be shut into parts of the city where there are traditional Anglican centres; or we can decide we really do want to cross cultural boundaries and bring the gospel to people elsewhere, in which case I suspect that we will need to analyse matters and make adjustments as missionaries would if they were moving to another country. I think that the considerations of pluralism are as significant as they would be in going abroad.

Now, here I think is a real point of tension, and the tension is at the point of the gospel. I think the issues of Anglican forms come into conflict with the gospel, and if they are being breached, then I suspect the inspiration for the breach is not the disobedience of anti-authoritarianism but arises from a deep-seated desire to meet people culturally where they are in terms of presenting the gospel and worshipping the Lord.

Gospel and Church

Further, although I think that we have within certain narrow limits an accurate assessment of the gospel, I don't think we have the breadth of the Apostles in terms of the way they presented the gospel according to their audience needs. They were keen to establish the character of the God with whom we deal and whom we must face, and the Lordship of his Son over history and over our lives. In other words, I see the Apostles presenting to us an over-arching broad view of God over the world and Christ over history. A much more over-arching view of life than our current individualistic justification model.

That way of thinking has not expressed itself in a Biblical view of church whereby I am part of a group, organically joined together. I think that the narrow and individualistic evangelism, which has been a feature of this diocese, is a flow-on of English forms of evangelism. It has had to take some real steps in terms of a post-war understanding of what it means to be part of the body of Christ in a particular place. So I think that there has been an emergence of a greater sense of community among Christians. I'm not sure whether evangelicals are also understanding that atonement is not only about substitution, but also about Christ as our representative man who through death and resurrection has won a great victory for man, for the new community of God's people, for all people potentially — that's the 1 Corinthian 5 kind of picture.

Flower: We are attempting to cope with pluralism. Probably, 15 to 20 per cent of our English speaking congregation is made up of those who are not Anglo-Saxon. We have a number of people from Eastern and Southern Europe and Northern Europe.

Now, along with that there is a very large and still growing Chinese and Asian population. Our churches are attempting to reach out to them, and our aim has tried to make the church centre the house of prayer for all nations. But I have resisted strongly the setting up of a separate ethnic church. Two other groups use our building for services — a quarterly Estonian congregation who have no link with us except goodwill, and

our own church missionary outreach to the Chinese speaking South East Asian people. We plan it to be an integral part of our own congregation, but necessarily meeting and speaking in Chinese for the next few years.

Howell: I think we must continue to take very seriously the fact that the gospel is for all people without discrimination and that has to come down even to the level of our public profile. There may be some advantages in parts of Australia in making sure that we are known as The Anglican Church, but in the end I think that this label is probably a divisive thing as far as outsiders are concerned.

What we are doing is to encourage people to minister the Gospel, in the full sense of that word, to their neighbours. For example, we have a bible study group that caters to people involved in the medical field. We have had in the past a group of people speaking Spanish. We have a number of groups running during the daytime for people working in the City. And there are some on the campus of the university, or associated with the university.

Fragmenting Relationships

ACR: Where do you think city people now form stable relationships?

Flower: Well, that is the big problem. If you are asking about our area, I don't think there is an answer; because one of the problems I have had to face is a constantly changing population in my parish. For many there are no stable relationships. There is a big problem of loneliness for the single parent, the deserted wife, the old person and so on. Others look to clubland and find everything in the clubs, some, a very small minority, would look to the Christian church, others perhaps a large group, would look to their own ethnic club and cultural centre.

Lawton: It is different in different areas. There are statistics showing a much higher breakdown of marriage and a larger number of one parent families in the inner city. As an overall comment however, the University of N.S.W. family research centre has indicated that marriage in Australia is taken seriously and that most Australians would want to see family life, with parental and child roles, as the controlling factor.

Barnett: I think that it's not just the fact of broken homes. There is a fragmenting force within the community. For example, it's well known that the extended family is largely gone. My impression is that kids don't have cousins any more. I don't know that people in Australia have Christmas get-togethers for the whole family group in the way that they used to. That's my impression.

There's been such a dispersion of people through employment and so on in the western world, and such high mobility, even in suburbia as well as inner urban parts, that I think there has been this very considerable fragmentation. Where people find their groupings nowadays I can't answer. But I suspect that while for some people clubs and pubs might be an experience of community, I also suspect that the majority of people have no sense of community, they have nowhere and no group.

Christian Affirmation

ACR: How must ministry respond to this relational fragmentation?

Lawton: There are two possibilities. We could try to infiltrate the club scene and the work place. To some extent we do that, e.g. we have industrial chaplains. On the club side of it, bodies like the Salvation Army tend to have a very close interaction with groups like the R.S.L. But it doesn't seem to me that in the long term these have been very successful.

It goes without saying that Christians should be gossiping their faith wherever they are. The facts seem to be however that we are generally inarticulate and we leave the statement of the Christian faith to institutions, and that has been part of our history. It strikes me that the other pattern that institutional Christianity can make is to affirm a quality of family life and relationship in a way that offers something to the community which it does not get elsewhere. I don't think that's an ideal because I believe we have the structures and the finance, all we

often lack is the will to put it into operation. It just takes some imagination on the part of the people who organise local churches to think of ways in which people can interact other than merely at the club or the football or work place.

Barnett: I think it is at this very time of fragmentation and isolation that people are rediscovering the powerful apostolic teaching about the Christian congregation; the very important teachings in 1 Corinthians 12-14 in that that community which is a pluralism there is a unity in Christ, in which love is to be the motive, and the upbuilding for good of one's neighbour is the objective. So there is being rediscovered in the churches who have grasped the N.T. understanding of the church, not just the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers but the ministry of all believers, the charismata of all. I think there has been discovered a kind of compensating experience of community which is probably capable of a greater reality than some of the experiences of community that we once experienced in Australia.

I think the character of the congregation in its formal and informal life together is the greatest evangelistic strategy.

Gospel and Society

ACR: How do you view the strategic relationship between gospel work and the society in which we find ourselves?

Lawton: We have too great a focus on a narrow understanding of exegesis and too little a focus on contextualisation. By which I mean we turn our attention too narrowly to the precise meaning of the text and leave the matter there. And we ask too few questions about the audience to whom the present text is being directed. There needs to be a constant interaction between our theological studies and our ethical and philosophical studies.

Barnett: I do not know of any clear bible guidelines on the matter, and my instinct is to say that ministry must operate at two fronts at once. Not necessarily beginning at the same time, but sooner or later ministry must be operating on two fronts: the quality of the congregational life in terms of biblical patterns of behaviour and relationships, and the concern for the lost, concern for those outside. Now, how one reaches out is not capable of being stated categorically in theory. There are as many potential strategies as there are situations.

Flower: It's one of great tension because Christians are misfits in society as they are men of another world.

Two Current Patterns

ACR: With respect to the strategic relationship between the gospel and culture, at least two definite patterns seem to be on offer: — the idea that evangelism consists of making the church socially relevant so that ordinary people will then come back in great numbers, or — that we must start first with the gospel and the response of the individual, and then seek to rebuild that person, and relevant parts of his environment, around the new centre he has in Jesus Christ.

What is your estimate of these ideas?

Howell: I'm not sure that the first pattern is evangelism. I think some of the problem is that it fits in with what people expect the Church to do, and it seems to me to be very easy to simply keep doing that. You may or may not attract people in, but the question is what do you do with them at that point. The temptation may very well be to go on keeping them by doing what you did when they first responded.

Lawton: We're not into the business of relevance. There are aspects of what we are doing that because of their very nature must be irrelevant. An institution like the Christian church has to enshrine values in the language of 2,000 years of its history. It loses all that at its peril. Not to say that we must be irrelevant, but there are issues in which relevance is not the main question.

Flower: Firstly, is evangelism making the church socially relevant? No, I don't think it is. There has to be a constant input of

teaching and encouragement for Christians to keep their feet, not on the ground, but on the bible, because we are apt to become so lost in making the church relevant we lose sight of the fact that the gospel is so different, and such a life-changing thing that God calls man to leave this world and start living as heavenly citizens. Perhaps what we should be saying is not that the church is socially relevant, but it is the Christian who is socially relevant; who can take the gospel fearlessly into a place where he is accepted in a way in which people don't become threatened because they see that he has got something worth having.

Lawton: As to the second option, it all sounds right and it seems in biblical terms the sort of thing we ought to do. My problem is that in practice it seems to produce a Christian elitism, a withdrawal, a ghetto mentality where people view the church as simply a restrictive group of the elect. I don't see a lot of evidence at the parish level of a strong face to face evangelism within the community which simply accepts people where they are.

Howell: Personally, I think the second one would fit more closely my own conviction, although I'm not sure how strongly you ought to make the dividing line between the two. I think if you are talking about sharing the Gospel with somebody then we have to bear in mind that it is with a person, and all that that means to them: their location, their situation, the pressures upon them — all of those kinds of things we have to be aware of, but in the end it has to come down to sharing the Gospel.

Lawton: I think there is a third option which hasn't been canvassed. We should take a hard look at folk religion in our community. So we can actually understand what belief structure people have it may demand of us that we begin to meet them at the point where they are, a little like the situation in the acts of the Apostles where St. Paul does not always find it necessary to preach atonement, but sometimes meets people at the level of the doctrine of creation. People accept many mythologies and stereotypes. The R.S.L. is one instance of a powerful structure in our society. It's part of the conservative society we belong to and it has ideals of nationhood and manhood which it promotes strongly. We need to understand its mythology. We have also seen the growth of occultism in our society, and that's providing a new religious sub-culture.

Appeal to Gospel

ACR: What is it in the gospel itself that you see determining your response?

Lawton: I think we should value more the doctrine of creation and the recognition of our relationship to God who made us, and what Christ is seen to do in reconciling the whole of the created order. That's not to deny any view of atonement which touches the individual life of man. But it is to see that there's a vast cosmic reconciliation taking place. I think that needs to be more valued.

Barnett: Repentance is the key word. And as is well known from the bible it means a complete change of attitude to reality, God being the reality. God and the kingdom of Christ being the reality; not what we perceive in the media and through other means to be the reality, but the gospel to be the reality, which means to say: Hey, what I've been thinking all along is not so. This is reality. Therefore I change my whole thinking — with behavioural change and attitudinal change. Now part of that repentance will be a warm confidence in God and a trust in Jesus for the forgiveness of sins. But they are sub-points, sub-sections under a broader and more embracing concept of repentance.

Flower: I think of when Jesus saw people as sheep not having a shepherd and had compassion on them and seeing people as souls going to hell. We've forgotten the word hell and we've got to bring it back into our language.

Howell: I think that it is a message that is applicable to all people without exception. It is a message which speaks about God and our responsibility to Him because He is our creator, and is therefore the most important thing in people's lives no matter who they are.

What a World

One of the best ways to outrage a feminist, according to George Gilder, is to accuse her of having a maternal instinct. And a good way to upset a "biblical feminist" is to maintain that when St. Paul enjoined a wife to submit to her husband, insisting on the headship of the husband in marriage, he was stating a principle that remains binding for modern marriages and for the role of women in the church.

Recently I've been reading two books of importance — one a secular work of sociology, George Gilder's *Sexual Suicide*, which was first published ten years ago, and the other *Women and the Word of God* by Susan T. Foh (pub. Presbyterian and Reformed, 1979), a serious theological thesis which grapples conservatively but convincingly with the Bible's teaching on the role of women, and examines critically the teaching of so-called biblical feminists.

Sexual Suicide

I'm actually re-reading Gilder's book, and thinking again about his profound and provocative assessment of what was then the thrust of the women's movement in the U.S. He may have since been somewhat reassured that a measure of sanity is beginning to prevail after all, with the defeat last year of the Equal Rights Amendment.

His main argument is that women have

a far greater innate sexual power and more secure identity than men; in his view, the differences between the sexes are vital, "even though they make women superior in the ways that matter most". By destroying the balance which enables males to compensate for their precarious sexual identity and channel their aggressive sexuality into responsible fatherhood and support for their families, our society seems bent on sexual suicide. We are destroying "the cultural preconditions of profound love and sexuality: the durable heterosexual relationships necessary to a community in which children can find a secure place." (p.5)

George Gilder is not, as far as I can detect, a Christian, but he may have hit upon a reason that God knew all along for requiring the loving headship of the man in marriage and the voluntary submission of the wife. We are told (Ephesians 5:22-28) that the relationship, far from being culturally conditioned, is to be like that between Christ and the church. It may well be that men and women are so made that the psychological and spiritual health of marriages requires a willing female submission and dependent spirit as well as loving leadership from the man.

What submission is not

Yet there is also "mutuality in marriage,

will back you because you live and work amongst these people and you perhaps would understand them better."

Howell: Here we enjoy quite an amount of freedom, for which we are grateful, to explore avenues of ministry and of patterns of congregational meeting. I think the Diocesan authorities recognise that the situation which we find ourselves in calls for radical and imaginative thinking, and creative ways of doing things which perhaps may not go down so well in other parts of Sydney. The thing that I would plead for is a greater understanding on the part of other members of our denomination for the great diversity of situations in which people find themselves, that what works in one location will not necessarily work in another.

Barnett: Getting on with it. Not talking about it. Talking about it but not just talking about it; getting on with it, provoking one another, stirring and stimulating one another. We don't need more commissions and enquiries and reports, we need people who are going to get down to it at a local level and work at it and pray at it and get on with it.

Australian Society (continued)

Denomination and Ministry

ACR: How can we as Christians and churches linked together in a denomination best help each other towards more effective and true gospel ministry?

Lawton: I think we operate in an unnecessary restrictive atmosphere. I would regard the current focus on uniformity as unfortunate. Whilst we need to maintain our ethos, I think there should be considerable scope in parishes for people to be able to abandon the structure and the form and not be regarded as disloyal. This would be determined by social factors. But it should be carefully monitored by those in charge so that there is not anarchy in the diocese.

Flower: First of all we have to recognise the problems that face us. The problems that face me here would be totally different from the problems that face our brethren in the Eastern suburbs or in Wollongong. I think we need encouragement, the encouragement of which says, "If that's the way you feel the problem ought to be tackled, we

WCC Assembly should take evangelism more seriously

The lack of teaching on evangelism at the forthcoming World Council of Churches Assembly has been criticised by a New Zealand delegate.

Angus H. MacLeod, NCC-NZ General Secretary, writes in the current WCC 'Letter on Evangelism':

"From distant New Zealand evangelism appears to many Christians as the poor relation of WCC programmes. The main thrust of the WCC appears to be in the direction of justice, peace and material

aid for the poor. Evangelism seems a minor concern.

"At the WCC Assembly this impression needs to be changed. Evangelism must be treated with as much seriousness as the much-publicised report on Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry.

"Evangelism must be promoted not as a specialist field for the enthusiastic few, but as a fundamental aspect of every part of the WCC.

C.E.N.

Women and the Word of God

Lesley Hicks



an equal personhood of the partners that does not annul the headship of the husband. "Susan Foh goes on (p.131) to quote Elisabeth Elliott: "To say that submission is synonymous with the stunting of growth, with dullness and colourlessness, spiritlessness, passivity, immaturity, servility, or even the "suicide of personality", as one feminist who calls herself an evangelical has suggested, is totally to misconstrue the biblical doctrine of authority."

Philosophy of Christian Womanhood

Recently I spent a full day as an observer at the National Leaders' Conference of the Philosophy of Christian Womanhood Course, held at Gilbulla, Menangle, 19-22 June, 1983. This is a course by which groups of women study the Bible's teaching on their role and fulfilment as women. Its content is more applicable to married women, though not of course exclusively so. However one aspect involves putting biblical principles into practice in a marriage relationship, and single, divorced or widowed women would not be able to join in that part of it.

The basic course consists of nine weekly sessions of group discussion, "homework" and Bible study, based on a

tape-recorded lesson and accompanying manual. They are led by women who have done the course and found blessing through it as they put the principles into practice, and have then done further training. Advertising and recruitment happens simply through enthusiastic women telling others about it. Judging by the enthusiasm of the 85 leaders at Gilbulla, this must be an expanding and encouraging ministry.

It is not without its critics, however. I'll make this a two-part column, and go on in the next issue to discuss some of these criticisms, and to give further impressions of the conference, and of Susan Foh's book.

Mackay case update

In my previous column I gave my thoughts on the Mackay case just before the flurry of much-publicised police activity, including the dragging of the River Murray at Tocumwal, which occurred in mid-June. As on so many other occasions in the past, the media attention faded as once again there was no obvious concrete result towards the solving of the case.

We have had to accept the police request for further delay in the scheduling of an inquest, to enable them to pursue these new leads. Meanwhile, we pray on.



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Rasina Sadono is a mother of five. She is a pitifully poor and hardworking member of the Sagambe Resettlement Project in Zimbabwe.

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itineraries. Price from Melbourne or Sydney \$3974.00
- PAPUA NEW GUINEA** — 7th September — 14 days.
Our unique itinerary is designed specially to show us Papua New Guinea at its best. Visit
Port Moresby, Lae, Goroka, Mt. Hagen, Karawari, Sepik River, Wewak etc. Group Leader
is Rev. J. Paice. Price from Sydney is \$2415.
- WEST AUSTRALIA AT WILDFLOWER TIME** — 23rd September — 16 days with Mr. Nelson
Warden. Coach across the Nullarbor and around the southwest to Esperance, Albany etc.
Cruise on the Blackwood River, and see the Spanish Dancing Horses at EL Cabello.
Return is by air and fares are from Melbourne \$1154; Sydney \$1295; Adelaide \$1016;
Brisbane \$1367; and Hobart \$1283.
- U.S.A. AND CANADA** — 25th September — 38 days
Visiting Honolulu, the Canadian Rockies, Montreal, Niagara Falls, New York, Washington,
New Orleans, Grand Canyon, Los Angeles, Disneyland, San Francisco etc. Price — from
Sydney \$5496 or Melbourne \$5564.
- ALICE SPRINGS AND RED CENTRE** — 30th September — 10 days
By air to Alice Springs, then tour Ayers Rock, the Olgas, the MacDonnell Ranges, Victoria
Downs, Coober pedy, Woomera, Port Augusta and back home via Adelaide. From
Melbourne \$1057; Sydney \$1178; Adelaide \$949; Brisbane \$1241.
- LANDS OF THE BIBLE** — 1st October — 25 days
Visit the Holy Land, then explore Greece — Athens, Corinth, Delphi and Olympia and on
into Italy — see Rome, Naples, Pompeii and Sorrento. Tour Leader: Mrs. Lynette Willan.
\$3461 from Melbourne or Sydney, Adelaide or Brisbane.
- VISIT THE LOVELY FLINDERS RANGES** — 22nd October — 10 days
Travelling via Bendigo and Wedderburn to Mildura, then to Broken Hill, Wilpena Pound,
Flinders Ranges, Port Augusta, Barossa Valley, Adelaide, Mount Gambier. All meals
except one lunch in Adelaide. Price from Melbourne — \$623.00
- BEAUTIFUL NEW ZEALAND** — 26th October — 18 days.
Both islands — 2 meals per day. Visiting Auckland, Rotorua, Waitomo, Taupo, Napier
Wellington, Pictou, Nelson, Greymouth, The Glaciers, Haast Pass, Wanaka, Queenstown,
Manapouri, Te Anau, Milford Sound, Gore, Dunedin, Oamaru, Mt. Cook, Tekapo,
Christchurch etc. From Melbourne \$1320; Sydney \$1271; Brisbane \$1309; Optional 5
day excursion to Bay of Islands — supplement \$279 departing on the 21st October.
- POCKET TESTAMENT LEAGUE — ASIAN TOUR** — October.
Departing October 1983 with George Glazier this group will visit Singapore, Thailand,
Burma, Nepal and Hong Kong. Send now for details.
- SEE THE BEST OF TASMANIA** — 8th November — 10 days.
By air to Launceston then coach to Devonport, North West Coast, Somerset, Zeehan,
Queenstown, Gordon River Cruise, Hobart, Port Arthur, St. Helens etc. All meals except
lunches. Fare from Melbourne \$769; Sydney \$893; Adelaide \$883; Brisbane \$980.
- SOUTH EAST ASIA** — 10th November — 15 days.
Visit those places holding memories of World War 2 — the infamous Kwai River Bridge,
the POW Cemetery, the Changi Chapel and the Kranji War Memorial. Full American
breakfasts included. Tour Leader: Rev. John Eddy. From Sydney or Melbourne \$1710.
- YOUNG ADULTS TOUR OF BRITAIN** — 17th December — 29 days.
Including Christmas Houseparty at Lee Abbey in Devon: New Year's Eve in Edinburgh: five
days in Yorkshire Dales. Send now for full details — group size strictly limited. Estimated
costs \$3200.
- INDIA 1984** — 7th January — 25 days with Rev. W.M. Constable.
Visit Madras, Trivandrum, Cochin, Bangalore, Mysore, Bombay, Udaipur, Jaipur, Amber,
Agra, and New Delhi, Srinagar and Calcutta. Price from Melbourne or Sydney \$3572.
- MIDDLE EAST ADVENTURE TOUR** — January 1984 — 27 days.
See this fascinating area — visit Bangkok, Amman, Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, Cairo, Aswan,
and Luxor. Group Leader — Rev. Harry McAndrew. Price from Sydney or Melbourne
\$3495.
- GO CRUISING WITH A.C.T.S./SITMAR** in beautiful TSS FAIRSTAR from Sydney
Escape to the Pacific Islands, to whichever unspoilt paradise you'd like to spend time in.
Enjoy one of these relaxing cruises — 2nd August 14 nights 7 ports from \$1005; 11th
September 15 nights 5 ports from \$910; 10th October 15 nights 6 ports from \$975; 17th
November 14 nights 5 ports from \$910. Book early, as 'Fairstar' fills quickly.
- 1984 — 350TH ANNIVERSARY YEAR OF OBERAMERGAU**
Australian Church Travel Service will be operating a number of tours that will include
attendance at these special presentations of the Oberammergau Passion Plays. They will
cover the whole series which runs from mid May until mid September. The itineraries will
vary in duration and places visited — from 4 weeks to 9 weeks with additional time away
to any who desire it. All itineraries will include Oberammergau, with a selection of
countries such as U.S.A./CANADA, Jordan, Israel, Egypt, Yugoslavia, Britain. Proposed
itineraries together with estimated prices are now available and will be forwarded upon
request. As it is anticipated that our Oberammergau programme will be very popular it is
suggested that you should make your inquiry as soon as possible.

Australian Church Travel Service Offices are Agents for all Sea, Land and Air Lines and will
assist with your group, individual, and business travel arrangements.

Australian Church Travel Service

(Director: Rev. W. M. Constable)

Head Office: 1st Floor, 31 Queen St., Melbourne 3000 Phone: 62 2021
N.S.W.: 1st Floor, 130 Phillip St., Sydney 2000 Lic. No. B317 Phone: 233 8504
Qld.: 160 Edwards Street, Brisbane 4000 Phone: 221 3922
South Aust.: 2nd Floor, 44 Gawler Place, Adelaide 500 Phone: 223 6300

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND HOMES

Notice is hereby given that the 99th
Annual General Meeting of The Church of
England Homes will be held at Kingsdene
Special School, 19 Gibbons Street, Telopea,
on Tuesday, 9th August, 1983 at 7.30 p.m.

BUSINESS:

- To consider the Annual report, Income
and Expenditure Statement and Balance
Sheet for the Year Ended 31st March,
1983.
- To elect Committee Members for the
ensuing year in accordance with the
Constitution.

Committee Vacancies — 2 Clergymen, 2
Laymen and 2 Laywomen.

Nomination Forms can be obtained from
The Chief Executive Officer and nomi-
nations must be lodged at the address
shown below no later than Tuesday, 26th
July, 1983.

Clause 6 of the Constitution provides inter
alia that "Every person desiring to become
a Member of the Society shall make an
annual subscription to the work of the
Society" (minimum now fixed at \$2.00),
and "no person shall be entitled to vote or
speak at any Meeting of the Society whose
subscription has not been received by the
Treasurer at least two months prior to the
holding of such Meeting".
For an on behalf of The Committee of The
Church of England Homes.

J. N. Collison,
Chief Executive Officer,
45 Hunter Street,
Parramatta, N.S.W. 2150
(Post Office Box No. 427, Parramatta)

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Amcliffe 2205

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ART & CRAFT SHOW

Parramatta Town Hall

OPENING 7.45 p.m. FRIDAY, 22nd July — \$3 SATURDAY, 23rd
July, 9 a.m. — 5 p.m. FREE SUNDAY, 24th July, 10 a.m. — 4 p.m. FREE
Eagle St. John Foundation — Caring for
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PHONE: 683 2643

THE SOUTH AMERICAN MISSIONARY SOCIETY

Invites applicants for the senior executive
position of FEDERAL SECRETARY.
We are seeking an evangelical Anglican
with missionary or cross-cultural ex-
perience who has a strong commitment
to world mission.

Additional preferred qualifications: or-
dained; Spanish-speaking; capable ad-
ministrator.

This position will become vacant in
April 1984. Full details are available on
application.
Applications should be sent by 15.9.83

to: Federal Chairman,
South American Missionary Society,
P.O. Box 176,
ROSEVILLE 2069
and will be treated as confidential.

CALL FOR SERVICE

If you are serious about full time Christian
service, a wide range of excellent
opportunities exist at Radio Rhema. Radio
Rhema is a non-commercial
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It has been described as 'New Zealand's most
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one of the country's fastest growing ministries.
Rhema has just been granted its third perma-
nent licence and at present has applications
lodged for a further four stations. To keep up
with this expansion, additional staff are re-
quired to join the 100 full time workers who
already make up the Rhema family.

Opportunities exist in all of the following
areas: ★ Broadcasting ★ Administration and
Management ★ Accounting and Clerical Work
★ Technical Construction and Maintenance ★
Marketing and Public Relations.

Representatives are also sought for each of
Australia's main cities.

These positions could be of either a full-
time or part-time nature.

Basic Requirements for Applicants
1. Applicants must be mature Christians and
have qualifications or experience appropriate
to the position sought.

2. Unless otherwise specified, all positions
require applicants to live in New Zealand.

3. Applicants should be aware that all Rhema
staff work on a faith basis, looking to the Lord
as their source of provision. In many cases,
assistance towards food, accommodation and
transport can be arranged.

If you feel the Lord is calling you, or would like to know more
about any of the positions available, please phone Mr. Richard
Berry (0561443, Melbourne) any time 8 a.m. to 11 p.m. between
July 14th and 21st. All calls are non-binding and strictly
confidential.

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NEW ZEALAND CHRISTIAN RADIO NETWORK



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★ STAMPS ★
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CLASSIFIEDS

Classified advertisements may be left at the office or phoned
to 264 6349 up to noon 14 days before date of publication.
Charge is \$4.20 per column centimetre.

Interstate Services

MELBOURNE: St. Jude's Carlton. Near city centre, cnr. Lygon
and Palmerston Streets. Sundays 10 a.m. Holy Communion, 7
p.m. Evening Worship. Minister, Peter Adam. Visitors wel-
come.

GOORPAROO: St. Stephen's, Brisbane. Cnr. Cavendish
and Chatsworth Roads. Visitors welcome. 7.30 am and 9 am Holy
Communion. 7 pm Sunday at Seven. Rector: Rev. Ken Baker.

Accommodation

JINDABYNE — Accommodation this winter in modern three
bedroom unit. Suitable for small group or family. Further
details and brochure: Southern Cross Ski Chalet
(02) 269 0642 ext. 323.

Position Vacant

NEW COLLEGE University of N.S.W.

DEPUTY MASTER

Applications are invited for the position
of Deputy Master of New College from
communicant members of the Anglican
Church, male or female, lay or clerical.
This is a full-time, residential post with
academic and administrative
responsibilities in a lively and
developing University College.
Further information from the Master,
New College, U.N.S.W., Anzac Pde,
Kensington, NSW, 2033. Australia. Ph:
(02) 662 6066.

Applicants close: 31st July, 1983.

FREE AD

This service to readers is a form of free advertising. A person
wishing to buy or sell anything can place a free advertisement
of up to three lines.

If the advertisement is successful, the advertiser is asked to
pay The Church Record 10 per cent of the value of the sale
price, up to a maximum of \$10 per advertisement.
The service is known as FREE AD and runs on an honour
system. The advertiser will be responsible for forwarding to
The Church Record office what is owing.

WANTED: "Principles of Theology" by W.H. Griffith-Thomas.
PLEASE CONTACT GRAHAM CREW 516 2405

German and Latin Dictionaries Grammars and Tapes, mint
condition. 772 3070.

For Sale: Vernier Micrometer 0-25mm Micrometer Head
0-12mm Brand New. Tasco Microscope 900. Phone
772 3070.

AEC BUS good condition throughout \$2,000. (02) 627 2913.

WANTED — A.C.T. BTH HOOD — Jon Noble 204 Thompson
St., Coorambundra 2590 — Phone (069) 42 1695.

GESTETNER 460 DUPLICATOR. Fully serviced for service
agreement with Gestetner, \$500. Also 25 Reams Paper, 10
boxes stencils, offer. 747 4780.

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TO UNDERSTAND EACH OTHER

Marriage or living together?

Our society is presently notable for its
heterogeneity, particularly in the area of
lifestyle. Many young couples today
prefer a period of "living together" as a
trial period prior to a formal marriage.
Another group of couples see the "living
together" arrangement as preferable to
marriage since it avoids the allegedly
unrealistic burden of a lifelong
commitment to one person. Christian
couples often ask me whether the
preference for living together is based
upon valid considerations or not, and
whether a marriage could be improved
by a trial period.

Let me make three comments on this
question. The first and most important
point is that living together and marriage
are quite different kinds of relationships
in most cases. It is the expectation for the
relationship which differentiates them.
Marriage is regarded by Christians as a
life-long union characterized by
faithfulness, love and trust which has
been publicly declared as being such
before society and God. In the case of
living together there is usually a
recognition that this management is not
intended to be permanent at this stage.

This is not to suggest that fidelity and
effort are not part of the arrangement. In
many of the couples I've worked with,
fidelity and effort are prominent features
of their relationship, but they stop short
at expecting this arrangement to be
permanent. They appear to fear lifelong
commitment, either because they have
doubts about themselves, their partner,
marriage as an institution, or all three.

When this arrangement is seen as a trial
period which will enable a better
decision about, and adjustment in,
marriage, a problem becomes apparent.
How can a relationship which avoids an
expectation of permanence and the trust
which needs to accompany it, provide a
trial for a relationship which has
permanence and trust as its chief
characteristics? The attitudes and
expectations of the two arrangements are
so different that one can hardly see how
living together could logically be
regarded as a satisfactory trial for
marriage, or even as a satisfactory
preparation for marriage unless it
involved the same expectations. Clearly, if
it did why not get married rather than
avoid it? The uncertainty and
complications brought about by the
unnecessary period of non-marriage
might even prove to be negative factors
impeding marital adjustment. It appears
that little is gained, and indeed
something might be lost, in these
circumstances.

My second point follows from the first.
If the living together relationship involves
a feeling of being on trial for either one
or both of the partners this is likely to
create a great deal of tension and
distortion. How can you be yourself and
become known if you're forced to avoid
certain issues and activities for fear of
being rejected and failing the "trial
period"?

This problem can be a great hindrance
to effective communication and to sexual
adjustment. Good sexual adjustment

depends upon trust and communication.
A couple need to be able to handle any
early disappointments and frustrations
with support, humour and optimism. If
you are "trialling" sexual adjustment with
a view to getting married or not, the
feeling that everything has to be
absolutely fantastic every time can
destroy that same goal very easily. The
focus is upon "am I pleasing him/her?"
rather than upon pleasing one another in
a relationship of sharing — giving and
receiving in a complementary fashion.

The third point has to do with the
evidence that social scientists have
published. For example, in a very recent
study (Watson, R. "Premarital
cohabitation vs traditional courtship:
Their effects on subsequent marital
adjustment". *Family Relations*, 1983, 32
(1), 139-147) carried out at the University
of Victoria, Canada, evidence was
presented which showed that higher
mean levels of marital adjustment were
obtained by couples who had not lived
together before their marriage compared
to couples who had cohabited before
their marriage.

The author of this paper commented
that "... far from being a mere rite of
passage, the act of becoming formally
married may have deep and quite
different meaning for those who marry
after cohabiting or after traditional
courtship. To the latter, marriage is a
liberating ritual through which new
possibilities, notably, the public
establishment of a common household,
are opened to a couple and are
celebrated. Cohabitors have already
established common residence and have
had to define their roles to each other

and before friends and, often, to defend
their action before parents. To them, the
aspect of marriage which is emphasized
is not the freedom it brings but the
assumption of new responsibilities."

Marriage, after living together, has not
been made easier by the trial period.
Psychologically, living together is
different from marriage and adjustment
to marriage can only be properly
achieved within the framework of
attitudes, values and expectations apply
to marriage.

Finally, a note of caution. There are lots
of Christians who lightly enter into
marriage. They have failed to explore
their expectations within themselves or
with their partner. Their contract with
their partner and with God can be faulty.
on the surface they've "done the right
thing" but if you look deeper they're in
trouble. On the other hand there are
many non-traditional couples who do
not believe in God or in the State. They
live together and within the framework of
their values and expectations they have a
satisfying relationship. It may not be
Christian, but at least they've thought it
through and this is their commitment.

Christians, don't be too quick to judge
them! We need to look to our own
situation. Public conformity to the right
Christian values does not guarantee
personal commitment to them. When
both public and personal commitment to
values endorsed by God occur together
we have the best possible platform for
the establishing of a marital relationship.
The strength of the relationship is in the
attitudes of the couple to one another
and to their Lord, Jesus Christ.

Alan E. Craddock

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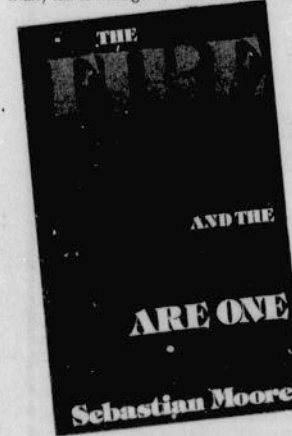
Book Reviews

The Fire and the Rose:

Sebastian Moore

Darton, Longman & Todd 158pp \$14-95

The title of this book is a line from T. S.
Eliot's poem, "Little Gidding" and is used
to illustrate the main thesis of the book
that the basic need of man is to love and
be loved and that the union of the two,
lover and loved, God and Man, is totally
fulfilling. Such a union answers the
question, are we significant?, with a yes.
Moore feels it is crucial that we realise
what he feels is a basic need, namely to
be valuable in the eyes of God — even if
many fail to recognise the need.



The problem however is how to
describe an inward event and give it
general significance. The author's
emotional experience is not necessarily
mine. Unfortunately, this personal
response makes the book difficult to read
and understand, for Moore seeks to
describe Christ and Christianity in terms
of his own needs and responses. What
does "the unique thing about the
Christian belief in God's love is that it
arose only after the execution of Jesus
had produced in his followers a total
disillusionment with all religion" mean?
Surely the Christian belief is also based
on the Old Testament message of love in
say Hosea or Deuteronomy.

This Book is suited for those who have
an interest in how the problems of
Christology may or may not be resolved.

R. Colacino

"Miracles and modern thought"

Norman Geisler.

Zondervan 1982 168 pp.

My local public library has a very large
religious section, and as may be expected
it concentrates on religious books of the
unusual kind. There are far too many
books about the mysterious or
supernatural history of Christianity.
Lourdes, Fatima, visions, stigmata etc. I
read the books but remain unmoved,
regardless of how many witnesses are
summoned forward, and which pope or
bishop gives his imprimatur.

I do not have the same trouble with the
miracles of the Bible. I have no doubt that
Jesus walked up to the grave of Lazarus
and the dead came back to life. I know it
happened even though there is no
"proof". For accepting the Bible is not an
exercise in intelligence or logic but of
listening to the voice of God.

Hence I find it very difficult to get too
excited about Norman Geisler's carefully
researched and argued book on miracles.
He covers the usual ground (are miracles
possible? are miracles recognizable? are
miracles necessary?) and does the job
well. Personally he believes the miracles
of the Bible, as one would expect from a
Zondervan publication. But all through
the reading, I was reminded of a chorus
I learnt long before these philosophical
debates entered my thinking:

ISOLATION! REJECTION!



Dreaded Words

Man needs companionship, a purpose in life. Yet, so often,
leprosy makes this impossible. Superstition, fear and ignorance
cause the rejection and persecution of many of the world's
fifteen million leprosy sufferers.

THIS SHOULD NOT BE

Leprosy is not to be feared. It can be cured. Deformity can be
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YES I want to share in your ministry.
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in all states.
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Bigger and better media centre



At the dedication of the newly extended Christian Music Centre in Sydney. (L to R) Rev. Bob Goodfellow, who commenced the work in 1967; Managing Director, Lorna O'Neill, who had the vision for the larger premises and stock; Kevin Hooper, General Manager of Spotlight Music Pty. Ltd.

Photo: Ramon Williams.

What do Elvis Presley, Popeye and Black Beauty have in common? They are all part of a bold new move, by the Christian Music Centre, to supply "just good wholesome entertainment" by means of a new video outlet.

The new department is called "WHOLE SOME VIDEO", and is a section of the extended premises, in the Lower Ground Floor, 262 Pitt Street Sydney.

The wide range of video tapes are described, by the Managing Director, Lorna O'Neill, as "No porn, no horror, as we believe people are now sick of trying to find a decent movie in the average video library".

Through the Wholesome Video Cassette Club people can borrow from a large range of movies both Christian and otherwise. They also have teaching tapes that are really uplifting as well as evangelistic and can be borrowed at the same rate as the others.

It costs \$100 to join the club and the first ten videos are free of charge. Casual memberships are also invited which will make videos affordable to those on a small budget.

The Christian Music Centre has been extended and remodelled to accommodate this new Video department.

E.F.A.C. Conference

Registrations for the Conference organised by E.F.A.C. to be held at Macquarie University in August are coming in at a pleasing rate, a spokesman told the Church Record. The Conference will feature lectures by Os Guinness and David Penman.

Church Record has been approached by some Sydney people who have asked why it is necessary for local people to be in residence. They said that the cost was proving prohibitive.

Conference organisers are aware of the problem and are sympathetic. The previous N.E.A.C.'s have been residential, even for Melbourne people and it was felt that this should continue to be the policy. The organisers told us that they have 140 beds available for the Conference. Unless these are filled the Conference will lose money. As well, full time attendance was deemed the best way to build up fellowship and to enable participants to get maximum benefit from the week.

Church Record did discover, however, that Conference organisers had decided on a special rate for students, youth workers etc who could come on a daily basis. That rate will cover an equal share

of all expenses other than residential expenses. The number of such places is limited by the accommodation in the lecture theatre. People wanting to take advantage of this need to send their \$20 soon, as the places will be allocated in order of receipt of application.

Lord Howe Island

The Anglican Home Mission Society of the Diocese of Sydney is backing a concerted effort to build up the congregation on Lord Howe Island. Reports are that recently there has been a 30% growth in the congregation.

H.M.S. recently shipped a pre-fabricated Hall to the island to assist with a widening of the work. In January a youth team will go to the island for special activities for young people.

At the moment Canon Newth is ministering there

MAINLY ABOUT PEOPLE

DIOCESE OF SYDNEY

Rev. R. Alexander will resign as Asst. Minister, King Street, to become Rector of Parish of Enmore with Stanmore on 19th August.

DIOCESE OF ROCKHAMPTON

Mr. Ian Bedford has been commissioned as Careforce Co-ordinator for the Diocese of Rockhampton.

DIOCESE OF MELBOURNE

Appointments:

Peter L. HORMAN, From assistant curacy Wantirna South with Vermont South to Priest-in-Charge (under the direction of the Regional Bishop) of the parish of Healesville. Commissioning by Bishop J.A. Grant on Monday, 18th July at 8.00 p.m.

M. Barry SMITH, From incumbency S. James' East Thornbury to incumbency Christ Church

Geelong. Induction by Archbishop R.W. Dann on Tuesday, 16th August at 8.00 p.m.

Reception:

John CLARKSON, Received as a Deacon into the Anglican Church of Australia by Archbishop R.W. Dann on 29th May, 1983. To be part-time assistant curate at S. Philip's Collingwood with S. Matthias' North Richmond.

Resignation:

Timothy McL. THORN, From incumbency of S. Aidan's Carrum. To take up work in the Diocese of Bendigo.

Retirements:

Burne B. BROOKER, From incumbency of S. David's Moorabbin as from 30th September, 1983.

H. John THORP, From incumbency S. Margaret's Caulfield as from 31st October, 1983.

Social Justice on Nationwide Television

Social Justice will be the theme of a special service at St. James' Old Cathedral, Melbourne, on July 10 (at 10.00 a.m.) which will be recorded by ABC Television for screening nationwide on Social Justice Sunday September 25.

Guest preacher will be Bishop Oliver Heyward, Anglican Bishop of Bendigo and Chairman of the Anglican Social Responsibilities Commission.

The special service will be part of the many celebrations and communications in connection with Social Justice Sunday 1983. For the first time, the major social responsibility commissions of the churches (Anglican, Uniting, Catholic and Australian Council of Churches) will issue a joint Social Justice Statement.

The special service will include liturgical dance performed by St. Jude's Carlton Dancers and led by Fiona Francis. Scripture Lessons and prayers will be conducted by different people engaged in welfare and social justice programs across Victoria.

The Minister at St. James' Old Cathedral, the Rev. Alan Nichols, who is also Secretary of the Anglican Social Responsibilities Commission, said today:

"Social Justice Sunday is increasing in importance across all the churches as an expression of the justice dimension of the gospel. St. James' Old Cathedral is seeking to make a contribution to this observance by offering a worship service on television

Annual Moore College Lectures

The Committee responsible for the organisation of the Annual Moore College Lectures have just announced the topics for this year's lectures.

The Lecturer will be the Vice-Principal of the College, Rev. Dr. W. Dumbrell. Dr. Dumbrell has just completed twelve months as visiting lecturer in Old Testament at Regent College, Vancouver.

His topic is "The End of the Beginning — a survey of Biblical Eschatology," based on Revelation 21 and 22.

Individual lectures will be:

Sept. 13 The New Jerusalem.
Sept. 15 The New Covenant.
Sept. 16 The New Temple.
Sept. 19 The New Israel.
Sept. 21 The New Creation.

All lectures will be at the College and will commence at 8.00 p.m.

The Australian



CHURCH RECORD

1782

JULY 25, 1983

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Archbishop of Sydney sends advice to Clergy REMARRIAGE OF DIVORCED PERSONS

In a letter to his clergy the Archbishop of Sydney, the Most Rev. Donald Robinson, has shared advice received from the Diocesan Chancellor on the Diocesan position on remarriage of divorced persons. The Archbishop's letter has caused great concern amongst clergy.

In his letter the Archbishop draws attention to the General Synod Solemnization of Matrimony Canon 1981 adopted by the Diocesan Synod last year. That says:

"matrimony shall not be solemnized according to the rites and ceremonies of this church . . .

(g) where either or each of the parties to be married is a divorced person, except in accordance with the law of this Church as to the marriage of such persons in force in the diocese concerned".

The Archbishop reminds his clergy that he indicated in his Synod charge that he would seek the advice of the Chancellor on the law applicable in Sydney Diocese and the obligation of the diocesan bishop and the local clergyman in regard to it.

The Chancellor has provided the Archbishop with a "comprehensive report" on both questions. The contents of the Chancellor's report have, in the Archbishop's statement of them, caused a bombshell in the Diocese.

Clergy contacted by the Record have claimed that the Archbishop's advice runs contrary to everything that they had been led to believe since 1975. Some were simply stunned, others expressed anger.

The problem

The passing of the Family Law Act to operate from 5th January 1976 caused problems. The Act made irrevocable breakdown of marriage the only ground for divorce. The question of guilt, particularly guilt related to adultery, no longer exists.

The Archbishop has written:

"I have been advised that the law of the church in this Diocese is (and always has been) that a clergyman is not permitted to conduct the service for solemnization of matrimony for a divorced person whose spouse is still living, except in the case of the innocent party whose marriage has been terminated because of the adultery of the other partner. The Archbishop cannot give permission for a marriage beyond this rule."

The Appellate Tribunal

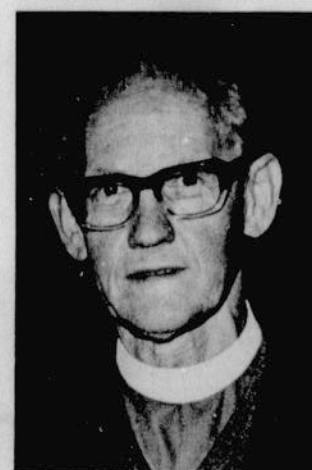
In a letter in November 1975, the then Archbishop of Sydney wrote to his clergy:

"The Canon for the Marriage of Divorced Persons 1973 was passed by the majorities in each House at General Synod in May 1973. It became a provisional Canon as a result of a sufficient number of persons making that request and as such was to have been referred to each diocese for consideration. However its validity was tested before the Appellate Tribunal of the Church of England in Australia. The President of the Tribunal reported to the Primate on 20th September, 1974, as follows:

"The provisions of the provisional Canon . . . are inconsistent with the Fundamental Declarations and in particular with Clause 3 of the Constitution because the provisional Canon allows for marriage after divorce granted on grounds other than (a) pornea, that is adultery, or such sexual offence as the word pornea connotes; or (b) any other exception which is recognised in the New Testament."

The Appellate Tribunal did not attempt to define the meaning of pornea beyond the phrase 'adultery, or such other sexual offence as the term implies'. Nor did it

attempt to determine what other exceptions are recognised in the New Testament. Perhaps St. Paul's argument in the Epistle to the Corinthians may be read as an 'ad hoc' decision in view of the special circumstances in which the early Church found itself. This may be implicit in his careful statement "To the rest speak I, not the Lord". (1 Cor. 7:12) It would appear that St. Paul taught that there were circumstances in which a marriage might be said to have come to an end.



Archbishop Donald Robinson.

Guidelines

With the passing of the Family Law Act Archbishop Loane set out the following guidelines to his clergy:

"Every application for marriage after divorce must be treated strictly on its merits in light of the decision of the Appellate Tribunal. The two major factors which must be taken into account are those of genuine compassion and considerations of continuing ministry to each party.

There should be a genuine commitment to the life and worship of the church on the part of those concerned and an honest belief on the part of the clergyman that a marriage in church is in their highest pastoral interests."

Since that time Diocesan clergy have acted according to that advice.

Further, they have often been told that legally they do not even have to refer the matter of remarriage to the Archbishop but that it is a courtesy consistent with Diocesan policy. That for example, was clearly stated at regional meetings of clergy prior to last year's Synod.

Confusion

The result has been that the Archbishop's letter has caused confusion in the mind of many clergy who believed that they had been acting legally in the past but whose actions now become questionable if the Archbishop's advice is to be accepted.

The crux of the matter is the Chancellor's Report. The Church Record, in order to shed some light on the confusion, sought access to that document. We were told, very abruptly, by the Archbishop's office that it was not available to us. We cannot therefore say more than that it seems to be in direct conflict with the opinion of many experts in Canon Law (see Church Record Comments).

Application Form

Archbishop Robinson writes: "The application form available from the Registrar now asks for an assurance from the minister that he understands the previous marriage to have been terminated in circumstances that would place it within the category of the lawful exception." (ie innocent party whose marriage has been terminated by adultery of the other partner.)

The Church Record has looked closely at the Application Form which we believe to have been devised to suit the guidelines set out by Archbishop Loane. Questions 4 and 5 relate to the information about breakdown of the previous marriage. However there are 15 sections in the Application Form, suggesting that the emphasis implied by the Form is more on pastoral concerns than on reasons for breakdown.

Civil Law

One of the most disturbing features of the Archbishop's advice is that it seems to require the clergyman to act in a way that is contrary to the Family Law Act. Back in 1975 Archbishop Loane wrote: "The Primate has received advice to the effect that the Family Law Act permits no liberty for a clergyman to go behind a divorce decree in order to ascertain whether pornea or any other New Testament exception in fact existed and could have been relied upon if the civil law allowed for it"

Legal advice received by the church Record is that this is the case. A clergyman who asks for details of reasons for a divorce other than irrevocable breakdown is guilty of acting contrary to the Family Law Act.

Even if a clergyman tells the person that he has no right to ask any questions about the divorce, he must add "but if you don't give me the full story, I can't marry you." And then, if the person volunteers the information, the clergyman must act as judge in the matter.

Clearly the advice given by the Archbishop places impossible burdens on the clergyman.

Reputation

The secular press has not been slow to lampoon the Archbishop's advice — in a way that is unfair but was to be expected. Writing in the Sun-Herald Yvonne Preston says:

"The Anglican Archbishop of Sydney is about to forbid all clergy to remarry divorcees in church except for 'innocent' parties."

The state has refused to recognise the concept of innocence or guilt in divorce since the Family Law Act of 1975. The church is about to revive it.

The move, which even the church's optimists say will shift it still further from the mainstream of society, reflects a growing concern among church and conservative groups that liberalised divorce laws have gone too far, producing divorce rates that are unacceptably high.

Marriage and the family are being undermined and could be destroyed they say.

"Till death us do part" is too liberally reinterpreted as "Till the Family Law Act us do part", hence the Archbishop's proposed guidelines to his troops!"

She quotes Frank Maas, a research

fellow at the Institute of Family Studies who says:

"Approaches like that of the Archbishop of Sydney are attacking the symptoms, not the causes. The idea of an innocent party is a medieval idea, part of the politics of punishment so popular with the Moral Majority."

She concludes: "Meanwhile Anglican clergy must endeavour to sort the divorced sheep from the goats, perhaps as potentially hypocritical an exercise as ignoring the realities of marriage and divorce and human frailty."

Conference

The Archbishop's letter does nothing but respond to the advice he has been given. Sources close to the Archbishop suggest that he wants to uphold the law of the Church and will support whatever moves Synod might care to make.

He has called a conference of clergy for August 12th to discuss this issue. Many clergy have told us that they fear that so much heat has been generated by the letter that the Conference may not achieve its stated aim of looking at the practical and pastoral implications of our position.

The Church Record will report on the results of that very important meeting.

CHURCH RECORD COMMENTS

The ACR has received the following advice:

"There is no doubt that the canons of 1603 governing remarriage of divorced persons have fallen into disuse and therefore no longer apply. In fact, Sydney has consciously ignored these canons over a long period of time.

"The canons had clearly fallen into desuetude before 1857 when divorces with the right of remarriage were granted by individual bills of the English Parliament. The 1857 Divorce Act passed by the English Parliament laid upon the parish minister the obligation to remarry the innocent party, and the discretion to remarry the guilty party. Subsequent Acts did not alter this fundamental position that a divorcee was, or could be, treated in matters of a later marriage on a par with first time marriages. Neither did these Acts of Parliament direct a parish minister to exercise his discretion, or obligation, through a bishop. The very fact that books on church law (e.g. Cripps 7 ed. 1921, Dale 1946) commenting on the 1857 and subsequent parliamentary acts pertinent to the question do not direct the parish man to especially work through his bishop on the matter confirms this.

"There has been no canon or diocesan ordinance passed on the matter other than the Canon of 1981. No church law in Australia affects the remarriage of divorcees in Sydney Diocese, and therefore we are thrown back on "to the laws relating to the faith, ritual, ceremonial and discipline of the Church

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