

Bishop Bruises Baby Boomer Barrier

A passion for fitness, Sydney-wide parish experience, country-born, proven record in youth-ministry, good-humoured, an interesting and compelling preacher, likes swimming (but not with sharks), excellent public evangelist, loves a good bit of meat, long-standing contributor to team ministry, winning smile (but no hair), able leader and administrator. The list could go on of the things that Wollongong is receiving in the appointment of her new Bishop, Alan Stewart.

But beyond those personal characteristics endorsing him for this position, Alan also holds much promise for the future because of his 'demographic'. Even though he might still qualify for a place amongst the Baby Boomers—irrespective of whether the period ends with 1961, 1964, or 1965—he is certainly a 'baby, baby boomer', part of its second cohort (1955+). Born in 1959, and with a clear interest in youth which has made him look to the next generation for some time, the new Bishop of Wollongong may not break the baby boomer barrier, but



he gives it a good bruising.

"I think the world has changed in the last generation. Institutional authority means much less to most people under 40. Leadership and influence has to come from winning people's hearts and minds—influence through vision and nurture. In order to lead we should be able to see where it is that we need to go and people need to know that you [Continued page 8](#)

English Women Keep Thinking



Across three October weekends, several thousand women attended conferences in London and Manchester, to think about what the Bible says about being women. Carrie Sandom spoke from Genesis 1–3, touching on issues like submission, singleness and marriage. In a seminar track, 'Digging Deeper'—new to the conference this year

—women studied 1 Timothy 2 in depth, assisted by our own Jane Tooher.

Given the debates in our society and our denominations, the conference participants found plenty of challenges from the speaker and the seminars. Jane reports an attractive and challenging graciousness and calmness in which disagreements were discussed. She was particularly impressed with women's willingness to look again at God's Word to 'see whether these things were so' and to submit to whatever they found there. Where so many are afraid of this issue, Jane reports that the open discussion fostered by these conferences, has actually been good for relationships. As she sums up: 'May each of us keep looking at God's word and what He says about what it means to be a man or woman, and may we never believe the lie that these passages are too difficult, or the issue too sensitive to talk about'. ●

The Australian CHURCH RECORD

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"The suggestion, often heard, that there are no theological objections to the ordination of women, seems to us unjustified."

Donald Robinson, ACR 28 Nov 1968

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Jesus the Man of Power and Goodness

John C Chapman



John Chapman told people about Jesus for many years as the Sydney Diocesan evangelist, and continues to do so now in his retirement.

Dhe story of Jesus stilling the storm at sea (Mark 4:35-41) has some remarkable lessons for us.

1. Jesus is a person of enormous power.

As you read through Mark's gospel you cannot help but be struck with his power. He exorcises demons, heals the sick, feeds the hungry, and even raises the dead. Here we see God in action and he is very impressive indeed. He does what we would like to be able to do but know only too well that we cannot.

How foolish it would be to think that

we could rebel against His rule and not be overpowered! To do that would be to put ourselves in a 'no win' situation. The best thing to do is to come to terms with that reality and acknowledge Jesus as the King in God's kingdom and submit our lives to Him.

During his lifetime Chairman Mao was apparently responsible for the annihilation of 70 million Chinese people. I have no way of verifying this. It seems an enormous number. Whatever the figure, it also is an exercise of raw power.

2. Jesus is wonderfully good

What is so wonderful about Jesus is that his power is always directed to the welfare of others. 'He went around doing good and healing all those oppressed by the devil because God was with him' (Acts 10:38). The ultimate good he did was to take the punishment our sins deserved when he died on the cross and rose again for us. He

defeated Satan in a wonderful show of strength and set us free from judgment and hell. He is wonderfully good.

He is wonderfully good.

3. Jesus wants us to trust him

What a rebuke! 'Why were you so afraid? Why didn't you trust me?'

Jesus knows about our situation. He cares about our situation and he is able to deal with our situation. 'Trust me', He says today. 'Trust me that my death on the cross is sufficient for your forgiveness'. 'Trust me that I will care for you'. 'Trust me with your whole life.'

His power and goodness combine together and say, 'Trust and obey'. ●

The Sting of a Bush Fly

Alison Blake



Alison Blake swats bush flies in Sydney's West.

Dwonder whether sometimes we love doing God's work more than we love God himself'. Ouch!—that stung!

This insightful comment was made to a group of Christian women at a teaching day I enjoyed recently. The Scriptures challenged and comforted us, the prayers were heartfelt, the Christian fellowship was warm and genuine, the spring weather gorgeous. But, like the impact of a super-sized summer bush flies, I still feel the bite

and irritation of that observation. Help me God, is my commitment to Your work greater than my commitment to You?

It's a tough one isn't it? Jesus calls us to share in his Father's work, telling the disciples to ask the Lord of the harvest to send out more workers. His last earthly words were for us to go and make disciples of all nations. There is certainly a job to be done, in season and out of season. Sometimes it seems more tangible than the Master.

We are to follow first, then fish.

The issue isn't whether I love God—I know I do—but have I lost my first love, like the Ephesian church who were known,

and rightly so, for their deeds, hard work and perseverance. God's concern was they'd lost their *first* love—Him. Jesus' two greatest commandments get the order right. Whilst passionately loving, serving and praying for others, our consuming passion is to love God with all our heart, soul and mind. We are to follow first, then fish.

And how will I know I'm loving God more than I love doing his work? When my keenness to privately listen to him in the Bible and speak to him in prayer is greater than my keenness to read the Bible with women or to teach it to children. When I'm quicker to put off the old self and put on the new, than I am to put my name on a roster or join a mission committee. When being up close and personal with God matters more to me than getting down and getting dirty doing his work. ●

Editorial

A Garden that waters the world?

In October the Sydney Synod decided that it would not revisit the question of the ordination of women to the priesthood. Enough has been said. The Sydney situation is already decided. The Synod should be congratulated on this stand, and for the good spirit in which the motion was discussed. But the discussion should now continue in numerous forums beyond the walls of Synod.

It is one thing to have a diocesan position, not foisted upon a diocese, but one that has been discussed and debated and decided upon by that diocese across a great number of years. Different decisions have been made elsewhere in Australia and the world—decisions from which our Synod does not just differ, but with which it explicitly disagrees. The Synodical decisions can now be conceived as the boundary lines erected by this Diocese, with October 2006 being the latest wire put in a boundary fence that must remain secure.

But it is another thing to move beyond the defensive, taking God's grace in all its forms into territory that still needs to joyously receive it. In other words, it is another thing for more to be persuaded—and glad of it.

There is still work to do here, but we have come a long way. Even within Sydney, a negative stance has been all too commonly heard: 'I don't really like it, but this is what God says'. The October Synod was thank-

fully spared of this, and speakers expressed a robust appreciation of what God's Word has to say about women and the God-ordained difference between their ministry and that of men. God's order is also a form of God's grace.

But is this the way that 'the many' receive this biblical teaching? Those who oppose Sydney's stand continue to misconstrue the arguments behind it. Even some who are friends on other counts, either misconstrue or misunderstand the 'complementarianism' we are said to hold. Because of such 'bad press', regular work needs to be done within Sydney congregations to ensure that hearts and minds are persuaded—far more important than simply toeing a party line. And this persuasion seems necessary even at the most basic of levels. How well are the relevant scriptural passages being taught? How well are they being understood? Are the arguments that have been rehearsed in Sydney for decades understood by those of the present generation who haven't had to fight the fight, let alone by those of the next?

In addition, it is only when a stand has been taken like that of Sydney, that the discussion can then be moved on further. So for example, there are at least two positions amongst the supporters of Sydney's concerted direction. One argues from a notion of 'leadership', or 'authority', arguing that the Scriptures reserve congregational leadership for (suit-

ably qualified) males. The other argues from a notion of teaching, arguing that the Scriptures reserve congregational teaching to (suitably qualified) males. Since the pastor pastors a congregation by teaching, therefore congregational leadership is also reserved to (suitably qualified) males. These two positions arrive at differing practical implications. Now, here is a discussion that should continue inside our boundary fence.

But even when the basic arguments are understood and accepted, there is still more to be done. Once the defensive posture is over—and now it seems that it may be—even this issue needs to be understood in a mission perspective. If the position maintained by Sydney Synod is not just opinion, but *right* (because it is biblical—that has been the consistent argument), then it is also the *best* position for all human beings to hold. If it is a form of God's grace, then within this fence is found the garden of God in which human beings will flourish.

This mission perspective then makes it all the more important that discussion continues. Our churches, our men and our women, should continue to talk and think about what God's Word says about our complementary relations, and the ministry patterns that flow from these. If this is liberation, we should now begin to see what this liberation looks like in practice. Perhaps this will, in God's good time, aid the wider task of persuasion ●

The Australian Church Record

The Australian Church Record is an evangelical newspaper in the Reformed Anglican tradition of the historic creeds and the 39 Articles of Faith, and the standard of teaching and practice in the Book of Common Prayer. We accept the Scriptures as God's word written, and as containing all things necessary for salvation and the final authority in all matters of faith and behaviour.

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SYNOD: DAY 1

Bill Salier



Bill Salier is the new Vice Principal of Moore College.

Everything must change would appear to be the theme song for this year's Synod, at least at the moment. This was the theme of the Archbishop's stirring Presidential address which was presidential in every sense of the word, beginning as it did with some insulting quotes about President Eisenhower. It was a wide ranging address that took as its focus the necessity of leadership prepared to change and to facilitate change in the light of the gospel imperative and the modern day circumstances.

Highlights along the way included a challenge to think about the question as to why men hate church and to lead whatever changes might necessary to arrest this. Cold water was poured on any attempt to revive the issue of women's

ordination with the Archbishop, perhaps provocatively, suggesting that the Bible did not allow women to operate in a position of eldership. The poverty and death of postmodernism was again declared, hints were found of a revived interest in spirituality in the wake of the demise of the postmodern project. Secular news commentators were quoted as observing the same phenomena and the importance of traditional biblical values and wisdom (though they might not have explicitly seen it that way).

It was a talk on leadership that exemplified leadership. A vision was cast, a challenge was stated and encouragement, as well as pause for thought, was given. It was a fine line to tread in affirming what was going on and yet frankly acknowledging that much more was required. At times clergy were addressed and at other times laity were addressed: in both elements of rebuke, encouragement and challenge jostled for position. A balancing act indeed.

In terms of the rest of the day it was mainly procedural. Questions were asked about a range of areas and issues: numbers of youth and children's ministry candi-

dates in training; numbers of women ministers in Sydney and financial support for these positions; Moore College Trustees; financial support for affiliated congregations; need for specialist support for ORAF/OMF for more efficient lobbying;

Leadership prepared to change.

the nomination system; how to capitalise on interest raised by the Boyer lectures; impediments to the mission; what is permissible for lay leadership.

The two presentations concerning Moore and Anglicare were suitably inspirational and informative and there seemed to be a large measure of goodwill toward each organisation. The benefit of the mission was seen in terms of focus and reorganisation, especially of Anglicare.

Al Stewart preached an excellent sermon at the end of a long afternoon/evening. A vigorous challenge again to change, suffer and repent in the light of the kingdom. ●

Synod clearly moves forward on women's ministry

Michelle Philp



Michelle is a women's minister in Sydney.

The closing night of synod saw a motion put forward by the Rev Chris Albany to reopen the debate regarding the ordination of women to the priesthood. This motion was debated on the first reading, i.e. whether the ordinance should be introduced for debate.

It is six years since this motion was last raised and the seconder of the motion, Ms Caroline Bowyer, argued that 'many in this house had not had opportunity to hear the arguments on both sides'. This

was strongly refuted by Louisa Pfitzner who argued that each synod should not need to reopen decisions of past synods, especially not ones that have already been rejected on two separate occasions.

Also opposing the motion was Archdeacon Narelle Jarett, who told Synod of the increase in enrolments of women at Moore College since the Archbishop made it clear in 2001 that he would not ordain women to the priesthood.

After an hour of balanced debate, with ten speakers of an equal mix of men and women, clergy and lay, from each side, a secret ballot was held. When the results of the ballot were delivered after the evening meal break, synod learned that 235 of 349 laity (approx 70%) and 165 of 196 clergy (85%) voted against the synod allowing the ordinance to be introduced for debate.

While some may be tempted to think

these numbers mean the issue has been 'put to bed', the nature of the debate means it will not go away as long as the influence of contemporary culture pervades the reading of Scripture. For this reason we need to ensure that the educational process in this area continues. Its importance will not subside, since, at its foundations, it concerns who we are as Christian men and women in the eyes of God. The unfortunately divisive nature the debate has taken in the past has often led to preachers avoiding teaching on the subject, and people have been reluctant to discuss it with others. Yet we always know that living God's way is the best way. We must take people to the clear word of God and show them that it was from His goodness that he created us equal in our humanity, but gave us different ways of expressing our service to Him and to others. ●

Wednesday 18th: Encouragement, Education and Money

Joanna Warren



Synod after a day of teaching, is like a second shift for Joanna Warren.

Did you know, asked Al Stewart, that if every employed Anglican adult in the diocese was suddenly on unemployment benefits, and regularly gave 10% of that to gospel work, then giving in the diocese would actually increase?! Apparently, on average, each member of an Anglican church gives just \$18 per week. Is it fear that holds us back from giving—and thus holds back Christian work across the diocese?

A good question....

but then we were greatly encouraged to hear of what is happening at St Anne's Strathfield and at Wilberforce where generosity of heart (even harder than that of the hip-pocket!) has enabled new life to flow into these churches and then out of them into the surrounding communities.

As part of the process of reforming the

structures of the diocese, to support the sort of work being done at Strathfield and Wilberforce, Bishop Forsyth then introduced the new 'Nomination Ordinance'—an up-dated version of the legislation which regulates how parishes find new rectors. Overall the process itself will become clearer and more flexible, without changing the excellent basic principles of the mechanism.

Wednesday 18th November also saw the introduction of action first requested

well as other Christian schools, and state schools too offer opportunities to committed Christian teachers.

Synod agreed that it was 'time to turn a dream into a reality' and passed the ordinance, reconstituting the Anglican Education Commission as a separate body.

Following quickly on this was a draft diocesan Policy on Education presented by Dr Grant Maple. This fascinating and wide-ranging document attempts to systematically think through the education

Apparently, on average, each member of an Anglican church gives just \$18 per week.

5 years ago, to involve the diocese in supporting the providing of trained Christian teachers—both in Christian Studies as well as in other subject areas. Dr Bryan Cowling (the new CEO of the Anglican Education Commission) spoke excellently of the need to ensure that there are enough Christian Teachers with a biblical worldview underpinning their subject knowledge and methodology.

Great opportunities have arisen as many non-Christian parents place their children in the new, low-fee Anglican as

of minds and wills that happens in Anglican contexts amongst children in playgroups to people in retirement villages. It is not intended to be prescriptive, but its aim is to help us to all 'read from the same script'—enabling many different teachers/carers/ workers etc, both voluntary and professional, to think through the issues involved in promoting ongoing growth in faith and intellectual maturity in those who attend whatever activity they might run. ●

Why do men hate going to church? Chris Allan

Chris Allan asks questions of his congregation in Sydney's West.

At Bible College they never told me that one of the employee benefits of ordination is that you get to answer that question (*regularly*) that every man eventually asks at a bbq; "So, what do you do for a crust?"

I love to predict their facial expression upon hearing the answer. Often I'll tailor my answer to how I think they'll react. I've used 'priest', 'rector', 'minister', 'bible teacher', 'general dog's body' and a host of others. I'm never surprised by their shock and disbelief: "No joke?" "You're kidding me?" "I didn't know people still did that?"

Just a couple of weeks ago my barber declared proudly to the entire shop (and all listening) that "if I walked into a church, the place would fall down. Besides, there are too many hypocrites in there for my liking..." There were generous guffaws and grunts of approval from the other recipients of the \$10 special.

It gave me the impetus to reflect upon Peter Jensen's recent Presidential Address where he asked; why do men hate going to church? I had a few ideas, but I decided to ask my 5pm congregation what they thought.

The answers were many: busyness with family and renovations; not enough time; fear of being domesticated; singing is way to weird (national anthem excluded);

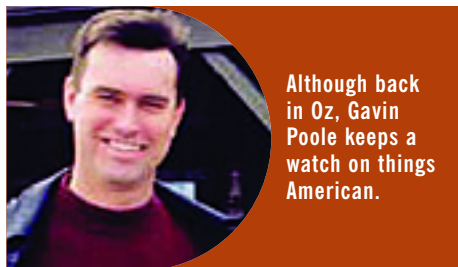
too feminine; they haven't figured out it's a good place to pick up; religion is girly; footy is on Sunday afternoons (preparation time is Sunday morning); Sunday is recovery day; too boring—and these were answers from those who go to church.

All the answers suggest that church no longer serves *them* a purpose. And that's the problem. Like my barber, most don't see that church is designed for people most in need—in need of forgiveness. The challenge for us is to change their perception of church. To do that, we need to change first... ●

Why don't men come to church? Let us know: letters@australianchurchrecord.net

A Church in need of support and encouragement

Gav Poole



Although back in Oz, Gavin Poole keeps a watch on things American.

Ghis year the Sydney Anglican synod passed a resolution stating that they would support and encourage, "...all within the Anglican Communion who are seeking to uphold biblical principles...". The concern was particularly for those who are ministering within parts of the Anglican Communion that have departed from biblical truth. Trinity Hillcrest in Dallas, Texas, may be one such church that could do with this support and encouragement. The following is an interview with Bill Lovell, the senior pastor.

GP: Bill, tell us a bit about Trinity Hillcrest.

BL: Trinity is located in North Dallas. We aim to be Christ centered, Bible focused, and mission minded. We are medium-sized (by Dallas standards) with Sunday attendance of about 500 at four services. We are evangelical Anglicans.

GP: In 2003 the Episcopal general convention approved the election of a practicing homosexual to the position of bishop. How has that decision impacted churches like yours?

BL: Many long-time Episcopalians were deeply troubled by Gene Robinson's ordination three years ago in New Hampshire. Thousands felt so strongly they actually left us and joined non-Episcopal churches.

Since then, the bishop's outspokenness about his sexual preference has also negatively impacted the Episcopal Church's mission to the wider community.

GP: That seems like a lot of fuss over one bishop.

BL: Homosexuality, of course, isn't the real issue. What's really at stake in the Episcopal Church is nothing less than the Bible and its authority among us. That battle goes back a lot more than three years.

GP: It must be difficult to serve in a denomination that is essentially moving in a different direction to your church.

BL: We often feel isolated and alone. We have concerns about how our money is being spent. And, above all, we resent having Trinity's name and reputation tied up with an agenda that is so clearly anti-gospel.

We resent having [our] name ... tied up with an agenda that is so clearly anti-gospel.

GP: So what choices do churches have?

BL: Within the last six months, there's been an increasing push-back. Many local churches have begun to exit the national structure, sometimes at great cost, both financially and emotionally. Just this fall, the largest Episcopal church in the US (right here in Dallas) made the painful decision to withdraw. Many are on the verge of following them.

GP: What about the future?

BL: From the denominational point of



Bill Lovell

view, things look pretty bleak. It seems as though God may have at last taken the lamp stand from the Episcopal Church. There's sadness about that, of course.

GP: It sounds hopeless.

BL: Not entirely. From the Kingdom perspective, I am convinced that God has not

entirely given up on Anglican Christianity in North America. The churches of the Global South have begun to recognize their gospel opportunity—and a measure of brotherly responsibility—here in the US. Things are changing, and doors are opening. It will take courage, determination, and a lot of discernment, but (by God's grace) the future may yet be bright.

GP: You seem to be looking for help outside North America. How would you describe your relationship with the Sydney diocese?

BL: We at Trinity are unabashedly enthusiastic about what God is doing in your diocese. We have admired Sydney's Christ-centered focus for years.

But, today, with the Episcopal Church sinking, many of us are frankly looking to you a bit like a rescue ship. We're waving our arms and sending up flares.

I'm not exactly sure what you can do, but we'd be grateful if you would do it! ●

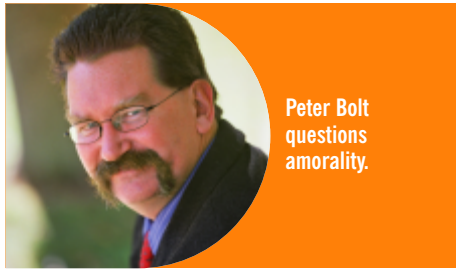


For reflection on the serious situation in the Anglican Communion,

see *The Faith Once for All Delivered*, \$10 from ACR, PO Box 218 CAMPERDOWN NSW 1450

The Rhetoric of Apparent A-Morality

Peter Bolt



Here this column suddenly steps into the murky ground of real-life examples. During Synod, exception was taken to the ACR's last editorial—any publicity is good publicity! How could ACR use the word 'immoral' in connection with the debates about women's ministry? In other circles at the moment, exception has also been taken to the suggestion that a woman preaching to men would be sinful, and for someone to allow or encourage it would be sinful too.

Now them's fighting words—if you are on the side being labelled 'immoral' or 'sinful', at least. Who wants to be called that? Surely this discussion about women's ministry is in a different category altogether: it is not about doctrine (which, to

set aside would be heresy), it is not about morality (which, to set aside would be immorality), but it is simply about church order, which, apparently, is a-moral, neutral, without any loading one way or another, just there, as serious as whether you choose English Breakfast Tea, or Irish. In a relativistic world, when such a variety of opinion exists over 'women', the rhetoric of tolerance and/or diversity (take your pick), commends a live and let live attitude (at least, in areas where the speaker is in the minority!).

But hang on, this apparent a-morality is a nonsense, isn't it? Haven't the so-called 'egalitarians' been arguing for years that it is a matter of *justice* to allow women to do anything and everything that a man is permitted? Last time I looked, *justice* was a moral category, and so if someone refuses to permit women to teach or exercise authority over a man, then that is *injustice*, or to use the nasty word, it is *immoral*. And, unless I missed something in the Scriptures, isn't *injustice* or even *immorality* something that we could clearly call *sinful*? And so wouldn't

it be *sinful* to encourage someone else to perpetrate *injustice*, by standing aside and not helping women teach or exercise authority over a man—as is their *right* according to natural *justice*, or whatever?

On the other hand, if someone is convinced that the Scriptures really do not permit women to teach or exercise

Let's stop the pretence.

authority over a man, then surely they must also be convinced that it is *immoral* to permit what God's word does not permit, and it is also even *sinful* to do so, and it is *sinful* to encourage others to do so as well. Doctrine leads to moral categories.

Let's stop the pretence. This is not a neutral issue for either side. Part of the heat that is generated is because it is a deeply moral issue, one way or the other. And that is why we need to move beyond rhetoric and onto serious examination of the Scriptures once more. ●

Two publications to watch out for in 2007

1) Selected Works of Donald Robinson.

Donald Robinson is no stranger to readers of the ACR. Even before he was Vice Principal of Moore College, or Bishop of Parramatta, or Archbishop of Sydney, the readers of the ACR were enjoying his writing on various topics of Christian interest. Across the course of his long ministry as preacher, Bible teacher, and churchman, Bishop Robinson's pen was regularly engaged. In 2007, a collection of many of his published and unpublished writings will be launched, enabling his insights to be more readily available to those who already thank God for his ministry, and to the next generation of Bible students.

These volumes will be jointly published by Moore College and the Australian Church Record.

Expressions of interest? editor@australianchurchrecord.net

2) Thomas Moore of Liverpool: One of Our Oldest Colonists. Essays and Addresses to Celebrate 150 Years of Moore College.

As part of the sesquicentenary celebrations of Moore College in 2006, Peter Bolt has written a number of essays examining the most interesting life of Thomas Moore, benefactor of Moore College. This collection will be published as a written celebration of the college's 150th year, and a portion of its purchase price will go to the continued ministry of this important centre of theological learning.

Copies of this special limited edition need to be pre-ordered using the form found at www.boltpublishing.com.au (\$71.50 all inclusive).

Women and the Word



Jane has recently taken up women's ministry at St Peter's Barge, London.

When Giving is Receiving

Jane Tooher

I recently moved overseas. Before I left Sydney I did not ask myself, 'What will be the best thing to help me settle quickly into London?' However, in God's kindness, within the first week of moving I was meeting up with women who were not Christian and who were keen to investigate Christianity. This has actually been the best thing in helping me settle into my new home. In one group we were looking at Mark's Gospel and working through the Christianity Explored (C.E) material. In another group we were reading through John's Gospel. Meeting up with these women helped me remember what really matters in life—giving God glory. This was especially important given that life was quite stressful and I was exposed to temptation. It helped teach me that the stressful things that were happening did not really matter in the big scheme of things. It helped me say no to temptation. It helped me see that what truly mattered was the eternal destiny of these women. It helped me be thankful to God. It helped me not focus on myself as much as I was tempted to do. After writing to a friend about this she then said she would like to run Simply Christianity or C.E at her church. Her response of course has filled me with much joy and I am wondering if you also would like to run an introductory Christianity course, or if you would like to be involved with one?

1. What are your fears about being involved in a course like C.E?
2. Why is it that many of our fears 'go' once we are involved in a course like C.E?
3. Why do we need to keep advertising courses like C.E at our churches rather than waiting for people to be interested before we start a course?
4. Pray for an opportunity to be involved in a course like C.E.

(Christianity Explored courses include those for adults, 'English made easy', and youth. See www.christianityexplored.com) ●

Bizarre Ideas about Bishops – Election Reform?

The final goal of the Diocesan Mission commits to us reforming structures to more fully enable the first three goals. As the ACR continues being bizarre about Bishops, we can ask whether this reform will include things associated with Sydney's next Archbishop?

It is an ideal time to call for such a review. The election is far enough in the future to avoid personalities. From all reports, the Diocese seems remarkably behind the present Archbishop, and such a positive environment should diminish reform from negative motives, and encourage a more neutral assessment of what is and what ought to be. It would be a positive act of leadership in mission if the present Archbishop and Standing Committee initiated such a review. A committee with responsibility to widely consult and to brain-storm could eventually propose some gospel-centred vision for the future office of Archbishop of Sydney that will fit the kind of leadership styles which will best serve the future churches of this ever-changing city. Certainly a clear picture of the kind of office we want, will help to shape the kind of person to consider come election time.

Amongst the items for review, the committee could examine the election process on the broadest canvass possible. Perhaps it could flush out the kind of 'urban myths' that always seem to appear around election time and dispense with them. Perhaps it can

propose some checks and balances that may help to work around some of the fears that lie behind those election myths. Perhaps it can articulate the kinds of commitments Synod has already taken, and the trajectory upon which our churches are moving, so that the ones to be nominated know what kind of diocese they are expected to honestly lead. Perhaps some kind of 'standing orders' could be suggested to govern the discussion of potential nominees that is inevitable as the time draws near.

Such a committee may end up deciding we already have the perfect system. In that case, we must be already ahead of our time, because the present

The diocese seems remarkably behind the present Archbishop.

will serve the future well too. But then again, a rethinking always opens the possibility that something better will emerge.

Any 'reform' agenda can create defensiveness if wrongly conducted. However, Synod has already committed itself to reform for mission-sake. Such a commitment says that no-one ought to fear reform, in fact, everyone ought to move towards it. Is it too bizarre to say we should aim to be so thorough that we engage in Arch-reform? ●

Bishop Bruises Baby Boomer Barrier [CONT. FROM PAGE 1]

care for them, have their best interests at heart and so they will trust you. As the old saying goes, he who leads with no one following, is just taking a walk'.

Although it is far too early to expect him to know how the Diocesan Mission's commitment to reform might work out amongst the episcopate, Alan is clear about the proper focus: 'In terms of leadership as a Bishop, I'm theologically committed to the primacy of the local congregation and its eldership. I will be aiming to strengthen that wherever I can and to serve and support the congregations and their leadership.'

And who says a bishop can't retain the

heart of an evangelist?

'There are 800,000 people in the region—between 1 and 2% are in Anglican churches. My dream is to see thousands and thousands of people come to know and love the Lord Jesus and brought into those Christian communities. My dream is to see pastors fired up and passionate about preaching the gospel, congregations growing, active, reaching out, living like Jesus and holding out the word of life. It would not hurt to have the St George Illawarra Dragons win a competition now and then. Although at the moment that seems a little less likely than my first dream!' ●