

**GENERAL SYNOD 2012**

**REPORT OF THE LITURGICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**Proposed by The Revd Canon Gerald, Field, (Hon. Sec. to the LAC) Diocese of Meath**

**EMBARGOED UNTIL DELIVERY**

**CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY**

Your Grace, it gives me great pleasure to have been invited by the Liturgical Advisory Committee to propose the reception of this year's report to the General Synod.

I sometimes think people believe that as a committee we sit around at meetings wondering what we can dream up to do next.....or at worst what havoc can the LAC now prepare to inflict upon the poor, unsuspecting Church of Ireland!

In reality, the work of the LAC is a mixture of being both pro-active and re-active.

As a committee we try to offer to the Church of Ireland liturgies and guidelines for best practice that will enhance the worship offered to God, and the worshipping experience of those meeting together for worship. We also seek to respond to those who suggest to us projects that will be of a wider benefit in both parochial and diocesan ministry. In proposing this report (on Pages 330–337 of the Book of Reports) I would like to draw your

attention to some of the undertakings of the LAC during the past year which fulfil those criteria.

The last time I stood before you was at the launch of the first in the PRISM series of Parish Based Adult Religious Education books, *Celebrating Communion*. Following that publication there was a request that something similar be done for the sacrament of baptism. In response to that request, the past two years have been spent composing *Holy Baptism – Journeying Together in God’s Love*. Because of financial constraints, the publication format will need to be given serious consideration, but we are hopeful that it will be available to parishes by this time next year, and receive the same encouraging response as its predecessor.

The Worship Page of the Church of Ireland’s website is one of the on-going successes of the LAC’s work. As the report notes, “The work of maintaining and updating the liturgical resources on the Worship webpage is time consuming and.....

is undertaken on a voluntary basis by people already committed in other areas of ministry.” I would, at this point, like to express our sincere gratitude to those who undertake that work on behalf of both the LAC, and the Church of Ireland.

As a Committee we are aware that it is far from perfect, but given the constraints of copyright law and the house style of the website generally, we believe it offers a valuable and accessible resource for parishes and individuals within the Church of Ireland and beyond. That is borne out by the statistical information carried in the report (a 30% increase in visitors to

the website in the past year, with over 9000 of those being unique visitors) and correspondence received from as far afield as Australia.

There can be little doubt that the internet provides access to a wealth of liturgical resources, some of which would integrate easily into the worship of the Church of Ireland, much of which would not! Part of the work of the LAC is to identify the former and filter the latter. Many have found the Church of England's *Times and Seasons* a great asset when seeking to make the major festivals of the Church's year more vibrant and inspiring for congregations. But as they say, there's nothing like good home cooking!! So whilst technically not a project of the LAC, the committee has been pleased to support the work of our Chairman in the production of his work *The Week of Weeks*, looking to provide suitable resources for Lent, Holy Week and Easter pertinent to the Church of Ireland.

The International Anglican Liturgical Consultation is one forum in which the Church of Ireland's participation and contribution have been acknowledged on more than one occasion, and especially so at the meeting in Canterbury last August when Your Grace was in attendance representing the Primates of the Anglican Communion.

That respect, for what one delegate described as the Church of Ireland's stabilising effect on debates that have the potential to become volatile, was evident in the election of the Revd Alan Rufli to the Steering Committee of the IALC.

Finally, a brief word about the Music section of the Report and the Appendix. The work of this sub-committee arose in part from requests for more hymn and song material for children's worship and to increase the

liturgical section of the present Church Hymnal. It also arose from a realisation that in the intervening 15 years since work was begun on the current Church Hymnal, a great deal of new, good quality material has been produced in a variety of volumes, and that it seemed appropriate to collate some of that material into a single supplement for the Church of Ireland.

The Appendix to the Report contains a compilation of the hymns and worship songs suggested to the committee during the consultation process so far.

It would be very remiss of me if, in concluding this proposal, I failed to acknowledge the tremendous debt of gratitude we as a Church owe to Canon Brian Mayne, who has formally resigned his seat on the LAC. Brian has for many years been an inspiring ambassador for liturgical revision both at national and international level.

His understanding of the subtleties and nuances of liturgical language permeate his writings, and was evident to those who worked with him in his editorship of *The Book of Common Prayer 2004*. He is remembered with great affection and respect by those who recall his valued contributions to discussions at the International Anglican Liturgical Consultation. But perhaps nowhere more so has his influence been experienced than here in the Church of Ireland. Since his retirement from full time parochial ministry, his continued contribution of lectionary resources and commentaries to a number of weekly and annual publications have been of untold value to many of us. Thankfully, Brian is also a good mentor, and the mantel of this particular “Elijah” has fallen on to a number of “Elisha’s” who will ensure the continuity of contributions to those publications.

As the LAC has recorded its recognition and appreciation of Canon Mayne's contribution to its work, may I respectfully suggest that this Synod also record its appreciation of his outstanding contribution to the liturgical life of the Church of Ireland over many years?

Your Grace, it gives me great pleasure to propose that the Report of the Liturgical Advisory Committee be received.