Plenary targets women's ministries

by E.T. M alone, Jr.

T
he Lambeth Conference yesterday approved an amended resolution stating that bishops should not be compelled to ordain or license women. The resolution also calls on provinces to provide for special episcopal ministry as a means of maintaining unity in the Anglican Communion.

Bishop Penny Jamieson (Dunedin, New Zealand) moved the amendment, hammered out in a series of meetings between female and traditionalist bishops and supported on the floor by a coalition of female, traditionalist and liberal male bishops.

“During our discussions there were deep and real disagreements” Bishop Jamieson said. “Our small group began by being suspicious of each other, but as trust between us began to grow it became our prayer that we could agree on an amendment that we could foster, as a way of deepening our Communion in the heart of God while and because of our respect for our differences.”

She suggested voting on the four sections of the amendment separately, but the bishops chose not to do that. The third section contained language calling on the provinces to provide “appropriate episcopal ministry” in an apparent reference to allowing episcopal ministry in addition to, or as an alternative to that of the diocesan bishop.

That section also stated “that there is and should be no compulsion on any bishop in matters concerning ordination or licensing” a concession to traditionalist bishops who maintain that they are conscience-bound to ordain women in their dioceses.

Bishop Victoria Matthews (Edmonton, Canada), a member of the small group that drafted the amendment, said: “At this Lambeth Conference I have been received with a gracious and generous spirit... and as one of the first generation of women bishops...ask that we keep this same spirit of graciousness and gener
gener-osity as we continue the process of open reception of female clergy.”

She said diocesan can be creative for the mind of the Church.

Suffragan Bishop Barbara Harris (Massachusetts, U.S.), the first woman consecrated bishop in the Anglican Communion, voiced opposition to the third section in its entirety, saying: “While the language seems "appropriate order"...to commit themselves to support a third section containing language calling on the provinces to provide "the kind of resolution that could be taken home by all members of this Conference" no matter what country or what national political positions had been taken on debt.

The resolution asks them to challenge their dioceses to fund international development programmes, cooperate with people of other faiths in advocacy programmes and to commit themselves to support a series of requests of both creditor and debtor nations governments, including establishment of a multilateral Council. Earlier in the plenary, the bishops first considered resolutions of Section Three (“Called to be a Church in a Plural World”). After nearly a 20-minute exchange focusing on whether it required adherence to literal interpretation of the Bible or not, Resolution One passed without amendment.

One of two resolutions moved to debate status Resolution One reaffirms the primary authority of the scriptures, urges biblical texts to be handled respectfully, coherently and consistently in the best traditions and scholarship. It also invites provinces to promote biblical study at all levels and across the Communion.

In a plenary from 3.30pm to 5.30pm this afternoon, while tickets for alcohol will be available from the Spouses’ Home Tent.

Log-jam threatens as Lambeth nears end

C
ference planners are scheduling an extra business session at 11.30am today in an attempt to avoid a log-jam. The weight of unfinished resolutions and other business is concerning the Resolutions Committee, according to its chair, Bishop Michael Nuttall (Natal, South Africa).

“In all likelihood we will have to have a further plenary session,” Bishop N. told bishops as yesterday afternoon’s plenary ended.

“There is a whole further cluster of resolutions from the regional groups and elsewhere that we still need to deal with,” he said.

In the original Conference timetable, planners set aside space for a plenary from 3.30pm to 5.30pm this afternoon.

A Conference resolution on euthanasia will be a key item on today’s agenda.

Yesterday’s plenary accepted one amendment to the draft resolution, originally proposed by Section O, and rejected another from Bishop Moses Tay (Singapore).

Faced with the prospect of a number of further detailed motions, the Conference decided to send the text of the draft euthanasia motion back to the Resolutions Committee for submission again today.

The final two business plenaries of the Conference will consider a number of outstanding resolutions from Section Three. A report from the Spouses’ Programme ala will be presented.

Archbishop Glauco Soares de Lima, of Brazil, will chair today’s sessions.

Archbishop Patrice N’Jojo, of Congo, is vice-chair.
Reconciliation

My father’s witness

Last year I read the statement from the Nippon Sei Ko Kai on their war responsibility. I felt humbled and moved by its honesty and courage. Its acknowledgement of the suffering inflicted by Japan during the war, and their moving apology, had obviously come out of a process of painful self-examination and prayer. It is an example to us all.

The particular reason why this statement from the Japanese Church touched me so deeply was that my father was one of the many Japanese prisoners of war who suffered from the atrocities perpetuated by their captors. His name was Leonard Wilson and he was Bishop of Singapore.

On October 10, 1943 (the double 10th as it became known), the Japanese military police—the Gestapo or Kempo-tai—raced Changi and arrested 57 of the prisoners among them was my father, the bishop. He was accused of being a spy and for many days he was subjected to torture.

Often he had to be carried back to the crowded, dark and filthy cell, almost unconscious from his wounds. On one occasion, when seven men were taking it in turns to flog him, they asked him why he didn’t curse them. He told them it was because he was a follower of a man who taught us to love one another.

He asked himself then how he could possibly love these men with their harsh cruelty who were obviously enjoying the torture they were inflicting. As he prayed he had a picture of them as they might have been as little children, and it’s hard to hate little children.

But then, more powerfully, his prayer was answered by some words of a well-known communion hymn which came to his mind: “Look Father, look on your anointed face, and only look on us as found in him.”

In that moment he was given a vision of those men as not as they were then, but as they were capable of becoming, transformed by the love of Christ. He said he saw them completely changed, their cruelty becoming kindness, their sadistic instincts changed to gentleness. Although he felt it was too blameworthy to use Christ’s words “Father, forgive them,” he experienced the grace of forgiveness that mercy produces.

After eight months he was released back to Changi—one of the few who survived. For the rest of his life he emphasized in his speaking and preaching the importance of forgiveness.

How would he have rejoiced to be here today—as I am sure he is. This year he would have been 100, and it is fitting to remember him now as this month is the anniversary of his death.

Although he was able to forgive, and I and my family want to affirm that unconditional forgiveness, true reconciliation can only come when there is an acknowledgement of wrongs done, when the truth is faced, and painful self-examination leads to confession and apology.

I and my brother here with me today want to say to our Japanese brothers and sisters a heartfelt thank you for what you have done. The cycle of reconciliation is completed.

Today we celebrate the Feast of Transfiguration. Michael Ramsay, a former Archbishop of Canterbury, says: “Transfiguration is indeed a central theme of Christianity, the transforming of suffering and circumstances of men and women with the vision of Christ, and the ‘Holy Spirit within us.’”

My father’s story is a transfiguration story, for himself and for his captors.

After the war he returned to Singapore and had the great joy of confirming one of his torturers.

This is how he described the moment: “One of those men who was allowed to march up from the prison to the cathedral, as a prisoner, to come for baptism, was one of those who had stood with a rope in his hand, threatening and sadistic. I had seldom seen so great a change in a man. He looked gentle and peaceful. His face was completely changed by the power of Christ.”

St Paul says in 2 Cor 3:18: “All of us, with unveiled faces, seeing the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord the Spirit.”

Today we are remembering something else. It is Hiroshima Day, when terrible suffering was inflicted on the Japanese people of Hiroshima, and then of Nagasaki three days later when 80,000 Christians were killed instantly, and thousands as a result of radiation.

“Men and women of the world, never again plan war!”

How necessary were those bombs? Why was a second bomb dropped on Nagasaki even as the Supreme Council of War was meeting in Tokyo to decide whether to surrender? These bombs ended the war, but at what cost? I do not know the politics, or the arguments, only that something terrible was inflicted on the people of Japan by my country and its allies, which the world must never forget.

A few years ago I read a little book called “The Bells of Nagasaki” by a Japanese doctor and physicist, who was also a Christian, Takashi Nagai. He witnessed the bombing of Nagasaki and describes in detail the terrible devastation and horror as it unfolded.

Everything was destroyed for him—his home, his wife and family. His hospital, his cathedral, the honour of his country, and thousands of his fellow men and women. Heroically, in spite of his own wounded spirit and sickness, he worked to relieve the suffering of others.

He wrote the book and told the story of a miracle. As Nagai tells the story of Nagasaki, he is also telling the story of his own transformation through suffering and loss.

In his funeral address for the victims of the bomb he said it was fitting that the Church in Nagasaki, which had kept the faith through 400 years of persecution, should bear the brunt of this bomb, that through this sacrificial peace was given to the world.

He ends his book with a ringing message: “Men and women of the world, never again plan war!” From this atom bomb disfigurement on the cross that God’s glory is revealed.

It is not only suffering the means of reconciliation, but the transfiguring of suffering itself is attended to in the Christian life and experience. My father experienced this transfiguring of suffering through the power of other prayers.

When two of his companions in the cell, who had shared so much with him, died of their wounds and hunger, he said he felt a terrible loneliness. But conscious of the prayers of others, he said: “Here again I was helped by God. There was a tiny window at the back of the cell, and through the bars I could see the glorious red of the flame of the forlorn tree, and something of God, something of God’s indestructible beauty was conveyed to my tortured mind.”

“A great peace descended. Gradually, the burden of this world was lifted and I was carried into the presence of God, and received from him the strength to bear the pain, which were enough to live by day by day.”

May many of you have experienced depths of suffering among your people or in your own lives beyond what most of us can imagine. You will know, too, the darkness and the cloud where God is awesomely present in the confusion and pain.

I would like to end with some words of Karl Barth: “Thus, our tribulation without ceasing to be transformation is worked. We suffer as we suffer before, but our suffering is no longer passive, no longer complexity but is transformed into a pain which is creative, fruitful, full of power and promise. The road which is impassable has been made known to us in the crucified and risen Lord.”

Brian Irvine of Oxford, England (Conference Secretariat): “After taking on initiatives regarding technology, I see a Conference in which thoughts and ideas can be easily and effectively communicated to those who need to know—perhaps even via virtual reality. Creativity can be realised and shown to the people of the world or the person down the corridor.”

Elizabeth Gordon Clark of London (Deputy Conference Secretary): “I guess the University will have to have an enormous building programme if they intend to house all those who will be coming to this Conference, knowing how fast the Communion is growing. As this Conference has been defined by (lating, I think the next Conference will be even more defined by love.”

Bishop Bernard Nhatorutai of Matana, Burundi: “I hope that there will be more love, compassion and fellowship in a more comprehensive manner. In this Conference, there will be listening. In human interaction, listening should take first place.”

The Rev Canon Susan Cole-King’s homily at yesterday’s Conference Eucharist on Transfiguration and Hiroshima

Daily Question

What is your prediction for the next Lambeth Conference?

T he Lambeth’th daily
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Daily Voices

What was your prediction for the next Lambeth Conference?
On a wing and a prayer

by Roland Ashley

W hat are you going to do now you're in your late forties and your last child is about to leave home? A friend asked Marion McCall six years ago.

For some time she had wondered how she could help her husband, Bishop David M McCall, whose Diocese of Willochra in South Australia stretches over an area six times the size of England. "Spending so much time driving thousands of miles was just killing me!" When M R McCall announced an archdeacon's party that she had been thinking about learning to fly but did not have the money, someone suggested that she ask the people of the diocese to buy $10 shares in her. But first she had to give the "enterprise" a name. "M Aron Over Willochra (MOW)" she said.

"It's just extraordinary" how the money poured in, M R Mc Call adds. "Before long thousands of dollars had been raised. It was getting serious—I'd really have to fly!"

She recalls her first lesson: "Taking off was easy but landing was a problem. When the wheels are about 3 feet, 6 inches from the ground you've supposed to take the plane down very gently. But even with three cushions on a seat clearly designed for men I had difficulty seeing well enough to estimate the distance from the landing strip!"

Another problem was that "unlike driving a car, there seemed to be no sense in it," she said. "You have to steer with your feet, and controls that intuition tell you to pull usually required to be pushed, and vice versa."

After a week of failed attempts at landing, M R M McCall decided she had had enough. "It was more than just not being able to master the basics. I really thought I was going to kill myself each time I tried to land," she recalls.

"For the first time in my life I was facing up to real fear—the kind which starts in the pit of the stomach and moves up to the brain. Fear became a real presence."

Fear, she says is the name she gives to the devil. "It's fear which stops us doing anything. It's fear which stops us reaching our true potential."

After a friend gave her a book on alcoholism, where she read: "When you notice...tension (going) into near-panic, and old fears returning, this is the time to stop short and turn to God. You can do nothing anyway, and you will find that if you supply the willingness He will supply the power."

This was the turning point. "I said to God, 'I'm willing but you'll need to provide the strength.' I decided to take God with me."

At first she wasn't disappointed. "It would be great to know more about the causes of engine failure," said Marion McCall on her visit to Headcorn Airport, Kent, on July 29. For a lesson in aircraft maintenance Marion said she was hoping to learn to detect serious problems and "do an oil change, clean the spark plugs and check the battery."

Turning to me, Des drily remarked in his broad Australian, 'He's gawn and left yuh!''

There were to be other mishaps. "Part of the training involves teaching survival skills in the event of engine failure. After climbing to 3,500 feet, you switch off the engine, and then follow the procedure as outlined in the manual: 1) reassure your passengers that you know what to do in the situation. 2) choose a paddock, and 3) glide down into the paddock," she says in mock seriousness at the suggestion that all this be achieved simply and swiftly.

On one occasion, she continues, "we had descended to just 20 feet off the ground when Des said, 'Take her home, the ground's too wet. But I tell you what, you've upset that woman hanging out her washing.'"

When the big day came to go solo, "I said to God, 'Zipp! We're on!'" Flying solo, she reflects, 'is a bit like having a baby. Anybody can get a plane airborne, but it needs every ounce of strength to land it.'"

Now an experienced pilot, her request during the Lambeth Conference was for a course in basic aircraft repair to avoid getting stranded in her remote destinations.

Ms R McCall has found herself in many embarrassing situations. "After a meeting of the bishops' wives, I agreed to take them up. Screaming down the runway I realised we weren't going to get airborne. "Because I hadn't wished to offend, I allowed the largest ladies to sit in the back. So we had to stop and change places. Although this time they were in the front, to make matters worse I had to ask them to lean forward."

When she's lost, she likes to sing hymns. "On one occasion, after singing through my repertoire several times— including old favourites 'Abide with Me' and 'Nearer My God to Thee'—I'd left through my repertoire several times— including old favourites 'Abide with Me' and 'Nearer My God to Thee'—I'd left several hymns. 'On one occasion, after singing through my repertoire several times— including old favourites 'Abide with Me' and 'Nearer My God to Thee'—I'd left through my repertoire several times— including old favourites 'Abide with Me' and 'Nearer My God to Thee'—I'd left several hymns.

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"However, my jubilation was to be short-lived. The next landing was terri-Table of Contents

Briefly

To launch the new "Faith in an Urban World Commission," a discussion is planned for 2.45 pm today in Lecture Theatre 2 in the Grindrod Building.

Grants of up to $2,500 to aid the worldwide mission of the Church are available from The Mission of the Conservative in Connecticut (US). Application deadlines are April 15 and November 15. Information: Bishop Clarence Coleman, 1235 Asylum Ave., Hartford, CT 06103, USA.

The Human Sexuality Resolution text released to The Lambeth Daily

"The Human Sexuality Resolution was not approved as reported in Tuesday's edition. The resolution was referred to the Resolutions Committee to return to the plenary session.

The Archbishop of Sydney was misidentified as the Bishop of Sydney in Wednesday's edition. We regret the error.

Bishops last call for portraits

Conference photographers will be available for one final time today—1:30 to 3:30 pm today—outside the plenary halls to take portraits for the Anglican Conference Office files.

The paper for The LambethDaily aly is kindly donated by Robert Home Paper Company Ltd.

Daily Events Weekend

Saturday August 8

7.15 am Prayer Time (Igreja Lusitana Católica Apostólica Evangélica) followed by Bible Study video with George Carey/Archbishop of Canterbury

8.15 - 9.15 am Breakfast

9.30 - 11.00 am Morning Prayer and Bible Studies

11.00 - 11.15 am Coffee

11.10 - 12.45 pm Final Plenary Session: Bible Presentation and Official Farewells

12.00 - 13.00 pm Lunch/Free Time

1.00 - 2.30 pm Sections Reflections on LambethFree Time

2.45 - 4.00 pm Sections Reflections on LambethFree Time

6.00 pm Closing Eucharist (Province: The Anglican Church of Australia) followed by Party Including DInner

Sunday August 9

8.15 - 9.15 am Breakfast

Coaches depart for the Railway Station, and Heathrow and Gatwick Airports

The Lambeth Daily Friday August 7 1998 3

How Marion McCall gave the devil the slip

by Roland Ashley

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Arriving at a large conference like Lambeth for the first time, joining hundreds of people from around the world, was a very confusing experience. All the delegates with divergent ideas and agendas, the sprawling campus, the myriad meetings, prayer groups, services and activities created an almost unbearable sense of chaos. Overwhelmed, I sought some symbol of unity. The pectoral crosses I saw every day became the anchor I needed to make sense of what I was experiencing. This montage is my gift to the people of Lambeth.

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