

# **The Church and its Ministry : with special reference to the Church of England and its Accredited Lay Workers**

ROSEMARY NIXON

## **The church and its ministry**

The existence of the church bears witness to the fact of God's intervention in, and ministry to, the world. Each building is a physical reminder of the fact, and each congregation a visible reminder of his grace. Members of the church have witnessed the intervention of God in their own lives, and that experience leads to the twin responses of worship and mission. In mission, we work alongside God in his reaching out to men and women; in worship, we praise and adore him because he reaches out to us. Mission (initially the mission of God himself) leads to worship, and worship (because he is the sort of God he is) inspires mission. Worship without mission is in danger of becoming self-indulgent and ultimately idolatrous. Scripture consistently portrays a God engaged in the action of reaching out, of revealing himself to the end that all the families of the earth might be blessed. When this crucial element is omitted from the church's response to God, then it is open to question whether or not it is worshipping a god of its own making. Mission without worship, on the other hand, readily degenerates into proselytizing.

If the above is true—if the church exists to bear witness, and if that witness is expressed in the twin responses of worship and mission—then we must ask, 'What are the implications of this assertion for Christian ministry?' Whilst the existence of the church bears implicit witness to the work of God, 'ministry', whether official and ordained or unofficial and belonging to the whole people of God, is the instrument through which explicit witness is made to the grace of God. God has intervened in human society. The whole ministry of the church is to interpret that intervention, proclaim it, teach the implications of it in society, and in all this must itself express the ministry of God. The church has an undoubted responsibility, a commission to do this, and as it fulfils that commission, it has authority. The authority resides in the one who commissions the church; in the one to whom the church is responsible for the fulfilment of its task. It is therefore a 'royal authority' belonging to the Lord himself. When the people of God proclaim his message, they bear his authority because it is his message. It may be in

this sense that the church (the whole people of God) can be described as a 'royal priesthood and a holy nation': in interpreting, proclaiming, teaching and expressing the word of God the church is most truly a priesthood. 'In the first place it is Christ and the church who are priestly; nowhere in the New Testament does the minister in the church take on particularly priestly characteristics.' It is a 'royal priesthood' in that its message and commission come from the King of kings and thereby bear his authority. Those who corporately seek to govern their lives by it, and thereby proclaim it, are a 'holy nation'. Their life together expresses the rule of God amongst them.

At this point we may briefly summarize our theology of ministry. It can be stated very simply: 'We minister because he first ministered to us.' Through the ministry of the triune God we have received grace and truth.<sup>2</sup> The Creator has ministered grace and truth to his creation. From this it may be inferred that in the omniscience of God his creation could only be completed or redeemed by its receiving grace and truth in the face of Jesus Christ. The church, the new creation, is born out of, and therefore witnesses to, this ministry of God.

Here I wish to note some of the characteristics, forms and effects of God's ministry. Scripture indicates that the *characteristics* of grace, righteousness, kindness, faithfulness, mercy, justice, patience and truth belong to the one who has ministered to us, bringing the church to birth. These characteristics, which are perceived to belong to God, are also those indicated in Galatians 5:22-23, and it is not without significance that in Acts 6:3 those who were appointed to 'serve tables' were to be men 'full of the Holy Spirit'. These are the same characteristics which the ministry of the church must express. The characteristics of God are made known to us through his dealings with us: conversely, it is because he is gracious and righteous that he has any dealings with us at all.

The human *forms* through which God's ministry is expressed are of necessity varied: apostle, teacher, pastor, prophet, servant, helper, judge, king, etc. There is not one human form that could fully express the ministry of God: only the human form of Jesus Christ, the supreme paradigm, gives full expression to the ministry of God.

The *effect* of God's ministry is to bring about a state of reconciliation, healing, restoration, confidence, trust and a new creation. Corporately these effects result in new expressions of right dealings, bearing witness to the ministry of God.

Christian ministry, therefore, is the result of God's ministry, possesses characteristics such as are found in the nature of God, is expressed in a variety of forms, and produces particular effects resulting in the upbuilding of the ministering body of Christ. It is of the essence of the church that it should minister in worship of him who has ministered to it, and, in mission, should be proclaiming and expressing how God has so loved the world that . . . he ministered to it by . . . giving

his only Son. Our theology of ministry lies in the very heart of God. It is his nature which shapes the character, form and effects of the church's ministry. Ministry which does not demonstrate the ministry of God is not Christian ministry.

### **The Church of England**

It is now old hat to say that ideas of ministry in the Church of England have been epitomized by, and summed up in, the clergyman. The fulness of God's ministry has been stuffed inside a dog-collar, and what the clergyman is and does has been understood to express the ministry of God. Not only has the one-man-band concept put intolerable pressures on the clergyman; more seriously, it has robbed the *laos* of its appreciation of the sheer variety of forms of Christian ministry. 'Ministry' is not what the schoolteacher or street-sweeper does; it is what the clergyman does. This concept has also tended to emphasize the liturgical aspect of witness, which is the distinctive function of the clergyman and has correspondingly undervalued mission. The one who sums up ministry is the one seen to lead the liturgy. He is involved with the sacred mysteries of the church; he symbolizes a holy tradition in his doctrine, teaching and work in the sanctuary. He works in those places where the *laos* walk with great reverence; his life-style is different from that of his flock; he is separate from them and they look up to him. They cannot easily identify with him; he is an example in holy living. He may correspond to their need for a 'holy man', although this assumes a concept of holiness which is subchristian. But God has ordained that a variety of forms are needful to express his ministry, and 'the church will need to be flexible, open to the possibility of the development of new forms and variants of ministry not now foreseen.'<sup>3</sup> In order to correct this imbalance, the new burden laid upon the clergyman is that he should enable his flock to exercise their ministry. Whilst the ministry of God may have the effect of enabling people, to imply that enabling is the task of one man in relation to the congregation is to give him the task which in reality must belong to the whole local congregation. The training the clergyman receives will enable him to be a theological resource in a local community. Whether he subsequently becomes a teacher, pastor, enabler or administrator will depend upon the particular charism he receives from God.

### **Other correctives**

The current increase in the number of women offering for the Accredited Lay Ministry,<sup>4</sup> along with developments in Non-Stipendary Ministry, Local Ordained Ministry and various diocesan schemes, taken with the overall decline in numbers of parish clergy over the past fifty years, must be seen in part as the working of God to broaden our ingrained concepts of ministry epitomized in the clergyman. Combined

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with other factors which have tended to inhibit mission (emphases on maintenance rather than mission, pastors rather than evangelists, clergy rather than laity), it lends support to the point made by Schillebeeckx:

According to the views of the ancient church, a shortage of priests was an ecclesiastical impossibility. The modern so-called shortage of priests therefore stands to be criticized in the light of the ancient church's view of church and ministry, because the modern shortage in fact has causes which stem from outside the ministry, namely the conditions with which the ministry has already been associated *a priori*, on not specifically ecclesiological grounds. Even now there are more than enough Christians, men and women, who in ecclesiological and ministerial terms possess this charisma; or who are at least prepared for appointment to the ministry if they do not feel that that means being clericalized and having to enter the service of a 'system'.<sup>5</sup>

Accredited Lay Ministry, previously known as Women's Ministry,<sup>6</sup> has developed because of the underlying conviction that there is a need to encourage and foster variety in forms of official ministry in the Church of England's structures. Recognition of variety at this level will help to break down monolithic images at other levels, and therefore encourage increased awareness amongst congregations of their own ministries. ('However, the extent to which this awareness has actually affected the basic assumptions and expectations of the majority of church people must not be over-estimated. Many good Christians take the view their vocation is not to "do the Vicar's work for him", but to be faithful witnesses in the places where they live and work.') In every respect (testing of vocation, selection and training) the Accredited Lay Worker (ALW) and the ordinand are identical, and, although this may immediately suggest a bringing into line of different forms of ministry, it does have the effect of affirming and recognizing an official form of ministry other than that of the ordained man. Whilst at present it is mainly women who enter the Accredited Lay Ministry, the option is also open to men.<sup>8</sup> Stereotypes and constraints put upon clergymen by conditioned congregations (or folk-religionists) can tend to restrict the kind of leadership the ordained man may exercise. There is no such 'type' for the ALW, and, although this may frustrate some, it is seen by others as an opportunity to exercise a different kind of leadership ministry. In terms of function the ALW is not licensed to preside at the eucharist, so whilst on the one hand such developments may tend towards increasing the variety of forms of official ministry, they may on the other hand tend towards exaggerating the sacral view of ordained man.<sup>9</sup>

To ordain women will also work towards broadening our concept of official ministry, although there will, no doubt, be women who become clericalized just as much as men. However, as the Rev. Carol Anderson

said recently during her visit to this country, 'Women are not the saviours of the church', but their eventual ordination is likely to contribute towards restoring the wholeness which belongs to an official pastoral ministry in the church. There are parish workers and deaconesses who consider it entirely appropriate to their calling amongst the *laos* to celebrate Holy Communion, particularly at times when the ordained man is not present, thus avoiding the need to import a stranger who does not know the local situation. (Some lay readers seek ordination for the same reason.) Similarly, a parish worker may deem it appropriate to baptise the child of parents she has been visiting and instructing in the faith. This request for a sacramental ministry is the fruit of a sound theological instinct that the pastoral and evangelistic ministry of Word and sacrament belong together. As Schillebeeckx comments:

The question is whether this development in the direction of pastoral workers (whose existence can only be understood in the light of the historical obstructions which have been placed in the way of the ministry) who are not ministers and who have not been appointed sacramentally is a sound theological development.<sup>10</sup>

The fact that procedures for selection and training for both ordinands and ALWs are now identical, reflects a belief either that both are receiving ordination training or that neither are receiving it, but that the training being given is theological and ministerial. (This is reflected in the recent change in the title of the General Ordination Examination to the General Ministerial Examination.) It is a correct assumption that training does not determine the order of ministry; would that all the *laos* could receive theological and ministerial training! Rather, training is intended to enable candidates the better to exercise their ministry, and it needs to be emphasized that there is no intrinsic difference between the ministry of the ordained man and that of the ALW: both exercise the ministry God has committed to the church. Where there appears to be a difference in value, it is the result of conditioned expectations on the part of the whole church, and these need to be challenged and changed—not succumbed to.

Having said that some ALWs seek ordination, it is important to say that others do not, although they do not necessarily see their ministry as being essentially different from that of the clergyman. The strong desire to remain 'lay', lies in the conviction that the ALW can more readily identify with the ordinary member of the church and that their 'layness' is therefore an encouragement to the general *laos*. They see the need to mobilize the laity, best met by remaining lay and avoiding the trappings of the ordained ministry. However, it must be admitted that such a view does not take fully into account the fact that, by virtue of being selected, trained, accredited and full-time stipendary, the

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professional lay worker is often regarded as a 'clergy-type of person'—he or she is a member of the staff and identified with the clergy team. Nevertheless, the needful task of bridge-building, narrowing the gap in understanding between clergy and laity, may more readily be accomplished by those who are recognized by the church and admitted into an office of ministry, and yet who retain a lay status. The difficulty of their position should not be underestimated. In a church taught implicitly to understand ministry in clerical terms (male, liturgical, incumbency, ordained) it is hard for many clergy, let alone laity, to comprehend the ministry of the ALW, a situation frequently revealed in the suggestions of well-meaning clergy that a parish worker should train as a lay reader. Imagine suggesting that to a clergyman! There is also a feeling that when men offer for the Accredited Lay Ministry it is because they are 'not up to ordination standard'. The lay worker, in spite of going through identical selection and training procedures, is in all respects deficient when measured against the clergy-plumbline-norm: usually female, not of incumbent status, not ordained, and only assisting in liturgy and pastoral work at the discretion of the clergyman.

Because the Church of England invests thousand of pounds in treating its ALWs in matters of selection and training in an identical fashion to its clergy, it is plain that it considers that there is a task to be done by them. Professional lay ministry appears to have developed out of an awareness of need and a sense of call, so that parish workers, deaconesses, Church Army captains and sisters have worked alongside clergy as full-time assistants in pastoral work and evangelism. Over the past decade, however, a variety of factors (shortage of clergy, development of non-stipendary ministry, weekly family communion services, joint theological training, feminist movements, developments in ACCM) have conspired to encourage professional lay workers to model their ministry on that of their clergy counterparts. Efforts made to draw together the ministerial functions of deacon and deaconess<sup>11</sup> have worked to some extent to give greater recognition to the ALW within the church's structures. However, the role does not fit comfortably into any of the three historical orders of ministry believed to exist in the Church of England.<sup>12</sup> Pleas that it belongs to the diaconate order are probably the most appropriate, although this would of course necessitate a serious rethinking of the significance of the order as we have it today.<sup>13</sup> The present dilemma for the ALW challenges the church to articulate reasons for the continued existence of this particular 'order' of official ministry, and, whilst not seeking to defend with a theology that which I believe has developed as a corrective to an inadequate expression of ministry in the church,<sup>14</sup> I would suggest the following three points as guidelines for further thought and maybe as an encouragement to ALWs persevering in the midst of confusion.

- 1) The characteristics of God are made known to us through his dealings with us. The incarnation of Jesus Christ shows us that he who

is the object of our worship and inspiration of our holiness is not confined to the sanctuary. His coming in the flesh puts value on the secular. It is often stated that in the ancient Hebrew tradition there was no distinction made between sacred and secular, such as the Christian knows today. Whilst this is theologically and fundamentally true, it must be recognized that the Hebrew cultus, by its systems for ritual cleanliness and impurity, pointed to a very clear distinction between that which was 'for common use' and that which was 'holy'. Whilst teaching clearly that God is God and not man, that he is to be feared and obeyed, that he cannot be manipulated, it does not readily prepare the way for the notion of incarnation. Jesus' breaking of cultic regulations which were intended to define holiness<sup>15</sup> in the interest of *life*, were unacceptable to the clergy of his day. The old system was surely an example of God's willingness to use an existing sociological pattern through which to reveal his truth. No sociological pattern can fully contain that truth which is fully contained in Christ. Such a system cannot comprehend incarnate holiness, and its use of particular images to speak of or signify holiness can only result in a distorted perception of holiness. Holiness for Christ did not necessitate separation from the world: rather, complete involvement. Holiness is to do with the fulness of life, the quality which Christ came to bring. His holiness, that is, his life, involved him in mission to the end that the world may share that life. The incarnation puts value on the secular. The history of the church has not been notable for this emphasis. It has thought of itself as 'an alternative society', those 'called out of the world', those who are called to be 'separate', and in such ways it has devalued the secular. Here, perhaps, the true emphasis in Hebrew theology can help us. It values the secular and is therefore continually in dialogue with it. In this way, knowledge of God's Word is extended and deepened. The Christian church, on the other hand, has tended to become increasingly estranged from secular society. The resultant lack of dialogue has contributed towards a loss of confidence in mission. By virtue of not being ordained, the ALW can be seen to remain a 'secular' person in open dialogue with society. The professional lay worker *says* implicitly that the church puts value on the secular. He does not carry with him the cluster of images that still belong to the clergyman. Holiness in the sanctuary is acknowledged by all, but holiness in secular society needs to be acknowledged and explored by the church. The sacred things of the sanctuary—the Word of God, the bread and wine, the absolution and the blessing—bring life eternal, but life itself is sacred. How do the images which characterize the official ministry of the church, affirm the value which God has invested in human life?

2) During the last one hundred and thirty years, a variety of official lay ministries have existed in the Church of England: religious orders, diocesan family welfare workers or social workers, deaconesses, parish workers, Church Army captains and sisters, missionaries, and lay

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readers. Yet of all these, it is the part-time non-stipendary lay reader who is recognized by clergy and congregations alike. For example, it occasionally happens that the lay reader is called upon to take responsibility in the church during an interregnum, even when there is a full-time, stipendary ALW on the staff of the church. Why is it that some dioceses consider ordaining their lay readers instead of their ALWs to assist the clergy in rural or urban areas? One reason must surely be that lay readers are less expensive than lay workers, although there are undoubtedly other reasons too. Why is it that all congregations know about the office of lay reader, whilst only a small number of them have ever heard of ALWs, diocesan social workers and the Church Army? Much ignorance of this existing variety in forms of ministry is sadly a reflection of ignorance on the part of the clergy. But why are they ignorant? Is it simply clergy-chauvinism, or is it to do with the conditioned expectation of congregations which will only respond to the clergy-model-ministry? The lay reader follows the same model as the clergyman and is therefore both recognizable and acceptable. In our present situation, recognition of various lay ministries (both at home and abroad) depend almost entirely upon the attitude of the individual clergyman, so it is not surprising that some ALWs feel that they are fighting a losing battle in their attempt to make a stand for a fully valued model of ministry which is *different* from that of the clergyman. I suggest that, until our exclusivist concepts of ordination are changed, the fight is worth it. Yet in all this it is the congregations who are impoverished by their ignorance of these vital ministries. Would it not stimulate and encourage their faith to know about and support the work done by local diocesan social workers, missionary deputation secretaries, etc.? Would not such knowledge aid in understanding social and strategic issues presently facing the church? Would it not help teach that the forms of God's ministry to his world extend far beyond the sanctuary and the confines of church premises?

3) Jesus' ministry was free from the 'trappings' of the established church. (By trappings is meant the expectations of role and function.) Although constrained to do his Father's will, there is an enigmatic freedom about his ministry. (Perhaps this is why Anglicans tend to look to the pastoral epistles for their model of ministry, where it is hoped that it may be a little more clearly defined!) The Church of England is an established structure within society, and whilst the significance of this cannot be underestimated for any of its internal structures, the rigidity which characterizes these structures and patterns of ministry tends to impoverish the church and is unfaithful to the much more fluid picture of ministerial forms presented in the New Testament.

What does the established church actually *say* about the gospel? Does it speak of freedom, forgiveness, grace and life, or does it speak of commitment, burden, duty and oppression? What are the effects of



the church's ministry on an individual or a community? Does it speak of the need for conformity, or does it recognize and affirm the rich variety of life God has created, and the endless possibilities of expressing the Christian life? In his mission, Jesus was identified with the materially needy, poor, helpless, outcast, and sinner. The image of the clergyman does not make it easy for him to imitate this example. He represents the established church, has the power of the keys, handles sacred mysteries, and is the teacher and the exemplar. These images make it difficult for him to be alongside where the people are. The ALW does not carry these particular images, and may therefore be intrinsically better equipped to come alongside to help release congregations from their blinkered concept of Christian ministry. Congregations need a vision of the sheer glorious variety of ministries which God has given his church. Theological and ministerial training may undergird the vision and also the reality when, given responsibility, lay people begin to exercise with confidence their gifts of evangelism, teaching, pastoring, praying, offering hospitality etc. Being alongside is an important part of enabling, which effects the freedom which God's ministry to us brings.

In practical terms, the ALW will be a full-time member of the official ministerial team but will avoid the 'clergy-image' rather than be sucked into it. His or her very presence, usually living in an ordinary house, will serve to represent a different model of ministry, although in terms of function he or she may teach and pastor as the clergyman does. Often bringing specialist skills, e.g. supervision, counselling, education and management to the task, the ALW will exercise a different type of leadership because allowed to do so by the congregation. He or she may exercise a 'co-ordinative leadership', operating like a liaison officer facilitating communication amongst various groups. The professional lay worker may exercise a 'supportive leadership', more like a chaplain offering theological and pastoral insight and encouragement, perhaps sometimes being a sounding-board. He or she may have a 'supervisory leadership' enabling small groups of Christians to reflect upon the relationship between the gospel and their own work situation. The lay worker will certainly not have all the answers, but he or she will be one of the *laos* anxious to work out with them the ministry and mission of God in their local situation. (There are parallels here with the style of leadership required of missionaries working with indigenous churches abroad; most frequently it is inappropriate for them to exercise an 'out front' leadership partly because much time needs to be spent learning the language and the culture of the community.) Küng, in his book *Why Priests?*,<sup>16</sup> deals helpfully although briefly with the question of the use of authority by those in official leadership ministry. Arguing that Paul reflects the apostolic model established by Jesus, he writes:

Paul was always very careful to avoid using his mandatory powers. Instead of issuing prohibitions, he appeals to individuals' judgement and

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responsibility. Instead of issuing constraint, he sought to convince. Instead of imposing himself, he exhorted. He said 'we . . .', not 'you . . .'; he did not issue sanctions but used forgiveness; and ultimately did not stifle but stimulated freedom.<sup>17</sup>

R. C. P. Hanson makes the same point: 'Paul's concept of apostolic authority carefully leaves the congregations which he has founded free to make their own decisions.'<sup>18</sup> The same point is made by C. K. Barrett in relation to the case of incest in 1 Corinthians 5.<sup>19</sup> Apostolic authority belongs to Christ (Matt. 28:18), and a re-examination of this truth will have a significant bearing on the reorganization of official ministry structures within the Church of England.

Perhaps, in summary of this point, it may be that at the back of the minds of many clergy lies the conviction that what is *really* important is the Sunday family communion service and the sermon. At the back of the lay workers' minds will lie the conviction that what is really important is the equipping of the people of God to minister, that is to engage in both mission and worship. A contribution from a debate in General Synod illustrates this:

I remember at one manager's meeting a managing director in charge of 10,000 people said, with some irony, 'When I was introduced to somebody by my vicar the other day, he said, "May I introduce my head server?"', and it struck me as extraordinary that the one job which to me, although important, would be the least of my responsibilities as a Christian, was the one way in which my vicar knew me and thought of me.<sup>20</sup>

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By way of conclusion, two final points need to be made about our congregations. The first is that they are already well trained. For many years they have been taught, albeit implicitly, that the clergyman is the model of ministry, that his life-style and calling represent a pattern of holiness and spirituality which they are to imitate, and that the type of ministry which he is seen to exercise week by week is the whole content of Christian ministry. They have learnt that by attending church each week they are fulfilling their Christian obligation and are assisting the clergyman in his task. They have learnt that in some way they must keep separate from the world, that at all costs they must keep their church buildings open,<sup>21</sup> that change usually leads to decay, and that the smaller numbers of people attending church these days represents an irreversible trend brought about by general social and moral decline in our country—a decline in which they have no part, and a society to which they have no responsibility, since that society has left off believing in God. Many congregations need to be reprogrammed but, until official ministry patterns are reshaped, congregations will still be hearing the messages they have heard over the decades. The presence

of the ALW will cause the church to continue knocking on this door.

Secondly, represented in some of our congregations are those who may or may not have received theological training, but whose job it is to foster vocation, teach, pastor, plan mission strategy in this country and abroad, administrate God's gifts, write, broadcast, and manage finances. There are missionaries, RE teachers, and those working for Christian societies and publishing houses who have skills and experience which the local church needs. Whilst, for obvious reasons, such people could not be full-time parish staff, they need to be recognized by the local church as part of the ministerial team. The point of this is to enable the local church to see its ministry being exercised in other than parochial, church-based, clergy terms. Important insights would be brought into the church's thinking and bloodstream which would both enrich the church and renew its confidence in the ongoing work of God.

How many of our churches commission their Christian school teachers and business men, supporting them by prayer and encouragement? How does the Christian facing moral conflict at work receive support and 'rest' from his local church? At what point in the weekly programme can Christians meet together to consider how the gospel relates to the issues and situations they are facing in their community and in their places of work? Is the local church encouraged to pray corporately for its missionaries (teachers, trade unionists, canteen workers, doctors) sent out from its midst each week? Does it listen to the difficulties of communication and witness that they face daily, or does it lay on more church meetings as a way of escape from its commission to witness to the intervention of God in human society? Is that 'holy thing' happening in the sanctuary or in the nave?

I would like to conclude this article with a quotation from the Bishop of Winchester, Dr John V. Taylor. Speaking in the February 1980 General Synod debate on 'Lay Involvement in Ministry', he said,

I have become convinced that one of the obstacles that is causing the extreme slowness with which we actually move towards something which in fact we constantly repeat that we want to see, is the nature of our understanding of theology and the way in which it is given to those who are to be ordained to the ministry . . . .

My difficulty has come home to me particularly through the experience of being chairman of the Doctrine Commission, where we have made honest efforts to try to remind ourselves that, for the particular subjects that we have before us, there are bound to be insights at great depths from those who are concerned with the sociology of knowledge, those who are concerned with the pure sciences, because, after all, philosophical thought in these days cannot take one very far unless one really enters into the thinking of research scientists and also the experience of people in research teams and the way in which new understanding comes to them; the way in which a team of people receive knowledge which no

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individual studying on his own could have received—a corporate kind of knowing.

Although we have seen the need for this, we have been totally inhibited from actually reaching out and inviting any of these people to come in so far as consultants, and it is extraordinary that it did not occur to the Synod, or to their Graces the Archbishops, or the Standing Committee, to appoint such people as members of the Church of England Doctrine Commission. I believe that we are living in such a world that until we understand that theology must now be an interdisciplinary study, we are going to go on locking ourselves up in an intellectual little box that is doing us no good. While we are in that little box we can talk until 'kingdom come' about the need for co-operating with the laity, but the very basis of our thinking is wrong. We need to feel deeply that it is often only out of the world of experience, of work, of study, of science, that a lot of the insights which we need for a total understanding of our faith will come to us.<sup>22</sup>

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## NOTES

- 1 Edward Schillebeeckx, *Ministry: A Case for Change* (SCM Press, London 1981) p.68f.
- 2 John 1:14.
- 3 General Synod, Ministry Co-ordinating Group, *The Church's Ministry—A Survey, November 1980*, GS 459 (CIO, London 1980) p.44.
- 4 'Since 1976 there has been a gradual increase in numbers of deaconesses and licensed lay workers' (ibid., p.12). In the half year up until May 1981, there had been 1 lay applicant for every 5.4 ordination applicants and one selection conference for ordinands was cancelled and replaced by a selection conference for Accredited Lay Worker (ALW) candidates. (I am grateful to the Rev. Richard Parsons of ACCM for this information.)
- 5 Schillebeeckx, op. cit., p.72f.
- 6 'Although the term "Women's Ministry" was dropped in 1972 in favour of "Accredited Lay Ministry", this field has continued to belong almost as exclusively to women as the priesthood has to men, except in the case of the Church Army. Clarification is needed as to whether the church wants a recognized and professionally qualified "lay" ministry of men and women, or whether it is, in fact, allowing the "Accredited Lay Ministry" to continue solely as a way of providing a sphere of ministry for women since they cannot be ordained to the priesthood' (General Synod, *Annual Reports, 1979*, GS 443 [CIO, London] p.1).
- 7 GS 459, op. cit., p.7.
- 8 By May 1981 one man had been recommended to train as an ALW. A handful of men who had not been recommended for ordination and who had subsequently offered as ALWs were not recommended. A few dioceses have 'unofficial' lay workers who are men: Portsmouth, Birmingham and Norwich are amongst dioceses in which there are currently deacons who wish to remain deacons.
- 9 Schillebeeckx, op. cit., p.85.
- 10 ibid., p.85.
- 11 General Synod, ACCM, 1977, *Ministry of Deacons and Deaconesses*, GS 344 (CIO, London). General Synod agreed in principle in November 1981 that women may be made deacons. As a result of this, the deaconess order is likely to come to an end.

- 12 R. P. C. Hanson, *Christian Priesthood Examined* (Lutterworth Press, London 1979). 'The fact that the major ministries, bishop, priest and deacon, were three in number was regarded—and still is regarded by those who stoutly defend the threefold ministry—as particularly significant whereas to the eye of the historian it appears largely adventitious' (p.33f).
- 13 General Synod, *Report of Proceedings*, Vol. 8, November 1977, p.1094f.
- 14 Schillebeeckx, op. cit., p.79.
- 15 Mark 3:1–6.
- 16 Hans Küng, *Why Priests?* (Collins, London 1971) ch. 4.
- 17 *ibid.*, p.86.
- 18 Hanson, op. cit., p.19.
- 19 C. K. Barrett, *A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians* (A. & C. Black, London 1968) p.124.
- 20 General Synod, *Report of Proceedings*, Vol. 11, February 1980, p.198, Canon D. A. Rhymes.
- 21 It could well be that the Jewish experience of exile (587-538BC), and its effects upon their understanding of worship and mission, is significant at this point.
- 22 General Synod, *Report of Proceedings*, Vol. 11, February 1980, pp.199-200.