

The Reverend John Masding  
1939-2017

The Reverend John Masding died on the morning of Good Friday, 14 April 2017, after a lengthy illness. John had been an active member of the Society since its formation thirty years ago, served for many years on its General Committee, and on several of its working parties. At conferences he rarely missed an opportunity to make a contribution from the floor, invariably prefacing his remarks, 'Speaking as an ordinary parish priest ...'

John was far from ordinary. Few parish priests drove vintage Bentleys, especially in the heart of Birmingham where he spent his ministry, including more than a quarter of a century as incumbent at St Paul's, Hamstead. He epitomised the Anglican parson, kindly in manner, unobtrusive in liturgy, consistent in teaching, and dedicated in the service of his parishioners.

John chaired the English Clergy Association, and was active in the Prayer Book Society. He cared about the incumbent's freehold and rights of patronage and was genuinely troubled by the cost of modernisation on the effective ministry of the Church of England as a national church. He was a regular contributor to the letters page of the *Church Times*, making serious points with passion, verve and humour. This is an example from 2006.

Sir, - The General Synod ought not to be bamboozled by the wrong-headed and disingenuous persistent recommendations of the Clergy Terms of Service Review Group ....

When Cardiff University introduced its Masters Degree in Canon Law, John was amongst the first to sign up and provided wise and insightful contributions to seminar discussions. John became convenor of the LLM alumni, hosting an annual dinner at Magdalen College, Oxford, with style and grace, reliving his undergraduate days there as a demy. The morning after, he would celebrate a BCP Communion service in the chapel in his inimitable manner, prayerfully savouring every cadence. And all over in time for a convivial hearty breakfast.

John retired to the West Country, but maintained an active ministry in the dioceses of Bath and Wells and Bristol. A devoted family man, and indefatigable correspondent, John was much loved by his many friends.

*Well done, thou good and faithful servant:  
enter thou into the joy of thy lord*

Mark Hill QC, Chairman ELS  
Holy Saturday, 2017