



Ecclesiastical
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NEWSLETTER
of
THE ECCLESIASTICAL LAW SOCIETY

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DATES FOR THE DIARY

Wednesday 3 July: London Lecture – Norman Doe on *The unifying effect of Christian Law for Ecumenism*. [Book here](#). Refreshments at 5 pm, lecture at 5.30.

Sunday 14 July: The 2019 Bishop Bekynton Lecture on Law and Religion, at Wells Cathedral. Mark Hill on *Canon Law in the service of the Church*, in which he will reflect on ‘how a deeper understanding of the nature and purpose of canon law can contribute to a richer appreciation of the nature of the Church and give renewed impetus to the ecumenical movement’. The lecture will be preceded by **Choral Evensong at 3 pm**, at which Norman Doe will speak on *Richard Hooker, one of the founding geniuses of Anglicanism*. Should you wish to attend, please e-mail paula.denyer@wellscathedral.uk.net by **Monday 5 July**.

Tuesday 16 July: Northern Province lecture – Bishop Nick Baines on *The Function of Ecclesiastical Law in Effective Parochial Ministry*. [Book here](#). Drinks at 5 pm, lecture at 5.30.

Wednesday 18 September: London lecture – Sir Philip Mawer on the role of the Independent Reviewer under the Declaration on the Ministry of Bishops and Priests (Resolution of Disputes Procedure) Regulations 2014. [Book here](#). **Refreshments at 5 pm, lecture at 5.30.**

Wednesday 6 November 2019: Northern Province lecture – Rt Worshipful Charles George QC, Auditor of the Chancery Court of York, on *Do we still need the Faculty System?* [Book here](#). **Drinks at 5 pm, lecture at 5.30.**

Saturday 28 March 2020: The Society's day conference – *Synodical Government: Fit for Purpose?* to be held at the Minerva House offices of Winckworth Sherwood, **10 am till 4 pm**. Speakers will include the Most Revd John Sentamu, Archbishop of York and Patron of the Society, the Rt Revd Christine Hardman, Bishop of Newcastle, the Rt Revd Paul Colton, Bishop of Cork, Cloyne and Ross, the Rt Revd Pete Broadbent, Bishop of Willesden and the Ven Jane Steen, Archdeacon of Southwark.

London Lectures are held at the offices of Winckworth Sherwood, Minerva House, 5 Montague Close, London SE1 9BB.

Northern Province Lectures are held at the offices of the Diocese of Leeds, 17-19 York Place, Leeds, LS1 2EX.

EDITORIAL

It's that time of year again, when many of the main Churches in the UK and Ireland hold their synods or assemblies and your editor starts worrying about the synod reports for the *Journal*. One item of non-Anglican news that might interest members of this Society is that the Marriage and Relationships Task Group of the Methodist Church is to present the Methodist Conference with a [report](#) in which it argues that the Church 'needs to recognise that it is being called by God to take the next steps in the development of its understanding of relationships and marriage. *Those steps include enabling people of the same sex to commit themselves to each other in Christian marriage services*'. [FC]

CHURCH OF ENGLAND: THE MINISTRY OF CONFESSION

On 8 May, the Church of England published an [Interim Statement on The Seal of the Confessional](#), together with the [Report of the Seal of the Confessional Working Party](#). The Working Party could not reach a consensus on the Seal itself, though it was unanimous in recommending improvements to training in safeguarding issues related to confession and that each diocese should appoint an adviser on the Ministry of Reconciliation to act as a point of reference for training, supervision and advice. [FC]

CHURCH REPRESENTATION AND MINISTERS MEASURE

On 6 June, the House of Lords **approved** the **Church Representation and Ministers Measure**. The Commons **agreed to** the Measure on 18 June: it will now go for Royal Assent. [FC]

CHURCH REPRESENTATION RULES: TERMS OF OFFICE CONSULTATION

Concerns were raised at the February General Synod about the new Church Representation Rules, which include a provision that would limit parochial lay representatives on deanery synods to two consecutive terms of three years. At an Elections Review Group meeting on 1 April, it was agreed to consult widely on seven different options. The consultation document was circulated to members of General Synod, Diocesan Secretaries, PCC Secretaries, Lay Chairs of Diocesan Synods, Lay Chairs of Deanery Synods, Area and Rural Deans and the National Deaneries Network; however, the ERG would welcome comments on this issue from anyone who has a view on the matter. Consultees are asked to rate each option as to whether they consider it acceptable or not and to place them in order of preference, 1 to 7. The Consultation is available [here](#) and closes on **Wednesday 10 July**. [David Pocklington]

THE CHANNEL ISLANDS AND THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

On 3 June, the Church of England issued a **press release** on the work of the Archbishop of Canterbury's Commission on the Relationship of the Channel Islands to the Wider Church of England. The Commission started its work last year and intends to submit a report to the Archbishop of Canterbury later in the year. Since 2014, the Channel Islands has been under the temporary oversight of the Rt Revd Trevor Willmott, the Bishop of Dover, who has recently retired; however, he will continue as Bishop to the Channel Islands as an Assistant Bishop in the Diocese of Winchester. [David Pocklington]

IICSA

On 2 May, IICSA **announced** a new investigation into child protection in Islam, Judaism, Sikhism, Hinduism and Buddhism and in various Christian denominations, including the Jehovah's Witnesses, the Baptists and the Methodists. The new inquiry is separate from IICSA's investigations into the Anglican and Roman Catholic churches. A preliminary hearing will take place on 23 July and public hearings will take place in 2020.

On 9 May 2019, it published its (252-page) **report** into the Church of England, based on its case studies last year of the Diocese of Chichester and the response to allegations against the former Bishop of Gloucester, Peter Ball. [FC]

FCO SUPPORT FOR PERSECUTED CHRISTIANS

The Bishop of Truro has published an **interim progress report** on his inquiry into FCO Support for Persecuted Christians. The inquiry was established by the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs in December 2018 and the intention was that it should be concluded by Easter 2019; however, Bishop Mountstephen explains that ‘it rapidly became apparent that the scale and nature of the phenomenon simply required more time’ – hence his interim report. It is hoped that the final report will be delivered by the end of June. [FC]

ECCLESIASTICAL LAW ASSOCIATION WEBSITE

The indefatigable Ray Hemingray has announced that, following the loss last September of the ELA website and its backup as a result of a major incident on the web-hosting company’s servers, he has now rebuilt the site and uploaded all the judgments that were on the old site plus all the judgments sent to him since September and a number of others.

An alphabetical list of **all consistory court judgments** is now available on the ELA site, with links to case summaries and the full judgments. Ray has also circulated this information (as at 3 June 2019) to Diocesan Registrars, Chancellors and others, *who are requested to forward him copies of judgments that are not currently included.*

If anything like that had happened to me, I’d simply have burst into tears... [FC]
