

EDITORIAL

The more astute reader may already have noticed that this Issue—number 32—differs from those which have gone before. The shape remains the same but the font size and the method of the binding have each been altered. The former is in response to complaints from members of the Society that the text—and particularly the footnotes—are too small to be read with comfort. The latter has resulted from a *cri de coeur* on the part of the printers that the content now exceeds that which can properly be retained by two humble staples. That the volume of scholarly papers continues at its high level is testament to my predecessor as Editor and also to the increased interest now being shown in the study of ecclesiastical law and its many satellite disciplines. Those who came before me had resisted the pressure to change but now, at the commencement of Volume 7, the rising tide at Oxuniprint makes it inevitable to convert—Canute-like—to what is styled ‘perfect binding’. This removes the practical limit on the length of the Issue, enabling the inclusion of more material. It is hoped that this new style will not detract from the quality of the Journal and it is anticipated that the more durable form of individual Issues may result in fewer readers requiring them to be hard bound in two-yearly volumes. We shall see. In the meantime, comments would be welcomed. Pæans of praise should be sent directly to the Editor, abusive comments to the Executive Officer.

As to content, this Issue continues to reflect the scholarship and catholicity of the Society. The Church universal is discussed in Professor Doe’s article on the common law of the Anglican Communion, while the Church national comes under Chancellor Behrens’ spotlight in relation to data protection and is the subject of the thoughtful reflection of our President, Dr Eric Kemp, in his history of legal aspects of Church and State. On the other hand, the Church particular—or should that be peculiar—is Dr Pearce’s subject in his contribution concerning the Isle of Man. Continuing with contributions on comparative church law, I am pleased to include a paper regarding the internal regulation of the Mormon church by Professor Gedicks of Brigham Young University, and one on the Judges and the Jews by Gerald Godfrey QC. Coupled with Synod Reports from England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales, reflections on two significant conferences, book reviews and case notes, I trust that both the quality and quantity of the Journal have survived its change in form.

This is the first Issue of the Ecclesiastical Law Journal to be published since the retirement of Dr George Carey as Archbishop of Canterbury. Dr Carey was patron of the Society throughout his period of office, jointly with successive Archbishops of York. He took a keen interest in the Society’s work, one of his final acts being the drafting of a Preface for *Religious Liberty and Human Rights*, the proceedings of the Society’s residential conference in Trinity Hall, Cambridge, in 2001, published last November by the University of Wales Press. We wish him and Eileen well in their retirement. Equally we welcome Dr Rowan Williams both as Archbishop of Canterbury and as co-patron of

the Society. An active proponent of canon law as an instrument of unity, Dr Williams spoke at the Second Colloquium of Anglican and Roman Catholic Canon Lawyers in St George's House, Windsor, in June 2000, and will doubtless be keen to take forward the initiative on the law of the Anglican Communion described by Professor Doe in this Issue.

The Lyndwood Lecture proved once again an excellent ecumenical venture and the text of Bishop John Hind's paper will be reproduced in the next Issue of the Journal. We look forward to the fifth lecture, to be hosted by the Canon Law Society of Great Britain and Ireland in the autumn of 2004. Our sights now turn to the Northern Province with the Durham Residential Conference close at hand. Entitled 'Safeguarding the Sacred in Society: The Future of the National Church', it will be held in St John's College, Durham, from 4–6 April 2003. David Harte has brought together a learned and eclectic group of speakers for what promises to be an informative and provocative weekend. Doubtless, in their different ways, the articles by Bishop Kemp and Dr Pearce which are included in this Issue will contribute to the discussions.

On the domestic front, the Society's General Committee met at Emmanuel College, Cambridge, last autumn to consider the affairs of the Society in a more relaxed manner, reflecting on its future with greater latitude than the conventional late afternoon business meetings usually permit. Discussion focussed on membership categories and subscriptions but also upon the educative role of the Society to clergy and laity alike and as a resource for General Synod and beyond. In these latter areas there is scope for further participation by members, the nature of which may be discussed at the forthcoming Annual General Meeting. A resurgence in this area might also provide future copy for this Journal, no longer corseted and constrained—as is now apparent—by its former format.

Mark Hill
Editor

A Postscript from Frank Robson

I should like to thank those who gave so generously towards the presentation that was made to me when the General Committee met in Cambridge recently. It was totally unexpected, and a marvellous surprise. I was honoured to be Chairman of the Society, and considered that to be reward enough. To be doubly rewarded for doing something I enjoyed so much is somewhat overwhelming.

Frank Robson
Chairman, 1996–2002