

reminder that there is more to the study of 'law and religion' than simply reading cases.

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## **The Established Church: Past, Present and Future**

Edited by MARK CHAPMAN, JUDITH MALTBY AND WILLIAM WHITE

T&T Clark International, London 2011, xi + 200 pp (paperback £14.99) ISBN: 978-0-567-35809-7

*The Established Church* comes at an appropriate time in the national debate on the relationship between Church and state. With a change of incumbency at Lambeth Palace, thoughts turn to how the new archbishop will lead the Anglican Communion forward through one of the most divisive periods in its history. The topical political issue of same-sex marriage, in particular, goes straight to the heart of where the boundaries between Church, state and our national culture lie.

Although the book is divided into a collection of essays, each addressing a different aspect of the relationship between Church and state, there are themes that run through all of them, giving what could be a rather disjointed collection a thematically consistent feel. One of the key issues addressed is whether the Church of England should be an evangelical or an institutional church and the first chapter, by Nigel Biggar, explores the limitations of establishment for the Church of England by balancing the Church's duty to the entire community against a call to express views that will run contrary to the those of many of its constituency. Matthew Grimley discusses how minority faith groups broadly favour establishment as a way of recognising the spiritual factor in public life; but at what cost to the theology of the Church?

A very useful comparison is drawn between the establishment of the Church of England and the Church of Scotland, in terms of the latter's independence to appoint clergy and adopt liturgy. This is increasingly relevant with regard to the devolution and localism that have seen the Coalition Government cede decision-making powers to local authorities and third-sector organisations. Why should this not equally apply to the Church of England? Can an organisation be subject to those not necessarily sharing its values, such as Parliament?

The final chapter concludes by noting Tony Blair's answer to Richard Younger-Ross in the House of Commons on the question of disestablishment: that the Prime Minister '(wasn't) bothered by that one'. The question of

establishment rarely rears its head outside ecclesiastical circles these days, which is all the more surprising given the sustained attack on faith in public life by atheist organisations. Elaine Graham writes on the place of the Church in a liberal democracy and possibly gives an answer as to why. She argues that a liberal democracy is in itself an ideology, and to maintain its aims it must therefore limit its influence in order to allow faith groups to participate in civic society in the same way that the established Church has done for some time. Reciprocally, the Church must also recognise its duties to foster that same civic engagement, which makes establishment an efficient way of advancing liberal democracy. This is a useful contribution to consider following criticism from the Church of the Big Society.

The book is a very accessible one. The reader is easily able to delve in and out as the chapters exist independently of one another. Nor does the reader need an in depth knowledge of ecclesiastical history, as concepts are clearly introduced. Its topicality also makes it a very useful contribution to our national debate on faith, state, culture and localism looking beyond the present state of establishment.

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### **Canon Law: A Comparative Study with Anglo-American Legal Theory**

JOHN J COUGHLIN OFM

Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2011, xix + 226 pp (hardback £47.50) ISBN: 978-0-19-537297-7

### **Law, Person, and Community: Philosophical, Theological, and Comparative Perspectives on Canon Law**

JOHN J COUGHLIN OFM

Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2012, xviii + 291 pp (hardback £55) ISBN: 978-0-19-975677-3

To anyone familiar with Roman Catholic canon law, the name John Coughlin requires no introduction. He enjoys a solid reputation as one who is not only prepared to pose difficult questions but also to provide responses to issues that are calculated to encourage further consideration and evaluation. His training and experience as both a canonical advocate and a civil attorney equip him with the means to embark upon comparative analyses, seeking commonalities