

## EDITORIAL

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WILL ADAM

The spring and summer of 2019 have seen unexpected elections: European Parliament elections, in which the United Kingdom expected not to take part; a by-election in Peterborough caused by the recall of the sitting MP following a criminal conviction; and the election of a new leader of the Conservative Party, which had the incidental, but significant, caveat that the person elected also took over as prime minister. The ongoing significance of three elections that could not have been predicted 12 months ago will become clear as the year rolls forward. But all three elections were conducted according to different systems of voting: proportional representation based on party lists following the d'Hondt system for the European Parliament in most of the UK (with Single Transferable Vote in Northern Ireland); first past the post in the parliamentary by-election; and a bespoke system (altered immediately before nominations closed) for the Conservative Party Leader. In the Comment section of this issue, Bishop Colin Buchanan, a long-time advocate of electoral reform, reproduces his Ecclesiastical Northern Province Lecture on the Single Transferable Vote, 100 years after its first introduction into the electoral life of the Church of England.

In April this year the Ecclesiastical Law Society held its residential conference, in Windsor, under the title 'Church and State in the Twenty-First Century'. An impressive range of speakers considered the changing face of establishment from different perspectives and it is particularly good that two of the papers, by Colin Podmore and Malcolm Brown, are reproduced in this issue.

Leading off this third issue of volume 21, Teresa Sutton analyses the complexity of the system of patronage in the Church of England, combining, as it does, aspects of property law as well as religious law. Patronage, while not specifically a symptom of establishment, is indicative of the deeply interwoven relationship between the Church of England and the law of England. Archdeacon Jane Steen, in a second article this year, reflects on the use of the concept of conscience in church decision-making, studying the particular case of the introduction of the ordination of women in the Church of England.

At the conclusion of this twenty-first volume of the *Journal* there are some significant personnel changes to note. Chancellor Ruth Arlow steps down as Case Notes Editor with this volume. Ruth and I started on the Cardiff LLM in Canon

Law in 2000 and began to contribute case notes to the *Journal* shortly afterwards, when Chancellor Michael Goodman was the *Journal's* editor. Ruth has been the Case Notes Editor since 2009. The Case Notes have, from the beginning of the *Journal's* life, been a cornerstone of its content, providing snapshots of the development of precedent in the ecclesiastical courts, as well as looking further afield at the judgments of other courts and tribunals on religious matters. Ruth's ability to spot the cases that were of particular significance has been second to none and she lays down this responsibility with my heartfelt thanks. I am pleased to announce that David Willink, barrister and Deputy Chancellor of the Dioceses of Salisbury and St Albans, will take over as Case Notes Editor from 2020.

A glance at the earliest issues of the *Journal* from its first appearance in 1987 is something of a roll call of the greats of the establishment of the Ecclesiastical Law Society and the *Ecclesiastical Law Journal*. The chancellors, registrars, archdeacons and interested academics, lawyers and clergy who came together in those early days brought the study and practice of ecclesiastical law out of the shadows to take its place as a respected and important discipline. There is one name that has been constant from that day to this and that is David Harte. David stands down as Book Reviews Editor with this issue, having held that position since the very beginning. David, a barrister and for many years a law lecturer at Newcastle University, was a member of the *Journal's* initial Editorial Committee and wrote one of the first articles published, 'Doctrine, conservation and aesthetic judgment in the Court of Ecclesiastical Causes Reserved' (1987) 1(2) *Ecc LJ* 22–32). The 32-year life of the *Journal* has seen the volume of scholarship in the area of law and religion increase. A glance at the tables of contents shows, in the titles of the books reviewed, the development of the discipline and the national and international breadth thereof. David has kept up with all these developments and has, through selection of books reviewed and encouragement of a wide variety of reviewers, made a great contribution to the development and expansion of the discipline. It is difficult to express the gratitude that all those of us who have been involved in the *Journal* owe to David but I know I speak for all in wishing him well in his retirement.

I am pleased to announce that Dr Charlotte Smith, Associate Professor in the School of Law at Reading University, will take over as Book Reviews Editor in the next issue. Charlotte is a legal historian and a specialist in the relationship between Church and State, particularly in the nineteenth century.

So, thanks and farewell to David and Ruth and welcome to Charlotte and David. As the 2019 issue comes to an end we look forward to 2020.