

INTRODUCTION

After the controversy which surrounded the ordination of women as deacons and priests, the 1998 General Synod called for a thorough discussion about the consecration of women bishops and forms of Alternative Episcopal Oversight for those who oppose their consecration before any formal proposals were brought to synods.

The General Synod Standing Committee now offers the national church the first draft proposals. The Standing Committee's working group has prepared a wide range of Options, to enable the fullest possible exploration of the issues involved.

This is the first stage of national discussion. After the feedback from this stage is analysed, a final report will go to the April meeting of Standing Committee. Formal proposals will then go to Diocesan synods during 2000 for their response in advance of the 2001 General Synod.

All Australian Anglicans are invited to participate in this important first stage discussion at many levels - from individuals to parishes to interest groups, to diocesan standing committees/bishops-in-council, and synods (though we ask for informal responses only from synods at this stage).

Please read the Options carefully and let us know what you think. Questions you may like to respond to are included at the end of this document. Succinct responses in the manner indicated will help our task enormously.

Please send email responses to: Womenbishops@fc.acenet.net.au

or post responses to: Dr Muriel Porter,
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by 15 November 1999

We thank you for your interest, in anticipation of an inclusive, constructive and prayerful national conversation. May our sense of unity and mission deepen and grow as a result of this process.

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HOW THE OPTIONS WERE DEVELOPED

The 1998 General Synod passed the following resolution by an overwhelming majority:

That -

(1) General Synod notes the reports of the Doctrine Commission and the Canon Law Commission concerning the consecration of women to the episcopate.

(2) Further, General Synod notes the undesirability of appointing a woman bishop until at least the next General Synod after 1998.

(3) The Synod, recognising the significance of this issue for the ongoing unity and mission of the Church commends the matter for further discussion with dioceses across Australia, requests the Standing Committee to prepare a draft bill and a discussion paper on the implications of such a proposal, together with practical ways of addressing those implications, including forms of Alternative Episcopal Oversight, for circulation among the dioceses by December 1999. (Resolution 51/98)

In response, Standing Committee established a working group to prepare materials for the anticipated discussion and discernment process. The working group is chaired by Standing Committee member Dr Muriel Porter (Melbourne) who moved the 1998 General Synod resolution. Deputy chair is Dr Ann Young (Sydney) who offered the alternative viewpoint in the General Synod discussion. Other members are Archbishop Peter Carnley (Perth), the Revd Dr John Davis (Melbourne), the Revd Dr Robert Doyle (Sydney), Bishop Roger Herft, (Newcastle) and Mr Justice Peter Young (Bathurst).

The Working Group recognises that whatever provision is made for Alternative Episcopal Oversight in this country, the consecration of women bishops will not be recognised as valid by all members of the Anglican Church of Australia. It seems inevitable that some members of the House of Bishops will not recognise the validity of the orders of women bishops, and that there will be further impairment of Communion. Conversely, if no action is taken towards the consecration or appointment of women bishops in the Anglican Church of Australia, there is the prospect of further dissension within the church, not to mention hurt felt by senior women clergy. The Working Group is aware that the way forward depends on the continuation of the spirit of reconciliation and respect that led to the passing of Resolution 51/98 with an overwhelming majority.

At its first meeting in June 1998, the Group decided to seek the widest possible consultation to assist in preparing Options for the Australian Church to consider. In response to a press release published in most diocesan newspapers, and through letters to interested groups and individuals inviting submissions (a total of 55 letters was sent), the Group received 14 submissions from within Australia and 12 from overseas, including five from women bishops in North America. The responses were diverse and representative. As the work has progressed, members of the Group have also canvassed opinion widely.

Background papers on leadership (the Revd Dr Bruce Kaye and Mr Hugh Mackay) and on the use of the term 'visitor' (Mr Justice Peter Young) have been prepared. Both Archbishop Carnley and Dr Doyle have prepared theological discussion papers on the nature of the Church. Archbishop Carnley's paper is the background to Options Two, Three and Four; Dr Doyle's is background to Option One.

OPTIONS

The Group has prepared four major Options, all of which provide for the consecration of women bishops. All but one offer some form of Alternative Episcopal Oversight; Option Four does not. In each of the other Options, the passing of a canon providing for the consecration of women bishops requires the provision of the alternative oversight, and vice versa. The Group believes the four Options represent the fullest possible range for considering the issue.

The first Option offers an approach to alternative episcopal jurisdiction based on non-territorial dioceses. This is a radical re-structuring approach.

The second Option works within the existing structures of the Anglican Church of Australia, offering four variations on the way in which Alternative Episcopal Oversight might be provided. These are a solemn protocol agreement by the Diocesan Bishops, and three variations on a legislative model: a centralised national model, a province-based model, and a diocesan-based model.

The third Option also offers a province-based model but creates Suffragan bishops with seats in the House of Bishops.

The fourth Option provides for the consecration of women bishops without provision for any form of Alternative Episcopal Oversight.

The Group has listed a series of 'pros and cons' with each of the Options, and an outline of the legislative steps required for each. There is also a series of diagrams to assist understanding of how each Option relates to Anglican Church structures.

The Group has made no judgement as to which, if any, Option should ultimately go forward for debate at General Synod 2001. Instead, the group will rely on feedback in this stage of the discussion process, before preparing a final report for General Synod Standing Committee's meeting in April 2000.

Precis of Options

Option One

A radical restructure providing complete alternative episcopal jurisdiction, with legislative force

In brief, under this Option parish churches and their priests would be allowed by negotiation to join a bishop and synod other than that of the geographical diocese they are presently located in.

The ordination of women, and especially to the episcopate is at one level only a presenting problem, that is, under it lie differences between many Anglicans on foundational issues. Within Anglicanism we see at least two traditions, evangelical and catholic, which now hold quite fundamentally different understandings about the nature of how Jesus Christ relates himself to his Church in the world, the possibility of further revelation to that Church extra to the biblical revelation, and in the context of the present debate, the nature and role of episcopacy. As a consequence of this, for any solution to be broadly acceptable not only to these two traditions, but also to what are sometimes quite major differences within each, it is important that as far as possible any solution offered to the problems caused by ordaining women bishops minimises the harm felt by the various parties to their own particular foundations.

As an answer to the problems that many see arising from women being admitted to the episcopacy, "complete alternative episcopal jurisdiction" offers a fundamental adjustment to the way we relate together as Australian Anglicans. Parish churches and their priests would be allowed by negotiation to join a bishop and synod other than that of the geographical diocese they are presently located in. Accepting that the Anglican Church ought remain inclusive, and that Anglican groupings ought be allowed space to pursue and propagate their own vision of Anglican Christianity, what can be done?

The answer lies in the observation that we are not just individuals, but we have a *shared* faith. Anglican clergy are not ordained to act in ministry as autonomous individuals, but within a community whose salient features are local church, synod and bishop. A clergyperson and their ministry, humanly speaking, is defined by this set of relations. Likewise, laypeople participate in the life of the Church in terms of a collegiality expressed by local church, synod and bishop. It is within this matrix that the Bible is read, the sacraments celebrated, the Christian faith proclaimed and lived, and where discernment and freedom are exercised. Further, it is only in this context of local congregation, synod and bishop that conscience can be safeguarded. So long as there is a grouping of parishes which can express their Christian convictions in a synod, and with a bishop sharing those convictions, conscientious action is safeguarded.

The Option of "complete alternative episcopal jurisdiction" seeks to meet this need and offer it to those who want women bishops and those who do not.

Option Two

Alternative Episcopal Oversight within existing church structures

Option Two (A)

Diocesan Bishops' protocols

The Australian Diocesan Bishops already have protocols in place to allow for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander bishops to enter dioceses, with permission of the relevant diocesan bishop for the purpose of providing ethnically sensitive ministry to Aboriginal communities. The same system could be invoked to enable ministry to parishes where the ministry of a bishop other than the woman diocesan is desired. Strictly speaking, no legislative changes would be necessary for protocols to be put in place by the Diocesan Bishops, though a simple General Synod canon could warrant and authorise this episcopal arrangement and at the same time raise the finance for it. Travel costs across the distances involved in Australia would be a significant factor but this Option would not necessarily involve the costs of providing additional episcopal personnel.

Option Two (B)

Nationally-based legislative model

This Option envisages the appointment of one or more bishops by the Primate to serve the whole country, providing liturgical and pastoral ministry to parishes, other church bodies and individual clergy, and administering confirmation and ordination where appropriate. The bishop would act at the invitation of individual diocesan bishops, in turn acting on the request of parishes under specific regulations. This Option would need some central funding and organisation.

Option Two (C)

Province-based legislative model

This Option provides legislation for collegial action by the college of bishops in a province. The Metropolitan, together with the other diocesan bishops of the province, would provide for the appointment, from among or in addition to their number, a bishop who could hold an auxiliary office and function, providing liturgical and pastoral ministry for those who request it within the province. That bishop would then offer alternative oversight where requested with the approval and consent of the diocesan bishop concerned.

Option Two (D)

Diocesan-based legislative model

This Option provides for a diocesan-based model of Alternative Episcopal Oversight. It reaffirms the diocesan focus for the provision of ministry. Specially-appointed assistant bishops within the diocese, or bishops from other dioceses, are licensed by the diocesan to offer ongoing and continuing liturgical and pastoral ministry to parishes, other church bodies, and individual clergy, and also to administer confirmation and ordination where appropriate.

Option Three

Province-based legislative model integrating suffragan bishops into the national (General Synod) House of Bishops

This Option envisages collegial action by the college of bishops in a Province to provide, from among or in addition to their number, episcopal care to those who request it. In this Option, suffragan bishops are created with a notional See conferring the authority of a diocesan and seats in the House of Bishops, to provide Alternative Episcopal Oversight. The appointed bishop would act at the invitation of the Archbishop with the consent of the diocesan bishops, in turn acting on the request of parishes under the terms of specific regulations, to offer liturgical, pastoral and sacramental ministry to parishes, other church bodies, and individual clergy, and also to administer confirmation and ordination where appropriate.

Option Four

No Alternative Episcopal Oversight

A Clarification Canon, along the lines of the Clarification Canon for Women Priests 1992, with no provision for dissenting views.

OPTION ONE

Complete Alternative Episcopal Jurisdiction

Theological Introduction

1. Several things stand out in the New Testament's description of the church.

1.1 First, in speaking of the church, the New Testament most often uses the secular word *ekkle/sia* ("church") which has the simple secular meaning of "meeting", "gathering" or "assembly". Thus, in Acts 19:32,39,40 the *ekkle/sia* is the gathering of the mob in the theatre in Ephesus.

1.2 Further, in New Testament usage generally, *ekkle/sia* is in the singular for a church in a city (e.g. 1 Cor. 1:2) or in a person's house (e.g. Rom. 16:5), and in the plural for churches in a region (e.g. 1 Cor. 14:33).

1.3 However, Acts 9:31 is an exception. Here the singular is used for three areas (Judea, Galilee and Samaria), even though elsewhere the plural is used with respect to Judea, "the churches of Christ in Judea (Gal. 1:22)". But, this area is exactly co-terminus with the promised land; i.e. the assembly of Israel which met three times a year in Jerusalem where they properly "churched". The variant reading in the Greek NT shows that the scribe thinks the singular is inappropriate. Normally, "church" is only used to describe a local group.

1.4 The NT writers appear to regard all these manifestations of "church", whether considered regionally, by cities or domestically, as true or complete churches in themselves.

2. The question then arises, is this pattern of usage more than just an accidental reflection of first century social realities where we may perhaps expect that in the early stages of gospel preaching and church planting the distribution of "churches" is uneven and ecclesiology is yet unformed? Or, may we see this usage of *ekkle/sia* as being a manifestation of a deeper underlying theological reality which not only gives unity to the NT data but also becomes a normative hermeneutic for interpreting the NT's doctrine of "church"?
3. The exception of Acts 9:31 gives us a clue. Behind the NT description of the church there are often OT realities which illuminate the concept, and which according to the

NT, are fulfilled in the coming of the Messiah. Three foundational elements in the NT doctrine of church are appropriate to our present discussion.

3.1 What makes Israel truly God's people is that they are "gathered" or "churched" around him. This marks their beginnings at Mt Sinai, of which God says, "I bore you on eagles wings and brought you to myself (Ex. 19:4)". Commenting on this Sinai event, the Greek version of Deut. 4:10 not only describes that event as "the day of the *ekkle/sia*", but renders "assemble me the people" as, "church me the people." That is, here "to church" means "to assemble". After they have settled in the promised land, this notion of being gathered around God is expanded to include the land of Israel, the temple, and the thrice yearly gathering of faithful Israelites (Ex. 23:14-17, 34:23-4). These mark them out as the "people of God". Conversely, when as an act of God's judgment they are "scattered" by being sent into exile, when they no longer have the temple, the land, or even God himself, they may be designated "Not my people." (Lev. 26:33; Deut. 32:26; Ez. 5:10-12; Hos. 1:9) However, when as an act of mercy to the exilic community God promises to shift his presence from Jerusalem and the fallen temple, and to "tabernacle" or "tent" with them in Babylon, the prospect is held out of them once again being truly God's people (Ez. 11:15-20, 37:24-8). As the use in the NT of the secular word *ekkle/sia* ("assembly") also indicates, as well as its drawing down on the OT material, "gathering" around God-in-Christ is constitutive of the NT understanding of church.

3.2 The NT understanding of church is relentlessly eschatological. For example, in Ephesians *ekkle/sia* is never used of the local church, but of the heavenly church. Indeed, in many places in the NT Jesus' gathering of his church is seen as a heavenly, that is, an eschatological activity. So, Acts 18:9-10, Jn. 17:21-4, Eph. 1:22, 3:7-10, Rev. 7:9, Heb. 12:18-24. Our locus, our true city and citizenship is in heaven where Jesus is, Phil. 3:20. Therefore, in thinking about the nature of the church on earth we must think of it in terms of the "now, but not yet" structure of NT eschatology. To put it another way, following the promise of Ephesians, while we in our earthly churches still await fulfilment of the promise inherent in our fellowship together, in the "not yet", nevertheless in a real way, because of our union with Christ by faith, we are "now" already seated in the heavenlies where Christ is (Eph. 2:6, cf 1:19-23). To think of our earthly churching only in terms of one pole of this NT understanding, as only "not yet" or only "now", invites a distortion.

3.3 It is no surprise to find that the main reason for this shape to NT ecclesiology is the person and work of Christ. Fundamentally, "church" is christologically defined. As 1 Cor. 12:12 highlights, Christ does not so much have the church as his body, like an appendage, but Christ *is* a body. Jesus Christ incorporates us in and through his incarnation, life, death, resurrection and heavenly rule, such that, without us he deems

himself insufficient (Col. 1:24). Further, in that same person and work the church which is his body is brought into the very life of the Trinity itself.

All these elements - gathering, eschatology and the centrality of Christ as the constitutive elements of what a true church is - can be seen in the climax of the Letter to the Hebrews which follows the exhortation in chapter 11 to persevere in our faith in the promises of God: "For you have not come to what may be touched, a blazing fire, and darkness, and gloom, and a tempest, and the sound of a trumpet . . . But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering, and to the assembly of the first-born . . . and to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant . . . (12:18-24).

So the question of "where is the church?" is answered in the NT by: "wherever two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst (Matt. 18:15-20)". It is on christological and eschatological grounds that every earthly church, all gatherings of those professing Christian faith, are complete and truly church as they gather around Christ in the Spirit.

4. If we ask the question, how does Christ rule his church, how does he manifest his care or *episcopate* for his body, the NT answers: he rules it directly by word and Spirit. "Word" and "Spirit" are manifested in the gifts the ascended Christ pours out by his Spirit (Eph. 4:1-16; 1 Cor. 12-14; Rom. 12:3-8). As the controversy in Corinth over the more spectacular gifts of healing and speaking in tongues shows, the priority in this broad range of gifts (which appear unfixed in number or even variety) is given to those gifts which bring to bear on the life of the church and its members the apostolic, and later, enscriptured witness to Christ (1 Tim. 4:1-16; 2 Tim. 1:12-14, 3:10-4:5; 2 Pet. 3:14-18).

5. In this context, in the main NT passages which speak of "church", and usually always in practical terms, the purpose of the church or churching emerges as a "double edification." That is, in the plan of God, Christ is edifying or building his church in two directions at the same time; "outward" by publicly embracing people of every tribe and tongue as they respond to the gospel (Eph. 1:20-3, 2:11-22, 3:1-11), and "upward" by fostering growth in Christian maturity as the word of Christ is heard, trusted and obeyed by the work of the Spirit (Eph. 4:1-16).

6. Faithfully congregating around Christ in the Spirit, and edification through the ministry of the word in all its forms, thus appear as the two external marks of the theological and practical reality which constitutes a church (see Article 19). From the viewpoint of the NT, beyond this we need not go.

7. With respect to order or ordained ministry in the church, although the NT makes it plain that there must be order so that the preaching of the apostolic witness

may continue, there is flexibility not only in the number of orders, but also how they may be defined. This has been widely recognized in biblical studies from the advent onwards of Christian humanism in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries (cf. Article 36 and 34).

8. We may also observe that in coming to grips with the radical way the Messiah and the coming of the Spirit fulfils the promise of the OT, the NT universalises and spiritualises the notions of human kinship and earthly geography. In this way, Paul can designate himself "an apostle to the Gentiles (Rom. 11:13; Acts 9:15)", and Peter be designated as "an apostle to the circumcised (Gal. 2:7-8)". Yet, Paul preaches to both Jews and Gentiles and regards both as owing obedience to his apostolic witness to Christ, and the contents of Peter's first letter indicates that he writes to both Gentile and Jewish believers. Further, in the NT, "people of God" language (in its almost exclusive application to Jewish Christians, Israel or the Jews)¹ is applied to those who also now live outside of physical Israel. In the NT at least, geography is not a defining issue, but "care" (Acts 20:28; 1 Pet. 5:2) and "sound teaching" (2 Tim. 4:3) are.

9. Further within this framework of "word" and "Spirit", "care" and "sound teaching", it is unsurprising to observe not only in the ministries of Peter and Paul, but also during the ministry of Jesus, that later notions of tightly defined jurisdiction are foreign (Mk. 9:38-9).

10. The context of our Anglican experience of care and sound teaching is that of: priest-congregation-bishop-synod. What follows by way of a more detailed theological and practical response to the question of caring for dissenters in the matter of women bishops seeks to apply the NT's teaching on the church to the way we have traditionally organized ourselves in the Anglican Church.

At the end of the 20th Century

The ordination of women, and especially to the episcopate is at one level only a presenting problem, that is, under it lay differences between many Anglicans on foundational issues. Within Anglicanism we see at least two traditions, evangelical and catholic, which now hold quite fundamentally different understandings about the nature of how Jesus Christ relates himself to his Church in the world, the possibility of further revelation to that Church extra to the biblical revelation, and in the context of the present debate, the nature and role of episcopacy. As a consequence of this, for any solution to be broadly acceptable not only to these two traditions, but also to what are sometimes quite major differences within each, it is

¹ See Mt. 1:21, 2:6, 4:16,23; Lk. 1:17, 77, 2:10, 2:31-3, 7:16; Jn. 11:50, 18:14; Acts 3:23, 7:34, 13:17-31; Rom. 9:25-26, 11:11, 15:10; Heb. 2:17, 4:9, 8:10, 10:30, 11:25, 13:12. Acts 15:14 is a clear and significant exception in that it is applied to Gentile Christians alone.

important that as far as possible any solution offered to the problems caused by ordaining women bishops minimises the harm felt by the various parties to their own particular foundations.

What follows in this paper, therefore, seeks first of all to openly acknowledge the foundational nature of the problems we face, and in that context seeks to offer an adjustment in the way we relate to each other as Anglicans. This will not be without pain, but will preserve as far as possible the integrity of most parties, while avoiding that schism we must inevitably face over what are in the end core issues, and thus non-negotiable.

As an answer to problems that many see arising from women being admitted to the episcopacy, "complete alternative episcopal jurisdiction" offers a fundamental adjustment to the way we relate together as Australian Anglicans. In brief, under this Option parish churches and their priests would be allowed to join a bishop and synod other than that of the geographical diocese they are presently located in. Why is such a basic change in relations needed, and why may it be fruitful for the harmonious continuance of the Anglican Church of Australia? The answer lies in the more specific issues raised by the proposal regarding women bishops.

The foundational nature of episcopacy: incarnational truth and inclusiveness

Present aspirations to ordain women as bishops create tensions at the bedrock of our faith because of two basic convictions we hold as Anglicans: inclusiveness, and the nature of incarnational truth.

On the first, most of us believe that no one ought be compelled to leave the denomination because of women bishops. Secondly, while we remain only discussing the truth issues surrounding full admittance of women to all orders of ministry, dissent between us poses no deep problems for communion because we are dealing with each other at the level of opinions or propositions. Indeed, communion could be enhanced by the debate, because it is of the essence of the Christian Church to discuss and seek the truth. However, once the truth is incarnated, the key place given to the body in Christian theology (e.g. 1 Corinthians 6:12-20) means that those dissenting from a move they consider disobedient to God's will have a real problem, which consequently must affect their behaviour and conscience. Further, those who believe that God's will is being disobeyed by *not* ordaining women to the episcopate, especially when the refusal is constant and seemingly inflexible, also experience distress, for in the end, the Church must give the truth not just a propositional recognition but incarnate it by courses of action.

The depth of the problem posed by the issue of women bishops can be seen by viewing it through the eyes of three significant groups in our church: traditional Anglo-catholics,

Evangelicals who hold a traditional view on the matter, and those advocates of women in all orders of ministry who hold that equality is of the essence of real personhood. Other Anglicans, while not necessarily fully identifying themselves with the following descriptions, may nevertheless see a partial reflection.

i. Egalitarian advocates for admission of women to all orders of ministry

To some, to deny women equal access to all orders of ministry is more than just a very unfortunate, outmoded denial of women's giftedness and vocation, but is also a denial of their true personhood. To deny equality of access is to affirm the permanent subordination of women to men and thus their ultimate inferiority. At the moment, by resolution of General Synod, we are moving towards equal access to holy orders which is not only culturally sensitive to the aspirations of women but is entirely natural and according to the mind of God. The problem here then is not just of having to wait for the right outcome, but what to do with dissenters when we do have women bishops. The rejection by some traditionalists of women bishops as invalid and unspiritual will then be not just theoretical but personal. Rejection, or even estimation of the authority of a bishop as unspiritual, is in itself an untenable position in an episcopal system, especially when that rejection or estimation is permanent. But to reject a bishop just because of how God has made them, a woman, is even more deeply offensive and a serious barrier to effective communion in a system which is not only episcopal, but also egalitarian with respect to gender.

Amended canons of the Episcopal Church of the United States now forbid the denying of access to the three orders of ministry, or any avenue of ministry, on the ground of gender (canons iii.8.1; iii.16.1d; iii.16.2; iii.17.3). Further, resolution A053a gives bishops, who hitherto have refused to ordain women or license them as incumbents, until 1999 to comply. When these canons and resolution were passed in 1997, four diocesan bishops were still not ordaining women to the priesthood or episcopate. After 1999 dissenting bishops will be in grievous breach of canon law and liable to court proceedings. To dismiss this development as merely "American" is to misunderstand the depth of the issues involved. The clerical and lay members of the Episcopal Church of the United States have had more than 20 years in which to receive the new insights of the Church into the nature of women's role in ministry and to implement appropriate changes. It is no more acceptable to deny someone ordination on the ground of their gender than it is on the colour of their skin.

ii. Traditional Anglo-catholics

For Anglo-catholics who hold a traditional view on women in ministry, the very ministry of Christ himself to the Church, which is his body, and the unity of that Church, is seriously fractured and impaired by the admission of women to the episcopate.

Anglo-catholicism stands in the broad catholic tradition from Ignatius and Cyprian onward in which Christian ministry is understood in the context of a firm belief in an inescapably sacramental universe. On this view, God works downward through his creation to reveal himself and to redeem it through a hierarchy of sacraments. The world is seen as a place in which created things become vehicles of God's blessing, and humanity itself is defined as a sacramental being. The sacramental potential of all nature is realized through the consecration of some elements of it in explicitly sacramental rites. Within this theological and metaphysical understanding, by the performance of sacramental acts grace flows down from God, through Christ, to the earthly Church via duly ordained bishops, priests and deacons. Without this three-fold order, the Church is not truly constituted and sacramental ministry, with its saving power, is not truly valid. Inherent to the validity of the order of priests and bishops is maleness.

The central doctrines of the church and its sacramental life are involved. It is observed that the admission of women to the presbyterate and episcopate is neither required by, not permitted by, nor finally provable from the teaching or example of our Lord and the rest of Holy Scripture as invariably understood by the Church for nineteen centuries. It is therefore no more than an opinion, a wrong opinion. With respect to sacramental life, it is concluded that sacraments administered by uncertain authority are in turn uncertain. Since there is no universal agreement on women in the presbyterate and episcopate, those who do not agree ought to be left alone untrammelled.

In this way, the spiritual and practical consequences are enormous. A woman bishop would in principle not only render invalid the ordinations she conducted but also in turn the sacramental ministries of the priests so ordained.

The major practical result is separation from an impaired priesthood and episcopate. Hitherto with only the presbyterate open to women, lay people have usually been able to avoid defective ministry by changing churches locally; with women bishops they would have to change dioceses, and even move interstate. Hitherto traditional male priests have had to avoid all cooperative ministry with women priests, even in hospitals. The advent of women bishops will move the arena of separation and non-cooperation from the merely local to the whole diocese. Further, for some traditional Anglo-catholic bishops, priests and lay people, it will not even be possible to receive Holy Communion from the hands of a male bishop who has ordained women as priests or bishops, for to do so could be seen as assent to his actions.

However there is some amelioration of this grim picture. Traditional Anglo-catholics believe in a process of "reception" whereby new doctrines and practices may gradually be seen, by the consent of the faithful, to express the mind of God. This process holds the possibility of a reversal of opinion and action. The Church may in the end come to regard the new doctrine and practice as an error, and subsequently restore the older faith. Within

the context of the major part of the catholic Church (Roman Catholicism and Eastern Orthodoxy) still repudiating the notion of women priests and bishops, there is hope for reversal. So, alongside separation from women priests and bishops, traditional Anglo-catholics must continue to hold the door open, and even cooperate in non-eucharistic ministries. The situation is analogous to the relations which exist between Catholic and Protestant denominations; for reasons of valid sacramental ministry, clear and unambiguous separation is needed, but with separation an accepted fact, cordiality and cooperation in lesser ministries is encouraged.

iii. Traditional Evangelicals

For Evangelicals who hold a traditional view on women in ministry, the advent of women bishops raises to the highest level the problems associated with active disobedience to an explicit prohibition of Scripture, "I permit no woman to teach or have authority over a man (1 Timothy 2:12)". The consequences of this disobedience are both profoundly theological and practical.

The Evangelical Reformers of the English Church affirmed that God does not work in the world as a first order by way of sacraments or signs, but that he works directly, by his word and Spirit. That is, it is affirmed that Christ himself and not any human person or persons rules his church, and he does it directly through his word of the gospel which the Holy Spirit himself speaks. The Reformers grasped from the New Testament's teaching on Word and Spirit that word is personal mode of God's being. Thus, in the faithful reading and teaching of the Bible and in the faithful hearing of that teaching, Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, is personally active, for as we read and teach, it is also a fact that "the Spirit preaches the gospel" (1 Thessalonians 1:5, 2:13; 1 Peter 1:12, 23). For that reason, the Reformers understood the sacraments as "visible words", or enacted promises.

To disobey a clear prohibition of the New Testament is thus a very serious matter, for it is a rejection of Christ's direct saving activity in his Church. It amounts to unbelief, a failure to trust the promises of God, that his enscriptured word is entirely for our benefit. Further, since the New Testament also places this prohibition within the context of the order in relationships that God has ordained between men and women, to disobey is to invite into those relationships a permanent distortion. Finally, the New Testament so talks about the order between men and women that to try to reverse them is an attempt to overthrow or repudiate an order which is reflected in the Godhead itself (1 Corinthians 11:1-16).

But there is also amelioration of this grim situation. Because traditional Evangelicals believe that God works in the world primarily by persuasion of the gospel, it is possible to tolerate or work beside erring Christians. For in the end it is the work of Christ and the Spirit

in the gospel which moves us from darkness to light, a process which is only complete on the last day.

However, both theologically and practically there is one thing which cannot be compromised: freedom to engage in the very gospel ministry which produces in us the changes God wants. Traditional evangelicals are bound by the same radically uncompromising approach to freedom to engage in gospel ministry that St Paul modelled: "I have become all things to all people, that I might by all means save some (1 Corinthians 9:19-23)."

The foundational nature of the episcopacy amongst the great majority of Anglicans means that cooperation for traditional Evangelicals brings either an inescapable compromise of conscience or restriction on their freedom to minister. Neither are in the end tolerable. It is not possible to quietly associate with others who publicly disobey an apostolic prohibition. It is not possible to tolerate the marginalisation or exclusion of traditional Evangelicals from ministry. Overseas, in the Anglican Communion and in episcopally governed Lutheran Churches dissenting Evangelicals have been, both openly and quietly, refused ordination to the presbyterate, denied parishes, barred from appointments in theological colleges, and refused access to the office of bishop.

In these ways then, the issue of women bishops will inescapably lead to impairment of communion at the very roots of our faith and practice. What can be done to protect conscience and freedom, while fostering a situation where impaired communion may move towards wholeness?

The context of Anglican ministry, discernment and freedom

In February 1998 General Synod affirmed in resolution 52/98 "that a Christian conscience ought to be bound by Holy Scripture, as being the ultimate rule and standard of faith, and the creeds and articles of the scriptural faith of the Church". It also affirmed that both the pro and against positions on women priests and bishops, conscientiously held, "stand within the Fundamental Declarations of the Constitution of the Anglican Church of Australia and the doctrine of the Book of Common Prayer and the Thirty-Nine Articles." That is, as the motion shows, we wish to preserve two things. First, that a Christian conscience is not autonomous, but ought be bound by Holy Scripture as the ultimate rule and standard of faith. Secondly, that a good Christian conscience ought be safeguarded in this matter of women bishops.

Because we wish conscience to ultimately be subordinate to Holy Scripture and the creeds and articles in which we confess our scriptural faith, there are limits on the degree to which we can protect conscientious objection. A parish council, a nominations board, a

synod, a bishop, must always be able to ask about any clergy person who is a candidate for a ministry post, "Is what they believe about women's ordination consistent with Holy Scripture and the scriptural faith of the Church?". Furthermore, they must be free to decide for or against the applicant on the basis of the answer to that question. This, appropriately, places a limit on protecting conscientious objection.

What then can be done to protect clergypersons and laypeople who have strong conscientious objections to receiving women bishops and their ministry? What may be done so that they are not compelled to leave the Anglican Church of Australia?

The answer lies in the observation that we are not just individuals, but we have a *shared* faith. Anglican clergy are not ordained to act in ministry as autonomous individuals, but within a community whose salient features are local church, synod and bishop. A clergyperson and their ministry, humanly speaking, is defined by this set of relations. Likewise, laypeople participate in the life of the Church in terms of a collegiality expressed by local church, synod and bishop. It is within this matrix that the Bible is read, the sacraments celebrated, the Christian faith proclaimed and lived, and where discernment and freedom are exercised. And when we face strong differences over issues which are perceived to be foundational, it is only in this context of local congregation, synod and bishop that conscience can be safeguarded. So long as there is a grouping of local churches which can express their Christian convictions in a synod, and with a bishop sharing those convictions, conscientious action is safeguarded.

Practicalities involved in complete alternative episcopal jurisdiction

It is feasible, although not without difficulties, for a clergyperson to move from a diocese inimical to their foundational convictions to another which is more affirming, for their livelihood and family may go with them. But that is less feasible for a layperson, and worse. Whereas a clergyperson may be able to discharge ministerial functions for his or her household, a conscientiously dissenting layperson, if unable to move to another diocese, could be without sacramental ministry altogether.

However, if congregations and their priests would be allowed to join a bishop and synod other than that of the geographical diocese they are presently located in, they may be afforded the fellowship, encouragement and protection due to their deeply held foundational Christian convictions. In this way they are guaranteed the maximal conditions that Anglicanism can offer for nurturing, proclaiming, and handing on to future generations the faith they believe is truly apostolic. In this context they can be maximally assured of safeguarding themselves and their children against discrimination. Further, as is the case now, through their bishops, conferences of bishops and General Synod, congregations in a conscientious minority in their geographical diocese would be able to continue in fellowship

with the wider Anglican Church of Australia, and thus the worldwide Anglican Communion. We could be truly inclusive.

The mechanism is relatively simple. The Constitution would need to be amended in Sections 6, 45, 71 and 74 to allow a church in one diocese ("diocese A") to become part of another diocese ("diocese B"), diocese B having agreed.

Courteous negotiation with all concerned parties ought be facilitated by the process. With the consent of the incumbent and say, two-thirds of the parish council, the parish council makes a declaration that they intend to put the matter to the vote of the parish council newly elected at the next annual general meeting. At the first meeting of the newly elected parish council, the same majority and the approval of the incumbent is required for the church to move from diocese A to diocese B. At least one month's notice of the parish council's intention ought be given to the bishop-in-council of diocese A. Both diocese A and diocese B ought be allowed to have representative's present to observe the proceedings of the annual general meeting.

After the requisite vote and formal acceptance by diocese B, the church building of that church, and all other church trust property held exclusively for the use and benefit of the church, and the licence of the incumbent, then come under the full and exclusive jurisdiction of diocese B for the use and benefit of the incoming church. In the case of endowments and other property from which income is derived, and which income is not exclusively held and applied for the use and benefit of that church and the ministry conducted in it, diocese A would continue to pay for 30 years the equitable level of income to the church which it has enjoyed for the five years prior to its departure to diocese B. The equitable income would be calculated not only on the basis of the previous five years of the history of the endowment and property, but also so as to preserve and foster the good future of that endowment or property.

Problems, pain, and gains

Inevitably, there will be pain in a change of relationship. Church meetings called to discuss the possibility of joining another diocese could become occasions for bitter acrimony. However, the temptation to take it out of the hands of laypeople ought be avoided. The parish church and its congregation is as much a defining element of Anglican community as is synod and bishop. Laypeople too ought to be full participants in decisions affecting them and their families, for it is part of the exercise of their Christian vocation. Open and honest procedures, and Christian grace and courtesy in wrestling with deep issues offer antidotes to acrimony and foundations upon which Christian growth may occur, even during a change in relationship.

As the canon to allow women priests charted unknown territory in our Constitution, so it may be expected will any canon allowing alternative episcopal jurisdiction. Three observations may be made here. First, the time taken to legislate for different forms of alternative jurisdiction may not vary significantly. Secondly, the time involved in just passing legislation allowing women bishops, but not alternative oversight, may be less, but invites schism. Thirdly, the events surrounding the legislation allowing women priests has shown us that the Constitution of the Anglican Church of Australia can only work if there is a good will on all sides. Without that good will, there is only the possibility of a disorder which is inimical to our communion.

Complete alternative episcopal jurisdiction should also enhance diversity within the Anglican communion. Where significant minorities are forced out, diversity is decreased, as is fellowship. By being able to remain not only in the Australian Church, but also physically in their old locality as a recognised member of the Anglican Communion, the special ministry of minorities has a chance to touch others.

May we expect big realignments by minorities? Many congregations already see their otherness as a gift to the diocese they serve in. For some, geographical location is an important centre of loyalty, a place become sacred by service. These congregations may be expected to remain, and bear certain costs, given fair treatment of their difference. Whatever may be the actual outcome, complete alternative episcopal jurisdiction will bring to new heights the responsibility to act towards otherness with respect and perspicuous fairness.

There are significant problems if complete alternative jurisdiction is not available. At its worst, collectively the experience of difference by conscientious minorities already has three negative features:

- limitations on their worship practices which they see as denying or distorting basic aspects of the Christian faith.
- the immediate continuity of their ministry damaged or even destroyed by the appointment of a new incumbent in whom they lack confidence for reasons of basic theological disagreement, spirituality or competence.
- the ability to hand on their faith curtailed because their young people face discrimination in the training, ordination and licensing processes.

The issue of women bishops, and present experience overseas with respect to both women priests and bishops, raises these current experiences and fears to a new level. With respect to these experiences, elsewhere neither protocols amongst bishops, or "flying bishops", has been free from significant failure. Unfortunately, there is little reason to expect a recent motion passed at Lambeth to be any more effective. Only complete alternative jurisdiction offers the fullest protection and nurturing possible within Anglicanism, in a linkage between congregation, synod and bishop in which mutual confidence is enjoyed.

Already, Anglicans who see themselves marginalised, or fear being compromised, are setting up independent congregations, synods and even denominations. In this "post-denominational age", people are voting with their feet. Our unique history and constitutional arrangements in Australia open up the possibility of dioceses seceding; or alternatively, offers the possibility of a fundamental and positive adjustment to the way we relate together as Australian Anglicans. The neighbour in Robert Frost's *Mending Wall* observes: "Good fences make good neighbours". It is always better to have peace without fences, but peace with fences is better than no peace. Complete alternative episcopal jurisdiction allows order, diversity, freedom, integrity, and above all, communion, in the midst of change.

Outline of the legislative process

1. A new clarification canon providing for the consecration and/or appointment of women bishops along with a supporting canon altering Sections 6, 45, 71, 74 of the Constitution to allow transfer of a parish from one diocese to another. The clarification canon and the supporting canon are to be linked inextricably to each other so that one cannot be passed without the other, either by General Synod or by Diocesan synods.

2. Under Section 67 (1) (c) of the Constitution, the amendments brought in by supporting the canon are duly made if passed by a vote of a majority of the members of each house of General Synod, and only come into effect unless and until at least three quarters of the diocesan synods of the Church including all of the metropolitan sees have assented to it by ordinance and all such assents be in force at the same time.

3. Movement of a parish from one provincial jurisdiction to another may also require changes in legislation by the relevant state parliament. However, the successful movement fourteen years ago of Albury from the Diocese of Canberra-Goulburn in NSW to Wangaratta in Victoria indicates that special legislation in a state parliament may not be needed.

Outline of parish process

1. The move is initiated by the parish when two thirds of the parish council, with the approval of the incumbent, makes a declaration to put the matter to the vote.

2. The bishop-in-council of the diocese of the parish is given notice of the parish council's intention at least one month before the annual general meeting of the parish.

3. The annual general meeting of the parish is duly called and held. Representatives of the bishops-in-council of diocese A and diocese B may attend.

4. The vote is held at the first meeting of the new parish council elected after the declaration has been made. The same majority, and the approval of the incumbent, is required.

5. The decision is communicated to both bishops-in-council. The bishop-in-council of diocese B may then extend an invitation to the parish to come under the jurisdiction of its diocese in accord with the relevant canons.

Pros and Cons of Option One: Complete Alternative Episcopal Jurisdiction

PROs	CONs
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Undercuts autonomous individualism by handling the problem of conscientious objection at the level of community. 2. Gives maximum expression to an inclusive Anglicanism in which no one ought be forced to leave the Church over the issue of women's ordination. 3. In accord with ancient Anglican practice, the shared faith of parishes and their consenting priests may be nurtured at the maximal level of a synod and a bishop who also share that faith. 4. The notion of a bishop exercising jurisdiction in the geographical area of another bishop of the same communion has a precedent in the Church universal. The Uniat Churches of Eastern Christendom are in communion with Rome, yet retain their own respective languages, rites, and canon law, and in some cases, governance. In the same area, Rome may also operate its own regular episcopal jurisdiction, e.g. in Hungary. 5. Guarantees that as long as there are bishops and synods who share their spiritual vision, a conscientious minority cannot be progressively marginalised. 6. Allows all outlooks to have or not have women priests and bishops. 7. Encourages dissenting parishes to clarify 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It raises fears that there may be many parishes who do not wish to bear witness to their particular spiritual vision of Anglicanism in their present geographical dioceses and will leave to the detriment of the spiritual and economic welfare of that diocese. 2. The process of the supporting canon from General Synod having to do the rounds of the diocesan synods will be too slow to match the urgency many feel about the introduction of women bishops. 3. The same process requires not only more time for deliberation, but also a greater percent of support than just a clarification canon. 4. Under this proposal, the reason for seeking alternative episcopal jurisdiction is not limited to the question of women bishops. 5. If there is major discontent within the Anglican Church of Australia, a massive movement of parishes and their priests could further resolve the Church into its different traditions along diocesan lines, thus exacerbating existing institutional divisions. 6. In the matter of effective pastoral care exercised by a bishop towards a parish and its priest, that may be located in another state, distance will prove a

PROs	CONs
<p>their mission statements, by carefully considering if they wish to remain in their geographical jurisdiction in order to bear first hand witness in the life of their synod and diocese to an alternative view of spiritual reality.</p> <p>8. Encourages synods and bishops to carefully nurture minorities.</p> <p>9. In the matter of protecting minorities, it encourages open accountability by diocesan bishops.</p> <p>10. As inclusion into another diocese is only by an invitation of bishop-in-council, the process restrains wilful, unjustifiable, and reckless behaviour by parishes and their priests in their geographical dioceses as well as that of any host who may accept them.</p> <p>11. At the parish level, the processes involved in negotiating a move allows both the full participation of all parishioners, and the more considered and intentional decision making that a parish council can undertake.</p> <p>12. The processes at the parish level are also open to scrutiny by the diocesan bishops of the present and proposed episcopal jurisdictions.</p> <p>13. Arguably, the legislation that General Synod needs to pass is straightforward.</p> <p>14. The need for three quarters of the diocesan synods of the Church, including all of the metropolitan sees, to assent to the supporting canon passed by General</p>	<p>problem.</p> <p>7. When two parishes are in proximity to each other, but under different jurisdictions, differences in the pastoral guidelines issued by each bishop may create confusion.</p>

PROs	CONS
<p>Synod ensures that ordination of women to the Episcopate along with legislation safeguarding dissent is the wish of a large majority of Anglicans. The perception of fairness which comes from careful and widely supported deliberation reduces the chance of schism and bitterness.</p> <p>15. The inextricable linking together of the clarification and supporting canons gives certainty that this provision for alternative episcopal jurisdiction will last.</p>	

Legislative steps required for Option One

An alternative view is provided in italics

GENERAL SYNOD----- (1) CLARIFICATION CANON*
(2) DIOCESE REDEFINITION CANON
(3) CANON TO AUTHORIZE GENERAL DEFECTIONS
AS SURRENDERS UNDER S 45 OF THE
CONSTITUTION.

Unless the alternative noted below was adopted, it is difficult to see how the second piece of legislation could be other than a constitution alteration canon. The alteration would be perhaps to change the definition of dioceses or perhaps to authorize a new way of territory being abstracted from one diocese and added to another. If it is necessary to pass such a canon, it would need to be adopted by three quarters of the dioceses including all metropolitan dioceses.

The second piece of legislation could be perhaps be avoided if each diocese which had a woman bishop would enact an ordinance to surrender part of its territory under a scheme to be set out in the ordinance. *This is inappropriate to Option One. Only constitutional amendments are irreversible by a diocese once accepted. But ordinances enacted by a diocese can be rejected at the next synod. Integral to Option 1 is safeguarding the permanency of protection for dissenters.*

The scheme would be that the general meeting of a parish would pass a resolution that after x days, it would cease to be part of the diocese and become part of an accepting

diocese. If property were to be transferred, the ordinance would be more complicated, but many of these complications would be avoided if the accepting diocese was within the same province. *Which 'ordinance' is being referred to here? That of General Synod, or the diocese? The 'complications' could be provided for in the constitutional amendments, as Option One already proposes.*

It would be more difficult to provide for a particular church or a particular congregation to change dioceses and the remainder of the parish to stay within its original diocese. However a diocesan ordinance could provide for one or more churches to defect this by allowing a new parish to be carved out of the defecting parish. It would not be possible to allow a particular congregation (say the 8am or 7pm congregation at the parish church) to defect..(“Defect” is used in apposition to “accept”: if the word is thought to have some pejorative vibrations, someone might think of a better word). *Not applicable. Option One does not envisage anything less than a parish unit coming under alternative episcopal jurisdiction.*

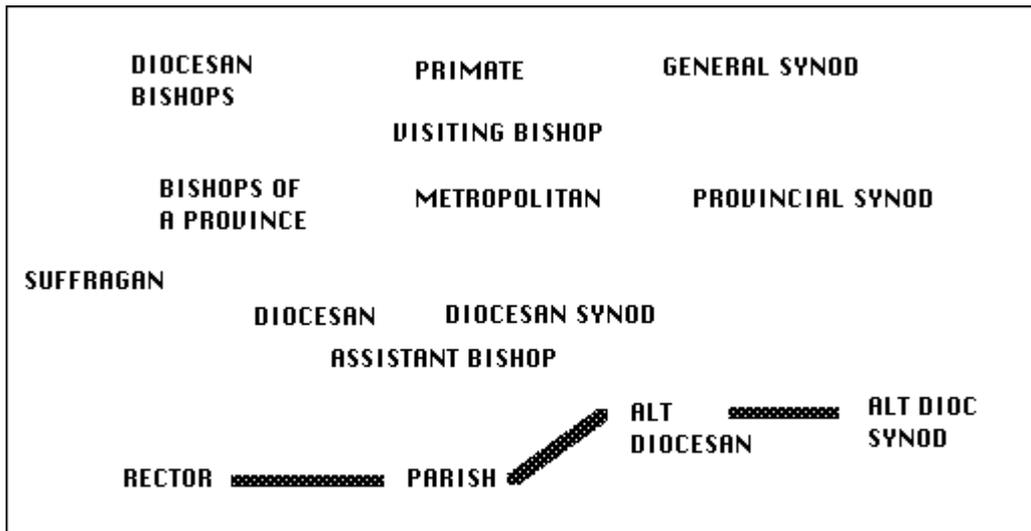
There would need to be legislation in the accepting diocese to receive the defecting parish and make provision for its representation in the accepting diocese’s synod. *Receptive diocese does not need special legislation.*

There would need also to be legislation in the accepting diocese to allow reversal of the defection. *Legislation for reversal not needed. Option One already allows this as it is not cause specific. Moving to alternative episcopal jurisdiction only needs the requisite parish processes and that of the receptive diocese through bishop-in-council.*

The defection would need to be authorised by a canon of General Synod under s45(3) Of the Constitution. *Restricting section 45 (3) to sections 45 (1) and 45 (2) of the Constitution removes the necessity for General Synod to ratify a movement by a parish, under Option 1, to the jurisdiction of another diocese.*

The diocese concerned would need to take especial care to prevent meeting stacking as the issue may well be one where there would be sufficiently high feeling for a secular court challenge which would be costly both pastorally and economically. *Any problem of 'stacking' is properly the concern of a diocese, not General Synod.*

- “Clarification Canon” means a canon similar to Canon 18 1992 to be found at pp 192-3 of the 1998 General Synod Constitution and Canons. Such a Canon would need to be passed as a provisional Canon and then reconsidered at the next General Synod unless special majorities were obtained to enable it to avoid the special bill procedure.



OPTION 1
Complete alternative episcopal jurisdiction

WOMEN IN THE EPISCOPATE IN THE ANGLICAN CHURCH OF AUSTRALIA

A paper prepared for the General Synod Working Group
on the Admission of Women to the Episcopate
by the Archbishop of Perth, the Most Reverend Dr. Peter Carnley AO,
19 February, 1999.

The ecclesiology set out in this paper provides background thinking
for Options Two, Three and Four.

The Diocese:

1. The Constitution of the Anglican Church of Australia makes it clear that a diocese is the 'unit of organisation of this Church and shall be the see of a bishop'. This is not a merely juridical statement; nor is it simply based on pragmatic and utilitarian considerations of organisational appropriateness and usefulness. Rather, this basic affirmation of our Constitution is theologically grounded.
2. In the New Testament the fundamental unit of the church is the 'church of the city'. St. Paul writes to the Christians in Rome, Corinth or Thessalonica as a coherent community, one body, sharing one faith in the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, one baptism into Christ, and the one common life in the communion of the Holy Spirit. In the book of Revelation the author is commanded to write to the church in Ephesus, or Laodicea or wherever.
3. Though the church is sometimes referred to as the church that 'meets in the house' of a specific person, there is no suggestion in the entire New Testament or in any text of any early Church Father that we are to think of multiple 'house churches' in any one locality or city. In the first generation of Christians the local church was essentially one; initially it met in the house of a specific person or family, or perhaps moved from household to household.
4. As numbers increased, particularly after the conversion of Constantine when the Christian population grew exponentially, we may conjecture that there was need for more than one sub-centre, but these were still clearly part of the single and unified entity of the local church of the city. There is no suggestion of multiple churches in the one geographical location, for the unity of the 'people of God' in any one location meant that there could only be one church in any one location, the church of the city including those who lived in the immediate vicinity in the country surrounding it.
5. The 'body of Christ' is the whole people of God in any single geographical locality, complete in itself with Christ as its head. This is no purely abstract and notional reality, but the concretely visible single Christian community. The Church of the city as the local manifestation of the Body of Christ is an inclusive reality, though made up of many members, for by baptism into Christ it includes 'Jew and Greek, slave and free person, male and female'.
6. We should therefore resist the temptation to speak of the local church or diocese as a 'part of the body of Christ', as though the whole body of Christ were a national or international reality of which the local church were just a component. Rather, the local church is the local manifestation of the body of Christ, complete in itself.

7. If the church of the city is inclusive of all the baptised in a particular locality, then it is inclusive in the sense that it includes all four orders: bishop, presbyters, deacons, and lay people together. It is on the basis of these New Testament insights that Ignatius of Antioch can say (around 110 AD) that without deacons, presbyters, and bishop 'you cannot have a church' (to the Trallians 3.1-2). It is because the church of early in the second century is understood to be the church of the city, inclusive of all the baptised in that locality, with bishop, presbyters, deacons and lay people, visibly living and worshipping together in one communion and fellowship, that the classical definition of schism was the setting up of rival episcopal thrones in the same local community.

8. The catholic Church, in the original meaning of the word 'catholic', is not the Church universal, in the sense of the church 'found everywhere' in the world, so much as the local church inclusive of everybody, no matter where they come from in the world and regardless of the usual humanly erected divisions of race, gender and class. In other words, 'catholic' originally meant 'inclusive' rather than 'universal'. The more extensive fellowship formed by a national or international grouping of dioceses is a communion of concrete local communions.

9. The diocese is thus the fundamental unit of the Church in the sense that it is the local manifestation of the Body of Christ, inclusive of every baptised Christian in that particular locality, regardless of differences of race, or gender, or social status. It is the eucharistic community under the presidency of the bishop, its minister of order and its visible sign of unity. The local church is the prolepsis of the kingdom, that part of this world where the kingdom of God is dawning in faith and obedient discipleship, and thus an anticipation in this world of the future perfect reign of God in justice, unity and peace for which we hope for all humanity.

10. This is the theological reality whose inclusive unity and integrity grounds the view that the local church of the diocese is the fundamental unit of the Anglican Church of Australia and the see of a bishop. Until as recently as last century the appointment of a bishop was a necessary condition in order that city status might be granted to a community: Perth became a city, for example, when the first bishop was appointed and Perth became a diocese in 1856.

11. The cities of the ancient world were of course much smaller than the city as we experience it today. St. Augustine of Hippo is said to have presided over a community of only 7000 people. However, despite the size of the urban conglomerates of today (which ideally should probably be divided into much smaller diocesan units), modern methods of mass communication at least make it possible for people to have a sense of belonging together as the local Christian community or body of Christ in a particular place, and to know their chief pastor by name as the minister of order and sign of diocesan unity. It is through him that they have access to pastoral care, should they need it, and upon him they rely, as ordinary, for the provision of ministerial priesthood and the decent and good order of community life.

12. The integrity, unity, and inclusivity of the communion of the local church or diocese as the local manifestation of the body of Christ is what is to be safeguarded in any abnormal arrangements that may need to be made in order to accommodate the possible new development of the consecration of a woman to the episcopate.

13. Indeed, given that the ordination of women is a comparatively new development in the life of the Church which has yet to command full assent, and in the face of dissenting minorities over the question of the consecration of a woman bishop, there is a clear challenge: to gather into the unity of the local church all the baptised including those who disagree about the consecration of a woman to the episcopate and those who may be uncertain about the validity of a eucharist presided over by a woman, or about confirmations and ordinations performed by a woman bishop. Clearly, we need a set of pastoral arrangements that will not compromise the bishop's canonical role as ordinary of a diocese while meeting the pastoral needs of those who dissent.

14. One proposal that has been raised elsewhere in the Anglican Communion for achieving this amounts to the development of separate and parallel episcopal jurisdictions within the same territory, one for ministering to those who accept the ministry of women bishops and one for those who do not. A similar idea has recently been proposed in the Anglican Church of Australia to meet the specific needs of armed forces personnel. This proposal involves the excision of small units from a diocese in which there are military bases and grouping them together under a 'bishop to the forces' - as a kind of pox of polka dots across the map of the national Church.

15. Generally speaking the Provinces of the Anglican Communion have been unenthusiastic about this kind of proposal, precisely because it is so inimical to the unity of the diocese as the local manifestation of the body of Christ under the shepherding and unifying leadership of a single diocesan bishop. Lambeth Conferences have been discouraging about parallel jurisdictions (eg. Lambeth Conference 1897, Res. 24; Lambeth Conference 1968, Res. 63, Lambeth Conference 1988, Res. 72. See also Resolution 14 of the Joint Meeting of Primates and Anglican Consultative Council at Cape Town, Southern Africa, January 1993). The most notorious of parallel jurisdictions in Europe (English Chaplaincies, and American Chaplaincies, plus the two Iberian Dioceses of Spain and Portugal which are within the Province of Canterbury) has been regularly deplored and there is currently a proposal to regularise this anomaly by the creation of an Anglican Province of Europe. For this reason the Eames Commission did 'not recommend the establishment of parallel jurisdictions within the Provinces of the Anglican Communion as an appropriate pastoral solution to this question' of the ordination and consecration of women bishops. (Eames, First Report, para 53.)

16. In the face of the clear imperative to include those who dissent in the continuing life and worship of the church, as we work towards the consensus of unity of one heart and mind, the provision of a pastoral alternative must be seen as a 'necessary and extraordinary anomaly' that is pursued 'in preference to schism'. (Eames, First Report, para. 55). To establish parallel jurisdictions would be to forsake the quest for inclusivity and to create schism by mutual consent. It would signal a tacit abandonment of the quest for unity of heart and mind for which our Lord prayed for his disciples and would stand condemned as an example of the sin of corporate faithlessness.

17. Also, while the matter is in debate during a 'genuinely open process of reception' as we work towards a more perfect unity of heart and mind we should not be too hasty to institutionalise anomalous and temporary arrangements in fixed and set structures. While the matter is being debated in the Anglican Communion and in the universal church there is always the possibility either that the consecration of women to the episcopate will be embraced, or else that the development will be put into reverse and suppressed (as in the case of the practice of ordaining women deacons in the 5th century). In other words, in this

present situation of fluidity during the open process of reception any arrangements to meet the pastoral needs of people or parishes unable to accept the ministry of a woman bishop should be of an interim nature. Disunity should not be institutionalised in a permanent juridical form. (See Eames, First Report, 1988-89, para 55).

18. Experience elsewhere in the Anglican Communion, however, suggests that the practical pastoral difficulties posed by the consecration of a woman to the episcopate may not be as great as was first anticipated:

- i. There does not seem to be a difficulty in the case where a woman is consecrated as an assistant bishop in a diocese. Even in dioceses where there is a degree of regionalisation and the woman assistant bishop has immediate pastoral responsibilities for a defined geographical region within a diocese, arrangements can be made for the diocesan bishop or another regional bishop who is a male to come into her region in order to provide specific episcopal ministry when there is need.
- ii. Even when a woman bishop is a diocesan bishop, there appears to be no great difficulty if she has assistant bishops or regional bishops who are male and who can be deputed to minister in any parishes which may be unable to accept the ministry of a woman bishop.
- iii. There is increased difficulty when the woman bishop is not an assistant bishop within a diocese or a regional bishop but a diocesan bishop who has no male assistant or regional bishops working with her. Should a diocese of the Anglican Church of Australia elect a woman bishop, and in the event of there being individuals or parishes in her diocese unable to accept the ministry of a woman bishop, this would impact upon them in two quite specific ways: at confirmations and at ordinations.

Most reports suggest that there has been little pastoral difficulty in managing the movement of parishioners from parish to parish as they seek out their preference for the ministry of a male priest rather than a female. Tastes in liturgy and music trigger the same kind of movement. Clearly, the celebration of eucharists by a woman bishop poses little more difficulty for dissenters than the celebration of eucharists by women priests. Confirmations and ordinations pose a greater difficulty, but even here the problem is not insurmountable.

- (a) Confirmation. Should there be individuals desirous of being confirmed, but not by a woman bishop, it may be necessary to bring in an 'episcopal visitor' from elsewhere. This could be another diocesan bishop willing to assist on occasion in this way upon the request of a parish and at the invitation of the diocesan bishop, or else a bishop may be designated by the college of bishops to minister across the national Church, as recommended by the Eames Commission (First Report, para.54).

The Australian Diocesan Bishops already have protocols in place to allow for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander bishops to enter dioceses with the permission to officiate of the relevant diocesan bishop for the purpose of providing ethnically sensitive ministry to Aboriginal communities. The same system could easily be invoked to enable ministry to parishes where a bishop other than the woman diocesan is desired. Strictly speaking, no legislative changes would be necessary for similar protocols to be put in place by the Diocesan Bishops, though a simple General Synod canon could warrant and authorise this episcopal arrangement and at the same time

raise the finance for it. Travel costs across the distances involved in Australia would be a significant factor in addition to the costs of additional episcopal personnel.

(b). Ordination. Candidates for ordination who do not wish to be ordained by their diocesan bishop should she be a woman, could be ordained in neighbouring dioceses by a bishop acceptable to them by letters dimissory. Once again, this is not an unusual procedure which may occur for a variety of reasons.

19. All the while, however, the insistent question with which we must grapple is whether a preference for the ministry of a male bishop rather than a female bishop is grounded in sound theological reasons or simply a psychological matter of ‘getting used to’ what is new and unfamiliar. As Anglicans who must assent to the Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion we are already committed to a position in relation to the ‘unworthiness of ministers’; fortunately valid confirmations and ordinations appear to be independent of the moral imperfection of the minister. This is a challenge to those, who are unconvinced about the propriety of ordaining and consecrating women priests and bishops, but who belong to a Communion of Churches in which this occurs. Is chromosomal difference to be accounted more vicious with respect to the validity of ministry than the moral imperfection of the minister? In the open process of reception while the debate about women in ministry proceeds a judgment of ‘irregular but valid’ might be the most prudent position for dissenters to take.

20. Meanwhile, provision must be made for the on going pastoral care of all dissenting minorities so as to minister to the inclusiveness of the church to which the Gospel calls us. This seems to dictate the need for mechanisms to allay troubled consciences so that we may maintain the highest degree of communion even in the face of seemingly intractable differences of opinion.

21. The protocols outline an approach based on pastoral goodwill and grace on the part of a woman bishop, and the support of existing diocesan and assistant bishops, rather than legislative mechanisms. However, they could be enshrined in some form of legislation, perhaps as a schedule to a canon of General Synod or in a local diocesan canon. In this case they would provide mandatory undertakings to be required following the election and prior to the consecration of a woman diocesan bishop.

OPTION TWO (A)

National Diocesan Bishops' Protocols

Protocols to be used by bishops of the Anglican Church of Australia in order to minister to those who dissent in the event of the election of a woman diocesan bishop

1.

SOLEMN COVENANT OF AGREEMENT TO ENSURE THE PROVISION OF ALTERNATIVE EPISCOPAL OVERSIGHT

I, Bishop-elect of the Diocese of
.....in the Anglican Church of Australia, am humbly grateful to God that the Diocese has chosen me to be its Diocesan Bishop.

I acknowledge that there may be some individuals and parish communities in the Diocese who, for various reasons, are unable to accept the ministry of a woman bishop. I therefore pledge myself to ensure that 'Alternative Episcopal Oversight' is provided in the diocese in the following ways:

1. Should a parish after a special general meeting of parishioners called explicitly for the purpose and advertised on two previous Sundays in the parish, with the consent of the Incumbent and Church Wardens, decide to request episcopal ministry by a bishop other than myself, I shall be prepared to ensure the provision of such ministry as a form of 'Alternative Episcopal Oversight'.
2. After consultation with the Incumbent and Wardens of the parish I will undertake to invite an appropriate diocesan or assistant bishop to enter the Diocese to minister with my permission to officiate. In the first instance I shall seek this Alternative Episcopal Oversight from within my own Province and, failing that, from elsewhere in the Anglican Church of Australia.
3. Prior to inviting a bishop to minister in this diocese under this protocol I will come to an agreement with the Incumbent of the Parish and Church Wardens as to the financial contribution the parish will be prepared to make with respect to travel costs and expenses. I recognise that if the bishop's visits to the diocese will mean that he will be away from home for extended periods of time, the parish concerned will cover the cost of his wife accompanying him on such visits.
4. I will request the visiting bishop to undertake to provide me with a report of ministry in my diocese.
5. I pledge to hold myself mutually accountable in collegial solidarity with my episcopal colleagues for ensuring that adequate and appropriate pastoral care continues to be provided for those in my diocese who dissent from the election and consecration of a woman bishop. I do this in the awareness that failure to provide such care would be a breach of my consecration vows.

(Signed) (Date).....

**SOLEMN COVENANT OF AGREEMENT
TO ASSIST
IN THE PROVISION OF
ALTERNATIVE EPISCOPAL OVERSIGHT**

(This undertaking is to be signed by as many diocesan and assistant bishops as may be deemed possible and necessary and is to be updated annually).

We, the undersigned Bishops of the Anglican Church of Australia, note that the Diocese ofhas chosen to be its Diocesan Bishop.

We acknowledge that there may be some individuals and parish communities in the Diocese who, for various reasons, are unable to accept the ministry of a woman bishop. We therefore pledge ourselves to assist the newly elected bishop in the following ways:

1. Should a parish after a special general meeting of parishioners and with the consent of the Incumbent and Church Wardens decide to request episcopal ministry by other than the newly elected diocesan bishop we shall each be prepared to provide such ministry as a form of 'Alternative Episcopal Oversight'.
2. We will not enter the Diocese except when the invitation has come from the Bishop of the Diocese concerned following a request to her from the parish signed by the Incumbent and Church Wardens after a resolution of a special general meeting of the parish called explicitly for this purpose and advertised on at least two successive Sundays in the parish.
3. Prior to ministering in her diocese we will come to an agreement with her and the Incumbent of the Parish and Church Wardens as to the financial contribution the parish will be prepared to make with respect to travel costs and expenses. We are grateful that if visits to the diocese mean that we will be away from home for extended periods of time, the parish concerned will undertake to cover the cost of our wives accompanying us on such visits.
4. We undertake to provide the diocesan bishop with a report of our ministry in her diocese.
5. In collegial solidarity we pledge ourselves to hold ourselves and the newly elected woman bishop mutually accountable for ensuring that adequate and appropriate pastoral care continues to be provided for those in her diocese who dissent from the election and consecration of a woman bishop. We do this in the awareness that failure to assist in the provision of such care would be a breach of our consecration vows.

(Signed)
.....

PROS AND CONS

Pros applying to all versions of Option Two

- require no major structural or geographical changes
- require no major constitutional change
- maintain the Diocesan bishop's juridical authority and so they do not alter existing relationships within the national church and responsibilities for funding, any necessary disciplinary action etc can be clearly defined
- allow for a preamble or other statement rejecting discrimination
- provide for pastoral / liturgical support for opponents of women's ordination
- affirm the national church's support for ordained women's ministry
- also affirm the legitimacy of the contrary view
- linked General and diocesan synod legislation aims to give certainty to both parties

Cons applying to all versions of Option Two

- danger of a 'special provision' that may be a precedent for future legislation to deal with other issues – homosexuality, lay presidency etc - on which different constituencies may have equally strong views
- possibility of appointment from outside the national church if no-one 'suitable' here (note: some ECUSA parishes have moved outside their dioceses to obtain episcopal oversight, and sought oversight from bishops in other countries). Some people could see this as an advantage in bringing 'new blood' into the national church.
- no Option provides for parishes wanting the ministry of a woman bishop in a diocese which refuses to provide it

Option Two (A) National Diocesan Bishops' Protocols

Pros

- it is an Australia-wide agreement
- the protocol for ministry in other dioceses by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander bishops gives a precedent (although in the case of a protocol for women bishops, the visiting bishop would not have a seat by right in the General Synod House of Bishops)
- it affirms the collegiality of the bishops and through this also affirms the ministry of all bishops including the women bishops

Cons

- a protocol without legislative enforcement can be changed as simply as it is entered into
- costing arrangements would be complex and travel costs could be high
- there could be a sense of separation between the parish and the visiting bishop (note the pressure in large dioceses for regionalisation to keep personal contact between bishops and parishes / clergy)
- there is potential for conflict between a visiting bishop and a diocesan
- there is a perception of hierarchy and it breaks the usual way in which all orders – diocesans, clergy and lay people – jointly make decisions in the Australian church
- the process is not transparent to the whole church

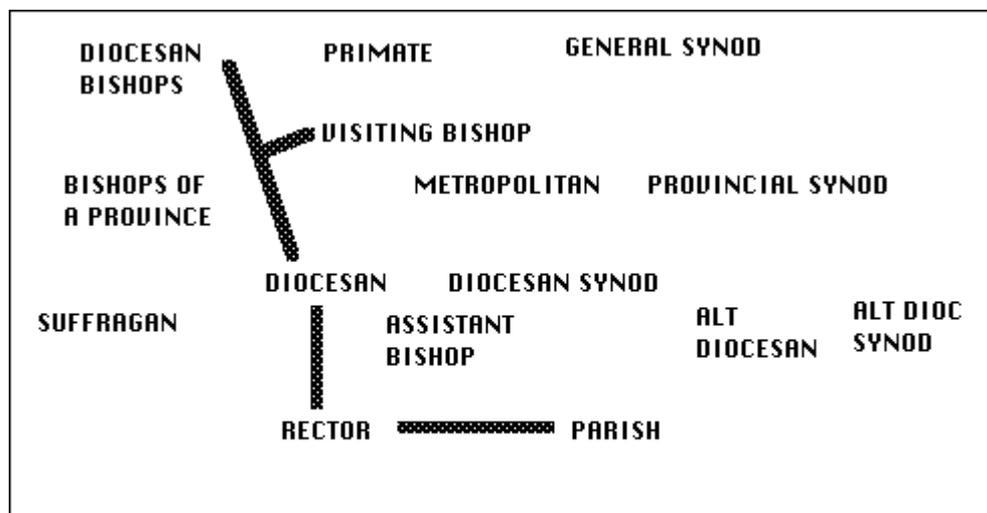
LEGISLATIVE STEPS REQUIRED

GENERAL SYNOD-----CLARIFICATION CANON*

With one exception, no other legislation would be necessary. Things would be worked out in a practical way by protocols between the bishops which would not have force of law in any sense. Care would have to be taken to ensure that as each new diocesan was installed, he or she renewed the protocol. To minimise the possibility of a new bishop reneging, diocesan ordinances could be passed enshrining the protocol as part of the law of the diocese.

The exception is that diocesan ordinances would have to make provision for payment to be made for the diocese which provides the alternative oversight to be compensated both for travel expenses and also for the cost of employing a substitute to cover the time that their bishop is outside the diocese.

* “Clarification Canon” means a canon similar to Canon 18 1992 to be found at pp 192-3 of the 1998 General Synod Constitution and Canons. Such a Canon would need to be passed as a provisional Canon and then reconsidered at the next General Synod unless special majorities were obtained to enable it to avoid the special bill procedure.



OPTION 2A
National Diocesan Bishops protocol

OPTION TWO (B)

Nationally-based legislative model

General Observations

- No major structural or geographic changes.
- One change to the Constitution (relating to membership of the House of Bishops).
- The clarifying legislation provides for consecration and/or appointment of women bishops and includes measures for Alternative Episcopal Oversight.
- The diocesan bishop retains juridical authority.
- Alternative Episcopal Oversight relates to pastoral and liturgical ministry. The bishop offering Alternative Episcopal Oversight would do so by letters dimissory.

Theology

See Archbishop Carnley's theological position paper on page 27.

Content

This Option envisages the appointment of one or more bishops by the Primate to serve the whole country, providing liturgical and pastoral ministry to parishes, other church bodies and individual clergy, and administering confirmation and ordination where appropriate. The bishop would act at the invitation of individual diocesan bishops, in turn acting on the request of parishes under specific regulations. This Option would need some central funding and organisation.

Legislation

1. A General Synod Clarification Canon, including a preamble affirming the unity of the Church, and rejecting all intolerance or discrimination on the basis of genuinely-held beliefs for or against the ordination of women (GS resolution 52/98).
2. Part of this Canon would provide for the creation of the position of 'episcopal visitors' and a process for their selection, appointment, and function.
3. Change to the Constitution to allow the episcopal visitors to be members of the House of Bishops (as with the indigenous bishops) as otherwise these bishops would not have access to membership of any synod;
4. Provision for the financial arrangements necessary - payment of each bishop, and provision of travel costs.

Process

This Option would involve consultation with both the Diocesan bishops and the constituency to be served by the new bishops, in their appointment.

This Option would require the delegation of specific powers by Diocesan bishops to the episcopal visitors in terms of liturgical and pastoral ministry within parishes and other church-related bodies, to individual clergy and lay people, and for administering confirmation and ordination.

Ordinands would be selected and trained in accordance with provincial and diocesan practice. At the point of ordination, they would be able to choose to be ordained by an episcopal visitor, acting on letters dimissory from the Diocesan Bishop. The ordination would be held separately from a diocesan ordination, and in a parish which had chosen Alternative Episcopal Oversight.

Confirmation would be administered by episcopal visitors in participating parishes, with the written authority of the Diocesan Bishop.

Choosing nationally-based Alternative Episcopal Oversight

Parishes

1. The decision to seek Alternative Episcopal Oversight would be initiated by the parish, when two-thirds of the parish council, with the approval of the Incumbent, makes a declaration that they intend to put the matter to the vote, and informs the diocesan accordingly.
2. The vote is held at the first meeting of the new parish council elected after the declaration has been made. The same majority, and the approval of the Incumbent, is required.
3. The decision is communicated to the Diocesan Bishop, who extends an invitation to the nominated bishop to offer a pastoral, liturgical and sacramental ministry to the parish with the Diocesan Bishop's written authority.

The parish retains its usual role within the diocesan structures, as do the clergy of the parish. Their licences remain unchanged.

Non-parochial church organisations (eg schools, agencies)

They would need to initiate a similar process through their governing bodies, with the same majorities required. Individual arrangements would need to be agreed with the Diocesan Bishop.

Individual non-parochial clergy

Such clergy would be able to link themselves as honorary associate clergy with parishes which have chosen Alternative Episcopal Oversight.

Opting out of Alternative Episcopal Oversight

The same process would be required in reverse.

PROS AND CONS

Pros applying to all versions of Option Two

- require no major structural or geographical changes
- require no major constitutional change
- maintain the Diocesan bishop's juridical authority and so they do not alter existing relationships within the national church and responsibilities for funding, any necessary disciplinary action etc can be clearly defined
- allow for a preamble or other statement rejecting discrimination
- provide for pastoral / liturgical support for opponents of women's ordination
- affirm the national church's support for ordained women's ministry
- also affirm the legitimacy of the contrary view
- linked General and diocesan synod legislation aims to give certainty to both parties

Cons applying to all versions of Option Two

- danger of a 'special provision' that may be a precedent for future legislation to deal with other issues – homosexuality, lay presidency etc - on which different constituencies may have equally strong views
- possibility of appointment from outside the national church if no-one 'suitable' here (note: some ECUSA parishes have moved outside their dioceses to obtain episcopal oversight, and sought oversight from bishops in other countries). Some people could see this as an advantage in bringing 'new blood' into the national church.
- no Option provides for parishes wanting the ministry of a woman bishop in a diocese which refuses to provide it

Option Two (B) Nationally-based legislative model

Pros

- it is an Australia-wide system
- the protocol for ministry in other dioceses by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander bishops gives a precedent (although in the case of a protocol for women bishops, the visiting bishop would not have a seat by right in the House of Bishops)

Cons

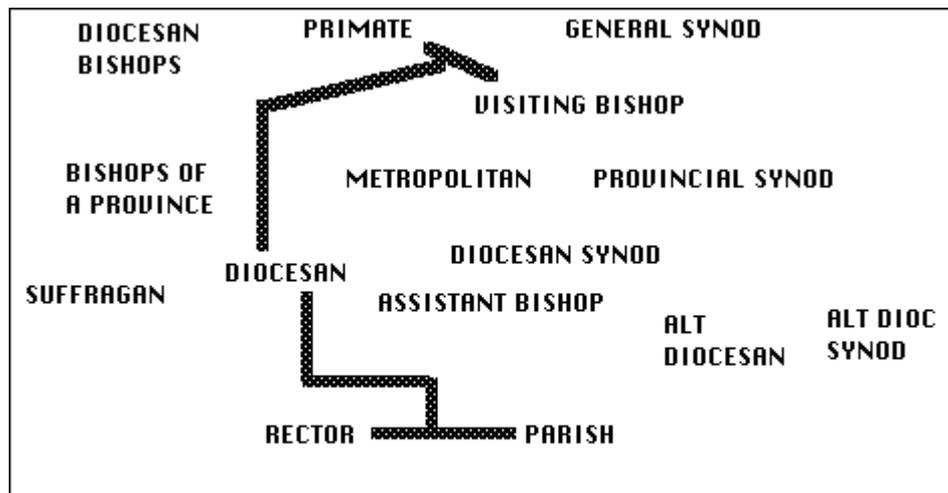
- the Primate and the relevant Diocesan may not agree on the suitability of a person appointed
- costing arrangements would be complex and travel costs could be high
- there could be a sense of separation between the parish and the visiting bishop (note the pressure in large dioceses for regionalisation to keep personal contact between bishops and parishes / clergy)
- there is potential for conflict between a visiting bishop and a diocesan
- there is a perception of hierarchy and it breaks the usual way in which diocesans, clergy and lay people jointly make decisions in the Australian church
- the process is not transparent to the whole church
- it would be a new role for the Primate, and one that is novel for the diocesan-based structure of the Australian church

LEGISLATIVE STEPS REQUIRED

GENERAL SYNOD **(1) CLARIFICATION CANON***
(2) ALTERNATIVE BISHOPS CANON

The Alternative Bishops Canon would authorise the primate to consecrate say two bishops for oversight of areas where the diocesan was a woman. The method of selection of such bishops would need to be specified. The cost would be on the dioceses generally and the canon would have to be approved by the dioceses under s 32 of the constitution. Part of the cost would be recouped from dioceses “using their services”. A diocese using an alternative bishop would be encouraged to have that bishop attend its synod and take part in the life of the diocese.

* “Clarification Canon” means a canon similar to Canon 18 1992 to be found at pp 192-3 of the 1998 General Synod Constitution and Canons. Such a Canon would need to be passed as a provisional Canon and then reconsidered at the next General Synod unless special majorities were obtained to enable it to avoid the special bill procedure.



OPTION 2B
 Nationally-based legislative model

OPTION TWO (C)

Province-based legislative model

General Observations

- No major structural or geographic changes.
- The clarifying legislation provides for consecration and/or appointment of women bishops and includes measures for Alternative Episcopal Oversight.
- The diocesan bishop retains ordinary jurisdiction.
- Alternative Episcopal Oversight relates to pastoral, liturgical and sacramental ministry. The bishop offering Alternative Episcopal Oversight would act on a general commission by the provincial college of bishops, with the specific consent of the diocesan bishop.

Theology

See Archbishop Carnley's theological position paper on page 27.

Content

This Option provides legislation for collegial action by the college of bishops in a province. The Metropolitan, together with the other diocesan bishops of the province, would provide for the appointment, from among or in addition to their number, a bishop who could hold an auxiliary office and function, providing liturgical and pastoral ministry for those who request it within the province. That bishop would then offer alternative oversight where requested with the approval and consent of the diocesan bishop concerned.

Legislation

1. A General Synod Clarification Canon, including a preamble affirming the unity of the Church, and rejecting all intolerance or discrimination on the basis of genuinely-held beliefs for or against the ordination of women (GS resolution 52/98).
2. A protocol or ordinance to provide for the appointment of a bishop by the provincial college of bishops, and a process for his selection and function.
3. Possible provision for the financial arrangements necessary - payment of the bishop, where necessary, and provision of travel costs.

Process

This Option would involve consultation with the provincial college of bishops, and the constituency to be served by the bishop, in his appointment. Questions which need to be answered: is an additional bishop needed? How is the 'constituency' to be identified?

This Option would require the delegation of specific powers by archbishops and diocesan bishops to the appointed bishop in terms of liturgical, pastoral and sacramental ministry within parishes and other church-related bodies, to individual clergy and lay people, and for administering confirmation and ordination.

Ordinands would be selected and trained in accordance with provincial and diocesan practice. At the point of ordination, they would be able to choose to be ordained by the nominated bishop. The ordination would be held separately from a diocesan ordination, and in a parish which had chosen Alternative Episcopal Oversight.

Confirmation would be administered by the nominated bishop in participating parishes, with the written authority of the Diocesan Bishop.

Choosing province-based Alternative Episcopal Oversight

Parishes

1. The decision to seek Alternative Episcopal Oversight would be initiated by the parish, when two-thirds of the parish council, with the approval of the Incumbent, makes a declaration that they intend to put the matter to the vote, and informs the diocesan accordingly.
2. The vote is held at the first meeting of the new parish council elected after the declaration has been made. The same majority, and the approval of the Incumbent, is required.
3. The decision is communicated to the Diocesan Bishop, who extends an invitation to the nominated bishop to offer a pastoral, liturgical and sacramental ministry to the parish with the Diocesan Bishop's written authority.

The parish retains its usual role within the diocesan structures, as do the clergy of the parish. Their licences remain unchanged.

Non-parochial church organisations (eg schools, agencies)

They would need to initiate a similar process through their governing bodies, with the same majorities required. Individual arrangements would need to be agreed with the Diocesan Bishop.

Individual non-parochial clergy

Such clergy would be able to link themselves as honorary associate clergy with parishes which have chosen Alternative Episcopal Oversight.

Opting out of Alternative Episcopal Oversight

The same process would be required in reverse.

Implications

Financial arrangements might impose a financial obligation on parishes which decided to accept Alternative Episcopal Oversight. The obligation might be particularly burdensome if only a few parishes made this decision.

PROS AND CONS

Pros applying to all versions of Option Two

- require no major structural or geographical changes
- require no major constitutional change
- maintain the Diocesan bishop's juridical authority and so they do not alter existing relationships within the national church and responsibilities for funding, any necessary disciplinary action etc can be clearly defined
- allow for a preamble or other statement rejecting discrimination
- provide for pastoral / liturgical support for opponents of women's ordination
- affirm the national church's support for ordained women's ministry
- also affirm the legitimacy of the contrary view
- linked General and diocesan synod legislation aims to give certainty to both parties

Cons applying to all versions of Option Two

- danger of a 'special provision' that may be a precedent for future legislation to deal with other issues – homosexuality, lay presidency etc - on which different constituencies may have equally strong views
- possibility of appointment from outside the national church if no-one 'suitable' here (note: some ECUSA parishes have moved outside their dioceses to obtain episcopal oversight, and sought oversight from bishops in other countries). Some people could see this as an advantage in bringing 'new blood' into the national church.
- no Option provides for parishes wanting the ministry of a woman bishop in a diocese which refuses to provide it

Option Two (C) Province-based legislative model

Pros

- it uses and strengthens the provincial structure
- the protocol for ministry in other dioceses by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander bishops gives a precedent (although in the case of a protocol for women bishops, the visiting bishop would not have a seat by right in the House of Bishops)
- it affirms the collegiality of the bishops and through this also affirms the ministry of all bishops including the women bishops
- it is likely to be less expensive than a national arrangement, and to have less of a sense of separation between parish and the visiting bishop, as the visiting bishop may come from an adjacent or at least a nearby diocese

Cons

- a protocol without legislative enforcement can be changed as simply as it is entered into
- costing arrangements would be complex and travel costs could be high
- there could be a sense of separation between the parish and the visiting bishop (note the pressure in large dioceses for regionalisation to keep personal contact between bishops and parishes / clergy)
- there is potential for conflict between a visiting bishop and a diocesan
- there is a perception of hierarchy and it breaks the usual way in which diocesans, clergy and lay people jointly make decisions in the Australian church
- the process is not transparent to the whole church

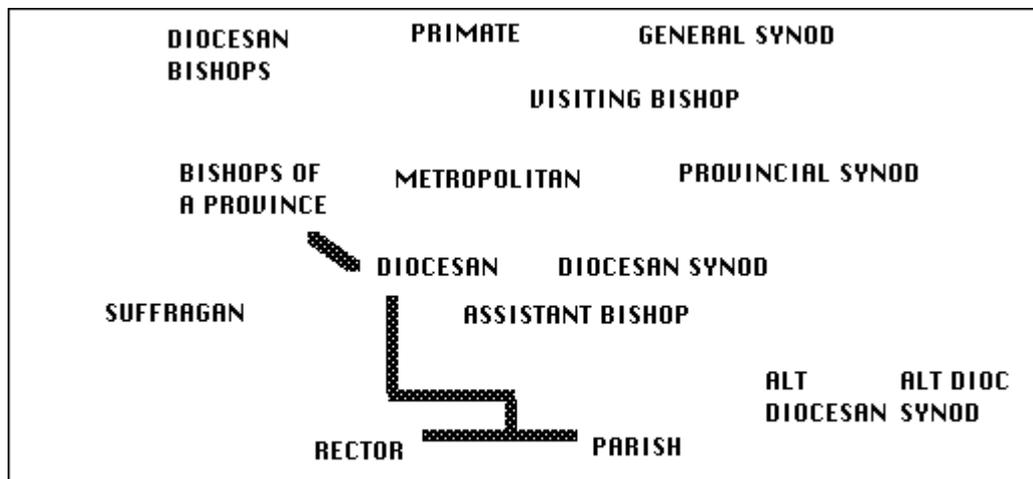
LEGISLATIVE STEPS REQUIRED

GENERAL SYNOD-----CLARIFICATION CANON*

**PROVINCIAL SYNOD (AND DIOCESAN SYNODS)---
ALTERNATIVE BISHOPS ORDINANCE**

Although this Option is conceptually close to Option Two (B), the problem is kept within the Province. Thus, no further General Synod legislation is necessary, but the Province needs to legislate for the Metropolitan to designate bishops to oversee parishes who have an objection in conscience to a woman bishop. The ordinance will need to specify how the costs are to be borne. If it is necessary to consecrate a bishop solely for this work, then the ordinance will have to specify a selection process.

* “Clarification Canon” means a canon similar to Canon 18 1992 to be found at pp 192-3 of the 1998 General Synod Constitution and Canons. Such a Canon would need to be passed as a provisional Canon and then reconsidered at the next General Synod unless special majorities were obtained to enable it to avoid the special bill procedure.



OPTION 2C
Provincially-based legislative model

OPTION TWO (D)

Diocesan-based legislative model

General Observations

- No major structural or geographic changes are envisaged;
- No changes to the Constitution;
- The clarifying legislation provides for the consecration and/or appointment of women bishops, and includes measures for Alternative Episcopal Oversight.
- The Diocesan Bishop retains complete juridical authority
- Alternative Episcopal Oversight relates to pastoral and liturgical ministry. The bishop exercising alternative oversight would do so under the provisions of protocols.

Theology

See Archbishop Carnley's theological position paper on page 27.

Content

This Option provides for a diocesan-based model of Alternative Episcopal Oversight. It reaffirms the diocesan focus for the provision of ministry. Specially-appointed assistant bishops within the diocese, or bishops from other dioceses, are licensed by the diocesan to offer ongoing and continuing liturgical and pastoral ministry to parishes, other church bodies, and individual clergy, and also to administer confirmation and ordination where appropriate.

Legislation

1. A General Synod Clarification Canon, including a preamble affirming the unity of the Church, and rejecting all intolerance or discrimination on the basis of genuinely-held beliefs for and against the ordination of women (GS resolution 52/98).
2. A set of protocols (similar in content to those outlined in Option 2 (A)) for the creation of diocesan-based episcopal commissaries, attached to the Clarification Canon in a schedule. This would give the protocols legislative authority.

Process

Each diocese would need to set out principles for the selection or appointment of the bishop, including the means of identifying the 'constituency' for consultation with the Diocesan bishop and Diocesan council on the appointment of the bishop/s within the diocese, or for the choice of a bishop in another diocese to be invited to act within the diocese.

No national Constitutional changes would be necessary, as the diocesan-based commissaries would be members of their local synods and councils, and eligible for election to General Synod as representatives of the House of Clergy.

No specific financial arrangements would need to be spelt out in the protocols, except the incorporation of the General Synod rule which requires a diocese to ensure proper financial provision is made for an assistant bishop. Financial detail would be the responsibility of individual dioceses, though presumably broad principles could be prescribed in the protocols.

Ordinands would be selected and trained in accordance with diocesan practice. At the point of ordination, they would be able to choose to be ordained by the alternative bishop, who might conveniently be termed an episcopal commissary, acting on letters dimissory from the Diocesan Bishop. The ordination would be held in a parish which had chosen Alternative Episcopal Oversight.

Confirmation would be administered by episcopal commissaries in participating parishes, with the written authority of the Diocesan Bishop.

Choosing diocesan-based Alternative Episcopal Oversight

Parishes

1. The move would be initiated by the parish, when two-thirds of the parish council, with the approval of the Incumbent, makes a declaration that they intend to put the matter to the vote;
2. The vote is held at the first meeting of the new parish council elected after the declaration has been made. The same majority, and the approval of the Incumbent and Wardens, is required.
3. The decision is communicated to the Diocesan Bishop, who extends an invitation to the diocesan commissary to offer a pastoral and liturgical ministry to the parish with the Diocesan Bishop's written authority.

The parish retains its usual role within the diocesan structures, as do the clergy of the parish. Their licences remain unchanged. The parish remains part of its region, where regions exist, in all respects except that they do not receive the pastoral and liturgical ministry of the regional bishop. They do however still come within the delegated juridical authority of the regional bishop.

Non-parochial church organisations (eg schools, agencies)

They would need to instigate a similar process through their governing bodies, with the same majorities required. Individual arrangements would need to be agreed with the Diocesan Bishop.

Individual Non-parochial clergy

Such clergy would be able to link themselves as honorary associate clergy with parishes which have chosen the ministry of a diocesan episcopal commissary.

Opting out of diocesan commissary ministry.

The same process would be required in reverse.

PROS AND CONS

Pros applying to all versions of Option Two

- require no major structural or geographical changes
- require no major constitutional change
- maintain the Diocesan bishop's juridical authority and so they do not alter existing relationships within the national church and responsibilities for funding, any necessary disciplinary action etc can be clearly defined
- allow for a preamble or other statement rejecting discrimination
- provide for pastoral / liturgical support for opponents of women's ordination
- affirm the national church's support for ordained women's ministry
- also affirm the legitimacy of the contrary view
- linked General and diocesan synod legislation aims to give certainty to both parties

Cons applying to all versions of Option Two

- danger of a 'special provision' that may be a precedent for future legislation to deal with other issues – homosexuality, lay presidency etc - on which different constituencies may have equally strong views
- possibility of appointment from outside the national church if no-one 'suitable' here (note: some ECUSA parishes have moved outside their dioceses to obtain episcopal oversight, and sought oversight from bishops in other countries). Some people could see this as an advantage in bringing 'new blood' into the national church.
- no Option provides for parishes wanting the ministry of a woman bishop in a diocese which refuses to provide it

Option Two (D) Diocesan-based legislative model

Pros

- diocesan control of its own affairs, and sense of unity, are protected
- funding is simplified because the diocese provides or organises funding
- there is no potential for conflict between the Diocesan and the bishop ministering to parishes

Cons

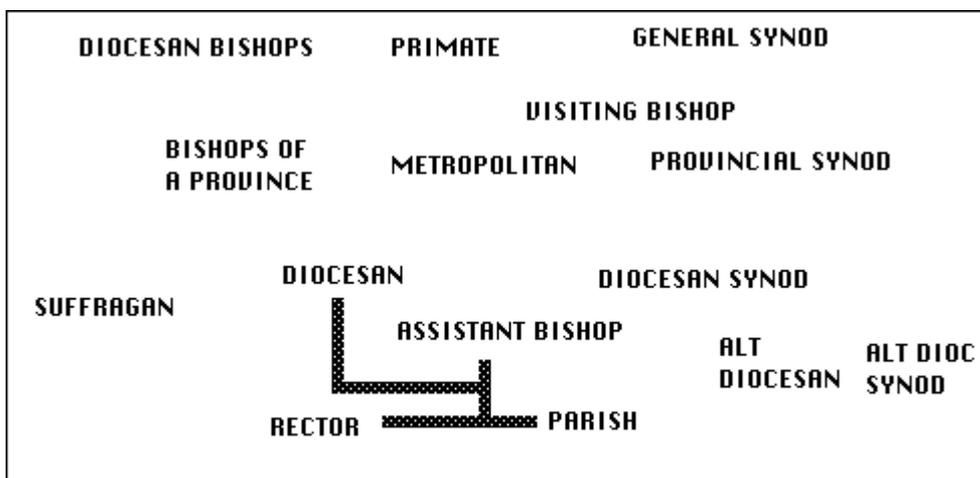
- it may be difficult for some dioceses to bear the cost of additional episcopal involvement

LEGISLATIVE STEPS REQUIRED

GENERAL SYNOD -----CLARIFICATION CANON*
DIOCESAN SYNODS----BISHOPS (CONSCIENCE) ORDINANCES

The Bishops (Conscience) ordinance would set up a method of episcopal oversight for parishes (congregations) who voted at a general meeting for Alternative Episcopal Oversight. The ordinance would only have effect whilst a woman was bishop of the diocese. The diocese would provide that a male assistant bishop would have oversight of the parish or, if there were no such then an arrangement with another diocese of the province is authorised whereby the bishop (or an assistant bishop) of that other diocese is authorised to have oversight of that parish at the cost of the parish (or of the inviting diocese).

* “Clarification Canon” means a canon similar to Canon 18 1992 to be found at pp 192-3 of the 1998 General Synod Constitution and Canons. Such a Canon would need to be passed as a provisional Canon and then reconsidered at the next General Synod unless special majorities were obtained to enable it to avoid the special bill procedure.



OPTION 2D
 Diocese-based legislative model

OPTION THREE

Province-based legislative model integrating Suffragan bishops into the General Synod House of Bishops

Note on Suffragan Bishops

1. In a Province:
There are diocesan bishops whose function and status are understood. There are assistant or regional bishops who are auxiliary to the diocesan, whose functions are variable and whose status is imprecise. Traditionally also there have been suffragan bishops, auxiliary to the Metropolitan. They have invariably held a see, albeit sometimes nominal if not virtually illusory. Such a bishop has diocesan rather than assistant status, but his portfolio might be that of a missionary diocese, or of a tribe or culture. He is responsible to the Metropolitan and reflects the jurisdiction which belongs to that office - not unlike, but not to be confused with, visitorial jurisdiction.
2. Suffragans, as opposed to regional/assistant bishops, have a seat in the General Synod House of Bishops. It would seem appropriate for this office to be revived for (a) indigenous provision (b) this present provision (c) the pastoral care of the defence force.
3. If Option Three is adopted, the Metropolitan and his college may then carry it out
(a) by resort to additional responsibilities for the existing diocesans;
(b) by designating one existing post as the suffragan see, and/or
(c) by creating a suffragan see.

Those appointed under (b) or (c) need not be restricted to working with the 'constituency' – they only need to be acceptable to the constituency. They may well carry out other duties which are not incompatible with that.

General Observations

- No major structural or geographic changes.
- One change to the Constitution (relating to membership of the House of Bishops).
- The clarifying legislation provides for consecration and/or appointment of women bishops and includes measures for Alternative Episcopal Oversight.
- The diocesan bishop retains ordinary jurisdiction while the Metropolitan exercises additional extraordinary jurisdiction.
- Alternative Episcopal Oversight relates to pastoral, liturgical and sacramental ministry. The suffragan bishop would act on a general commission by the Archbishop with the general consent of the diocesan bishop.

Theology

See Archbishop Carnley's theological position paper on page 27.

Content

This Option envisages collegial action by the college of bishops in a Province to provide, from among or in addition to their number, episcopal care to those who request it. In this Option, suffragan bishops are created with a notional See conferring the authority of a diocesan and seats in the General Synod House of Bishops, to provide Alternative Episcopal Oversight. The appointed bishop would act at the invitation of the Archbishop with the consent of the diocesan bishops, in turn acting on the request of parishes under the terms of specific regulations, to offer liturgical, pastoral and sacramental ministry to parishes, other church bodies, and individual clergy, and also to administer confirmation and ordination where appropriate.

Legislation

1. A General Synod Clarification Canon, including a preamble affirming the unity of the Church, and rejecting all intolerance or discrimination on the basis of genuinely-held beliefs for or against the ordination of women (GS resolution 52/98).
2. Legislation to provide for the creation of suffragan bishops and a process for their selection, appointment, and function.
3. Change to the Constitution to allow these suffragan bishop to be members of the General Synod House of Bishops (as with the indigenous bishops) as otherwise these bishops would not have access to membership of any synod;
4. Possible provision for the financial arrangements necessary - payment of each bishop, and provision of travel costs.

Process

This Option would involve consultation with both the Diocesan Bishops and the constituency to be served by the new bishops, in their appointment. Questions which need to be answered: is an additional bishop needed? How is the 'constituency' to be identified?

This Option would require the delegation of specific powers by archbishops and diocesan bishops to the suffragan bishop in terms of liturgical, pastoral and sacramental ministry within parishes and other church-related bodies, to individual clergy and lay people, and for administering confirmation and ordination.

Ordinands would be selected and trained in accordance with provincial and diocesan practice. At the point of ordination, they would be able to choose to be ordained by the nominated bishop. The ordination would be held separately from a diocesan ordination, and in a parish which had chosen Alternative Episcopal Oversight.

Confirmation would be administered by the nominated bishop in participating parishes, with the written authority of the Diocesan Bishop.

Choosing Alternative Episcopal Oversight from a provincial Suffragan bishop

Parishes

1. The decision to seek Alternative Episcopal Oversight would be initiated by the parish, when two-thirds of the parish council, with the approval of the Incumbent and Wardens, makes a declaration that they intend to put the matter to the vote, and informs the diocesan accordingly.
2. The vote is held at the first meeting of the new parish council elected after the declaration has been made. The same majority, and the approval of the Incumbent, is required.
3. The decision is communicated to the Diocesan Bishop, who extends an invitation to the Suffragan bishop to offer a pastoral, liturgical and sacramental ministry to the parish with the Diocesan Bishop's written authority.

The parish retains its usual role within the diocesan structures, as do the clergy of the parish. Their licences remain unchanged.

Non-parochial church organisations (eg schools, agencies)

They would need to initiate a similar process through their governing bodies, with the same majorities required. Individual arrangements would need to be agreed with the Diocesan Bishop.

Individual non-parochial clergy

Such clergy would be able to link themselves as honorary associate clergy with parishes which have chosen Alternative Episcopal Oversight.

Opting out of Alternative Episcopal Oversight

The same process would be required in reverse.

Implications

Financial arrangements would be complex, and presumably would impose a financial obligation on parishes which decided to accept Alternative Episcopal Oversight. The obligation would be particularly burdensome if only a few parishes made this decision.

PROS AND CONS

Pros

- This Option affirms collegiality of the bishops of the province
- The collegiality addresses perceived difficulties of impaired communion
- The juridical authority of the woman bishop is acknowledged by her collegial partnership
- A provincial model of Alternative Episcopal Oversight is more manageable in the national context, than a national model
- The model is manageable in terms of both distance and resources
- By providing a seat in the General Synod House of Bishops for the suffragan, this Option gives high recognition to this minority group in the life of the national church

Cons

- The creation of ‘suffragan’ bishops could pose difficulties. The term is poorly defined and understood in Australia
- This Option may require an alteration to the Constitution to create the suffragan role
- The creation of suffragans may diminish the rights of diocesan bishops within the province
- Creating extra sees and seats within the House of Bishops will give this special interest group a level of formal recognition not offered to other special interest groups, particularly given the possibility that five suffragan bishoprics, with seats in the House of Bishops, could be created
- This Option has serious financial implications, if the suffragan is not already provided for as an assistant bishop within the province

LEGISLATIVE STEPS REQUIRED

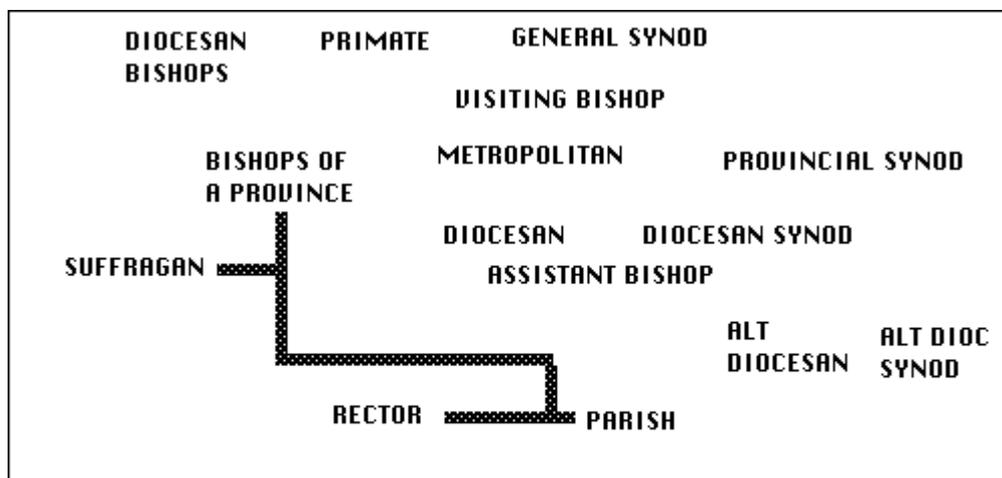
GENERAL SYNOD-----CLARIFICATION CANON*

CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT TO CREATE SUFFRAGAN SEES/ MEMBERSHIP OF HOUSE OF BISHOPS

PROVINCIAL SYNOD (AND DIOCESAN SYNODS)---ALTERNATIVE BISHOPS ORDINANCE

Although this Option is conceptually close to Option Two (B), the problem is kept within the Province. Thus, no further General Synod legislation is (*or may be*) necessary, but the Province needs to legislate for the Metropolitan to designate bishops to oversee parishes who have an objection in conscience to a woman bishop. The ordinance will need to specify how the costs are to be borne. If it is necessary to consecrate a bishop solely for this work, then the ordinance will have to specify a selection process.

* “Clarification Canon” means a canon similar to Canon 18 1992 to be found at pp 192-3 of the 1998 General Synod Constitution and Canons. Such a Canon would need to be passed as a provisional Canon and then reconsidered at the next General Synod unless special majorities were obtained to enable it to avoid the special bill procedure.



OPTION 3
Province-based legislative model, with
suffragan bishops

OPTION FOUR

A clarification Canon along the lines of the Clarification Canon for Women Priests 1992, with no provision for dissenting views.

This Option clearly divides persons into pro- and anti- camps, yet seems to provide a fair way of determining the mind of the Church on this matter. The arguments are touched upon in a brief manner under three headings with pros and cons being canvassed.

THEOLOGICAL AND ECCLESIAL CONSIDERATION

PRO - The primary order of the ecclesia is the Laos of God. This order is entered into through Baptism. In Baptism there is no gender barrier – men and women equally become full inheritors of the Kingdom of God. If the Orders of the Church – Deacons, Priests and Bishops – derive from the Laos and from Baptism then as in the case of enabling women to be ordained Priests, all that is required is a Clarification Canon authorising them to be ordained to the Episcopate.

CON - The Order of ordained ministers was instituted by Christ and is an essential part of the gospel revelation and proclamation. The Scripture and the Tradition see the ordained ministries as taking responsibility for the right ordering of the dominical Sacraments, the Episcopacy in particular being responsible for ordaining, teaching and defending of the faith.

This role of ordering and teaching within Scripture and Tradition is restricted to males. The decision for women to be ordained Bishops will therefore require more than a Clarification Canon.

PRO - If the Orders are of similar worth though differing in function the integrity of all the Orders suffer when one, namely the Episcopate, requires different legislation to that already in place for Priests and Deacons.

CON - The historic Episcopate is viewed as an Order that holds together the unity of faith and practice – therefore different legislation is required to allow for this change.

PRO - Any legislation other than a Clarification Canon undermines the Office of Bishop and legislates for dissent, thus devaluing the unifying role of the Bishop. If dissent on the basis of the gender of the office-bearer is made valid in legislation could not grounds of race, ethnic background, nationality, theological stance, etc, be made grounds for dissent as well?

The integrity of the Office, role and function of the Episcopate is seriously jeopardised by providing for Options that affect the nature of the Order. Professor Robert Wright has observed that the nature of Christ's presence in the Orders of the Church, including the Episcopate, is not determined by "mimesis" - univocal sexual or physical identity, but by "anamnesis" - the vital recall of personhood and being.

CON - The move to ordain women to the Episcopate has no basis in Scripture or Tradition. Maleness is central to the integrity of the Order. The break with this Tradition demands Options that enable those who view this integrity as central to have a place of equal value in the Church. A Clarification Canon does not allow this to happen.

PRO - The time that has passed since the ordaining of women as Deacons and Priests has provided the Church with a serious opportunity of revisiting the Scripture and the Tradition. Both in the area of hermeneutics and in the study of Patristics there is a growing view that theologically and in ecclesial terms the ordaining of women is to be seen as a legitimate extension of the Office.

There are many within the evangelical tradition who have moved to a position that sees the matter of ordination as being of a secondary nature - "not being essential for salvation" – and who would read 'headship' as pertaining to the family rather than to the household of faith.

If simple legislation was required then for the enabling of women to function in the priesthood surely the weight of scholarship should allow for such simple legislation to be acceptable for women to be ordained as Bishops.

CON - The scholarship has not been convincing, the Vatican and Orthodox sources have remained firm in their views, opposed to what is seen as a serious breach of Church Order impacting upon the Gospel. Simple legislation is not an option. There are many evangelicals who see the ordaining of women as contrary to the order of male headship for home as well as for Church.

MISSION / EVANGELISM CONSIDERATION

PRO - Legislation that is simple enables the Church to get on with its task of mission and evangelism.

In Australia a simple Clarification Canon enabled women to be ordained Priests with no provision for dissent.

*The Legislation Canon 18 of 1992 desires
To maintain the unity in diversity of This Church,
To acknowledge that there are differences of conviction about the ordination of women to the Office of Priest.*

It made no condition upon the priestly ministry of women accepting their Priesthood as valid in those dioceses that adopted this Canon.

Where dissent [against women being ordained Priest] has been legislated for in the UK the mission and witness has been hindered and hampered.

What first appeared as an expression of pastoral intent, of kindly concern for fair play and mutual respect became a failure to understand that the two diversities of opinion (that women can or cannot be ordained Priest) are not of equal validity, because the Church's governing body has, by full constitutional process, decided

that women can be ordained to the Priesthood. Acknowledging the convictions of those who differ but not legislating for their convictions is the way the Australian Church has proceeded in this matter, with individual dioceses determining the adoption or otherwise of the Canon.

The logic of having legislation that says “Yes” with no conditions to women in the priesthood, and “Yes” with conditions that imply “No” to women in the Episcopate will seriously impact on our witness and mission to the world.

CON - The acknowledgement of differing points of view and legislating for them will give an example to the world of how to deal with differences. Some would suggest that the scene in America, where no legislation for dissent has been provided for, has had a negative influence on life in the Church .

PRO - *The world in which we seek to proclaim the Gospel sees gender bias as offensive. The world would not tolerate a woman being appointed as Judge or General Manager on the basis that provision should be made for those who dissented to her appointment on the criterion of her gender to be granted alternative forms of authority.*

Women are seen and known as capable, efficient, wise and effective in every field of human endeavour. Yes, women have specific roles that are biologically determined but this should not be used as reasons for excluding women from the vast opportunities that the modern world offers.

Are not the children of the world providing us with prophetic wisdom concerning all people being one in Christ, male and female, made in the image and likeness of God? We who are called to act in this mission field, should we not accept the equality of women as a part of modern life and include women as an essential component of leadership, expressing a partnership that is natural and creative?

CON - We should not conform to the world and its standards and values. Spiritual leadership is different to any other leadership. Our witness and mission is enhanced by being different to the world. We are not undervaluing women and their role, but rather making it clear. All roles have divine authority and significance. We teach the world this value by being different. Legislation that authenticates this differing view point will be appreciated by the children of the world.

PASTORAL AND ETHICAL CONSIDERATION.

PRO - *The enabling Canon maintains the role of the Bishop as Chief Pastor whereas any provision that provides for dissent flaws this character of the Episcopate. It leaves serious questions in that the Bishop is not deemed mature enough in the faith to provide care for those who differ. A male Bishop will have those who dissent to his words and actions or even to his very presence and person, yet no legal options are allowed for such dissent. The matters of difference are handled pastorally.*

The provision for dissent while appearing pastorally sensitive damages the restorative, redemptive work that is vital for true pastoral relationships to be

formed and to grow between Bishop and those who dissent, or vice versa.

CON - Security in Law enables for good, binding and clear relationships. Provision for dissent is pastorally wholesome and ethically responsible.

CONCLUSION

Many women and men in the Australian Church, clergy and laity alike, would see the passing of a Clarification Canon as one that retains the integrity of the Office of the Episcopate, upholds the wholesome nature of the character of such an office and clearly maintains the theological, historical and sociological authenticity of the role and functioning of a Bishop vis a vis the Deacons, Priests and the Laos of God.

They would view any provision for dissent or any other form of legislation as seriously destroying the integrity of the Office. There are some who would hold that they would rather not have a woman ordained to an Office that was devalued in order to include them. They would rather wait for the Church to fully include women into the Episcopate without conditions that undermined the central integrity of the Office.

They are pastorally sensitive to those who wish to validate dissent in legislation but would see such a validation as negating the central pastoral oversight of all that is required of a Bishop.

They would view legislation that gave options as entering into a compromise that paid too high a price.

Those who oppose the measure passing with a simple Clarification Canon would say that legalising options for dissent does not affect the integrity of the Episcopate but rather provides good and true guidelines for worship, ministry, mission and administration which retains the true character and unity of the Church.

By voting against this measure, those who find the ordination of women to the Episcopate unacceptable on the grounds of Scripture and/or Tradition would have a clear opportunity of declaring their point of view with no compromise being suggested through other options.

Compromise is the basis upon which our Church moves forward and for women to be included in the Episcopate some provision must be made for those who in conscience find this measure unacceptable. This

measure leaves no room for genuine ‘reception’ which requires provisionality as a vital component in the process.

LEGISLATIVE STEPS REQUIRED

GENERAL SYNOD---CLARIFICATION CANON*

This Option ignores “conscience” and allows market forces to rule: no other legislation is necessary.

*“Clarification Canon” means a canon similar to Canon 18 1992 to be found at pp 192-3 of the 1998 General Synod Constitution and Canons. Such a Canon would need to be passed as a provisional Canon and then reconsidered at the next General Synod unless special majorities were obtained to enable it to avoid the special bill procedure.

RESPONSE FORM

Please send email responses to: Womenbishops@fc.acnet.net.au

or post responses to: Dr Muriel Porter,
c/- General Synod Office
PO Box Q190
QVB Post Office NSW 1230

by 15 November 1999

Questions for response:

1. Which is your preferred Option?

2. Why? (Please limit your response to 200 words)

3. Do you have any particular comments to make relating to any of the other Options?
(Please limit your response to 200 words)

4. How many of the Options do you believe should go to diocesan synods next year for their formal response?