Thinking about

The Book of Alternative Services

A Discussion Primer

Prepared by the
Theological Sub-Group of The
Book of Alternative Services
Evaluation Commission

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Preface

One of the tasks of the BAS Evaluation Commission, which was established at General Synod in 1989 and which has been meeting since January 1991, has been to undertake a theological evaluation of the BAS in consultation with a wide range of those who could be called practising theologians. This interim report makes public some of the results of that consultation.

The present document represents only one aspect of the work of the Commission, although it is the first to be published. The Commission believes it will be helpful both to the Church and to the Commission to make our work available to a more general readership, for we hope in this way that the discussion of theological issues raised by the BAS will be both widened and deepened. While the original target group for this survey was people with a fairly specialized knowledge of the Christian tradition, our hope is that the interim report and sample papers will be accessible to a wider group, and that the material will act as a stimulus to informed discussion in the Church.

We also hope for response from those who read this document and discuss it. Some suggestions for discussion can be found at the end of the interim report. If you wish to share your responses with the Commission, please write to

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before January 1, 1994. This will give members of the Commission time to collate responses before our March meeting in 1994.

The members of the Commission assure you that all responses will be welcomed and considered carefully. Responses to the present document will form one part of the data upon which its final report will be based.

For the Commission:
Eric Bays, Chair

SECTION I

Interim Report

of the Theological Sub-Group of
The Book of Alternative Services
Evaluation Commission

1. Introduction

What follows is, as the sub-title says, a 'discussion primer': an attempt to stimulate good, informed theological debate about *The Book of Alternative Services*, and about its place in the way in which Canadian Anglicans worship and think about themselves. It seeks to do this by offering the Church two main resources: an interim report of the work of the theological sub-group of the BAS Evaluation Commission, and three papers which have grown out of the sub-group's work.

The interim report is just that: an interim, not a final report: the final report of the sub-group will, of course, be made to General Synod as part of the report of the BAS Evaluation Commission as a whole. However, the Commission believes that theological discussion of the BAS will be focussed and furthered by making available in a preliminary form the fruits of response to the theological questionnaire, responses to which form the basis of the analysis in this interim report. Though we are not yet at a stage of formulating recommendations to the church, we think it important that differing theological evaluations of the BAS be brought together for study, reflection and discussion.

Similarly, the papers which are included in this discussion primer are put out into the public arena in order to share with the church at large what we believe to be some of the most helpful material which has been made available to the Commission. The papers were chosen because they represented a high level of informed theological discussion and approached the issues from different points on the Anglican spectrum. We are deeply grateful to the writers of the papers, not only for their care and thoroughness in preparing their original submissions to the sub-group, but also for their readiness in allowing the papers to be shared with a wider readership.[1]

Our aim is to foster healthy theological debate, not only among those who think of themselves as professional theologians but among all for whom the gospel and its expression in Canadian Anglicanism is a matter of vital concern. Parish or deanery study groups may find this a helpful basis for discussion; seminaries may seek to use some of these materials in their teaching; clergy gatherings may care to give themselves to some good theological interchange. The Commission would be delighted to have individual or group response to the materials we have published here: be assured that, like the responses to the original questionnaire, they will be treated very seriously. We look forward to hearing from others in the church as we move into the stage of formulating recommendations to General Synod about future directions in the worship life of Canadian Anglicans.

A. The Sub-Group and its Work

The theological sub-group of the BAS Evaluation Commission was established at the second meeting of the Commission in June, 1991. In general terms, its task has been to oversee the theological aspects of

[1] One paper (that by Professor Webster) is a paper originally prepared for an early meeting of the Commission; it is included at the request of the Commission as a whole.

the Commission's evaluation work; in particular, the sub-group undertook to consider, in the words of the NEC directive to the Commission (May 11, 1991), 'the extent to which the book reflects the theological understanding of the church'. The members of the sub-group were chosen to ensure theological competence and a wide range of theological opinion. The present members of the group are: the Rt Rev Eric Bays (Qu'Appelle); Dr Terence Penelhum (Calgary), and the Rev Professor John Webster (Toronto), who acts as convener. The Rev Patricia Johnston (Ottawa) was a member of the sub-group until she resigned from the Evaluation Commission in June 1992.

The sub-group drew up and the Commission approved a questionnaire and a list of those to whom it should be sent. The questionnaire solicited comment on the criteria for liturgy in the BAS, on changes in theological understanding in the BAS in relation to the norms for Anglican theology, and on themes which some judge should receive greater emphasis. Those asked to make a response were: members of the House of Bishops, members of the Doctrine and Worship Committee, members of the BAS Evaluation Commission, Diocesan Doctrine and Worship Committees, seminary faculties, religious communities, ecumenical partners, feminist theologians, interest groups such as the Prayer Book Society and the Hoskin Group, and others who could be expected to offer significant theological comment.

Around 200 questionnaires were sent out in July,1991. Ninety-seven responses were received, including some from those who were not on the original mailing list but had obtained a copy of the questionnaire. Responses varied a great deal in both length and substance, ranging from the briefest of comments to full-scale papers. Whilst the sub-group is confident that the responses represent a wide range of theological opinion, it should be noted that we would have liked more responses from members of the House of Bishops, seminary professors, and feminist theologians. The breakdown of the responses is contained in an appendix.

B. About this Interim Report

This report attempts to identify and interpret the major issues which emerged from those whose theological opinion was canvassed. Some delimitations about what we seek to do in the report need to be noted:

(i) The report does not attempt to cover everything that was said to us. Some of what was said to us went beyond our brief, by commenting on particular issues about the BAS as a liturgical text: these matters we noted and passed on to others on the Commission. Some of what was said to us, especially in unsolicited replies, was simply an expression of personal frustration, hurt or anger about liturgical change or about the BAS; whilst these feelings can run deep and should not be minimised, they did not express theological insights that would be useful in drawing up this report.

Accordingly, we adhered as closely as possible to our brief and concentrated on theological matters, fully aware that this is only one of the areas in which the BAS is to be evaluated.

(ii) The report does not attempt any kind of statistical accuracy in the reporting of opinions; we have considered it adequate to use rather loose terms, such as 'a few', 'some', 'many' or

'most'. Our reasons for this are as follows. First, our respondents constitute a tiny fraction (though we believe a very significant, theologically acute fraction) of the church, and it would be folly to base an overall assessment of what the church as a whole thinks on what our respondents said. Second, we have given more weight to seriousness and clarity of thought and to theological articulateness than we have to mere numbers. We considered that we would best fulfil the sub-committee's mandate by listening to the theological voices of our church, and that in the matters with which we were concerned, expertise was to be valued above everything else. This is emphatically not to undervalue the 'non-experts' of the church, nor to deny that all Christian people are 'theologians' in the sense of bearing responsibility for the faithful reception and transmission of the gospel. But it is to say that God has gifted the church with those possessed of special gifts in the area of theological reflection, and that wisdom requires that we listen to them with care.

(iii) In what follows, we report not only on the answers we received to the specific questions in the questionnaire, but also on other issues raised in the responses (as well as in other material we have considered, such as published papers). Though we did solicit answers to some specific questions, we also envisaged the questionnaire as a springboard for serious theological comment on the BAS, and have found that our respondents used the questionnaire in this way. Most respondents appeared to find the questionnaire a helpful catalyst for their theological reflections on the BAS. A few respondents had some criticism of particular questions. One or two found difficulty in understanding what was being asked in the questions on 'the mediating function of the church and its symbolism' and 'the inclusivity of the gospel'. Whilst the questions could certainly have been phrased more sharply, other replies to these questions did addresss the issues on which we were seeking opinion, and we do not consider them wasted. One or two others felt that the format of the questionnaire perpetuated a BAS versus BCP division, especially when we ask in question 2(b) for respondents to consider supposed new developments in theological understanding in the BAS for their consistency 'with the norms for Christian theology as they have been understood in the Anglican tradition'. Those who criticised the question evidently believed that we identified those norms with the BCP: in fact, we wished to solicit opinion on precisely that issue: what are the norms for Christian theology in the Anglican tradition? Once again, we take some comfort in the fact that most respondents addressed the issue which we thought we were asking. Moreover, most respondents succeeded in looking at the BAS in its own right, and did not simply use the BCP as an absolute standard of comparison.

(iv) Whilst this report generally details its findings in the order of the questionnaire, sometimes the questions interrelate. For example, the first question (about the BAS' use of liturgical tradition) cannot be isolated from the second part of the second

question (about the adequacy of the BAS in the light of Anglican norms). Or again, question 2(b) asks about the BAS' understanding of the nature and authority of the Bible, which is clearly inseparable from the BAS' use of Scripture as a criterion for liturgy (about which question 1 asks).

Above all, the report tries to identify major issues which are, or ought to be, matters for informed public debate in the Anglican Church of Canada. As we say at the end of our report, we have come to believe that behind particular theological issues there lies a very large cluster of questions concerning the theological identity of Canadian Anglicanism. Much of the debate about liturgical texts and their theologies has also been the beginning of a debate about the nature of Canadian Anglicanism, its theological and liturgical norms, and the character of its doctrinal commitments. We came away from reading the responses with a strong sense both that much is to be gained from promoting such a debate, and that much might be lost if it fails to take place. This report is not that debate itself: it is the work of a very small group who have come to believe that before the church is offered any more conclusions, it needs to engage in courteous, well-informed discussion about matters of central significance to its theological and spiritual well-being. If that discussion is to proceed well, it must be by listening as carefully as possible to all serious voices in the expectation that wisdom is not the exclusive possession of any one body of opinion. We have tried in our own discussions as a sub-group, as well as in the present report, to exemplify the character and quality of discussion which we are commending to the church as a whole.

2. Analysis of Responses

I How does the BAS make use of Scripture, doctrine, liturgical tradition and experience as criteria for liturgy? How would you judge the adequacy of the BAS in this matter?

(i) Scripture

The question deliberately asked about Scripture in relation to other criteria for liturgy for two reasons. (1) Many contemporary Anglicans accept the 'dispersed' view of authority set out at the Lambeth Conference in 1948, according to which authority in the church is distributed among a variety of norms, so that (for example) the authority of the Bible cannot be isolated from that of tradition or experience. (2) The BAS itself sets Scripture within the context of liturgical tradition and the experience of the church.

Most respondents took the cue, and addressed themselves not simply to each criterion in isolation but to the various criteria in their interrelation.

The question evoked a good deal of comment from a variety of theological perspectives. Moreover, issues of the nature and authority of the Bible surfaced frequently in other parts of many respondents' answers, especially when discussing the theology of the eucharist or initiation, for example, or the provision for funerals.

A large number of respondents were very well satisfied with the BAS in this regard, feeling that the BAS is firmly rooted in biblical tradition, that its lectionary provision and its liturgical texts substantially increase our exposure to the Bible in all its variety, and that it thereby offers what one respondent called 'the opportunity to nurture a serious and informed biblical piety'. Some respondents commented that the BAS is less overt or direct and more allusive in its incorporation of the language of the Bible in its liturgical texts than the BCP, though they did not regard this as in any way detrimental. In sum, a substantial number of responses indicate that many believe the BAS uses Scripture 'extensively and effectively'.

Not many respondents commented directly on the very specific question of the BAS' use of Scripture as a criterion for liturgy, preferring to talk more generally about the place of the Bible in BAS worship. (This in itself may indicate how the BAS, like other contemporary liturgical texts, is less explicit in identifying and articulating biblical warrants for its liturgical provision than the BCP). However, those who did comment on the question of Scripture as criterion were often negative in their evaluation, sometimes severely so. A number fastened on the phrase in the 'Introduction' which speaks of Scripture as 'the repository of the Church's symbols of life and faith' (BAS, p. 9), and argued that to refer to Scripture in such terms ignores its character as divine revelation, undermines its doctrinal or theological content, and renders Scripture little more than a resource book of images for liturgical construction. Others fear the accommodation of Scripture to cultural or religious norms, or the domestication

of Scripture in such a way that it becomes simply a function of the larger liturgical life of the church. The grounds for such fears were sometimes identified in the lectionary provision, especially its omissions, and sometimes in what is seen as the BAS' failure to reflect the whole scriptural testimony on crucial points. Examples of this latter concern were often given in evaluating its eucharistic rites, where some felt that certain biblical understandings of the work of Christ fail to find expression, and that the BAS promotes unscriptural notions such as the oblation of the elements or the invocation of the Spirit on matter.

In the judgment of the sub-group, a deeper issue lies behind there comments, both positive and negative. This issue is what some might see as a changed attitude to the Bible which finds expression in the BAS, though it is by no means the invention of the BAS or its compilers. There can be no doubt that the BAS is firmly within the Anglican tradition of making the public reading of Holy Scripture a central act in the liturgical assembly. However, the BAS accurately describes itself when it says that the authority of the Bible is to be construed more as the authority of a repository of symbols that of a textual form of divine revelation from which doctrinal proposals can be adduced. This lies behind, for example, the way in which the BAS is less strict than the BCP in stating scriptural warrants for its liturgical provision (however we may judge the adequacy of the warrants which the BCP adduces). And it surfaces above all in the way in which the BAS often makes symbolic objects and acts an imaginative focus in worship alongside the reading of the Bible (the provision for Holy Week is a particularly good example here). In effect, the BAS offers liturgical texts in which Scripture is of central but not exclusive significance: the liturgical assembly encounters the gospel not only in Scripture but also through a range of actions, gestures and objects.

Many respondents see this as a considerable enrichment of the church's liturgical resources. Others view this as a repudiation of, or at least as a threat to, the supremacy and sufficiency of Scripture in the public prayer life of the church. What is clear to us is that this attitude to the Bible, whatever its merits and demerits, needs thorough discussion by theologians and liturgical scholars of varying points of view, and by the church at large. Such discussion must not be a matter of educating some to accept the conclusions of others, but should involve a full consideration of the nature and authority of the Bible in classical and contemporary Anglicanism and its place in public worship.

(ii) Doctrine

The question asked about the BAS' use of doctrine as a criterion for liturgy. In their replies, many addressed themselves to the question of the consistency of the BAS with the theological norms of the Anglican tradition, an issue on which we solicited comment in question 2(b). Accordingly, some of what was said to us in answer to this first question is treated at a later stage in this report.

One line of response ought to be

noted here, however. A number of replies took considerable space to address the question of the relation of liturgy and doctrine in the Anglican tradition in general and the BAS in particular. A number of responses argued very strongly that the BAS represents a shift away from a doctrinally-informed, credal liturgy and spirituality, in which one of the primary functions of liturgical texts is to encode, reinforce and transmit a doctrinal framework by which heart and mind are shaped for the Christian life. Thus one response argued that 'The tendency in the BAS is that varieties of contemporary experience and selected moments of liturgical tradition have become the dominant criterion by which Scripture and Doctrine are judged and to which they are made subordinate. In general, there is a flight from the primacy of Scripture and the priority of Doctrine. The confusion which the BAS consequently presents arises from the inherently unstable and unsatisfactory nature of such criteria and from the lack of clarity about any coherent principle of doctrinal understanding.'

Others drew attention to the differences between the understanding of the nature of worship in the BCP tradition and the BAS. The difference was variously identified: as one between 'prayed catechesis and prayed narrative, or between liturgy as a vehicle for the Word and liturgy as the 'making real' of the gospel through symbolic acts, objects and language. One or two respondents went into detail in describing the differences between the theology of worship set forth in the various prefaces to the editions of the BCP and the theology implicit and sometimes explicit in the editorial materials in the BAS, arguing on that basis that the two books represent different doctrinal traditions. As we shall also see later, others argued differently — either that the doctrinal traditions are not, in fact, so varied, or that both are authentically part of the developed Anglican tradition, or that Anglicanism has moved beyond its original Reformation doctrinal framework.

Some of the responses in this area fastened on the expression *lex orandi lex credendi* as it is used in the Introduction to the BAS. One response, for example, argued with a number of others that 'The principle *lex orandi lex credendi* does not set aside the primacy of the Gospel and of Scripture. Rather, it is a way of describing the dialectical relationship between the church's prayer and the church's theology, which grows out of its hearing of the Gospel in the proclamation of Scripture'. Others were less positive. One felt that the principle may be used in such as way as to remove liturgy from legitimate doctrinal or theological critique, by making doctrine secondary to liturgy; another felt that it 'provides no hermeneutical basis for adjudicating between competing theological claims, and in fact completely inverts the proper relationship between belief and prayer'. One discussion of the topic suggested that 'As formulated, it seems to establish 'liturgy' as the criterion by which all other criteria of Christian existence are judged and incorporated (or not) into living practice. But the statement, as

formulated, fails to deal with one very basic problem: How does one judge whether or not a liturgy is authentic?' The same respondent went on to suggest that the expression does not, in fact, reflect the fact that the BAS arose out of 'pre-liturgical' decisions — about the superiority of the Antiochene eucharistic tradition, for example, over other traditions of equal antiquity. Thus the BAS 'was not the fruit of *lex orandi* alone; it was produced by the interplay between *lex orandi* and *lex credendi,* each acting mutually upon the other'.

In sum: it is clear from those who responded to this question that the BAS focusses a larger question about the role of doctrine in the Christian life and Christian worship. Does doctrine form or flow from worship? Is the complex one of mutual interplay and influence? The question is given particular edge because (for some at least) the BCP tradition enshrines one model of the relation of doctrine and liturgy and the BAS at significant points appears to work with a rather different model. As with the question of the nature and authority of the Bible, it is clear that Canadian Anglicans differ in their convictions, and that thorough, open discussion of the differences is needed.

(iii) Liturgical Tradition

Some of what was reported to the sub-group on the question of the use made by the BAS of liturgical tradition as a criterion for liturgy has already been identified in the immediately preceding section. Other points, however, need to be mentioned.

A number of responses spoke very positively of the way in which the BAS recovers pre-Reformation liturgical traditions, finding it to be an expansion of the catholic character of Anglican worship. In particular, the use of a primitive anaphoral tradition was seen to be a considerable enrichment of eucharistic worship. The section on the eucharist in this report will look at this point in more detail; for the present, it suffices to record a representative comment that 'As a document arising out of the Liturgical Movement, the BAS reflects a careful scholarly use of the liturgical tradition. While there is an obvious departure from the Prayer Book tradition, there is a recovery of the rich liturgical tradition of the church, eastern and western.' The expansion of the range of imagery in the BAS is regarded by many as one of most positive aspects of the BAS which, as one respondent put it, uses tradition 'as a catalyst not as a shackle'.

Others were less positive. As already noted, some regard the BAS as giving priority to liturgical tradition over Scripture or doctrinal order, and as promoting a view that ancient precedent is a sufficient warrant for the fittingness or value of liturgical ceremonies or texts. Further, a number of respondents commented that whilst the BAS clearly ranges beyond the BCP tradition, its view of the liturgical tradition of the church is in fact narrow — restricted to one eucharistic tradition, for example. Some suggested that this constricts (rather than expands) contemporary Anglican liturgical life by tying it to only those traditions considered significant by the Liturgical Movement.

(iv) Experience

Very few respondents directly addressed the question of experience as a criterion for liturgy. (It may be that a more substantial response from feminist theologians might have made the picture look quite different.) Such replies as were received tended to be of a general nature. Some felt that the BAS effectively embodies what it calls a 'diligent and passionate search for fresh expressions and evocations of the tradition' (BAS, pp. 8f), and that it does, indeed, 'wear the idiom, the cadence, the world-view, the imagery' of the present age (p. 10). It does this, not simply in its language, but in its reflection of a less hierarchical, more communitarian church, its awareness of the changed relation between the church and civil society, and its flexibility. As we shall see later, a few respondents felt that the BAS is only a beginning in these areas, and that greater attention is needed to the localities of culture and context. On the other hand, others felt that the BAS is accomodationist in this regard: by seeking to correlate public prayer with contemporary experience, it fails to challenge, correct or convert contemporary experience, and so comes to be simply a reflection of its context.

The general character of the comments which we received suggests that what surfaced here were widely divergent understandings of the church's relation to its contemporary context, and consequently different evaluations of the church's need to adhere to received tradition. Once again, that is, we found that in receiving comments on the BAS we were touching on primary questions about the identity of the Anglican Church of Canada whose resolution goes far beyond the revision of texts for public worship.

II Some argue that the BAS breaks new ground in theological understanding in some of the areas listed below.

(a) Do you agree that these developments are present in the BAS?

(b) Do you consider that these developments are consistent with the norms for Christian theology as they have been understood in the Anglican tradition?

the nature of God
creation
salvation — *specifically, the saving work of Christ*
the eucharist — *specifically, its centrality for Christian faith and practice; sacrifice or offering; the presence of Christ; the Holy Spirit and the eucharist*
Christian initiation
marriage
Christian ministry — *specifically, the relation of the threefold ministry to the ministry of the whole people of God*
the church as community
the mediating function of the church and its symbolism
the nature and authority of the Bible

Our second question attempts to do two things. First, it seeks theological comment on a number of specific themes which we regarded as basic to any consideration of the widespread view that the BAS represents a significant theological shift in Canadian Anglicanism, whatever judgment one makes about the appropriateness or otherwise of that shift. The questions were chosen for their

importance to Anglicanism, their importance to the BAS, and their importance in the response which the BAS has so far received. We received a great deal of significant comment on most of these questions, which is described in detail below. Second, the question seeks comment on the consistency of perceived changes with Anglican theological norms. Though this second part of the question overlaps in some measure with question 1, we believe that asking the question about Anglican theological standards in the light of some specific themes yielded a sharper definition of the issue, and the responses bore out this belief.

A. Does the BAS break new ground in these areas?

(i) The nature of God

Many of those who praised the expansion of the range of imagery in the BAS used this area as an example. 'The BAS reflects a wider variety of images for God ... I believe the effect is to expand the consciousness of the faithful about God's nature'. The basic shift identified by many respondents was summed up in one response as 'a greater emphasis on God's smiling face and less association between God and Royalty'. Respondents made the same point in differing ways; the understanding of God in the BAS is 'more Christlike'; God is envisaged as 'a loving, creative and redemptive God'; God is less judgmental and distant and more immanent. Such themes were discerned not only in the variety of modes of address to God in collects and other prayers, but also in the general tone of worship. Several respondents noted (in the words of one) that the BAS 'tends to move us out of the thought forms of the sixteenth century royal court — the monarch enthroned on high with subjects standing around'. One respondent commented that God is conceived of 'economically and narratively', in terms, that is, of God's presence to and interaction with creation, rather than in terms of God's being considered as independent of the world.

A small number of respondents had critical comments, in particular with regard to a perceived de-emphasis upon God as transcendent or God as judge. Another line of criticism concerned the use of the formula 'God of x' as a mode of address (e.g. in the psalm prayers), which was considered to entail a projection of human self-understandings onto God. Such responses were a distinct minority, most seeming well satisfied that the BAS not only enriches our apprehension of God, but does so in a way which makes available a greater selection of biblical imagery and language.

(ii) Creation

What one respondent called a 'much more fulsome ... treatment' of the significance of the created order in the BAS was welcomed by many. A number of respondents hinted that in the BAS the relation between God and the world is primarily seen to be one between Creator and creation, rather than simply one of Judge and sinner or Redeemer and redeemed. 'The offering of praise to the Creator is a paramount theme'. Thus the BAS has a more extended account of the

activity of God, in which the redemptive focus of the BCP is supplemented (or, some suggested, supplanted) by a greater emphasis on God's work in creation.

Though all respondents who addressed the question acknowledged the shift in emphasis in the BAS, some had criticisms or hesitations, in two rather antithetical areas. A number of respondents found the BAS too optimistic, lacking in a deep sense of the fallenness and disorder of creation, and tending to blunt our appreciation of the need for redemption from sin and death. Another response suggested, by contrast, that the BAS is far too conservative in this regard, and that it fails both effectively to dispel the traditional emphasis on dominion over creation and also to promote a creation-centered spirituality.

(iii) Salvation, specifically the saving work of Jesus Christ

A large number of responses identified that there has been a major theological shift in this area in the BAS, although different respondents evaluated the shift differently.

Most commonly, respondents identified that the BAS represents a broadening of our understanding of the saving work of Christ. Many directed attention to the eucharistic prayers in this regard, in which Christ's saving work is not exclusively identified with Good Friday but is considered to include the whole movement of his life and ministry as the incarnate one— his coming into the world, his public ministry of teaching and healing, his death, resurrection and ascension, and his future parousia. Moreover, some respondents believed the BAS to encompass a fuller sweep of salvation history: 'The BAS is superior in its treatment of the whole of salvation history from creation through the covenants, prophets, uniquely and radically in Jesus Christ and in the ongoing sanctification of the lives of God's people'. That is to say, salvation is not identified only with forensic acquittal accomplished by the death of Jesus Christ, but more inclusively with the restoration and renewal of the human person and the creation of the new community.

Many respondents feel the BAS is particularly strong in its recovery of the resurrection as a central moment of the paschal mystery. 'Over and over again,' wrote one respondent, '(the BAS) makes the fundamental connection between Christ's death and resurrection, presenting both together as necessary to salvation and constitutive of Christ's saving work.' Those who identified this move in the BAS generally believed it to be in line not only with the biblical witness but also with ancient tradition, in a way which the BCP, with its concentration on the cross, failed to be.

Other respondents recorded that such developments in the BAS lead to a neglect of themes of equal or greater significance. Most of all, a number of respondents drew attention to the way in which the broadening of the reference of salvation tends to downplay the centrality of the cross in a way which is out of accord with the teaching of the New Testament concerning the atonement. '(T)he soteriology expressed in the eucharistic prayers isn't so much wrong, as merely part of a larger truth that isn't

fully expressed. That is, while our understanding of salvation is indeed related to our understanding of salvation history, creation, and incarnation, it's also related strongly to the Cross, but I find the centrality of the Cross downplayed in the eucharistic prayers'. Other respondents wrote in similar vein that the finality of Christ's saving work finds inadequate expression in the BAS, which, by drawing the Cross into a larger sequence of saving acts, fails to state the perfection and entire sufficiency of Calvary. This is clearly related to the BAS' self-conscious shift away from what it calls 'the late mediaeval and Reformation themes of atonement' (p. 178), especially those of satisfaction or penal substitution. It is clear that some Anglicans regard these themes not as accretions or as inadequate interpretations of Christ's saving work, but as fundamental and non-negotiable in the light of the New Testament's account of salvation. Accordingly, they criticise the BAS for its neglect of these themes and its shift to other perspectives.

(iv) The Theology of the Eucharist

a. Introductory

Response to the question concerning the eucharist was particularly instructive in displaying the wide variety of theological conviction brought to bear upon the questionnaire. The tone of many responses was very positive, as will be seen from the more detailed comments recorded in what follows. Such respondents find the BAS a rich statement of their understanding of the eucharist and a recovery of strands of the Anglican tradition which the Canadian BCP tradition, derived essentially from the 1552 BCP, had not expressed so fully. Others argued differently — that the BAS works with a restricted range of anaphoral traditions, and that in the light of the massive presence of the BCP theological tradition in Anglicanism, there is need to provide eucharistic material which takes with greater seriousness Reformed theological conscience on issues such as sacrifice or reception. Thus whilst some feel that their theological convictions have finally found a voice in the BAS, others feel that their convictions have been relegated to the margins or not thought worthy of serious contemporary articulation in a liturgical text.

b. Sacrifice

The question of the sacrificial character of the eucharist has been at the forefront of ecumenical and liturgical debate. For many, the mainstream ecumenical rethinking of the issue has redefined what was a characteristic polarization in Anglicanism between what can loosely be termed catholics and evangelicals. Many are now convinced that the antithesis — either the perfection and finality of Christ's unique sacrificial self-offering or a re-sacrifice of Christ at the Christian altar — is in fact a false alternative, emerging from an historical debate in which neither side of the debate heard what the other was saying. Hence it is argued that in the eucharistic sacrifice, the church is not re-sacrificing Christ but entering into the movement of Jesus Christ's own sacrifice in a way which 'realizes' but does not repeat his action in the sacramental action of the church

now. In this way, the theological account of the eucharist as sacrifice (focussed in the BAS in the optional prayers over the gifts or in the oblationary words in the eucharistic prayers) is not to be understood as a detraction from the graciousness of God or from justification by faith or from the finished character of Christ's work, but as a consistent expression of the participation of the church and its acts in Jesus Christ himself. A good number of respondents argued thus, of which one example will suffice: 'The BAS, so far from presenting the eucharist as a new, separate, or supplementary act of propitiation, goes out of its way to present the eucharist, both as a whole and in its individual parts, as a participatory oblation whose origin, rationale, and energy is the sacrifice which Christ began to offer on the cross and continues to offer in the embrace of the One who sent and raised him'.

Others, however, show much greater reserve towards the position embodied in the BAS texts. A number of respondents evidently believe that oblationary language or gestures in the eucharist, especially when attached to the bread and the wine, are so contaminated by abuse that they are best avoided. Not only do they blur the distinction between Christ's unique saving work and the church's response; they seem to undermine the sufficiency of what Christ accomplished, making the movement of the eucharist both a human ascent to God and a divine self-gift. More technically, one respondent raised critical questions about the tying together of anamnesis and oblation — a link firmly enshrined in Liturgical Movement theology and liturgy. The link, it was suggested, lacks biblical warrant, and obscures the fact that in the eucharistic memorial the church is turned back to Christ's unrepeatable act in the past.

Evidently, respondents across the board believed that the BAS reflects a changed theology of the eucharist as sacrifice. Where they disagree is over the propriety of the change and its coherence with what are taken to be the norms for Anglicanism. These disagreements spring, furthermore, from very large theological questions about issues beyond the scope of eucharistic theology — questions such as the nature of the atonement, the relation of the church to Christ, or the nature of justification. Some find the BAS a fresh and vivid statement of deeply-held theological convictions; others find that convictions equally deeply-held are absent or disqualified in the BAS texts.

c. The presence of Christ

The same range of opinion was evoked by the question concerning the presence of Jesus Christ in the eucharist. Some respondents felt that the BAS 'stands solidly in the Anglican tradition' in affirming Christ's eucharistic presence without prescribing where that presence is to be discerned or how that presence is effected. In particular, many welcomed the broadened notion of consecration with which the BAS works, according to which it is no longer possible to regard the words of institution as a formula to actualise the presence of Christ. More than one commented along the lines that 'the

BAS— like most contemporary eucharistic rites — envisages the presence of Christ as multifaceted — in the Word, in the assembly, in the prayers, in the elements and in the act of eating and drinking'.

Other respondents were more uneasy about the BAS' handling of the matter. Some felt that the post-communion prayers are phrased in such a way that they sometimes collapse the presence and effectiveness of Jesus Christ into the eucharist — in effect, undermining a proper sense of his transcendence of the church's ritual action. A number of respondents, moreover, expressed dissatisfaction with the words of administration, which they consider too unqualified in their identification of the eucharistic elements with the body and blood of Christ. This highly objectivist language is considered to sit ill with the receptionist tradition of Anglican eucharistic theology and piety. Furthermore, the words of administration, some argued, lack a clear statement of the necessary role of faith in receiving Christ's presence, a necessity which is underlined in the lengthier BCP formula, ending with 'feed on him in thy heart by faith with thanksgiving'.

d. The Holy Spirit and the eucharist
Nearly all comment on this issue focussed on the question of the invocation of the Holy Spirit in the eucharistic prayers, which follows the anamnesis and oblation. A number of respondents found this frankly unacceptable, because (like the BAS' words of administration) it is too closely associated with ideas of transubstantiation, and because the Holy Spirit is not properly invoked upon matter but only upon persons. 'The net overall effect,' one commentator wrote, 'is surely to say to the communicant that he or she receives Christ, not by faith and trust, but by the physical act of eating bread and wine which has, in some sense, been transformed into the body and blood of Jesus by an act of the Holy Spirit'. Others interpret the matter differently, welcoming the use of the epiclesis at this place in the eucharistic prayer precisely because it prevents any suggestion that the presence of Christ is effected *ex opere operato:* Jesus Christ is present in the eucharist by the action of God the Holy Spirit and not by the power of consecratory formulae. Moreover, a number pointed out that the Holy Spirit is not invoked simply upon the elements but also on the assembled faithful, and that sacramental materialism is thereby avoided.

e. Conclusion
The questionnaire addressed itself to particular issues in eucharistic theology which had emerged as focal points in debate about the BAS. From what has been reported in this section, two things are evident. First, a range of theological conviction exists; second, those of differing theological conviction tend to read the texts differently, interpreting them from within their own theological framework. It was rare to find respondents who were able to enter into and engage with a theological framework other than their own.

(v) Initiation — specifically, the relation of baptism to confirmation

As may be expected, comment on this question reflected the diversity and fluidity of Canadian Anglicanism over the matter of Christian initiation. At either end of the spectrum were those who regard the BAS' initiation texts as 'the best in Christendom' and those who view the same texts as gravely deficient in what they have to say about both baptism and confirmation. Between these two poles, there is a spectrum of more moderate opinion. Many are positive about the major features of the theology which the BAS contains: the stress on the celebration of baptism at major gatherings of the Christian community; the emphasis on baptism as full sacramental initiation; the consequent separation of confirmation and eucharistic communion, and the interpretation of confirmation as a rite of profession, not as a sacrament of initiation. Others find the BAS' baptismal provision rich in its theology of regeneration, and especially appropriate for a church which finds itself marginal in society and receiving its members as much by conversion as by birth into the church. A few welcomed all these elements, but maintained that the BAS is still 'interim' in character, needing to make some further provision for the catechumenate.

A small but articulate number of responses did not share the general positive response. One or two suggested that the baptismal material lacks a proper emphasis on baptism as the washing away of sin (a lack which is believed to reflect a generally optimistic attitude in contemporary Christianity to human fallenness). A few respondents also judged the BAS to signal an abandonment of the traditional Anglican theory and practice of confirmation, relegating it to an optional rite and thereby contributing to the breakdown of what has become the normative sequence of baptism — confirmation — communion. In addition to this, one or two commented on the absence of a catechism in the BAS, and hoped for its restoration.

(vi) Marriage

This question evoked only a few comments. In general, respondents were favorable towards the theology of the rites. In particular, they were considered to be more appropriate to the changed role of women, and to emphasise the roles of both the couple's families and the witnessing community. Others commented that the BAS is correct to emphasise the unitive as well as the procreative function of human sexual activity. One or two comments were less positive, finding the marriage provision 'sentimental' or (more strongly) as containing a 'tendency ... uncritically to affirm and 'celebrate' an essentially private, subjective, natural sexual relationship which needs no perfection by grace'.

(vii) The church as community

The questions about Christian initiation and marriage evoked comment on the corporate character of the Christian faith, which were further specified in brief responses to the present question. Many welcomed what was called by one the 'recovered sense of the church as a community of faith in Christ', finding in the BAS greater encouragement for the

participation of all members of the liturgical assembly, a rejection of individualism, and a firm insistence on the fact that Christian identity is not drawn from secular society but from belonging to and praying with the Christian community. Clearly, for many the BAS is a collection of liturgical texts which refuses to picture the Anglican Church of Canada as the religious arm of the establishment, and instead insists upon the priority and distinctiveness of the church as the community of the baptized.

Some respondents raised questions about the place of individual appropriation of the gospel, asking whether the BAS downplays or even, perhaps, discourages, individual or interior spirituality in favour of a more 'open', external and socially-oriented understanding of the life of faith.

(viii) Ministry — *specifically the nature and function of the threefold order and its relation to the ministry of the whole people of God.*

The majority of those who responded to this question focussed their remarks on the second half — 'the ministry of the whole people of God'. Many wrote positively of the significance of the recovery of the ministry of the baptized. 'Baptism is more clearly the initiation of a person into the ministry of Jesus Christ into which all have been called to share'; 'there is great emphasis on the ministry of all God's people in which the ordained ministry has a special role'; 'the ordinal ... locates the threefold ministry within the ministry of the church'. Critical commentary on the theology of ministry in the BAS, moreover, suggested, not that the BAS has gone too far in emphasising the role of all the baptized, but that, whilst it is a positive move in the right direction, it has not gone far enough. Some judge that 'while it intends to move toward emphasis on the whole people of God', the BAS is still 'clerical' or 'hierarchical' in its understanding of ministry. Others comment that because of the sacramental character of much BAS worship, the profile of ordained presbyters is in fact heightened. A few others, again, feel that the BAS inadequately states the mutuality between ordained and non-ordained in the life of the church, and may give greater authority to episcopal ministry than has been customary in Canadian Anglicanism. In another direction, one respondent regretted the lack of textual provision for the commissioning of 'lay workers'; one or two regretted that the BAS did not make any significant moves to raise the profile of the diaconate; and one regretted the retention of the term 'priest' rather than 'presbyter'.

(ix) The mediating function of the church and its symbolism

Many respondents found the question opaque, and were unsure what was being asked of them. The sub-group's intention was to trigger comment on what was considered to be a major feature of the BAS: the fact that the forms of the church, and especially its liturgical and symbolic activities, are considered a means through which the gospel is made real to the people of God, and, through them, to the world. The question thus sought comment on the view of worship

which is articulated in the 'Introduction' to the BAS: 'Liturgy is the means by which the Church is constantly invested in (the) gospel, in the reading of the Scriptures, in proclamation, in praise, in prayer of deep concern, and in those sign-acts which wordlessly incorporate the believer in the Word' (p. 10).

A few comments were received. One respondent judged that, whilst the BAS does not initiate a shift in this regard, it does make more explicit something which finds only slender expression in the BCP tradition. Another commented that the BAS tends to reinforce dependence on the part of the members of the church by envisaging the church as mediator. Further related comments can be found under II(ii) above.

(x) The nature and authority of the Bible
The responses to this question have been incorporated into II(i) above.

B. Are these developments consistent with the norms for Christian theology as they have been understood in the Anglican tradition?

From the responses which we received to the first part of question II, it is evident, first, that most believe that the BAS does contain fresh theological understandings in the areas about which we inquired, and second, that there is great variety of opinion as to how these developments are to be evaluated: what to some is a discovery or recovery of an aspect of the gospel is to others a departure from the way in which the gospel is properly to be understood and expressed. The second part of question III asked respondents to make a judgment about this latter issue: how consistent is the BAS with Anglican theological norms? Answers to the question clustered around three differing positions. Some believed the BAS to be deeply consistent with the classical Anglican theological tradition. Others believed that the BAS is in accordance with that tradition envisaged as a living process and not as a static inheritance. Others, again, believed that the BAS constitutes a rejection of aspects of the Anglican tradition (whether that rejection be evaluated positively or negatively). The responses, in other words, not only show how differently the BAS is evaluated by different groups and individuals; they also (and more importantly) show that there is among Canadian Anglicans no generally agreed account of what constitute the norms for Anglican theology. It is diversity and this basic level which frequently lies behind diversity (and sometimes conflict) of opinion over particular issues in theology and liturgy.

Some, for example, believe that the norms for Christian theology in the Anglican tradition are Holy Scripture (for some, read through the lens of ancient tradition), and, derivatively, the Reformation standards — the Book of Common Prayer, the ordinals, the 39 Articles and the Book of Homilies. Others supplement this account by looking to certain periods in Anglican history as having particular importance — the period of the Caroline divines, for example, or the theological developments associated with the Liturgical Movement or the Ecumenical Movement. Canadian Anglicans, it seems, disagree on whether Anglicanism is normatively and fully articulated in the Book of Common Prayer tradition. Some believe it is so articulated, and that liturgy and theology must be judged by fidelity to those norms. Others believe that the whole developing Anglican tradition,

enriched by many different strands of theology and church life, is what constitutes the norm.

Two things impressed us especially as we considered the responses to this question. First, opinion on the matter runs deep; what surfaced here were convictions held to not out of prejudice or unreflective adherence to received formulae, but out of conscience. Second, these different positions of conscience do not appear to be much in dialogue with each other. Once again, we are drawn to conclude that Canadian Anglicanism would be well-served by the mutual informing and correction which comes from real theological interchange. In that interchange, there are few topics more needful of thorough discussion than that of the norms for Anglicanism. As one respondent put it, 'because the theological consensus within Anglicanism today is not that of the sixteenth century or even that of the earlier Prayer Books from this century, I believe that the existence of two official liturgical texts within the Anglican Church of Canada creates a theological tension which is sometimes more than the Church can bear'. It is just that tension which makes dialogue imperative for the Church's health.

III Some argue that significant theological themes are given insufficient emphasis in the BAS.

Please comment on

(a) whether you feel these themes are underplayed;

(b) why you feel they are or are not important:

penitence
mission and outreach
the Canadian context of our theology
eschatology and life after death
feminist theology and spirituality
the inclusivity of the gospel
the charismatic nature of the church
native spiritual traditions
justice, peace and the integrity of creation

(i) Penitence

Nearly all those who responded to this question believed that the BAS handles penitence in a different way from that to which Canadian Anglicans have been accustomed, and many identified the difference by comparing the BAS with the BCP. There are, indeed, few clearer examples of both the range of response to the BAS, and of the roots of such responses in differing conceptions of the Christian life and its expression in public worship.

A good number of respondents expressed frank relief that the penitential tone of the BCP (which they believe to stem from the fact that the BCP is still rooted in late mediaeval spirituality) has been transcended in the BAS. In particular, such respondents noted that penitence is a theme in the BAS (particularly in the Lent and Holy Week provision, and in the eucharistic rites), but that it is penitence as part of a larger truth: 'There is ... a movement through penance into reconciliation so that the lasting impression of the worshipper is not a false and sometimes destructive humility but a sense of being empowered and yet taken to task'. For such respondents, what is seen as a shift away from isolated or localised 'moments' of penitence is an appropriate expression of the gospel whose heart is reconciliation. In essence: 'because we are no longer "miserable offenders", that does not mean that

penance is underplayed'.

An equally large number of respondents, on the other hand, were concerned that the BAS does, in fact, underplay the theme of penitence. For some, the problem was identified by speaking of the BAS as having 'altered the tone of the BCP' in promoting a 'rather more optimistic attitude towards human nature'. For others, the BAS speaks more readily of human beings as victims than of human beings as sinners. It is important to note that, for many in this category of response, the BAS fails in some measure to function as a vehicle for a type of spirituality which is felt to be both biblical and classically Anglican; a spirituality in which encounter with God in worship always involves a move from confession of sin and guilt through forgiveness to reconciliation. On this model of the Christian life, worship is weakened if it does not face the worshipper with a sense of falling short of the divine requirement (hence some respondents keenly miss the Ten Commandments as part of the eucharistic provision).

(ii) Mission and Outreach
The question evoked fewer and shorter responses than some others in this section of the questionnaire. A number of respondents commented in fairly general terms that they judged that 'the relation between liturgy and mission is a central feature of the BAS', or that 'the BAS does as much as a liturgy should do: it proclaims the calling and establishes the context of mission and outreach'. One respondent noted further that the BAS reflects a less imperialist mode of relating to those outside the church. A few responses were less positive, arguing that outsiders 'suffer from a liturgical low profile', or that social service is given priority over explicit evangelism.

(iii) The Canadian context of our theology
Once again, few responded at any length to this question. One or two judged the BAS adequate; one or two cautioned against excessive reference to context. A slightly larger number of respondents argued that the BAS is culturally parochial, reflecting only one strand of a culture which is extraordinarily diverse (the chosen strand being characterised as 'transnational, urban, North American, progressive intellectual'). One more lengthy response viewed the BAS as part of the imposition of this cultural style on Canadian Anglicanism as a whole.

An important issue which surfaced in responses to this issue (as well as in the later question concerning the relation of the BAS to native spiritual traditions) is that of the contextualisation of the liturgy. We have already seen in response to question I that some believe the BAS to be 'accomodationist' in regard to contemporary culture and religious attitudes. Some respondents to the present question, however, felt that more local adaptability was to be encouraged. What is not clear is at what level such adaptation is to be encouraged: in the local worshipping community? in the diocese? in the Canadian (as distinct from the English) Church?

(iv) Eschatology and Life after Death
Some were frankly dissatisfied with the BAS at this point, especially in its provision for funerals. 'I get the general impression,' wrote one, 'that the BAS is less concerned with personal salvation and life in the world to come'. Some suggested that the BAS has a thoroughly 'realized' eschatology in which eternal life is as much a quality of present experience as a matter of future hope. A couple of respondents felt this to be a serious deficiency in which, as one put it, the BAS appears to 'betray a lack of assurance about the future' which 'issues in an over-concentration on the visible rewards of the church's present'.

Others, by contrast, noting the same features of the BAS, argued along two lines: first, that the tenor of the BAS' eschatology is consistent with biblical norms and not to be rejected as a compromise of Christian truth; second, that alongside the 'realized' eschatology there is ample material in the BAS which does point to the consummation of the Christian life in the life of the world to come, notably in the eucharistic prayers.

(v) Feminist theology and spirituality
Very few responses were received from feminist theologians, despite our best efforts to secure such response. However, the responses from feminist theologians which we did receive, and the vast majority of responses from other individuals and groups, all tended to converge in a basic conviction: the BAS is at this point 'not a finished book'. Most felt that, whilst the BAS is generally deliberate in using inclusive language for human persons, and takes some initial steps in moving away from exclusive male imagery for God, it still represents a style of worship which is only at the beginning of the process of working through the significance of feminism for the creation of texts for public worship. One response expressed anxieties about any doctrinal change which might arise from the broadening of the church's imagery about God; most, however, believed (some with great strength) that any revision of the BAS would need to give feminist theology and spirituality a very high priority on its agenda.

(vi) The inclusivity of the gospel
Little response was received under this heading, though, as has already been noted, a number commented that they found it hard to discern what was being asked. Some respondents ran questions (v) and (vi) together, speaking of 'inclusivity' in terms of gender inclusivity. One or two others noted that, whilst the BAS emphasises the overcoming of barriers in Christ, it does not emaciate the gospel into a message which makes no demands of its hearers.

(vii) The charismatic nature of the church
A good number of respondents expressed satisfaction with the BAS at this point, believing it to have a rich theology of the Holy Spirit in its eucharistic and baptismal provision, as well as in the litanies and collects which it contains. Two divergent strands of opinion were expressed, however, each by a small number of respondents. First, some discerned a need for the BAS to give more permission for explicitly 'charismatic' features

of public worship. Whilst acknowledging that 'it is difficult to give a form to the spontaneity required for typical charismatic worship', and whilst welcoming the increased flexibility of modern liturgical texts such as the BAS, such respondents look for some acknowledgement in texts for public worship of, for example, the gift of tongues or the exercise of gifts of healing. A few others, by contrast, judge the BAS to have moved much too far in this direction already, encouraging Canadian Anglicans to become 'episcopal pentecostals'.

(viii) Native spiritual traditions

Once again, response to this question was decidedly thin. One or two replies were quite clear that any drawing upon native spiritual traditions would be wholly inappropriate. Others suggested that — even more than in the case of feminism — the Anglican Church of Canada is only just at the beginning of a debate on the issue, and therefore that much more reflection and discussion is required. None of our respondents gave specific examples of areas which needed more thorough discussion.

(ix) Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation

In response to this final question, too, we received little in the way of detailed analysis of the BAS (though further material on a related theme can be found under I(ii) above). A number of respondents commented in general terms that the BAS adequately represents contemporary Anglican conscience on these issues. A small number were more critical, either because of a perceived drift into easy accommodation of the liturgy to fashionable moral themes, or because — in contrast — these themes are given insufficient weight. One lengthy response focussed on the need to critique the BAS for its failure to give adequate expression to a creation-centred spirituality.

IV Please add any comments on other issues which you feel are important in undertaking a theological evaluation of the BAS.

What was said in response to this heading on the questionnaire has been incorporated into what has been reported in I-III above. One point of significance did, however, emerge from a number of responses: a call by many to serious, genuine theological debate. 'I want us to get beyond trench warfare ... and allow ourselves to be open and honest about our needs and implicit theologies'; 'we think that critique should be encouraged, with provision for open dialogue among all interested parties'; 'a theological evaluation of the BAS is most necessary; 'we believe that there has been an inadequate theological debate of the issues ... and it is our hope that this will now commence with a fair hearing given to all sides'. The Commission believes it very important that this plea be heard and some response made.

3. Major Findings

(i) The most obvious result of our survey of theological opinion on the BAS is that there is diversity of theological conscience amongst Canadian Anglicans. This variety, we have seen, extends to some fundamental issues about the sources and norms of Anglican theology. There is no consensus, for example, about the nature of Holy Scripture, or how its authority is to be construed. There is, moreover, a wide spectrum of opinion about the status to be accorded to other authorities, such as liturgical tradition (whether ancient or Reformation), the growing ecumenical doctrinal convergence, or contemporary experience. Furthermore, there is divergence with respect to some cardinal Christian doctrines insofar as they find expression in the liturgical texts of the BAS. What the BAS says and presupposes about the person and work of Jesus Christ is variously evaluated, especially over questions concerning the church's participation in the saving acts of Jesus Christ. Or again, differing theologies of the eucharist lead to differing theological judgments about the eucharistic rites in the BAS, especially with regard to controversial areas such as the nature of Christ's presence, the sacrificial character of the eucharist or the activity of the Holy Spirit in the eucharistic rite. Over these and many other such issues detailed above, Canadian Anglicans do not have a common theological mind.

(ii) This lack of a common mind is, of course, nothing new in Anglicanism, whether in Canada or elsewhere. Whether we regard it as the distinctive genius of Anglicanism or as its most characteristic weakness, Anglicanism has taken 'comprehensiveness' to be one of its defining features. There are, however, two particular features of comprehensiveness in contemporary Canadian Anglicanism to which we need to attend. First, the distinctiveness of differing theological strands within the Canadian Anglican tradition tends to be heightened at the present time by the existence and widespread use of two quite different liturgical texts, texts which (according to many of our respondents) embody different, though not necessarily irreconcilable or mutually exclusive, accounts of important matters of faith and theology. Second, for whatever reason, those differing strands of the Canadian Anglican tradition have not found it easy to engage in dialogue; there has been much suspicion, and sometimes some open hostility, which has inhibited frank debate.

If this is the case, then it is imperative that the Anglican Church of Canada discover ways of studying and debating theological matters. Theological debate is not a leisurely sideline, a scarcely to be afforded break from active engagement in the church's mission. It is essential to the church's health, because it is a primary way in which the church renews its apprehension of the gospel. Moreover, theological debate in the church should be characterised by a proper spirit of mutual trust and forbearance, by listening and learning as much as by the establishment and defence of positions and counter-

positions. Ideally, moreover, theological debate ought to be to some degree detached both from the bureaucratic processes of church administration and from the more immediate business of the production and authorization of liturgical texts. Of course, theology will have a great deal to say about the church's worship and about liturgical texts; but the sheer pressure of drawing up and revising texts for public worship rarely leaves time for adequate airing of matters of theology. What might be the proper forum for such debate? Our sense is that the present standing committees of General Synod are already overburdened with work and do not always contain the necessary expertise or the diversity of theological conviction. It may be that a national consultation on matters of faith and theology would both exemplify and encourage the theological discussion which we believe to be necessary. At any rate, we believe it would be unwise for further liturgical revision to take place without a public airing of the issues which have surfaced in our work.

(iii) A more complex matter concerns the extent of and limits to theological diversity within liturgical texts. Both existing liturgical texts in the Anglican Church of Canada are theologically rather monochrome. This is clearly the case with the BCP which, even though it has evoked a considerable breadth of interpretation and an even wider diversity of use, represents one distinct strand within the Western Christian tradition. But, as some of our respondents noted, the BAS is also in good measure theologically uniform, especially in its eucharistic provision. Whatever direction Canadian Anglicanism takes in future liturgical revision, the church will need to decide whether and how liturgical texts should honour and make provision for variety of theological conscience. One very important example of this question is the considerable pressure for the production of liturgical texts adequately dealing with feminist theological convictions.

To summarise: part of the mandate of the Evaluation Commission as a whole was to inquire into the extent to which the BAS reflects the theological understanding of the church. As we have sought to conduct that inquiry, we have found ourselves faced with a prior question: what is the theological understanding of the church? It is that question which we believe must engage the attention of the Anglican Church of Canada.

The work of the Evaluation Commission is, of course, only one small factor in the Anglican Church of Canada's thinking about and renewal of its worship, and the work of the theological sub-group of the Commission is an even smaller factor. The life of the people of God is much more than the formulation of doctrine, as indeed the worship of the people of God is much more than liturgical texts. And both doctrine and worship need the sustaining presence and activity of the Holy Spirit if they are to be more than the church talking to itself. Doctrine at its best enables the people of God to clarify their vision of the gospel, and so to grow in the mind of Christ. Worship, too, has as its end the focussing of heart, mind

and will on the good news of Jesus Christ. Our hope is that this report may serve as one means by which Canadian Anglicans can discuss, debate and celebrate the gospel in a more informed and lively way.

4. Questions for Further Study

Your reading of the Commission's Interim Report or the appended papers may suggest areas for discussion. Here are some questions to set discussion in motion; there are many others, and you may wish to frame your own.

a. The following questions focus on some of the major themes which emerge from the responses to the theological questionnaire.
   i. Where are the norms for Anglican theology to be found? How would you relate Scripture to doctrinal and liturgical tradition as norms for Anglicanism?
   ii. Does sacramental theology form or flow from the worshipping life of the church?
   iii. What theological directions do you think the Anglican Church of Canada should take in the future?
   iv. How can fruitful theological discussion be engendered amongst Canadian Anglicans?
   v. Is Anglicanism inherently comprehensive? What are the limits of comprehensivenes?
   vi. Is there legitimate diversity of theological conscience amongst Anglicans about questions in eucharistic theology such as the sacrificial character of the eucharist, the role of the Holy Spirit and the nature of Christ's presence? Should such diversity be represented in contemporary liturgical texts?
   vii. How would you evaluate the claim of some that the BAS represents an overemphasis on celebration and a de-emphasis on penitence?

b. The following questions focus on themes which evoked little response from those who answered the questionnaire:
   i. How much do you think contemporary ecumenical agreement in doctrine and liturgy ought to affect the way in which Anglicans approach liturgical revision?
   ii. Is the link between worship and mission central to the BAS?
   iii. In what ways do you think contemporary Anglican liturgical texts should embody feminist convictions about (a) imagery for God (b) the understanding of God's power?
   vi. Should Canadian Anglican liturgical texts draw upon native spiritual traditions?

You may wish to share the fruit of your discussion with the commission. If so, please write to us as indicated in the Preface.

SECTION II

Study Papers

The Book of Alternative Services Evaluation Commission

Some Theological Questions

BAS Evaluation: Some Theological Questions Responses

by
Stephen Reynolds

1. How does *The Book of Alternative Services* make use of scripture, doctrine, liturgical tradition, and experience as criteria for liturgy? How would you judge the adequacy of *The Book of Alternative Services* in this matter?

Like theological understanding, the adequacy of a liturgy depends upon a convergence of criteria. It is not a matter each criterion coming into play separately and *seriatim*. It is a matter of all the requisite criteria coming together in mutual support of one another. This, I am convinced, is just what has happened in the formation of the BAS. It uses Scripture, doctrine, liturgical tradition, and experience in such a way that they converge on liturgy. It is this convergence that makes the BAS such an adequate — and far better than adequate — document, theologically as well as liturgically.

The BAS uses both Scripture and patristic spirituality to focus on the paschal mystery of Christ (see Response 2.3 below) and to ground its renewal of Christian initiation (see Response 2.5). It uses contemporary social experience to highlight 'the ministry of Jesus to the distressed' (BAS, p. 11; cf. p. 194). It uses the classical doctrinal tradition of the Church to test and anchor its use of a broader range of scriptural images. And it uses the insights of the Liturgical Movement to guide through the labyrinth of liturgical traditions which are available to us. On many counts, each of these criteria reinforce one another and converge in mutual witness.

I must concede, however, that the Introduction to the BAS professes to follow a different method. It appeals to 'the theological principle *lex orandi: lex credendi*, i.e., the law of prayer is the law of belief.' The Introduction continues: 'This principle, particularly treasured by Anglicans, means that theology as the statement of the Church's belief is drawn from the liturgy, i.e., from the point at which the gospel and the challenge of Christian life meet in prayer' (BAS, p. 10). This is one of those statements which must die the death of a thousand qualifications, both in the history of doctrines and in systematic theology. Here I make no pretence to deal with the historical dimension; my concern is with the theology of the statement. As formulated, it seems to establish 'liturgy' as the criterion by which all other criteria of Christian existence are judged and incorporated into living practice. But the statement, as formulated, fails to deal with one very basic problem: How does one judge whether or not a liturgy is authentic?

The answer to such a question is, I believe, very close to the final qualifying clause of the statement just quoted. Authentic liturgy is an act of worship wherein 'the gospel and the challenge of Christian life meet in prayer'. But a lot of pre-liturgical activity must take place in

order to effect this 'meeting in prayer'. The gospel is not perspicuous; it requires interpretation. Authentic liturgy, therefore, depends upon the authenticity of our interpretation of the gospel's meaning. Neither is 'the challenge of Christian life' perspicuous. Particular issues make 'being Christian' a challenge, and a community must determine which issues are fundamental, and which are peripheral, before it can produce and practise a liturgy which is authentic to its context. And if it comes to that, neither is the liturgical tradition itself perspicuous. Take the Eucharistic Prayers in the BAS. Each and every one is modelled on the West Syrian (or Antiochene) pattern. Why is this one anaphoral model used so exclusively? There is nothing in the *lex orandi,* when it is as ecumenically conceived as it is in the BAS, to make such a choice self-evident. Several other anaphoral traditions exist and can claim equal or perhaps even greater antiquity. The answer to the question in this case cannot be solely liturgical. The choice of the Antiochene pattern is the product of a variety of other criteria, all converging in Anglican thought to make this pattern the most preferable.

The finished BAS may indeed become the *lex orandi* which will shape our common *lex credendi;* it may even come to be the criterion by which we interpret to ourselves and to the world the other criteria of Scripture, doctrine, liturgical tradition, and experience. But it was itself formed by the convergence of these other criteria. It was not a fruit of *lex orandi* alone; it was produced by the interplay between *lex orandi* and *lex credendi,* each acting mutually upon the other.

2. Some argue that *The Book of Alternative Services* breaks new ground in theological understanding in some areas listed below.

(a) Do you agree that these developments are present in *The Book of Alternative Services*?

(b) Do you consider these developments to be consistent with the norms for Christian theology as they have been understood in the Anglican tradition?

2.1. The nature of God.

My response to this issue is in three sections.

(a) *'Nature' and 'narrative'.* The term 'nature of God' makes me think of deity-in-itself, the *esse* which the persons of the Trinity equally possess and consubstantiate. This kind of discourse is not native to the BAS. It does not deny the mystery of the divine nature in itself, nor the possibility and legitimacy of theological knowledge gained by way of abstraction from the characteristic pattern of divine behaviour to which Scripture bears witness. Nevertheless, the BAS prefers to work with the primary data, with the scriptural witness to God as the Holy One who acts — who acts not only (though principally) through the death and resurrection of Christ and the gifts of the Spirit, but also through the Christian community in history, most especially those whom the community itself has chosen to name and commemorate as 'saints'.

Such an 'economic' approach to prayer and theological discourse is certainly present in the BCP. There, however, it tends to be foreshortened

by a desire to highlight certain doctrinal points which, within the Prayer Book's purview, are the consequences of faith's discernment of God's action. The result tends to be 'prayed catecheses'. By contrast, the central moments of celebration in the BAS are cast as 'prayed narratives' of God's saving deeds. In the BAS, therefore, 'the nature of God' is presented primarily as the 'economic' action of the Father, through the Son, in the power and unity of the Holy Spirit. I'm not sure how much more Christian one can get.

(b) *Variable proper Prayers.* The variable proper prayers of the BAS — collect, prayer over the gifts, and prayer after communion — also use narrative discourse, especially in their addresses; and they do so far more frequently and deliberately than the Prayer Book collects and their Romano-Gallican predecessors.

Nevertheless, the variable prayers of the BAS often feel like the weakest element in the whole book. Not only do they fail the Cranmerian standard of sonority. They also fail as good modern compositions. Too often they are brief without being incisive, too often flat-footed in cadence without displaying a compensatory 'sharpness of imagery' (cf BAS, p. 12). These prayers also generally fail to understand the rhythmical demands of the sense-line form which has been adopted for them.

One of the most natural ways to compose in sense-lines is to employ parallelism, as the Psalter does. And here is where the theological dimension comes into play. Parallelism may enable a better sense of cadence and rhythm. It certainly allows the exploitation of paradox, the combination of positive and apophatic statements about God. Such a combination of discourses is in fact much closer to the human experience of God. We not only experience God as 'light' and 'glory' and 'splendour,' the divine attributes which the BAS variable prayers seem to repeat most often. We also experience in the saving God, made manifest in Christ, that 'deep but dazzling darkness' which is a constant theme of the Christian mystical tradition. What I am trying to say is that the BAS, in this case, fails to exploit the wider theological possibilities of the literary form which it has adopted for its variable proper prayers.

(c) *Inclusivity.* A serious effort has been made in the BAS to expand the language and (to a lesser extent) the range of images when addressing the first Person of the Trinity, who is normally the object of prayer. This expansion usually takes place in the attributes. We have such addresses as 'God of mercy,' 'Gracious God,' 'Source of all life,' 'Loving God,' and so forth, as well as traditional addresses like 'Almighty God' and 'Eternal (or Everlasting) God'. The expansion must, as a rule, deal with attributes because the word 'god,' in itself, is not a proper name; it is a classification of being. Thus, the attributes employed distinguish the god being addressed as the only true and living God, the Holy One whom Jesus named as his 'Father'.

I wonder whether further expansion and experimentation might not be made with the divine attributes. Would it be possible to translate abstract qualities (mercy, grace,

goodness, love) more directly into narrative, so that certain creative and saving *deeds* themselves become the *active* attributes of the Holy One?

I may add one further point. I myself have no difficulty with the use of the name 'Father,' even on a regular basis, because of its scriptural warrant. But 'Father' is a *name*, not just an attribute, only so far as it refers to the eternal and consubstantial relation between the First and Second Persons of the Trinity. Its use *without this qualification* justly irritates feminist theologians. It also misses the trinitarian economy of revelation. The Source and Partner of the eternal Word is 'Father of all' only as the One who sent Jesus Christ to redeem all and to make all humans participants in the divine life of the whole Trinity. In the emerging situation of inclusive theology, this needs always to be made clear.

Conclusion. A narrative approach to 'the nature of God' is undoubtedly consistent with the norms of theology recognized in the Anglican tradition, because its basis is the witness of Scripture. The point of the critiques I have broached in this section, is that the BAS might have gone a good deal further in this direction and still remained consistent with basic Anglican norms.

2.2. Creation.

The BCP emerged at a time when the vast majority of people, even town dwellers, necessarily lived close to the earth. Their relation to the physical creation, however, was predominantly one of fear. The means of technological control were still so limited that the vagaries of the environment posed a serious challenge to human life, and therefore to the divine command that humans rule and subdue the earth and its creatures (Gen 1.28-30). This pre-industrial perspective persists in CanBCP 1962: where creation is concerned, the dominant note is still that of the uses to which we may put it, with little reference to the creation's goodness or integrity. There is certainly acknowledgement that our stewardship over the created environment might have become exploitative and therefore sinful.

In the meantime, of course, it has become painfully clear that our exploitation of the environment poses even greater dangers to human life than the vagaries of the environment posed to our sixteenth-century ancestors. The BAS texts reveal a consciousness of this fact. They acknowledge far more consistently that creation is not merely a resource for human consumption but, first and last, God-given, Spirit-informed, and therefore *good in itself.*

At eucharistic moments especially, the BAS tries to combine the our biblically-attested commissioning as stewards of creation with the new environmental consciousness. For instance, Eucharistic Prayer 6 states:

> You formed us in your own image,
> giving the whole world into our care,
> so that, *in obedience to you,* our creator,
> we might rule *and serve* all your creatures.
>
> (BAS, p. 208; italics added)

The note of 'rule' continues, but it is subordinated to *service*, first to God 'in obedience' and secondly to all other creatures. A somewhat more explicit acknowledgement of the situation is presented in Eucharistic Prayer 4: 'You

made us the stewards of creation .... But we turn against you, *and betray your trust;* and we turn against one another' (BAS, p. 201; italics added). In the context of this Eucharistic Prayer, the 'trust' in question, the 'trust' which we have betrayed, is the stewardship of creation which the Creator has commended into our hands. As a final example, there is the Collect for Rogation Days and Harvest Thanksgiving (BAS, p. 396). This collect combines a petition for our right use of creation with a petition for the preservation of the environment for future generations.

In general, then, the BAS reflects development in concern for creation and its integrity. This development has little precedent in earlier Anglican tradition, but it does represent a response to an ongoing modern crisis which earlier Anglicans did not have to face.

2.3. Salvation, specifically the saving work of Jesus Christ.

Salvation is a theme as variegated and omnipresent in theological expression as the God who saves is in operation. Two approaches to the theme are possible. (a) One may focus on one of its aspects in such a way as to open our understandings and imaginations to its other aspects, equally biblical and patristic. (b) Or one may focus on a single aspect in such a way as to reduce the theme to an easily enforced, propositional dogma.

The Anglican tradition, especially the BCP, tended to follow the latter, reductionist procedure. Salvation was identified with the effects of the propitiatory sacrifice and forensic satisfaction which Christ rendered on the cross. This identification was itself inherited from late medieval spirituality, which focused all but exclusively on the passion and death of Christ as *the* salvific moment. This is represented in the Eucharistic Prayer of CanBCP 1962 by the petition that 'by the merits and death of thy Son Jesus Christ, and through faith in his blood, we ... may obtain remission of our sins, and all other benefits of his passion' (CanBCP 1962, p. 83).

The question one needs to ask of such a petition is: 'What happened to the resurrection?' True, the resurrection and ascension are mentioned in the memorial which immediately precedes this petition. But the summary character of the memorial cannot override the impression that Christ's death and passion alone bring about the forgiveness of sins 'and all other benefits'. The saving work of Christ *is* his passion. But again, what happened to the resurrection? Is it nothing more than a subsidiary miracle which 'proves' and 'confirms' the propitiatory benefit (i.e. the forgiveness of sins) of Christ's death?

If the BCP does not deny the resurrection, I should argue that it does none the less miss a fundamental connection in the biblical understanding of salvation. St Paul wrote: 'If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile *and you are still in your sins* ' (1 Cor 15.17; italics added). The forgiveness of sins is not effected by the death and passion of Christ: it is accomplished by his resurrection. In Paul's preaching, the benefits of Christ's passion are that our sinful selves have died and are buried; they do not include being'alive to God' (cf Rom 6.3-9).

The BAS reflects a fuller understanding of the theme of salvation. Over and over again, it makes the fundamental connection between Christ's death and resurrection, presenting both *together* as necessary to salvation and constitutive of Christ's saving work. Hence, by the way, the BAS does not speak of the Lord's

passion; it speaks of his paschal mystery, i.e. his passover mystery, and deliberately exploits the imagery by which Scripture identifies salvation with the experience of passover. As a result, the saving work of Christ is not presented as a forensic transaction whereby the guilty are granted 'full and free pardon' because of Jesus's bloody execution in their stead. It is presented as a transformative event whereby the oppressed are liberated and created a free community. As Eucharistic Prayer 3 puts it: 'In [Christ], you have brought us out of error into truth, out of sin into righteousness, out of death into life' (BAS, p. 198).

Yes, therefore, the BAS breaks new ground in our theological understanding of salvation and the saving work of Christ. But it does so on scriptural grounds. It brings the fuller dimensions of the scriptural understanding of salvation into clear liturgical focus. The BAS is thus true to the apostolic (not to mention the patristic) witness in a way that the BCP has signally failed to be.

2.4. The Eucharist

2.4a. Its centrality for Christian faith and practice.

'Centrality' can mean a couple of things here. It can mean that the eucharist is the *normal* act of worship for the Christian community: it is the rite we expect to celebrate as our principal service every Sunday of the year. 'Centrality' can also mean that the eucharist is the *normative* act of worship for the Christian community, the liturgy which encapsulates 'the intersection of gospel and service' in a way and to a qualitative degree that other rites do not. On this showing, a community is never more truly or fully Christian than when it celebrates the Lord's Supper.

So far as I have been able to discover, the BAS never comes right out and says that the eucharist is (or ought to be) the *normal* liturgy of the Church. But it certainly implies, even encourages, such a view at almost every turn. This view, however, is hardly an innovation or even much of a development. It merely reflects a pattern which has been in the process of becoming mainstream Anglican practice in Canada over the past forty or fifty years.

But if we mean that the eucharist is *normative*, the view presented by the BAS is a good deal more complicated. We usually take it for granted that the eucharist can be celebrated only by those who have been baptized. The BAS is structured in such a way as to make this assumption explicit. As I argued in my response to the previous question (2.3), its norm is the celebration of the paschal mystery of Christ. It also works on the premise that we are initiated into this mystery by baptism *and* eucharist together, though the eucharistic liturgy is the normal means by which we continue to be nurtured and matured in this mystery. Thus, to speak strictly, our *normative* act of worship cannot be the eucharist alone. It must be baptism *and* eucharist together. The BAS assumes that baptism will normally be celebrated with the eucharist as a single act of liturgical worship on a Sunday. It could be argued that *the* normative liturgy of a Christian community, and of the whole Church, is the Great Vigil of Easter (pp. 322-332), from the Service of Light through the Liturgy of the Word, Holy Baptism, and the first Eucharist of Easter. By this liturgy, with all its components, we express and celebrate the fullness of the paschal mystery.

Such a view, I think, can indeed be said to break new ground in Anglican eucharistic theology. Unlike earlier

Anglican exhortations to frequent celebrations of the Lord's Supper, it sets the eucharist in the context of the paschal mystery. Having done that, it bonds the eucharist to baptism, the rite which initiates us into that mystery. Thus, the eucharist is central in a double sense. It is central to Christian faith and practice in the sense of being the *normal* act of Christian worship. But it is also central because it continues to nourish and mature our participation in the baptismal covenant, by which we have been made sharers in what is absolutely *normative* for Christian life, the paschal mystery of Christ's own self.

2.4b. Sacrifice or offering.

In the Anglican tradition, this aspect of eucharistic theology has had a more tangled history than any other. The Reformers, reacting against the late medieval tendency to treat the Mass as a separate sacrifice, appeared to reject the sacrificial character of the eucharist altogether. They were reluctant, however, to reduce the Lord's Supper to a mere memorial (see Art. XXV of Religion; CanBCP 1962, pp. 707-708). Their more typical concern was to oppose the divine initiative in bestowing a free, unmerited gift against the human initiative in seeking to offer a sacrifice sufficiently meritorious to propitiate the wrath of the Almighty. But in the Elizabethan period, one of the great influences of Calvinism, with its doctrine of election, was to confuse this dichotomy. English divines denied that the eucharist in itself constituted a sacrifice; but they consistently affirmed that there were indeed sacrifices *in* the Lord's Supper. These sacrifices ranged from 'spiritual' offerings like the act of thanksgiving itself and the confession of sins through physical oblations like the alms presented before communion and the offering of 'our selves, our souls *and bodies*' in responsive thanksgiving to the benefits of communion. In the 1630s a few divines like Joseph Mede of Cambridge and William Forbes of Edinburgh argued that the physical elements of bread and wine constituted real sacrifices which 'agnized God as Lord of the creature,' and ought to be treated as such. Their view was renewed and advanced by the Usager party of the Non Jurors early in the eighteenth century.

Very few Anglican divines, then, questioned that we humans do indeed make sacrifices or offerings in the eucharist. The controversial question became: '*What kind* of sacrifices do we offer: are they purely spiritual or may they also be physical?' The canon of CanBCP 1962 dealt with the issue by making room for several different interpretations at once. The phrase,'... do make before thee, *in this sacrament of the holy Bread and the Cup of everlasting salvation,* the memorial which [Christ] hath commanded' (CanBCP 1962, p. 83; italics added), suggests at the very least an intimate connection between the oblation of the memorial and the offering of the physical elements. At the same time, other phrases in the same canon make it clear that the whole action of praise and thanksgiving, as enacted in the Prayer of Consecration, is indeed a sacrifice.

The BAS clarifies this ambiguity somewhat. It is even more insistent than CanBCP 1962 that the whole action of the eucharist is offered as a sacrifice — but only in union with the sacrifice which Christ offered in his paschal mystery (see, e.g., BAS, Introduction to the Holy Eucharist, p. 179, and Eucharistic Prayer 3, epiclesis, p. 199). At the same time, the Eucharistic Prayers of the BAS, especially

in their memorial-sections, specify the physical elements of bread and wine as integral parts of the Church's participation in the one, once-for-all oblation of Christ. Yet these Prayers make it clear that these are gifts offered *to* God only insofar as they are themselves gifts *from* God and offered within the context of God's blessing of the community which presents them.

Such an action within the Eucharistic Prayer merely continues the sensibility expressed in the scriptural acclamation which concludes the offertory in CanBCP 1962 (p. 74): 'All things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee.' But the BAS Eucharistic Prayers do something more as well: the explicit oblation of the physical elements with which the eucharistic action is performed links them with the purpose of the action itself. It establishes the sacramentality of the eucharistic event by declaring that the physical elements of bread and wine are indeed the means by which flesh and blood participate in the one sacrifice of Christ.

In respect of 'sacrifice or offering,' then, the BAS appears to advance beyond 'the norms for Christian theology as they have been understood in the Anglican tradition.' But the ambiguous and somewhat tangled history of that tradition in this respect needs to be recognized and taken into account. The BAS, so far from presenting the eucharist as a new, separate, or supplementary act of propitiation, goes out of its way to present the eucharist, both as whole and in its individual parts, as a participatory oblation whose origin, rationale, and energy is the sacrifice which Christ began to offer on the cross and continues to offer in the embrace of the One who sent and raised him.

2.4c. The presence of Christ.

For centuries, eucharistic theology in the Anglican mainstream was neither Catholic nor Zwinglian, but 'high Reformed'. This meant that it was driven by two principles. On the one hand, it felt obligated to deny that Christ's real body and blood are anywhere else but in heaven. On the other hand, it felt equally obligated to affirm that *the power and effect* of his body and blood are really present and actually available to worthy communicants.

It is significant that, apart from the institution narrative, the BAS Eucharistic Prayers do not mention the presence, the divine life, or the body and blood of Christ until the closing movements of memorial and epiclesis/supplication. These sections are essentially eschatological in cast: their concern is with the fulfillment of the purpose of the eucharist, both as consolidation of the communicants' participation in the one life of Christ and as the achievement of the promises of the gospel. The presence of Christ, then, is neither a miracle nor 'bare memorialism'. It is 'an anticipation of the future banquet in the kingdom of God' (BAS, p. 180).

By placing Christ's presence within an eschatological context, the old controversial dichotomies of presence *either* in heaven only *or* also on earth, *either* 'really' *or* 'virtually' (by power and effect) — may be overcome. It becomes clearer that 'presence' is not a static condition of just 'being there'. It is a dynamic condition whereby the whole person of Christ is present to the community *for* the transforming purpose of salvation. The eucharist thus ceases to be merely the *terminus ad quem* of Christ's presence; it becomes the event which reveals Christ's presence as the *terminus a quo* of the

ongoing fulfillment of God's purpose.

To be sure, Christ can only be such a *terminus a quo* if he is 'really there'. The BAS, however, does not define what this might mean, nor does it foreclose on any doctrinal interpretation of the manner of his presence except Zwinglian, 'bare memorialism'. The words 'body and blood of Christ' occur outside of the institution narrative only in Eucharistic Prayers 3 and 6. But in both cases, the words are qualified. Eucharistic Prayer 3 asks 'that [the offered bread and wine] may be *the sacrament of* the body of Christ and his blood of the new covenant' (p. 199; italics added) — hardly a petition to which traditional Anglicanism would take exception. The epiclesis in Eucharistic Prayer 6 may be thought to affirm a real 'real presence,' but again, its language is more nuanced than that. It prays for the descent of the Spirit upon the bread and wine, to sanctify and show them

> to be holy gifts for your holy people,
> the bread of life and the cup of salvation,
> the body and blood of your Son Jesus Christ.
>
> (p. 209)

The first two lines here offer patristic and biblical images which broaden rather than contract the meaning of the third line. The 'spiritual' interpretation so important to Reformed understandings of Christ's presence is just as possible as the Roman Catholic understanding known as transubstantiation. The piling-up of such images leaves options open.

In the other Eucharistic Prayers of the BAS, references to the presence of Christ are even more open-ended. Eucharistic Prayer 1 asks that the Holy Spirit be sent 'upon us and upon these gifts, that all who eat and drink at this table may be one body and one holy people, a living sacrifice in Jesus Christ our Lord' (p. 195). Similarly, Eucharistic Prayer 4 prays that 'we who eat and drink at this holy table may share the divine life of Christ our Lord' (p. 203). Eucharistic prayer 5 requests the Spirit 'on us and on these gifts, that we may know the presence of Jesus in the breaking of bread, and share in the life of the family of your children' (p. 206). In all of these references, the presence of Christ is an event which happens, and which happens principally *in the community*, not only or even primarily to the bread and wine.

Regarding the presence of Christ, then, the BAS Eucharist represents a modest development in Anglican eucharistic spirituality. It insists that Christ is indeed present far more explicitly and deliberately than earlier mainstream of Anglican thought and liturgy, but it does so in such a way that the concept of 'presence' is liberated from its earlier constrictions of controversy. It is able to accomplish this liberation by placing Christ's eucharistic presence within an eschatological context. In this light, the eucharistic presence of Christ anticipates a presence whose fullness is still to be enjoyed. Christ's presence in the Lord's Supper belongs to the 'now and not yet' which defines the Christian experience of God's promise in Christ of a 'new heaven and a new earth'.

2.4d. The Holy Spirit and the Eucharist. My response to this issue follows up on some points I tried to make in discussing the previous issue (2.4c). In the Eucharistic Prayers of the BAS, the Holy Spirit is associated with eschatological motifs, insofar as the epiclesis takes places within

the final movement of supplication.

Positioning the Spirit-epiclesis in the final movement, and associating it with the eschalogical motif, have to do with the integrity of the Great Thanksgiving itself. It is a single prayer which constitutes a rehearsal of the mystery of salvation, from creation through the parousia, with the person and work of Jesus Christ as its centrepiece. Within this mystery of salvation, according to the scriptural witness, the Spirit is the primary agent by whom the Father accomplishes the 'already and yet to come' of the new creation. This eschatological agency of the Spirit is reflected in Ezekiel's vision of the raising of a new Israel (Ezek 37.1-14); in Joel's prophecy of the Spirit poured out on all flesh (Joel 2.28-29); in Paul's testimony that it was 'the Spirit of holiness' who raised Jesus from the dead (Rom 1.3): and in the Johannine witness that the Spirit is the divine agent whom the Father sends at the behest of Christ, in order to guide the community of disciples 'into all the truth' (John 16.7-15). By setting the epiclesis in the prayer's closing movement of supplication, the Church enacts its own 'final discourse' with God in union with Christ, and prays that in this eucharist the Spirit may guide the Church 'into all the truth' which the celebration anticipates, signifies, and communicates.

Combined with my response 2.4c, this suggests a way of dealing with the knotty issue of consecration. I should argue that the words of institution do not constitute 'the moment of consecration'. But I should argue the same thing with respect to the epiclesis. Once we regard the Great Thanksgiving as a single prayer which rehearses the mystery of salvation, there is no need to pose a consecratory dilemma — either the words of institution or the epiclesis within the Great Thanksgiving. For the whole eucharistic prayer itself, from Sursum corda to final Amen, is 'the moment of consecration'.

If this is a true reading of the eucharistic prayers in the BAS, they do indeed break with the mainstream of Anglican eucharistic theology. By the same token, however, they do little more than develop insights which belonged to what was, for two centuries, a minority report within the Anglican tradition: I mean the rites of the Non-juring Usager party and the communion Orders of the Episcopal Churches in Scotland, the United States, and South Africa. Even so, such a development is legitimate in its own right for reasons which I broached while discussing Question 2.3. For the BAS prayers incorporate a far richer, a far more comprehensive, and, yes, a far truer understanding of the scriptural witness to the dynamics of the mystery of salvation. This is so by their explicit recognition of the eucharist's eschatological dimension, and not least by their expression of the Spirit's role as the agent who is sent to enact the divine promise to fulfill the eucharist, the Church which celebrates the eucharist, and all creation.

2.5. Initiation, specifically the relation of Baptism and Confirmation

Our tradition has always asserted that baptism is, with the eucharist, one of the only two sacraments which were 'ordained of Christ' and could therefore be accounted 'necessary for salvation'. Generally speaking, however, baptism was not practised in a way that gave this exalted theological claim living force. It was undoubtedly the sacrament most frequently celebrated by Anglicans; but apart from times of sectarian strife, when the real issue was not baptism itself but paedobaptism, it never received the

quality or amount of concern that Anglican authors accorded to worthy communion. For most of our history baptism has been a Sunday afternoon affair, a semi-private event in which parents registered their babies in the Book of Life and, just as importantly, in the social roll of their nation.

This view of baptism, and of the whole process of Christian initiation, has been undergoing change over the past fifty years. The catalyst has been the growing realization that Christianity now occupies a marginal position in the western societies it once dominated, and that active membership in Christian churches is an exception to the rule of social life. This quiet revolution has hit Anglicanism the hardest because of its establishmentarian heritage, here in Canada as well as in England. Belonging to Christ in the communion of the Church is no longer seen as an attribute which every white Anglophone may take for granted as one of her or his cultural rights. It is now seen as a condition that people must chose.

Seen in the light of these developments, the BAS baptismal liturgy cannot be said to have been a liturgical rabbit pulled out of some clever Anglo-Catholic's biretta. It reflects a recent stage in a movement towards consensus, theological as well as liturgiological, which has been taking place both within the Anglican communion and among other churches for over thirty years.

CanBCP 1962 and its predecessors printed the baptismal rite after the Psalter with the appendix of Pastoral Offices. In this respect, the BAS' most obvious innovation is its placement of Holy Baptism immediately before the Holy Eucharist. It thus reasserts Anglicanism's doctrinal association of these two sacraments as the primary and necessary constituents of Christian faith and practice.

The BAS baptismal rite also follows up on the consequences of this renewed association. First, the very structure of the rite assumes that it will be celebrated not only in public but also in the context of the Sunday eucharistic gathering. Baptism is no longer a semi-private event for family members only; it is an act of the whole Christian community. Secondly, the BAS makes it clear that baptism constitutes complete initiation into the paschal mystery and body of Christ. It thereby grants the newly baptized an immediate right to eucharistic communion, without need for any intervening rite to consummate initiation and enfranchise the initiate.

Such a position raised the troublous issue of confirmation. The issue is troublous because Anglican practice of confirmation has tended to overstep Anglicanism's basic doctrinal evaluation of the rite. On the one hand, the Thirty Nine Articles of Religion (Art. XXV) relegated confirmation to the status of those rites which 'are not to be counted Sacraments of the Gospel,' and which therefore cannot be accounted 'necessary to salvation.' But the rubrics which concluded the Order for Confirmation in EngBCP 1552 (and subsequent versions) seemed to make this rite necessary to holy communion, i.e., necessary to a sacrament which *is* necessary to salvation. However, a closer reading of the rubrics which accompanied the BCP rite suggests that the principal reference of confirmation is not to the eucharist but to catechesis. At issue was not the bishop's authority to confirm, but the need for individuals to learn (or at least memorize) those elements of doctrine — the Apos-

tles' Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments — which the Reformers believed were the basic conditions of the 'lively faith' needed for a worthy communion. Confirmation was intended to be a person's attestation of this faith in the most public possible manner: it was the Establishment's version of the revivalist 'altar call.'

This view is supported by episcopal charges from the Elizabethan period right through the early nineteenth century. Surprisingly few, in light of later Anglican practice, asked about confirmation as such. The majority were concerned whether or not parish priests were catechizing their people (adults as well as children) and if so, how adequately. In early Anglicanism, then, the axis of Christian initiation between baptism and communion was not confirmation but catechesis.

The BAS seeks to get behind even this pattern, which belonged to the Reformation and tended to identify faith with its expression in doctrinal propositions, by reviving the ancient Church's practice of initiation. If there is a danger in this revival, it is that of a sacramental fundamentalism, i.e., the opinion that the celebration of the liturgy is a self-interpeting event. According to this view, regular participation in the liturgy and attendance to the liturgical text should provide sufficient catechesis. Pastoral experience has revealed to many of us that this is just not true. Even with the best bulletins and leaflets, even with the most assiduous efforts to lead people through the text, it still remains that the liturgy is the enactment of a mystery; and it is the mystery itself, as well as the particular imagery and ceremonial actions through which it is enacted, that leaves regular parishioners, not to mention visitors and 'seekers,' in need of catechetical interpretation. The BAS itself acknowledges as much in its Introduction to Holy Baptism (p. 146), but principally with respect to candidates for baptism.

I myself cannot doubt but that baptism constitutes full and complete initiation into the mystery of Christ, and that this initiation involves an immediate right to eucharistic communion. For it is by eucharistic communion that we are sustained and nurtured in the mystery of Christ. But just as participation in that mystery through the liturgy is a life-long commitment, so growth in the mystery which liturgy enacts ought to be a life-long endeavour. We never exhaust the meaning of the paschal mystery; we only, if we are graced, grow more deeply into it. But such growth requires catechesis, continuing catechesis, beyond courses for prospective baptizands, beyond Sunday school and confirmation class, beyond childhood. What we need to develop, then, are patterns of catechesis which act as the axis of an initiation that never ceases: patterns of catechesis which can address and nurture Christians of all different ages and backgrounds, at all levels of intelligence, and in each of the various stages of spiritual maturity.

In this light, the true question is not: 'What is the relation between baptism and confirmation?' but: 'How do we provide authentic catechesis for people whose continuing participation in the liturgy is itself an ongoing initiation into the inexhaustible mystery of God in Christ?'

2.6. Marriage

The matrimonial liturgy, at least in the West, has nearly always been dogged by a fundamental uncertainty. The official theology has considered the bride and groom to be the ministers of the rite. In

practice, however, it appeared more often than not that the priest was the real minister. The problem is not really theological or liturgical, but pastoral.

The BAS makes a serious effort to work through this uncertainty by providing a marriage rite which tries to address the pastoral as much as the liturgical issues. The bride and groom remain the primary ministers, both in preparing and in performing the rite. But their matrimonial ministry is set in the context of the Church community, of which the ordained minister is the continuing leader and representative. Marriage, then, is no longer seen as a private contractual event between two individuals and their respective families, which happens to require sacerdotal blessing in order to be binding. It is now seen as a public liturgy of the whole Christian community, by means of which the married couple assume new responsibilities not only towards each other and each other's families, but also as Christians in a community of Christians. By the same token, the new emphasis on matrimony as a liturgy means that the Christian community assumes new responsibilities towards the married couple. Its chief obligation is to support, nurture, and sustain the new couple as a single but diversified reality within the community's corporate life. On this showing, if the marriage should happen to break down, the consequences become a real sign of breakdown in the community, for which members of the community themselves must bear some of the guilt. It is a failure of the community to enact its own diversity in mutual justice, mercy, and love.

The BAS, therefore, calls the Church to regard matrimony as much more than a matter of complying, first, with civil law and, secondly, with canon law. It calls the Church to recognize matrimony as a public liturgy of the Christian community and, as a result, to treat it as a community-building event in Christ.

2.7. The Church as community.
2.8. Ministry, specifically the nature and function of the three-fold order and its relation to the ministry of the whole people of God.
2.9. The mediating function of the Church and its symbolism.
These three issues are so closely related that I will treat them together.

Earlier Anglican theology and practice tended to view the Church more as an institution of the establishment than as a community of all the baptized. True, the disciplinary rubrics which prefaced the BCP Communion Order, even in CanBCP 1962, certainly suggested a communal view of the parish; and in earlier versions of the BCP many of the 'common texts' — e.g. the Collect for Purity, the General Confession, and the Prayer of Humble Access — were assigned to the presiding priest alone for pretty much the same reason as the Eucharistic Prayer was (and is still) to be said by the president alone, i.e. in order to symbolize the solidarity of the whole worshipping community. It is also true that various movements within Anglican history — for example, the Puritans in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the Evangelicals in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, and the Parish Communion movement in this century — sought (among other things) to foster a sense that the Church was indeed a community, not just an established institution. Nevertheless, Anglican practice was historically dominated by the authoritarian model, whereby the faithful ought to be characterized by obedience to the ecclesiastical institution and, in

particular, to its authorized (ordained) officers. This meant that 'the Church' was fundamentally extrinsic to 'the laity'. Its 'mediating function' belonged to the clergy, who alone were authorized to interpret the gospel and administer the sacraments to a subordinate (because non-ordained) class of Christians.

The BAS reflects rather than perpetrates a change in this ethos. The establishmentarian bias was long a tacit assumption in the attitudes of Canadian Anglicanism: in the Atlantic Provinces and in Upper Canada, at least, other denominations, though they constituted a majority of the Christian population, were considered with a quiet arrogance to be 'dissenters'. In the past thirty years, for a variety of reasons, Anglicans have come to face the statistical music and learned, in some measure, to dance to the tune of denominational diversity of Canada. This realism has both produced and been the product of developments within our own communion.

One of chief of these developments, strongly reflected in the BAS, has been a reassessment of the nature of the Church itself. It is now regarded not as an established institution which acts upon the laity through its ordained clergy, but as the community of all baptized people who enact their mutual participation in the paschal mystery of Christ. Hence, the rubrics which accompany each of the BAS rites emphasize the importance of including lay-people both in the planning and in the performance of the liturgies. They also encourage greater diversification of ministries within the liturgical action, so that the clergy no longer appear to be the sole celebrants. The readers, the intercessors, even the preparers of the eucharistic table, should now come from the congregation — and it should be obvious that they are *of the people,* not garbed to look like honorary clerics. Likewise, the acclamations which punctuate the various liturgies are intended to emphasize the communal nature of the celebration.

All these changes are bound to have an impact upon 'the nature and function of the three-fold order'. The BAS Ordinal certainly strives to recognize the authoritative character of the ordained ministry; an authority which is implicit in the Anglican inheritance of a three-fold order, and which from ancient times has been an inescapable fact in the history of Christian ministry. The BAS Ordinal makes this most apparent by its rearrangement of the three ordination services. CanBCP 1962 followed its predecessors in arranging the Ordinal as if the three orders were a *cursus honorum,* a progression from lowest (diaconal) to highest (episcopal) offices. The BAS seeks to restore the more ancient view: the rite for the consecration of a bishop comes first, in order to stress that all other orders of ministry are derived from and dependent upon the episcopate.

By the same token, however, the BAS Ordinal lays far more stress than did the CanBCP 1962 Ordinal on the clergy's obligation to serve and facilitate the ministry of the whole community. The ordained minister, whether bishop or priest, is seen not as an *alter Christus* whose authority is independent of the body of the faithful, but as one whose office is grounded in and representative of the ministerial priesthood of all those who, by baptism, have been made to share in the high priesthood of Christ.

These changes have a bearing on 'the mediating function of the Church and its symbolism'. The re-communalization of the Church and its liturgy may have made it clearer that the whole community of the

baptized shares in mediating salvation. But, by the same token, it has become harder to identify who might be the objects of this mediating activity. It has also become harder to fix the symbolism of mediation. It can no longer be simply baptism and the eucharist, nor even the interpretation of the word of God. For these symbolic enactments of salvation, which were once the exclusive preserve of the clergy, are now presented as celebrations which belong to the whole community.

The BAS offers two solutions to this issue.

(1) The community, having enacted its participation in Christ through the various symbols afforded by word and sacrament, then goes forth to mediate the gospel to 'the world'. The 'mediating function of the Church,' therefore, is to manifest 'the splendour' of God in Christ and to interpret this 'splendour' to the rest of humanity through deeds of justice, proclamation, and love. Such is certainly a view reiterated time and time again in the variable Sunday prayers.

(2) The BAS offers another solution as well. *The community mediates Christ to each of its members.* This is where my earlier comments about ongoing and variegated catechesis come into play (see Response 2.5). Baptism is not the end of our pilgrimage into the sovereign mystery of God; neither is confirmation, nor any particular stage in eucharistic life. To be sure, each may indeed symbolize a terminus of growth, a point at which we realize something new, or richer, or deeper about our participation in Christ, so that we can only mediate the meaning of our experience to ourselves and the rest of our community by means of the wordly and sacramental symbols which the Church affords. But the terminus is no sooner reached than the pilgrimage continues; and as it continues, our understandings and 'the thoughts of our hearts' will continue to need the mediating function which belongs to each member of the community, as well as to the community as a whole, in order to interpret, appropriate, and enact what happens in that pilgrimage. The BAS, through its liturgies, calls us to be responsible towards one another in mediating to each other our common foundation, constitution, and goal, which is to participate in Christ's passing-over into the inexhaustible embrace of the One who sent him.

2.10. The nature and authority of the Bible.

'Nature' refers to the state of a thing in itself; 'authority' refers to the status of a thing in relation to others. When it comes to the Bible, however, this useful distinction virtually disappears. In the BAS every reading from Scripture is acclaimed as 'the word of the Lord' or 'the gospel of Christ'. Such acclamations not only express the nature of the biblical text just read; they also proclaim its authority.

The ecumenical Sunday lectionary ensures that the community experiences, both through any given year and over a three-year period, a far wider range of the scriptural text and a far richer encounter with its divine authority — or rather, its divine challenge — in the discernment, formation, and definition of the community's vocation. The traditional identification of 'the nature and authority of the Bible' is thus enhanced.

Several of the people who dislike the BAS claim, as one of the grounds for their dislike, that it fails to make Scripture its sole criterion. I have already suggested an answer to this accusation in Response I;

there I followed Richard Hooker, who did the job much better and much more fully in *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity,* especially Book V. Mainstream Anglicanism has never claimed that the sole criterion of the BCP was Scripture; it was, as the BAS is, the product of several *converging* criteria, in which Scripture was a necessary or even a principal element. In the BAS, it might be said, Scripture plays an even more explicit role than it did in the BCP. For the prayers of thanksgiving in the baptismal and eucharistic liturgies are largely composed of scriptural quotations or allusions. The charge that the BAS plays fast and loose with scriptural authority, however, seems to be based primarily on the realization that it does not endorse, either explicitly or solely, one particular doctrine of the atonement. I have responded to this view in my answer to Question 2.3.

Beyond that, the BAS also implies that the Bible's witness to God's mighty acts makes true sense only within the community of faith. It is indeed 'the word of the Lord,' but it is a word addressed to faith, which faith must appropriate and interpret. Its truth, its challenge, is not self-evident outside the context of worship and meditation. To that extent, the Bible belongs to the community which hears, reads, marks, learns, and inwardly digests it — and which then must take responsibility for mediating or interpreting it into other contexts.

This is a real development insofar as earlier Anglican tradition tended to be fundamentalist in its treatment of Scripture. The biblical text was regarded as self-validating in its authority because of its nature as 'the word of the Lord'. But alongside this apparent fundamentalism needs to be set one obvious fact about the BCP: it presented selected texts from the Bible. To make such selections is hardly to treat Scripture as a law unto itself. It is to gear Scripture to the community's needs and to the occasions which the community deems important in its evaluation of itself as God's people. In CanBCP 1962, the Psalter is actually expurgated, so that the community would never have to read passages which the Canadian revisers considered offensive to their contemporaries' ears.

On the whole, then, it may be said of the BAS that, so far from impairing the Bible's nature and authority as 'the word of the Lord,' it broadens the Bible's authority as a text which sets forth God's challenge to the community of faith.

3. Some argue that significant theological themes are given insufficient emphasis on the BAS.
Please comment on
(a) Whether you feel these themes are underplayed;
(b) Why you feel they are or are not important.

3.1. Penance.
Several people who dislike the BAS have accused it of underplaying penance — worse, of being 'weak on sin' because use of the form of General Confession *within* the eucharistic liturgy is optional. The accusation is unjust. The rubric which introduces the form of General Confession and Absolution in the BAS eucharistic liturgy reads: 'The following prayers may

be used here if the Penitential Rite [pp. 216-217] was not used before the Gathering of the People, or if penitential intercessions were not used in the Prayers of the People' (p. 191). In other words, the form and timing of the act of penance may be optional, but some act of penance is required.

This observation will probably not satisfy those who have accused the BAS of being 'weak on sin'. Such people seem to think that a form of General Confession said between the Intercession and Prayer of Consecration is the only possible way of meeting the penitential obligation at the eucharist. The theological rationale for such a position, with its identification of a single 'moment of penance' as alone valid and efficacious, is at best elusive. The general idea seems to be, that the acknowledgement of sin and its absolution are necessary conditions for a worthy communion. I myself do not question that penance is a precondition for the celebration of our participation in Christ. But it is a *precondition*, not a *constituent* of celebration, except on Good Friday and perhaps on Ash Wednesday. If this is so, the form of General Confession after the Prayers of the People, and maybe even penitential intercessions in the Prayers of the People, come too late in the liturgy. Such forms, at such moments in the liturgy, turn the people back in upon themselves, just at the moment when the people should be opening themselves out to the mystery of God in Christ. A form of General Confession may indeed be necessary, if the whole community as a corporate entity is guilty of sin; but then it should use the Penitential Order, or preferably a form which is specific to the sin which the whole community needs to confess, before it even begins to celebrate the eucharist. For the community does not suddenly begin to celebrate its participation in Christ just at the *Sursum corda*. It is the whole eucharist, from Greeting to Dismissal, that constitutes the community's celebration of its participation in the One who is our passover.

Apart from the exception just mentioned, however, general forms of confession are inadequate to the nature and function of penance. For penance is a particular act which refers to particular sins. General forms do not allow people either the time or the spiritual elbow-room in which to identify, acknowledge, and seek reconciliation for the specific sins and offenses which each has committed against God and other human beings. The BAS provides forms on pp. 167-172 which meet just these needs and thus allow Christian persons to perform authentic acts of penance.

3.2. Mission and outreach.

I do not feel that this particular theme is underplayed. For the variable Sunday prayers constantly offer petitions that our obedience and commitment to God in Christ may lead us to manifest his glory, his gospel, his justice, his mercy, his forgiveness, and his love to all people. In this respect, the BAS does as much as a liturgy should do: it proclaims the calling and establishes the context of mission and outreach.

Having said this much, I should also observe that our Church's ethos in this respect has undergone a real change, even a revolution, since the publication of CanBCP 1962. Historically our Church practised mission and outreach through campaigns of conversion, by which white Anglophone Anglicans sought to bring Jews, Indians, 'China's unloved daughters,' the Japanese, and other pagan peoples 'to Christ'. Witness the Collect in

the Epiphany Octave, the (now proscribed) Third Collect of Good Friday and, in the Prayers and Thanksgivings appended to the Daily Office, the Collects for the Extension of the Church, for the Conversion of the Jews, for all Missionary Workers, and for Missionary Societies — not to mention the Missionary Hymns and the hymns for Evangelistic Missions in *The Book of Common Praise* (1938). In the last thirty years a variety of reassessments have taken place, chiefly a recognition that so much of our mission-work was imperialist and ethnocentric in bias, while our social outreach was too often governed by the bourgeois instinct to enforce class hegemony.

In place of these attitudes and procedures, our Church has established policies for mission and outreach which are far more concerned with humane deeds than with evangelistic motives. I myself can sympathize with those who feel that we have worked too hard, and succeeded too well, in hiding the light of our Christian motives under a bushel. But I also feel that the BAS, especially in its variable prayers for Christmas, Epiphany, Easter, and Pentecost, redresses some of the balance. It offers a vision of mission and outreach which places responsibility upon our own selves and how our daily patterns of life with others may reveal Christ to them. The light is in us, and it manifests the gospel not by exhortation or cultural blackmail but by those small acts of justice, mercy, and love which cause an angry world surprise, awe, and finally, perhaps even assent and faith.

3.3. The Canadian context of our theology.

Who are the 'we' whose theology is supposed to have a 'Canadian context'? Does '*our* theology' mean *Anglican* theology? My response works on the assumption that this in indeed what the phrase means. As such, it calls for response on two levels.

(a) The *'Canadian content' of the BAS.* Apart from Canadian entries in the Calendar, petitions for the Queen in the various litanies, and propers for Canada Day, the BAS does indeed contain very little that can be readily and unmistakably identified as 'Canadian content'.

Nevertheless, the BAS does have a very real Canadian *quality*. This quality is revealed only in detail, by comparison with other renewed liturgies in the Anglican communion. Generally speaking, the BAS does not make its mark by presenting an idiosyncratic national liturgy but by assimilating and reworking the renewed liturgies of other Anglican churches (and not of Anglican churches alone) already in place. Take the Eucharistic Prayers in the BAS for example. Two (3 and 4) are 'modelled on' Eucharistic Prayers in the AmerBCP 1979, but not without substantive verbal revisions in detail. Eucharistic Prayer 2 is a fairly straightforward translation of the third-century Hippolytan canon, while Eucharistic Prayer 6 is the 'ecumenical' canon produced by experts from a variety of experts in the United States and based on the Orthodox anaphora of St Basil. Finally, Eucharistic Prayers 4 and 5 are entirely new *Canadian* productions, unique to the BAS. Similar points may be made about the BAS Daily Office and its choice of canticles, litanies, and responsories; the Holy Week services; and the rites of Baptism, Matrimony, and Ordination.

Overall, then, the BAS reflects the internationalist bias which has been such a hallmark of 'the Canadian context,' its governmental policies and official culture, since the 1950s. A religious version of

this internationalism has been an integral part of 'the Canadian context of Anglican theology' for even longer.

(b) *Anglicanism in the Canadian context.* Even so, such internationalism has been a comparatively recent development in Canadian Anglicanism. Historically speaking, 'the Canadian context of our theology' has been colonial, missionary, and Anglo-Saxon. From the Loyalist plantations at the end of the eighteenth century until the close of the next, our Church was dependent on English missionary societies for its staffing, its finances, and its theology; and, of course, it was constitutionally bound to the Church of England until 1893, and in name until 1955. Our internationalist bias began as a colonialist bias which asked, 'What will the C of E think?' This colonial reflex is still present and active in many parts of our Church. It also bore fruit in our missionary programme, at least at home, where the object was to convert peoples of the first nations and, to a lesser extent, Francophones to English culture as well as to Anglican spirituality.

Overseas, especially in China and Japan, our missionaries had a far better record. During the 1920s and 30s they led the way in transferring authority to native church leaders and in seeking to develop truly indigenous national Churches. At home, our Church leaders embraced the ideal of multiculturalism and genuinely sought to make it work both within Canadian Anglicanism and towards other ethnic-religious groups. This policy represented a kind of indigenization of the internationalist ethos in 'the Canadian context of our theology'. Its goal was no longer assimilation but consensus.

But even as the BAS was being produced, during the early 1980s, it was becoming clear that the Canadian nation had passed beyond multiculturalism. Diverse cultures — most obviously the Quebecois and the First Nations — began to move away from 'mere' consensus towards 'national' sovereignty. There has been, at the same time, a noticeable increase in centrifugal regionalism even among those parts of Canada which have been traditionally Anglophone.

This is the present 'Canadian context of our theology'. One is forced to ask whether Anglican theologians have tried to make sense of it, or even taken it seriously as the actual 'Canadian context'? So far as I can tell, most theological voices in our Church deplore it as a threat to national unity and the old virtues of multicultural consensus. And yet such reactions look more and more like ideological projections, less and less like a facing of facts about the existing shape of the Canadian context itself. Circumstances may change (and I, for one, passionately hope that they do), so that the actual socio-political context of our theology ceases to be so fissiparous. But what does a Church, whose own theology shunted between the inheritance of a post-colonial organization and internationalism, have to say to such a situation? Or put it another way. One of the historic callings of Anglican theology was to explore the nexus between church-membership and citizenship, between churchhood and nationhood, between communion and commonwealth. In a religiously and socially diverse nation, in a nation which is increasingly liable to balkanization, it may be the true 'Canadian context of our theology' to meet the challenge head-on, without flinching, and to help create, rather than simply endorse or critique, official secular policies.

The BAS may serve as a springboard

to the larger and more immediate task presented to 'our theology' in its current 'Canadian context'. It is a book of alternatives; and clearly alternatives — alternatives to separatism *or* unity, centrifugal regionalism *or* centralized nationhood are just what we need. At the same time, it may also be true that the BAS does not go far enough in the way it conceives of alternatives. It still works on the model of consensus, rather than true diversity. Again, to take the Eucharistic Prayers as an example: they all follow the West Syrian (or Antiochene) pattern, even to the point of inserting a Sanctus into the Hippolytan canon, which originally did not have such an acclamation. It may be one of the tasks of *liturgical* renewal within 'the Canadian context of our theology' to help to create in our own Church an atmosphere where *real* alternatives are possible.

3.4. Eschatology and life after death. These two issues are different and ought not to be identified, as the question here seems to do. The difference is succinctly put in one of the funeral collects: '[Grant] that when we depart this life we may rest in [Christ], and at the resurrection receive that blessing which your well-beloved Son shall then pronounce....' (BAS, Funeral Liturgy, p. 601 [Additional Prayers, 4]; cf. CanBCP 1962, Burial Office, p. 603 [prayer at the grave]). 'Rest in Christ (or in peace)' is not really an eschatological image; it refers to an interim state *before* the consummation of all things, which is the resurrection. The idea at issue is put forward in the Letter to the Hebrews, when it refers to the saints of the old covenant: 'Yet all these, though they were commended for their faith, did not receive what was promised, since God had provided something better so that they would not, apart from us, be made perfect' (Heb. 11.39-40). No less than the saints of Israel, the Christian dead and indeed we ourselves have yet to receive the 'something better' which God has provided in Christ, namely, the promise of resurrection. *That* is eschatology; 'life after death,' however it is conceived, is a condition of waiting expectation for the promised *eschaton*.

So, no, the BAS does not underplay either theme any more than CanBCP 1962 does. It simply expresses the same basic distinction between the interim condition of 'rest in Christ' and the final resurrection which is promised to all created life, whether 'at rest' or yet on earth.

3.5. Feminist theology and spirituality.
3.6. The inclusivity of the gospel. These two issues, I feel, are best discussed together, precisely on feminist grounds. I do not mean to underplay feminist efforts to rediscover in the past, or to conceive and gestate in the present, authentic and distinct voices, practices, and authority for women within Christian traditions of theology and spirituality. But my own reading of feminist theologians — and here I confess that I may need to be corrected — has led me to wonder whether this specifically feminist agenda does not have, as one of it principal aims, a wish to establish the radical inclusivity of the gospel. This, it seems to me, means a Christian spirituality and theology which does more than just appropriate and assimilate the distinctive experience of women to an already-existing consensus. It means, instead, breaking open the consensus so that women *as women* may be shapers of the whole community's spirituality and definers of the whole community's doctrinal understandings — and may be so as the full, independent

partners of men, not just as their dependent helpmates. As Rosemary Radford Ruether has said, Christian feminism has a vocation to inclusivity: 'Women cannot affirm themselves as *imago dei* as subjects of full human potential in a way that diminishes male humanity. Women... must reach for a continually expanding definition of inclusive humanity — inclusive of both genders, inclusive of all social groups and races' (*Sexism and God-Talk: Toward a Feminist Theology* [Boston, 1982], p. 20).

I am not competent to say whether or not the BAS addresses the particular concerns which are at the centre of feminist theology and practice. I have already commented (Response 2.1c) that it has probably not gone far enough in exploring inclusive imagery for God. It has made some efforts, however, in representing a more inclusive vision of humanity and the experience of salvation. Eucharistic Prayer 1, for instance, not only picks up on Genesis 1.27 in referring to male and female *both* being created in the divine image. It also refers to Abraham *and Sarah* as joint participants in God's original covenant; and the BAS Calendar includes a wider representation of women saints than either CanBCP 1962 or any other Anglican calendar. Listening to feminists within our Church, however, I am sure that the BAS could have gone much further, and that any future book should go much further, in meeting feminist concerns and, in particular, feminism's vocation to inclusivity.

3.7. The charismatic nature of the Church. I must confess to a wariness on this issue, a wondering whether there might not be a hidden agenda in its phrasing.

In the Greek New Testament, *charismata* refer to 'gifts' bestowed on individuals within the Church, 'gifts' which are bestowed primarily through the Holy Spirit. But St Paul takes pains to link them to the 'edification' of the whole Christian community, so that they must be seen as public 'services' and 'ministries' which are at the disposal and for the benefit of all members of the body of Christ (cf. 1 Cor 12.4-7). In this light, the whole Church is seen as a 'gifted' community whose nature is its breathing of the Spirit which quickens the risen body of Jesus.

Nowadays, however, 'charismatic' normally refers to the agenda of a particular movement of Christians. This movement appeals to certain 'gifts of the Spirit' — glossolalia, faith-healing, testimonies to conversion, etc. — which are presented as necessary badges of 'true Christians'. This 'charismatic' movement thus has a tendency to set up a church within the Church — the very tendency which so outraged Paul in his Corinthian correspondence.

'The gifts of the Spirit,' as defined by the modern charismatic movement, are given no means of expression at all in the BAS. But insofar as this movement constricts the qualities and characteristics of Christianhood, insofar as it sets up a distinct church of 'true' or 'elect' members within the Church, and insofar as it ignores the witness and warnings of 1 Corinthians 12-14, I think that the BAS has acted justly in making no specifically 'charismatic' provisions.

But if 'charismatic' is understood in a broader sense, as meaning the Spirit's action in the Church, then the situation changes quite drastically. Consider, first of all, the evidence in the baptismal liturgy: the opening greeting (p. 151), the prayers for the candidates (p. 155), the alternative prayers of Thanksgiving over Water (pp. 156 158), the prayers for confirmation (p. 161) and for reaffirmation of baptismal vows (p. 162) — all these texts suggest that the Spirit is indeed the Person who consti-

tutes the Church in communion with the Father through Christ. The same must be said about the various forms of epiclesis in the Eucharistic Prayers; and it should not be forgotten that in the BAS ordinal the laying-on of hands is, in the case of each order, accompanied by a petition for the sending-down of the Spirit upon the ordinand. All in all, therefore, the BAS bears strong witness, at crucial moments in the Church's life, to 'the charismatic nature of the Church' — that is, to the Church as a community constituted and quickened by God's pouring out of the gift of the Holy Spirit.

3.8. Native spiritual traditions.
Yes, native spiritual traditions are 'underplayed' in the BAS — but only on the assumption that we, as Anglicans, have a relatively clear appreciation of what role they *should* play in our liturgical life. I see little evidence for making such an assumption. The emergence of native spiritualities in the religious and cultural consciousness of the Christian churches is a new phenomenon. Moreover, the native peoples' reassertion of their ancestral spiritual traditions is itself a comparatively recent development. It is also a development which, with a good deal of justice on the side of the first nations, has involved polemics against Christian spiritualities. The dialogue between these two spiritual traditions had hardly even begun to take place when the BAS was being produced. This dialogue still has a long way to go before aspects of native spiritualities can be incorporated into Anglican liturgical texts without perpetrating the indignity and injustice of mere tokenism.

I think we need to ask ourselves some hard questions on this issue; and I confess that the questions I ask here arise out of my own ignorance and need for instruction. First of all, I wonder if the spiritual traditions of the diverse tribes of Canada can be reduced to a common foundation which the native peoples themselves would recognize as authentic? If the answer is 'No' — if, for example, Micmac spirituality differs from Mohawk, Swampy Cree from Labrador Inuit — which elements or aspects in which native traditions do we select? Moreover, how do we go about making the selection? For I assume that, native spiritualities being non-Christian, we must make a selection. There is a difference between prophetical witness, which is not only compatible with but also perhaps necessary to the renewal of Christian spirituality, and a vision which without denying its integrity in itself, is fundamentally incompatible with the gospel of Christ and its liturgical expression in the Church. How do we go about determining compatibility? And if we do find things truly compatible, and *if* native people allow us to appropriate them, how do we express such visions and insights in a way that is both comprehensible to the overwhelmingly white membership of our Church and just to the integrity of the tradition from which we draw it?

3.9. Justice, peace, and the integrity of creation.
'Christians have discovered a new responsibility in the world, that loving their neighbours as themselves demands more than compliance with the civil law. As the *Letter of James* puts it, it is not enough to say to the poor, "Go in peace. Be warmed and filled" (2.16).' So states the Introduction to the BAS (pp. 10-11). The 'new responsibility' of which it speaks is important because we Christians, though we may not be '*of* the world,' are certainly '*in* the world' as participants in its shape and fate. But by baptism and eucharistic communion

we are also participants in Christ and his redemptive work. As participants in Christ, we are more than mere recipients of benefits. We are also agents of the One in whose life and gospel we participate, who are empowered to enact the very benefits which we have received — and who must enact these benefits in the actual contexts and situations in which 'we live, and move, and have our being'. It seems to me that this is at least part of the point of Christ's parables, where the kingdom is so often likened to a seed which, having been planted by God, grows out of the earth and produces as its fruit 'a new heaven and a new earth'. Our responsibility, then, as participants in the life of the Redeemer, is to nurture the seed of God's sovereignty in Christ by enacting his saving justice, his redeeming peace, and his transformative care for the integrity of all creation in our own time and among the persons of our own age.

I do not feel that these themes are underplayed in the BAS; one has only to attend to the variable Sunday prayers. Some may consider the themes of justice, peace, and the integrity of creation to be underplayed because the BAS does not to address them directly — by appointing and providing propers for, e.g., a 'Justice Sunday,' a 'Peace Sunday,' or an 'Environmental Concern Sunday'. Such themes are universal concerns, but it takes particular issues, specific events and circumstances within a given community to give them a more than abstract reality. In a liturgical book like the BAS, whose use is national and (it now appears) designed to last for a generation, the propers for a 'Justice Sunday' would require us to pray and select readings on a generic basis, a procedure which would not allow us to address a present challenge or a specific issue of justice, in a world where injustices flourish, any more than many of the variable propers already in place. Meeting a specific issue and challenge of justice within a community is, instead, best accomplished through petitions in the Prayers of the People. We need to be more flexible — and perhaps more courageous — in our performance of this part of the Daily Office and Holy Eucharist. Indeed, the BAS itself says that the set forms of intercession provided on pp. 110 -128 'are... only suggested models. They ought not to become the standard forms used in a parish, but should be adapted with imagination to meet the needs of the local Church' (p. 177). If this guideline were truly taken to heart, the Prayers of the People would allow a congregation to address, occasionally or on a regular basis, particular issues of justice, peace, and ecological concern in the local, national, and international situation, while maintaining its continuity with the unfolding of the Church Year. It may also be noted that the commemoration of certain saints may afford a similar occasion for focusing the Prayers of the People, inasmuch as certain saints have borne special witness for justice, peace, the integrity of creation, and other special issues. Their past witness may be translated and applied in such a way as to allow the community to speak to local, provincial, national, or the world's condition.

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Submission to the Evaluation Commission on *The Book of Alternative Services* of the Anglican Church of Canada

by
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Starting Points:
The Theology of the BAS vs that of the Book of Common Prayer

Where you choose your starting point determines where you finish. In undertaking their revision, the revisers of the 1959-62 Canadian *Book of Common Prayer* made their starting point plain. In the Preface we read: 'And always there has been understanding that no alterations should be made which would involve or imply any change of doctrine of the Church as set forth in *The Book of Common Prayer*, or any other alteration not in accord with the 27th Resolution of the Lambeth Conference of 1908 and the 78th Resolution of the Lambeth Conference of 1948.' (BCP, p. vii).

The Preface continues: 'When the Bishops, Clergy, and Laity of the Church in Canada assembled for the first General Synod in 1893, they made a Solemn Declaration of the faith in which they met together. It is in that faith that this Book of Common Prayer is offered to the Church...'

That faith is defined in the Solemn Declaration of 1893 (BCP, p. viii); it consists in holding the One Faith which is revealed in Holy Writ, and defined in the Creeds as maintained by the undivided primitive Church in the undisputed Ecumenical Councils; it receives the same canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as containing all things necessary to salvation; teaches the same Word of God, partakes of the same Divinely ordained Sacraments through the ministry of the same Apostolic orders; and worships the One God and Father through the same Lord Jesus Christ, by the same Holy and Divine Spirit.

The touchstone of this faith is seen as *The Book of Common Prayer*, not through any virtues of its own, but by virtue of its fidelity to the revealed Word of God in its doctrine, discipline, and sacraments: 'And we are determined by the help of God to hold and maintain the Doctrine, Sacraments, and Discipline of Christ as the Lord hath commanded it in Holy Writ, and as the Church of England hath received and set forth the same in the Book of Common Prayer...'

Thus, the norms of Anglicanism are set out by the revisers of our Prayer Book, and the determination to hold them fast is resolutely declared. *The Book of Alternative Services*, on the other hand, starts out from a very different point, as is made clear in the various introductions to the book. These introductions also go to great lengths to explain the underlying theology of the BAS. It is here that we should start an evaluation of the BAS, as this theology departs from the classical Anglican norms outlined above in several significant areas.

The Authority of Scripture

The most serious point on which the theology of the BAS departs from classical Anglican norms is the authority of Scripture. Article XX declares Scripture to be God's Word writ, that is, it possesses both

authority and integrity. *The Book of Alternative Services,* on the other hand, regards Scripture as the 'repository of the Church's symbols of life and faith' (BAS, p. 9). The implication is, I believe, quite clear: Scripture becomes a collection of themes and symbols, haphazardly stored away (a 'repository of symbols'), which may be retrieved individually or severally, rearranged, and restructured to conform to contemporary ways of thinking. Dr Robert Crouse, addressing the Annual General Meeting of the Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island branch of the Prayer Book Society of Canada in May 1990, expresses it in this way: The BAS 'starts from the acceptance of contemporary culture as its standard, and reinterprets the Gospel in its light'. [1]

The introductions of the BAS make this clear. Its authors regard the incorporation of contemporary, secular thought into this process of restructuring — the process of reinterpreting the Gospel in the light of contemporary culture, as Dr Crouse puts it — as essential: 'it is consequently vital that [liturgy] wear the idiom, the cadence, the world-view, the imagery' of the passing generation (BAS, p. 10).

The authors of the BAS make it clear that they locate doctrine in what the Church enacts as liturgy: 'liturgy is a reflective process in which doctrine may be discovered' (BAS, p. 10). (This in itself is a significant departure from classical Anglican norms). To change liturgy must therefore be to change doctrine. An attempt to refashion liturgy so that it wears the 'idiom, the cadence, the world view, the imagery' of contemporary culture must therefore involve, at least to some extent, the refashioning of doctrine in such a way that it reflects the preoccupations, prejudices, and outlook of the passing age. This, indeed, seems to be what the authors of the BAS have in mind: 'The church must be open to liturgical change in order to permit the continuous development of a living theology' (BAS p. 10).

Yet, surely, as Christians, we believe in the Gospel, which we find in Holy Writ ('God's Word written'); and we believe that Gospel to be revealed, eternal, and unchanging. It is something objective: it is Absolute and it is True, existing of itself, independent of what we may think or feel at any given moment, and independent of changing fashions, philosophies, and modes of thought.

This idea of a Gospel that is both revealed and eternal is at the heart of all classical Anglican thought, and is the very essence of all orthodox Christian teaching. Against this understanding, the theology of the BAS becomes problematic. A Gospel open to theological and doctrinal change, change which is itself conditioned by contemporary culture: surely this is a dubious principle. At a time when 'the idiom, ... the worldview' of our own age is fast becoming increasingly materialistic, self-indulgent, relativistic, self-seeking, violent, and irreligious — in short, increasingly antagonistic to the values of the Beatitudes — it becomes a principle that threatens the integrity of the Christian religion itself.

The Introduction to the BAS Funeral Rite

It is in the Introduction to the Funeral Rite of the BAS that we see this principle of reinterpreting the Gospel in the light of contemporary culture in its fullest expression. This should not be surprising, as it is in the face of death that Christian belief is put to the ultimate test.

The authors of the BAS seem to have taken as their starting point the assump-

tions of contemporary thought, which are strongly conditioned by secular sciences such as sociology, anthropology, and psychology; all of which are known for their sceptical approach to any exclusive claim to a revealed or absolute truth.

Where you pick your starting point determines where you finish. Significantly, the Introduction, which reads like a sociological study, opens with musings upon the burial rites of 'our most ancient ancestors', and proceeds to draw universal conclusions about the nature of death and the 'mourning process', as if this were an appropriate place to start the formulation of a Christian understanding of death.

'It is important for Christians to be aware of the universal dimensions of funeral practices, partly out of sensitivity to the basic needs, conscious and unconscious, which mourners bring to these rituals, and partly so they can identify clearly the particular insights and interpretations which the Christian faith brings to bear on the reality of death and the experience of bereavement' (BAS, p. 565).

Having chosen a detached, sceptical approach to the mystery of death, it is not surprising to find that the authors of the BAS find the Bible to be ambiguous about death itself, and about Christ's death in particular: 'There is no single biblical attitude to death, not even the death of Jesus' (BAS, p. 566). The Gospels of St Matthew and St Luke are reduced to 'a cry of abandonment', that of Luke to one of 'resignation'. Christian belief is reduced to 'insights' and 'interpretations', and the fullness of the Christian revelation becomes 'a theology of resurrection'.

The statement regarding the Bible's ambiguity towards the 'death of Jesus' bears particular scrutiny. Of course the believing Christian, reading the events of Christ's trial, public humiliation, shameful execution, death and resurrection, and meditating upon their significance may undergo a wide variety of emotional responses: anger, perhaps, at the hypocrisy of religious and civil authority; desolation at the suffering and death of our Lord; humility at the realization that it is our sins that have placed him there on the Cross; compassion at the grief of his mother and the disciples; perhaps with St Thomas some scepticism at the first reports of his resurrection; and surely most of all wonder and rapture at finding those reports to be true.

But surely this is not what the statement in the BAS is saying. Given the context, it seems clear that it is the reality of the Resurrection, and its significance, which the BAS finds ambiguous in the Bible.

'For the truth is we do not know the condition of the dead, and while faith may consign their well-being to the creative and redemptive remembrance of God, everything we say about them remains, as things said, at the level of symbol. This is precisely the level at which Paul worked when he wrote the great fifteenth chapter of his first letter to the Corinthians, drawing on images of seeds and stars and bodies to communicate his belief in the ultimate transformation of mortal human nature. It is important that funeral liturgies enable people to act at this poetic and symbolic level of their being' (BAS, p. 567).

Here, facing death, at the time when it is most important that the Christian Church speak with clarity and conviction, the authors of the BAS fail to affirm any faith in the truth of Christ Jesus, risen from the dead. Significantly, the writers even disassociate themselves from St Paul: the convictions the great Apostle declares with such power in the epistle to the Corinthians

are reduced to 'his belief' — that is, something we need not believe, nor the Church proclaim, if we choose not to.

It is also noteworthy that, when talking about the 'death of Jesus' in the passage quoted above, the BAS gives our Lord only his human name, Jesus, and neglects to give him his title of Christ. *Eerdman's Bible Dictionary* points out the significance of his name and title: ' The two names of Jesus Christ are not really interchangeable. "Jesus" is the name given the child at his circumcision (Luke 2:21); when the title, Christ, is used, that passage should be understood as a specific reference to the Saviour's office as Mediator, the agent of reconciliation between God and Man.'[2] Thus the failure to proclaim the full name and title of Jesus as the Christ takes on a theological significance that becomes particularly significant in the context of an attempt to formulate a Christian understanding of death.

Eerdman's Bible Dictionary continues by pointing out that the title Christ is that given to the pre-existent Son of God, existing before the foundation of the world (cf John 1:1). The title Christ proclaims that the man Jesus, as the Annointed One, fulfills the threefold roles of Prophet, Priest and King. As Prophet he proclaims salvation to a sinful people, and pronounces his forgiveness to those whom he has called, justified, and glorified. As King, he comes to reign over a kingdom not of this world, but another. As Priest, Jesus restores for his people what had been corrupted by Adam's fall, and perfects for us what Adam failed to do. For He is our incomparable High Priest, who alone accomplishes the great sacrifice of the Atonement, fulfilling the Law on behalf of his people, redeeming them from their sins.

This is the living heart of our Gospel. It is essential that it be both understood and articulated clearly and unambiguously in any attempt to formulate a Christian understanding of death, as it is only in the context of Christ's victory over death on the Cross, as King and great High Priest, that death can have any meaning for Christians. At this crucial point in its exploration of the meaning of death, the BAS fails to do this. In doing so it fails to proclaim the messianic and propitiatory role of the One who takes our sins upon him, and conquers both sin and death. In the light of the Introduction to the BAS on page 7, and the lack of importance placed on the Atonement and penitence and absolution elsewhere in the BAS, one suspects that this is deliberate.

All this serves to confirm a general impression that what is being presented in the BAS is a watered-down theology, a diluted Gospel for a secular age. It is only once this notion has been grasped that the anguish and dismay with which traditionalist Anglicans have greeted the BAS can fully be understood.

The attempt to view the Gospel through a secular lens ends where it must: the Resurrection is no more than 'symbolic'. Death remains a veiled mystery, and ultimately, we don't really know very much about anything; little more, it seems, than the primitive ancestors with whose funeral rites we started. 'For the truth is we do not know the condition of the dead, and while faith may consign their well-being to the creative and redemptive remembrance of God, everything we say about them remains, as things said, at the level of symbol.'

This is not the Faith for which the saints died. A member of the Prayer Book Society of Canada has written: 'I wonder what would have happened if the early Christians, when hauled up in front of the Roman magistrates to explain their belief in the resurrection of Jesus and all who die in Him had replied: "The truth is we don't

really know their condition, and everything we say about them is at the level of symbol". I'm sure the Romans wouldn't have though them *worth* persecuting! 'Level of symbol' indeed! Jesus' resurrection was no symbol. It was real! It was no symbol that put out His hands so St Thomas could feel the wounds, no symbol that ate with the apostles in the room at Emmaus. There's no doubt that the BAS waters down our religion ...'. [3]

One might add that even the most cursory reading of the opening of 1 Corinthians 15 makes it clear that St Paul is not talking in mere symbols.

Of course death is a mystery — a terrible and difficult mystery — but any Christian response to death must surely end in an affirmation that we 'look for the Resurrection of the body, and the Life everlasting'.

It has been argued that critics of the BAS make too much of these passages in the Introduction to the Funeral Rite. I do not believe this to be the case. It is in the face of death, and in articulating her response to death, that the Christian Church must proclaim unflinchingly, with a clear and unequivocal voice, her unwavering faith in the truth of Christ crucified, risen, ascended, glorified. Anything less is indeed a watering down of the Catholic and Scriptural faith which has been handed down to us. Anything less becomes a Gospel without conviction, and without demands. It is not the world remade by the Gospel, but the Gospel remade by the world.

The Atonement, and the Centrality of the Cross

The failure to affirm the Resurrection which we see in the introductions of the Funeral Rite of the BAS seems to this writer the direct result of the practice of treating the Scriptures as a mere 'repository of symbols', and of reinterpreting the Gospel in the light of contemporary culture. Similarly, the importance of faith and penitence, and the reality of sin, (concepts antagonistic to the 'idiom, the cadence, the world view' of western, late twentieth century ways of thought), are notably downplayed in the BAS, in direct contradiction to the emphasis placed on them in Scripture. A look at the way in which the BAS treats the doctrine of the Atonement and the centrality of the Cross shows this clearly.

Scripture, the Church Fathers, the mediaeval doctors, and the Anglican reformers all agree in teaching that through Adam all have sinned. God, in his holy wrath, is angered by that sin, but in his holy love has taken that sin upon himself, and paid the price that the law of righteousness demanded, in the person of his only Son, Jesus Christ, true God and perfect Man, upon the Cross.

Orthodox Christianity has always stressed the finality and completeness of Christ's atoning death on the Cross, and its centrality for Christian doctrine and worship. The importance of these three points — the finality, the completeness, and the centrality of the Atonement for Christian doctrine and worship — are admirably summed up in the sublime words of the Prayer Book Eucharist: 'Who of thy tender mercy didst take our nature upon him, to suffer death upon the Cross for our redemption; who made there, by his one oblation of himself once offered, a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation and satisfaction, for the sins of the whole world' (BCP, p. 82).

Yet the authors of the BAS attack *The Book of Common Prayer* for this very focus as being excessively narrow: 'bound to later medieval and Reformation themes

of atonement' is how the BAS puts it (cf BAS, pp. 178, 179). The Prayer Book's focus on the death of Christ, with its concomitant images of atonement and payment of penalty for sin are replaced in the BAS with more 'fluid' images: creation, liberation, deliverance, victory. The authors claim to be following the Fathers, and therefore reverting to a more pure liturgical imagery.

In doing so, however, the authors of the BAS have tended to divide and confuse what is present in its fullness and integrity in both the Scriptures and the Fathers. They have set up a false dichotomy, presenting the classical Anglican tradition as focusing on 'negative' images: sin, propitiation, the Cross, while presenting the patristic tradition as concentrating on 'positive' images: redemption, victory, deliverance, etc.

Integral to an orthodox interpretation of the Atonement are the concepts of *both* sin *and* redemption; Christ is both King and servant, priest and victim. The authors of the BAS seem to want only the victory and kingship, to the exclusion of the terrible price at which these have been bought.

The eminent Canadian theologian Dr Crouse puts it this way: 'What some modern scholarship, as with Aulen, has tended to divide as alternate views or theories of the atonement is all there in the Fathers from the beginning, as in the Scriptures; but in the Fathers, as also in the Scriptures, what are now seen as opposing views [i.e., by modern scholarship of the type we have in the BAS] are present as necessary facets, or dimensions, of one doctrine of salvation, focusing in the one oblation of Christ.' [4]

In fact, of course, *The Book of Common Prayer* is merely following Scripture in placing the focus of the Eucharist on Christ's death. The proper symbolism and imagery of the Eucharist has been given to us by our Lord himself. 'This is my *Body* which is *given* for you'. 'This is my *Blood* of the new *Covenant, shed* for you and for many for the *remission* of *sins*'. St Paul reminds us that 'as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's *death* until he come'. (1 Corinthians 11:26) One suspects that the BAS' reluctance to conform to the imagery of Scripture is dictated by its authors' desire to reshape both doctrine and liturgy so they are more conformable to the 'idiom', 'cadence' and 'world view' of the contemporary age. The notions of sacrifice and propitiation are hardly ones to find favour in modern eyes.

In keeping with its prejudice against 'the medieval and Reformation' themes of atonement, the BAS Eucharist treats the Cross as if it were merely one moment among others in the history of creation and redemption. It isn't. The Cross is the one great Act that delivers us from sin, it is the climax of the Bible, and the summation of all that Scripture has to say to us about the love of God, his righteousness, and his holiness. The Cross is the great Archetype; all other Biblical themes and stories of deliverance, of liberation and victory are mere types and foreshadowings. Something like a third to a quarter of the Gospel narratives are taken up by our Lord's Passion. Yet the word 'cross' hardly occurs in the BAS Eucharist prayers, the word 'passion' not at all.

In their desire to use more 'upbeat' images than death and sacrifice, the authors of the BAS attempt to concentrate on types rather than the great Archetype. In their desire to be positive, the Scriptural focus of the Atonement is lost, and the fullness and balance of the orthodox

understanding of the victory of the Cross is compromised. The net effect of the BAS Eucharist is that the emphasis is shifted away from the very thing that it is all about.

The same tendency to want only the Kingship and the victory to the exclusion of the price at which these have been bought for us is observable in other places in the BAS. For instance, the Thanksgiving Liturgy on page 128 gives thanks for many things, but does not mention God's greatest gift of all: it neglects to give Him thanks for our redemption.

Repentance

Scripture repeatedly directs us to the need to acknowledge our sin and repent. Yet *The Book of Alternative Services* has made confession and absolution optional at all services except that of Baptism. [5]

Such a view seems to envisage a notion of repentance without contrition. It certainly falls far short of the fullness of the classical Anglican understanding of repentance, which consists of four separate elements: (i) repentance, (ii) charity, (iii) the intention to lead the new life, and (iv) faith. These four elements, are, of course, best summed up in Prayer Book's Invitation to Communion: 'Ye that do [i] truly and earnestly repent you of your sins, and are [ii] in love and charity with your neighbours, and [iii] intend to live the new life according to the commandments of God, [iv] Draw near with faith ...'

The Old Testament is the story of God's relentless love reaching out again and again to a rebellious people, who fall away from the ways of their God, only to be recalled by his unfailing love, only to fall away yet again. The full summation of these successive fallings away, the Archetype of all the rejections of God recorded in the Old Testament occurs in the New, when the Incarnate God himself, standing before his People, is rejected once more, scorned, and crucified. In this continuously repeated process of turning from God we see, of course, our own image, as we ourselves turn away from God to embrace the world, our own pride, our selfishness and greed and self-interest.

It is inconceivable that we should approach the Throne of the Heavenly Grace and the re-presentation of the very act whereby the spotless Lamb gave his blood for our sins without first begging forgiveness for our misdoings and expressing an earnest desire to turn from the sins that have separated us from God.

The BAS, in making penitence optional at Communion, flies in the face of the repeated and urgent warnings in Scripture: 'Repent therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out' (Acts 3:19).

The prejudice of the authors of the BAS against the notion that repentance is an essential part of our approach to God appears in many places in the book. Especially noticeable are the removal of all or part of the Sentences of Scripture at Morning Prayer that urge repentance. The Sentence for Advent, 'Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand' (Matthew 3:2) in the Book of Common Prayer becomes 'The kingdom of God is at hand, O come let us worship' in the BAS. The Prayer Book Sentences for Lent, 'The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and contrite heart, O God, wilt thou not despise' (Psalm 51: 17), and 'Rend your heart and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God; for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of

the evil' (Joel 2:13), are both discarded in favour of 'The Lord is full of compassion and mercy: O come let us worship'. The Sentence for Good Friday in *The Book of Common Prayer* 'All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all' (Isaiah 53:6), is removed altogether.

Perhaps it needs to be remembered that, far from being 'gloomy', or degrading to human dignity, continuous repentance enables the Christian worshipper to discover the consolation and joy brought by dependence on God's grace. Modern sensibility might be offended at the self-acknowledgement of the singer of the old hymn 'Amazing Grace' as a 'wretch', but in so doing overlooks the fact that the singer celebrates not a state of wretchedness, but rapture.

There is of course, no Exhortation, no Confession, no Absolution in the BAS Morning Prayer, all these having been moved into a separate, optional service. The Venite is cut off at the very place where the psalmist calls us to listen to the voice of the Lord our God urging us to repentance, thereby denying us the chance to hear the very words that the psalmist feels we must hear!

Sin: Corporate rather than Individual

It is impossible to leave the subject of penitence without a short comment on the BAS' tendency to treat sin as something corporate and social, rather than individual and inward. This encourages a tendency to think of sin as if it were something treatable by political or social methods, rather than something spiritual, treatable only by inward conversion to the new life in Christ.

Worship: Centred on the Community rather than God

The primary purpose of liturgy has traditionally been the worship of God, our Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer, and King. The BAS replaces this with a new purpose: the celebration of the 'gathered community'. In fact, it can be argued that the BAS removes God from the centre of worship, and focuses instead on the 'gathered community' and its actions. The classical Anglican emphasis upon the appropriation to the penitent believer of the redeeming and strengthening grace of Christ through the work of the Holy Spirit receives scant emphasis in the BAS.

The BAS: Emphasis on the External Action

The profound gulf separating the BAS' understanding of the Eucharist from that of the classical Anglican tradition which has been handed down to us in *The Book of Common Prayer* is further illustrated by the BAS' emphasis on external action, and its suppression of an understanding of the need for inward, spiritual transformation.

In the BAS Eucharistic rites, with their explicit epiclesis upon the elements of bread and wine, the emphasis is placed upon the external action. This is congruent with the notion of Christian life, community and action in the BAS. The emphasis is placed upon the earthly participants as members of a gathered community, gathered here and now, and upon the action, the doing. It is in that doing that the BAS defines our relationship with God, with one another, and with the world. There is a deliberate and self-conscious focusing upon this gathered community, with ourselves as actors, hence the invocation upon the gifts, which have become an integral part of

our action. We move from what we do as the spiritual community with these gifts to what we are going to do as we are sent out to transform the world.

The Words of Administration from *The Book of Common Prayer*, on the other hand, exhort the communicant to receive the consecrated Body and Blood of our Lord and Saviour with faith and thanksgiving, remembering that Christ died for us and for the remission of sins.

The objection to the invocation in the BAS of the Spirit upon the bread and wine lies in the fact that without the Prayer Book sense of the Eucharist as drawing us to what God has done for us, to what is real in time and eternity (that is, the winning of our Salvation upon the Cross), a reality grasped inwardly and not performed by us externally, we are in danger of moving to an external and magical sense of the sacrament. The elements are not, and never can be, Spirit-filled pieces of matter imparting some magical and automatic grace: they must be received responsively by living, understanding creatures with love, faith and consciousness.

In *The Book of Common Prayer*, the emphasis is meditative, upon internal transformation. The soul meditates upon what God has done for us, so that we may perceive, through the Holy Sacrament, what Christ has done for us in offering his body and blood to reconcile us as sinners to the Father.

The emphasis in the BCP is inward: it aims at the transformation of the human soul; lost in awe and wonder at the love of the great mystery of redemption, contemplating the risen, ascended, glorified Christ, we pray for the descent of the Holy Spirit upon us, that we may be 'filled with grace and heavenly benediction', and respond with faith to the great Act that is remembered before us.

Only once this internal transformation has been effected, with the soul conformed to God's love, and meditating upon the supreme sacrifice of Christ, can we go forth into the world, and be in perfect charity with all people. 'For when we spiritually eat the flesh of Christ, and drink his blood, then we dwell in Christ, and Christ in us, we are one with Christ, and Christ with us' (The Exhortations before Communion, BCP p. 89).

This transformation of the human soul can only take place through understanding, with faith and thanksgiving. This is why the words of Administration in *The Book of Common Prayer* are so explicit as to what our proper response to the Communion ought to be. 'Take and eat in remembrance that Christ died for thee, and feed on him in thy heart by faith with thanksgiving'; 'Drink this in remembrance that Christ's blood was shed for thee, and be thankful'.

The Communion in the Prayer Book is therefore seen as our contemplation of God's great Act of redemption wrought for us by the death of Jesus Christ on the Cross. In the BAS, on the other hand, the Eucharist becomes our self-conscious act of defining ourselves as a gathered community. The BAS makes the communion our act, rather than God's.

Similarly, from its positioning and handling in the BAS, it appears that the Peace is understood primarily as a reconciliation between the members of the 'gathered community'. This is a significant departure from the 1962 Canadian Prayer Book, where it is clearly the Peace of God, which flows from the love of Christ, a significance underlined by its positioning immediately after the Prayer of Consecration.

The new liturgies of the BAS, in their insistence upon the external, upon the

doing, in their clamorous affirmation of our right to stand before God at the Eucharist, in their suppression of the internal spiritual element of the Communion, actively (and deliberately) militate directly against the insistence in traditional Christianity upon the inwardness of spirit in which the Body and Blood of Christ should be received, and upon the inward nature of the transformation affected in those who receive the Body and Blood of the risen, ascended, and glorified Christ. In the BAS there is no opportunity to let the soul meditate upon what God has done for us. The Augustinian emphasis upon inner spiritual transformation is simply denied.

The Collects

The collects of *The Book of Common Prayer* are consistent in exalting the glory of God, stressing the fallen nature of mankind, and asserting the necessity of Divine Grace. In doing so, they remind us as often as we pray them of the realities which Scripture sets before us.

Apart from the collects which are either modern re-wordings of those in *The Book of Common Prayer*, the collects of the BAS fail to do the same. They are, to the mind of this writer, insufficient as prayers whose task is to sustain the Christian in daily life. The emphasis on the importance of humility on the part of the worshipper is diluted, and the doctrinal precision of the BCP collects is lost.

This is not a matter of language so much as content. Compare, for instance, the BAS collect for the Third Sunday in Lent — Year B and C (BAS p. 290), with its counterpart from the BCP (for the Second Sunday in Lent, p. 143). Gone are the petitions for defence against bodily adversity and spiritual temptation; replaced by vague talk about 'being discouraged by weakness'.

Similarly, the BAS collect for the Second Sunday for Advent prays that our disobedient hearts may be turned to God, that when Christ comes again to be our judge, we 'may stand with confidence before his glory'. One might almost be forgiven for thinking that the 'confidence' mentioned is something that we ourselves have earned.

There is a desperate need to restore to these prayers the Scriptural emphasis and doctrinal purity of the classical Anglican collects. It is noteworthy that the BAS collects for Christmas make no reference to the Virgin Birth or to our deliverance from sin, nor to our being regenerate and made God's children through adoption and grace. The BAS collect for Trinity Sunday makes no reference to the Holy Trinity. These failures indicate that a new theology is at work in the BAS, one that goes to the very heart of what we believe as Christians.

Sorrow and Suffering

No commentary on the BAS would be complete without a note on the Book's approach to sorrow and suffering. Many letters to the Prayer Book Society of Canada have expressed the opinion that the BAS is inadequate to prepare for the adversity that every Christian must meet in his or her pilgrimage through life.

It may well be that the authors of the BAS feel that sorrow and suffering do not loom large in the lives of late twentieth century Canadian Anglicans, and are therefore not a part of the 'idiom' and 'cadence' of the present age. However, sorrow and suffering are very much a part of the lives of the vast majority of people living around the world: for countless millions, disease, famine, early death, war, and infant mortality are daily com-

panions. If the same is not true in contemporary Canada, it is only through the grace of God. Even so, one need only visit, for instance, a shelter for battered women in downtown Toronto to see that suffering and heartbreak are as much with us as ever.

'Altogether too sunny,' Bishop Cameron has said of modern liturgies,[6] and one certainly gets the impression that the authors of the BAS, carrying over their attempts to present a 'positive' image in worship, and reacting against what they see as the excessive 'gloominess' of *The Book of Common Prayer*, seem unwilling to face the fallen nature of mankind, and the fact that Nature, too, is fallen. There is a very real sense in which the BAS does not reflect adequately the full spectrum of human experience, and is in danger of projecting a shallowly optimistic picture of human existence.

Some Conclusions

The BAS departs from traditional Anglican norms in doctrine and worship in several significant ways. The most serious of these is the failure to assert the authority and integrity of Holy Scripture. The classic Anglican position has always been that doctrine and worship should conform to the revealed Truth of the Gospel, which we find in Holy Scripture. The BAS does not put sufficient emphasis on the authority of Scripture, or treat Scripture as possessing its own inviolable integrity.

A direct consequence of this failure occurs in the attempt to formulate a Christian understanding of death, and a Christian response to death, in the Introduction to the Funeral Liturgy. Here the BAS fails to affirm the witness of the one Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church that Jesus Christ rose from the dead and ascended to the Father to prepare a place for those who believe in Him, so that with the Saints they may reign with Him in glory and holiness and joy forever.

The Christian life is a journey and a pilgrimage, often amidst much adversity. Paradoxically, while trying to be optimistic in its view of human nature, the BAS waffles on the most important of all of Christ's promises to us: that of eternal life. This can offer little consolation to the forty-one year old schoolteacher, struggling with a mortgage and a career, whose wife and mother of their children is dying slowly and in great pain from cancer. Statements such as 'The truth is we do not know the condition of the dead ...' are hollow and empty — quite simply insufficient — in light of the Church's Credal affirmation that it 'looks for the Resurrection of the dead, and the Life of the world to come'.

The failure to affirm the authority of Scripture is reflected elsewhere in the BAS. In what seems to be a misguided attempt to be accessible to the modern mind, the BAS fails to articulate the fullness, the finality and the centrality of the doctrine of the Atonement.

A direct consequence is the downgrading of the centrality of the Cross. The BAS treats the Cross as if it were but one moment among others in the history of creation and redemption, rather than the one great Act which delivers us from sin and restores us to our right relationship with God. In the attempt to downplay its centrality, the BAS loses the fullness and balance of the orthodox understanding of the victory of the Cross. As the Cross stands at the very heart of our faith, this is a matter of the utmost importance.

Not unexpectedly, as a result of this loss of the fullness of the orthodox understanding of the Cross, the BAS fails to recognize fully the reality of sin, as well as

the need for repentance, nor does it appear to understand fully the true nature of contrition, as it has traditionally been understood by the Church. The sum total is a failure to acknowledge fully the terrible price at which our redemption has been bought.

Similarly, the BAS fails to emphasize the importance of faith in Christ and the appropriation to the penitent believer of the redeeming and strengthening grace of Christ through the work of the Holy Spirit. Another significant departure from classic Anglican (and orthodox Christian) norms is the tendency to view sin as something corporate, rather than individual, as if it were something treatable by political or social methods, rather than a spiritual illness, treatable only by inward conversion to the new life in Christ.

The primary purpose of liturgy has traditionally been worship: the worship of God, our Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer, and King. The BAS focuses instead on the actions of the 'gathered community', on creation, rather than Creator, on our actions rather than God's. In the BAS, Creation, rather than Redemption, becomes the central theme. The heavenward slant, the God-centred vision of the Holy Scriptures, faithfully mirrored in the writings of the Fathers, and in our own Anglican tradition as embodied in *The Book of Common Prayer*, is replaced by this new earth-ward, human-centred emphasis.

In sharp contrast to *The Book of Common Prayer*, the BAS focuses on the Eucharist as our act, rather than a sacramental re-enactment of what God has done for us. This runs parallel to an emphasis upon externalities, upon our actions, rather than on an inward spiritual transformation brought about by faith in Christ and the action of the Holy Spirit.

The necessity of responding to God's grace with love, faith, and conscious understanding receives scant emphasis in the BAS. The BAS Eucharist suppresses, deliberately and consciously, the traditional Christian insistence upon the inwardness of spirit in which the Body and Blood of Christ should be received, and upon the inward nature of the transformation affected by those who receive, with faith, love and understanding the Body and Blood of the risen, ascended, and glorified Christ.

The authors of the BAS seem to understand theology as a developing process discovered in the world by means of the reflective process of liturgy. They argue that both doctrine, that is, the teaching of the Church, and liturgy must be flexible to reflect changing attitudes in contemporary society. This is inconsistent with the teaching of the early Church Fathers: central to that teaching is an understanding of the Gospel as eternal and revealed, as well as the idea that Christians should stand apart from the world. Further more, the notion that the Christian Gospel should be subject in any way to the vicissitudes of changing secular thought is one that any faithful Christian should view with apprehension. It is a notion that some Church leaders espoused in Nazi Germany in the 1930s, with disastrous consequences. [7]

The authors of the BAS, in their attempt to adopt an optimistic and 'upbeat' view of human nature and of the human condition, have, I believe, fallen into the trap of projecting a shallowly optimistic view of human existence, and in so doing have failed to address the harsh realities of life.

This is an important issue, as the Christian Gospel claims to answer the hard questions asked by anyone who

studies the human condition. It seems a strange trap to fall into for any Christian book of worship, produced in the last half of the twentieth century, when the unprecedented evils of the regimes of Stalin and Hitler (not to mention those of their more recent imitators such as Pol Pot or Idi Amin) are still a part of living memory.

In our immediately contemporary world of the 1990's it is doubly curious: in the quest for a materialistic paradise rather than a spiritual one, modern industrial society has polluted the heavens above us, as well as the earth beneath our feet, yet the dream of a perfect society remains as elusive as ever.

Drug abuse, violence, inner city decay, and the development of an underclass are among the modern plagues that scourge our North American cities. In Europe, there is bitter and bloody civil war among people who have lived as neighbours for generations, and the spectre of a renascent Fascism haunts the wealthy democracies. War, pestilence and famine stalk Africa. Particularly sobering is the thought that these are things many thought progressive, modern societies had left behind. Their re-emergence should remind us with unequivocal force that we live in a fallen world, and that sin, and evil, and despair, and violence, and greed are spiritual illnesses; they still abound in the world, and political and social remedies can offer at best limited solutions.[8]

A falsely shallow view of the human condition hampers the Church's ability to preach the Gospel to an unbelieving world. The Scriptures, with their acknowledgement of the human capacity for folly, violence, arrogance and greed have a far tougher and more realistic view of human nature, and show an awareness of our need for God that is not always evident in the BAS.

I respectfully submit that, in spite of what are doubtless the best of intentions, the BAS presents us with a diluted doctrine and a watered-down Gospel, and distorts the Faith which is attested for us in Holy Scripture, and which has been handed down to us through the long years of faithful Christian witness.

The BAS also rejects many significant, specifically Anglican insights into the Christian faith. Their absence from an Anglican book of worship implies a failure to appreciate the Anglican theological tradition, and diminishes any sense of our worshipping as a community which is identifiably Anglican.

Notes

1. Quoted in the article 'Rites for a New Age?: Dr Crouse Comments ', from the *Newsletter* of the Prayer Book Society of Canada, No. 18, December 1990, p. 9.

2. *The Eerdman's Bible Dictionary,* Revised Edition, edited by Allen C Meyers, (Wm B Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, 1987), pp. 207 ff.

3. Quoted in the *Newsletter* of the Prayer Book Society of Canada, No. 17, September 1990, p 3.

4. Dr Robert Crouse, 'Atonement and Sacrifice: Doctrine and Worship. Augustine and the Fathers', in *Atonement and Sacrifice: Doctrine and Worship. A Theological Conference at the Cathedral Church of St Peter. June 26-28. 1990,* ed. by G. E. Eayres, (St Peter Publications), p. 28.

5. A recent article 'Overheard ...' in the first issue of the Hoskin Group's publication *Liturgy Canada* disputes this. For a refutation of the position taken in the *Liturgy Canada* article see the article 'New Publication Promotes BAS Viewpoint', from the *Newsletter* of the Prayer Book Society of Canada, No. 19, April 1991, p. 8, which discusses this issue in more detail.

6. The comments were made by the Rt Rev'd Donald E Cameron, Bishop of North Sydney, Australia, in addressing the 1990 Theological Conference at St Peter's Cathedral in Charlottetown, as reported in the *Newsletter* of the Prayer Book Society of Canada, No 17, September 1990, p. 7.

7. Richard Grunberger, *A Social History of the Third Reich*, (Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, 1974); pages 553 ff.

8. This is not to imply that Christians are not called to work against social evils wherever they find them, through all the legitimate means — including social and political — at their disposal, and orthodox Christian teaching has always acknowledged this.

   Curiously enough, the authors of the BAS seem to regard social concern as a modern phenomenon ('Christians have discovered a new responsibility for the world, that loving their neighbours as themselves demands more than compliance with the civil law,' BAS, p. 10). Responsibility for the world is not new, nor have Christians just discovered it. Innumerable Christian saints have worked selflessly for the amelioration of suffering and poverty throughout all the long years of Christian witness, from the earliest days through the times of the mediaeval monasteries and convents, to the many modern Christian relief agencies and organizations of to-day.

   The traditional Corporal Works of Mercy have always reminded the Church of her calling, and enumerate the varieties of social work to which Christians are called: (i) feeding the poor, (ii) giving drink to the thirsty, (iii) clothing the naked, (iv) sheltering the homeless, (v) visiting the sick, (vi) ministering to the prisoners, and (vii) burying the dead. Of this list, only the last falls strangely upon the modern ear, and that is because the state has largely taken up this responsibility where there is no family present.

   In our own church, William Wilberforce worked tirelessly in the latter half of the 18th century for parliamentary reform, Catholic emancipation, and most of all for abolition of the slave trade, and of slavery itself. In the 19th century, Lord Shaftesbury worked for the repeal of the Corn Laws (which kept the price of grain — and therefore bread — artificially high), and was instrumental in abolishing child labour, instituting factory reform, in setting up programmes for low-cost housing for urban workers, and for providing free education for destitute children. Both men were passionate and committed Evangelical Anglicans, and worked through and with Christian agencies and institutions. The work of Anglo-Catholic priests in the slums of East London in the 19th and early 20th centuries is a further outstanding example of Christian social concern from the era which pre-dates ours.

Failure by the authors of the BAS to acknowledge this is puzzling (especially as the spiritual insights of these two groups within Anglicanism are mentioned on the previous page): it is important to remember that we stand in a long tradition of Christian witness and commitment, and that, by honouring those valiant workers in the Faith who have gone before, we in turn may emulate them by working against the evils that abound in our own day.

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BAS and BCP
Some Thoughts on a Theological Shift

By
John Webster

1. Introduction

Perhaps the most unedifying aspect of our present round of liturgical renewal has been that disputing about liturgy has often inhibited us from really thinking about the issues. At least some protagonists, on both sides of the debate, have run very quickly to defend positions which have not always been clearly thought through and which show little evidence of having seriously weighed viewpoints other than their own. The debate has frequently let itself be trapped within clichés and caricatures; the issues are in danger of being lost. In a church already nervous of debate and lacking in friendly forums for high-quality theological disagreement, the effect has been a politicisation of the issues, to the point where genuine conversation is very difficult indeed. One thing Canadian Anglicans can learn from our present troubles is that we do not yet know how to argue with one another in a courteous, constructive, non-ideological way.

Above all, we need to learn how to carry on a good theological discussion of the issues, for a couple of reasons. First, the BAS makes theological proposals; it is part of a larger process, which it calls 'the continuous development of a living theology' (p. 10). There is no question that the BAS retains the basic framework of classical Christian doctrine: it is, that is to say, trinitarian and incarnational; and, though its presentation of the atonement is in some respects not fully adequate, it is firmly committed to a view of God's relation to humanity as a redemptive relation, set forth in the biblical drama of creation, fall and salvation. Within that framework, however, the BAS (like the BCP) articulates or implies theological convictions, and therefore it invites and deserves theological judgments to be made about its provisions for worship.

Second, and I think more important, theological discussion is imperative because theology is the church taking stock of itself. Theology is that exercise in which the people of God submit themselves — their teaching, their proclamation, their patterns of common life and their worship — to judgment by the gospel. This is all the more important in view of the fact that the BAS explicitly denies the propriety of this critical role of theology with respect to the church's worship. The principle *lex orandi, lex credendi,* it proposes 'means that theology as the statement of the church's belief is drawn from the liturgy ... The development of theology is not a legislative process which is imposed on liturgy; liturgy is a reflective process in which theology may be discovered.' (p. 10)

Over against this, I want to suggest that one of the marks of a lively worshipping community is precisely that kind of legislative activity — not in the sense of doctrinal dictatorship, but in the sense of the church's engagement in a process of healthy, open, trustful dialogue and self-criticism about its forms of worship. That process is *theological reflection* — conversation in which we seek to take the measure of our worship's adequacy as a means of access and response to God's

transformation of us and our world in Jesus Christ. In essence, theology measures liturgy against the gospel which is laid before us by — amongst other things — the liturgy.

This point is worth pausing over briefly. What is the relation of theology to liturgy? In one sense, of course, theological activity presupposes the existence of believing, praying Christians — without the Christian form of life, there is nowhere for the theologian to begin. But the introduction to the BAS goes considerably further than that by claiming that 'theology as the statement of the Church's belief is drawn from the liturgy'. Two comments are in order here.

(a) The phrasing of the principle *lex orandi: lex credendi* should not obscure the fact that we are not simply talking about prayer as a natural and spontaneous human activity but about planned corporate prayer using texts of prayer, and about instructions for the use of those texts. The 'prayer' from which 'belief' is 'drawn' is not immediate invocation of God but a prayed text, handled in a certain way. In other words, we are talking about *lex*, law: the prayed text has prescriptive force in the life of the people of God. The meeting of the gospel and the Christian life, in other words, takes place through the medium of an officially sanctioned text (and, to a lesser degree, through officially sanctioned actions). And it takes place within the framework of the church as institution. Any liturgical language, when it is given textual form and regularly rehearsed at the community's gatherings, is normative discourse which operates within and reinforces certain power-relations within the church. The texts are written by some and not by others; they are distributed and enforced with varying degrees and kinds of coercion by bishops, parish priests, worship committees and so on. All this means that it would be unrealistic, therefore, to think of the BAS as a move away from legislative liturgy. Cranmer's committee of prelates and doctors meeting at Chertsey in September of 1548 to work on the first Edwardine Prayer Book was without any doubt less consultative and more unilateral than the Doctrine and Worship committee; but both groups were about the same business: liturgical legislation. My point is not to regret this: by and large it is inevitable in an institutional church which values a high level of liturgical uniformity. But it is to say that the worship of the people of God cannot be abstracted from its context in the church as political institution, and that when we 'discover' theology in liturgy we may be discovering what has been put there by others who enjoy a measure of authority. For all its flexibility and variety, the BAS remains a legislative liturgy, in which a certain understanding of God and his dealings with us is articulated and reinforced.

(b) In an institutional form of religious life like Anglicanism, one of the most important reflective moments in its corporate life is theological activity. It is especially important that worship be a matter for this kind of reflection, precisely because texts for public worship are powerful instruments for the establishment and maintenance of a certain self-understanding on the

part of the church. Here, I believe, we reach something close to the heart of Protestantism, both in its origins in the 16th century and in its permanent character as a way of being a Christian believer. The Methodist liturgical theologian Geoffrey Wainwright has described the early Reformation liturgical revisions as 'an exercise in magisterial control over the liturgy by prophets who critically opposed current understanding and use in the name of a renewed vision of the gospel'.[1] The liturgical work of Cranmer and others, that is, takes its rise from a perceived gap between the biblical gospel and the celebrations of the community, a gap which in some instances could only be closed by a more or less radical starting again. Certainly the early English reformers would have construed the primacy of *lex orandi* as conservative, and would have accorded much greater prominence to theology as a critical enterprise, lest the life of the church be 'caught' in a determinate shape and so inhibit access to the gospel.

In this, I believe they were substantially correct, however much we may feel that the task of confronting liturgy with the gospel needs doing again for a very different age. To suggest that theology is drawn from the liturgy and to leave the matter there is inadequate, because it may immunise the institution from critique, and make it less than alert to the dangers of thinking and acting in ways which are untrue to God. This is not to say that we are to imagine theology governing liturgy in such a way that worship becomes a bare statement or enactment of theological propositions: with possible exceptions like the 1552 burial rites, Anglican worship has not gone that particular route. Nevertheless, theological reflection and critique are a central means of asking ourselves hard questions; and those hard questions are as much directed to our inherited texts as to their contemporary equivalents.

In what follows, I want to look at four theological themes: the nature of worship; creation, sin and redemption; eucharist; and ministry. These are no means the only issues where the BCP and the BAS pull in different theological directions (initiation is obviously another, along with some of the pastoral offices). But a look at these four themes may highlight something of the shift which is taking place, and help us to begin a discussion about that shift.

2. The nature of worship

The first major shift to be identified concerns the way in which Christian worship is to be understood.

a. BCP

For the BCP, worship is above all an encounter with God through the Word of God in Scripture. This is most obviously set out in the BCP offices, but can be found throughout the book. What the 1549 Preface calls 'advancement of godliness' (p. 715 — we would call it 'growth in the Christian life') is brought about through regular, sustained attention to Scripture in public worship. The 'assembly' is an assembly of *hearers*: its aim is that 'the people (by daily hearing of holy Scripture read in the Church) might continually profit more and more in the knowledge of God, and be the more inflamed with the love of his true Religion' (p. 715). This principle informs not only the structure and content of Morning and Evening Prayer, but also the celebra-

tion of the sacraments and the pastoral offices. Corporate worship for the BCP is rooted in Scriptural warrants and drenched with Scriptural allusion and phraseology; worship is, indeed, assembling and meeting together to hear and receive God's holy Word. Above all, BCP worship promotes a style of Christian discipleship in which the imagination is constantly faced with the biblical text as the place where Christ and the gospel are to be encountered. This, of course, accounts for the BCP's resistance to liturgical elaboration and ceremony, its plain insistence upon 'edification, whereunto all things done in the Church ... ought to be referred' (p. 717) as the prime criterion for liturgical propriety, and its frank fear that 'undiscreet devotion' can slide all too easily into 'vanity and superstition' (ibid). The oft-lamented didactic, schoolmasterly tone of much of the BCP is partly a matter of its almost exclusive emphasis on the priority of the interpretative word over action and its unease about symbolism other than the verbal (with the exception of the dominically and scripturally warranted symbols of bread, wine and water). But the didactic tone is bound up also with the BCP's protest against devotion unchastened by single-minded attention to the Bible. Much of our thinking about the BCP is a function of whether we believe that protest to be a permanent feature of Christian faith, or merely an essentially occasional corrective to the muddles of late medieval Catholicism.

In important respects, then, the BCP's vision of Christian worship is uneasy with religion as human practice, which the Preface 'Of Ceremonies' readily identifies with those 'dark' religious devotions, which 'did more confound and darken, than declare and set forth Christ's benefits unto us' (p. 718). This perceptible hostility to ceremonial additions to the unadorned reading of Scripture, public prayer and the celebration of the sacraments of the gospel is not only motivated by distaste for mute symbols which fail to enlighten, for what is 'dark and dumb' (p. 178). It is also part of an understanding of the way in which the 'benefits' of Christ (the good things which Christ has secured for his people) are mediated to us. Christ and the gospel are properly and normatively 'set forth' in the Bible and the dominical sacraments; whatever distracts the people of God from proper use of these divinely-instituted means is therefore to be rejected as 'Ceremonial Law' which interposes itself between Christ and his church.

In sum: the BCP's understanding of the nature of worship is a function of its underlying theological convictions about Christ's self-communication through Word and sacrament, its emphasis upon hearing and receiving as the primary modes of human liturgical activity, and its consequently modest account of the role of liturgical mediation of the gospel. To this, it needs to be added that in many ways this is not, of course, how the text has come to be *used*. Extracted from the context of the theological principles out of which it arises, in the hands of many the BCP has become a great cultural (and cultic) artefact — precisely what its architects sought to avoid. Where the BCP originally sought to furnish a generally minimalist liturgical structure for Word and sacrament to govern and shape the life of Anglican Christians, it now threatens to be identified by some as *the* means of access to the gospel: hardly a Protestant stance.

b. BAS

With the BAS, we enter into a quite different world. 'Liturgy is the means by which the Church is constantly invested in

(the) gospel' (p. 10). Liturgy, that is to say, is the chief means whereby Christ is communicated to the Church. Worship, on this account, is much more than what the BCP envisages: assembly for hearing God's Word and receiving Christ's promises through the sacraments. For the BCP, worship is ostensive, referring the worshipper beyond the life and activity of the church to the finished work of Christ whose benefits he imparts to us. For the BAS, worship is the embodiment of the gospel, the point at which the gospel is 'realized', made real in our midst. The most obvious example of this is the strong claim made for the benefits of eucharistic worship in the post-communion proper prayers: 'in this eucharist we find the source of all your blessings' (p. 397). Another example is the provision for Holy Week and Easter, which offers a good illustration of the conviction that Christian worship is an entry into the saving work of God. Some examples: the collect for the liturgy of the palms says 'may we enter with joy into the celebration of those mighty acts whereby you give us life and immortality' (*BAS*, p. 287). Liturgy, that is, is envisaged not as mere mental recollection, but as a form of human activity in which God's saving activity becomes real amongst us, in which the drama of salvation is not so much remembered as relived. 'May we also,' the celebrant says on Palm Sunday, 'carrying these emblems, go forth to meet Christ and follow him in the way that leads to eternal life' (p. 298): the procession is, as it were, a re-presentation of the first Palm Sunday. Or again, on Maundy Thursday, the liturgy begins with a number of statements which bring together worship now and what took place in the upper room: 'This is the day,' the liturgy tells us (p. 304). The same kind of near-identification can be found on Good Friday, where there is a response at the beginning of the meditation on the cross of Jesus (p. 313): 'This is the wood of the cross, on which hung the saviour of the world.' And in the Easter Vigil we find much the same: 'This is the passover of the Lord' (p. 322).

The chief difference to be noted here is the replacement of the BCP's modest claim about liturgical mediation by a strong theory of liturgical (and especially eucharistic) realization: liturgy makes Christ and the gospel real. Of course, the BAS by no means seeks to undermine Scripture as the normative locus of encounter with God; but its rich ceremonial provision tends inevitably to make symbols of water, light and oil into the imaginative centre of worship, in a way which makes Scripture part of a larger liturgical framework, rather than viewing the liturgy as a platform from which the Bible can address us. Such worship, of course, has very considerable weight: it is symbolically dense and highly charged; it appeals to senses beyond the almost exclusively auditory response evoked by the BCP; it genuinely seeks to promote a Christian vision shaped by the weekly re-presentation of the paschal mystery. Moreover, in a largely functionalist and technological culture, dramatic liturgy can offer powerful reinstatements of the reality of God. But behind these points, there are theological questions to be considered — most of all, questions about Christology. How is Jesus Christ present to us? What is the relation of Christ's saving work to the ongoing liturgical activity of the church? From the vantage-point of the BCP tradition, the BAS theory of sacramental realization could be said to tie the presence and activity of God too firmly to sacramental acts and signs, thereby

surrendering something of the otherness and transcendence of the gospel, to which the BCP's minimalism sought to testify. And, as we shall see in looking at the eucharistic material, there are more probing questions to be asked concerning our understanding of the finality of Christ's saving work and its liturgical representation. From the vantage-point of the BAS, the BCP's minimalism reflects its preoccupation with word over act and symbol, its assumption that symbolic action is ceremonial accretion likely to darken the plain gospel message, its weak sense of the significance of the created order, and — above all — its concentration on the past achievement of God in Christ which the BAS seeks to redress by a theology of the 'whole Christ' (see BAS p. 179), in which the church, supremely in its liturgical activity, is to be understood as an extension of the incarnation. Such, I believe, are the real differences; whatever tradition we favour, for whatever reasons, we need to be clear that there is a shift.

Before moving on, it is worth remarking that it is doubtful if the church at large perceives itself as caught between two contrasting *theologies* of worship (rather than simply two different texts). One reason for this has been mentioned already: the theological principles of the BCP are largely forgotten, even by its defenders, or, if not forgotten, regularly dismissed as too embarrassingly Protestant for a liberal mainline denomination whose agenda lies elsewhere. Another reason is that BCP partisans often seem to present themselves as defenders of a religious text upon which the survival of a certain Christendom understanding of Christian worship has come to rest. A third reason is that the pastoral urgency of liturgical renewal has in large measure prevented us from taking a long hard look at the principles underlying our dominant model of renewal. But — the issues remain, and I am not yet convinced that we have aired them as fully as we ought.

3. Creation, sin and redemption

Over the course of the last 75 years or so, the liturgical movement has evolved a set of theological principles which underlie much of its practical work in the reform and renewal of Christian worship. Whilst they do not find formal statement in any document, they do surface with a fair degree of consistency in liturgies and works on theology and spirituality which draw impetus from this remarkable movement in church life over the course of the present century. In essence, three focal convictions can be identified as basic to what is at work in the liturgical movement. First, an 'incarnational principle', according to which the creaturely and especially the human sphere is the location of God's action. Second, a 'sacrificial principle', according to which the self-offering of God in Christ in the incarnation, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ and in the giving of the Spirit is matched by the Christian life as sacrificial self-giving in service to God and to the world. Third, a 'community principle', according to which the saving acts of God aim at the creation of the community of the church in which Christ's redemptive activity is present and operative. These principles have been massively successful in much of Western Christian life, especially amongst those Christian groupings like Anglicanism which have taken a large part in the ecumenical movement and which are large enough to support lively and informed theological and liturgical scholarship.[2]

I want to focus on the first of these

principles, the 'incarnational', because it offers a helpful means of locating the BAS on the larger theological and liturgical map. The term has become a means of articulating a strong sense of the continuity between creation and redemption, in a number of senses. First, God's creative activity is the presupposition without which God's activity in redemption is not comprehensible. Second, the continuity between the initiation of God's purposes in creation and their fulfillment in the eschaton is not completely ruptured by human sin. Third, accordingly, redemption is the restoration of creation. Fourth, the creation restored by God's redemptive activity is the location of God's continuing salvific activity. Fifth, the church as the community of God's people is the sign and foretaste of the renewal of the whole created order. Sixth, Christian worship (especially eucharistic worship) is a dramatization, a re-presentation of the mighty acts of God and of the origins and goal of the created order.

These emphases are deeply influential upon the BAS: its understanding of the nature of God and his activity and presence in the world, of the person and work of Jesus Christ, of human nature and destiny and of the nature and purpose of the church in the world tend to be informed by these kinds of perspectives. And, in working within this framework, the BAS is significantly different from the liturgies of the English Reformation.

The BCP assumes the classic schema of fall and redemption, and derives much of its energy as well as its conceptuality and language from the authoritative expositions of that schema by Augustine and Anselm, amongst others, even though its more immediate sources lie in the early work of the European Reformation. The influence of this account of the Christian faith can be discerned, for example, in its bleak evaluation of the human lot in Adam, or in its use of forensic categories in talking of the human relationship to God. But above all it is to be seen in the sharp concentration on Calvary as the hinge upon which the whole of God's dealings with the human creation turns, and in the consequently penitential tone of much of what it prescribes for public worship, especially in its eucharistic liturgies and in its handling of the pastoral rites. By contrast, the BAS has a much more extended understanding of the nature of God's activity, in which the passion of Jesus takes its place in the entire series of God's saving works, and has a good deal more to say of God's work in creation and through the church. To try to explore these themes more fully, I want to look at the way in which the BAS handles the themes of creation, sin and redemption.

(i) Creation

Creation has a high profile in the BAS, both in terms of the natural order as a sphere of God's activity and Christian responsibility, and more generally in terms of human experience and history as a backcloth against which the Christian faith is to be understood.

The natural order features not simply at the points where we might most expect it, such as Rogation Days and Harvest Thanksgiving (Cf. BAS, pp. 396f), but also in the daily offices. The Psalm Prayer for use with Ps 19 at the Mid-day office, for example, reads:

> O God, the source of all life, you have filled the earth with beauty. Open our eyes to see your gracious hand in all your works, that rejoicing in your whole

> creation we may learn to serve
> you with gladness, for the sake of
> him through whom all things
> were made, your Son Jesus Christ
> our Lord.

Or, in similar fashion, the Thanksgivings in the Service of Light before Evening Prayer often focus on aspects of God as 'ruler of the universe' and 'creator and preserver of the whole world' (pp. 62f), linking prayer to the natural daily rhythms of creation. From the seasonal material, the long series of alternative readings for the Easter Vigil (pp. 325-9) includes prayers for use after each reading which often focus on the natural order — see particularly prayer 1 ('Almighty and eternal God, you created all things in wonderful beauty and order...'); prayer 2 ('Faithful God, you have placed the rainbow in the skies as the sign of your covenant with all living things ...'); prayer 6 ('O God, by the power of your Word you have created all things, and by your Spirit you renew the earth ...').

In the sacramental liturgies, a similar move can be identified. The thanksgiving for water at baptism, for example, starts by giving thanks for 'the gift of water' and (like most contemporary forms) traces the symbolism of water back to the moving of the Spirit over the waters 'in the beginning of creation' (p. 330 — the BCP makes mention of only the water and blood from the side of Christ, p. 528). Again, creation has become a significant feature of the great thanksgiving at the eucharist. In line with nearly all modern eucharistic prayers, all the alternatives in the BAS give thanks for the whole scope of God's work, and all apart from Prayer 2 begin by praising God for his goodness in creation: 'We give thanks to you, Lord our God, for the goodness and love you have made known to us in creation...' (prayer 3), or 'Fountain of life and source of all goodness, you made all things and fill them with your blessing; you created them to rejoice in the splendour of your radiance...' (prayer 6). This is a highly significant move, which we will explore a little more when we look at the theology of the eucharist; suffice it to say here that the content of the eucharist is greatly expanded: it is no longer simply what Article XXVIII called 'a Sacrament of our Redemption by Christ's death'.

Finally, in the pastoral offices there is a serious attempt to correlate Christian prayer with the natural processes of human life and community. Unlike the BCP order for 'Thanksgiving after Childbirth', which is a rather somber little office ('Be thou to her a strong tower/From the face of her enemy'), the BAS tries to make much more of the natural process of childbirth, and locates itself via the basic human needs for 'expression and resolution' (p. 606) in situations which bring us into 'close contact with the springs of life and the gates of death' (ibid.). Moreover, divine creativity and human creativity are jointly celebrated here:

> God, giver of all life,
> we thank you for calling us to
> share in your work of creation,
> and especially for giving us this
> child N ... (p. 613)

The same trend can be seen in the funeral rites. The preface to these rites tells us that 'It is important for Christians to be aware of the universal dimensions of funeral practices, partly out of sensitivity to the basic needs ... which mourners bring to these rituals, and partly so that they can identify clearly the particular insights and interpretations which Chris-

tian faith brings to bear on the reality of death and the experience of bereavement' (p. 565). Or, more clearly: 'People do them first of all because they are human' (ibid.).

At significant points, then, the BAS sets Christian worship within the natural processes of human becoming and human community, and makes full use of opportunities to draw attention both to the glory of creation and to the creative purposes of God. There is much here to be welcomed, for the church is a natural as well as a supernatural society, a willing and not merely grudging participant in creaturely reality. Where the BAS is less successful is in directing the worshippers' attention to the sheer gratuity of creation's origin, and to the presence of disorder in nature and the human community. Paul tells us that 'the whole creation has been groaning in travail together until now' (Rom 8.22). To affirm this is not to rob the earth of its particular glory, or to deny that it is the sphere of God's presence and activity, or to refuse to believe the promise that 'the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay' (Rom 8.22). But it is to say that God entirely transcends what he has made; and, more importantly, it is to say that creation is not simply a reflection of God's glory but also the theatre of human wickedness whose disorder stands under God's just condemnation. The dialectic we need to aim at has been well-expressed in the recent report of the Inter-Anglican Theological and Doctrinal Commission, *For the Sake of the Kingdom:*

> A Christian appreciation of the world as creation ... states the presuppositions of the message of redemption in Christ. The world is God's creation. As such, it is good. Both the natural order and the world of history ... have their ground and their end in God, who is present in them and for them to finish his creative work. Yet this same world — secondarily but no less truly — is spoiled, nor is any person, group of persons, or realm of activity exempt from the effects of the systemic perversion of choosing and loving. Thus God's Kingdom is native to the world and foreign to it: native by God's creation and providence, foreign by human sin.[3]

(ii) Sin

The way in which the BCP and the BAS handle human sin is frequently caricatured. It is easy enough to contrast a negative spirituality of self-abasement in the BCP with a resurrection spirituality of joy in the BAS, or to contrast the BCP's sober realism about sin and grace with the apparent cheery optimism of the BAS. The truth of the matter lies beyond the caricatures, however.

The BCP takes sin very seriously, but takes God's grace in Jesus Christ even more seriously. That is to say, it promotes an understanding of the human situation as one in which we are perpetrators of moral evil, justly condemned by a holy God, yet does so without losing sight of the overwhelming mercy and grace of God. The Septuagesima collect catches the point well:

> O Lord, we beseech thee favourably to hear the prayers of thy people; that we, who are justly punished for our offenses, may be mercifully delivered by thy goodness, for the glory of thy name ...

Thus, for the BCP, to gather in worship is to gather as penitents; but as such we do not stand before a hostile accuser, but before the throne of grace. And it is just that — the graciousness of grace, God's 'infinite goodness and mercy' — which makes us realise that we are 'miserable offenders'. The dynamic of the BCP's handling of sin is thus not natural self-accusation, but a lively sense of the generosity of God in pardoning and restoring humanity in Christ. What of the BAS?

Roughly speaking, the BAS tends to push penance into particular seasons of the church's year, rather than opting for an even spread of penitential material throughout the liturgies and propers. Most clearly does this take place in the Ash Wednesday liturgy, which, though it envisages Lent as 'our journey to Easter' (p. 282) rather than simply as preparation for Good Friday, nevertheless contains a lengthy litany of penance and provision for the imposition of ashes as 'a sign of our mortality and penance' (p. 285). Besides this provision at the beginning of Lent, the provision for Holy Week contains a good deal of material on the death of Jesus, in the collects, prayers over the gifts, and prayers after communion, some of it penitential in tone such as the suggested meditation on the cross with accompanying anthems, the first of which (pp. 314-6) is heavily penitential.

More often, however, the BAS stresses not so much our responsibility and culpability for the death of Christ but rather that death as a model for Christian service and a call to Christian testimony. In the same Holy Week provision, for example, we find prayers such as

> Lord God,
> your Son our Saviour gave his body to be whipped and turned his face for men to spit upon.
> Give your servants grace to accept suffering for his sake, confident of the glory that will be revealed ... (p. 303)
> O God,
> by the passion of your blessed Son, you made an instrument of shameful death to be for us a means of life.
> May our lives be so transformed by his passion that we may witness to his grace ... (p. 302)

At this point, it ought to be said, the BAS is in fact little different from the BCP: the BCP Holy Week collect focusses on 'the example of his great humility' in similar fashion. The distinct emphasis of the BAS is evident, however, in its handling of penance in the eucharist. On the basis of early tradition, the preface to the BAS rite argues that verbal confession and absolution are medieval accretions, which found their way into the Edwardine liturgies. By contrast, the BAS seeks to follow the understanding of 'the ancient church' according to which 'the eucharist as a whole' is 'the means by which the People of God are renewed in their baptismal covenant and reconciled to God' (pp. 181f). The rite certainly gives consistent expression to this: it focusses on the resurrection and the gift of the Spirit as much as on Calvary, and, by suggesting that penance be incorporated in the flow of the prayers of the people, it reduces the sharpness of our engagement with sin and forgiveness. Most of all, in the great thanksgiving prayers, it has little to say of human unrighteousness and rejection of God. Certainly there are references in prayers 1 and 2 to reconciliation, and phrases which speak of sin as

'error' (prayer 3), 'transgression' and 'iniquity' (prayer 4) 'rebellion' (prayer 5) and 'disobedience' (prayer 6). But greater weight seems to be given to sin as that of which we are victims rather than as that of which we are perpetrators. The thanksgivings incorporate much more material from the accounts of Jesus' ministry in the gospels than the mere words of institution — his healing of the sick, his table fellowship with the ritually impure, his compassion for the marginalised are common themes. Whilst it is entirely appropriate to celebrate these aspects of the ministry of Jesus, the BAS tends to move on from here to speak most naturally of sin as an oppressive reality keeping us from full liberty, without a corresponding emphasis on sin as incurring guilt and judgement:

> In fulfillment of your will he stretched out his hands in suffering, to bring release to those who place their hope in you; and so he won for you a holy people. He chose to bear our griefs and sorrows, and to give up his life on the cross, that he might shatter the chains of evil and death, and banish the darkness of sin and despair. (Prayer 2)

It is hard not to see this as a reduced account of the human situation which we find in Scripture. We are not *only* saved from grief and sorrow and despair but also from damnation; and we are not those who put their hope in God but — emphatically — those whose rebellion against God is so complete that we are not able to see our lostness for what it is or to look to God for aid. From this perspective, Cranmer's apparently gloomy language of judgement and propitiation is both more realistic in its diagnosis of the human situation and more merciful in its presentation of the astonishing grace of God.

This leads, naturally, to the theology of redemption.

(iii) Redemption

Much of what ought to be said under this heading has been already mentioned in connection with the way the BAS handles human sin, and a certain amount will be held over for our consideration of the theology of the eucharist. At present all I wish to do is identify three central moves which the BAS — in line with most contemporary liturgies — makes over questions concerning the nature of salvation.

(a) Most clearly, there is a broadening of the Christological base. The BCP reflects Reformation convictions about the finished character of Christ's saving work by focussing with single-minded attention on the cross as the locus of God's redeeming activity. In the BAS, on the other hand, salvation is not simply won through the atoning death of Christ but through his whole history, from his taking flesh of a virgin through his sharing the human lot, his ministry and passion to his resurrection and ascension. The BAS by no means makes the move which Michael Ingham claims when he writes that 'the central paradigm' has to be 'resurrection, not crucifixion'.[4] Nevertheless, it would be accurate to say that the BAS sets the passion in a larger reality, self-consciously distancing itself from ideas of satisfaction or substitutionary death. When we come to look at the eucharist, I want to examine a little more closely the

adequacy of this as a reflection of the biblical testimony.

(b) In the same way that the Christological base of the theology of salvation is broadened, so also the notion of salvation itself undergoes considerable expansion. Once again, it is not envisaged as forensic acquittal but rather as the restoration of full humanness within the purposes of God. Our look at the theology of the eucharist will again clarify this. It is evident that the BAS eucharist is not simply a way of lodging the death of Christ in the devotion and practice of the community; it is much more a celebration and self-offering on the part of those who have been set free to live as the people of God, those who have been made 'worthy to stand in your presence and serve you' (p. 197, eucharistic prayer 2).

(c) For the BAS, salvation issues not simply in the restoration of the individual's relationship to God but in the creation of a new community. Despite what is sometimes claimed, the BCP does have a sense of the corporate character of the people of God, 'the blessed company of all faithful people', however much the use of the BCP in formal, individualized styles of devotion often militates against this. The BAS, however, is much more self-conscious and articulate on the point; its provision for baptism and the eucharist, for example, does much to re-introduce a sense of the people of God as just that: *people*. Accordingly it works hard to introduce the dynamics of corporate life into the liturgy. The preface to the rite for baptism, for example, tells us that the union between Christ and his people in baptism is 'both individual and corporate', that 'to be a Christian is to be part of a new creation which rises from the dark waters of Christ's death into the dawn of his risen life' (p. 146). But more than this, there is an underlying conviction that the Christian community is itself part of the reality of salvation, and even the occasional hint (such as in its handling of eucharistic sacrifice) that at its gathering together it is in some sense continuous with the saving reality of Jesus Christ — a point which the classical Reformed tradition which lies behind the BCP would never allow.

To pursue these points on redemption a little more sharply, we need to look more specifically at the eucharist.

4. Eucharist

Perhaps the best way to identify some of the shifts which take place between the BCP and the BAS in the area of the theology of the eucharist is by asking what kind of text we have in the BAS. Four points are worth making here.

a. The function of the text is to enable an action to take place. 'The apostolic and primitive church regarded the eucharist as primarily an action,' wrote Dix, 'something "done", not something "said"'.[5] Like nearly all contemporary eucharistic rites, the BAS majors on the character of the eucharist as action. Here the difference from the BCP tradition is important. In the sacramental theology and practice of the earlier Reformation period, in which the BCP tradition took decisive form, the crucial points at issue were theological. Hence the Reformers sought to develop a rite which articulated basic biblical convictions in areas of

dispute — notably the relation of the sacrament to the historical act of Christ's redeeming death, and the correlation of sacrament, faith and the Word of God. Contemporary eucharistic liturgies, such as the BAS, are seeking much more self-consciously to furnish material for an event to take place in the life of the users. Because of this, it lacks a good deal of the didactic tone of the BCP (despite the rather schoolmasterly preface to the rite, pp. 174-82), and accords greater significance to gestures, actions and objects in worship. Behind this, of course, lie convictions about the symbolic and ritual (as opposed to purely linguistic or conceptual) nature of liturgical encounter with God, and about the secondary, derivative nature of theological reflection upon the primary liturgical activity of the people of God.

b. The BAS rite is distinctly ecclesial in its handling of the eucharist, steering Canadian Anglicans firmly towards an understanding of the eucharist as a corporate activity, and, indeed, as *the* corporate activity of the people of God. Partly this means a much greater sense of the participatory nature of the eucharist, both in the planning of the worship event and in its actual celebration: 'The celebration of the eucharist is the work of the whole people of God' (p. 183). Hence the peace and the fraction, for example, come into renewed prominence as dramatic moments in which the members of the community encounter one another in encountering Christ. But more than this, the eucharist becomes the central act in which the Christian community rehearses its origins, its present identity, its mission in the world, and its future hope. This can be seen both in the inclusion of a large number of themes in the eucharist previously largely absent from it (such as mission, or eschatology) and, more practically, in the thin BAS provision for non-eucharistic Sunday worship, which further pushes the offices to the margins of lively worship on the Lord's Day.

c. The overarching theme is (as the chosen title suggests) 'thanksgiving', and thanksgiving not only for the benefits of the passion of Christ but for 'the whole work of creation and redemption' (p. 178). What the WCC document *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* says of the eucharist is certainly applicable to the BAS rite: 'It is the great thanksgiving to the Father for everything accomplished in creation, redemption and sanctification, for everything accomplished by God now in the Church and in the world in spite of the sins of human beings, for everything that God will accomplish in bringing the Kingdom to fulfillment'.[6]

d. Finally (but by no means as an afterthought), the eucharist is a celebration of Word and sacrament. As the preface puts it, 'The eucharistic community is the assembly of the baptised who are gathered to hear the word of God and to celebrate the eucharist. Word and sacrament stand in a dynamic relationship to each other'. And so 'It is appropriate ... that there be some reflection on the word of God at every eucharist, even at weekday celebrations and at early Sunday morning eucharists, so that the good news of the gospel can be heard and responded to in a living way by the congregation' (p. 175).

In brief, then, the BAS offers a liturgy of Word and sacrament in which the whole people of God gather together to 'do' that which is most foundational to what they are. Within this, I perceive

three theological issues upon which the BCP and the BAS differ quite sharply in their eucharistic provision: the work of Christ, the relation of memorial and offering, and the notion of 'consecration'. In looking at these issues, we should yet again remind ourselves that the eucharist is not simply 'about' theology, as if all a sacrament provides is engaging illustrations for the catechism. We all too easily treat the eucharist as if it were a kind of encoded confessional statement rather than as what it truly is: prayer. But, for all that, prayer and rite are not immune from issues of truth and falsity: it is possible to do or say something which does not correspond to the gospel. Whatever else *lex orandi, lex credendi* may mean, it cannot mean that the liturgical life of the people of God is beyond the reach of the critical, reflective activity which is one of the primary tasks of theology.

i. The work of Christ

In its 1552 version, Cranmer's 'Prayer of Consecration' anchored the eucharist in two points in the ministry of Jesus and two points only: the dominical institution of the eucharist on Maundy Thursday and the death of the Lord on Good Friday. The 1959 Canadian Prayer Book has made us familiar with a slightly different treatment: instead of going straight into reception (as in 1552), an anamnesis is inserted after the supper narrative; and, as in Cranmer's first rite, the anamnesis has in remembrance not only Christ's death but also his resurrection and ascension.

The BAS goes much further than this by incorporating a much greater range of biblical material on the work of Christ, as in eucharistic prayer 1, for example:

> In the fullness of time,
> you sent your Son Jesus Christ,
> to share our human nature,
> to live and die as one of us,
> to reconcile us to you,
> the God and Father of all.
> He healed the sick
> and ate and drank with outcasts
> and sinners;
> he opened the eyes of the blind
> and proclaimed the good news of
> your kingdom
> to the poor and to those in need.
> In all things he fulfilled your
> gracious will.

Here the inclusion of the synoptic presentation of Jesus' proclamation of the Kingdom fills out the sparse BCP outline of incarnation ('to take our nature upon him...') and death.

Further than this, the BAS seeks to expand the number of theological concepts and images through which the death of Christ is articulated. The preface makes clear that it regards 'the later medieval and Reformation themes of atonement' (p. 179), especially that of satisfaction, to be seriously inadequate, and proposes three images as central to the biblical material about Jesus' death: vicarious suffering, expiatory offering, and divine deliverance (on the *Christus Victor* model). The statements about the death of Christ in the texts of the eucharistic prayers bear this out: Jesus 'lived and died ... to reconcile us to you' (prayer 1); 'his perfect sacrifice destroys the power of sin and death' (prayer 1); 'He chose to bear our griefs and sorrows, and to give up his life on the cross, that he might shatter the chains of evil and death, and banish the darkness of sin and despair' (prayer 2); 'He was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities. By his death he opened to us the way of freedom and peace' (prayer 4); 'On the cross he

defeated the power of sin and death' (prayer 5).

Though some would argue (rightly, in my judgment) that the language of satisfaction and substitution ought to be given its place alongside these other images, there is much here that extends our apprehension of the richness of the biblical material and lodges it firmly in the worship of the community. But, though the gains are real, the handling of the death of Christ in the anamnesis is much more weak. What happens is that Calvary tends to be included simply as part of the sequence of God's action in Christ, so that its centrality is to a degree lost from view:

> Recalling his death
> proclaiming his resurrection,
> and looking for his coming again
> in glory ... (prayer 1)
>
> we recall the death of your Son
> Jesus Christ,
> we proclaim his resurrection and
> ascension,
> and we look with expectation for
> his coming ... (prayer 4)
>
> Recalling Christ's death
> and descent among the dead,
> proclaiming his resurrection
> and ascension to your right hand,
> awaiting his coming in glory ...
> (prayer 6)

The point here can be made by contrast to the way in which the same passage in the thanksgiving is handled in Rite A of the Church of England *Alternative Service Book 1980:*

> we remember his offering of
> himself
> made once for all upon the cross,
> and proclaim his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension
> (First eucharistic prayer)
>
> And so, Father, calling to mind
> his death on the cross,
> his perfect sacrifice made once
> for the sins of all men ...
> (Third eucharistic prayer)

The Church of England texts suggest another rather obvious weakness in the BAS treatment, namely the lack of any positive statement of the finality and completeness ('perfection') of Christ's atoning death. Whilst the past tenses are there ('On the cross he *defeated* the power of sin and death', and so on), the biblical 'once for all' is not explicitly stated or, indeed, hinted at. Despite the reassurances of the preface to the effect that 'Cranmer and the Reformers were right in insisting on the once-for-all and the 'full, perfect, and sufficient' character of the sacrifice of the cross' (p. 179), the silence of the thanksgiving prayers on the issue can hardly be innocent. In view of the very sharp polarization of the Anglican tradition at this point, and in view of the way in which the BAS very clearly adopts one and only one position over eucharistic oblation, it is hard not to read this as rather more than an unfortunate oversight.

With this, we have begun to stray into the next issue, that of memorial and sacrifice.

ii. Memorial and sacrifice

Once again, the BAS draws upon a number of larger theological and liturgical trends in this area. Three are especially important.

(1) By now the 'dynamic' understanding of anamnesis has become semi-official,

especially when enshrined in both the WCC Lima text and the *Final Report* of ARCIC 1: 'The biblical idea of memorial as applied to the eucharist refers to (the) present efficacy of God's work when it is celebrated by God's people in a liturgy';[7] 'The eucharistic memorial is no mere calling to mind of a past event or of its significance, but the Church's effectual proclamation of God's mighty acts'.[8]

One of the things which flows from contemporary enthusiasm for this interpretation of memorial is a considerable easing of confessional hostilities over the sacrificial nature of the eucharist. In remembering, we both articulate the gracious origin of our acceptance and offer ourselves to God in Christ. This is why in nearly all modern anaphoras, anamnesis and oblation are inseparable, as inseparable as the union between Christ's self-offering and the offering of the Church. In the eucharistic memorial, we are not 'merely' recalling a past event but being drawn into it as a present reality: as ARCIC goes on to say, 'In the eucharistic prayer the church continues to make a perpetual memorial of Christ's death, and his members, united with God and with one another, give thanks for all his mercies, entreat the benefits of his passion on behalf of the whole Church, participate in these benefits and enter into the movement of his self-offering'.[9]

(2) There are a number of other associated ideas which also tend to bring the offerings of the Church and Christ into union: in particular, the idea of the Church's union with Christ's continual intercession in heaven, and the theology of the 'whole Christ, head and members', to which the BAS eucharist preface refers in talking of 'the unity between the Church's offering and the offering of Christ' (p. 179). These ideas have rattled around in Anglicanism for a very long time, and whilst they can claim no official status, they have considerable informal authority, increasingly so after ARCIC 1.

(3) A final piece of the jigsaw is the persistent authority in Anglicanism of Dix's four-action shape of the eucharist, despite some battering from historians and theologians. The BAS invokes Dix in picking out the offertory as one of the central moments of the eucharistic action (p. 180), and thereby sets itself decisively on one side of a debate in which the arguments by no means all go in Dix's favour.

So much for general background to memorial and sacrifice. How does all this fall out in the texts?

The first item to look at is the provision of optional 'prayers over the gifts' — optional in the rubrics, although included with no reference to their optional status in the Preface's outline of the liturgy (p. 177, where we are told that the prayer gathers up the 'action of preparation').[10] These *super oblata* prayers follow a fairly constant pattern: invocation — petition for the receiving of what we offer — petition for benefits from the eucharist, as in the prayer for Proper 18:

> God our sustainer,
> accept all we offer you this day,
> and feed us continually with that bread
> which satisfies all hunger,
> your Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

It should be said plainly that the BAS is *not* 'Pelagian' here: the preface to the rite explicitly roots offering in anamnesis, so that 'the offering of the gifts and the community are entirely dependent upon the one sacrifice of Christ' (p. 179). Nor, emphatically, is there any hint that we are

'offering Christ', or that, after consecration through the words of institution, the bread and wine are the body and blood of Christ presented to God. Moreover, as *super oblata* prayers go, the BAS texts are fairly mild and generalised, and in a great many instances are to be seen as encompassing the whole eucharistic celebration, rather than drawing attention exclusively to the eucharistic gifts (which, indeed, are not always explicitly mentioned):

> Generous Creator,
> in faith and joy
> we celebrate the birth of your
> Son.
> Increase our understanding and
> our love
> of the riches you have revealed
> in him
> who is Lord now and forever.
> (p. 274)

Nevertheless, the prayers, hand-in-hand with a higher-profile offertory and with the BAS handling of anamnesis-oblation, make it less easy for us to see the theological and spiritual point about the eucharist which the Edwardine liturgies dramatised by clear separation of 'the collection' and the functional move of 'laying the table': the point, namely, that the eucharist is one-directional, from a merciful God to sinners.[11] At the very least, we ought to press the question: 'What do we gain (and lose) by such a prayer?' And the more critical might wonder if these prayers are, in Thomas Talley's words, 'novelties which thinly mask the intransigence of questionable if not discredited presuppositions'.[12]

A much more important issue (because of its non-optional nature) is the handling of anamnesis. The Roman Catholic liturgist David Power has remarked that 'Because of the place at which it is situated in the eucharistic prayer, namely after the Supper narrative, the anamnesis is prone to be subjected in its composition to confessional interests'.[13] The BAS is a case in point. Apart from prayer 5, all the anaphoras link anamnesis to oblation more or less firmly:

> Recalling his death ... we offer
> you ... this bread and this
> cup (prayer 1)
> Remembering ... his death and
> resurrection,
> we offer you this bread and this
> cup (prayer 2)
> we remember his death ...
> presenting to you, from your
> creation,
> this bread and this wine (prayer 3)
> We who have been redeemed by
> him ...
> now bring you these gifts
> (prayer 4)
> Recalling Christ's death ...
> and offering to you,
> from the gifts you have given us,
> this bread and this cup (prayer 6)

The sequence of the prayers at this point makes it clear that what we do in obedience to the Lord's command to 'do this in remembrance' is precisely to *offer*. What are we to make of this?

First, it is worth stating something which Protestant instincts might cause us to overlook: in a real sense the eucharist as a whole *is* a sacrifice. The eucharist is prayer, and prayer is an offering to God, presumably included in the 'spiritual sacrifices' of the 'holy priesthood' (1 Pet 2.5). The problem, however, is that focussing this sacrificial character in the offertory or in the anamnesis-oblation almost inevitably says more than this, by

identifying one object or gesture or moment as a particularly appropriate referent for sacrificial language. Of course, we are only talking of a tiny part of the liturgy (a gesture, a few verbs); but far too much may have been invested in those small items. We have grown used to the idea that 'consecration' is not a 'moment' coinciding with or brought about by the supper narrative, but rather is that which takes place throughout the whole eucharistic action. Why could the same not be said of sacrifice? Kenneth Stevenson suggests that, because the liturgy does not consist of 'a series of "magic moments"', then 'there is no "moment of oblation" whether at offertory or after "consecration"'.[14] Perhaps it is in this way, rather than in further refinements of the sixteenth-century preoccupation with the relation between Calvary and the elements, that we might make some headway on a contentious issue which still by and large defeats us.

Second, it is by no means historically clear that oblation is intrinsic to anamnesis, however firmly that connection is lodged both in contemporary texts and in ecumenical statements. David Power, again, has argued with some success that anamnesis has 'the simple but purposeful role of summarising the church's commemorative blessing and founding its confident supplication'.[15] And beyond the historical uncertainties, it remains acutely difficult to support the idea of anamnesis-oblation by biblical exegesis. (It is presumably for this reason that the BAS, in line with others who take this line, argues on the basis of 'ancient liturgies' and 'patristic theology' — even if the historical arguments are by no means all in its favour.) Some Anglicans have consistently argued that to offer the bread and the wine to God is at best to obscure and at worst to contravene some basic theological principles set out in the New Testament. Above all, it is very hard to relate the eucharistic oblation to a sense of Christ's work as finished — as the unique, unrepeatable, sole-sufficient ground of our redemption into which we cannot enter, and whose benefits we can only passively receive.

A final issue raised by the handling of anamnesis and oblation is the larger question of human unworthiness. This is a matter where we need to tread very carefully indeed. I find myself deeply attracted by Rowan Williams' argument that one of the things which the eucharist dramatises is our renewed *status* as adults before God, as those who can respond and offer to God: 'We are always in danger...' he writes, 'of *regression* in the Christian life: the basic fact of our unqualified dependence on grace can become an alibi, a refusal to assume the authority we in fact have as baptised Christians ... Christians should understand themselves as heirs of the adult liberty and authority of the firstborn, rather than continuing anxiously to look for an omnipotent Father to provide totally for all needs at every step ... We need to acknowledge that God's gift in making us his children is a *real gift*, and we may do this by trusting in his will to receive what we are and what we offer'.[16] But however much we may heed the warning here, to redress the balance by making the bread and the wine into the symbol of our responsive giving is to reduce the impact of the eucharist as a dramatization of what it is that God has rescued us *from*.[17] One of the things which the regular celebration of the eucharist should do is enable us to do what it is acutely difficult for us to do: to see ourselves steadily and without illusions as sinners, as wilful perpetrators

of moral evil. Cranmer's spare 1552 liturgy, with its unadorned reminders of betrayal and the shedding of innocent blood, achieves this with an unparalleled vividness. Wisely seeking to enclose the reality of our hostility towards God within the even greater reality of our acceptance and renewed status before him, the BAS nevertheless lacks something of the capacity to shock us with our propensity for sin in all its forms. The structure and flow of the thanksgivings in particular tends to soften our exposure to Calvary, leaving us less disturbed than we might be. And thereby, something of the sheer devastation of the passion is lost from the corporate worship of the people of God.

What all this amounts to is a cumulative suggestion that the language of sacrifice is by no means a necessary part of the eucharistic memorial, and that to allow such language to gravitate towards the elements, their preparation or the anamnesis may be to perpetuate a gesture so marred by abuse as to make its presence positively disruptive.

iii. 'Consecration'

Most modern rites do not offer much in the way of definite clues about consecration. The rough contemporary consensus is that consecration takes place through the whole eucharistic action and especially through the whole eucharistic prayer, rather than, for instance, through the recital of the words of institution. The BAS follows the trend, and further omits any rubrics about manual acts, leaving the president free to make of consecration what he or she wishes.

Anxieties are around, however, about the invocation of the Holy Spirit upon the elements, found in all six prayers but absent from the BCP.[18] At heart, the fear is that this introduces a notion of 'local' presence to which many have rightly objected. My own view, for what it is worth, is that we need not be too worried on this score.

It is worth noting, initially, exactly what it is that we are asking the Spirit to do with the elements upon which he is invoked. Only prayers 3 and 6 specifically link the coming of the Spirit upon the elements to their being 'the sacrament of the body of Christ and his blood of the new covenant' (prayer 3) or, more plainly, to their being 'the body and blood of your Son Jesus Christ' (prayer 6). Prayer 5 links invocation of the Spirit to the petition 'that we may know the presence of Jesus in the breaking of bread'. And prayers 1, 2 and 4 direct our attention away from the elements and onto the worshippers themselves: the Spirit is invoked 'that all who eat and drink at this table may be one body' (prayer 1) or gathered 'into one' or 'may share the divine life of Christ our Lord'. And, moreover, the Spirit's coming is linked to the eating and drinking of the elements, so that there is little suggestion of a localised presence independent of reception.

Moreover, it is worth adding that the epiclesis tends now to be thought of as a way of *de-emphasising* local presence or consecratory agency of the Latin type through the quasi-juridical recitation of the institution narrative. As Geoffrey Wainwright puts it, 'It is "in the Spirit" that the glorified Christ holds sacramental fellowship with his Church'.[19] And so we should not fear the introduction of inappropriate ideas about the presence of Christ in the elements, but think more of the sanctification of bread and wine for the holy use of encountering the risen Lord. If we wish to be scrupulous on the issue of eucharistic presence, then we do better to turn our attention to the words of

administration, whose rather blunt form devoid of any invitation to faithful reception is disappointing, or to the post-communion proper prayers, whose claims about the eucharist are on some occasions little short of extreme.

5. Ministry

One of the points at which theological conservatism is most evident in most Christian traditions is over the theology of ministry — not surprisingly, since institutional forms of ministry are one of the chief points at which the stability and continuity of the tradition is maintained. This is most especially the case for Anglicans, who, for largely historical reasons, have often sought to establish the validity of the Anglican tradition by making a case for the validity of Anglican orders. It was this path which was followed in seventeenth century debates with both Roman Catholics and Puritans, and in late nineteenth and early twentieth century polemic against *Apostolicae Curae.* And over the course of the ecumenical movement, one of the chief issues brought to the table by Anglicans has been the question of the conditions under which the validity of non-episcopal orders can be maintained. Accordingly, it is not surprising that both the BCP and the BAS are conservative over the theology of ministry.

The Reformation ordinals as we have them in the BCP reflect late medieval institutional patterns of ministry — a threefold order, with the diaconate as a temporary stage on the way to the priesthood, the episcopate as a regional authority with particular responsibility for transmission of order, and the presbyterate as the basic local expression of ministry, into which the earlier 'minor orders' (subdeacons, etc.) had been absorbed. The Reformation ordinals certainly envisage a very distinct *content* to the presbyteral office, which distinguishes their theology of ministry from that of the medieval pontificals. The BCP de-emphasises the sacerdotal aspects of ministry: the ordinals call into question the notion of a sacrificial priesthood focussed on the eucharistic offering, and replace it by a pastoral and didactic model of the ministry, centering on public proclamation, the orderly administration of the sacraments, and private exhortation. Thus, for example, the Canadian BCP, in line with the 1552 ordinal, omits the *porrectio instrumentorum* and has the Bishop hand the Bible only to newly-ordained priests. The ultimate reason for this is that, in the BCP, the theology of the work of Christ as High Priest whose work has finished absorbs much that in late medieval theology was attributed to the priest — intercession, access to God and the mediation of forgiveness were now attributed supremely to Christ present to the Church through the Word.

But, though its understanding of the content of ministerial office is in some ways radical (indeed, that understanding has never really taken root in large tracts of Anglicanism), the BCP still identifies ministry with ordained ministry, and identifies ordained ministry with the threefold order.

The BAS, drawing on much recent work in ecumenical theology, makes some advances in these areas. Its ordination prayers, like nearly all contemporary ordination prayers, set ordained ministry in a broader context: the context of the person and work of Jesus Christ, and the context of the royal priesthood of all believers:

> We praise and glorify you,
> almighty Father, because you

have formed throughout the world a holy people for your own possession, a royal priesthood, a universal church.

We praise and glorify you because you have given us your only Son Jesus Christ to be the Apostle and High Priest of our faith, and the Shepherd of our souls...
(p. 648)

Moreover, it continues the didactic and pastoral model of the BCP — though with less emphasis on pastoral discipline and with slightly higher profile given to the sacerdotal aspects of ministry. However, two rather conservative features remain. First, despite the preface to the ordination prayers, ministry is strongly identified with the threefold order. Although the prayer praises God for the variety of gifts which the Holy Spirit gives to the people of God (apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers), it still only has space for three ordered ministries, and does not envisage ordination to ministries other than those in the inherited pattern. This is not a problem for the BAS alone, of course; so far as I am aware, no contemporary Anglican ordinal has questioned the sole validity of the threefold order, and none has dared to say that what we affirm about *ministry* ought to affect the categories to which we *ordain*. But the BAS further reinforces a pattern which has nothing to commend it apart from the inertia of inherited usage.

A second thing to note in the BAS is the fact that in some ways it is an oddly clerical book. This is not because it discourages lay participation, but because the points of greatest liturgical density tend to be moments which require a priest — especially because eucharistic worship is so central to the BAS' understanding of what Christians should do when they assemble. And even when it is not clerical in the sense of requiring the presence of the ordained, its expectations of the assembly are such that they demand a high level of liturgical expertise which is all too rare amongst the ordained, to say nothing of 'lay' Christians.

All this is to identify both a shift and a commonality between the BCP and the BAS over ministry. The shift is towards a more rounded understanding of ministry as that of the whole people of God. The commonality is that this shift is not fully successful; in significant respects, both books still presuppose that the *real* point at which ministry happens is in the work of the clergy.

6. Conclusion

There are a number of other areas where theological shifts between the BCP and the BAS could be traced — the most notable being baptism and confirmation, where what the BAS offers clearly envisages wide-ranging changes in our understanding of Christian initiation and nurture. But what I have reviewed in the understanding of worship and in the areas of creation, sin and redemption, eucharist and ministry shows, I think, that there are significant theological divergences between the two books. And these divergences are, of course, a reflection of the wider theological, ecumenical and liturgical context in which Anglicans do their thinking about worship.

Having identified some aspects of the theological shift, what next? In my worst moments, I fear that the Anglican Church of Canada is so indifferent to theological reflection that the issues will simply pass us by almost unnoticed. In my better moments, I hope that serious thinking

about some of these questions will make us see that, at some points, the BAS enables a richer apprehension of the gospel, and that, at other points, it does less than justice to the gospel. And I hope, further, that we will work hard — but not too fast — to produce liturgical texts which will articulate the gospel as best we can. But, most of all, I hope that we will put energy into fostering a stream of life in Canadian Anglicanism in which renewed worship might find a home. Worship is a function of many more things than simply the texts. However important the texts may be in embodying and transmitting the faith, worship draws much of its vitality from the context in which it is done — that is, from the life of the people of God who pray the text and whose living feeds into that praying. One of our jobs is to argue for the best — most imaginative, resourceful, nourishing, biblical — texts that we can. But on their own the texts will only lay out the ground for us: we need to take up occupancy. 'Let Anglicans not luxuriate in the notion that texts constitute the chief agenda ... The issues are deeper'.[20] The issues, in the end, all focus on the centrality of the gospel for the life of the church; and it is there, I believe, that we need to begin to put our energies.

Notes

1. G. Wainwright, Doxology. *The Praise of God in Worship, Doctrine and Life* (Epworth, London, 1980), p. 267.
2. The classic statement of these principles remains the work of Dom Lambert Beauduin; see, for example, *Liturgy the Life of the Church* (Liturgical Press, Collegeville, 1926).
3. Inter-Anglican Theological and Doctrinal Commission, *For the Sake of the Kingdom. God's Church and the New Creation* (Anglican Book Centre, Toronto, 1986), p. 30.
4. M. Ingham, *Rites for a New Age* (Anglican Book Centre, Toronto, 1986), p. 121.
5. G. Dix, *The Shape of the Liturgy* (Dacre, London, 1945), p. 15.
6. 'Eucharist', §3.
7. *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry,* 'Eucharist' §5.
8. ARCIC 1, *Final Report,* p. 14.
9. Ibid.
10. For background, see D. Holeton, 'The Sacramental Language of S. Leo the Great. A study of the words "munus" and "oblata"', Ephemerides Liturgicae 92 (1978), pp. 115-65, and (more generally) K. Stevenson, *Eucharist and Offering* (Pueblo, New York, 1986), pp. 85-99.
11. On the issues here, cf. C.O. Buchanan, *The End of the Offertory. An Anglican Study* (Grove, Bramcote, 1978).
12. T.J. Talley, 'The Eucharistic Prayer: Tradition and Development' in K. Stevenson, ed., *Liturgy Reshaped* (SPCK, London, 1982) p. 64.
13. D.N. Power, 'The Anamensis: Remembering, We Offer' in F.C. Senn, ed., *New Eucharistic Prayers* (Paulist Press, New York, 1987), p. 150.
14. K. Stevenson, 'Eucharistic Sacrafice — What Can We Learn from Christian Antiquity?' in C.O. Buchanan, ed., *Essays on Eucharistic Sacrifice in the Early Church* (Grove, Bramcote, 1984), p. 33 and n. 1.
15. Op. cit., p. 162.
16. R. Williams, *Eucharistic Sacrifice. The Roots of a Metaphor* (Grove, Bramcote, 1983), p. 27.
17. David Tripp remarks that 'Cranmer seeks to obey the command to "do

this" by giving thanks. For him, thanksgiving in the preset state of things is inseparably intertwined with penitence, because thanksgiving is for the salvation that sin made necessary': 'Shape and Liturgy' in K. Stevenson, ed., *Liturgy Reshaped,* p. 67.

18. On the issues here, see J.H. McKenna, *Eucharist and Holy Spirit* (Mayhew-McCrimmon, Great Wakering, 1975); id., 'The Eucharistic Epiclesis in Twentieth Century Theology (1900-1966)', *Ephemerides Liturgicae* 90 (1976), pp. 289-328, 446-482; id., 'The Epiclesis Revisited' in F.C. Senn, ed., *New Eucharistic Prayers,* pp. 169-94.
19. G. Wainwright, op. cit., p. 341.
20. C.O. Buchanan, *Anglican Eucharistic Liturgy 1975-1985* (Grove, Bramcote, 1985), p. 23.

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Appendix 1
Questionnaire

The Book of Alternative Services Evaluation Commission
July 1991

Dear Friend,

As you may know, the 1989 General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada established an Evaluation Commission for *The Book of Alternative Services*, with a mandate to undertake a wide-ranging and consultative evaluation of all aspects of the BAS, including its theology. A sub-group of the Commission has been working on these theological questions, and as part of its task is seeking opinion on some of the issues which have been raised in the course of the book's reception.

The sub-group, in consultation with the Commission as a whole, has drawn up a brief set of theological questions which we are sending to a number of interested parties — seminary professors, bishops, doctrine and worship committees, ecumenical partners, and other individuals and groups. We very much hope that you will have the time to reflect on the questions and write us your response. We are asking that responses be kept as brief as possible (without sacrificing necessary detail), and that they reach us *no later than October 31, 1991.* If you wish your comments to be kept anonymous, simply let us know. When we have received responses, the sub-group will work through them in detail, along with other documents pertinent to the theology of the BAS, and will draw upon them in drafting a report which will form part of the Evaluation Commission's report to the General Synod. Although it was hoped to have a final report by the 1992 Synod, this now seems unlikely. A copy of the final report will be sent to you.

Some of the recipients of this letter will be members of societies, orders, committees or groups of one kind or another. We suggest that, rather than trying to put together a composite response, groups should have the questions answered by as many individuals as wish to make a response.

We very much hope that you will be able to help us in this way. If you have suggestions of others whom you think would be competent and interested in making a response to these questions, please let us know.

Sincerely,

The Rt Rev Eric Bays
The Rev Patricia Johnston
Prof Terry Penelhum
The Rev Prof John Webster.

The Book of Alternative Services: Some Theological Questions

Please keep your answers as brief as possible without sacrificing any necessary detail.

1. How does the BAS make use of Scripture, doctrine, liturgical tradition and experience as criteria for liturgy? How would you judge the adequacy of the BAS in this matter?

2. Some argue that the BAS breaks new ground in theological understanding in some of the areas listed below. (a) Do you agree that these developments are present in the BAS? (b) Do you consider these developments to be consistent with the norms for Christian theology as they have been understood in the Anglican tradition?

   the nature of God
   creation
   salvation
   — *specifically, the saving work of Jesus Christ*
   the eucharist
   — *its centrality for Christian faith and practice*
   sacrifice or offering
   the presence of Christ
   the Holy Spirit and the eucharist
   initiation
   — *specifically, the relation of baptism and confirmation*
   marriage
   the church as community
   ministry
   — *specifically, the nature and function of the threefold order and its relation to the ministry of the whole people of God*
   the mediating function of the church and its symbolism
   the nature and authority of the Bible

3. Some argue that significant theological themes are given insufficient emphasis in the BAS. Please comment on (a) whether you feel these themes are underplayed; (b) why you feel they are or are not important.

   penance
   mission and outreach
   the Canadian context of our theology
   eschatology and life after death
   feminist theology and spirituality
   the inclusivity of the gospel
   the charismatic nature of the church
   native spiritual traditions
   justice, peace and the integrity of creation.

4. Please add any comments on other issues which you feel are important in undertaking a theological evaluation of the BAS.

Thank you for taking the time to respond to these questions: your comments will be weighed very seriously. A copy of the report of the Commission will be sent to you when it is completed.

Please mail your response to:

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Telephone: (416) 979-2870
Fax: (416) 979-0471

Appendix 2
Distribution List/List of Respondents

Distribution List

BAS Evaluation Commission	12
House of Bishops	47
Doctrine and Worship Committee	17
Diocesan Liturgical Representatives	22
Theological Colleges and Theologians	23
Women Theologians	8
Religious Orders	5
Ecumenical Partners	3
Other Individuals and Groups	53
Total:	**190**

List of Respondents

BAS Evaluation Commission	5
House of Bishops	12
Doctrine and Worship Committee	2
Diocesan Liturgical Representatives	3
Theological Colleges and Theologians	16
Women Theologians	1
Religious Orders	1
Ecumenical Partners	0
Other Individuals and Groups	23
Total:	**63**
(Unsolicited)	34
(Total, including unsolicited responses)	97

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