

MOWatching

newsletter of MOWatch Australia

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Women bishops at Lambeth 2008

Lambeth 2008 had eighteen bishops taking part who are women. The above photo comes from the official website: Bp Barbara Darling is in the front row fourth from the left; Bishop Kay Goldsworthy is in the back row, sixth from the left. There are now so many women who are bishops that time forbade obtaining every name! □

Submission made to Sex Discrimination Review Panel

On behalf of *MOWatch*, the members of the National Network have read, considered and endorsed the Joint submission to the review of the *Sex Discrimination Act* prepared by the *WomenSpeak Network* and *Security4Women* and facilitated through leadership of the YWCA Australia. Preparation of this submission was a collaborative effort between organisations working on issues affecting women, academics and specialists which resulted in a very comprehensive document that will be bolstered by the support of organisations such as ours - *MOWatch*. □

CofE opens door to women bishops

The General Synod of the Church of England, meeting in York in July, voted strongly to move forward with the consecration of women as bishops.

In doing so, the Synod recognised that not all members of the Church of England could accept this step. But it refused - somewhat unexpectedly - to put in place protocols which would place systemic limits on

the ministry of women who are bishops. It is likely to be some years before a woman is consecrated in England, but the crucial barrier has been hurdled.

In this issue, we include English commentary on this significant event from English sources, from church figures to a highly supportive *Times* editorial.

Ending women free zones

Giles Fraser,
The New Statesman,
8 July 2008

And about time too. Of course, we won't have women bishops in the CofE for several years yet. But the momentum of the Synodical process is now decisively in the direction of consecrating women and the whole idea of women free zones for traditionalists has gone down in smoke. Those of us who had fought hard for this, quietly celebrated with a few

US Anglican leader wades into women bishop row

Martin Beckford,
Religious Affairs Correspondent, *The Telegraph*, 21 July 2008

The head of the Anglican church in America, Katherine Jefferts-Schori, presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church of the USA has stepped into the controversy over female bishops, claiming those who oppose them simply don't like women.

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President's Column

It is with a degree of sadness that I write this, my last column for *MOWatching*. The recent Lambeth Conference has brought back memories of my visit to the UK in 1998. It was at the Lambeth Conference venue that I spoke with the leaders of WATCH in the UK, and received encouragement and insight into the need for MOW to continue in Australia but to seek a new direction.

As you are aware, I will be stepping away from the role as President at the next AGM. The past eleven years have been a very exciting period in my journey, and I am sincerely grateful to have been given the opportunity to contribute to this great *Movement* for change in the Church of God. I will reflect more about this time in my Annual Report.

For the present, I continue to give thanks to God for the ministry of women, lay and ordained, who

have embraced the challenges for change with humility, dignity, respect, quiet courage and a sense of humour. I am looking forward to being part of the future of *MOWatch*, in a different capacity, as the pursuit of our goals continues.

It is interesting to recognize that as breakthroughs are made along the way, energy to continue has been renewed rather than diminished. Changes in leadership and direction are therefore vital to maintain and empower us at various stages and our *Movement* has clearly reached a new stage of growth.

May we never give up on striving to contribute to the Church we love.

Val Graydon,

MOWatch President

Ending women free zones

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beers in the student bar at York University, where the debate took place.

Though the final vote was clear, there had been some choppy moments.

Towards the end of a long debate, a number of Bishops, fearing the direction things seemed to be going, rose to scupper the result. The Bishop of Durham tried to get us to put off a vote, arguing that with the Lambeth conference about to take place, and with all our rowing about gay bishops, we didn't need any more division. The Bishop of Dover said he was 'ashamed' that the Synod wasn't prepared to create greater safeguards for those who don't think women can be made priests or bishops - just as they don't think a pork pie can be made a priest or bishop.

Yes, that is an example that has been used. It's quite extraordinary that he can be ashamed of our church when we fail to give the anti-women bishops brigade their own women free enclave, but not ashamed that we have been complicit in centuries of misogyny. The so-called traditionalists speak a lot about 'deeply held theological conviction' and many bishops want to veto the use of words like discrimination by progressives. But it is what it is.

The debate threw up some unlikely heroes. Foremost among them the Bishop of Liverpool, who has had his troubles of late, chiefly as chair of governors of the Oxford college, Wycliffe Hall that has made the

news for sacking most of its staff and going so right wing it has been nicknamed an Anglican 'madrasa'. But his speech steered the women bishops debate to its conclusion. The job description of bishops, he argued, was to feed the body of Christ. And yet, before the body of Christ became a metaphor for the people of God, it was women that fed Christ's physical body and looked after him. Here was the biblical argument for women bishops. Indeed - on this argument - the very first bishop was a woman. It proved the vital speech.

The traditionalists speak a lot about being pushed out. Actually, no one is pushing them out. All sides of the church want them to stay. Which is why the church will draw of a code of practice so that their views - weird as they are - can be accommodated. Some may leave - though far far less than say they might.

But the House of Bishops can stay a boys' club no longer. It's this boys' club mentality that is creating so much hand-wringing: 'Fr. so-and-so, we went to college together, great priest, such a shame he is thinking of leaving, having to brush up on his Italian etc.'. All of which is piled on with a dollop of sentimental tosh dressed up as pastoral care. Synod saw through all this and voted for what is right and just. Alleluia. □

Giles Fraser is the vicar of Putney and a lecturer in philosophy at Wadham College, Oxford

This is a mailing from St Matthew's, Westminster, which seeks to keep people informed of comment in the UK concerning current issues in the church.

US Anglican leader wades into women bishops row

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The Most Rev Katherine Jefferts Schori, Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church of the USA, also claimed those who believe women should not be religious leaders do not understand church history.

In a rare British interview, she accused the Church of England of taking far too long to modernise, just days after its governing body voted to ordain women as bishops with no compromise measures for traditionalists.

And she dismissed the threat of orthodox Anglicans who are planning to create a rival structure to her church because of its liberal stance on homosexuality.

Dr Jefferts Schori, in England for the once-a-decade gathering of Anglican leaders, the Lambeth Conference, said the decision of the General Synod on Monday to allow women to become bishops was a "positive next step".

But she went on: "I think for people on the other side of the Atlantic, it feels very slow. It feels like a very protracted and extended process."

Anglo-Catholics and conservative evangelicals believe bishops must be male because Jesus and his apostles were, and hundreds have threatened to convert to Roman Catholicism as a result of the Church of England's reforms.

But Dr Jefferts Schori, the first woman to become a "primate" or leader of an Anglican province, claimed other reasons were often behind people's opposition to women in the clergy. She said: "I think there's a whole range of reasons why people aren't comfortable with the idea.

"It's personal antipathy, and it's a misunderstanding of leadership in the early church. The early church had women in leadership roles."

Asked if she thought the Anglican Communion is heading for a schism over the introduction of women bishops and homosexual clergy, she replied: "There is a great deal of anxiety around the Communion and the world. People are faced with a range of changes and a pace of change that is unknown in human history. But all will be well.

"The Elizabethan settlement was about keeping together people who have vastly different opinions and people were ready to die and kill each other then. This is a slightly lower level of hostility."

At the GAFCON summit in Jerusalem last month, hardline Anglicans from around the world announced

the formation of a new movement based on an orthodox interpretation of the Bible, and plan to create a new province in North America for those opposed to the liberal Episcopal church.

Dr Jefferts Schori said she was not worried about their plans, however.

"They may threaten but I don't think there's a real possibility. If they decide to leave I think they will end up like other groups who have left the Anglican Communion." She added it was always "lamentable" when groups leave the church.

Dr Jefferts Schori said the Archbishop of Canterbury was coping well in his battle to hold the warring factions of the worldwide church together. But she criticised his decision not to invite Bishop Gene Robinson, the openly gay priest whose ordination triggered the crisis over sexuality in the church, to Lambeth. "He was duly elected," she said.

Dr Jefferts Schori gave a speech on leadership on Thursday July 17 to a unique gathering of women bishops from around the world at Ripon College, a theological training college near Oxford.

Canon Professor Martyn Percy, the college principal, said he was embarrassed that the Church of England had taken so long to join the other 15 Anglican provinces around the world which admit women as bishops. He said: "I think it has become a matter of some public embarrassment that we have not yet taken the step of becoming fully inclusive."

Asked when he thought there might be a female Archbishop of Canterbury, he replied: "Within fifty years. I think there's no bar now that they can become bishops." □

African woman theologian to deliver Barry Marshall Memorial Lecture

The 2008 Barry Marshall Memorial Lecture, entitled 'An African View on Anglicanism's current troubles', is to be given by Dr **Esther Mombo**, Academic Dean of St Paul's United Theological College in Limuru, Kenya.

Dr Mombo teaches church history and theologies from women's perspectives. She is a member of the *Circle of Concerned African Women Theologians*; her writings have been on women's issues, evangelism, HIV/AIDS, Christian-Muslim relations, and poverty in Africa. In the Anglican communion, Dr Mombo is a member of the *Inter-Anglican Doctrinal and Theological Commission*.

The lecture takes place at 8pm on Wednesday 20th August in the Buzzard Lecture Theatre, Burge building, Trinity College, Parkville. All are welcome.

The consecration of Bishop Kay

The excitement in Perth was palpable on May 22nd 2008 – the feast of Corpus Christi, as Archbishop Roger Herft prepared to consecrate the Venerable Kay Goldsworthy as Australia's first woman bishop – the twenty third in the Anglican Communion. A small contingent of Sydney MOW members including Judy Little, Sue Henry-Edwards, Gwilym Henry-Edwards and Patricia Brennan had made the long journey to Perth to be present at the historic occasion.

Everyone we met – bus drivers, taxi drivers, shop assistants and waiters excitedly asked “Are you here for the big event?” The whole city was delighted and many people quite unconnected with the church spoke of their admiration for Kay and their support for her consecration as bishop.

St George's Cathedral was packed for the occasion. There were 21 bishops present and the procession of diocesan and visiting clergy seemed to go on for ever. It was wonderful for those of us from Sydney to see so many ordained women taking their places alongside men and to see how taken for granted this is in most other dioceses. There was even another bishop who was a woman: Bishop Victoria Matthews, former Bishop of Edmonton Canada and Bishop-Elect of Christchurch New Zealand, was Kay's retreat conductor and participated in the consecration along with the Australian Bishops.

The Consecration service was a wonderful example of Anglican worship - formal but inclusive, grand and beautiful, with colour and movement and wonderful music but with room for everyone to participate and join in the prayers and singing. Worshippers were greeted as they arrived by a group of Aboriginal elders, playing the didgeridoo and presiding over a traditional Aboriginal smoking ceremony. The service commenced with a Welcome to Country and the Lord's Prayer in the Noongar language read by Mr Ben Taylor, Ms Vivienne Sahanna and Ms Olive Woods. Mr Taylor expressed the great joy of the Aboriginal people at being a part of the ceremony and of their great respect for Kay: “She's a nice lady!”

In the centre of the cross formed by the nave and transepts is the nave altar on a raised platform, plainly the sacramental focus of worship. There was feeling of expectation as the service began, a blend of solemnity and excitement.

The sermon was delivered by the Primate of Australia, the Most Reverend Dr Phillip Aspinall. Phillip Aspinall has a clear, measured preaching style, each word carefully chosen and emphasised. He pointed out that the Feast Day was the celebration of the In-

stitution of the Holy Communion, and said, “There could be no better holy day on which to consecrate a bishop than this, because the heart of the episcopal office is to serve this holy communion. The essence of the charism of episcopal ordination is maintaining, nurturing and extending communion as God's gift.”

Bishop Aspinall reminded us that the main cause for celebration was the consecration of a bishop in the church of God and the commissioning of the new bishop for the role they are to sustain in the church. However the fact that the person chosen to be a bishop is a woman is also a significant cause for celebration. Bishop Aspinall said that it “points to the ongoing overcoming of barriers in the ever widening embrace of God. That is the real cause for celebration tonight and the deep source of the joy we feel.”

After the sermon and the creed, Archbishop Roger Herft took his place in front of the altar for the consecration. Kay was presented to the Archbishop who called her to assent to “the Catholic faith, as received and retained by the Anglican Church of Australia, grounded in Holy Scripture, set forth in the Creeds and historically expressed in the Thirty Nine Articles, the Book of Common Prayer and the Ordering of Bishops, Priest and Deacons”. She was required to be assent to the Constitution and Canons of the Church and to take the Oath of Canonical Obedience.

Each stage of the rite was followed with great care and solemnity, emphasising the importance of the role of bishops as witness to the resurrection of Christ, protector of the purity of the Gospel and proclaimer of the Lordship of Jesus Christ. As each admonition was spoken to Kay, we were all aware of the awesome responsibility we expect of our bishops. At the end of the examination, when Kaye prostrated herself before the altar she seemed very small and fragile; an exposed and vulnerable figure in the white of her alb. And when the crowd of other bishops laid hands on her, she was completely hidden from view.

There is no doubt that all the consecrating bishops believed Kay to be truly called to the office and work of a bishop in the church of God and their endorsement and support affirmed this even as it laid the weight of responsibility upon her.

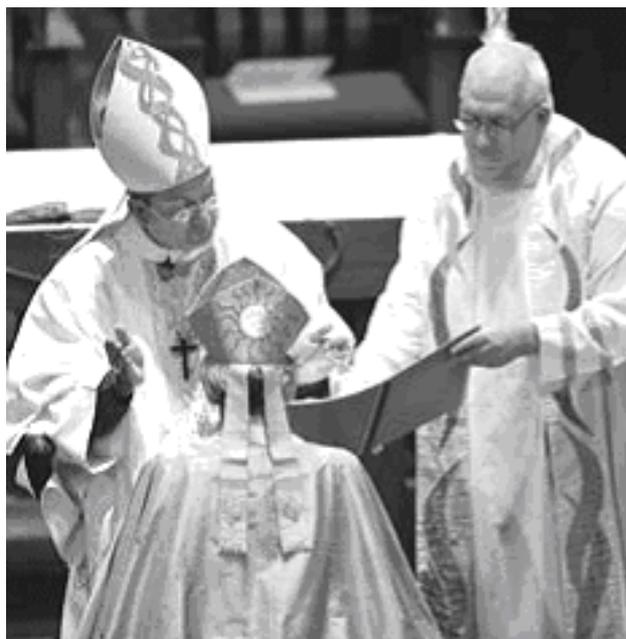
From here the service became lighter as Bishop Kay was presented with her pectoral cross, episcopal ring, mitre and pastoral staff, each in its way a symbol of the office and work of a bishop. The cross was presented by her family, husband Jeri and twin sons Tom and Ben whose joy as they greeted the new bishop was very moving.

Goldsworthy - personal views

The service booklet instructed us to greet the newly ordained bishop with applause, a rubric obeyed with great enthusiasm, joy and thanksgiving to God. The feelings of joy and thanksgiving continued in the Peace and the Eucharist which followed. A new bishop was consecrated, the first woman to be consecrated in Australia, and the people rejoiced.

The anticipation at the beginning of the service was no reality and the solemn procession out of the cathedral soon broke onto excited groups of people talking animatedly. Eventually the crowd streamed across the road to the Government House Ballroom where they were able to greet their new bishop in an informal and relaxed atmosphere. □

*Sue Henry-Edwards, General Representative,
National MOWatch Network, and
Gwilym Henry-Edwards, Rector, St Luke's Enmore
with Stanmore, NSW*



WOW! What a great two days ...

Wow!! What a great Archbishop Perth has!! And closely followed by Melbourne's Archbishop. I hope that these men realize how much we value them.

To think that after all these years, years of disappointment and frustration and hurt ... we finally have not one, but two women bishops.

"Blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness for they shall be filled."

To be part of a group who witnessed these wonderful events, I feel privileged and proud. I wish you could have all been there.

"Did you watch the Compass programme?" I asked all my friends. The wonder of it all still makes my heart sing. From the wonderful 'smoking ceremony' outside Perth cathedral to seeing Kay walking in the procession of bishops at Barbara's consecration was / is such a joy.

So many people have worked for this day over many years, often unknown and unacknowledged, but still believing that the day would come. Of course, at each of the consecrations there were crowds present, but there was just so much good-will and so much pleasure portrayed you

couldn't help but smile. We were still smiling days after the event.

In Perth, when we returned to our unit we had no thought of going to bed. We sat and talked, we were so excited, and after lots of cups of tea and lots of toast and marmalade. eventually stopped talking just before the sun came up.

When it was time to go to Melbourne for Barbara's consecration we were

just as excited and still felt very privileged to be there. A wonderful service, the highlight for me was the singing of the Sudanese choir, and the drumming, and the joy of it all.

Next day we went back to St Paul's Cathedral, Barbara was presiding and Muriel Porter gave the address. What a wonderful day. What a wonderful month ... What a wonderful year.

Judy Little



*MOWatch members celebrating at Perth Government House Ballroom:
Front: Lesley McLean, Sue Henry-Edwards, Bishop Kay Goldsworthy, Alison Gent,
Archbishop Roger Herft, Bishop Victoria Matthews.
Back: Judy Little, Kathleen Toal. In the background is Kay's mother.*

The consecration of Bp Barbara

It was a misty, overcast day as we entered St Paul's Cathedral in Melbourne on May 31 to find our reserved seats. We were seated near many women from all over Australia, who had been involved at various times and to varying degrees in the 30-year struggle for the equality of women in all the ministries of the Anglican Church. The atmosphere was one of joyous anticipation.

The procession was long and colourful, recalling processions of a similar nature that have been a feature of liturgical rites for centuries, however this one was refreshed by a newer inclusiveness of gender and race.

Soon, the Chapter Procession entered to Widor's *Toccata*. The crucifer was at the start, followed by the taperers, then the cathedral choir, then servers and theological students. Then followed various clergy in ascending order of seniority. Here I recognised people I had known in Sydney.

The Archbishop's Procession began as we started singing a hymn (words by Elizabeth Smith) which spoke of the diversity and inclusivity of Christian ministry. Early in this procession we saw Canon Barbara Darling followed in a precise order by the 19 bishops present, including the Primate, Dr Philliop Aspinall, and ending with the Archbishop of Melbourne, Dr Phillip Freier, and the chaplain.

Just as they passed me, Regional Bishops Phillip Huggins and Stephen Hale let go two large white helium filled balloons. These sailed up to the roof of the cathedral. They had come from Geranium, the Christian clown. This woman, who is a parishioner at St Margaret's Eltham, now in her seventies, has been visiting the cathedral on and off for ordinations for about 20 years. For her first visits she had a sad face, then for later visits a happy face and a balloon. The balloons usually last in the rafters for about a week.

The setting for the communion service was the 'Christ Church' mass by Phillip Matthias. After the moving presentation, assents and oaths (where I found it very strange to hear a woman's voice) came the prayers and then the exhortation and the examination.

Near the end of this we could hear the St James', Dandenong Chollo Sudanese Choir warming up! Their bright enthusiastic singing was wonderful. One hymn was entitled: "If we make or take an oath before God and the people, then we must stick to it"!

Before the laying on of hands we sang *Veni Creator Spiritus*. The laying on of hands was especially moving, as we could see Bishop Kay Goldsworthy among the other bishops. Next the gifts of a Bible, the episcopal staff, the episcopal ring and finally the cope, mitre and stole were presented to Barbara.

Then the communion service resumed at the Greeting of Peace, and at the conclusion of the service was the prayer for the newly ordained bishop. The postlude (and recessional) was the finale from Symphony No 1 by Louis Vierne.

Afterwards it was lovely to watch the atmosphere of warmth and celebration outside the cathedral.

It is interesting to reflect that Barbara Darling was one of the first of many women to leave Sydney to study theology, and then to become a priest in Melbourne. Hers was a true journey of faith, because when she left Sydney in 1975, ordination for women was not on offer, even in Melbourne.

The next day we attended the eucharist at the cathedral. This was the first service at which Barbara presided as bishop. She arrived wearing the cope, mitre and stole as symbols of being clothed in God's love – she was a symphony in blue and gold.

Muriel Porter delivered the address. This related the idea of Jesus as Mother, to God as Mother and then expanded and developed these to that of a Bishop as Mother.

I was in awe. I never thought I would hear this theology that I had read actually set forth from the pulpit!

I reflected on how far women have come in the Anglican church in the last 30 years!

Christine Middleton, MOW Executive, and immediate past Convenor of Sydney MOW!

*MO*Watch at Christchurch installation of Bp Matthews

As announced in the May issue, Bp Victoria Matthews has been elected as the eighth Bishop of Christchurch. Bp Matthews was the Bishop of Edmonton from 1997 to 2007, and the Suffragan Bishop of Toronto, Canada, from 1994-97.



Her installation will take place in Christchurch Cathedral on August 30. *MO*Watch will be represented by Val Graydon (*President*) Judy Little (*National Secretary*) and Kathleen Toal (*National Treasurer*). They will fly to Christchurch immediately after the *MO*Watch Conference in Perth (12.15 am flight out!). □

Darling - personal viewpoints

In May, women in the holy Catholic Church, and in the Anglican Church of Australia in particular, were honoured by the consecration of two women to the Order of Bishop.

This doing, this act of ordering, put order into ancient and sacramental three-fold order of bishop, priest and deacon. Now we can truly say that in our land, within the church's sacred ministry there is 'neither male nor female'.

If these services could be said to represent a completion of the struggle for Women's ordination the struggle was effected by a testimony to Anglicanism's internal ecumenism. I attended both the Perth and Melbourne consecrations. I experienced Anglican worship in its diversity. The consecration in Perth presented Anglican 'high church' liturgy at its most restrained and beautiful; in Melbourne a sedate and more reformed expression of the same service was beautiful and moving.

I left Sydney to fly to Perth for the consecration of the first woman bishop in Australia. To travel from one side of Australia to the other was an act of financial imprudence born of the knowledge of its overwhelming and momentous importance. There was such a gathering of clergy robing from all over Australia. I am told there were 22 bishops. The solidarity of the international Anglican Communion was in the person of Bishop Victoria Matthews, Bishop-elect of Christ-church New Zealand, but coming to us from Canada. Bp Victoria led Kay's retreat.

This consecration service was a service of extraordinary beauty – beauty of fabric and ambience; smoke: eucalyptus and incense; music: didgeridoo, choir, organ, people, hymns, mass setting; visual beauty: vestments (understated but splendid) and liturgy exquisitely Anglican led by a holy bishop. There was a beauty too of the completeness of God's people - men and women together, clergy and lay, from all over Australia.

Kay Goldsworthy was graciously and contentedly herself. She displayed humility and confidence in her demeanour and in steady convinced responses. There was so much beauty that tears of joy are not enough.



Chollo women from the Sudan rejoice during the consecration of Barbara Darling as Bishop. Photo: Janine Eastgate, reproduced courtesy Anglican Media Melbourne.

Because I love this Anglican way of being it was for me a foretaste of heaven.

Within ten days I was robing again for the consecration of Melbourne's first woman bishop, Barbara Darling. Here I was, in the cathedral where I was ordained to the priesthood, an occasion for me of a most profound confirmation of my being. I walked up familiar stairs, saw many familiar faces from my time of training for the priesthood at a time when this was still only a dream, still a prohibition.

And yet as we processed into the church and took our places, there was an air of the ordinary, the un-extraordinary, rather a sense of the inevitability of the event in such a modern, sensible and truly liberated diocese: a diocese which has been the long-time leader in the fight.

I looked around at the equal number of men and women in the ranks of the clergy. Here and in the congregation were many of the campaigners for women's ordination. Some like me who had travelled to be here as in Perth – to give thanks to God for these first women bishops.

And then to add to the completeness of it all Kay processed in – with the bishops, taking her place in the ranks! And we have lived to see the days, these happy, blessed.

Thank you Kay and Barbara for being who you are and brave enough to answer your calling. □

Lesley Maclean

Vestments for Bishop Barbara

MOWatch member Morna Sturrock describes the hectic rush to make vestments for Melbourne's Bishop Barbara Darling.

Early the morning after Archbishop Freier announced his choice of Barbara Darling as Melbourne's first woman bishop, Muriel Porter rang me to confirm that I was commissioned to make cope, stole and mitre for her consecration. They were to be gifts from her friends and colleagues, and donations were already being sought.

It became a hectic time all round, particularly of course for Barbara herself ... Interviews of all kinds, took up days, and I was only able to persuade her at the end of the first week that I urgently needed to talk with her. She arrived on the Sunday night, after I believe six meetings during that day, not to mention a couple of church services.

Having made vestments for Barbara many years ago, I knew something of her tastes, and that her favourite colour was blue. So blue became the colour for all three episcopal vestments. A hurried visit to my favourite importer, Redelmans in High Street Prahran, proved very worthwhile, with about five different blue fabrics going out to Barbara for selection; all of course of guaranteed availability within this country.

Two days later, Redelmans delivered Barbara's choice of two fabrics, the principal cope fabric a 'Marian blue', of silk and polyester which proved to hang beautifully, despite my wonderful dressmaker / cutter friend Jenifer McKenzie saying it was dreadful to sew!

Symbols for the embroidery were next discussed, Barbara wanting 'something simple'. In consultation with my graphic designer son Andrew, the hood carries a Mother-in-god stylised figure embracing her flock. The stole ends have her favourite cross. Over her heart the stole has five pearls (not the usual one pearl I place on every clergywoman's stole). These form the Southern Cross, a symbol with many meanings for Barbara, including its importance in the Girl Guide movement where she was a leader for many years.

The mitre had to be simple, with 'no sticking out at the sides' and based upon the best fitting one in Archbishop Freier's collection. (It's nice to imagine the trying on of his 'hats' that went on during their private meeting!!). Again, the mitre carries a simple cross, made up by Jenifer McKenzie ... This is made of the same lighter fabric used on the cope's orphreys and hood.

Jenifer and I had the privilege of presenting all three vestments to Barbara during the consecration service in the cathedral, and next day were present when she wore them for the first time celebrating the Eucharist there. Any wonder we MOW people celebrated for hours af-

terwards, over the road at Young and Jackson's!

PS: The fee for these vestments was not paid to me, but direct to the Trinity College Foundation's fund for the Morna Sturrock Doctoral Scholarship. □

A light repast for *MOWatch* members

Morna Sturrock concluded her article on the Vestments with the words – "Any wonder we MOW people celebrated for hours afterwards, over the road at Young and Jackson's!"

Chloe's Dining Room at Young & Jackson's opposite St Paul's Cathedral was the perfect place for a large group of MOWatch members and friends to enjoy a light repast and celebrate the very moving and historic consecration service they had attended for Melbourne's first woman Bishop in the Church of God – Barbara Darling.

Many of the MOWatch group had travelled long distances from interstate, others were local, they were all pleased to be able to be together, catch up with each others news, reminisce of times past, recall the struggles to have women ordained to the three fold ministry, first as deacon, then priest and now finally to get to this most momentous month of May 2008, when first Kay Goldsworthy was consecrated Bishop on 22 May in Perth and – now Barbara Darling in Melbourne on 31 May – both Kay and Barbara had been ordained deacon in Melbourne in 1986.

The meal was excellent and was quickly followed by members proposing a number of toasts. The first toast was for Barbara, the newly consecrated Bishop; and then followed many toasts as members recalled past milestones and achievements.

It was a perfect afternoon, and for those readers who are wondering who 'Chloe' is – Chloe is a well known Melbourne icon whom we were able to view from the dining room where we enjoyed our meal and afternoon – a work of art (painting) by the distinguished French academician and teacher, Jules Joseph Lefebvre, who made her debut in the Paris Salon in 1875, a show case exhibition of the work of the leading French Academic Masters.

There is much history attached to 'Chloe'!

Kathleen Toal



On June 1, 2008 Bp Barbara presided over her first Eucharist as a bishop. LtoR: Christine Middleton, Kathleen Toal, Muriel Porter (preacher for the occasion), Bp Barbara Darling, Judy Little and Morna Sturrock. Photo courtesy of Kaitlan Reid



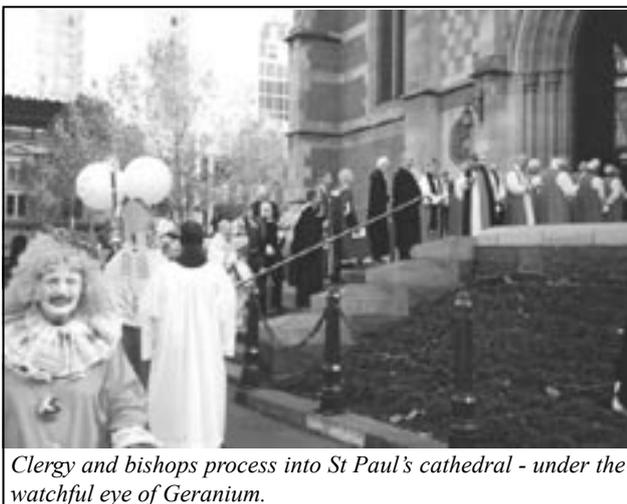
Geranium hands over her balloons to Bp Philip Huggins

‘Geranium’ at St Paul’s Cathedral

In February 1992 an ordination of women was planned in the Diocese of Canberra & Goulbourn and this was stalled by a Supreme Court challenge. Melbourne MOW members were contacted and urged to attend St Paul’s Cathedral and protest about the cancellation of the ordination of the women. However, the ordination of the men was *not* cancelled.

As a member of MOW I put on the clown costume of ‘Geranium’, a Christian clown, and went to Flinders Street bearing a notice with these words: “I’m glad GOD called me to be a Christian clown and not a priest. I didn’t need permission from Synod, an Archbishop or anyone else.” I walked up and down outside the cathedral where many people spoke to me about what I was doing – one was Bp Bob Butters who wrote on the notice “Well done. God Bless! + Robert Butters”.

On 13 December 1992 women were ordained priest at St Paul’s Cathedral, Melbourne. For this event



Clergy and bishops process into St Paul’s cathedral - under the watchful eye of Geranium.

Sherlock sent me a red ticket for Geranium to attend this wonderful ceremony. So Geranium attended with an enormous white balloon with “PRAISE THE LORD” printed on it.

At the tenth Anniversary of the first ordination of women in Melbourne, Geranium attended again with a giant white “PRAISE THE LORD” balloon and released it in the Cathedral where it remained for approximately a week on the ceiling.

Geranium likes to attend women’s ordinations with her special helium balloon. When Bishop Barbara Darling was consecrated, Geranium attended with two of the special balloons: if priests deserved one, a bishop deserves two! I had intended to give one to Bishop Barbara, but couldn’t find her.

I had previously arranged with Bishop Philip Huggins that I would hand him one balloon, but as I didn’t find Bishop Barbara I gave two to Bishop Philip who gave one to Bishop Stephen Hale and they both released them halfway along the aisle and the balloons floated to the ceiling.

So I praise the Lord for women priests, and also a woman Bishop – Barbara Darling.

Glynn Pritchard



Morna Sturrock chats with Bp Barbara Darling about her new cope and mitre.

Photo: courtesy of Kaitlan Reid

Sydney MOW: *between delight & depression*

By ELAINE A. PETERSON, Editor, *MOW Report*

MOW members in Sydney have been greatly encouraged by the wonderful news of the consecration of two Australian women bishops. However, while we had a great photo display of these consecrations to welcome people to our Annual General Meeting on July 5, we cannot help feeling a bit like the 'Little Match Girl', our noses pressed to the window watching the happy party inside.

So, when our Guest Speaker, Dr Muriel Porter, offered her sympathy at our situation, this was warmly received. In 'The Road to Women Bishops in Australia', Muriel presented a fascinating overview of the long theological and tactical struggle on the way to our present happy outcome.

She reminded us that, way back in 1977, the twelve member General Synod Doctrine Commission agreed, by an 11-1 majority, that there was *no theological reason that women could not be ordained*. The one was, of course, Canon Broughton Knox, then Principal of Sydney's Moore Theological College. His opposition and his influence in Sydney led to the *headship theory* of the diocese of Sydney which has dominated the debate here ever since.

She followed this with a detailed chronology of the significant decisions and debates leading to the Appellate Tribunal's decision last year that a vote in General Synod was not necessary so an individual diocese could make its own decision on this matter.

The copies of her paper, *Women in Purple – Women Bishops in Australia* (Mulgrave: Garrett Publishing, 2008) quickly sold out.

The AGM of course included the Election of Officers – a challenging occasion, as according to our constitution the significant officers (Convenor, Secretary and Treasurer) cannot serve more than a consecutive three years. The time was up for the current crop. The results were:-

Convenor – Vacancy

Secretary – Sue Henry Edwards

Treasurer – Elaine Peterson

Committee – Christopher Albany, Pamela Albany, Carolyn Bowyer, Patricia Brennan, Bronislava Lee, Christine Middleton, Carol Russell, Lawrie Russell.

I am very happy to report that those elected met a few weeks later and elected **Patricia Brennan** as our new Convenor. Many readers will know that Patricia was an early leader of this movement and became MOW's first National President.

That the struggle goes on in Sydney is very clearly shown by the recent refusal of the Senior Assistant Minister of St Andrew's Cathedral to permit Sydney MOW to hire the Chapter House for a celebration of the 25th Anniversary of the public launch of MOW, when the Twelve Founding Theses were attached (not nailed) on the door of St Andrew's Cathedral in October 1983.

We are planning this as a pre-synod meeting. When this year's Sydney Synod begins on October 13, Chris Albany's motion from last synod will be high on the Agenda and we will again have the opportunity for public debate. After all, we can do no other. □

ADF welcomes and congratulates the Consecration of Bishops Kay Goldsworthy and Barbara Darling

May God's love inspire them to lead and serve the people within their Diocese

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The Church of England: A Vote for Clarity

The Times Editorial - July 9, 2008

This is an historic step over women bishops

Rarely has a General Synod seen such emotion, heard such passionate supplications or witnessed such agonised conflicts of conscience and loyalty. The York meeting of bishops, clergy and lay members of the Church of England tested the faith of those present in a way that few other Anglican debates have done in recent years. And after months of tension, factionalism and lobbying, the long debate on the consecration of women bishops was cathartic. It was also refreshingly decisive. The Church of England has voted for the full ecclesiastical equality of women. In the conflict of tradition with reform, reform has triumphed.

In many ways, the synod showed the Church at its best. Despite the clash of convictions, speakers were respectful of place and occasion and to each other. The Archbishop of Canterbury set the tone. He spoke of the agonies facing the Church, but acknowledged the sincere conviction of everyone who spoke. Dr Williams's sermon, during the synod, was uplifting at a time when comfort was needed by those distressed by the divisions and the rancour. He showed the sensitivity essential to his office and a spiritual leadership that may yet steer him past the rocks of the Lambeth conference.

John Sentamu, the Archbishop of York, gave Dr Williams the support he has too often lacked from senior clergy, while giving the synod his proverbs and common sense. A figure who has managed to avoid the factional struggles within the Church, he is well placed to effect whatever reconciliation is possible after the big vote.

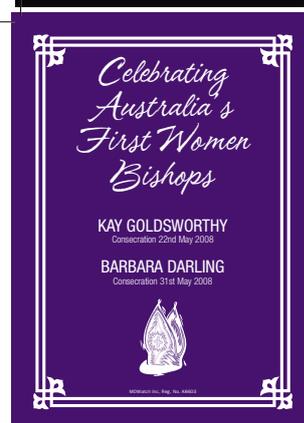
That vote, to admit women to the episcopate, is the culmination of a debate that began some 30 years ago. It was brave and sensible, but far from inevitable. True, the majority of clergy and bishops now favour the logical consequence of ordaining women as priests. They also believe that the Church must not be out of step with the mores and convictions of the society that it serves. But there were strong moves to postpone the vote to avoid further division just before Lambeth, or to seek a further compromise by appointing 'super-bishops', with extra-geographical jurisdiction, to supervise those clergy who believe in the sanctity of male apostolic tradition. The step was favoured by many, including Dr Sentamu. But it would

have been a fudge. And it would have enshrined the principle that women were still not acceptable to the whole Church. Despite the tears and prayers of those who fought for compromise, the need for clarity was greater.

The question now is whether the traditionalists can reconcile themselves to the decision. About 1,300 threatened before the vote to leave the Church. Far fewer will carry out their threat. The assumption that they could move en masse to Rome is probably wrong. The Anglican and Roman Catholic churches will now move away from the 'full visible unity' that they once sought. Not every defector is welcome.

Some traditionalists will indeed leave, and find themselves in a lonely place. But most will remain. Some may try, once again, to overturn the vote. For others there were hints at York, intriguingly, of unofficial moves to offer them the ministry of traditionalist bishops in a non-statutory way. Clarity has won. What is now needed is magnanimity, resolution and a readiness of all factions to work and live together. □

MOWatching is produced by MOWatch Inc. Editorial responsibility is taken by Charles Sherlock, 3 Lelant St Trentham 3458. Written contributions should be emailed to chsherlock@netspace.net.au.



To celebrate the consecration of Australia's first two women bishops, MOWatch has issued two postcards. Enjoy!

Postcards from
the centre

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