

## Holy Baptism with the Laying on of Hands 1990

(A report from the Doctrine Commission of the Anglican Diocese of Sydney on a new order of service for Baptism)

### Introduction

1. The Liturgical Commission of the General Synod has published a new order of service for Baptism, known as Holy Baptism with the Laying on of Hands 1990. In response to this document the Doctrine Commission of the Diocese of Sydney has compiled this report. The report first considers the theology of Baptism before proceeding to consider the new liturgy and its value for Australian Anglicans.

### Theological Considerations

#### *The Theology of Baptism in the New Testament*

2. The first references to baptism in the New Testament concern the baptism of John. This was a baptism of repentance for Israel, which under the influence of Malachi's prophecy was expressed in terms of covenant renewal (Mal 3:1-4). True Israelites were those who were baptised as a sign of their repentance and their expectation of the coming Messiah.

3. Jesus' endorsement of John's baptism is clearly seen in his readiness to undergo this rite, for it was fitting "to fulfil all righteousness" (Matt 3:15). Jesus thereby identified with Israel who was in need of repentance, cleansing and the hope of a Messiah.

4. Although John baptised with water, he spoke of the coming Messiah as one who would baptise with the Holy Spirit and fire. Yet Jesus also authorised a water baptism ministry among his disciples concurrently with the ministry of John the Baptist. Although Jesus himself did not baptise people (John 4:2), the fourth Evangelist makes it plain that water baptism was a sign of discipleship, whether of John or of Jesus (John 4:1).

5. Jesus' command to his disciples at the end of Matthew's Gospel to go and make disciples, baptising them and teaching them, is best understood against the backdrop of both John's and Jesus' water baptism ministries. Although the ascended Jesus came and baptised with the Holy Spirit (as prophesied by John), he did not make water baptism thereby redundant. This is clear not only from the terms of the Great Commission, but also the practice of the apostles from the Day of Pentecost onwards.

6. John's water baptism signified discipleship, as did the water baptism of Jesus' earthly ministry. However, they were both signs of the gospel, of God's promises to Israel and the fulfilment of those promises in the person of Jesus. Both baptisms were covenantal, in that it was God's covenant promises to Israel which were to be fulfilled (John 1:31; cf. Mal 3:1-4). Similarly the first Christian baptism on the Day of Pentecost was conspicuously covenantal (Acts 2:39), as was the context of Jesus' command in Matthew 28:18-20. Jesus' last command was for his followers to make disciples from all nations and baptise them in the name of the triune God. The preaching of the gospel would be the means of making disciples, and such discipleship would be signified by baptism. Like the water baptism of John the Baptist, Christian baptism is a sign of the gospel. John's baptism held out the promise of salvation through the Messiah, whereas Christian baptism is based upon the fulfilment of that promise. Christian baptism therefore looks back upon the completed work of Jesus and identifies the one baptised with the death and resurrection of Jesus (Rom 6:1-4). This concept of fulfilment is similarly seen in the apostles' testimony to the association of baptism with the forgiveness of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38-39).

7. Although water baptism is not essential to salvation, as Jesus' promise to the thief on the cross makes plain, it is an important sign of salvation. For it is through "the washing of water with the word" that Jesus has cleansed his church (Eph 5:26). Of course, no mere application of water is able to cleanse a person spiritually (1 Pet 3:21); that is the work of the Holy Spirit through the word. Yet significantly Paul describes this inward cleansing by the metaphor "washing of regeneration" (cf. Tit 3:5). Similarly the writer to the Hebrews couples the inner and outer cleansings in his invitation to draw near to God "with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water" (Heb 10:22). Clearly the physical act of water baptism symbolises the spiritual act of inner cleansing. Our Catechism has rightly captured this symbolism in its definition of a sacrament as "an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace". Paul expected that water baptism would be the normal experience of all those who had become disciples of Christ (Rom 6:1-4; 1 Cor 1:13; cf. Acts 18:8; 19:5). Their spiritual incorporation into Christ could therefore be described as being "baptised into one body" (1 Cor 12:13) and this was symbolised and signified by water baptism.

8. Furthermore, the language of baptism is applied by both Peter and Paul to old covenant experiences of God's salvation (1 Pet 3:21; 1 Cor 10:1-5). For the apostles, baptism was descriptive of God's saving activity in continuity with his covenant promises of old, while also embracing the eschatological newness of the fulfilment of those promises in the person of Jesus. It is the continuity of covenant promise and fulfilment that explains the inclusion of children within the orbit of Christ's saving work, as members of the new covenant

with their parents. Although it may not be proved that any of the household baptisms recorded in Acts actually included children, what is clear is that the household of faith which was defined under the old covenant was the same household that was baptised under the new (Acts 10:2; 11:14; cf. 16: 15, 31). The children of believers are holy (1 Cor 7:14), in distinction from those children who are unclean because their parents are unbelievers. The children of saints are part of the saints (Eph 1:1; 6:1), and therefore should be identified with the same sign of discipleship as their parents. The gospel of God's grace is as inclusive of children under the new covenant as it was of children under the old (1 Cor 10:1-4).

### *The Theology of Baptism in the Book of Common Prayer and the Thirty-Nine Articles*

9. "Baptism", according to Article XXVII, "is not only a sign of profession, and mark of difference, whereby Christian men are discerned from others that be not christened, but it is also a sign of Regeneration or New Birth, whereby, as by an instrument, they that receive Baptism rightly are grafted into the Church....". What the Article affirms is that baptism is a sign of discipleship or profession, which properly belongs only to those who can be called Christians. However, baptism is also a sign of regeneration, in that those who are rightly baptised are incorporated into the church. They are now publicly recognised as members of Christ's Church, and baptism is the instrument whereby such recognition is conferred.

10. Although the Prayer Book embraced the concept of baptism as a ceremony of initiation or sign of entry into the church, it also saw it as a sign of divine covenant. It was God's movement towards mankind, rather than the reverse, which was given the emphasis. The Medieval Church had been more concerned with what baptism effected, than what it signified, yet the Reformers combined both, placing the emphasis upon God's grace towards us. Baptism, together with the Supper of the Lord, were "certain sure witnesses, and effectual signs of grace, and God's will towards us, by the which he doth work invisibly in us, and doth not only quicken, but also strengthen and confirm our Faith in him" (Article XXV).

11. Baptism and the gospel are therefore inextricably combined in the Prayer Book. It is the gospel which persuades us "of the good will of our heavenly Father towards this infant, declared by his Son Jesus Christ" (BCP, Publick Baptism of Infants). It is because of the gospel that those who are rightly baptised are incorporated into the church and "the promises of forgiveness of sin, and of our adoption to be sons of God by the Holy Ghost, are visibly signed and sealed" (Article XXVII). It is the gospel that allows the Prayer Book to declare "We yield thee hearty thanks, most merciful Father, that it hath pleased thee to regenerate this infant with thy Holy Spirit, to receive him for thy own Child by adoption, and to incorporate him into thy holy Church". This declaration is based upon the promises of the gospel and publicly identifies the one baptised as a member of God's family.

12. Discipleship is therefore expected of those who have been baptised, that they "shall not be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified, and manfully to fight under His banner against sin, the world and the devil, and to continue Christ's faithful soldier and servant unto his life's end". However, such discipleship is only predicated on the presence of faith. The BCP manner of expressing this faith was by the candidates themselves if they were of age, and through the godparents if the candidate was an infant. It may be questioned whether or not the latter expression of faith is the most appropriate. Nevertheless, that baptism must take place in the context of faith is certainly the presupposition of the Prayer Book's understanding of baptism. It is noteworthy in this regard that in the Private Baptism of children, the sponsors do not have to declare anything in the name of the child to be baptised, yet nonetheless, those who are present "call upon God" as a necessary prerequisite for the baptism.

### **General Considerations**

13. There are many aspects of the Liturgical Commission's new service which are attractive. Worthy of special mention is the adoption of one rite of baptism for both adults and infants. In this way a clear and unambiguous signal is given that baptism means the same whether it is administered to infants or adults. The addition of a service for the Laying on of Hands in the one booklet also has distinct advantages for adults presenting for baptism and confirmation. Yet the integrity of baptism is maintained in such situations, as noted in the Preface: "Where both baptism and confirmation are administered, the liturgy should be so arranged that the sacrament of baptism is seen to be central". Nonetheless, the congregation is in danger of being overwhelmed by the liturgical wordiness of the combination of Baptism, Confirmation and Lord's Supper in the one service. Moreover, such a weight of liturgical action leaves little opportunity for the preaching of the word, which provides the all important context for understanding God's grace expressed in the sacrament of baptism.

14. The Liturgical Commission has also moved away from the provision of two orders of the one service, which was a feature of AAPB. This is not in itself an unsatisfactory move, as long as it is possible to satisfy the theological and liturgical preferences across the spectrum of the Anglican Church of Australia.

15. The setting of Holy Baptism in the context of "the regular pattern of congregational worship" (p. 4) is appropriate, and follows our Reformers' practice. However, the Preface goes on to add, "preferably with the Holy Communion (Eucharist)", when there is no compelling reason for this preference. This was not the

pattern of the apostolic church, which readily administered baptism to new converts but makes no mention of the Lord's Supper as a desirable aspect of one's initiation into the church. It is one's baptism into Christ, according to the New Testament, which clearly signals a believer's membership of the church. With the renewed recognition of the completeness of baptism as a sacrament of initiation, it seems a pity to have it overshadowed by the need to celebrate communion whenever baptism is administered.

16. The statement in the Preface that "Baptism is an instrument of God's salvation" is an unfortunate expression. Moreover, the biblical text cited (1 Peter 3:18-21) specifically denies that the mere washing of water saves. Although Article XXVII uses the language of "instrument" it does so more carefully and in a different sense. The use of the word "instrument" in the Article bears a legal connotation, whereby a right is created or confirmed, or a fact recorded. The ingrafting of a person into the church is thereby validated by the action of baptism. Baptism does not save, but signifies by a "legal" instrument those who are saved. The language of "sign" or "seal" would therefore be more appropriate and less misleading as a description of the function of baptism.

17. Some minor changes have been made to the Lord's Prayer, the Gloria in Excelsis and the Apostles' Creed. These changes reflect the agreed liturgical texts prepared by the English Language Liturgical Consultation 1988 (ELLC). The most significant of these changes are in line 9 of the Lord's Prayer, and lines 3, 7 and 8 of the Apostles' Creed.

<i>line 9</i> "Lead us not into temptation"	→	"Save us from the time of trial"
<i>line 3</i> "his only Son, our Lord"	→	"God's only Son our Lord"
<i>line 7</i> "dead, and was buried"	→	"died, and was buried"
<i>line 8</i> "he descended into hell"	→	"he descended to the dead"

18. When the AAPB was published, the Liturgical Commission decided not to adopt the rendering of the predecessor of ELLC (the International Consultation on English Language Texts) with regard to line 9 of the Lord's Prayer. It seems reasonable to expect some justification for this change of attitude, especially when the ELLC acknowledges that acceptance of its own version "is far from universal".<sup>(4)</sup> The changes in lines 7-8 of the Apostles' Creed attract less criticism because of the acknowledged difficulty that line 8 has always occasioned for Christians. Given the challenge of translating *descendit ad inferna* (literally "He went down to the lower regions"), the ELLC text appears to be a good solution. Of more concern, however, is the removal of the masculine pronoun for God in line 3 of the Apostles' Creed (and also line 2 of the Gloria in Excelsis). While agreeing that inclusive language is a sensible guideline for reference to human beings, we see no justification for the removal of masculine pronouns when referring to God, as this is the way in which Holy Scripture refers to God the Father. Since the Liturgical Commission clearly feels free not to adopt some of the changes introduced by ELLC (note the continued use of an upper case "N" for "Name" in line 2 of the Lord's Prayer), we would suggest that the AAPB version of line 3 of the Apostles' Creed (and line 2 of the Gloria) be retained.

## The Service of Holy Baptism

### General Comments

19. The recognition of the congregation's involvement with those who are to be baptised is a healthy development beyond AAPB. This can be seen in the greater participation of the congregation (§§19-21) and their reception and welcome of the candidates (§26).

20. The elimination of the pre-Reformation concept of the sanctification of "water for the mystical washing away of sin" is to be loudly applauded. Prayer is now offered for the baptismal candidates (§21), rather than for the waters of baptism, which surely better reflects the teaching of Scripture. The recognition that Baptism is an important ceremony is subtly conveyed by the nomenclature of "Holy Baptism", rather than "Public Baptism", as in the AAPB.

21. The structure of the service is good, although for practical reasons, it is probably better for the sermon to follow the baptism rather than to precede it. In the case of adults being baptised, there is a logic to their having heard the sermon before being baptised. However, anyone who has baptised infants should know that it is a cause of much anxiety for parents to keep their babies quiet through a sermon, knowing that their infants will be on public display shortly thereafter. The sermon is not directed to the babies, but to their parents and godparents and the congregation in general. These adults will be far more attentive to the word of God if they know that the liturgical participation of their infants has concluded. Liberty should therefore be given to ministers to place the sermon after the baptism, as occasion demands, rather than be forced into an artificial priority of word followed by sacrament. Despite the theological correctness of "Word before Sacrament", the Word should never become subservient to the Sacrament; it is the latter which is the servant of the former. This theological order is, after all, still preserved by the reading of God's Word prior to the administration of baptism. However, it is to be regretted that a rubric has been inserted in the Ministry of the Word which requires the congregation to stand for the Gospel reading and to sit for both the Old Testament

reading and the New Testament reading (other than from the Gospels). Although this has been the practice in the Lord's Supper, its appearance in the baptismal service is a novelty. The practice of adopting a different posture for the reading of the Gospel than that adopted when other parts of Scripture are read is surely in need of revision. We would strongly urge the Liturgical Commission to consider the theological implications of such a differentiation, and the ambiguous message it conveys regarding the relative respect one accords to different books of the Bible.

22. The triple renunciation of the world, the flesh and the devil is obscured by the new form (§17).

*Do you renounce evil and all that leads to sin?*

*Do you renounce all that is false and unjust?*

*Do you renounce selfish living?*

23. The reference to the devil has been omitted and replaced by a more vague reference to evil. The toning down of any reference to a personal devil is unhelpful, if not misleading. The reference to "all that is false and unjust" loses the punch of "the false values of the world". Similarly the lameness of "selfish living" is not as strong as "the sinful desires of the flesh" (AAPB), even though it is conceded that the word "flesh" currently conveys a specifically sexual connotation. Perhaps "desires of our sinful nature" would be more preferable. Accordingly, the following triplet is considered preferable (in a slightly altered order):

*Do you renounce the false values of this world?*

*Do you renounce the desires of our sinful nature?*

*Do you renounce the devil and all his works?*

24. The responses at §21 draw upon helpful instances of the use of water as a symbol of salvation, although the fifth response should read "through the river Jordan" rather than "over the river Jordan". However, one gains the false impression that any reference to water is an appropriate means of shedding light on the meaning of baptism. Yet it is the redemptive references to water, rather than water per se, which must inform our understanding of the sacrament. It would have been wiser to include Noah and his family (following 1549, 1552 & 1662, though omitted in AAPB) and exclude some of the other non-redemptive aquatic references. The reference to the water and the blood flowing from Christ's side, on the other hand, is a novelty. The Scriptures do not testify to any baptismal allusion here, and it is foolish and misleading to cite it, merely because water is mentioned. The final response makes reference to the grace of the Holy Spirit "to serve your creation". This a curious phrase. In what sense do Christians serve the creation (vis-a-vis Gen 1:26)? It would have been more felicitous to express it as "to serve you in your creation".

25. The prayer at the end of §21 is excellent and, as mentioned above, removes all mention of sanctification of the water. Furthermore, it is good to see the removal of the obvious, namely, asking candidates if they want to be baptised.

26. The mention of the optional use of oil in §24 is disturbing. Although the Reformers expunged its memory from the 1549 and subsequent Prayer Books, our liturgical commissioners have deemed otherwise. The scriptural references cited in support for its reintroduction (p. 6) bear no relation to any putative connection between oil and baptism. Water is the symbol of baptism, in fact the only symbol countenanced by Scripture. To introduce oil (however ancient the custom) is to confuse the occasion with different symbolism. There is already a number of different images conveyed in the symbolism of water (e.g., washing, saving from judgment, burial) which makes the introduction of another symbol entirely unnecessary. On the contrary, the introduction of oil into the baptism service, apart from having no scriptural warrant, not only confuses the administration of the sacrament, but also suggests that the sole use of water is insufficient. The introduction of oil should therefore be strongly resisted.

27. The same arguments apply in some measure to the presentation of a lighted candle to each candidate (§25). This practice was permitted by the Second Order of AAPB in the endnotes, but it has now gained more prominence by its elevation to the status of a rubric (though the practice is still optional). Many would argue that it is an aesthetic addition to the service, which is not only harmless but also helpful as a reminder of our task as Christians to shine as lights in the world. Nonetheless, its very presence undermines the significance of the washing of water as the sole instrument and symbol of baptism.

28. The change of wording in the congregational response after the signing of the cross omits the threefold mention of "sin, the world and the devil". This would not be a significant omission if the threefold renunciation had not already been weakened in §17 (see 22 above). Yet the new wording here is pertinent, crisp and powerful:

*Confess the faith of Christ crucified,*

*proclaim his resurrection,*

*and look for his coming again.*

29. The Liturgical Commission have possibly considered the expression "Fight bravely under his banner" as a little quaint in the 1990s, and they may be right in this judgment. Nonetheless, the omission of all reference to resisting temptation and sin is surely an unbalanced assessment of the nature of Christian discipleship. The exhortation by the president: "Live as a disciple of Christ" needs amplification for both the candidates and the congregation.

30. The final congregational response is an excellent conclusion to the service with its affirmation of reception and welcome into the congregation, together with its recognition that the candidates and the congregation are all "children of the one heavenly Father and inheritors of the kingdom of God".

#### *The Role of Sponsors and Godparents*

31. The Liturgical Commission has continued the welcome innovation of the AAPB of encouraging parents to join with the sponsors in their responses to questions. Reference is made to the fact that "our Church lays down certain requirements for the godparents of infants" (p. 5), however, it would be helpful if these requirements were included in the Preface. Furthermore, it seems appropriate to reconsider the need for three godparents for each child. Our present formularies require two godparents of the same sex and one of the opposite sex. Liberty could be given to parents to have only two godparents, or be themselves the godparents, if they so desire.

32. The suggestion that one godparent be a member of the congregation is a good one, though surprisingly no mention is made of the desirability of at least one parent being a member of the congregation.

33. The introduction of a sponsor for adult candidates presenting for baptism is also a good idea. (The revisers clearly saw no need to have two sponsors, let alone three.)

34. It is a great pity that the Liturgical Commission did not revise the role of godparents (and sponsors) with respect to their giving answers on behalf of infant candidates. The concept of a proxy answer supplied by sponsors on behalf of the child is an "ancient figment". It has no scriptural warrant and obscures the basis of deciding who are the legitimate candidates for baptism by imposing the adult model of faith and repentance as necessary conditions. The children of Christian parents are eligible for baptism on the basis of the promises of God: "to be God to them and to their children". Cranmer's use of the godparents' answers was a way of publicly identifying the faith into which the child was being baptised.<sup>(2)</sup> Faith in the promises of God is a necessary condition for baptism. However, this can be realised without recourse to the custom of godparents' answering on behalf of the child. That the sponsors answer questions on their own behalf is clearly important, in order to verify their fitness for the task, and in the case of the parents it establishes the eligibility of their child for baptism. However, the need for the child's faith to be present before baptism is administered has no scriptural warrant, and it would be best if this procedure were changed. Let the parents' and sponsors' own answers declare the faith into which the child is to be baptised.

35. Although the above proposal is a departure from the BCP and the AAPB, the General Synod Doctrine Commission looked into this question in its Report to General Synod in 1973, at the request of the Liturgical Commission. When asked whether "a declaration of repentance and faith is essential in the baptism of an infant", the Doctrine Commission declared that it was "not essential in the strict sense. Our church does not require such declarations in emergency baptism, for example." Furthermore, when asked if declarations by parents in their own name could be substituted for those in the name of the infant, without contravening any doctrine or principle of worship, the Doctrine Commission replied: "we see no theological objection to services in which declarations are made by parents in their own names provided these are coupled with promises that the children baptised will be brought up in the Christian faith [emphasis original]". The administration of baptism would be significantly strengthened if such changes were to be introduced into this new liturgy. For in so doing, the covenantal promises to God's people would be clearly identified and the nature of God's grace towards the children of Christian believers, prior to their own response of faith, would be more clearly proclaimed. It is interesting to note that all reference to God's covenant in relation to baptism has been removed from this service (contrast AAPB, pp. 503, 541). This is a great pity, since the the Fourth International Anglican Liturgical Consultation readily acknowledges the significance of the concept of covenant for the practice and theology of baptism: "The term 'baptismal covenant' is used in this document as having scriptural and Anglican heritage".<sup>(3)</sup>

36. It is noteworthy that the recently revised New Zealand Liturgy of Baptism incorporates these very changes. The parents and godparents are asked questions, and it is their response as parents and godparents that establishes the legitimacy of the baptism of the child. It would be more appropriate, therefore, to make the heading of §17 THE RESPONSE TO GOD'S WORD, rather than THE DECISION, which better captures the relationship of this section to THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD. Furthermore, the term applies equally to adult and infant baptism as well as having the benefit of emphasising God's prior grace, expressed through his promises. A suggested change to the heading and rubric of §17, therefore, might read as follows.

## THE RESPONSE TO GOD'S WORD

17 The president asks candidates who can answer for themselves

There would then follow the declaration of repentance (see our comments at 22 above) by the candidates. An additional rubric could then be inserted thus:

The president asks the parents and sponsors of children to be baptised

Do you believe that God's covenant promises belong to you and to your children?

I do.

In §18 the question asked could then be expressed in this way.

I now ask you to profess the Christian faith into which you are to be baptised/these children are to be baptised.

§19 could also be amended so that a separate question is addressed to the parents and godparents.

Will you, believing in the promises of God, and by God's grace, strive to bring up these children as disciples of Christ, teaching them to love God with their whole heart, and their neighbour as themselves, until their life's end?

I will, with God's help.

## The Laying on of Hands

37. The inclusion of a rite for the Laying on of Hands is to be commended, as a worthwhile addition which tidies up the anomaly of an adult presenting for baptism and waiting for subsequent confirmation. However, it necessarily raises all the questions which accompany our present understanding of confirmation as "a practice in search of a theology". Moreover, everything which is stated or prayed for, concerning the candidates for confirmation, could equally be predicated of the infant candidates for baptism. A more robust confirming of the candidates' faith, a stronger declaration of God's grace that he will complete what he has begun in their lives, and a call to their perseverance in the Christian life is warranted here (cf. AAPB second form).

38. The innovation of using the Laying on of Hands for Reaffirmation is gaining wide acceptance in the Anglican Communion. Although this practice may be pastorally helpful to many, it should not be seen in such a way that would undermine baptism as "the unrepeatable sign of initiation into Christ". <sup>(4)</sup> However, even if the practice of reaffirmation is considered pastorally helpful, there is little to be gained in conjoining this with a ceremony of laying on of hands. Indeed it would appear that the current proposal sees no distinction between reaffirmation and confirmation, which surely only further clouds the significance and meaning of the rite of confirmation. Nonetheless, we note that the revival of the catechumenate as a means of discipleship and preparation for reaffirmation has been welcomed by many in the Anglican communion.

39. In the communion service that follows, it ought to be noted that the prayer of consecration reintroduces the clause which was omitted by the 1552 and subsequent revisions of the Prayer Book, viz., "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest". The use of the present tense is capable of wide interpretation, and if the clause were to be maintained, it would be preferable if the verb "comes" were placed in the past tense.

40. The wording of the penultimate line of the last prayer in ¶28 seems awkward, where the first comma functions very differently from the second comma. The prayer first addresses the Holy Spirit, which in itself is unusual (and has no precedent in Scripture), then the prayer is addressed to God. Why not address the prayer to God in the first place, as Paul did when he speaks of him (i.e. God) who has begun a good work in you (Phil 1:6)? A better prayer would be:

*Name*, may God who has begun a good work in you  
direct and uphold you in the service of Christ and his kingdom.  
God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit  
bless, preserve and keep you.

## The Reception

41. The inclusion of a service of Reception into communicant membership of the Anglican Church affords opportunity for tidying up another anomaly. The words of the service are appropriate, although it is surely misleading that the bishop's affirmation "We recognise you as a baptised and communicant member of the Christian Church" is stated after the candidate has expressed a desire to be admitted into communicant membership of the Anglican Church of Australia and accepts her doctrine and order. It would have been

more felicitous to recognise the candidate as a baptised and communicant member of the Christian Church (on the basis of their profession), and then ask the candidate if they wanted to join the Anglican Church.

For and on behalf of the Commission

S. FIFER (the Rev)  
*Secretary*

15 June 1993

#### Endnotes

1. "ELLC believes that the above version is likely to commend itself for widespread ecumenical use, although it acknowledges that some would prefer a negative rendering of line 9." *Praying Together. A Revision of "Prayers we Have in Common" (ICET 1975) (Norwich: Canterbury Press, 1988), p. 2.*
2. The words of the Preface (p. 5) accurately capture this concept: "Those baptised as infants need to profess for themselves the faith into which they have been baptised."
3. *Christian Initiation in the Anglican Communion: The Toronto Statement "Walk in Newness of Life"*, ed. D. R. Holeton (Bramcote, Notts; Grove, 1991), p. 16, n. 1.
4. *Christian Initiation in the Anglican Communion*, p. 17. Note also the caution expressed on p. 18 of the same document. "Since the regular renewal of the life of the baptized is in the eucharist (with confession and absolution), the solemn affirmation of the baptismal covenant-a comparative innovation in Anglican liturgy in any case-should be infrequent and preceded by due notice and preparation....".