

The Bishop of South Florida moved the following Resolution:

*Resolved*, That the House of Bishops enthusiastically and unanimously encourage the efforts of the Executive Council to implement, immediately and intensively, a Church-wide educational effort in the field of Stewardship.

**Resolution adopted**

### **Office of a Bishop**

The Bishop of Missouri reported for the Committee on the Office of a Bishop. He presented the following paper, which was received by the House:

#### **SOME REFLECTIONS ON THE OFFICE OF A BISHOP**

The contemporary Church is caught up in a monumental ecumenical involvement, the rediscovery of the Bible, liturgical reform, and theological creativity, which few institutions have ever before countenanced; strong dissent from the culture which embraces us, with anguishing divisions among the ranks; and with the swelling demand that the laity—not the clergy—be the Church. This theological revolution co-incides with an urbanized culture, the death knell of a white minority's untoward and cruel dominion, vast technological changes, the explosions of populations and the Bomb, and with the management of life not by the Church but by a tangled interlocking of public and private bureaucracies.

What is the role of a Bishop in all of this? Can the Bishops lead the People of God to bring the Gospel to God's People? Can Bishops assist in the discovery of new life in God's new world? Can God's world discover new life in the Church? What is God asking Bishops to do? A Bishop of modern Romanism, Anglicanism, or South India cannot have the same functions as a Bishop of the Second Century, or of the Fifth Century West, or of the Eighth Century East, or of Eighteenth Century England.

It is the considered opinion of your Committee on the Office of a Bishop that the Office of the Bishop must provide a viable and radical leadership in every area of diocesan policy. The opportunity and need are in the area of those "public ministries" outside the scope or principal purpose of the normally private and personal parish ministry. The priority policy of diocesan structure is development of ministry with "public impact". A Diocese will work with its parishes so that the primary thrust of Diocese and Parish is Mission. Provision of land and buildings, while sometimes essential, is not the high priority goal.

The commitment to public ministry means that a Diocese, through and with the Bishop, seeks to be the agent and enabler of social change in community policy affecting basic issues of community life. Change must be sought in the areas of education, housing, public welfare, poverty, race, etc., etc., etc. A Diocese must accept its responsibility, along with other institutions, for shaping the community as well as for acting remedially within it. A Diocese has a particular responsibility to exercise theological reflection in the developing community and to insert

such reflection and critique into the public processes of its area. Such commitment to "public" ministry includes recognition that lone-wolf denominational action in these sectors is not desirable, is easily neutralized, and is probably ineffective. A diocesan policy should be to work with existing ecumenical structures and to work for new ones where necessary. This implies that diocesan policy is to develop major sources of non-parochial revenue for non-parochial ministries and to do this ecumenically wherever and whenever possible.

The policy of ecumenical co-operation is pervasive but flexible. In any given area (geographical or topical), a Diocese must work with those who are available and willing, through ecumenical task forces and ecumenical structures created *ad hoc* for the work to be achieved. Similarly, a diocesan policy must promote and encourage co-operation and communication in the local parish units. In all of this, and much more, the concern, commitment, and action of the diocesan unit will be the reflection of the Bishop's attitude.

Structure in National Church and diocesan units will require radical change to meet the crises and emergencies of these times. Metropolitan regions span diocesan and provincial lines and require thought, consultation and co-operation involving jurisdictional boundaries. Co-operation between the Dioceses of Maryland and Washington, Missouri and Springfield, Quincy and Chicago, and other areas, is a hopeful sign. There are still larger groupings concerned with Cuban re-settlement, the American Indians, and Appalachia. The proposals of the Committee on Diocesan Boundaries and the Joint Commission on the Structure of General Convention and Provinces are exciting and need encouragement.

Finally, the relation of a Bishop to a jurisdiction should be seen in the context of a more flexible use of the episcopate. Translation of Bishops was approved by the 1964 General Convention and will come before the 1967 General Convention for a second reading. This is a step that should be most useful in the life of the Church. Further, the possibility that a Bishop, after a due period of service in the episcopate, might accept a call to parochial ministry or to other responsibilities, either within or without the structures of the Church, should be recognized as a valid Christian ministry. Question as to the right of such Bishops to vote in the House of Bishops must be raised. This issue is also posed by the increasing and alarming demand for more Suffragan Bishops. Action, therefore, should be initiated to relate the vote of a Bishop in the House of Bishops to jurisdiction.

The expression of the pastoral responsibility of Bishops one to another, both individually and corporately, needs strengthening. The status and work of Suffragan Bishops must be debated and clarified. Guidance should be offered to newly-consecrated Bishops. Retired Bishops should feel the continuing concern of the fellowship for them. Those who face special problems should be enfolded by pastoral care. To achieve this, more frequent, small, informal gatherings of Bishops are to be preferred to larger meetings of the whole House. Such meetings, however, should not be wholly regional.

Organization is a responsibility which contemporary Bishops cannot avoid. Good procedures must therefore be learned and be implemented in diocesan structure. Administration can be seen as a pastoral opportunity to "minister to" many people, some of whose lives are touched by a Bishop only within these patterns of organizational life.

In all of these matters, the life of a Bishop is bound to the clergy of the Diocese and their life to his. For this relationship is a two-way street. As a Bishop is chief pastor to his clergy, so the clergy have a pastoral responsibility to the Bishop. Yet, as a Bishop seeks to implement his pastoral concern for the clergy, he discovers that he has responsibility without authority, especially in the critical area of the placement and use of the clergy. A Bishop does not long for autocratic power, but rather, for the ability, working with the Priesthood and with responsible parish authorities, to minister effectively in this all-important realm and to serve the good of the Church. There is need for the House of Bishops to face the chaos of the present methods of deployment of the clergy and to offer creative leadership through appropriate canonical legislation. Until this can be accomplished, Bishops should welcome personal approaches of the clergy relating to placement problems. The House of Bishops might well share specific individual situations, seeking together such solutions as are possible at the moment. There is also need of a Canon that will permit withdrawal from the normative ministry in order to serve in new ways in community, economic, or political life. Appropriate episcopal care should be provided for such experimental ministries.

The inescapable dilemma of a Bishop in these affairs is that he is both judge and pastor of the clergy. Under God's Grace, this can be resolved if both Priests and Bishops recognize that "Father in God" represents not sentimentality but strong love. Discipline can then be seen as an aspect of a pastoral and paternal relationship.

These are matters of great concern, for a Bishop is involved in life-long responsibility for the clergy. At the very beginning of postulancy, help is needed in appraising men who offer themselves for the ministry. Regional arrangements akin to the conferences held in the Church of England for men anticipating the ministry should be considered. After ordination, in-service training of Deacons is imperative. Continuous post-ordination education of the clergy in a Diocese not only breathes vitality into the ministry of that Diocese, but builds understanding between the Bishop and the clergy and strengthens the fellowship within which both the clergy and the Bishop work.

A Bishop is consecrated in the Church of God to provide humble and courageous leadership for all the people of God. By what he does, but more essentially by what he is, will the evidences of reform and renewal emerge from the cloudy multiplicities and perplexities of our times.

### **Resignation of Bishops, Proposed Canon**

The Bishop of Missouri moved canonical and constitutional changes on behalf of the Committee, as follows:

1. Amend Canon 42, Section 8 (a), so that the same shall read:

Sec. 8 (a). If the Bishop of a Diocese, or a Bishop Coadjutor, shall desire to resign his jurisdiction, he shall send in writing to the Presiding Bishop his resignation with the reasons therefor, and accompany the same with the advice and/or approval of the President and two other neighboring Bishops of his Province. The Presiding Bishop shall immediately communicate the same to every Bishop of this