

NEW CRANMER SOCIETY NEWS AND VIEWS

NUMBER 57 : JULY 2006

VIEWPOINT

Excerpts from Peter Corney's
address on July 15



83 HANNAN ST
Williamstown 3016

“What sort of Church do we want to be...need to be....should we be?”

A broad liberal Church versus a narrow constricted Church?

“The idea that a broad liberal Church leads to a greater engagement with society just doesn't fit the facts. It was the Puritans with their radical political critique and desire for a true “commonwealth” who engaged with the big socio/political questions. ... They brought together the three great emphases that we desperately need today –

**passionate worship,
passionate evangelism and
a passion for justice. ...**

The key is the vision of the Holy God, not a God reduced to fit the prevailing plausibility structure and moral framework of contemporary Australian life. In the history of our Church the passion for worship, evangelism and justice has always arisen from a recovery of this vision. Theological liberalism slowly sucks out the oxygen of classical belief that produces passionate faith”

A statistical snapshot of our Diocese

*Number of Parishes: 1981 - 235
2006 - 216*

*Attendance on an average Sunday:
1981 - 50,000
2006 - 21,000*

*Current age profile: 40% are over 60yrs,
11% are under 30yrs*

*Current Clergy: 6% are under 35 yrs,
59% are over 50 yrs*

The importance of Leadership in the local church

“We need to recruit **leader**/pastors not pastor/maintainer's. We need people who can innovate and initiate, who can regenerate communities, entrepreneurs. Men and women with gifts and abilities in communication, recruiting and motivating others, building teams and community, the ability to teach, persuade and build vision – in a word, leaders! We no longer have the luxury of accepting well intentioned sincere pious people who think they have a call to pastoral ministry but are not strong in leadership gifts. We cannot continue a “Vicar of Dibly syndrome” unless we want to be trivialized as a charming anachronism or an historical theme park. Remember they are laughing at us not with us!”

The need for the Diocese to support the parishes

“The central leadership and administration must develop a permission giving culture and not be drawn into a negative compliance and control syndrome. The current social climate of over protection, litigiousness and fear of risk reinforces the tendency to compliance and control. This must be resisted! We need diocesan leaders who are relaxed and very flexible and willing to take risks with new models and approaches. The leadership needs to be very focused on our core values and mission but flexible at the edges, willing to develop new alternative parallel programs alongside old ones. The institution must create a structural framework that allows the social movement of people with enthusiastic living faith to revive. Only rewarding creativity and growth, openness to new models, flexibility, and relaxing the institutional rules and attitudes will do that.”

(continued over)

***The position of Archbishop is one of substantial authority.
He has power to decide who is ordained and who is licensed .
He has power to set the vision for the diocese – he sets the agenda, although
needing the Council of the diocese to agree in matters that are “temporal”.***

NCS Council

NEW CRANMER SOCIETY NEWS AND VIEWS

From the President...

Dear Friends

It was good to see many of you at the Seminar on July 15, and to hear not only Peter Corney's excellent analysis of our current situation as a Diocese, but also to have three of our Assistant Bishops respond to what Peter had to say. One of the aims of the seminar was to ensure that, at the forthcoming Election Synod, some of the key issues facing us as a Diocese are kept to the fore. Both the Age (July 17) and the Australian (July 21) picked these up, as has the Melbourne Anglican website in its forum - <http://www.media.anglican.com.au/news/2006/07/what-sort-of-church-does-melbourne.html>. Do read excerpts from Peter Corney's paper in this newsletter and speak to others about the issues that are raised within it.

With the election now **only 3 weeks away**, the New Cranmer Council continues to believe that an Election by the Synod and not by a Board is the best way ahead for us as Diocese. As Peter Crawford explained in the last Newsletter "If a candidate can catch the imagination of the synod members because he has flair and leadership we will be able to move forward in hope. If the candidate cannot be voted in by Synod, then election by the Board will not help him".

When the names of the candidates are released on August 14, the New Cranmer Council will, after wide consultation with others, send out a letter of recommendation to all our supporters. ***On the Saturday of the Election Synod the Council will host a BYO lunch at the Dallas Brooks Hall for further reflection and conversation on the Election process.*** This will replace our normal Synod Breakfast.

Finally can I urge each of us to be ever more prayerful concerning the election of a doctrinally orthodox, mission minded Archbishop for our Diocese. Why do we pray when we know that ultimately God is sovereign? Calvin expressed it in this helpful way:

"Believers do not pray with the view of informing God about things unknown to him, or of exciting him to do his duty, or of urging him as though he were reluctant. On the contrary, they pray in order that they may arouse themselves to seek him, that they may exercise their faith in meditating on his promises, that they may relieve themselves from their anxieties by pouring them into his bosom; in a word, that they may declare that from him alone they hope and expect, both for themselves and for others, all good things"

Friends let us come to this Election Synod, trusting in God for all good things for our Diocese of Melbourne. We must talk, listen and act but above all let us pray.

Warm regards,

Richard Trist (President)

Do we have your email address?

Send to –

newcranmer@technologymatters.com.au

“What sort of Church ...”(contd from page 1)

The Church and Contemporary Australian culture.

“Unless we are a community of distinctive values, lifestyle and belief we have nothing to offer our culture. A community without boundaries is destined to disappear. As Thomas Oden has written of the circle of faith “A center without a circumference is just a dot, nothing more ...to eliminate the boundary is to eliminate the circle itself. The future of the Christian community lies in our obedience to two imperatives - distinctiveness and mission. We must live and work in the creative tension between the two commands – “Be holy for I am holy” and “Go and make disciples.” Without boundaries we are destined to disappear, but equally if we fail to focus beyond our boundaries we will disappear.”

***A complete copy of Peter Corney's address, & responses of Bps Hale & White
Articles on “Qualities of an Archbishop***

Found at

www.newcranmer.org.au