

Parishes would be under the care and control of a bishop of the new province rather than a bishop of the province of Canterbury or York.

The bishops of the new province would elect one of their number to be presiding bishop. He would be the chief consecrator at the ordination of new bishops.

The rights of all parishioners to be baptised, married or buried from their parish church would remain as now.

The services contained in Book of Common Prayer (and other services currently used in the Church of England) would continue to be available for use in the parishes of the new province.

The legislation for the new province must be enshrined in a Measure of the General Synod so that it has the full force of an Act of Parliament, which can only be altered with the consent of Parliament. An Act of Synod or a Code of Practice (as often suggested by those in favour of women bishops) will simply not suffice, as neither are legally binding and could be removed at the whim of General Synod at any time in the future.

**The new province would not be a new Church, but simply a separate part of the Church of England where those who cannot accept the innovation of women priests and bishops would be able to continue to live their lives as loyal members of the Church of England holding fast to the faith our Church has received from the time of the Apostles.**



## **WOMEN BISHOPS - WHAT WILL THEY MEAN FOR YOU?**

**On 11<sup>th</sup> July 2005 the General Synod of the Church of England decided to prepare legislation to allow women to become bishops. That legislation could be approved by 2008, with the first woman bishop consecrated in the Church of England not long afterwards.**

## **When we have women bishops ~**

there will be serious doubt as to whether they actually are bishops in the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. (Our Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox sisters and brothers will be certain that they are not!)

## **Therefore ~**

there will be serious doubt about the validity of all confirmations they administer

there will be serious doubt as to whether the priests and bishops - male or female - that they ordain will actually have been validly ordained.

you will no longer know whether a priest has been validly ordained or not, simply on the basis of whether that priest is male or female - you will need to know who ordained them!

It follows that you cannot know whether any of the Sacraments celebrated by a male priest are valid or not - unless you know who ordained him. (And, in a few years, you will need to know who consecrated that male bishop! If *he* was consecrated by a woman bishop, then serious doubt attaches itself to his orders as well!)

So, when we have women bishops and you receive Holy Communion or receive absolution or anointing at the hands of a male priest you will no longer be able to be certain that those sacraments or sacramental actions will be valid.

## **This will be an impossible situation**

To avoid this uncertainty for loyal members of the Church of England who are unable to accept women priests and bishops we need a separate structure within the Church of England which distances us from women priests and bishops.

This separate structure can and must be achieved.

In October 2004 Forward in Faith published a report called *Consecrated Women?* which sets out proposals for such a separate structure.

## **A new province in the Church of England**

The Forward in Faith proposals envisage the creation of a new province within the Church of England in addition to the provinces of Canterbury and York, so that the Church of England would be made up of three equal provinces.

In the provinces of Canterbury and York women bishops and priests would be able to function everywhere without restriction - Resolutions A & B (which, put simply, prevent women from ministering as priests in parishes) would no longer apply.

But in the new province there would be no women priests or women bishops and no male priests ordained by women bishops.

Parishes would enter the new province automatically if they had passed 'Resolution C' and so were receiving care from a PEV ('flying bishop') or other bishop under the Act of Synod.

Other parishes could vote to join the new province by a vote of the PCC.

It would not be a 'once and for all' decision to join the new province - parishes could review the decision after 5 years.