

With little contention accounts were approved, members re-elected to committees, and retiring members thanked. Goodwill was enhanced by a dinner for delegates after the first day, at which a Catholic priest held the company enthralled by an amusing speech. On the third day the agenda was disposed of, and members dispersed to enjoy the summer, if and when it arrived.

THE GENERAL SYNOD OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

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This Report covers three Groups of Sessions held in February, July and November 1998.

In February the General Synod gave final approval to the Cathedrals Measure (see 4 Ecc LJ 682 and 5 Ecc LJ 64). The voting was Bishops 34, 0; Clergy 174, 0; Laity 193, 3. At the time of writing, the Measure has been found expedient by the Ecclesiastical Committee of Parliament but awaits debates in both Houses. The National Institutions Measure (see 4 Ecc LJ 682 and 5 Ecc LJ 64) was also finally approved at the February Sessions (Bishops 36, 0; Clergy 181, 11; Laity 175, 27). The Measure received the Royal Assent on 2 July 1998 and is to come into force on 1 January 1999.

Also passed in February was a Statutory Instrument amending the Church Representation Rules to make it possible for a district church council to be designated by the bishop's council of the diocese as a parish for the purposes of producing financial statements in respect of that district instead of consolidating such financial statements in the statements of the whole parish. Draft Amending Canon No 22 was given general approval in February. The purpose of the Canon is to make it possible for the diocesan bishop to grant permission for a form of service which has ceased to be authorised for use in the Church of England to continue to be used for a limited period only in the applicant's place of worship.

At the July 1998 Group of Sessions the draft Care of Places of Worship Measure—formerly called the Care of Non-Parochial Places of Worship—(see 5 Ecc LJ 65) was considered for revision in full Synod. The Revision Committee had amended the Measure in relation to faculty fees. It was considered that it would not be fair to allow non-parochial places of worship who opt to come into the faculty jurisdiction to have the services of the diocesan registrar and chancellor without making any contribution to the costs. After considering various options the Committee decided that the fair way would be to call for payment when such a building needed a faculty and then to charge the normal faculty fees together with an extra fee fixed by the Fees Advisory Commission to take account of the work of the DAC and the archdeacon.

In July the Synod approved a number of subordinate instruments giving effect to changes needed as a result of the passing of the National Institutions Measure. A draft Statutory Instrument amending the Church Representation Rules was given general approval. The amendments mainly deal with modifications to the appeal rules as a result of recommendations made in various election appeal judgments and changes needed as a result of the Charities Act. The Faculty Jurisdiction (Appeals) Rules 1998 were also approved.

At the November Sessions Amending Canon No. 21 was promulgated. The Canon amends Canons H 2 and H 3 to give ex officio membership of Convocation to clergy serving as members of the Archbishops' Council.

Final approval was given to the Care of Places of Worship Measure (Bishops 27, 0; clergy 150, 0; Laity 171, 1) and it now awaits consideration by Parliament. Draft

Amending Canon No 22 which had been given general approval in February, was revised in full Synod as was the Church Representation Rules (Amendment) Resolution which had been generally approved in July.

General approval was given to a draft Church of England (Miscellaneous Provisions) Measure. A number of clauses deal with the devolution to dioceses of functions of the Church Commissioners which could not conveniently be included in the National Institutions Measure. Other miscellaneous clauses deal with amendments to the Consecration of Churchyards Act 1867, the Church Funds Investment Measure 1958, the Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction Measure 1963 and the Patronage (Benefices) Measure 1986.

A draft Canon (No 23) was also given general approval dealing with miscellaneous amendments to the Canons including amendments to Canon B 42 (Of the language of Divine Service) in order to make it lawful for translations of authorised services to be used in places of worship including services for the deaf in British Sign Language.

The draft Measure and Canon have now been submitted to a Revision Committee.

The Synod also approved the proposal for the change of name of the See of Ripon to the title of Ripon and Leeds.