



WATCH TRAINING DAY

The Legislative Process

- 1 The Legislative Drafting Group established by the Archbishops' Council as a result of the July 2006 General Synod motion prepares legislation.

General Synod has charged the Legislative Drafting Group with:

- (i) preparing the draft measure and amending canon necessary to remove the legal obstacles to the consecration of women to the office of bishop;
- (ii) preparing a draft of possible additional legal provision consistent with Canon A4 to establish arrangements that would seek to maintain the highest possible degree of communion with those conscientiously unable to receive the ministry of women bishops;
- (iii) submitting the results of its work to the House of Bishops for consideration and submission to Synod.

A single clause Measure might read "That it be lawful for the General Synod to make a Canon for women to be ordained to the episcopate". Issues of Resolutions A and B and the Act of Synod would need to be considered.

- 2 The legislation will almost certainly be designated 'Article 7' and 'Article 8' business. A group consisting of the Archbishops, Prolocutors of Convocations, Chair and Vice-Chair of House of Laity determines this. Article 7 business is that which affects matters of doctrine, services and sacraments, and requires approval by House of Bishops and must be passed by the four Houses of Convocation (GS bishops and clergy from Canterbury and York) and GS House of Laity. Article 8 business is that which brings in permanent changes to the Ordinal, and must be referred to Dioceses and be passed by simple majority of Diocesan Synods.
- 3 First Approval debate in General Synod. No amendments possible.
- 4 Revision Committee consideration. Committee appointed by Appointments Committee (Preb Kay Garlick chairs this, and Christina Rees is a member) – members can be drawn from those who speak in First Approval debate or can submit name as being interested in serving. Anyone can submit proposed revisions, not just members of GS. Plenty of scope for delay here.
- 5 Revision Stage debate in General Synod. Revision Committee brings revised legislation to GS with a report on their work. Amendments possible.
(If necessary the legislation may undergo another round of review by the Revision Committee – more scope for delay)
- 6 Final drafting stage.
- 7 Assuming Article 7 business, reference to House of Bishops for approval.
- 8 Assuming Article 8 business, reference to Diocesan Synods. Simple majority required in Diocesan Synods (Houses of Clergy and Laity may vote separately). More than half the Dioceses must vote in favour. Optional referral by Diocesan Synods to Deanery Synods and PCCs.

- 9 Report back to General Synod on results of Diocesan deliberations.
- 10 Assuming Article 7 business, reference to four Houses of the two Convocations and House of Laity. Complex provisions allow for veto by just one House.
- 11 Possible reconsideration by House of Bishops.
- 12 Final approval debate in General Synod. Requires 2/3 majority in each House.
- 13 Referred to Legislative Committee of General Synod – comprising Archbishops, Prolocutors of Convocations, Chair and Vice-Chair of House of Laity, Dean of the Arches and 2nd Church Estates Commissioner, plus six elected members. Makes report to Parliament.
- 14 Consideration by Ecclesiastical Committee of Parliament – comprises 15 from House of Lords and 15 from House of Commons. Required by 1919 Act to report on nature and legal effect of legislation and express view on its expediency, especially in relation to the constitutional rights of HM subjects.
- 15 Consideration by both Houses of Parliament.
- 16 Royal Assent.
- 17 Promulgation of Canon – will have been considered alongside Measure at all stages.
- 18 First ordination of women to episcopate.

