

EDITORIAL

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Do clergy make good lawyers? This is a question that, for better or worse, runs through much of this first issue of volume 21 of the *Journal*. Two articles, by the Venerable Jane Steen and Mr Sion Hughes Carew, look at two aspects of the life of the Church where clergy, by virtue of office, are enmeshed in legal process. The convocations of Canterbury and York have had a chequered history but still exist, albeit as part of the General Synod, as legislative bodies. The members of convocation have a role in the shaping of legislation and vote on legislative business. And the principal, root, qualification for being a member of convocation is to be in holy orders. Archdeacons, like bishops, have particular legal roles and responsibilities. Sometimes, as Archdeacon Steen points out, this does not sit comfortably with other aspects of the priestly vocation.

Over the centuries the Church (and this is not limited, of course, to the Church of England) has been served by excellent examples of clerics who are also lawyers. This issue sees the first in a new series of historical biographies. Professor Norman Doe takes on the mantle of Sir John Baker and Professor Richard Helmholz in bringing to life in this *Journal* characters and voices from the intersection of law and religion in years gone by. While there were some clerics among the lawyers in the first two series, they were by no means an overwhelmingly clerical bunch. Professor Doe's series, however, focuses on priest-jurists – those whose theological and legal training informed their thought, writing, ministry and practice.

It is a mark of the Anglican way that the preparation, amendment and approval of legislation, the giving of legal advice and the administration and enforcement of church law has never been an exclusively clerical preserve. Clergy can make good lawyers, of that I am sure, but the church also relies on lay legislators, advisers, advocates and judges. The co-operation of clerical and lay authority in the Church is something that the Anglican Communion can offer to the whole Church. This point is made in the recent report of the Anglican–Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC III) entitled 'Walking together on the way'.

This issue also sees reviewed the fourth edition of *Ecclesiastical Law* by my learned predecessor, Professor Mark Hill. Mark's contribution to the clear presentation and explanation of the law of the Church of England is remarkable. To remind readers of some of his editorials penned in far-off lands, I am happy to say that I have written this editorial overlooking the Bosphorus.