

Day 2 – Trial of ANiC Parishes v Diocese of New Westminster - May 26, 2009

Bishop Don Harvey was under cross-examination for the first half of the morning session. Mr George Macintosh, counsel for the diocese, asked questions focused on the “legitimacy” of Archbishop Venables’ intervention in Canada, the response of the Anglican Church of Canada (ACoC) and the Archbishop of Canterbury to this intervention, and whether Bishop Harvey had been invited to the 2008 Lambeth Conference - to which Bishop Don replied, “no, but nor was Bishop Gene Robinson”. Another line of questioning revolved around how Bishop Don has changed his mind on the issue of women’s ordination over the last 30 years; previously against it, he is now for it. There were also extensive questions about the conscience clause in respect of women’s ordination and the one offered by Bishop Ingham to the parishes in New Westminster and Shared Episcopal Ministry.

Bishop Ron Ferris then took the stand for the rest of the day, although his cross examination will continue tomorrow morning. He is another cradle Anglican who was baptized, confirmed, married, ordained and consecrated in the church. He was Bishop of the Yukon from 1981-1994 and Bishop of Algoma from 1995 until he retired in 2008 and moved to Langley, BC for family reasons. He joined ANiC in 2009 and is currently planting a church in the Langley area.

There was much discussion about the importance of the Solemn Declaration and the significance of the worldwide Anglican Communion and of “communion” for Canadian Anglicans. Having attended three Lambeth conferences (1988, 1998 and 2008), he was able to share much history about how the Lambeth conferences, the Canadian House of Bishops and General Synod meetings have addressed the issues of women’s ordination and human sexuality, particularly the issue of same-sex blessings. The unprecedented divisive nature of the controversy around same-sex blessings was highlighted during his examination.

He confirmed that the ACoC has not published membership statistics since 2001 and said there was major denial on the liberal side of the church, saying they ignore declining statistics, statements from around the world and international distress, and assume things will eventually settle down.

While Bishop Don described himself as a Charismatic Anglo-Catholic yesterday, Bishop Ron described himself as “Anglican”, never affiliating with any one stream of Anglicanism – the Charismatics, Anglo-Catholics or Evangelicals – but being appreciative of them all. He said he was mainly concerned about being biblically faithful.

Under cross-examination, he too was questioned about his “standing” as a bishop and the importance of being invited to the Lambeth conference as a hallmark of such “standing”. Mr Macintosh then began to question Bishop Ron on the canons of discipline and was very concerned to make the point that no one ever “appealed” Bishop Ingham’s decision to proceed with same-sex blessings. There was some debate between Bishop Ron and Mr Macintosh as to whether Canon 20 could have been used to make such an appeal, but in the end the point was made that no such appeal was ever initiated.

We are very grateful for the two bishops’ testimony and their commitment to being faithful to scripture in their ministry and life. They were both godly and gracious

witnesses – and we thank everyone who prayed for them.

Tomorrow, Bishop Ron's cross-examination will continue. Other witnesses expected (time permitting) are Linda Seale (St Matthew's), Gail Stevenson (St John's), and Peter Pang (Good Shepherd).

Please continue praying. We can all feel the support in a mighty way.

Blessings,

Cheryl Chang