

Mandate

Rowan Douglas by Divine Providence Archbishop of Canterbury Primate and Metropolitan to all to whom these presents shall come Greeting

Whereas it has been represented to the Primates of the Anglican Communion meeting in February 2005 that certain parishes have been unwilling to accept the direct oversight of their diocesan bishops and that certain dioceses are in dispute with their provincial authorities

And Whereas the Primates have recognised the principled concerns motivating those parishes and dioceses and acknowledge the various attempts which have been made to meet their difficulties

And Whereas the Primates have recommended that a body be established to assist in the resolution of these difficulties

Now in pursuance of the Primates' recommendation:

I direct that:

1. There shall be an advisory and consultative body to be known as The Panel of Reference ("the Panel")
2. The members of the Panel shall consist of not less than nine persons qualified by professional and pastoral skills and experience and appointed by myself as necessary from time to time
3. The functions of the Panel shall be:
 1. At my request to enquire into, consider and report on situations drawn to my attention where there is serious dispute concerning the adequacy of schemes of delegated or extended episcopal oversight or other extraordinary arrangements which may be needed to provide for parishes which find it impossible in all conscience to accept the direct ministry of their own diocesan bishop or for dioceses in dispute with their provincial authorities
 2. With my consent to make recommendations to the Primates, dioceses and provincial and diocesan authorities concerned, and to report to me on their response
 3. At the request of any Primate to provide a facility for mediation and to assist in the implementation of any such scheme in his own province.

Provided always that the Panel shall in consultation with me have power to determine which classes or categories of cases fall within its competency to consider in line with the concerns expressed by the primates at their meetings in Dromantine in February 2005 and in Lambeth Palace in October 2003.

4. The Panel shall continue in existence for the period of five years or until I shall determine in consultation with the members of the Primates' Standing Committee that its functions have been fulfilled (whichever shall sooner occur).

And I request that:

The Secretary General of the Anglican Communion shall make provision for secretarial and administrative support to the Panel of Reference and its Chair to enable them to undertake this work

And I call upon:

1. Each Primate or Moderator of the Communion which has such a scheme of delegation or extended episcopal oversight to lodge with me a copy of such scheme within 14 days of receiving this document and to notify me within 28 days following any change to such scheme
2. Each bishop of the Communion to respect fully and in accordance with its spirit any scheme of delegation or extended oversight established in his or her province
3. Each parish of the Communion which considers that in all conscience it cannot accept the direct oversight of its bishop to work with him or her in the first instance towards finding some appropriate means for delegated or extended episcopal oversight within the diocese and Province in which the parish is situated
4. The Instruments of Unity of the Communion to work tirelessly towards reconciliation and healing "that the world may believe"

Dated this sixth day of May in the Year of Our Lord Two thousand and five
Rowan Cantuar: