

The Standing Commission on World Mission  
*An interim body of the General Convention*  
Second Meeting 2004-2006 Triennium  
October 7 – 10, 2004  
San Antonio, Texas

The Standing Commission on World Mission held its second regular meeting of the triennium from October 7 – 10 in San Antonio, Texas.

Members present were: The Honorable Martha Bedell Alexander (Secretary), The Reverend Katherine Babson, Dr. Diana Dillenberger-Frade, The Right Reverend Jean Zache Duracin, The Reverend Canon Mark Harris, The Right Reverend Julio Cesar Holguin, Mr. Willis J. Jenkins, Mrs. Helena Mbele-Mbong (Chair), The Very Reverend Robert S. Munday, The Right Reverend Wilfrido Ramos-Orench (Vice-Chair), Mr. Saulo Salvador (Treasurer), The Very Reverend Titus L. Presler (Executive Council Liaison), and Mrs. Margaret S. Larom, World Mission Interpretation and Networks Officer.

Members absent were: Maria L. Mendez, MD.

Present for parts of the meeting were: Mr. Tony Price, A former member of SCWM who is now living in San Antonio.

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 a.m. on Thursday, October 7 by Chair Helena Mbele-Mbong.

Ms. Mbele-Mbong thanked Mr. Price for his hospitality and help in making arrangements for the meeting and for inviting the members of the commission to stay over in San Antonio, if possible.

It was announced that Members of the Standing Commission on World Mission who will be attending the meeting of the Convocation of Churches in Europe are Mrs. Mbele-Mbong, Chair, and Bishop Duracin. The meeting will take place October 20-24 in Geneva.

A draft agenda for the SCWM Meeting was presented. Added to the agenda were dates of the next meeting and reports from the three sub-groups: Vision Statement, Autonomy and Interdependence and Mission Support. (The discussion also included that all documents should be printed in Spanish and French.)

The next meeting of the SCWM will take place from April 27 – May 1 at Nashotah House in conjunction with EPGM.

### Report of the Cambridge Consultation – Episcopalians for Global Reconciliation

There was extensive discussion surrounding the Report of the Cambridge Consultation - Episcopalians for Global Reconciliation. This group is a network of Episcopalians for reconciliation that is focusing primarily on economics. Mr. Jenkins and Mrs. Babson were present at the meeting.

Mr. Jenkins reported there was interest in providing feedback to the SCWM about *Companions in Transformation* and how funds are spent on missionaries and international aid as well as looking at

fundraising and reorganization. He felt that there is excitement around SCWM but that there are probably overlapping mission opportunities, particularly in the area of poverty and literacy.

Ms. Babson felt there is an energy and commitment around mission and we should let parishes and other organizations excite their constituents about EPGR.

Bishop Duracin talked about reconciliation and stated we should try to figure out “how to touch other people”.

Ms. Babson thought we should look at the UN and other agencies and how they are dealing with reconciliation and the economy.

Bishop Ramos-Orench suggested we invite someone to come and speak to us. He suggested Bishop Jeffrey Rowthorne or Ian Douglas.

Discussion continued around where priorities are being directed in the church and Mrs. Larom suggested we review the booklet from EGR as well as information from the Office of Peace and Justice Ministries, our Episcopal Church Office in Washington, DC and Episcopal Relief and Development.

## Episcopal Partnership for Global Mission

Dr. Dillenberger-Fraede thought the meeting in conjunction with Hear the Children Conference was well done but she expressed her disappointment that the whole church had not been invited and the number of participants was small.

Mr. Presler led a panel discussion during the meeting about mission in the Episcopal Church and other issues following General Convention. There was a lot of concern about the withdrawal of SOMA from EPGM.

Ms. Babson stated the representatives from SAMS said there were difficulties following the action of General Convention with some of their missionaries. Funding was cited as another issue.

Mr. Presler stated that the formation of EPGM took place under the aegis SCWM. The 1997 General Convention asked the SCWM to convene a planning group for the formation of EPGM, which involved representatives from ECGM, SCWM and Executive Council. The group met for several years and then reported their plan to the 2000 General Convention.

Bishop Ramos-Orench asked if God is calling the SCWM to play a reconciling role in all of this confusion. Discussion followed concerning reconciliation.

## Global Episcopal Mission Network

Mr. Harris stated that the recent meeting of the GEM which was held at the Episcopal Theological Seminary of the Southwest in Austin and there were 50 people present. Some of the questions at the meeting were: How do you engage your diocese in mission? How do you form a diocesan commission and how will it work? Membership at the moment for the Global Episcopal Mission Network is \$500.00 a year and the membership is at an all time low with 20 members.

## Seminary Consultation on Mission

Mr. Presler reported on the Seminary Consultation on Mission. It was established by the Venture in Mission Program in the 1970's and became part of the Volunteers for Mission program. There was an endowment established and grants were given to seminarians and faculty members. There was a representative from each seminary as part of this effort. At that time there was a lot of vitality and outreach in the church.

There are 11 accredited seminaries at the present. They are the channels for the grants. \$61,000.00 is available for grants and the requests are a total of \$248,000.00.

It was suggested that seminaries outside of the USA be invited to participate as well. The SCWM could help with this effort. If the revision of Title III of the Canons takes place at the 2006 General Convention then seminary students will be required to have a cross-cultural experience and funds will need to be found for this effort.

Bishop Holguin stated he is very interested in the inclusion of overseas seminaries.

Bishop Duracin added that it is very important to have exchange programs and share resources. He further stated that even if seminaries of overseas diocese have no financial resources they may have other resources to share.

Bishop Ramos-Orench noted that the Congress of Theological Education will meet in October, 2005 in Panama and this would be a good time for further discussion on this issue.

Ms. Babson suggested the SCWM consider a resolution for the 2006 General Convention around this issue. This resolution would need to have a budget linkage and should be included in the report of the SCWM to the Convention.

*Continuing Thursday afternoon after lunch.*

Bishop Duracin invited the Commission to meet in Haiti in January, 2006 to write the report.

Mr. Presler reported that he joined Bishop Ted Daniels and Bishop Lipscomb in writing a statement concerning ECUSA and the Anglican Communion. He continued with a description of the trip they took to Africa as individuals who had not been sent by any body or agency – but three people interested in having conversations with some of our partners in the Anglican Communion. He stated the three of them have very different perspectives and opinions but wanted to call for unity of the Communion. And – they made it clear they wanted to hear from those in Africa firsthand. They were felt very welcomed by the receiving dioceses which were Kenya, Burundi and Rwanda.

There was concern about the consecration of Gene Robinson as Bishop of New Hampshire and disagreement about other issues as well. There was a call for repentance from ECUSA. The conversations were candid and thorough and though it was hard there was a sense that a feeling of relationship was being built.

Discussion followed among the members about the role the SCWM should play in reaching out to others in the Anglican Communion. It was agreed we should continue to have conversations and to listen to each other.

Chair Mbele-Mbong suggested the sub-committees take all of the discussion into consideration when they meet.

*Executive Council Report from the Liaison from Executive Council to the SCWM and two members of both bodies.*

Mr. Presler reported on the last meeting of the Executive Council. There was a lot of discussion about the Lambeth Commission and whether or not there was undue attention being paid to dissenting voices in the Church. There was no formal action taken on that matter. The next meeting is in November, 2004.

Mr. Presler was asked to discuss *Companions in Transformation* for the International Concerns Committee.

Reports were received from the covenant committees which included the Philippines, Mexico, IARCA and Brazil as well as Liberia.

Pensions for clergy of overseas diocese were a concern. Members questioned why there was an increase for US pensions but the funds were frozen for those overseas.

Resolutions were presented on detainees from the Middle East at Guantanamo Bay and on the Palestine situation as well as on Haiti.

Bishop Ramos-Orench reported on the budget and stated it is not in crisis.

Bishop Holguin discussed the language of sensitivity reminding ECUSA that it is multinational, multilingual and international as well as multicultural.

## Change in Episcopal Church Center

There was discussion about the upcoming retirement of The Reverend Canon Patrick Mauney, Anglican and Global Relations Officer, who has been the Episcopal Church Center Staff Liaison to the SCWM. A gift and a card will be presented to him from the SCWM for his dedication to world mission and to his many contributions to the SCWM.

## General Convention 2006

The report of the SCWM and possible budget items need to be completed in 2005. The budget process begins in June, 2005. There are three resolutions which were sent to the committee: A150 which deals with *Companions in Transformation*, A151 which concerns world mission and D009 which is the Anglican Gathering in 2008.

The needs of Cuba are important and we should continue to reach out to them. Bishops Ramos-Orench and Holguin will be in touch with them as well as Mrs. Dillenberger-Frade and Mr. Salvador.

The commission recessed at 5:40 p.m. The commission members went to dinner and the sub-committees met.

Friday, October 8, 2004

The meeting began at 9:00 a.m.

## Meeting Schedules

There was discussion about the Spring Meeting. The SCWM needs two full days of meeting time but would like to have another full day with EPGM.

The next meeting should take place after Executive Council in the fall of 2005. Bishop Duracin suggested Haiti as a possibility.

A suggestion would be that smaller delegations visit different areas in route to the Fall Meeting with the understanding that we have a listening posture and are available if they would like to have us visit.

Bishop Duracin said he thinks the commission needs clarifications in the autonomy process and that we need clarification about the national church in partnership with other diocese which are part of the Episcopal Church, USA. The commission agreed that we need to raise awareness of ECUSA and that we have overseas dioceses as full members.

Mr. Harris suggested we need to address interdependence within our report as well as autonomy even though we are never autonomous since we are all parts of one body on some levels.

## Autonomy and Interdependence Sub-Committee

The committees reported they were reviewing four papers written by members and plan to place them in a single document.

Partnership and Companionship was one area. Bishop Ramos-Orench said this is all about deepening friendships so when things are broken we can remember when they were not broken and we pursue the friendship again.

Mutual Responsibility and Interdependence needs to be addressed. The vision needs to be sure that we remember the last two words "in Christ" as we work to do away with old colonial mindsets and the whole granting system.

Mr. Salvador's paper addresses the issues of trust and the importance of trusting the process of allowing people to have their own voice and this will then play back into having a new form of reciprocity.

Bishop Duracin's piece was on reconciliation and the fact that we if we allow faithfulness to the original sense of mission being given by God, God will do what is necessary for that vision to be fulfilled.

Dr. Dillenberger-Frade's paper states that the Anglican Communion is a gift of God and is not anything we create here or abroad.

Mr. Harris stated that behind all the structural issues and questions is the notion that the mission of reconciliation is of God and is not finally determined by whether we succeed or fail in the particulars.

## Covenant Committees

There was another part of the report which had reviewed questions for the meeting of the Mexico Covenant Committee.

Chair Mbele-Mblong said the SCWM should be receiving the reports from the various covenant committees.

Bishop Ramos-Orench said we should not only talk about companionship but should be talking about encouragement and relationships.

Names of the members of the covenant committees including staff and the dates of the meeting would be helpful to SCWM and a request was made for Mrs. Larom to supply the information.

## Vision Statement

Ms. Babson reported on the work of the committee. When she attended the “Hear the Child Conference” there were people present who were already addressing mission issues on a diocesan level and were excited about *Companions in Transformation*.

This booklet will be the bases for having feedback from others such as EPGM. There is a need to fund translations of the document and we need a reprint. Mrs. Larom will help with effort. So will Mr. Presler.

Ms. Babson stressed the need for a study guide which will be included. Also – people need to look at the photos and realize the main thrust was Africa even though the photos refer to Honduras and Haiti. There was a lot of discussion about funding issues.

## Resolution

Bishop Ramos-Orench moved the following:

Given the importance of the Lambent Commission Report and its implications for the life of this church, and given the fact that House of Deputies exists only during General Convention, the Standing Commission on World Mission requests the Executive Council to ensure that the voices of laity and clergy throughout this church, as well as those of the bishops, are solicited and heard in discussions of the report and fully incorporate in the response of this church to the Lambeth Commission Report,

Mrs. Babson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

## Mexico Covenant Committee and SCWM Meeting

The meeting began at 2:00 p.m.

Present were: Episcopal Church Panel Members: Mrs. Mandy Alford, The Reverend Enrique Brown, The Right Reverend James E. Folts, The Reverend Anthony Guillen and The Reverend Canon Juan I. Marquez. IAM-Iglesia Anglicana de Mexico Panel Members: The Most Reverend Carlos Touche-Porter, The Right Reverend Martiniano Garcia, P. Habacu Ramos Huerta, Mrs. Maritza Cordova and Dr. Brian Husted.

SCWM Members: Martha Alexander, Katharine Babson, Diana Dillenberger-Frade, Bishop Duracin, Mark Harris, Bishop Holguin, Helena Mbele Mbong, Bishop Ramos-Orench, Saulo Salvador, Others present: Margaret Larom, Tony Price and Helen Schelzer.

Since both groups were meeting in San Antonio it was decided the groups would have a joint meeting. What follows is a summary of the questions asked and the discussion which followed them.

Bishop Touche-Porter said he worries about the autonomy process in Mexico. He does not feel they were ready when it was given to them since they find it difficult for the five dioceses to work together as a national church. He stated that as individual dioceses they would feel more connected to the American Church. There is not a support group of retired bishops since they lost some two to three years ago. Four of the five bishops were consecrated within a year of each other and are learning together. Self-support is a problem. They are growing little by little and are the Anglican Embassy in Mexico. He went on to state they feel the church now belongs to them and they have a sense of ownership which they did not have before. Autonomy and interdependence are not the same. Anglican Churches are interdependent but when they became autonomous there was total isolation on both sides. They felt like they lost most of their international connections.

Bishop Folts asked about thoughts from the Province of Mexico.

Mr. Huerta said clergy and people sometimes ask if they should go back to the way things were and others think they should move forward by exercising more energy, talent and planning. They have established priorities: the first one is evangelism. This will be a part of all commission.

Bishop Holguin asked if they would entertain other diocese like Cuba. Bishop Touche-Porter replied they would be open to other dioceses. They have been approached about their seminary becoming a provincial one.

Mr. Marquez suggested the possibility of bringing some kind of body together in Latin America to be a bridge to the churches, dioceses and provinces there.

Bishop Ramos-Orench asked about the controversy surrounding the decisions of General Convention and if there was any impact in Mexico. Bishop Touche-Porter suggested it was 100% positive. The Episcopal Church was portrayed a trying to be honest and open.

Mr. Harris was interested in the church in Mexico and how they were going to make changes. Bishop Touche-Porter said he was the first of four bishops to be consecrated within a year and he decided to be more pastoral and he would try to find qualified people who would do the administration. The bishops decided to make everything simpler and to live like the rest of the clergy. He also stated that he wants the church in Mexico to be come a native church not just a translated one from Spanish to the American Church. He said people need to know how to disagree and still be together. He went on to acknowledge that Mexican Americans feel privileged and

blessed by being in full communion with the church and that they have inherited great treasures of Anglicanism as well.

The covenant will be signed October 26 in New York and they will still be a part of the Pension Fund.

Most of the dioceses in Mexico have a companion diocese in the USA and many of them are going well. Some have kept ongoing contacts and some do not have much going on within their relationship.

It was suggested that it would be helpful if there was a mentor for the new bishops. It was suggested that maybe some Hispanic Bishops in the States would be willing to engage in partnering relationships.

Bishop Garcia said there was discussion about a meeting between bishops in Mexico and those in Central America but there were no resources available.

Mrs. Mbele-Mbong talked about various aspects of isolation and wonder if resources could be pooled and wondered how the SCWM could support, encourage and advocate for the provinces.

Bishop Touche-Porter said it would be very helpful if SCWM could let the rest of the church know about them. Trust needs to be built.

Mr. Guillen said there has been some talk about the problems with the Church in Mexico and then the problems becomes a blanket statement about the whole church which is not fair.

Bishop Duracin asked about local giving.

Bishop Touche-Porter stated giving has been increasing in some dioceses more than others. They need to ensure people know they are Episcopalians. The church is involved with doing ministry with HIV AIDS.

Bishop Marquez said one of the things the province did was to organize a national fund for autonomy. This fund is used to pay the quotas for the national pension fund for clergy and the fund has been used to help the dioceses.

Bishop Touche-Porter said they were not aware of becoming autonomous. They were not consulted. It was the agenda of their primate and Presiding Bishop Browning. In the beginning when the local reform movement began in the 1850's some of the Roman Catholic Priests left and became involved with the American Church. When one was asked to be consecrated bishop, money was given to the church. There was no need for the priest to raise the money. And – people gave money they raised by selling handmade items or they gave their time by cleaning the church or bringing the candles and wine. Even though very few people pledged they were not lacking money.

There are around 20,000 baptized members and probably a total of 12,000 communicants. They have passed a resolution that states ordained must serve for three years before they can transfer.

Mrs. Cordova stated it was necessary to discover your own identity and that she had not heard discussion about returning to the Episcopal Church in the US.

Dr. Husted said there is a sense of isolation from the American Church and there is a sense of isolation from one diocese to another. He thought it would be a good idea to have more diocesan and provincial activities.

Bishop Ramos-Orench wanted to know how the SCWM could be resourceful to others.

Bishop Touche-Porter replied that keeping in touch, sharing insights and ideas would be helpful.

Mr. Guillen suggested a web page would be helpful so when people visit Mexico they can find churches and phone numbers.

Bishop Folts talked about relationships and how everything is relational. Fostering relationships is very important not only on a national level but diocese to diocese and parish to parish.

This part of the meeting was over at 4:00 p.m.

Mr. Harris added that through the difficulties that the US Church is facing and the whole varieties of relationships that are present throughout the whole communion we need to remember we share what is the deepest and more important between people not structures.

Ms. Mbele-Mbong added that the focus of the SCWM is about the problems discussed and understanding that we are here for God's mission, not ours, and we need to rebuild relationships within the Anglican Communion.

At 4:46 p.m. the SCWM met again to review the following.

Isolation is a main concern among many of the dioceses and provinces as they seek autonomy. There must be an ongoing process and relationships must be maintained. This is a new day and we need to ensure people know of our ongoing concerns and interest.

Discussion centered on Province IX and the embarrassment of colonial imperialism. We need to invite them as guests to be with us. They are trying to build connections. We cannot lose sight of spirituality and the issue of isolation.

The meeting adjourned at 5:30 p.m. followed by dinner.

## The Role of a Diocese in World Mission – Diocese of West Texas

On Saturday, October 9, the following members of the SCWM met with members of the Diocese of West Texas: Martha Alexander, Katherine Babson, Helena Mbele-Mbong, Saulo Salvador. Also present were Margaret Larom and Tony Price, Diocese of West Texas. The Diocese of West Texas was formally represented by Betty Chumney, Bishop's Deputy for World Mission.

Mrs. Chumney talked about the role of mission in the Diocese of West Texas which is the largest diocese West of the Mississippi. She stated one has to have a real passion for mission.

The Vision Statement for the Diocese of West Texas is: "We the family of the Diocese of West Texas reclaim our historic and spiritual vision as a missionary people. Living in the midst of change, we are determined to communicate to all people the unchanging good news of Christ".

World Mission may be addressed in sermons, offerings short term trips and prayer partners. There are Goers, Senders, Prayers.

There are 92 congregations in the diocese and each parish has a representative for mission. There is a business meeting in March which welcomes new members and there is an evaluation in September. There is a charge of \$30.00 per person and the relation shop us bishop to bishop.

Mrs. Chumney is the Bishop's Deputy and is paid an honorarium of \$24,000 plus administrative expenses.

There is a training manual which may be downloaded from their web site.

There is a mission devotional book for each team and there is a coloring book for youth and a teaching guide. They usually have exhibits at workshops and have opportunities for people to speak about their trips.

Their companionships/partnerships last for three years. They have ties with Northern Mexico, South East Mexico, Honduras and Russia.

They invite people to their diocesan camp and might teach them hygiene or micro-business, i.e. a bakery.

They have monthly newsletters, weekly e-mails and observe World Mission Sunday as well as having a symposium on world mission.

They do not belong to GEM but belong to EPGM.

They sell wood carvings from Argentina to raise money which is divided half for mission and half for Argentina. They have a program called Pennies from Heaven which helps provide scholarships and Quart4rs for Quarters which is a building project in Mexico.

They have a partnership with Chicago.

Mrs. Chumney says God's middle name is "surprise"!

People involved in mission need to be people who are filled with passion and find inspiration in the Word of God.

The meeting adjourned at 11:28 p.m.

Martha Bedell Alexander  
Secretary

Acronyms:

ECUSA Episcopal Church of the United States of America  
EPGM Episcopal Partnership for Global Mission  
EGR Episcopalians for Global Reconciliation  
GEM Global Episcopal Mission (GEM) Network

IARCA  
SAMS South American Missionary Society  
SCOM Seminary Consultation on Mission  
SCWM Standing Commission on World Mission  
UN United Nations