

HOW TO SUCCEED AT SYNOD
FOR BEGINNERS



ANGELICAN CHURCH OF SOUTHERN AFRICA

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SYNOD AND ITS STANDING RULES

INTRODUCTION

1. You have been elected by your Diocesan Synod to be a member of Provincial Synod. You are keen to make your contribution but perhaps you are confused and put off by what you regard as the excessively complex rules of procedure governing Synod, and you may be afraid that if you open your mouth you will make a fool of yourself. This introduction to the Standing Rules of Synod is designed to help you overcome your fears and to give you the necessary freedom and confidence to speak and play your full part in Synod.

If you have been elected by your parish to be a member of your Diocesan Synod, this guide to the Rules is also for you. The standing Rules of Provincial Synod govern the proceedings of Diocesan Synod as well. You should be able to notice the few places where you have to adapt the wording to the situation in Diocesan Synod. For example, for **Provincial Synod** read **Diocesan Synod**, for **Province** read **Diocese**, for **Your Grace** read **My Lord**, (though the diocesan bishop like the Archbishop when he or she is in the chair may also be addressed as **President of Synod**), and for the **Metropolitan** or **Archbishop** read **Diocesan Bishop**. You should also consult your Diocesan Acts or Rules for rules your diocese may have made governing procedure. In particular its rules governing the notice required for motions may be different from those explained below in Section 7, 15 (2) (3) (4) (5) and 17.

2. Provincial Synod is the highest decision-making body in the Province. It consists of all the bishops, and of the clerical and lay representatives elected by each Diocesan Synod. It meets together under the guidance of the Holy Spirit to discover God's will for God's church in the carrying out of its God-given mission.
3. Although you have been elected to Provincial Synod by your Diocesan Synod, you are a **representative** and not a delegate of your diocese. It is important to understand the difference between a delegate and a representative. Delegates have been given a mandate by those who sent them. They have instructed him or her to follow a certain line, or support certain decisions and he or she may not deviate from this mandate in the light of discussion or further information. If asked to do so, he or she can only reply that they must first consult their constituency for its decision. Therefore, though you are responsible for informing Provincial Synod of the decision of your Synod (if it has made one), you are not bound to speak and vote in obedience to its decisions. You possess the freedom and you have the duty to speak and vote in obedience to what in your conscience you believe to be the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Only by doing so are you acting as a responsible member of Synod.

4. Provincial Synod consists of more than one hundred and fifty members. You cannot have all of them talking at once. There must be order. Human society has had centuries of experience of conducting meetings. It has found that particular situations are constantly recurring, and that certain ways of dealing with them are better than others. These have been written down in rules for the conduct of these meetings. Those which Provincial Synod has selected as helpful for the conduct of its business are to be found in Standing Rules. These can be found printed at the back of the book ***Constitution and Canons of the Anglican Church of Southern Africa***. You should possess a copy of this book. It is obtainable from the Anglican Church Publishing Committee at orders@anglicanchurchsa.org.za Though at first sight they may seem complicated; these rules are all in fact based on common sense. They are a great help to the President and the members of Synod in keeping the business of Synod running smoothly. In particular they show you the lines between which you should move in order to make your contribution to Synod.
5. The person responsible for keeping order in Synod is the President. He or she will guide the members of Synod along the lines laid down in the Standing Rules. Though the President presides over Synod it is the responsibility of Synod to decide what it will do. The President therefore continually asks Synod what it wishes to do. Situations will however arise in which the President will have to apply the rules or use his or her discretion, and give a ruling (Rule 2). When the President calls you to order when you are on your feet, obey and sit down (Rule 63).

MOTIONS, NOTICE OF MOTION, MOVERS AND SECONDRERS OF MOTIONS

6. You will not begin to master the procedure of Synod until you understand that the method by which Synod does its business is through motions. **A motion is a proposal put into words.** It begins with the word **'That'** and states the thing that is believed needs to be done or affirmed. Synod is unable to deal with any matter unless there is some motion before it, proposed by one of its members. The motion can be something very simple like a procedural motion proposing that Synod do its business by taking a particular step. Suppose a member thinks that a motion has been debated sufficiently for Synod to be able to vote on it. He or she then moves: *"That the motion now be put"*, that is *"be put to the vote"*. If Synod agrees and votes for the motion, the President will then put the motion under debate to the vote.

If a report is to be presented to Synod, and before it can be presented and discussed, a motion *"That the Report be received"* must be moved.

When Synod wishes to express its appreciation or send a message of greeting or condolence, this has to be done by means of a motion to that effect moved by a member of Synod. For an example of this see Section 13.

Major proposals affecting the life of the Church also have to be put into the form of a motion before they can receive the attention of Synod. These motions may either be resolutions expressing a judgement or a request (see Section 15), or measures making some alteration in the Constitution and Canons (see Section 17.)

When these motions are under debate, any proposal to alter their wording (called an *amendment*) must be put into the form of a motion (see Section 12 (3) (and (4))).

If you therefore wish to become competent in Synod, you must train yourself to express exactly what you want done or affirmed and write it down in the form of a motion.

7. (1) There are some motions, such as procedural motions or motions of greeting, which do not arouse serious differences of opinion and do not provoke debate. Synod either does not need notice of them or it needs only the shortest notice, and this can be given during Synod itself (Rules 30 (a) (iv) and 30 (b)).

(2) Any motion on which there is going to be debate calls for considered thought on the part of Synod. It is not fair to Synod to spring it upon Synod without warning. In order to give time to members of Synod to think about the motion, notice of your intention to move the motion has to be given. In the case of a motion to amend the Constitution or a canon, the motion (called a "measure") must be in the hands of the Metropolitan five months before Synod (Canon 49.1 and Rule 30 (a) (i)). In the case of other motions they must reach him at least six weeks before Synod (Rule 30 (a) (ii)). Synod has the power to allow a motion to be submitted without the six weeks notice being given; but it makes this exception only for an urgent reason and only if two thirds of the Synod agrees (Rule 30 (a) (iii)).

8. In addition to having a member to move a motion (the mover), there must be another member of Synod to second it (the seconder). Synod requires a minimum of these two people supporting a motion for it to take up the time of Synod. If there is no one prepared to second the motion it cannot be debated. Not even the mover may speak on it. It just falls away.

After the mover has moved the motion the President asks: "Who seconds the motion?" The seconder then puts up his or her hand or stands and says "*I do*" or "*I second it*".

The only exception to this rule is when Synod is in Committee (Rule 33).

RULES

Rules to observe when you are not speaking

9. Certain courtesies are expected of you at times when you are not speaking. At the beginning of business when the President enters Synod you should be in your place and, with all other members of Synod, stand. When the President takes the chair you should sit down (Rule 53). Should you wish to leave the Synod hall at any time, you bow to the chair on leaving and again on your return (Rule 54).

Rules to guide you when you wish to speak

10. A further courtesy expected of you is that you do not interrupt another speaker. There are, however, exceptions to this. For example, if you think that President or the speaker has disregarded one of the rules, you may arise and say: *"On a point of order, Your Grace"*. You then ask if the rule you have in mind should not apply. Another occasion when you are allowed to interrupt is when you think the debate has gone on long enough and that Synod should vote. You rise and say: *"Your Grace, I move that the motion now be put"* (Rule 61).
11. It has been found in practice that certain people tend to speak excessively and to deprive others of the chance to speak. One important way in which Synod places some restriction on these individuals is the rule allowing an individual member to speak only once on the same motion. This means that if you wish to speak you must train yourself to put together all the points you wish to make. You will not be able to speak again. The only exceptions to this are when Synod is in Committee and when the mover of a motion exercises his or her right to reply to the debate (Rule 59). When you are more experienced you will also learn that since you may speak only once, the timing of your entry into the debate is most important. It may be better to wait and speak after several others have spoken.
12. (1) As a beginner you will not doubt be content to sit and listen to other more experienced members moving motions and debating them. The time will come when a motion is under debate and you feel moved to influence Synod in the way you believe it ought to decide, by expressing your own opinion on the matter. What do you have to do? Wait until the member who is speaking has finished his or her speech and has sat down. Then catch the President's eye by putting up your hand or by rising to your feet. Wait for the President to give you leave to speak. If someone beats you to it and the President calls upon him or her to speak (Rule 56) sit down and try again when this speaker finishes.
- (2) When the President calls upon you to speak, go to the microphone and give your name and diocese (Rule 55). Then say what you have to say. Speak to

the point on the motion under discussion, or you may be stopped by the President for wandering from the point (Rule 64). As clearly as you can, present your arguments either for or against the motion.

- (3) **Amendment to motions:** It may be that the motion deals with a matter on which you think a decision is needed but it is so phrased that it does not express exactly what you think is needed. You cannot vote for it as it stands. Yet you do not want it to be totally rejected. You want it with certain alterations. The procedure open to you is to move an amendment to the motion. Suppose the motion is, *“That this Provincial Synod affirms the principle of Christian stewardship and calls upon members of the Church to consider giving two percent of their income to God.* You agree with this in general but think one tenth is preferable to two percent. You therefore write this down in the form of an amendment *“That ‘two percent’ be deleted and ‘one tenth’ be substituted”*. As before, you put up your hand or stand up. When the President gives you leave to speak you say: *“Your Grace (or Mr President) I wish to move an amendment, as follows: “That ‘two percent’ be deleted and ‘one tenth’ be substituted”*. The President will announce the amendment and then ask: *Is this amendment seconded?* If someone seconds it, the President will then announce the amendment and call upon you to speak in support of it. When you have finished speaking hand the text of your amendment with your signature to the secretaries. This will prevent confusion as to the exact wording of your amendment and will help the secretaries record it correctly. After your amendment has been debated, it will be put to the vote. If Synod votes in favour of it your amendment will now be adopted by Synod as part of the original motion. Unless there is further debate or other amendments are moved, Synod will be called upon to vote upon the amended motion. If it is carried, your contribution will have helped to form the decision made by Synod.
- (4) In the example given above you amended the motion by deleting certain words and substituting other words. In Rule 36 you will find other ways in which it is open to you to amend a motion.

Suppose you accept the motion but think it will not have much effect unless diocese have training courses for parish leaders, you would then perhaps propose an amendment to insert words as follows: *“That after the words ‘Christian stewardship’ the words be inserted ‘encourages dioceses to arrange training courses in it for parish leaders’”* (Rule 36 (a)(ii)).

Suppose you think it important to stress that the money due to God should be the first amount people set aside out of their income, your amendment would add this to the end of the motion as follows: *“That the following words be added at the end of the motion ‘as the first amount set aside out of their income’”* Rule 36 (a) (ii).

Finally, suppose that the original motion reads: *“calls upon all rich members of the Church...”* and you believe that giving to God is something for poor and

rich alike your amendment would be to omit the word 'rich' as follows, "That the word 'rich' between 'all' and 'members' be omitted" (Rule 36 (a) (i)).

- (5) Always make sure that your amendment fits the motion you are amending so that the motion in its amended form makes sense.

13 Messages of greeting, etc.

It is a pleasing practice of Synod to take the opportunity of its meeting to send greetings to some distinguished person who is in the mind of Synod at that time, or else a message of condolence to persons who have suffered bereavement or some other loss. Synod may also convey to someone who has performed a notable service an expression of appreciation. This is done in the form of a motion proposed by some member of Synod. Debate on motions of this kind is inappropriate. For the same reason, they do not require investigation or argument and therefore members of Synod do not require time to consider them before voting on them. It is therefore sufficient in their case to give notice of them during Synod (Rule 30 (a) (iv) (2)).

Suppose that the bishop of your diocese has recently retired after giving distinguished service to the Province. You feel that Synod should honour him or her by sending its greetings. In that case you write down the motion in some such form as the following: "That Synod sends its loving greetings to the Rt. Revd ... and wishes him or her many happy years of retirement." You will also be wise to ask someone to second it (see Section 8). You then wait until the beginning of the day's proceedings (Rule 14) and listen for the President to ask if there are any notices of motion in terms of Rule 30 (a) (iv). Then stand up and say: "I give notice of motion in terms of Rule 30(a) (iv) (2) as follows: and then read your motion. The President will then ask you to hand the motion to the Secretaries for submission to the Advisory Committee of Synod. The Committee may think that the wording should be improved and it has the power to suggest ways in which you should alter your motion (Rule 5(a)). Your motion will then be placed on the agenda of Synod with an agendum number. Later in the proceedings of Synod the President will announce that Synod will now deal with this agendum number. You should then stand up. The President will call upon you to move it. You go to the microphone, give your name and diocese (Rule 55) and say: "Your Grace, I move that ..." and read your motion. You say nothing more. You make no speech. The President will then ask for a seconder. The seconder also makes no speech. In the same way no member of Synod discusses it and there is no debate, though it is permissible for a member to ask a question for greater clarification. The President puts the motion to Synod and Synod votes on it. Your motion has been dealt with and you sit down.

This is the easiest kind of motion for a beginner to move in Synod. You do not have to give notice of it before Synod, you do not have to make a speech and generally speaking it will be favourably treated by Synod.

14 **Seconding a motion:** It may happen that someone who has given notice of a motion which will be debated, asks you to second the motion.

After it has been moved and the President has asked who seconds the motion, and you have replied *"I do"* or *"I second it"*, the President will ask you whether you wish to speak. You have three options.

- (i) You may decide that the motion does not need any further arguments in favour of it. You will then say: *"I do not wish to speak"*.
- (ii) Or you may decide to speak, you then say: *"Thank you, I do wish to speak"*, and then you make your speech.
- (iii) The third possibility is to put off deciding whether you will speak till later. Perhaps you decide to see how the debate goes before you decide to give it additional support. You then say: *"I do not wish to speak now Your Grace, but I reserve my right to speak late in the debate"*. If you find after that you do wish to speak you choose the right moment to rise and say: *"May I now exercise my right to speak in seconding the motion?"* When the President gives you leave, you then make your speech.

15. (1) **Presenting a motion:** The time may come when you feel sufficiently strongly that a particular matter requires Synod to make a decision, and you feel sufficiently confident to take the initiative yourself in bringing it to the attention of Synod. Or you may be asked by some authority in your diocese to raise the matter in Provincial Synod.

Suppose that you are concerned about the conditions of paid layworkers in the Church when they retire and feel that something needs to be done on a provincial basis to relieve their needs. Perhaps you think you have the answer in providing free housing for them. You will then put your proposal into the form of a motion such as this:

"That this Synod requests each diocese to provide free housing for its full time paid layworkers on their retirement".

Alternatively you may regard the matter as too complicated for settling by such a proposal and think it needs to be examined by a commission. In this case your motion would take a form like this:

"That Synod respectfully requests the Metropolitan to appoint a commission to examine the conditions under which full-time paid diocesan layworkers are living in retirement, to examine how the conditions can be improved, and to report back to the next Provincial Synod with recommendations".

(2) In either case you will need to give notice of your intention to move the motion. You will have to write to the Archbishop, sending him a copy of the motion you wish to move, at least ten weeks before the beginning of Synod. If it has not reached him six weeks before Synod it will not be put on the agenda of Synod. You will have missed your chance (Rule 30(a) (ii)).

(3) Another requirement is that your motion should be a matter which merits or

requires the attention of Provincial Synod. As it is the highest decision-making body in the Province, you would obviously be wrong to waste the time of Provincial Synod with matters which are either of minor importance or should first be handled by some lower body. Synod requires some authority other than yourself to judge whether your motion ought to go before it (Rule 30 (a) (ii)). You should therefore write to your bishop requesting him or her in accordance with Rule 30(a) (ii) to ask an appropriate diocesan body to give its opinion whether your motion requires or merits the attention of Provincial Synod. Alternatively you ask other elected diocesan representatives to Provincial Synod to give their opinion. If the diocesan body or three representatives to Provincial Synod agree that it either merits or requires the attention of Provincial Synod, you obtain a certificate or a declaration from them to this effect. Then you send your motion for Provincial Synod to the Metropolitan, together with the certificate or declaration. Make sure that it reaches the Metropolitan at least six weeks before Synod is due to begin.

- (4) The only exception allowed to the rule about six weeks notice and the prior consideration by a diocesan body, is if the motion deals with an urgent matter has arisen within the six weeks immediately before Synod (Rule 30 (a)(iii)).
- (5) You have formulated your motion. It has been considered by a diocesan body or by three elected representatives to Provincial Synod to merit or demand attention by Provincial Synod. You have sent it in to the metropolitan to reach him six weeks before the date fixed for Synod, with the request that it be placed on the agenda for Synod. When you receive the Second Agenda Book you will find your motion printed there with the statement that it is moved by you.
- (6) In the interval before Synod you will have the opportunity to prepare your speech. You may also be wise to ask another member of Synod to second your motion, and to discuss how you will divide the arguments between you.
- (7) When Synod has been constituted an order paper will be handed out giving the order in which the motions are to be considered by Synod, your motion among them. When Synod gets to your motion on the list, the President will call upon you to move your motion. You come forward to the microphone, give your name and diocese and say: *"Your Grace, I wish to move the motion standing in my name, as follows"*, and then read it out. If it is very long and reading it out would be tedious, instead of *"as follows"* say *"as printed in the Second Agenda Book Agendum No. ..."*. Then wait for the President to ask *"Who seconds the motion"* and for your seconder to say *"I second the motion" or "I do"*. Then the President will call upon you to speak in support of your motion. Present you arguments as

clearly, as briefly and as persuasively as you can. End your speech by saying: *"And therefore Your Grace, I move the motion standing in my name"*.

- (8) You may then resume your seat. If there is a likelihood that you may to answer questions or deal with amendments to your motion, the President may suggest that you take a seat near the microphone.
- (9) The President will then call upon your seconder and after that any member of synod will be able to enter the debate. During the debate you will be wise to make a note on the points made against your motion. This will help you when you come to reply to the debate.
- (10) If no amendments to your motion are moved, the time will come when someone moves *"That the question now be put"*. If that is carried, before your motion is put to the vote the President will ask you to speak (Rule 41). This is the point at which you will answer the arguments against your motion. Make your reply brief. Then end with the words *"And so I move the motion standing in my name"*. The President will then put it to the vote. It may happen that the President forgets to give you your chance to reply to the debate and starts to put the motion to the vote. If you wish to speak you should rise and say: *"On a point of order Your Grace, do I have the right to reply to the debate before the vote is taken?"* The President will then allow you to speak.
- (11) It is as likely as not that some member of Synod may propose an amendment to your motion. Consider it carefully. If it appears to improve your motion and to have general support you may say: *"If my seconder agrees, I accept the amendment as part of my motion"*. The President will ask your seconder if he or she agrees. If so the amendment becomes part of your motion. If your seconder does not agree to the amendment, Synod has to vote on the amendment separately.

If on the other hand you object to the amendment, you may, if you wish, speak against it before it is put to the vote. If it is lost it falls away. If it is carried it becomes part of your motion. In the course of the debate a possible way of improving your own motion may occur to you. You then say: *"Your Grace, may I ask leave of Synod to alter my motion in the following way ..."*. You then move that as an amendment. If seconded and carried, it becomes part of your motion.

After all amendments have been dealt with, the motion in its final amended form has to be voted on by Synod.

- (12) **Withdrawing a motion:** It may happen that after you have given notice, but before you are asked to present your motion to Synod, for some reason or other you no longer want to move it, or for the reason for moving it has fallen away. In that case, when the President calls upon you to move your motion, you stand up and say: *"I wish to withdraw my motion"* and you will

be allowed to do so (Rule 67 (b)).

It is possibly only during the debate on your motion that you decide that you want to withdraw it. Because it has been moved and seconded, it has become the property of Synod. Only Synod can say whether it allows you to withdraw it or not. Your seconder must also agree to its being withdrawn. You have to say: *“Your Grace, if my seconder agrees, I wish to withdraw my motion. May I have the permission of Synod to do so?”*

The President asks your seconder if he or she agrees and then asks Synod whether it gives you permission to withdraw it. If it does so unanimously, you thank the President and resume your seat. If it does not give its unanimous consent, you will be responsible for the motion until it is finally put to the vote (Rule 67 (a)).

- (16) **Speaking a second time:** In section 15(1) it was said that if an amendment to your motion is proposed, you have the right to speak on that amendment. This may at first seem to you to contradict Section 11 which said that you are allowed to speak only once on the same motion. The fact however is that the amendment is a separate motion and is not the same motion as yours. You may therefore speak on the amendment, though of course only once. In the same way, though you may have already spoken on a motion moved by someone else, when amendments are moved you are allowed to speak to each of those amendments.

MEASURES

(17) Provincial Synod is the supreme legislative authority within the Church. You have been chosen as a member of the Synod in order that on behalf of the Church you may share in the making of laws for the Church which will enable the Church to serve God and humanity better. A great responsibility thus rests upon you. You will have to put in a good deal of hard work to inform you properly about the issue on which you will have to decide. These measures are a special kind of motion. Besides the usual procedures for dealing with motions, there are additional rules controlling them.

(1) Since they affect the laws governing the Church they need very careful scrutiny. Longer notice therefore has to be given. Canon 49.1. requires five months notice to be given to the Metropolitan. They are printed in the First Agenda Book. This is sent to you three months before Synod (Rule 7). This gives you time in which you can study the proposed measures. You should compare them with the existing Constitution and Canons (of which you should possess your own copy). If they have not been discussed at your Diocesan Synod you should discuss them with other knowledgeable Church members and begin to form your own judgement. Before Synod meets you will be summoned by your bishop to a meeting of Synod members to ensure that you all understand the issues at stake (Rule 8).

(2) In addition to setting out the proposal like any other motion, a measure needs a preamble, beginning with the word "*Whereas*" and stating why the proposed amendment to the Canon or the Constitution is considered necessary. This is technically called the "Principles" (Rule 3 (vii)). It is there to help you to understand the measure.

(3) When a measure is moved in Synod it has to pass through three stages before it can be finally approved and become law. Although this can be tedious, the extra trouble is necessary if Synod is going to make good laws.

(a) In the first stage the reason for the proposed legislation, as stated in the **Principles** is debated. Details in the wording of the proposed amendment to the Canon or the Constitution may not be discussed (Rule 43(a)). If you have views which you wish Synod to hear, either for or against the Principles of the measure, then choose a good moment to present them.

(b) In the second stage the text of the proposed legislation is examined in detail and the exact wording is decided (Rule 43(b)). This is the **Committee stage**. Here the rule that you are allowed to speak only once does not apply (Rule 59 and 74). If you consider that the

proposed legislation needs at any point to be improved, you should propose an amendment in the same way as outlined in sections 12(3) and (4) above. Make sure that your amendment falls within the scope of the Principles agreed in the first stage. If it falls outside, it involves a new Principle for which five months notice should have been given, and it will be ruled out of order. The Chairman of the Committee will go through the text clause by clause. When he or she gets to the clause which you think needs amending, this is the point at which you should propose your amendment. You do not need a seconder (Rule 33 and 74). When agreement has been reached on the wording, the measure goes back to Synod (Rule 80)

- (c) An interval of time elapses before Synod makes it **final decision** on the measure. This is to give time for second thoughts and to prevent the measure being rushed through. Once it is passed, even though it is realised a mistake has been made, the mistake cannot be put right till Synod meets three years later. At this third stage the measure is approved or rejected as it stands, or it may be sent back to the Committee for further consideration of some detail, after which it again comes back for final decision to Synod (Rules 44-55).

It is usual at this stage for there to be no debate. It does, however, give an opportunity for any member who is still not happy with it to state his or her case. If you find yourself in this position, then this is your last chance to say so.

When it is finally approved, Synod's work on the measure has been completed. If the measure affects the Constitution it has to be approved by the following Synod before it becomes law (Rules 46-47).

VOTING

- 18 (1) There is no time for every member of Synod to speak on every motion that is presented to Synod, nor does every member have the inclination to do so. Every member is however entitled to vote on every motion. Even though one may keep silent during the debate, listening to the arguments on either side, one needs to form a judgement under obedience to the Holy Spirit. Which way Synod in the end decides depends on the members. Your vote is therefore the most serious exercise of your responsibility as a member of Synod. It does not matter if you never make a speech. You justify your election to Synod by voting in obedience to the Holy Spirit and thus enabling God to make God's will known to the Church through the collective mind of Synod.
- (2) There are three choices open to you. If you agree with the motion you vote for it. If you disagree with the motion you vote against it. You may, however, be in the state where you would not be expressing your mind by voting in either of these two ways. You may be confused because you do not understand what it is you are being asked to vote on. You may be torn by doubt and unable to make up your mind. If this is how you feel, it would be wrong for you to vote either for or against the motion. So you choose the third option. You abstain from voting. In not voting you are acting no less responsibly than those who vote for or against.
- (3) The normal method of voting is by voice. The President calls those in favour to say "Aye" and those opposed to the motion to say "No". The President then judges who are in the majority and says "*I think the Ayes (or Noes as the case may be) have it.*" (Rule 48 (a)). Those who have decided to abstain from voting keep silent.
- (4) Sometimes a member of Synod may on an important matter want to know the exact numbers of votes or may question whether the President has correctly judged whether the Ayes or the Noes have it. In that case the member may ask for the votes to be counted. He does this by saying: "*May we have a division?*" The member must be quick and say this immediately after the President has declared that either the Ayes or the Noes have it. In a division only those intending to vote may stay in the Synod hall. Those who abstain from voting must go out. Then the President calls those voting for the motion to stand. Then the President calls for those voting against the motion to stand. Scrutineers count the votes each time and the result is announced by the President. A division places a heavy responsibility upon each member of Synod. The member is required to vote exactly as he or she spoke when the Ayes and the Noes were called for. One would be acting irresponsibly if under the pressure of the moment, you waited to see how others were voting and then voted with the majority (Rule 49 (a)).

- (5) **Voting by Orders:** Another method of voting is voting by orders. Here the laity vote first. If the motion is lost, it falls away. If it is passed, the house of clergy then vote. Here again if it is passed, the bishops then vote. Only when they have added their vote in favour of the motion is it finally carried (Rule 52(a) and (b)).

One restriction on a call for voting by orders is that it must be asked for before the motion is put to the vote (Rule 51). This is perhaps in order to exclude the possible abuse of members changing their vote.

The purpose of voting by orders is to ensure that there is a majority in each house in favour of a motion. This is a valuable safeguard when there is a serious division of opinion on a motion. While there may be an overall majority in Synod in favour of it, a majority in one of the houses may be opposed to it. There is not sufficient consensus for it to be imposed on the Church.

- (6) An even stronger safeguard is the rule that a motion may be ruled to be a controversial motion. For such a motion to be passed, in addition to being passed by a majority in each house it has to be passed by an overall majority of two-thirds of all the votes cast by Synod (Rule 49(b)).

CONCLUSION

The guidance that you have been given in these pages should be enough to enable you to participate with confidence in the proceedings of Synod.

There is still a great deal to learn. This will come with experience and from a careful study of the Standing Rules. These should in time appear less forbidding than when you first started to attend Synod.