

**GIRLS FRIENDLY SOCIETY WORLD COUNCIL
NEW ZEALAND
MAY 1993**

Minutes of the meeting of the 14th meeting of the World Council of the Girls' Friendly Society held at Samuel Marsden Collegiate School, 8 May to 16th May 1993.

Theme: "Women Helping Women Worldwide"

Saturday 8 May 1993 saw the arrival of delegates and observers to the 14th World Council of the Girls Friendly Society held in Wellington, the beautiful capital city of New Zealand. Members registered at Samuel Marsden Collegiate School, the venue for Council and were then transported by friends of GFS in private cars to the two hostels located in Karori, the Girls Friendly Society Hostel – Lucy Jervois House and Helen Lowry Hall.

A 'happy hour' preceded dinner and the World Chairperson welcomed all delegates and observers to New Zealand and thanked them for coming such a distance – for some to the other side of the world! She then introduced the World Secretary, Mrs Jean Mangan, the World Treasurer, Mrs Gillian Steel, and the New Zealand members of the GFS Council. Archdeacon Michael Small, the Chaplain to World Council and Dr John Bonifont, the honorary doctor to Council were also introduced.

The Opening Eucharist was held in the Wellington Cathedral Church of St Paul the following morning and was a moving and spectacular service with the full Cathedral Choir, the procession of official delegates, the presentation of banners from all participating countries, and many vested clergy, the preacher being the Right Reverend Dr Penelope Jamison, Bishop of Dunedin. Lessons were read by Mrs Subuola Thompson, Past World Chairperson of the GFS and the World Chairperson, Mrs Joy Parkin of New Zealand. The Eucharist was celebrated by the Primate of New Zealand and Bishop of Wellington, the Most Reverend Brian Davis who welcomed all present to the 14th World Council of the Girls Friendly Society.

After a luncheon hosted by the Wellington Diocese, visitors walked a short distance to Old St Paul's Cathedral, a magnificent historic place building, and were then taken by bus to the Wainwiamata Marae in the Huth Valley for a traditional Maori welcome, a talk on the history of the Maori and a hangi meal.

Each morning from Monday through to Saturday a Eucharist was held in the Karori Parish Church of St Mary the Virgin and these services, arranged by the Chaplain to World Council, Archdeacon Michael Small, were an inspiration and joy to all attending. Services were held in English, Japanese, Welsh and Maori and each morning representatives of various countries took part in readings, prayers and the administration of the elements. They were truly international.

Monday morning saw the Minister for Women's Affairs, the Hon Jenny Shipley, the Council's keynote speaker, given an outstanding address entitled "Women's Voice: An International Perspective". Considering the theme of Council of "Women helping women worldwide" and with special focus on "Vision with action changes women's lives" the Minister's address was topical and especially relevant. A fluent and forceful speaker her speech set the tone for the Council. Later the World Council Executive was introduced to the delegates with the ceremony of handing over the Minute Book to the World Secretary. World Reports were presented preceded by the introduction of delegates and messages from their countries to World Council.

Delegates:

Australia	Mrs Val Gribble	
	Miss Christine Loos	Junior
Cameroon	Mrs Justina Nzegu	
England	Mrs Joy Epton	
	Miss Nicola Gratton	Junior
Ghana	Mrs Julie Okine	
Ireland	Mrs Olein Gyles	
	Miss Alison Burnside	Junior
Japan	Mrs Rebecca Ida	
	Miss Kaori Suzuki	Junior
Lesotho	Miss Alice Mafereka	
Nigeria	Mrs Clarice Modu	
Philippines	Dr Kate Botengan	
Sierra Leone	Mrs Subuola Thompson	
Sri Lanka	Mrs Gris Samuel	
Transkei	Mrs Nomatembo Titus	
USA	Mrs Constance Kilgour	
	Miss Maureen Power	Junior
Wales	Mrs Carol Gardner	
	Miss Louise Parsonage	Junior
Zambia	Mrs Rose Chisenga	
New Zealand	Mrs Jean Paterson	
	Mrs Barbara Gorman	

Messages were received from Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother, The Archbishop of Canterbury, the Primate of Australia, the Most Reverend K Rayner; the Rt Revd the Bishop of Chichester; the Rt Revd the Bishop of Birmingham; the Rt Revd the Bishop of Coventry; the Rt Revd the Bishop of Southampton; the Rt Revd the Bishop of Chester; the Most Revd the Primate of All Ireland; the Rt Revd the Bishop of Dublin; the Rt Revd the Bishop of Lesotho; the Prime Bishop and Metropolitan of the Philippines; the Rt Revd the Bishop of Freetown the Rt Revd the Bishop of Colombo; the Rt Revd the Bishop of St John's, Transkei; the Most Revd the Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church of the USA; Mrs Dorothy Orr, President GFS, USA the Rt Revd Bishop Suffragan of Pennsylvania; the Revd G A Ash of Trinity Church, Oxford, USA; the Most Revd the Archbishop of Wales; the Rt Revd the Bishop of Newport, the Vicar of Esclaspam, Wales.

The World Chairperson's Report was then read:

It is with pleasure and privilege that I write the Girls' Friendly Society World Report for the period of which I have been your chairperson.

After the 13th World Council in Sierra Leone in 1990 and with the prayers of Mrs Subuola Thompson, I returned to New Zealand via London where I received such support and help from our GFS Office in Townsend House.

GFS New Zealand were delighted that New Zealand had been chosen to host the 14th World Council in 1993. We set to work immediately with a strategic planning meeting and made our bookings.

The Archbishop of New Zealand, the Most Reverend Brian Davis, who is also the Bishop of Wellington Dioceses, was our first place of call. His enthusiasm and encouragement gave us the means to take on the task of organising a World Council.

We had a small but very experienced World Council Executive with Mrs Jean Morgan as the World Council Secretary and Mrs Gillian Steel as the World Council Treasurer.

The Executive team gave a great deal of thought to the logo and the theme for the Council, as 1993 was to be a year in New Zealand to celebrate the Centenary of Women's Suffrage. GFS is so much a part of the history of the independent development of young women in our country. The logo, with Women helping women worldwide, Wahine Toa Te Awhina, seemed to cover what we needed. A theme of "vision with action changes women's lives" also seemed appropriate for this very special year.

We decided to ask the New Zealand Government through the Department of Women's Affairs and the Suffrage Centennial Trust, Whakatu Wahine, to help us with world travel to bring some delegates to World Council. The Trust was very generous and gave us a grant for which we are most grateful. Several sponsors were also generous with their help for us, so we were assured of a successful Council.

Communication has been again the most difficult task. As your Chairperson I have tried to keep in touch with you all and I thank those who have written to me with news of their activities and special events.

The World Project is now established in the Philippines and Dr Kate Botengan will report on this at World Council.

I have only visited Australia as your World Chairperson and what a wonderful welcome I had from Mrs Ev Beckenham. I spent a day with GFS leaders in Sydney, enjoyed a lovely meal at Ev's and talked to Mrs Val Gribble on the phone in the middle of dinner. It was truly a time I shall remember.

One of the jobs of the World Chairperson is to look with vision for the GFS worldwide family and make our Society relevant in today's changing and restructured world.

To think of all who are working in different situations, working with young women who are vulnerable, who are at risk facing uncertain futures, unemployment, breakdown of family life, communicable diseases and violent situations, many who are unaware of God's love and Christ's hand of comfort.

We have a challenge in our work as a Society to give young women a chance to grow with self-esteem and love. Not many organisations carry out work the way we do in that very special GFS way.

Our way may be stormy and our path hard but if we follow our faith in truth, simplicity and spirituality we will reach our goals. I sincerely hope that our Council will begin on this path in 1993.

It is now time in our progress as a World Council to put our Society on a strong, well-established business foundation. The Guidelines need to be clearer, and finances need to be clarified so that continuity and understanding of our aims are very clear to all. These points have been communicated to me as your Chairperson and will be on the agendas for World Council meetings at this World Council.

We have achieved a great deal to be gathering for the fourteenth time as a World Council and we can all say, "well done, true and faithful servants".

I conclude with many thanks to say not only to you all around the world who have upheld me with your prayers and love, but to all GFS members in New Zealand, especially your World Secretary, Mrs Jean Morgan, whose talents have been a shining light for the Lord and through our Society.

Your Chairperson

Joy Parkin.

The **Agenda** for the 14th Triennial General meeting the following day was then set. A Civic Reception hosted by Her Worship the Mayor of Wellington, the Hon Fran Wilde, was held in the City's Town Hall. The Archbishop of New Zealand, the most Reverend Brian Davis, with the Chaplain to World Council, Archdeacon Michael Smart, attended this Reception. In the evening a Youth Session was convened by the Chaplain and six younger New Zealanders shared their experience as young people in New Zealand and in the church. This included being a student, being in the workforce, being Maori and Pakeha, being a married couple and parents, and being ordained. All expressed the need to live up to their Christian faith in a secular society where most people saw God and the church as irrelevant.

Tuesday morning saw observers leaving for a day's visit to a kiwi fruit farm and to Lindale Farm where many aspects of farming life were shown and where many of the visitors were able to purchase woollen goods. The delegates attended the 14th World Council Triennial Meeting, and the minutes of this meeting are as under.

The Girls Friendly Society World Council: Minutes of the Fourteenth World Council of the Girls' Friendly Society held in Wellington, New Zealand. 11 May 1993 at 9.30am

Present: Delegates from Australia, Cameroon, England, Gambia, Ghana, Ireland, Japan, Lesotho, New Zealand, Nigeria, Philippines, Sierra Leone, Sri Lanka, Transkei, United States, Wales, Zambia.

Mrs Parkin, Chairperson, formally welcomed delegates and declared the meeting open.

Minutes of the Thirteenth World Council

With the following amendments and additions, the Philippine delegated moved, New Zealand seconded

"That the Minutes be accepted as a true and correct record".

Message from the Prime Bishop Richard Abellonk, Philippines was not mentioned.

Two messages from Ireland were not mentioned.

Archbishop's message from New Zealand not mentioned.

Page 4, last paragraph, eight lines from the bottom, "I felt as the start" should read "I felt at the start"

Page 9, second paragraph. "krio languages" should read "krio language".

Page 9, third paragraph, "Other languages groups" should read "other language groups".

Page 9, last paragraph, "Young people are included" should read "young people are secluded".

CARRIED

The Chairperson pointed out that the Japanese delegation were having language problems and it was agreed that the observers be allowed to stay to help with this problem.

Matters Arising

Page 11, "GFS decision over the years". The Chairperson advised that Mrs Floris Bain is undertaking this, but it has not yet been received.

Page 11 "Keeping GFS Diocesan Membership alive". The problem of communication is an ongoing problem about which many World Council Chairpersons have spoken.

The Australian delegate reported that she had received the Minutes only a week ago and that the person who attended the meeting was not at this year's Council meeting and had had little opportunity to see the Minutes. There followed much discussion on whether the Minute Book should remain with the outgoing World Chairperson or go with the new World Chairperson, and whether just the Minutes of the meeting should be included in the Book or a report of the whole session.

A motion was put

"That the Minute Book be taken home with the new World Chairperson" **which** was LOST

England Moved, Wales seconded

"That the Minutes of this meeting and the report of the whole session be circulated within one year of the triennial meeting with a recommendation that, if possible, it be done within six months"

CARRIED

Financial Reports:

The previous World Council Treasurer, Sierra Leone, presented a financial report and the report of receipts and payments of the last World Council and moved that these be adopted.

Sierra Leone formally passed the World Council account book to New Zealand. The New Zealand World Council Treasurer advised that the £7,500 to come from Sierra Leone via the bank in London has not yet been received and will be followed up. It was reported that some structure is required for financial systems as the previous World Council seems to be responsible for spending money after their term of office has ended and the current Chairperson has no knowledge of what is being spent.

Australia and England advised that they have money available for World Projects but were waiting for advice from the Philippines as to how this was to be paid.

New Zealand reported that its aim is to pass the £17,500 it received from World Funds on to the next Council.

World Travel Fund

World Travel has caused a few problems in that some of the fares have escalated. There is currently about £1,800 in the fund and subsidised travel will have cost about £14-15,000. The Travel Fund has financed five delegates and New Zealand will finance what cannot be financed by the Fund. There will, however, be nothing in the Fund to pass on. The Council had considered requests for travel in the order in which the applications were received – some tickets were issued at a far higher cost than that budgeted. Delegates were asked to travel to New Zealand by the most economical route and several went via the UK when it would have been more economical to go via Australia. This has caused a great strain on the Travel Fund. Letters were sent to delegates asking for details of travel plans but although replies were received, they did not contain answers to the questions asked.

Australia reported that they approached their travel agent, found the cheapest fare and itinerary and faxed the Philippines and Lesotho and told them that this was what Australia was prepared to pay for. The ticket was available at the airport they were to travel from and there was no problem. England moved and Nigeria seconded.

'That the World Funds be made available for the past World Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer to attend the next World Council' CARRIED

Sierra Leone moved and Nigeria seconded *"That all subsidised fares to World Council be at the cheapest possible rate and that the control of the fare be in the hands of the country who is paying the account"* CARRIED.

Currency of Funds

The minutes of the World Council meeting in Wales record that the World Council's funds be in sterling, or \$US. They have been held in sterling and as they were needed, they were converted to \$NZ. It was agreed that to be fair to all countries sterling was used. In answer to comments that it was a very expensive Conference to attend, the Chairperson replied that the cost was the same as the last and had not risen for the previous three Conferences. It was agreed that the Minute recorded in Wales should continue to stand.

Duration of World Council

The Chairperson reported that, with economics as they are, it is extremely expensive to have World Council meetings every three years. Ireland proposed that is difficult financially to support them every three years and that maybe the example of the Mothers Union should be followed and Councils held every ten years, although this may be a bit too long. Sierra Leone felt three years was just right, any longer might be too long for a Chairperson to carry on, but that perhaps countries should send fewer delegates to attend. She also advised that the Mothers Union feels that ten years is too long, and they are to discuss this. England felt that five years was too long a time to maintain contact, particularly for new member countries. The Chairperson suggested that if countries are having trouble funding their travel, the World Council should be called on to help.

The United States spoke in favour of extending the time between Councils. They only send two delegates but even this has been costly. They have difficulty enough raising money for work within the country and people resent money spent on sending two people to World Council meetings out of the country. They supported extending the period to five years.

Philippines suggested explaining another possibility such as having a World Council every six years but Regional Conferences in between, ie every three years.

Australia moved and Lesotho seconded

"That we continue holding a World Council every three years" **14 for/2 against** CARRIED.

United States moved and Wales seconded

"That the duration of Council meetings be an agenda item at the next World Council Meeting". CARRIED.

Attendance at Council Meetings

GFS in the US is asking for a representative from each Diocese to come to World Council. However, if they were not a delegate, they would not be allowed to sit in at the World Council meetings. They felt that it was unfair to delegates not to have the support of observers. They should be allowed to sit in and listen, not to have a vote but to be supportive. Nigeria felt that if observers did not have a vote and did not participate there was no reason why they could not observe. It would help the work of GFS back home to have more people understanding the work of the World Council.

Philippines noted in the Guidelines that observers may be invited to the Council and shall have the right to speak but not vote. Australia spoke in favour of having observers attending the meeting.

The US did not expect observers to speak but delegates would be able to consult with observers before voting. To have a group going home to report is far better than one or two people reporting as each person takes home their own view. Japan agreed they would like to have observers as observers only and during lunch and morning tea they could discuss items with their delegates. England suggested that the Guidelines need a review as some things are not adhered to as set out. It was agreed to do this the following day.

The United States moved and Nigeria seconded

"That observers be permitted to observe. They will not have a vote and they will not be permitted to speak" CARRIED.

World Day of Prayer

England put forward a suggestion that countries who are not able to host World Council could prepare a form of World Day of Prayer for everyone to use (as a guide). Members would see the

way other cultures worship and their view of God. The Chairperson advised that New Zealand was responsible for 1993. US suggested that countries be asked to volunteer for the next three years at each World Council.

England moved and US seconded

“That countries offer to prepare the World Day of Prayer form of service for each of the next three years” CARRIED.

It was agreed that the Order of Service be prepared in 1994 by Sri Lanka, 1995 by Lesotho and 1996 by Zambia.

World Treasurer

For the World Council accounts to show a true picture of what has happened it is necessary for all details of transactions to be recorded, ie details from countries that have paid air fares for other countries must be recorded as an "in" and "out" transaction. The World Treasurer needs to be advised of all money handed over for World Projects. The Chairperson advised that not all countries had paid their World Dues which are £30 for three years. This money is vital for administration. England suggested that if countries are finding it difficult to find this money, they should approach their link country. Sierra Leone asked that it be known who has not paid their dues.

World Banner

England suggested that a World Banner be considered. It was suggested and agreed that each country provide a symbol, and possibly a design or two, and that the World Secretary, Mrs Morgan approach Mrs Beverley Shore-Bennett, a New Zealander, to see if she is prepared to help with it. Symbols and designs to be sent within one year.

General Business

Zambia and Cameroon applied to the World Council for membership. The Chairperson advised that although they have now made formal application, they must have a letter from their Bishop to say that he agrees and supports the application for World Council membership.

The link countries are as follows:

A	Australia	New Zealand	Liberia	Korea	Cameroon
B	England	Gambia	Guyana	Barbados	Transkei
C	Ireland	Japan	Kenya	Zambia	Philippines
D	USA	Newfoundland	Nigeria	Sierra Leone	
C	Wales	Sri Lanka	Ghana	Lesotho	

Next World Council

The Chairperson, before leaving the Chair, thanked everyone for their prayers over the past three years. It had been a tremendous task for a small group to run the World Council.

Transkei, who had been looking forward to hosting the World Council in 1996, sadly had to withdraw their invitation because of unrest in some parts of the country. They hoped to be able to host the 1999 Council and asked that members did not give up on them – they would not give up. The Chairperson tabled an invitation from the Archbishop of Canterbury to host the 1996 World Council in England. She then declared that England would be host and presented the new World Chairperson to the meeting. Philippines expressed a vote of thanks and appreciation to all the current Council officers for their leadership, work and love that went into the preparation of this Council.

The meeting closed at 2.05pm.

Tuesday evening saw a Maori culture demonstration with action songs and the art of making poi. This was instructive but provided some considerable amusement as delegates endeavoured to master the intricate poi movements.

World Project

Before the World Project was discussed on Wednesday morning Zambia and Cameroon were welcomed as new members of the Girls Friendly Society.

Reports from Wales, Zambia and New Zealand which could not be tabled on Monday, due to lack of time, were presented.

As no delegate from Barbados was able to attend, this country's report was tabled by the chairman. It was moved by the Chairman and seconded by Wales

"That all reports be adopted" CARRIED.

Guidelines

A number of modifications and revisions were made to the Guidelines agreed to at the 1987 meeting of the Council. It was moved by Ireland, seconded by Nigeria,

"That the proposed changes be adopted" CARRIED

(See annex for revised text)

GFS World Council meeting – May 1993

World Project

1990 Project- Philippines

The Philippines delegate (Dr Kate Botengan) presented a report on the World Project which was approved by the 1990 World Council meeting. Progress was reported on the collection of information material and the workshops which resulted in the production of the "GFS Handbook of Information" and the "GFS Leaders Manual". Future planning includes organising a Leaders Training Camp in October 1993 and the production of a "Members Book". It is hoped that sufficient finance will be available to support the employment of a Coordinator for at least one year, if not for three.

Finance

Although the project was approved for implementation in the period 1991=1993, the bulk of the funds were not received through GFS until October 1992. Contribution to come from Australia, England, New Zealand and the United States should be sufficient to make up the remainder of the allocation (some \$US22,000).

Taking into account the problems of inflation (15-18%) in the Philippines and general increases incosts, the "guesstimate"

the delegate was that the total project would cost \$US261,000.

Minor Projects

The Vice-Chairman, Mrs Subuola Thompson, put forward a recommendation that a sum of between \$4000 and \$5000 be reserved as a contribution to training of leaders in countries which have recently joined GFS such as Ghana, The Gambia, Zambia and the Cameroons.

It was suggested that this money could be used to send people to the countries concerned to train leaders and could cover, for instance, airfares, out of pocket expenses and the cost of training materials while the host country would provide accommodation. The Chairman advised that this proposal would be considered by the next Vice-Chairman who would consult with members.

World Project 1993

Two proposals have been circulated to members, those of Nigeria and Kenya.

- a) Nigeria. The Nigerian Delegates (Clarice Modu) spoke of the serious problem of unemployment in her country (approximately 80% at present) which particularly affects young girls and explained the proposal to construct a centre, on land Tobe provided by the

diocese, which would aim to train girls in arts and crafts and some domestic work and enable them to gain employment.

The centre would include five dormitories for short stays for some 20 trainees, a hall or assembly area for training sessions, and a two-room unit for a resident co-ordinator. It is expected that the running expenses of the centre would be covered by the sale of the arts and crafts produced by trainees.

It is estimated that the project would cost about \$US25,000 for the construction of the centre.

- b) Kenya. The Kenyan delegate has not arrived in New Zealand and was therefore unable to speak about the proposal.

The delegate from England felt that without further explanation and clarification from a representative from Kenya, it was impossible to vote on the project at this meeting. Other Council members agreed with this comment.

The Chairman therefore proposed.

“That the World Council support the Nigerian project”.

The proposal was seconded by the Philippines delegate and CARRIED unanimously.

The Vice-Chairman recommended that the funds for this project be paid over at the earliest possible date.

Buses then took all present to the Headquarters of the Society, GFS House, in Newtown. Various activities of the work of the House were shown to members who also visited the adjacent Wellington City Mission and heard of the work of the Mission from Father John Bowles, Wellington City Missioner. Lunch was served and various tours and visits were arranged with many taking advantage of visiting the shops in the centre of the city.

The first speaker on Thursday morning was Dame Miriam Dell BNZ, DB, BL, the Chairperson of the 1993 Suffrage Centenary Year Trust, Whakatu Wahine. Her charm of manner and excellent address endeared her to all.

Following Dame Miriam's address an interesting Forum was held entitled "Women in the Church" featuring Mrs Janet Hesketh QSM, Mrs Gillian Robertson B.Com and Canon Pat Muxlow L.Th. All are very much involved in the work of the church and spoke of the different aspects of their commitment and the huge opening for women to show the various ways in which to make their presence felt and seen.

After lunch buses took all to Government House for a Vice-Regal Reception hosted by the Governor General, Her Excellency Dame Catherine Tizard. This was a most significant occasion as the first GFS in New Zealand was formed in 1883 by Lady Lucy Jervois, the wife of a former Governor of New Zealand. The national dress of many of the delegates and the wonderful setting of Government House, plus the most magnificent autumn day, made this a very special event.

In the evening the Chaplain to World Council led a Plenary Session and was assisted by the Revd Helen Jacobi, Assistant Priest at St Mary's Karori.

Archdeacon Smart began by pointing out that this Conference was occurring not only in the Centennial Year of Women's Suffrage in New Zealand, but also in the Ecumenical Decade of Churches in Solidarity with Women (1988-1988). He then introduced Helen Jacobi who spoke about the way she continues in her life the roles of wife, mother and priest. This is only achieved because she and her husband operate in a partnership of mutual support which gives them both the opportunity to explore their individual careers. She explained that her husband Stephen, was a Foreign Affairs officer and had been posted to the New Zealand Embassy in Paris where she carried

out the traditional role of a diplomat's wife – attending cocktail parties, entertaining, etc. but was also able to pursue her own interest, studying theology and participating in the service and activities of the American Episcopal Cathedral in Parish. After their return to New Zealand and the birth of their daughter, Hannah, her husband, as a Government employee was granted 12 months parental leave and looked after Hannah while Helen progressed in her career in the church. She was ordained and appointed to St Mary's Karori as Assistant Priest in 1992. Stephen has now returned to Foreign Affairs and while the couple are able to employ a nanny to look after Hannah, Stephen takes his share in caring for her at times when Helen is not able to be at home – bringing her to church on Sundays, for instance.

The partnership which Helen and Stephen share serves as a model for many young parents and families. Some women had told her that they felt able to identify with her when she was officiating at a service, thus bringing an added dimension to their worship. Helen concluded by reiterating that the mutual support and partnership which she and Stephen share meant that there was no conflict in each pursuing their individual careers.

Those present then joined in the singing of a modern hymn "Com, celebrate the women who brought the Church to birth". Michael Smart began his talk by showing two images on the screen, the first of a very young girl, the second which appeared to be an older version of the same girl, but in fact also contacted the image of an old woman. He used this as an example of the "conditioning" which consciously or unconsciously prevents us accepting new images. The Spirit comes to us to enable us to take off our blinkers of conditioning or bias or prejudice and makes us see in new ways. He then talked about the sacrament and its meaning and reminded his listeners that, regardless of who is offering it, priest or lay person, the sacrament remains the means of grace.

Speaking of the image of God, traditionally depicted as a male human being, he asked the question: Does this mean God is a Father, or God is like a Father? Traditionally again, it was accepted that it was all right for women to participate in church life, but not at the altar. However, we should be looking at the qualities of God rather than his physical form.

He referred to the three "lost" parables – the shepherd looking for his sheep, the woman searching for a lost coin – the father awaiting the return of his long-lost son. While all those present had seen pictures representing the first and third parables, it was agreed that pictures of the woman searching for her lost possession were practically unknown. We were not responding to feminine pressure; women had always been a presence in the Scriptures. He told the story of the Captain of a battleship on a collision course with what he believed to be another vessel, but which turned out to be the lighthouse, and reminded us that while it is common now for people to say "truth is what I choose it to be" we as Christians have Christ as our lighthouse and the measure of what we want to do. While he understood that there were some women's experiences that man can hear about but never fully appreciate, men and women can share in prayer, in hope, identify with each other – in other words, solidarity with women, as God is in solidarity with the whole human race. Wherever we go, we can feel we have solidarity with each other in what Christ is seeking to do. He referred to the Bible description of the Creation – the creation of "humankind" both male and female make up the totality of the image of God, and we need both parts of the image. The image of a crucified Christ in the form of a woman, from a church in Canada, was shown and discussed. Michael pointed out that Christ took upon himself the sins of the world – when women are sinned against or abused, Christ is crucified again.

The evolution of the role of women in recent years has meant that men are not necessarily threatened but have to adjust. He personally had found the experiences of working with women enriching. He expressed the hope that equality and wholeness, with the richness and beauty that each can contribute, would lead to a greater nearness on earth.

Michael then asked those present to share with each other, in small groups, their impressions and feelings of what has been happening during the week, which might be the Spirit of God working within them. Many referred to the fellowship, the sharing of worship in different languages, the

unity within diversity and felt that there were many new thoughts to reflect on and study when they returned to their home countries.

After hearing these comments Michael thanked those present and pointed out that while emphasis had been in many ways on the role of women in the church, the last thing he wanted to convey was that their ministry is about being ordained. After all, 90% of the church's ministry has always and will continue to be carried out by lay people.

Helen Jacobi brought the evening to a close with a prayer. The Chairman asked all those present to join in thanking Michael and Helen for their addresses.

An all day visit to the Wainarapa was held on Friday and members visited Martinborough where they were entertained to lunch by members of the Association of Anglican Women. Mrs Jill Baker, the wife of the Vicar, was a former President of GFS, New Zealand and was able to renew acquaintance with delegates from other countries. A visit to a paua shell factory provided members with an opportunity to purchase gifts and other farm activities were also provided.

In the evening the young delegates were asked to share what were important issues for them as young Christians in their context and culture. It was interesting to note how many common concerns were shared. Young people in all cultures test out the values of the older generations, keeping some and leaving others behind. Christian beliefs and values are timeless but have to be re-expressed for each generation.

Saturday morning saw the setting up of craft stalls and an opportunity for local shopping. Unfortunately, an incredibly wet and windy day had an effect on the attendance at the craft display in the afternoon and this was disappointing for all. However, in the evening the international entertainment was a wonderful success with so many different items and demonstrations from all the countries. At the end of the evening New Zealand members thronged the stage and after the Chaplain had offered a blessing paua shell gifts were given to every person who attended World Council. The singing of "Now is the Hour" with the sight of the Archbishop of New Zealand holding aloft the painted words made a huge impression on everyone and will be a memory to treasure by all. It was a happy and moving finale to a splendid evening's entertainment.

Sunday morning saw the closing Eucharist at the Cathedral Church of St Paul when another wonderful service of praise and thanksgiving was held. Lessons were read by Mrs Floris Bain, a Past World Chairperson from the United States of America, and Miss Christine Loos, Junior Delegates from Australia. The Holy Gospel was read by Mrs Joy Epton, World Chairperson-Elect from England. Prayers were read by the Venerable Michael Smart and delegates from various countries. Mrs Joy Epton was commissioned as World Chairman by the Archbishop of New Zealand, the Most Reverend Brian Davis who presided at the Eucharist and also preached the sermon. At the conclusion of the service the Girls Friendly Society banners were returned from the sanctuary and carried from the Cathedral. Again, the procession of robed clergy, the music, this time from the Wellington Canoris Choir – the flowers and the banners, all made for a service to remember as the 1993 143rd World Council came to a conclusion. After lunch delegates were ferried to their various points of departure and New Zealand members were left to reflect on the activities of the past week. "Women helping women worldwide" had been the theme for Council. May that theme continue in the lives of all those who had taken part.

(Copies of the sermons preached by Archbishop Brian Davis and Bishop Penny Jamieson, and the addresses by the Hon Jenny Shipley and Dame Miriam Dell were circulated to member countries at the time of Council)

Guidelines of the World Council of the Girls Friendly Society.

- 1) The organisation shall be called the World Council of the Girls' Friendly Society.
- 2) Purpose – The purpose of the World Council of GFS shall be to promote fellowship between the members of the Society throughout the world by the exchange of information and ideas. The promotion of World Assemblies, camps, exchange visits and correspondence between members shall be encouraged.
- 3) Day of Prayer. September 20th, St Michael and All Angels Day, shall be the GFS World Day of Prayer. Member countries who feel they are unable to host a Council meeting may offer to prepare the format for the Day of Prayer.
- 4) Membership. Membership shall be open to GFS in all countries whose purposes are in fundamental agreement. Each country seeking admission shall be considered separately and shall present a letter of support from the Bishop, and the policy shall be inclusive rather than exclusive. Representation at Council meetings shall be extended to two 2) from each country, one of whom shall ideally be between the ages of 16 and 25.
- 5) Officer. It shall be the responsibility of the Chairman of the World Council to arrange for the election of the country to preside over the World Council for the succeeding period, the voting to be carried out by mail, if necessary. The method of voting to be determined by each country concerned. There shall be one vote for each member country in this election.
 - a. The duration of the office of Chairman shall usually be for not less than three years and shall coincide with the term between meetings, and the Chairman shall relinquish office immediately at the conclusion of the Council meeting. The responsibility for the chairmanship of the GFS World Council shall rest on the person of the Chairman and not on the Executive Committee or Board of the country she represents.
 - b. The World Chairman is empowered to appoint her own secretary for her time of office.
 - c. The Chairman of the previous period shall be the Vice-Chairman up to and including the next meeting of the Council.
- 6) Voting at Meetings. Each delegate to World Council shall have one vote. If the President is not the Chairman, then the President of the GFS in the country concerned shall be an ex-officio non-voting member of the Council. The Vice-Chairman of the World Council shall also be an ex officio non-voting member unless she is the chosen delegate of the country concerned. Observers are invited to the Council but shall not have the right to speak or to vote. The Chairman has a casting vote.
- 7) Agenda. Suggestions for inclusion on any Agenda shall be sent to the Chairman of the GFS World Council to reach her not less than three (3) months prior to the date of the meeting. The Agenda for a meeting of the Council should be circulated to the chairmen and secretaries of member countries as long as possible in advance to allow for discussion and suggestions.
- 8) Minutes. Minutes of each meeting shall be circulated and assigned by the Chairman of the meeting and shall be recorded in a book which shall pass from Chairman to Chairman. Further, that as a common language will be necessary for this book. English be used as the official language. The minutes shall be circulated within at least six (6) months and no longer than a year.
- 9) Newsletter. The newsletter shall, where possible, be edited by the country providing the Chairman, or by another country at the request of the country providing the Chairman. The distribution within each country shall be the responsibility of that country.
- 10) Finance. All member countries should, if possible, contribute to a common fund to help defray the expenses of the country carrying the World Chairmanship Each country to pay the same amount as an Affiliation Fee – this to be ten (10) pounds sterling per year per country, during the period of the three years. The World Chairman may administer all World Funds.

Agreed at the 14th meeting of the GFS World Council held in New Zealand, 8-16 May 1993.
Signed Joy Epton, 24 July 1996.