

Racing Industry, Chaplain to the (42/94)

(A report from a Synod-Committee.)

History

1. On 1 November 1994 the Synod passed the following resolution -

"Synod notes the recommendations of the committee covering New Initiatives in Ministry and the racing industry in particular, and appoints a committee, comprised of Mr John Gormley (Chairman), the Rev Paul Bayliss and Mr Wayne Olling, to further consider the recommendations in the report."

Tasks Undertaken

2. We have met formally on 9 occasions and conducted many interviews with interested parties. Information on progress has been supplied to Bishops Brian King and Paul Barnett and other interested people.
3. Personal contact has been established with Senior Administrators of the Australian Jockey Club (AJC) and Sydney Turf Club (STC), who are the main controllers and programmers of thoroughbred racing in the Sydney area. Both clubs endorse the proposal for a full time Anglican Chaplain and will authorise entry to their racecourses to enable a Chaplain to carry out his duties, particularly in the early hours of each morning during trackwork and at other times when other activities occur.
4. Both the AJC and STC recognise a need for a visible and accessible person able to listen, support and comfort the many who are unable to hear any Christian message due to their work and living arrangements.
5. Ministers in parishes covering the racecourses have been informed and we are certain that this specialised ministry will add to their effectiveness.
6. Many people in the industry, the Anglican Church, and the public at large have been informed of this project. A number have expressed surprise at the Anglican Church taking an interest in an area that is considered unusual for a Protestant Church to be involved. However, no one has said the project should not proceed and most thought this work was of great importance to remove the vacuum in spiritual help that exists at present.
7. Information obtained from the AJC showed the thoroughbred industry employs over 330,000 people and generates over \$500m each year in State and Local Government taxes.
8. There are approximately 1,740 people in the stables, engaged in training thoroughbred horses within the Sydney Diocesan boundaries. Many others are active in training standardbred horses (trotting and pacing) and greyhounds. At this stage the needs of these branches of racing have not been fully pursued.
9. The President of the NSW Jockeys' Association was asked "Is there value in the Church having a direct ministry to people in the Racing Industry?", he answered "Yes, there are lots of souls there that aren't saved. The hours worked by many make it difficult for churches to contact them. A chaplaincy could have a big bearing on people being saved".
10. A submission for a diocesan grant to fund the Chaplain from 1996 was submitted.
11. The Committee's stated objective is - "To introduce the people of the racing industry to Jesus Christ, that they might receive him as Lord and Saviour and inherit eternal life".
12. The Committee's recommendations to achieve the aforesaid objective are -
 - (a) For a full time Chaplain to the Racing Industry to be appointed.
 - (b) To seek out persons who would be capable of carrying out the duties of Chaplain.
 - (c) To obtain funding that will enable the employment of a full time Chaplain for an initial 3 year period.
 - (d) To continue the Committee as structured under the umbrella of the Olympic Games Task Force.

For and on behalf of the Committee

JOHN GORMLEY
Chairman

7 July 1995