

An Anglican Perspective on Integralism: Reflections on the Discipline and Affective Culture of the Church of England

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Abstract

Theological and legal advice concerning sexual ethics provided to the Church of England in 2025 provides a perspective on the long influence of integralist thought amidst both societal and ecclesial pluralism. The advice distinguishes between formative, reformatory and punitive forms of discipline. The argument here examines the interplay of the discipline and affective culture of the Church of England in order to explore a confessional political context, which is milder than that which is hoped for by some Catholic integralists. It engages the work of Kevin Vallier and Joan Lockwood O'Donovan to argue that stability and mildness are compatible with the deployment of ecclesial jurisdictional authority in the form of punitive discipline, authorized by primary legislation and exercised in relation to ordained ministers. Drawing on historical considerations and New Testament thought about fear, love, longsuffering, gentleness, and peace, the argument concludes that mildness is not acquiescence in an inordinate pluralism of doctrine or practice. Sin is framed not only within the church's jurisdictional authority but also, and decisively, within the church's evangelical essence, in the grace and forgiveness found in Jesus Christ. Accordingly, while longsuffering has a limit, the argument urges patience rather than an over-hasty recourse to the courts.

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Introduction

A 2025 theological report from the Church of England's Faith and Order Commission (FAOC) was entitled *The Exercise of Discipline and Clergy Exemplarity in the Church of England: The Case of Same-Sex Civil Marriages*.¹ It was published alongside legal advice regarding the permissibility both of certain liturgical acts and of same-sex marriage for Church of England ordinands and clergy.² Taken together, and along with material published simultaneously,³ this theological report and legal advice provides an important, recent point of reference for considering the life and practice of the Church of England as a counterpoint to the aspirations of Catholic integralism. Moreover, they function as indications concerning the challenges for the realization of integralism in practice amidst both societal and, especially, ecclesial pluralism.

Interest in Catholic integralism has both increased and become more controversial in recent years. By way of introduction, note this brief, widely cited account offered by Edmund Waldstein.

Catholic Integralism is a tradition of thought that, rejecting the liberal separation of politics from concern with the end of human life, holds that political rule must order man to his final goal. Since, however, man has both a temporal and an eternal end, integralism holds that there are two powers that rule him: a temporal power and a spiritual power. And since man's temporal end is subordinated to his eternal end, the temporal power must be subordinated to the spiritual power.⁴

Kevin Vallier, in his careful study of Catholic integralism, expresses doubts about this definition,⁵ refining the account in the following way which we will take as the basic account for the purposes of this argument. Vallier gives three headings followed by 'three interrelated integralist theses':

- 1) *The complete political good*: Political order must advance the whole common good, temporal, and spiritual.
- 2) *Compound political authority*: God authorizes and commands ... church and state to each advance their part of the common good. God also grants the church the authority to direct the state to assist it in fulfilling its mission.
- 3) *The political ideal*: The best regime includes the partial subordination of the state to the church, which together form a dyarchy that successfully promotes the whole common good.⁶

¹ Faith and Order Commission, *The Exercise of Discipline and Clergy Exemplarity in the Church of England: The Case of Same-Sex Civil Marriages*, GS Misc 1431, 2025.

² Church of England Legal Office, *Living in Love and Faith – Legal Advice – September 2025*, GS Misc 1432, 2025.

³ Faith and Order Commission, *The Nature of Doctrine and the Living God*, GS Misc 1429, 2025; *The Doctrine of Marriage and the Prayers of Love and Faith: Texts and Contexts*, GS Misc 1430, 2025.

⁴ Edmund Waldstein, 'Integralism in Three Sentences' (*The Josias*, October 2016). <https://thejosias.com/2016/10/17/integralism-in-three-sentences/>, accessed April 1 2026.

⁵ Kevin Vallier, *All the Kingdoms of the World: On Radical Religious Alternatives to Liberalism* (OUP 2023) 38.

⁶ Vallier (n 5) 35.

This is then followed by Vallier's formal definition of Catholic integralism:

- 1) *Natural authority*: God directs the state to advance the natural common good, *G*, of a community, *C*.
- 2) *Supernatural authority*: God directs the church to advance the supernatural common good, *S*, of all baptized persons in *C*.
- 3) *Indirect supernatural sovereignty*: to advance *S* and only for this reason, the church may mandate state policies, *P*, backed by civil penalties, *E*, that advance *S* directly (ie, not merely by advancing *G*) without excessively undermining *G* or *S* in some other respect.⁷

The nature and practice of the Church of England's *current* process for clergy discipline vis-à-vis integralism *thus understood* is the target for this paper's enquiry. By way of further orientation, note the following Anglican-focussed account both of Christian integralism in general and how integralism influenced the context in which the Church of England emerged:

Eschewing models that separate the religious and political realms into distinct spheres, cities, or societies, Christian integralists err, to varying degrees, on the side of a unity between church and state whereby the latter is deputized as the enforcement mechanism of the former. *Virtually all Anglican political thought before 1689 is, to one degree or another, integralist.*⁸

Lest this final claim mislead, it should be noted that the form that integralism took in relation to the Church of England was conditioned by local factors shaping the *English* reformation. The character of the Church of England, as understood by the English reformers, has been recently and authoritatively explained by Joan Lockwood O'Donovan. The key point for present purposes is that ministers, especially bishops, held both evangelical and jurisdictional authority. However, the two are, precisely on account of the gospel, distinguished as follows:

In that the church's authority and practices of proclamation are constituted by the saving judgment of God in Christ, who is both the judge and the judged, they are removed from the divinely appointed secular authority and practices of coercive human judgment. The English reformers see this contrariness reflected in God's providential investing of supreme jurisdictional authority over his people in lay rulers, so that the English clerical hierarchy holds jurisdictional authority from, and under, its faithful lay monarch.⁹

⁷ *ibid* 37.

⁸ Andrew J. Nolte, 'Bishops, Kings and Leviathan: Nationalism and Integralism in Light of High Church Anglican Political Thought' (2021) 2 *International Journal of Religion* 115–28, 118 (italics added). Note that even if 'thought' could be categorized as integralist, under this definition, the extent to which the English state was integralist in the period between the Henrician reforms and the Glorious Revolution is too vast and complex a matter to detain us here. Nolte sees Hooker as a certain kind of integralist. For discussion of Hooker, see Littlejohn, W. Bradford. *The Peril and Promise of Christian Liberty: Richard Hooker, the Puritans, and Protestant Political Theology* (Eerdmans 2017). Moreover, while the idea of an integralist order has been entertained, the reality of how England was governed was, at the very least, not uniformly integralist. Nolte comments that 'whatever merits it may have in theory, the harmonious and balanced Christian commonwealth Hooker envisioned never materialized in practice, leaving behind, instead, various contending parties who sought either to preserve, reform, modify, or entirely erase it.' (Nolte, 'Bishops, Kings and Leviathan', 121).

⁹ Joan Lockwood O'Donovan, *English Public Theology: A Reformation Response to the Crisis of Natural Rights* (T&T Clark 2023) 14.

As we shall see, this jurisdictional authority of the clergy need not be exercised coercively (meaning forcing someone against their will) nor indeed punitively (especially if punishment is solely taken to mean retribution). And yet jurisdiction, in the sense of legal authority, may indeed be coercive and may indeed be punitive, on the authority of the lay monarch, as O'Donovan describes. This is not, then, a subordination of 'state' to 'church' in the sense that integralism describes. Rather, it is a coordination of both lay and ordained members of the church to the spiritual good of the Church and of the realm, with jurisdictional authority carefully and deliberately distinguished, *for theological reasons*, from evangelical authority.

While there is a vast distance between the sixteenth century and the twenty-first—not least in there now being no presumption that the church is coextensive with the people of England—the following important points about current law show that the thread of this English strain of integralist thought, though now vestigial, still influences the life of the established Church of England and the nation to which it is constitutionally bound:

Since the Church of England remains established by law, the inextricable link between church and state permits Parliament to legislate for the church and its religious affairs, either directly or by implication.

The General Synod of the Church of England has the power to legislate by Measure, which formerly vested in the Church Assembly. A Measure has the full force and effect of an Act of Parliament and may relate to any matter concerning the Church of England.¹⁰

The role of the lay monarch in this legislative process remains essential. Russell Dewhurst summarizes the current situation:

Measures passed by the General Synod are submitted to the Ecclesiastical Committee of Parliament, which reports to Parliament and gives its views on the expediency of proposed Measures. If each House of Parliament so resolves, Measures are then presented to His Majesty and 'have the force and effect of an Act of Parliament on the Royal Assent being signified thereto in the same manner as to Acts of Parliament'.¹¹

Moreover, lest this be thought a merely ornamental matter, while all legislation concerning clergy discipline requires Royal Assent, there are aspects of clergy discipline in which the monarch is *directly* involved. The monarch may issue pardons in some circumstances and, where the case involves an 'archbishop or bishop or on any person holding any preferment the right to appoint to which is vested in [His] Majesty',¹² the monarch must confirm the penalty before it is applied. Dewhurst concludes that

In the national life of the Church, the King's involvement in ecclesiastical legislation and in senior appointments demonstrates that the Supreme Governor plays a fundamental role in the Church's constitution.¹³

¹⁰ Mark Hill, *Ecclesiastical Law* (Oxford 2018; online edition) 1.23–1.24.

¹¹ Russell Dewhurst, 'The King and the Law of the Church of England' (2023) 25 *Ecclesiastical Law Journal* 139–55, 143; citing *Church of England Assembly (Powers) Act 1919*, s 4.

¹² Dewhurst (n 11) 146.

¹³ *ibid* 149.

To repeat, the interrelation of the Church of England with the state does not map straightforwardly onto the account of (Catholic) integralism offered above. While primary legislation is a significant aspect of the Church of England's life, the Church of England does not mandate state policies (although it may seek to influence them). Instead, a particular form of the dyarchy with which integralism is concerned has developed over time. Primary legislation, the lay monarch and various aspects of parliamentary process have been deliberately enlisted in the service of securing the spiritual good of the Church of England and thus the nation it serves. This naturally includes the interest the nation has in the quality of the clergy, their beliefs and behaviour. While clergy occupy a public office (unlike, for example, in Wales or Scotland), it can hardly be accurate to describe such a state of affairs as an accident when a significant amount of theological thinking, legislative work and political activity have resulted in the place of clergy (and clergy discipline) in the life of England.

The case of clergy discipline provides an illuminating case study for tracking the ways in which the long tradition of integralist thought influenced English life when it encountered the theology of the English reformers, the effects of which are still felt today. In sum, consideration of clergy discipline provides a useful lens for analysing the relationship between the current form of the Church of England's establishment and the aspirations of Catholic integralism.

In search then of the current self-understanding of the Church of England, we turn to the FAOC report noted above, which makes important theological distinctions regarding the nature of discipline in the lives of Church of England clergy. The report articulates three forms of discipline: 'formative, reformatory and punitive',¹⁴ a more detailed examination of which will follow below. All three forms of discipline matter for discerning what Joan Lockwood O'Donovan have called the 'public' vocation of the Church of England, which takes both jurisdictional and evangelical forms.¹⁵ These considerations bear directly on core matters in moral theology and especially, for this paper's purpose, on the affective culture of the Church of England.

The nature of the affective culture of a nation-state, including that of its main institutions, is closely associated with the question of 'stability' to which Kevin Vallier's study of integralism, noted above, devotes significant amounts of attention. One conclusion of Vallier's analysis of integralism is that 'integralism is false if it is less stable than a milder confessional state'.¹⁶ It is precisely this reference to a 'milder confessional state' which invites a consideration of the Church of England's establishment. Just what mildness means in practice, and in relation to stability, is a key aspect of this enquiry.

To explain what integralists mean by 'stability', Vallier considers integralist order:

Catholic integralists characterize their view as a moral and legal *order*. States should order society toward the highest good. But society should also order *itself*, in that its main institutions must be stable.¹⁷

As we shall see, the possibility of a stable order is dependent on the quality of human motivation which is in turn determined by the quality of their affections, such as fear.

¹⁴ GS Misc 1431 (n 1) s 46.

¹⁵ O'Donovan (n 9) 251.

¹⁶ Vallier (n 5) 198.

¹⁷ *ibid* 165.

An examination of the condition of the Church of England—still by law a ‘main institution’, in Vallier’s terms, of the *nation* of England (and, with complexity we cannot here consider, the *nation-state* of the United Kingdom) enables a consideration of a milder confessional political context than that for which some Catholic integralists hope.

The relevant meaning of ‘stability’ for the Church of England emerges in O’Donovan’s analysis:

ministerial authority is also political, making judgments on behalf of its members commanding their deference, about a range of matters pertaining to ministry and practice, such as the preparation and appointment of ministers, the definition of doctrine and the prescription of formal liturgies. In that the primary purpose and operation of this political authority, according to the reformers, is to maintain the stability and unity of the visible community of faith under the condition of human sinfulness, the authority is necessarily jurisdictional: designating, judging, and punishing offenses against God’s revealed judgments and the church’s public judgments conforming to them.¹⁸

The argument here is that stability and a proper mildness—are not incompatible with the exercise of jurisdictional authority in a coercive manner, in the form of ‘punitive discipline’, in relation to at least a certain sub-group of Church of England believers, namely ordained ministers. Not only are they not incompatible but indeed they are interdependent. For mildness, as the argument below will show, is not acquiescence in an inordinate (in Vallier’s terms ‘unnatural’¹⁹) pluralism of either doctrine or practice. It implies the existence of sin but frames sin not only within the church’s jurisdictional deployment of coercive force, dependent on an authority which is alien to the gospel; but also, and decisively, within the evangelical essence of the church, in the grace and forgiveness found in Jesus Christ.

What mildness requires is focused here in relation to certain questions about doctrine, discipline, and governance which have shaped the Church of England’s disagreements about marriage in the period 2015–25. One characteristic of this period has been a willingness, among some of the Church of England’s bishops, both to deny that doctrinal change has taken place regarding the nature of marriage and to countenance the relaxation of the discipline required of clergy (and ordinands) in order to open up the possibility of some clergy entering same-sex marriages, in the sense of ‘marriage’ articulated by the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013. This willingness has met obstacles, not least in the form of the legal and the theological advice which was provided by the Church of England Legal Office and by the FAOC, noted earlier.

In this context, Vallier’s consideration of Catholic integralism raises questions about the coercive, punitive disciplining of Church of England clergy as a sub-group among the baptized, as authorized by primary legislation in the United Kingdom parliament. The relevant foundation for coercion is not baptism alone—as with integralism defined by Waldstein and, more precisely, by Vallier—but baptism *and* ordination. Vallier’s argument is that stability is complexly dependent upon the interrelationship of coercion and moral motivation, with reference to the role of fear. Fear has been influential in the Church of England’s life in recent years. This enquiry concludes by reckoning with the place of fear within the

¹⁸ O’Donovan (n 9) 13.

¹⁹ ‘Sinful behavior produces unnatural pluralism; natural pluralism arises from causes that could confuse a saint’. [Vallier (n 5) 166].

Church of England's affective culture. It will further conclude by describing the manner of mildness, regarding the (punitive) discipline of the clergy, which should characterize the Church of England and the confessional state of which it is an established part.

While other churches will be characterized by their own distinctive affective cultures in respect of the exercise of discipline, what is importantly distinct about the Church of England is the way that its discipline is authorized and effected by primary legislation. The modest argument here is that mild, judiciously deployed coercive discipline in the Church of England's life remains a potentially beneficial aspect of the Church of England's vestigial political-legal standing, and constitutes a revealing counterpoint to what some Catholic integralists desire.

Stability and integralism

The twenty-first century proposals from some in the Church of England for an episcopal 'relaxation' or 'disapplication' of discipline in relation to clergy marrying someone of the same sex provide a striking contrast to those who envisage bringing Catholic integralism into practical effect today. If some integralists think it is just that all baptized Catholics under an integralist regime should become subject, by civil law, to special constraints, requirements, and penalties, consider how unjust it would seem to such integralists if those who are ordained as priests should have canon law disappplied.

Vallier doubts the possibility of Catholic integralism being a practical political reality, for a variety of reasons. These include the instability of integralism. Vallier calls the argument from stability the 'heart' of his critical assessment of integralism.²⁰ This very important argument emphasizes that affective culture matters to the practical realization and maintenance of an integralist regime. As noted above, an 'integralist regime is one where the state submits to the church'.²¹ Vallier has in mind the possibility of an integralist order in large scale societies of more than a million people under a thoroughly united dyarchy of state and (Roman Catholic) church. What Vallier means by integralist stability is articulated here:

An integralist regime is stable when order arises from free choices to follow the moral law. Coercive punishments cannot produce moral order on their own. They can create only *modi vivendi* The engine of integralist order is the free, moral action of its citizens. When the church is sovereign, it regenerates its citizens through God's grace, which helps people both see and follow the natural moral law . . . *Moral citizens* form the basis of moral stability.²²

This discussion of stability matters for the discipline of clergy as mediated through the vestiges of integralist thinking which have influenced the political-legal order in which the Church of England stands. The case of the Church of England's standing vis-à-vis state authority is clearly different from what might be hoped for by integralists in, for example, the United States: far more circumscribed, for more embedded in ancient law and custom and far less assertively claimed than in the integralist scenarios imagined and critiqued by Vallier. One of the challenges to stability which Vallier notes concerns pluralism.

²⁰ Vallier (n 5) 167.

²¹ *ibid* 168.

²² *ibid* 169–70. I note that Vallier argues that this kind of stability is impossible to achieve.

The situation in the Church of England indicates how, even where there is a significant, legally secure vestige of integralist thought inflected by the local character of a polity and its history, its practical effectiveness will be conditioned by the wide plurality of beliefs which influences many institutions in twenty-first century western democracies, not least the established Church of England.

In addition to the factor concerning pluralism, to which we will return, what is also importantly common between Catholic integralism and the legal-political standing of the Church of England is the ecology of moral motivation, coercion, and fear. Regarding the integralist order he is considering, Vallier comments

Fear and moral conviction do not always displace one another. Instead, I assume only that coercion degrades moral motivation as coercion becomes more pervasive and severe. This displacement may happen for any number of reasons. One is disproportionate punishment. People may want to stop heresy, but the threat of execution might seem, well, overkill. If citizens resent their regime as unjust, they may disobey it.²³

The threat of execution, though once a feature of the Church of England's life, is not a factor now. What Vallier's analysis means for the Church of England may be considered by examining the theological report and legal advice noted at the outset. These concern how the life of the church is to be *ordered*—theologically, morally, and legally—and address the complex weave of motivations, affections, including fears, which shape the Church's life. Among other matters the legal advice examines the possible routes to enable clergy to enter same-sex civil marriages; or to enable those who have already entered a same-sex civil marriage to proceed in the ordination process. Noting the significant doctrinal barriers which exist to such routes being taken, the advice also considers the responsibilities of bishops.

For example, it considers the suggestion that those wishing to be ordained and who have then entered a same-sex marriage receive a dispensation from the requirements to uphold the doctrine of the Church of England and, by so upholding this doctrine, making their lives a wholesome example to the flock. The legal advice was clear on this point, namely that: "To provide for a power of dispensation to permit the doing of something that was contrary to doctrine would be a novel departure in the canon law of the Church of England."²⁴ In this legal context, the term 'novel' does not carry a positive connotation. Since this is so, the alternative route would depend on individual bishops' decisions with some scope for 'different bishops to adopt different approaches in practice were clergy in their respective dioceses to enter into same sex marriages.'²⁵ If the House of Bishops were to support this localized, discretionary approach, the legal advice warns that a House of Bishops' statement endorsing it would be exposed to the 'possibility of being successfully overturned by a court'.²⁶

The jeopardy here is that those bishops seeking to act in a way which may be judged by a court to be contrary to the Church of England's doctrine will be exposed to judgment. Here the jurisdictional authority of the Church of which O'Donovan spoke is brought into focus. Of course, jurisdictional authority *need* not be deployed punitively or coercively.

²³ *ibid* 175.

²⁴ GS Misc 1432 (n 2) s 35.

²⁵ *ibid* s 38.

²⁶ *ibid* s 42.

One may have law requiring punishment in certain circumstances without there being a need in practice for the execution of that punishment. Indeed, a key reflection from Vallier's interpretation of integralism, albeit applied across a wider scope of people and concerns, is that punitive features of judgment may threaten the stability by which institutions are sustained.

Nonetheless, with this qualification made, one form that the Church of England's jurisdictional authority *may* legitimately take, according to primary legislation in England, is punitive discipline, effected by coercive action. This may quite reasonably be an occasion for fear, drawing relations into that unhappy ecology described by Vallier above. For judgment is not just the moral censure of other Anglicans in England or elsewhere but the judgment of a court, with powers to impose penalties, under the terms of the Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction Measure (EJM) (1963) which concerns 'the jurisdiction on regulating the conduct of a priest, deacon, bishop or archbishop in cases which involve a question of doctrine, ritual or ceremonial.'²⁷

Discipline: formative, reformatory, punitive

To understand this possible eventuality in context, note how FAOC's theological advice presents discipline as 'a holistic way in which communally authorised doctrine becomes communally regulative through a formative, reformatory, and (when necessary) punitive exercise of discipline.'²⁸

The formative aspect of discipline, concerning ordinary spiritual disciplines freely undertaken by a disciple, concerns 'ways in which God graciously elicits a person's efforts to become something they have not yet been, empowered by the Holy Spirit.'²⁹ This is a normal part of the life of churches generally, covered widely in a vast range of literature and so not covered in detail in the report and not the focus of the argument here. As to the reformatory aspect, an 'admonition' to those being consecrated to episcopal office is that they 'exercise discipline to correct'—the wording in the *Book of Common Prayer* (BCP)—or, in *Common Worship*, that they 'use their authority to heal'.³⁰ Reformation requires another to bring correction but with a view to the disciple turning afresh to God in penitence and faith in expectation of restoration. As to the punitive dimension of discipline, the report comments that this may arise in a variety of circumstances such as where 'the disciple refuses to recognise the error. It may be because an attempt at non-punitive correction has failed. It may be because the conduct has been so egregious that punishment is considered necessary to ensure justice for a party that has been harmed.'³¹ Noting that this punitive dimension of discipline is also intended to bring 'help' to those thus disciplined by being a means of reformation, the report emphasizes the wider public context of such punitive discipline by observing also that

such punishment has a public element, with the wider community being informed in some way of this punitive exercise of discipline. This is for two reasons. Firstly, it allows for transparency, ensuring that the one being punished has recourse to review or appeal to ensure

²⁷ Church of England, *Clergy Conduct Measure*.

²⁸ GS Misc 1431 (n 1) s 39. For the language of 'communally authorised and communally regulative' see GS Misc (n 3) s 29.

²⁹ GS Misc 1431 (n 1) s 42.

³⁰ As quoted in GS Misc 1431 (n 1) s 43.

³¹ GS Misc 1431 (n 1) s 44.

such punishment is appropriate. Secondly, in being public, the punishment has the formative aspect of declaring to the community afresh what is good and right.³²

All three kinds of discipline are approved parts of the church's life and bear directly on the church's affective culture. Discipline as formation and reformation contribute to an affective culture in various respects, bringing joy and delight, albeit often through godly sorrow. However, there are additional affective elements which bear upon stability, not least a pronounced role for fear. The reason for fear is closely linked to the penalties which are available as an outcome of punitive discipline: '1. prohibition for life from exercising any of the functions of [an ordained minister's] Orders; 2. limited prohibition for a specific time from exercising any such functions; 3. removal from office; 4. revocation of licence; 5. injunction; 6. rebuke.'³³

Here law directly engages with clergy lives, including in some of the most tender and vulnerable aspects of human identity and in ways which will often have long-lasting consequences. It is in no way a matter to be entered into lightly.

Occasions, as noted, for such punitive discipline will cover a variety of matters but may, touching the questions which prompted the FAOC reports, accompany cases concerning clergy entering same-sex marriages. This might include cases where formative or reformative discipline administered by diocesan bishops is deemed inadequate and the question of punitive discipline is considered. The question of discipline may also arise in cases where certain liturgical resources to pray for those in same-sex unions are used, since they are merely resources 'commended' by bishops and relatively weak since a significant minority dissented from the commendation.³⁴ This matter has not yet been tested in a court and may only be if some further steps are taken to enable the wider use of such resources (for example, in so-called 'standalone services').

Regarding integralism, the crucial point to note is that both the EJM (concerning doctrine, ceremony and ritual) and the Clergy Discipline Measure (CDM) [concerning clergy conduct and to be replaced by the Clergy Conduct Measure (CCM)] are (or will be), through established parliamentary processes via the Ecclesiastical Committee, *primary legislation*. This is a key distinction from the disciplinary processes which are part of almost all churches. Such discipline may be coercive in the straightforward sense that all churches may maintain their life and doctrine by excluding people from the group against the will of those so excluded. The state permits this but the disciplinary action is not authorized or given effect by the law of the state. However, the regulation of discipline in the Church of England is either by primary legislation or, as in the case of the Clergy Disciplines Rules (2005) 'a species of delegated legislation, [which] have the force of law'.³⁵ This crucial distinction between the Church of England and other churches is what makes a critical engagement with integralist thinking viable. While other churches may exercise some kind of coercion in their discipline—such as cancelling the membership, voting rights or eligibility for office of those they choose to exclude—these acts are not specifically backed by

³² *ibid* s 45.

³³ Hill (n 10) 6.54.

³⁴ GS Misc 1432 (n 2) s 14. 'Commendation' by the House of Bishops does not confer any canonical or other legal authority on a form of service; it simply makes it clear to ministers that the House of Bishops is of *the opinion* that its use would be compatible with the requirements of Canon B 5.2 and 5.3. The use of such a form of service remains the personal responsibility of the minister and he or she must be satisfied that the relevant canonical requirements are met.' [GS Misc 1432 (n 2) s 14].

³⁵ Hill (n 10) 6.02.

legislation designed for the purpose, as in the case of the Church of England. Moreover, to reinforce the point noted earlier, this is not some mere accident but proceeds from a settled constitutional principle that the discipline of Church of England clergy is a matter of particular importance to the people of England. Whether or not this vestige of the church's political-legal standing is widely understood or approved by the people of England or their political representatives is significant for the standing of the Church of England. But even without such popular understanding or approval, the legal reality remains.

In practice, matters which come under the EJM may ultimately reach the Court of Ecclesiastical Causes Reserved. These parts of English law and the relevant courts number among what Joan Lockwood O'Donovan calls the 'contemporary political-legal vestiges of English church establishment'. As she argues elsewhere in this journal issue, the theology and social vision which provide the vestiges with a coherent rationale are, in her view, set over against the political philosophy which Vallier espouses.³⁶

To call something a vestige is not to indicate that it is trivially important or inconsequential. The weight given to such matters is indicated by the UK Parliament's Ecclesiastical Committee's reception of oral evidence on the (draft) Clergy Conduct Measure and its decision, in 2025, to return the Measure to General Synod for further consideration (in that case, as to whether the default should be that tribunal hearings under the Measure are held in public or in private).³⁷ The result was that the General Synod, in February 2026, accepted what this parliamentary body recommended. Moreover, the General Synod, also in February 2026, was notified that the Court of Ecclesiastical Causes Reserved, long dormant, was being made ready for action by the appointment of appropriate members of the courts and by the gathering of a group of theologians and liturgists to resource the court's future work.³⁸

Each of these is evidence that clergy discipline is not properly treated merely as a church matter if this is understood to be *opposed* to being treated as a civil matter in accord with the Church of England's canons and measures being part of UK primary legislation.³⁹ In short, there remains an evident, living, and active interplay of church interests and national interests, secured by law. With all this said, the nature of the penalties which may be imposed differs from those which would be possible under an integralist order as described by Vallier. Not only is the scope of discipline solely concerning those who are ordained (not all the baptized) but the way in which discipline is conceived is directly shaped by the theology of the English reformers.

Regarding same-sex marriages entered by the clergy, an important consideration is that the EJM and CDM/CCM (as primary legislation) sit alongside the marriage law of the state

³⁶ Joan Lockwood O'Donovan, 'Vallier's Parochial Theoretical Project: A Reformation Critique and Alternative' (2026) *Oxford Journal of Law and Religion*, this special issue.

³⁷ Ecclesiastical Committee of the House of Lords and House of Commons, 'Corrected Oral Evidence: Clergy Conduct Measure' (June 2025) <https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/16170/pdf/>, accessed April 1 2026.

³⁸ For the amendment to the tribunal hearings, see GS 2311W. For the readying of the court for action, see Conv. Cant. FS (26)2 and York.Conv 26 (04) EJM Panel.

³⁹ 'Church of England measures are laws with the same force and effect as Acts of Parliament, but which relate to the administration and organisation of the Church.' (UK Parliament website, <https://www.parliament.uk/site-information/glossary/church-of-england-measures/>). 'Measures are made by the General Synod. If approved by both Houses of Parliament they receive the Royal Assent and become part of the law of the land, having the same force and effect as Acts of Parliament. They are a form of primary legislation.' (Church of England website, <https://www.churchofengland.org/about/leadership-and-governance/legal-resources/legislation>), accessed April 1 2026.

which, in the Marriage (Same-Sex Couples) Act (2013), articulates how Church of England doctrine and practice is now at variance with the civil law of the land.⁴⁰ Certain disagreements have arisen over this, not least in the disputes about how marriage as holy matrimony (defined by the BCP and canon, especially Canon B30) relates to these changes to extend English marriage law to include same-sex couples. An argument has been mounted that it is possible to demarcate two wholly distinct categories: holy matrimony and ‘civil marriage’, and that this distinction would permit bishops to permit members of the clergy to enter such civil (same-sex) marriages without those bishops contradicting the doctrine of the church (most obviously regarding marriage) or being indicative of a departure from such doctrine; or those clergy living in a manner which falls short of the standards required of them. This argument, while still proposed by some, has become steadily more marginal to debates on account of the Church of England’s teaching that marriage between a man and a woman is a gift of God in creation and thus available to a man and a woman contracting a civil marriage (such as the current Sovereign, King Charles III, and Queen).⁴¹ In short, marriage between a man and a woman is the same gift of God whether the ceremony takes place civilly or according to the rites of the Church of England.

The relevance of the Clergy Discipline Measure 2003 (and draft Clergy Conduct Measure) for considering integralism is the possibility that some Church of England bishops may choose (or may have chosen) to disapply at least elements of the means in primary legislation at its disposal by which it might govern the conduct of the clergy and thereby govern the church according to episcopal vows made at consecration. Those preparing to be consecrated are told: ‘You are to govern Christ’s people in truth, lead them out to proclaim the good news of the kingdom, and prepare them to stand before him when at last he comes in glory.’⁴² The governing duties which fall to bishops are both evangelical and jurisdictional. Moreover, as discussed above, their jurisdictional authority, when disciplinary, may take form in ways which are not punitive. Nonetheless, backed by primary legislation which supports punitive actions (removing priests from their office, for example), their governing duties do include the exercise of such jurisdictional discipline, effecting lawful punishment.

The possible disapplication of discipline among clergy matters for the interrelation of law, doctrine and affective culture. For a long time now, there has been a willingness to accept extensive (but not limitless) pluralism in what clergy in the Church of England say about doctrinal matters (including in public preaching and writing), while formally, and with faithful commitment, retaining a shared doctrine, authorized liturgy and, crucially, agreed standards for the way life is conducted, at least among the ordained, in

⁴⁰ Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013.

⁴¹ For a version of how the argument regarding civil marriage and holy matrimony came to be in circulation see GS 2346 Annex B (especially page 15). For an extract of the legal advice which rehearsed this possible line of argument (without endorsing it as legally or theologically safe), see GS 2055 Annex 1 s 10-13 especially s 13 (c) and (d). For discussion, see Faith and Order Commission, *Theological Reflections Responding to Queries from the General Synod and House of Bishops in Relation to Living in Love and Faith*, GS Misc 1406, 2024, 1; s 275, 280. Here the argument that civil marriage is something wholly other than holy matrimony is treated with well-justified scepticism. Such a view was, for some time, discussed in the Church of England (especially by her bishops) as providing a possible way to endorse same-sex marriage while not indicating a departure from the church’s doctrine regarding marriage found in Canon B30. That view has been (rightly) judged to be wholly implausible. More fundamentally it has not been shown to be warranted by Scripture.

⁴² ‘The Ordination and Consecration of a Bishop’ in Archbishops’ Council, *Common Worship: New Patterns for Worship for the Church of England* (Church House Publishing 2002).

correspondence to doctrine and liturgy. But the proposal for the disapplication of discipline is in seeming tension with this arrangement. The November 2025 legal advice notes the possibility that bishops may seek to relax discipline in respect of same-sex marriage for ordinands and clergy. However, the advice notes that: ‘A bishop cannot ... lawfully decide that he or she will simply dispense clergy from compliance with their canonical obligations’.⁴³ It continues to say that what ‘it plainly is not lawfully open to a bishop to do is to declare that no clergy in his or her diocese will face discipline if they enter into a same sex marriage.’⁴⁴ On this view, relaxation could not conceivably be a universal permission although it could conceivably be attempted on case-by-case basis, dependent on individual diocesans’ opinions and consciences; and in relation to individual members of the clergy and their circumstances. On this point, FAOC, referring to its prior definition of doctrine as ‘true knowledge about God that is communally authorised by warrant in the Holy Scriptures and is, therefore, communally regulative’,⁴⁵ observes that the ‘individual, local relaxation of discipline by nature of its *individual* character is in some tension with that idea.’⁴⁶ The argument is carried through the report, concluding with the observation that ‘this path carries the greatest risk for discipline to depart from doctrine, potentially resulting in legal challenges and increased confusion over such matters.’⁴⁷

The arrival of the church’s discussion and debate at the frontier of legal action changes the affective context in which that discussion and debate continue. That frontier raises sharply how the discipline of the Church of England should be understood in the light of the gospel it seeks to ‘proclaim afresh in each generation’.⁴⁸ As we will see in the next section, this may be framed as a question about the interrelation of the evangelical essence of the Church of England and its jurisdictional functions, which include, but are not limited to, punitive discipline. Moreover, it interlocks with an important question regarding pluralism, hinted at earlier. The distinction Vallier draws between ‘natural’ and ‘unnatural’ pluralism is relevant:

If humans lack grace, we will exhibit two kinds of pluralism—unnatural and natural. Unnatural pluralism derives from sinful behavior, whereas natural pluralism derives from factors that could confuse a sinless person. God has not revealed the entire moral law to everyone; even virtuous people may adopt false moral beliefs.⁴⁹

In terms of clergy discipline, the question concerns the ways that unnatural pluralism is met by legal action and how this in turn bears on the affective culture of the Church of England in respect of how enduring moral commitment or ‘motivation’ is sustained in the face of fear of punishment.

⁴³ GS Misc 1432 (n 2) s 39.

⁴⁴ *ibid* s 41.

⁴⁵ GS Misc 1429 (n 1) s 146.

⁴⁶ GS Misc 1431 (n 2) s 84.

⁴⁷ *ibid* s 197.

⁴⁸ See Faith and Order Commission, *To Proclaim Afresh: Declaration and Oaths for Church of England Ministers* (Church House Publishing 2022).

⁴⁹ Vallier (n 5) 175.

Gospel, fear, and discipline

Discussion of discipline in the Church of England's current condition invites reflection on its history and theology. How the Church of England is to inhabit what O'Donovan calls 'contemporary political-legal vestiges of English church establishment' in the twenty-first century should be informed by the complex ecology of grace, coercion, fear and moral order to which Vallier signals, and which has been tested on multiple occasions throughout its history of establishment and often in terms of its historic formularies (the Book of Common Prayer, Thirty-Nine Articles and Ordinal).

O'Donovan offers astute guidance to sixteenth century sources which provide relevant insight what this ecology might entail practically. A key conclusion of her analysis is that

... theologians cannot adequately conceive the purpose and parameters of coercive jurisdiction without engaging with Christ's revelation of the created (natural) communicative goods, relationships, and practices of human society and their perfecting renewal through his resurrection victory over sin and death witnessed by the communicative relationships and practices of the post-resurrection community of faith.⁵⁰

In short, to sever an understanding of the purpose and limits of jurisdictional authority, exercised in coercive discipline, from the social theory of created and renewed human life which emerges from the gospel is a serious theological and ecclesiological mistake. It is serious because a correct understanding of the interrelation of the jurisdictional and the evangelical is vital to the affective culture of the Church of England.⁵¹ To describe the overall contrast between the different modes of the Church of England's public communication, O'Donovan first recalls

Cranmer's prophetic lines of attack on papal traditions of public worship, personal and collective piety, discipline and jurisdiction judged to be idolatrous, superstitious, hypocritical, and usurping of secular authority.⁵²

By contrast

On the prevailing Anglican view, expressed in the Articles, so far as the external church needs public judgment, it is to be rendered by or under the supreme lay governor. When, therefore, English bishops issue binding public judgments in whatever ecclesiastical sphere—doctrinal, liturgical, administrative, or (more narrowly) disciplinary—they directly act as the monarch's ministers, whereas when they preach and celebrate the sacraments, they directly act as Christ's ministers.⁵³

⁵⁰ O'Donovan (n 9) 252.

⁵¹ In passing, I note that this way of construing things provides a theological argument, rooted in Scripture, against the symmetry argument which Vallier also criticizes [see Vallier (n 5) 92–116]. It does so by defending a limited but vital role for secular government, via the Church's supreme governor, in the punitive discipline of members of the church, most especially—for present purposes in the twenty-first century—both those who are ordained and those who are also consecrated as bishops or archbishops. But it deliberately places that limited role as in a different position in the life of church and state, compared to the announcement of the gospel.

⁵² O'Donovan (n 9) 171.

⁵³ *ibid* 226.

Two interlaced lessons may be drawn here. First, while that narrow work of exercising disciplinary judgment, which *follows from* other binding public judgments which cover the wide scope of doctrine, liturgy and administration, taking form in primary legislation, remains part of the work of the bishops of the church, as ministers of the monarch, the church's essence remains distinct from this necessary jurisdictional task. Preaching the word of God, alongside celebration of baptism and holy communion, are not mediated through any other person than Christ and are in no way acts of jurisdiction of any sort.

Second, as a complement, the work of temporal government, enlisted in support of the ministry of the Church to authorize certain delimited tasks and apply certain temporal penalties where necessary, provides a check on the improper spread of the coercive, punitive discipline of the bishops' jurisdictional authority into an understanding of church's essence.⁵⁴ She continues:

In that the church's proclamation is supported by a legal framework established and enforced by human government, the church is institutionally part of the body politic, yet not of its juridical essence. Conversely, in that the work of human government, defining the body politic, is itself defined and empowered by the church's proclamation, human judgment is a service within the church, but not of its evangelical essence.⁵⁵

Returning to the conversation between integralism and Anglican thought and practice from which we set out, it is notable here that the exercise of jurisdictional authority is 'a service within the church', thus speaking an Anglican word about how the dyarchy of church and state may together be obedient to the gospel without requiring a simple subordination of state to church.

These claims may be best understood by grasping the various ways in which the church has a public vocation. It is not that this public vocation is exhausted by the exercise of jurisdictional authority in its various forms. Rather, there is a subtle relationship between the church's proclamatory mission and what O'Donovan calls 'human judgment', which includes the provisions for clergy discipline:

the visible church, in its multiple and diverse institutional arrangements, has the task of sustaining a theological and practical balance in which the alien public practices and authority of jurisdiction are peripheral to its essential public evangelical practices and authority.⁵⁶

Here we see a carefully delineated sense in which the evangelical is the decisive public framing of human life which gives a circumscribed but necessary logic to its jurisdictional authority, which includes the punitive and coercive exercises of that authority. However, this delineation does not require the evangelical and the jurisdictional being hermetically sealed off from each other. Further subtlety follows in relation to the Lenten liturgies of commination, regarding which O'Donovan notes that, while previously penitential rites in

⁵⁴ For a critical engagement with O'Donovan's defence of this way of construing the church's essence, see Enoch Kuo, 'In Defense of Cartwright: The Kingly Office of Christ and the Visibility of the Church' (2026) 39 *Studies in Christian Ethics* 108–21.

⁵⁵ O'Donovan (n 9) 226; see also 250.

⁵⁶ O'Donovan (n 9) 251.

the patristic practice unambiguously blended the pastoral and the juridical, the Tudor liturgy's general recitation of biblical threats and exhortations, combined with penitential prayer, is wholly pastoral. Yet both instances recognize the possible, if not inevitable, juridical dimension of certain pastoral tasks of the church's apostolic ministries. These are forms of communicating God's saving Word, vehicles for nurturing faith and repentance, but in a paternal and disciplinary mode, *so that they may border on, or overlap with*, properly judicial action.⁵⁷

We recall here Vallier's earlier analysis of the conditions for stability, namely that 'Fear and moral conviction do not always displace one another.' This allows for this peripheral role for jurisdictional authority, when exercised as punitive discipline, in the church which is in some overlap with its pastoral and proclamatory role. Vallier's caution that 'coercion degrades moral motivation as coercion becomes more pervasive and severe'⁵⁸ is nonetheless recognized through the institutional, theological embedding of a strong distinction between the evangelical and the jurisdictional.

For the purposes of this discussion, the circumstances in which bordering or overlapping may occur can be identified precisely in relation to the role of bishops in cases of ordinands in a same-sex marriage or clergy considering whether to enter a same-sex marriage. In these circumstances, the evangelical and the jurisdictional functions are in complex interplay within the same person holding the office of a bishop. What is vital for a theological understanding of the current challenges of the Church of England and for the maintenance of an affective culture which will support stability is that the

primarily spiritual aims and effects of these disciplinary tasks of preaching and the manner in which they are conducted distance them from the logic of social condemnation and vindication, of coercive restraint and correction of evil-doing, characteristic of public judgment.⁵⁹

The ministry of preaching is disciplinary in the first and, at times, the second senses of discipline which FAOC identified—formative and reformative—but not the third, which depends on the punitive and temporal authority held from the lay monarch. This distinction sustains a decisive buffer against perceiving the life of the church as essentially coercive. And yet such coercive restraint and correction which go beyond reformative discipline is a regrettably necessary (though, in eschatological perspective, only temporary) feature of the church's life, and so will have consequences for affective culture:

in commanding coercively, with threat of communal sanction, the church may elicit merely "outward" obedience from its members by appealing to their baser, self-protective fear of social condemnation and other punishment.⁶⁰

The discomfiting outcome is that fear is not of the essence of the church but that the alien authority of secular judgment, which engenders fear, remains vital to the church's proper jurisdictional tasks which in turn are of service to its evangelical essence and which

⁵⁷ *ibid* 238, italics added.

⁵⁸ Vallier (n 5) 175.

⁵⁹ O'Donovan (n 9) 238.

⁶⁰ *ibid* 250.

together contribute to stability.⁶¹ In short, discipline is generally necessary for churches. For the Church of England, the theological thinking of the English reformers established that an element of this discipline is supported by primary legislation. It could have been otherwise; and it could yet be otherwise. However, this is how it is—justified in part by theological reasoning—and therefore the role of jurisdictional authority, held from the lay monarch and secured by primary legislation, remains an intentional (not an accidental) aspect of the Church of England.

This account of some early Anglican thinking holds significant interest for the conversation about integralism and ecclesial affective culture. In O'Donovan's account, the Church of England in its public proclamation and celebration still stands over against 'the trajectory of late-medieval Roman ecclesiology toward close integration of the jurisdictional and the sacramental'.⁶² Thus it provides a way of publicly confessing faith in the authority of the gospel over both church and state. The possibility of jurisdictionally authorized punitive discipline remains a part of public jurisdictional vocation of the Church of England but not of its public evangelical essence.

In both the evangelical and the jurisdictional, 'the church's authority is public by virtue of *commanding* the beliefs, understandings, affections, and actions of its members'.⁶³ That this full sweep of human life may be commanded in such a way as to maintain stability will be aided by the judicious exercise of both the evangelical and jurisdictional modes. Stability, in a sense which approximates Vallier's—attentive to the necessity of coercion but conscious of its potentially deleterious effects—may be helped by both modes of governance. The judicious deployment of the different modes of discipline is then the key to shaping the affective culture: the commanding of an affection of joy by means of preaching the word and celebrating the sacraments is distinct from but not inimical to the commanding of an affection of fear in the case of punitive, coercive discipline. However, to allow the affection of fear to become overriding is likely to lead to a culture not of helping but of hurting—to the kind of decline of motivation which Vallier's analysis describes, and which the Book of Common Prayer warns against.⁶⁴ With this understanding of evangelical and jurisdictional elements to the Church of England's public vocation and affective culture in mind, we turn to consider an important moment in the history of integralism, as narrated by Vallier that forms an illuminating interconnection between English church history and integralism, bearing on some practical considerations. The following historical reflection thus provides a worked example of the salience of the distinction between evangelical and jurisdictional in practice.

Historical reflection

The preceding theological discussion, focussed on an exegesis of sixteenth century English reformers, provides context for certain late seventeenth century and early eighteenth-century Anglican and, especially, Oxonian disputes, especially the famous debates between

⁶¹ Underlying this affective culture, we may recall the words of the apostle Paul: 'For rulers are not a terror to good conduct but too bad. Do you wish to have no fear of the authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive its approval, for it is God's agent for your good. But if you do what is wrong, you should be afraid, for the authority does not bear the sword in vain! It is the agent of God to execute wrath on the wrongdoer.' (Romans 13:3–4, NRSV).

⁶² O'Donovan (n 9) 229.

⁶³ *ibid* 250.

⁶⁴ GS Misc 1431 (n 1) s 24. See also below.

John Locke and his correspondent Jonas Proast. These disputes offer vantage points from which to consider both how English church life developed in the century after the sources Joan Lockwood O'Donovan considers; and, in due course, the twenty-first century affective culture of the Church of England.

Vallier notes that integralists have characteristically 'regulated communication about dangerous ideas and controlled religious minorities to protect Christians from spiritual harm'.⁶⁵ This observation captures something of the late seventeenth century debates between latitudinarianism and tolerance on the one hand and coercion in matters of belief on the other, on which Vallier briefly touches.⁶⁶ Dissent within and beyond the Church of England represents an interesting context for considering the regulated communication Vallier notes. Historically, dissent has represented a major existential threat: the possibility of governments being brought down; or of doctrinal dispute becoming a *casus belli*. The wider context for Jonas Proast is the nonjuring schism—the refusal by some to swear an oath of allegiance to William and Mary on account of the binding oath they had sworn to James II.

Recalling the situation of the twenty-first century Church of England—much reduced in the eyes of the English people, far less consequential in international affairs—the dangers of dissent remain real and bear on both the evangelical and the jurisdictional work of bishops. Moreover, since it remains a 'main institution', in Vallier's sense, of English (and to a more limited extent British) national life, the peace of the Church of England is not inconsequential for the constitution and everyday life of the people of England, including both those of other faiths and the many non-Anglican Christians who are in some form of ecumenical partnership with it.⁶⁷

With this in mind, let us place Jonas Proast, John Locke's long-running critic, in context. The late seventeenth century East Anglian Dutch Calvinist, Jonas Proost (1572–1668), a preacher, was concerned to see his son, an able Oxford scholar, being drawn not to the low church, Puritan cause he espoused but to the cause of the high Tories of Oxford in that last quarter of the seventeenth century. That son, Jonas Proast (1642–1710) was a somewhat troubled churchman who twisted and turned with the great events of his day. Vallier wisely notes that 'playing with kings is playing with fire' when it comes to integralism.⁶⁸ Indeed, it was a time of ferment in English and Scottish life, especially surrounding the kind of national religion which will emerge from the reigns of Charles II and James II.

Jonas Proast (the son of the puritan preacher) flitted amidst these late seventeenth century ecclesio-political debates, dallying with the nonjuring cause but determining, prudently for career purposes and perhaps even conscientiously, to take the oath to William and Mary. Alongside Proast, various characters, neatly illustrative of Vallier's concerns about stability and moral motivation in integralism, appear on the Oxford scene at this time: Warden Finch, a signally underqualified high Tory Anglican installed awkwardly at All Souls College, appointed by James II, but much more comfortably installed in the pubs of Oxford's High Street; the wonderfully named Dr Plot, the Catholic party's candidate for warden whom the fellows of All Souls rejected; and the fellows of Magdalen College who refused to accept James II's preferred President, and so suffered, under James' jurisdiction, the penalty in 1687 of being deprived—by force—of their fellowships but who were then,

⁶⁵ Vallier (n 5) 169.

⁶⁶ *ibid* 90.

⁶⁷ For relevant discussion, see Joshua Hordern and Graham Tomlin (eds), *A Voice in the Wilderness? Why Should We Listen to the Church of England?* (SCM Press 2026).

⁶⁸ Vallier (n 5) 185.

following national outrage, reinstated the next year, with that reinstatement still commemorated vigorously by the current Fellows every twenty-fifth of October.

It is in this unsettled scene that Jonas Proast was operating—exposed to the coercive authority of Kings, Archbishops, and bishops. He gains a chaplaincy, loses a chaplaincy, is denied justice, is reinstated under William and Mary but is still denied financial recompense. Far from the differently turbulent life of Colchester Dutch Calvinists who in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries are constantly seeking help from friends in Parliament to preserve their religious practice, Proast—the Anglican—is still tossed around by the University, ecclesial and national politics of his day. The East Anglian (and London) Dutch Calvinists, with which Proast's father Proost is associated, suffer under, amidst other things, the religious coercion of some parts of the Anglican establishment which Proast joins but lacks the established status upon which even a deposed chaplain of All Souls College could depend.⁶⁹

This brief review of Anglican manoeuvring enables further observation of the points of principle at stake which bear upon the concerns with integralism which Vallier identifies.⁷⁰ He observes '(1) that moderate coercion produces too little stability to overcome pluralism, and (2) that high coercion undermines moral motivation, which worsens the effects of coercion.'⁷¹

These concerns are evident in the contest between Proast and Locke, with Proast's letters against Locke provoking Locke's second, third and unfinished fourth letters on toleration, which the eminent thinker Jeremy Waldron perhaps imprudently describes as 'boring and inordinately repetitive.'⁷² Mark Goldie offers this summary:

The debate concerned the efficacy of coercion on behalf of 'true religion'. Proast argued astutely, drawing upon St Augustine's arguments against the Donatists. He conceded that the mind cannot directly be forced to assent to a proposition, but held that penal laws can break the weight of intellectual prepossession. Thus coercion is indirectly efficacious in altering people's disposition to search for truth, and consequently the godly magistrate should use force.⁷³

⁶⁹ For these details concerning Jonas Proost and Jonas Proast, see Richard Vernon, 'Locke's Antagonist: Jonas Proast' (1993) 24 *The Locke Newsletter* 95–106. See also Mark Goldie, 'John Locke, Jonas Proast and Religious Toleration 1688–1692' in John Walsh, Colin Haydon, and Stephen Taylor (eds), *The Church of England c. 1689–c. 1833: From Toleration to Tractarianism* (Cambridge University Press 1993) 145–6.

⁷⁰ This paper does not claim sufficient historical (or mathematical) expertise to assess where late seventeenth century England could be plotted in Vallier's figure 5.1 [Vallier (n 5) 179]. However, Proast's life and the life of late seventeenth century England hardly looks stable, and Warden Finch does not provide strong evidence of a well-formed moral motivation.

⁷¹ Vallier (n 5) 178.

⁷² Jeremy Waldron, 'Locke, Toleration and the Rationality of Persecution' in S. Mendus (ed), *Justifying Toleration: Conceptual and Historical Perspectives* (Cambridge University Press 1988) 63. For a critique of Waldron's assessment, see Reid Mortensen, 'Specious Delusions: John Locke, Knowledge and Religious Toleration' (2014) 33 *University of Queensland Law Journal* 335–55.

⁷³ Mark Goldie, 'Jonas Proast' c.1642–1710, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press 2006). Goldie comments on the party to which Proast belonged: 'In politics they inclined to absolutism, though protective of the Church. In ecclesiology, they remained imbued with a militant desire to destroy the Dissenters. Their time of triumph was the period 1681–5, when they set about achieving a purified Anglican and Tory polity, and when an unprecedentedly savage onslaught upon the Dissenters was undertaken.' [Goldie (n 69) 147].

John William Tate is critical of Waldron and Goldie, observing—against their view—that Locke in fact yields to Proast a limited concession on the point that coercion (deploying jurisdictional force in O’Donovan’s sense) may alter people’s sincere beliefs, though balances this with various caveats concerning the many harms which come to people by that mode of persuasion.⁷⁴ Drawing on the pastoral counsel of Bishop Burnet, Locke, in his third letter, observes of Proast’s Church, how ministers, ‘not over-busying themselves in the care of souls, find it for their ease, that the magistrate’s coercive power should supply their want of pastoral care’. Goldie notes how Locke denounced Proast’s ‘itching of your fingers to be handling the rod’ and emphasized instead Burnet’s reflections on the duty of the gentle shepherd.⁷⁵ Goldie further observes that ‘Proast claimed that Anglican laws were intended as a gentle chastisement to assist persuasion and catechesis. They did not extend to destruction of life or limb, they were edificatory, a schoolmasterly discipline to encourage Dissenters to think again.’⁷⁶ Evaluating Locke, Jeremy Waldron’s argument is that, in the end, Locke fails to answer Proast’s claim in favour of moderate coercion (especially of dissenters). Waldron’s view continues to have significant force in Locke scholarship, although has come under significant criticism.⁷⁷

Further navigation of the disputes over the interpretation of the Proast-Locke correspondence is not necessary for present purposes. Whatever the judgment on who has the better of the dispute between them, the interchange raises matters which bring our discussion of twenty-first century concerns to a sharp point. In particular, the debate on the properly jurisdictional and evangelical nature of Anglican discipline finds echoes in the FAOC report’s analysis of discipline. The emphasis there falls repeatedly upon the promise episcopal candidates are asked if they will make at consecration, namely to

maintain and set forward (as much as shall lie in you) quietness, peace, and love among all men; and such as be unquiet, disobedient and criminous within your Diocese, correct and punish, according to such authority as ye have by God’s Word, and as to you shall be committed by the Ordinance of this Realm?⁷⁸

The prayer prior to consecration includes the hope that those consecrated will ‘use the authority given him, not to destruction, but to salvation; not to hurt, but to help.’ (BCP)⁷⁹ Common Worship, without altering the thought, articulates how bishops ‘are to be merciful, but with firmness; to minister discipline, but with compassion.’⁸⁰ These promises, cumulatively, cover both restorative and punitive discipline. The final part of the discussion

⁷⁴ John Tate, *Liberty, Toleration and Equality: John Locke, Jonas Proast and the Letters Concerning Toleration* (Routledge 2016) 134fn33.

⁷⁵ Goldie (n 69) 166; for references to John Locke, *Third Letter for Toleration* (1692), see Goldie (n 69) 166fn79.

⁷⁶ Goldie (n 69) 168; Locke, ‘wanted to show that Anglican persecution was but a branch and remnant of popery ... Locke’s Third Letter ... was Locke’s most thorough assault on the Restoration hegemony of the High Churchmen, who had preferred a regime of violence on behalf of inessential dogmas rather than a pastoral commitment to Christian unity and holy living.’ (170) Goldie describes Locke as Archbishop Tillotson’s servant (145). As has recently been argued, this may over-define Locke’s context in terms of his position in relation to the Anglican elite [Tate (n 74) 147].

⁷⁷ Tate (n 74) 110–9.

⁷⁸ Church of England, ‘The Form of Ordaining or Consecrating of an Archbishop or Bishop’, *The Book of Common Prayer*.

⁷⁹ GS Misc 1431 (n 1) s 24.

⁸⁰ Archbishops’ Council *Common Worship* (n 42).

here considers what affective culture the church should seek to preserve or develop in relation to the exercise of punitive discipline, as authorized by ecclesiastical law.

On the affective culture of the hurch of England

Vallier discusses the effects of fear on public life, believing them to have broadly deleterious impacts. He cites, in passing, the work of legal philosopher Martha Nussbaum.⁸¹ In her book on the subject, she observes how, in a democracy, ‘laws can’t be enacted, or sustained, without the hearts and minds of people. In a monarchy, that is not the case, and all the monarch needs is enough fear to produce obedience.’⁸²

For the Church of England today, it remains the case that the lay monarch enables the exercise of jurisdictional authority, including in its coercive and punitive forms, in the life of the Church although not in the sense of absolute, non-democratic monarchy which Nussbaum is critiquing. Nonetheless, although it is only vestiges of integralist thinking in the political legal order which remain, it is still the monarch who, for example, on the advice of the prime minister, appoints bishops to ecclesiastical courts. With this continuity in mind, it is tempting to plot the politics of the Church of England in the twenty-first century in relation to some of the characters and movements evident in the late seventeenth century. Jonas Proast’s way of life might encourage us to see compromise and the concerted effort to salvage one’s own position and status as a model of successful Christian participation in public life. But surely this is not the wise lesson to draw or, indeed, the wise way to draw lessons. Instead, it would be more edifying to err on the side of the judicious practice of the early Anglican divines such as Whitgift who

stressed that a community of faith and repentance has no place for its members’ probing and exposing the *hidden* sins of one another, rather than confining their probing and exposing to their own sins.⁸³

So when we think through the English public theology of the sixteenth century and the seventeenth century debates which we have reviewed in relation to Church of England discipline and its relation to Catholic integralism, it is at the level of theological ethics, rather than speculative critique of individuals, that we should conclude. Richard Vernon’s reflection provides a bridge from the episodes which surrounded Proast and Locke to the present:

... although we can say quite confidently that Proast won his fight with Leopold Finch, it is a much harder matter to say who won the fight with John Locke, a fight over the relative priority of thinking and of belonging, still waged today under different names.⁸⁴

Focussing then on the ‘fights’ of the period 2015–25, how thinking and belonging—one might say ‘doctrine’ and ‘inclusion’—should interrelate is of great interest for how the affective culture of the Church of England is formed and what upshot follows for law, not

⁸¹ Vallier (n 5) 179.

⁸² Martha Nussbaum, *The Monarchy of Fear: A Philosopher Looks at Our Political Crisis* (Oxford University Press 2018) 9.

⁸³ O’Donovan (n 9) 246 (italics added); on Whitgift, cf. also 247 and Kuo (n 54).

⁸⁴ Vernon (n 69) 106.

least from what has emerged about the interplay between evangelical affection and jurisdictional authority. Taking inspiration from O'Donovan's supple retrieval of the sixteenth century conception of the 'public' ministry of the Church, consider Edmund Burke's saying that 'public affections, combined with manners, are required sometimes as supplements, sometimes as correctives, always as aids to law'.⁸⁵ Recalling also Locke's warning about coercive discipline displacing pastoral care, and O'Donovan's distinction between the evangelical essence of the Church and the borderland of ecclesial life in which jurisdictional authority is enlisted, we will now consider how an ecclesial affective culture should be marked.

A fitting way to do this is by considering the fruit of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Church, especially as it bears on questions of law and on what makes for a mild form of establishment:

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.⁸⁶

Numerous Anglican studies of this fruit could hold our attention. An appropriate representative author who pays particular attention to affections is William Perkins (1558—1602).⁸⁷ Working one generation beyond the principal texts in O'Donovan's study of the English reformers, Perkins wrote concerning these verses, that the church is 'the garden of God.' Members of the church are as wild branches, grafted into Christ and their 'affections shall be fruits of the Spirit.'⁸⁸

The chief point here is that while, as discussed, law—accompanied, in its punitive exercise, by fear—may protect the church in which the fruit of the Spirit may grow, no fruit of the Spirit, no essential fruit of the garden of God, is fear. Thus we see, at an affective level, a pattern which is apt to O'Donovan's distinction between the evangelical and the jurisdictional. In other words, all fruit of the Spirit will slow down and perhaps ward off entirely a recourse to law or to the exercise of law in its strictest application. But this is not to say that they are antithetical to a recourse to law or to its strict exercise, in the sense that Joan Lockwood O'Donovan explained. The fruit of the Spirit do not exclude the proper role of fear (concerning punitive discipline) in the borderland of the life of the church. But by the

⁸⁵ Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (OUP 1999) 77–8.

⁸⁶ Galatians 5:21–2.

⁸⁷ A brief introduction to Perkins' life and work may be found in Oliver O'Donovan and Joan Lockwood O'Donovan, *From Irenaeus to Grotius* (Eerdmans 1999) 771–2. Perkins is notable especially for his account of equity, summarized by the O'Donovans as 'as a humble moderation in passing judgment, such as befits those who know their own sinfulness and dependence on the mercy of God.' (772) As to our present concerns, Perkins focusses on the administration of law and execution of judgment, making the case for mitigation, encouraging his readers not to 'press not justice too far, nor urge it too extremely in all cases, lest sometimes you make the name of justice a cover for cruelty.' (774) However, he qualifies this caution by observing 'that there must be no mitigation but honest, profitable, and convenient. If any man ask: When is it so? I answer: in three cases. First, when the mitigation stands with the law of nature. Second, when it agreeth with the moral law or any part of the written word [of Scripture]. Third, when an inferior law is overruled or countermanded by a higher law. In these three cases the moderation of men's laws, and the mitigation of the punishment due by the extremity of these laws, is honest and good, and may and ought to be practised. But if it be contrary, and not warranted by some of these, then that mitigation is flat injustice and a manifest wrong unto the law.' (774)

⁸⁸ William Perkins, *A Commentarie Or Exposition, Upon the Five First Chapters of the Epistle to the Galatians: Penned by Mr. W. Perkins. Now Published for the Benefit of the Church, and Continued with a Supplement Upon the Sixt Chapter, by Rafe Cudworth* (John Legat 1604) 443.

Spirit sustaining good fruit, fear is maintained precisely at the very margins of the garden which is the church.

What it is to be ‘mild’ in the use of the law emerges cumulatively from a consideration of the fruit of the Spirit. Though all the fruit could profitably be studied to develop this line of thought, we will consider especially patience, gentleness, peace and love.

Mildness and doctrinal pluralism

We will recall that Vallier pondered the stability of a confessional state which was milder than that dreamed of by Catholic integralists. As regards mildness, Joan Lockwood O’Donovan’s caution about the nature of the public should be borne in mind:

contemporary theologians must assert more robustly than did official Tudor theology the *intrinsically public character* of the church’s evangelical practices and ministries. For recognition of the church’s evangelical authority is instrumental to the renewal of individual and collective moral agency and action wrought by faith in Christ, on which truly good practice in every institutional and vocational sphere of social endeavor depends.⁸⁹

Here O’Donovan argues that the church’s evangelical ministry, definitive of its public character, is vital to personal and social renewal and so to what Vallier has in view when he thinks of stability.

The Church of England has moderated its practice of exercising punitive discipline on its non-ordained members (save for licensed lay ministers), let alone Christian dissenters from Anglican faith and order or members of other religions or those with no faith. Integralists, on Vallier’s account, agree with this non-coercive attitude towards non-Christians: for, as Vallier notes, ‘Integralist regimes protect the *religious* [my emphasis] liberties of their unbaptised citizens. If they coerce the unbaptised, they order society, but poorly.’⁹⁰ But they would disagree with the Church of England’s non-coercive attitude towards non-ordained members and indeed towards those who are baptized but no longer practising the faith. The Church of England’s way of being a national church—available to all, welcoming to all but neither desiring nor being in any position to coerce non-office holders—is displayed very clearly at this point. Nonetheless, the evangelical ministry of the Church of England emphatically encourages an ambition to see ‘the renewal of individual and collective moral agency and action wrought by faith in Christ’⁹¹ among those who are not yet Christian, including those of other faiths. Such a ministry will induct people into the life of formative discipline, that primary mode of discipline in accord with this evangelical ministry.

Mildness is particularly important for the reformative and (where necessary) punitive aspects of discipline, with the latter especially salient for ordained ministers. Elaborating on O’Donovan’s remarks, we can understand the life of the church as intended to be a kind of ‘moral order’ defined by faith; a corporate form of participation in *the* moral order which exists independently of the church, which was established by God in creation, and which

⁸⁹ O’Donovan (n 9) 252.

⁹⁰ Vallier (n 5) 272.

⁹¹ O’Donovan (n 9) 252.

was fulfilled in Christ's coming, life, death, resurrection, ascension, and continued intercession which will culminate, in due course, in Christ's return.⁹²

Such a moral order is hospitable to a kind of Christologically defined stability which offers grace within the wider life of the nation in every social endeavour. For this reason, it has been thought necessary that the Church of England hold its ministers to a specific, defined standard in their way of life, and exercise coercive discipline among its clergy with punishments for infractions—for example (as noted above), through depriving them of their living, denying them permission to officiate as a minister or to hold an office or, in some cases, to move to a new post.

Taking Vallier's terms, the dispute which has been the focus of this paper concerns whether an intention to relax discipline involves recognition of natural pluralism (in doctrine and thus, by association, in conduct) which is best managed without the deployment of punitive discipline which will threaten stability; or whether this is, in Vallier's terms, an 'unnatural pluralism' (or 'inordinate pluralism'), which is an inherently destabilizing factor that may require the deployment of jurisdictional authority in its disciplinary modes for the sake of that part of the Catholic Church which is the Church of England.⁹³ Concerning the proposed differentiated forms of episcopal response to clergy use of the Prayers of Love and Faith, FAOC commented on the risk that 'pastoral discretion becomes doctrinal pluralism, without the theological safeguards of collective discernment'.⁹⁴

Such a warning gives an indication of where inordinate pluralism lies, the risks which attach to it and where the mind of the Church ought to remain settled. In short, it ought not to subside into an acquiescence in doctrinal pluralism on account of a well-meaning but inordinate idea of pastoral care. It is clear from both theological reflection and legal advice that there are two opposed ideas of marriage which cannot yield a single order within the life of the Church of England, nor, as a corollary, a single discipline for its ministers. Discipline must be ordered by some definite account of sexual ethics, not least because of the vulnerability to which uncertainty on this matter exposes the church. The upshot is that, rather than have two contradictory doctrines, the way forward is to ensure that discipline is ordered in relation to doctrine; in particular, in the inheritance of faith to which all ministers declare loyalty, discipline should be ordered to the doctrine concerning marriage articulated in Canon B30 and in the Form for Solemnization of Matrimony contained in the Book of Common Prayer, as warranted by Scripture.

In praise of patience and gentleness

However, amidst the fraught exegetical, doctrinal, legal and pastoral context which surrounds such matters, consider the fruit of the Spirit. As to patience, reflecting on the chief published output of the *Living in Love and Faith* process, Oliver O'Donovan wrote:

⁹² See Oliver O'Donovan, *Resurrection and Moral Order: An Outline for Evangelical Ethics* (Apollos 1994) for this idea developed in detail.

⁹³ Disagreement concerns whether the pluralism concerning the relevant questions of sexual ethics is 'natural' or 'unnatural', in Vallier's senses. For an understanding of disagreement in the life of the Church, see Faith and Order Commission, *Communion and Disagreement* (2016), GS Misc 1139.

⁹⁴ GS Misc 1430 (n 3) s 60; Similarly, FAOC asks 'what level of communal authorisation is required to engender confidence that ministerial discretion in use of the PLF will not create doctrinal plurality?' (s 90).

The commission has worked with admirable patience. The church is being asked to learn new skills of mutual patience. It would be a tragedy if the whole attempt foundered on impatience in the House of Bishops.⁹⁵

Whether this advice has been appropriately heeded is a matter which lies beyond the scope of this article, although communication from the House of Bishops may be instructively read in light of this caution.⁹⁶

As to our present focus, patience in respect of a recourse to law includes the willingness to endure provocation. Thinking of patience in terms of ‘longsuffering’, another possible translation of the Greek term, presses this point. It is fittingly preceded by ‘peace’, in pursuit of which bishops are also consecrated. Perkins writes that ‘peace is an excellent fruit but it takes very hardly in these parts. For our manner is, *a word and a blow: a word and a stab: a word and a writte*.’⁹⁷ This is an apt caution, especially in respect of legal action (‘a writte’), for any who would trace their theological lineage to a more Puritan side of the Church of England. The fruit of peace is only *hardly* displayed in a writ.

Nonetheless, a key conceptual point is that patience is not endless—*longsuffering* precisely implies that there is a limit to the lengths people will appropriately go before anger may reasonably follow. Moreover, peace is not inevitable—the work of coercive judgment may be necessary to maintain or restore the conditions in which the garden which is the church may enjoy the fruit of peace. Reaching the limits or borderlands and making judgments is not necessarily antithetical to that fruit of the spirit named ‘self-control’, ‘moderation’ or ‘temperance’. Perkins remarks that ‘Gods [sic] commandment forbids rash anger’ and that while anger is ‘a sudden affection ... meanes are to be used beforehand, when we are quiet; then shall we better restrain it.’⁹⁸ The point is that patience and anger (though not revenge) may reasonably coexist—or at least border one another with tension—so long as the latter falls under the auspices of another fruit ‘self-control’. This lesson could be applied in various ways to the affective culture of the Church of England. As to recourse to the use of ecclesiastical courts, *longsuffering* is a fruit of the Spirit. Paul’s conclusion should be read similarly: regarding the fruit he says, ‘against such things there is no law.’ As Perkins explains, on the one hand, this means that none can condemn people marked by such fruit; and on the other, there is no need to compel such people since ‘they freely obey God, as if there were no law’.⁹⁹ As to affective culture: *longsuffering* and gentleness are of the non-legal evangelical essence. And yet self-controlled anger is properly attached to the alien yet necessary work of punitive discipline, which is, as we recall, a properly jurisdictional activity of the church employed not to hurt but to help.

⁹⁵ Oliver O’Donovan, ‘Mapping the Terrain for Engagement on Human Sexuality: A Review of *Living in Love and Faith: Christian teaching about Human Identity, Sexuality and Marriage*’ *Covenant Online Journal*, November 2020; <https://livingchurch.org/covenant/mapping-the-terrain-for-engagement-on-human-sexuality/>, accessed April 1 2026.

⁹⁶ For example, House of Bishops, *Statement of the House of Bishops on Living in Love and Faith* (January 2026), <https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2026-01/bishops-statement-jan-2026-final.pdf>, accessed April 1 2026.

⁹⁷ Perkins (n 88) 445.

⁹⁸ *ibid.*

⁹⁹ *ibid* 448.

Concerning love and fear

This turn to punitive discipline gives shape to the full range of ways in which love may take form in judgment. For the first-named fruit, love, is not the enemy of justice, nor specifically of the disciplinary judgments required that justice might, like the river, roll down in judicial activity. Article XXVI (*Of the Unworthiness of the Ministers which hinders not the effect of the Sacrament*) reads as follows:

Although in the visible Church the evil be ever mingled with the good, and sometimes the evil have chief authority in the Ministration of the Word and Sacraments, yet forasmuch as they do not the same in their own name, but in Christ's, and do minister by his commission and authority, we may use their Ministry, both in hearing the Word of God, and in receiving of the Sacraments. Neither is the effect of Christ's ordinance taken away by their wickedness, nor the grace of God's gifts diminished from such as by faith and rightly do receive the Sacraments ministered unto them; which be effectual, because of Christ's institution and promise, although they be ministered by evil men.

Nevertheless, it appertaineth to the discipline of the Church, that inquiry be made of evil Ministers, and that they be accused by those that have knowledge of their offences; and finally being found guilty, by just judgement be deposed.¹⁰⁰

The interrelation of fear and stability are thus united in the requirement to use just judgment to depose evil ministers by 'the discipline of the Church', including the use of the courts.

At one level, the risk of court action (to which the 2025 legal advice noted above referred) is associated with fear because it is unpleasant for the individuals involved, placing at risk things which are treasured—vocation, reputation, a living or a home. In addressing related themes around religious toleration and coercion, John Perry has talked of a 'Johannine' tradition extending from John Locke to John Rawls.¹⁰¹ In talking of the fruit of love, that Johannine tradition should be extended to include *the* Johannine tradition found in the New Testament. For love, as explained by Jesus Christ in John's gospel, is the test of the conduct of the life of the Church of England. Love is not, however, a fruit whose proper order the bishops of the Church of England can determine for themselves, separately one from another: love is the fruit *of the Spirit* who desires the unity of the body in the bond of peace. Since love is of the Spirit, court action is not of the evangelical essence of the corporate body, the church. As John says,

Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness on the day of judgment, because as he is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear; for fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not reached perfection in love.¹⁰²

What is of the essence of the church is confidence in the face of eschatological judgment on account of Jesus Christ. Fear has to do with punishment, ultimately by God but

¹⁰⁰ Church of England, *Thirty-Nine Articles*.

¹⁰¹ John Perry, *The Pretenses of Loyalty: Locke, Liberal Theory and American Political Theology* (OUP 2011).

¹⁰² 1 John 4:17-18 (NRSV).

penultimately by human authority. If love were perfect in the church, fear would be appropriately driven out beyond the edges of the life of the church by that love. But, unlike God's love, the church's love is imperfect. And so fear remains appropriately operative under an authority which, while alien to the non-coercive, non-punitive essence of the gospel, nonetheless is ordered by the logic of that gospel in service of the church and thus in service of the perfecting of love and of the fruit of the Spirit, the true affective culture of the church. By governing the church's life according to law, including in its jurisdictional mode, including in judgments which are coercive and punitive in form, bishops may, as required in their consecration vows, 'maintain and set forward (as much as shall lie in you) quietness, peace, and love among all men'.

Conclusion

One of Vallier's critiques of integralism was that it is unstable, not least as compared to a milder confessional state. The fact that much of the debate in the life of the Church of England turns on what loyalty to the inheritance of faith, precisely in the ordinal, BCP and articles requires, means that a turn to the theology of the sixteenth century has not been at all out of place. The perspective which the established church in England offers for assessing the possibilities of integralism, considering those vestiges of legal and political order influenced by integralist thought, is to understand the ecology of fear and stability in an existing context where the threat of court action on account of doctrinal plurality is practicable. Fear which is relevant to ecclesial life is not only fear of being taken to court but may concern far deeper matters such as the loss of the conditions which enable the preservation of the unity and stability of an established church. The invitation for both those who would press the case for doctrinal change and practice to permit marriage between people of the same sex to be written into the canons and liturgies of the Church and those who might make use of legal action to oppose such eventualities is to bear in mind that the vestiges of integralism which are found in the legal political order of the established Church of England remain of assistance for the protection of the Church but will never be of the essence of that garden of God.