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Forward in Christ

The magazine of Forward in Faith North America.

Vol. 8 No. 2
February, 2016

Lent

Also in this issue:

The Primates Meeting

C4SO, Missional And Misguided

What is Anglo-Catholicism?

*Will The Real Gabriel Please
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IN JULY

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In the News

Primates Meeting: Meeting at Canterbury in June, the Primates of the Anglican Communion voted by a two thirds majority to sanction the Episcopal Church (TEC) for its continued advocacy of gay marriage. In a Communique, the Primates stated that the Episcopal Church may “no longer represent us on ecumenical and interfaith bodies, should not be appointed or elected to an internal standing committee and that while participating in the internal bodies of the Anglican Communion, they will not take part in decision making on any issues pertaining to doctrine or polity.”

The sanctions will remain in place for three years, and follow on from the Episcopal Church’s decision at its 2015 General Convention to authorize gay marriage rites and adopt gender neutral language in the denomination’s marriage canons. However, while barred from representing the Anglican Communion and taking part in its decision making process, the Episcopal Church still remains part of the broader Communion.

TEC Still on the Island: TEC’s Presiding Bishop, Michael Curry, held a press conference in February and stated that the Episcopal Church had not been “voted off the island” by the Primates of the Anglican Communion, and that “nothing would change.”

“We’re not changing,” declared Curry to reporters at Washington DC’s Press Club, “so there shouldn’t be an expectation that in the next three years the Episcopal Church is going to change.” Curry was referring to the denomination’s approval of gay marriage rituals, prompting retired bishop Gene Robinson, who divorced his husband Mark in 2014, to congratulate Curry. “Thanks for not throwing us under the bus – the LGBT community as well as the Episcopal Church, we’re proud of you,” enthused the onetime Bishop of New Hampshire and the world’s first ever openly gay prelate.

Whether the unchangingly gay Episcopal Church and the wider Anglican Communion will remain in their troubled marriage at the end of three years remains to be seen.

See pp. 5-9.

Pope and Patriarch Meet: Pope Francis and Patriarch Kirill, the leader of the Russian Orthodox Church, met this February in Cuba. The meeting focused on building ecumenical relations and protecting persecuted Christians, especially in the Middle East.

According to the Metropolitan Hilarion Alfayev, who is head of the Russian Orthodox Church’s Foreign Relations Department:

“In the current tragic situation, we need to put aside internal disagreements and join efforts to save Christianity in the regions where it is subjected to most severe persecution.”

Forward in Christ urges your prayers for the unity of the Western and Eastern churches and an end to the persecution of Christians.

ISIS Genocide: The European Parliament has condemned the Islamic State for committing genocide against Christians and other religious minorities. In early February, the Parliament adopted Resolution 0051, “Systematic mass murder of religious minorities by ISIS,” labeling its crimes as genocide.

The resolution stated that “religious and ethnic minorities, such as Christian Chaldean, Syriac, Assyrian, Melkite and Armenian, Yazidi, Turkmens, Shabak, Kaka’i, Sabae-Mandean, Kurdish and Shi’a communities, as well as many Arabs and Sunni Muslims, have been targeted by the so-called ISIS/Daesh” and many have been “killed, slaughtered, beaten, subjected to extortion, abducted and tortured”, their women “enslaved” and “subjected to other forms of sexual violence,” forcibly converted,” and have been “victims of forced marriage and trafficking in human beings” and their churches and mosques have been “vandalised.”

Iraq’s Oldest Monastery Destroyed: Satellite photos have revealed that St. Elijah’s monastery, which was built in 590 AD, has been razed to the ground by the Muslim terror group ISIS.

St. Elijah’s monastery stood as a place of Christian worship for over 1,400 years until it was reduced to dust and rubble by the fanatical Islamists. “Our Christian history in Mosul is being barbarically leveled,” stated Fr. Paul Habib, in Irbil, Iraq, “We see it as an attempt to expel us from Iraq, eliminating and finishing our existence in this land.”

Church of England Decline: Attendance at Church of England services has plunged to its lowest level ever, with church statistics showing that only 1.4 per cent of the population of England now attend Anglican services on any given Sunday.

Overall average attendance at Sunday services across England fell over a five year period by 22,000 to 764,700 in 2014, a fall of seven per cent. This represents a two thirds decline in Sunday attendance since the early 1960s.

Trans Jesus: A Church of England parish in the Diocese of Manchester, St. Chrysostom, is hosting a trans Jesus play, “The Gospel According to Jesus, Queen of Heaven.”

The play is part of Manchester’s Queer Contact festival and portrays Jesus as a man who had a sex-change to become a woman and returns to earth. Transsexual playwright and actor, Jo Clifford, describes the performance as, “A play which imagines Jesus as a trans-woman, and she’s come back to Earth and she’s living in the present day and she tells many of the familiar stories that we know from the Bible but they have a very particular interesting slant on them. And she preaches a wee sermon and at the end she invites the people around her for a Communion service.

“I hope [Jesus] would like it, he and she - because I’m sure he was a he and a she.”

FC

The Primates Meeting, Responses

Statements from Archbishop Foley Beach, Forward in Faith and Bishop Iker

Archbishop Foley Beach:

To the members of the Anglican Church in North America,

I am writing to you from Canterbury, England late on the night of January 14th, 2016. Thank you for your prayers and support this week. Although I'm tired at the end of a long day, I wanted to send you an update.

I participated fully in the meeting, where the first and primary agenda item was addressing the Episcopal Church's changes to the doctrine of marriage. We spent most of the week discussing this issue and seeking to come to a common conclusion.

We unanimously agreed that these changes "represent a fundamental departure from the faith and teaching held by the majority of our Provinces on the doctrine of marriage," and we wrestled with what the consequences should be.

The GAFCON and Global South Primates were tremendous in their leadership in the meeting, and made a strong impact in the final decision. I confess that I have mixed feelings about the sanctions.

The sanctions are strong, but they are not strong enough, and to my deep disappointment, they didn't include the Anglican Church of Canada as they should.

With that said, it took many steps for the Anglican Communion to come to this current crisis. This is a good step back in the right direction, but it will take many more if the Communion is to be restored.

Thank you again for your incredible prayer support, and let us stay on our mission – to reach North America with the transforming love of Jesus Christ!

Your brother in Christ,

*Archbishop Foley Beach
Archbishop of ACNA*

FiFNA: With all Christians who submit to Biblical authority within the historic Church, Forward in Faith North America rejoices in the recent statement by the Primates of the Anglican Communion in support of marriage de-



defined as a covenant between one man and one woman.

Our members within The Episcopal Church, often marginalized or treated as a tolerated minority, are encouraged to hear that our position is upheld by the vast majority of our international leaders.

Our members within the Anglican Church in North America welcome both the statement itself, as well as the full inclusion at every level at the meeting of Archbishop Foley Beach.

All of our members are heartened by the small step taken in Godly discipline towards those who have acted unilaterally in presuming to redefine Biblical marriage.

Bishop Jack Iker: *"Primates Suspend Episcopal Church from Full Participation in the Anglican Communion"*

When I read this headline on the results of last week's meeting of the Anglican Primates in Canterbury, my first thought was, "Well, what took them so long?"

For decades The Episcopal Church has been undermining the historic faith and order of biblical Anglicanism – most recently by endorsing same-sex marriages. And for years there have

been efforts to sanction or discipline TEC for its continuing drift away from orthodox belief and practice. The Windsor Report in 2004 and the Primates Meeting at Dar es Salaam in 2007 both called for specific actions to discipline TEC and called for repentance, but to no avail. There is little reason to believe that anything will change as a result of this most recent decision from the Primates. Already, the leaders of TEC have said as much. They are going to continue to be defiant and autonomous, come what may.

Yes, for three years TEC representatives can no longer serve on ecumenical bodies or be elected or appointed to decision-making bodies of the Anglican Communion. Yes, an overwhelming majority imposed these consequences on TEC for its unfaithfulness to the Scriptures. (The tally was 26 For, 3 Against, and 6 Abstentions.) And yes, TEC has been suspended from full participation in the Anglican Communion. They are reduced to observer status, with seat and voice, but no vote in meetings of various Anglican bodies. All of this is welcome news, and we commend the Primates for the position they have taken.

However, the real good news behind all this is the growing strength and influence of the GAFCON movement, rep-

resenting the vast majority of Anglicans around the world. They have been increasingly supported by the Global South Primates, and the future of the Anglican Communion lies with the leadership of this new alliance. They recognize the Anglican Church in North America (ACNA) and have seated our Archbishop, Foley Beach, as a Primate in both bodies. It is very telling that the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, followed their lead last week, consenting to this recognition and welcoming Archbishop Beach to the Canterbury meeting, with full seat, voice, and vote. Our place in worldwide Anglicanism is confident and secure.

At the conclusion of the meeting, Archbishop Eliud Wabukala, GAFCON Chairman, said: "The need for the GAFCON movement is being recognised by an increasing number of

people... We long to see a united, confident and courageous witness to God who by the death and resurrection of his Son Jesus Christ has given us an unshakeable hope and assures us of his unfailing love."

Fort Worth stands with him in the pursuit of this goal in the days ahead.

*The Rt. Rev. Jack Leo Iker
Bishop of Fort Worth*



A Prayer For The Church

O God, you who have established the foundations of your Church upon the holy mountains: Grant that she may not be moved by any wiles of error which would fain compass her overthrow, nor may she be shaken by any earthly disquietude, but ever stand firmly upon the ordinances of the Apostles, and by their help, be kept in safety. Through Jesus Christ Our Lord. Amen.

Support The Ministry of Forward in Christ!

Dear Friends,

I am sure that all of us appreciate the value of *Forward in Christ*. We read it for our own benefit, and we share it with others. It is both informative, attractive and above all, it proclaims the Faith once delivered by Christ to the Apostles.

I would like to extend an offer to you to help us to both continue and also expand the unique ministry of our magazine by considering a complete or partial sponsorship of an issue. You may wish to do this as a way of celebrating a special event such as an ordination or wedding, or an anniversary. It could also be done in memorial of someone, in gratitude for an event or blessing, or simply in support of orthodox Anglicanism itself.

We will advertise your sponsorship and its intent in the magazine, which in turn will give our readers the opportunity to join in your prayer.

The cost of a full issue of *Forward in Christ* is over \$4000. Please prayerfully consider your support of this magazine's ongoing ministry.

With every blessing for a holy Lent and joyful Easter,

The Rev. Canon Lawrence D. Bausch, President, Forward in Faith North America.

Please contact the FiFNA office at 1-800-225-3661, or email julia.smead@fifna.org, to support this magazine's ministry of proclaiming the Faith once delivered by Christ to the Apostles.

The Primates Meeting, Aftermath

By Fr. Gavin Ashenden

Without going into the history of the recent meetings of this group, not all the archbishops there had personal experience of what had happened during the course of this long struggle between those who were trying to change the essentials of the Christian Faith by re-defining what marriage was, and those who, as bishops ought to, guarded the integrity of the faith.

It was expected that those archbishops who had shown they were committed to orthodox Christian belief and joined GAFCON, would be in a minority, and a minority that could not win this battle within the worldwide Anglican Communion.

The expectation was therefore, that since the GAFCON provinces had been mandated by their people not to sit at the same table as TEC – the American progressive or revisionist Anglican Church – that they would leave the meeting.

Justin Welby had resorted to calling it a ‘gathering’ since they were committed not to attend a meeting where TEC was invited.

One of the reasons for this was their outrage at the continuing persecution of clergy in American who held views formed by the Scripture and unbroken tradition by the Episcopal bishops, the details of which are another story.

At the meeting in Canterbury, many of the Primates themselves had not got a full picture of what had happened either at previous meetings, or of the dynamic of manipulation and what has amounted to persecution by the pro-gay marriage lobby, who although they claim to be ‘inclusive’, are determined to exclude orthodox Christians wherever they can.

At the beginning of the meeting a motion was put to require the Episcopal Church of America (and the similar Anglican Church of Canada) to voluntarily withdraw from the meeting.

It was lost.

The Archbishop of Uganda was committed by his Church not to attend ‘meetings’ with TEC. He observed that not only was this in fact a meeting in reality, but he found the atmosphere



and the dynamics of what was taking place manipulative. He therefore left in protest on day 2.

It was expected that other orthodox archbishops (who belonged to the GAFCON grouping) would follow him; but at that point a strange development took place.

The Archbishop of the Anglican Church in North America, ++ Foley Beach, which was formed of refugees fleeing persecution from TEC, had been invited to the ‘gathering.’

Although Justin Welby had backed the TEC position when he came into office by declaring that ACNA were not part of the Anglican Communion, the reality was that most of the rest of the Communion maintained that he certainly was. Justin Welby had been forced to change his political position even if he hasn’t changed his rhetoric. Because Welby has a reputation for reconciliation, he found he had to invite Foley Beach to the ‘gathering’ or the event would have failed before it even began.

Talking among themselves, a clearer picture emerged for the archbishops about the way in which homosexuality had been promoted by the liberal provinces and the issues at stake for the faith. Perhaps to everyone’s surprise the numbers of archbishops who were

coming round to the orthodox position began to increase. Provinces that had left GAFCON asked to rejoin. Provinces that had sat on the fence, had moved to the orthodox position. As discussions and votes continued to take place, a new realignment began to take place against the American (and Canadian) provinces. It must be said that this happened despite the enormous sums of money that the Americans had promised the near destitute Africans, if they promised to adopt the American pro-gay culture.

From the outside, those who supported the orthodox Christian position hoped that the other Primates would follow the Primate of Uganda and leave. From the inside, it began to seem possible a new configuration of worldwide Anglicans could be achieved, catalysed by Archbishop Foley Beach and Eliud Wabakola of Kenya, which would hold the Scriptural and orthodox line over the sanctity of marriage.

And that is what happened. After four days a strong majority of Archbishops declared that marriage was indeed between a man and a woman with the intention of possibility of procreation. It then voted to enforce sanctions against TEC for having changed a core element of the Christian Faith.

The sanctions meant that they were

to be deprived of a voice and a vote for three years, at which point the situation would be revisited by the Primates.

The clear implication is that they would need to repent and take up again orthodox Christian Faith by the end of three years.

The Implications

Of course, that won't happen. TEC and the Anglican Church of Canada, as well as Anglicans in New Zealand and perhaps even England, are too committed to the zeitgeist to consider that they have undermined and radically altered the faith.

So the decision to divide into two kinds of Anglican across the world has been delayed for three years.

During those three years trajectories will have become clearer and events we cannot yet foresee may well act as catalysts for further change and reconfigurations.

What is clear already, is that those Anglicans who hold on to the orthodox Scriptural faith grow, evangelise and flourish, and that those who do not are in a free-fall in terms of numbers.

From an orthodox point of view, one could have hoped for stronger sanctions, stronger language. But what has been achieved in defence of the faith is nonetheless remarkable.

The local provincial struggle for the integrity of the faith and against the supporters of the zeitgeist will con-

tinue with the intensity that grows.

There is what amounts to an implacable dislike from the liberal camp that in places become hatred. The outpouring of bile and bitterness since the decision from the progressive voices has been marked and disturbing.

The Church of England?

Whatever took place at the Canterbury meeting it remains, in my judgement, that the situation in the Church of England for orthodox Christians is lost.

Many of my best friends whose judgement I admire, think otherwise. So I come to that opinion with caution.

But the C of E is a creation of the state. It is chaplain to the state. What happens to a state Church when the state turns against Christianity?

There are some notable casualties in history that litter Church state tensions, not least St Thomas a Becket, St Thomas More, and Archbishop Cranmer.

That rejection of Christian faith and morals, is what is taking place at the moment. Some people will, in desperation travel as far as they can with the culture of the anti-Christian state. But if they go too far, they become anti-Christian themselves. This is a situation which has developed numerous times in the history of Church/culture/state relations.

My view is that over these issues,

those who prefer and identify with the zeitgeist, are becoming anti-Faith; both those who proclaim to profess the faith and those who share their priorities and don't. This faction is certainly in charge of the Church and its senior appointments. The fact that half of the Cathedral Deans in England wrote to support a letter rebuking the CofE for not backing homosexual Christians and redefining marriage, gives an indication of how long and how thorough the campaign to conform the Church to the zeitgeist has been.

I see the way ahead then in England as requiring a new Anglican jurisdiction. An Anglican Church whose bishops believe the Bible, are nurtured by the Tradition, and have the spiritual authenticity to know how to interpret this profound and serious spiritual struggle.

All each of us can do is say our prayers, search our hearts and offer our obedience to Christ as we hear Him moving and calling us to be His faithful body; whatever the cost.

✠

The Rev. Canon Dr. Gavin Ashenden lives in Jersey, in the United Kingdom.

Who Dares Call it by Name?

By A.S. Haley

There appears to be some reluctance on both sides of the aisle to express the full rationale behind the Primates' vote to impose consequences upon the Episcopal Church (ECUSA) for its adoption at General Convention 2015 (GC 2015) of canons allowing the performance of same-sex marriage ceremonies in the church, in parallel with the traditional ceremonies between a man and a woman.

The activists within ECUSA see the consequences as unjust "punishment" for their having taken a visionary stance -- out in front of the entire Communion -- to support full sacramental equality in the Church for LGBT Episcopalians. They express hurt for what they call "sanctions", but at the same time express their determination to wait out the three-year period without changing a thing, and certainly without trying to undo the marital canonical changes at GC 2018.

The orthodox and traditionalists who support the vote of suspension, on the other hand, do so on the ground that "changing the Anglican doctrine of marriage as between a man and a woman" was the straw that broke the camel's back, and say that the move simply could not be ignored. Unfortunately, this rationale appears to give a wink and a nod to provinces that adopt merely rituals of blessing for Same Sex Unions (like Canada), and thus far, at any rate, stop short of celebrating same-sex marriages within their churches.

This debate engages nothing, and can go nowhere. It is like two ships passing in the night. There will be full engagement within the Communion only when the whole ground underlying the vote has been articulated plainly for all to see and discuss.

At the root of what ECUSA has seen fit to do with its mar-

riage liturgies is, to speak simply and directly, the sin of blasphemy, against both Jesus Christ our Savior and against the Holy Trinity. ECUSA has, to put it bluntly, shown contempt for the divine givenness of marriage as something that occurs between a man and a woman, reflecting the union of Christ with His church.

The blasphemy begins in the new same-sex marriage rite at the point where the celebrant says to the congregation:

Dearly beloved: We have come together in the presence of God to witness and bless the joining together of N. and N. in Holy Matrimony. The joining of two people in a life of mutual fidelity signifies to us the mystery of the union between Christ and his Church, and so it is worthy of being honored among all people.

This bold language evinces a category mistake of the worst sort, by equating the union of two people of the same gender to the holy union between Christ and His Church. (How can they be so equated? In the former, which of the two men -- or two women -- signifies Christ, and which the Church?).

I have written elsewhere, explaining how the trial rites for same-sex marriages go on to blaspheme the Holy Trinity, as well as each of the three Persons separately, so that the sin is comprehensive and complete. Was no one on the drafting committee, or among the bishops, clergy and laity who voted for the rituals, mindful of Jesus's warning in the twelfth chapter of Matthew?

Therefore I tell you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven people, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven. [32] And whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come. (Matthew 12:31-32 ESV)

Regardless of the spiritual consequences of such blasphemy, it simply cannot be that a Communion of Christian churches will ignore, let alone accommodate, one of their member provinces as it systematically goes about promoting and uttering blasphemy in its rites and liturgies.

To be sure, churches bless animals, flags, tartans, and all manner of objects, but those rites do not invoke any of the theology of matrimony. Nor do they try to alter an institution which God established and defined. So they do not risk blaspheming the Trinity.

If I am simply wrong in my claim, then let those who are theologically more knowledgeable tell me where I err. For the present, the silence of the orthodox remaining in the Episcopal Church (USA) in response to such blasphemy simply baffles me. If Episcopalians really believe that by just lying low for three years, the problem with their actions will go away, then I fear they truly are blind to how deep a wound they have cut, with these rites, into the Body of Christ.

Even if the offending language were excised from the liturgies, I do not see theologically how the fundamental fallacy that underlies invoking the triune God's blessing on same-sex unions in the Church could be overcome. For as the BCP says, the union between a man and a woman is modeled on the mystical union between Christ and His Church. But same-sex unions cannot ever be said to model that relationship, without veering into the sin of blasphemy. Nor can the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be asked to bless that which God has declared cannot be joined together.



I am aware of a significant possibility for misunderstanding here, and I am trying my utmost to be plain and clear. Regardless of how one chooses to read Scripture's prohibitions against sexual relations outside of holy matrimony, Scripture, as interpreted by one no less than Jesus Himself, is unequivocal in defining matrimony as between a man and a woman. It is just as unequivocal in declaring that God joins them together, man and woman, as one flesh. This is God's prescription, not proscription, for marriage as a covenant blessed by Him through His church.

One can fail to agree with the proscription against sinning, and engage in unrepentant same-sex behavior, that is between God and the sinner. But man cannot alter God's prescription for holy matrimony; any attempt to do so is a nullity. Moreover, as noted, the attempt inevitably leads to blasphemy.

Therefore, if ECUSA really wants to accept the consequences of what it has done, let's have an open debate, culminating in a vote at GC 2018 either in favor of or against blaspheming the Holy Trinity. That way the whole world will know what that denomination is doing, and what it chooses knowingly to bless. And the Communion in good conscience can then make its separation from ECUSA -- as well as from any other member province that chooses the same path -- permanent, as it will have no other choice.

FC

A.S. Haley is a lawyer living in California and part of the Diocese of San Joaquin's legal team. This article is republished with permission from his blog, The Anglican Curmudgeon.

Make a Right Beginning of Lent

Bishop Jack Iker on Ash Wednesday

Ash Wednesday is a new beginning – a new beginning in our relationship with the Living God as followers of Jesus Christ. Ash Wednesday is a new beginning, as it is the first day of Lent – sometimes called the “spring-time of the soul.” It is a solemn day of fasting and penitence, when every member of the Church is called to repent of his or her sins and turn again to God. To begin afresh with God, to make a right beginning of Lent, we must first repent of our sins.

But remember that real repentance is not just feeling guilty for what we’ve done. It is not just feeling sorry for our sins – though that is certainly a good place to start. Repentance is more than feelings of regret or remorse. Repentance is a change of life, a re-orientation and a re-submission of our lives to God that is seen in our behavior. It is something we do, not something we feel.

To make a right beginning of Lent – to take advantage of this invitation to begin anew – we must repent of our sins. In classical Christian theology, there are three steps in true repentance.

First is a recognition of my sins. This requires self-examination. We cannot confess our sins until we name them, first to ourselves and then to God. What things have I done that I ought not to have done, and what things have I left undone that I ought to have done? Where have I been resentful, envious, proud, selfish, and so on? What Commandments have I broken? Have I lied, cheated or gossiped? Take time today for self-examination. Look upon your heart – as God surely does – and recount those thoughts and actions that are contrary for His will for you. We have not loved God with our whole heart and mind and strength. We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We have not forgiven others, as we have been forgiven.

Second is contrition. Here we express sorrow for our sins and say to God that we are truly sorry for what we have done and not done. We are sorry that we have offended against His holy



laws. But if we are honest about it, the truth is that we may not feel very contrite at all. We suffer from hardness of heart and do not feel genuine remorse for our sins. So for many of us we must start by asking God to make us contrite – to create in us a sense of regret for our alienation from Him – to wound our hearts for having offended Him or others in various ways. We have turned from God’s love for us by clinging to self-indulgence, hypocrisy, and pride. But now it is time to make a new beginning – a fresh start in our walk with the Lord. We must not stop with a burden of guilt for our great sinfulness. We must confess our sins and then move on to the next step, which is to firmly resolve amendment of life – a change in behavior.


This third step in making this new beginning is to promise we will try to do better, with the help and grace that God promises to give to repentant sinners. To turn from our sins requires a change of heart and a change of direction. It means cultivating the four cardinal virtues (justice, prudence, courage, and moderation) and asking God to nurture within us the nine fruits of the Holy Spirit in our daily lives (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control – Galatians 5:22-23). It means a new commitment to Bible study and daily prayer – to

faithfulness in worship every Sunday. It means a discipline of the tongue – to refrain from belittling and criticizing others – from gossiping and spreading pessimism. It means to use our lips to build up and encourage and share our faith with others – not to complain and grumble. It means to show forth God’s praise not only with our lips, but in our lives, by giving up our selves to His service, and by walking before Him in holiness and righteousness, all the days of our life.

Let us make a right beginning of Lent today. Let us make a new beginning in our walk with the Lord. As you are marked with ashes today on your forehead, remember that the ashes represent our mortality: “remember that thou art dust and to dust thou shalt return.” Remember that it is sin that leads to death and eternal separation from God. But don’t stop there; take heart and be encouraged. For the ashes are imposed on you in the form of the cross, a sign of our redemption – our eternal salvation – and perfect gift of God’s forgiveness through the blood of Jesus. Ash Wednesday celebrates our deliverance from sin and death – it gives us a new beginning and a fresh start, in a new life – that is eternal.

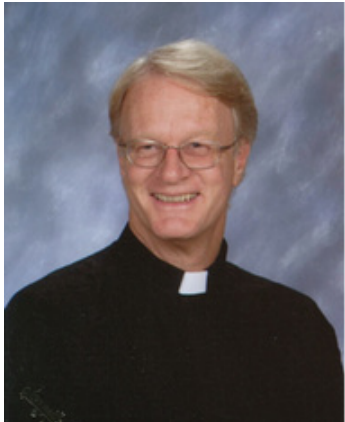
“Create and make in us new and contrite hearts, that we, worthily lamenting our sins and acknowledging our wretchedness, may obtain of you,

the God of all mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.”

Bishop Jack Iker 

Lent And The Gospel of Suffering

By Fr. Lawrence Bausch



Much of our yearning for eternal life won for us by Jesus’ resurrection is rooted in our desire to be healed of the hurts and pains of this life. Truly we are wounded people, who have suffered, do suffer, and will suffer much in this life. Even during those seasons in which we may be free of such, we are witnesses to the sufferings of others.

Our hearts of compassion are struck every time we pay attention to the news. In every Mass, we pray for God in these or similar words to “comfort and succor all those who, in this transitory life, are in trouble, sorrow, need, sickness, or any other adversity.” When we factor in the ravages of persecution, warfare, famine, poverty and natural disasters, the enormity of human suffering, the weight of such knowledge threatens to overwhelm our faith.

It is perhaps at such times as this that we are best able to ponder the strange feature of the mark of our Lord’s Passion in his Risen Body. We might have reasonably expected them to be gone forever as a part of His victory over sin and death, but they are not. What does their continual presence mean for us and for our hope of perfect healing?

After the end of World War I, which had been the occasion of suffering and death on an unprecedented scale, Edward Shillito published a book entitled *Jesus of the Scars, and Other Poems*. The title poem began the collection, and was preceded by a passage from John 20:20, “He showed them His hands and His side.”

In the poem, Shillito movingly addresses our question:

If we have never sought, we seek Thee now;
Thine eyes burn through the dark, our only stars;
We must have sight of thorn-pricks on Thy brow,
We must have Thee, O Jesus of the Scars.

The heavens frighten us; they are too calm;
In all the universe we have no place.
Our wounds are hurting us; where is the balm?
Lord Jesus, by Thy Scars, we claim Thy grace.

If, when the doors are shut, Thou drawest near,
Only reveal those hands, that side of Thine;
We know to-day what wounds are, have no fear,
Show us Thy Scars, we know the countersign.

The other gods were strong; but Thou wast weak;
They rode, but Thou didst stumble to a throne;
But to our wounds only God’s wounds can speak,
And not a god has wounds, but Thou alone.

As William Temple commented on this poem and its significance for us: “Only a God in whose perfect Being pain has its place can win and hold our worship . . .” May we, who worship the Risen Lord in the midst of suffering, be strengthened by his scars: “By his wounds we are healed.” (Isaiah 53:5)

We are not saved from suffering, we are saved through suffering, in the midst of suffering. And may this thought pervade our Lenten disciplines as well as our Easter hope this year.



Fr. Lawrence Bausch is President of FiFNA and Rector of Holy Trinity, Ocean Beach, San Diego, California.

The Ash Wednesday Collect

*ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, who hatest nothing that thou hast made,
and dost forgive the sins of all those who are penitent;
Create and make in us new and contrite hearts, that we, worthily lamenting our
sins and acknowledging our wretchedness, may obtain of thee,
the God of all mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness; through Jesus Christ
our Lord. Amen.*

Parish Highlight

Christ The Redeemer, Washington State

Christ the Redeemer Anglican Church is a true “instant church” or, maybe, an “accidental” church.

Rev. Dr. Mac Culver and Rev. Art Moore have known each other for over 35 years with both working together in their early ministry years during the 1980’s. Mac+ moved to the Tri Cities WA, where Art+ had been living for the past 20 years, after the unexpected death of his son in 2008. At that time, Mac+ took an assignment as a Christian School Administrator in order to be close to his son’s widow and his grandchildren.

In March 2010 both decided to run an advertisement in the local newspaper to “explore” local interest in an Anglican church plant. Shortly, Art’s+ phone rang in response to the ad that was titled: “Discover, Again the Ancient Faith.”

On the phone was a Roman Catholic priest, Fr. Jim O’Connor, asking: “Who are you?”, “What do you plan to do?” “When do you plan to do it?” After a brief conversation Fr. O’Connor hung up and life went on. Within a day or two the phone rang again with Fr. Jim O’Connor on the line stating: “I have found a place for you to worship and you can begin next week! Come on over to West Highlands Methodist Church (A Confessing Methodist Church) on Thursday and you can talk to their pastor about fees.”

Holy panic! Are we really ready? Do we really want to do this at our age?

We went ahead and met with Fr. O’Connor and Rev. Ed Branham at the very attractive Methodist church facility. After good, polite Anglo-Catholic words and safe chat we asked: “How much will the monthly rent be?” Rev. Branham, after a short pause, said: “We cannot charge you more than we charge Alcoholics Anonymous which is \$50 a month. Will that work?”

More panic sets in. Are we really ready? Do we really want to do this at our age?

With a bit of unexpected fear we answered: “Yes, that will work.”

So, out of nowhere, God opened the windows of heaven and we had a very



nice place to worship. We also had a delightful Roman Catholic priest, who had been present in Rome at Vatican II, encouraging us! God had greater plans and more accelerated plans than we had dreamed or hoped for.

Against all church planting rules, against all methods ever suggested to plant a church, we accepted a year lease and began services in a beautiful chapel set up perfectly, with split chancel, for Anglo-Catholic services. This was 6 years ago.

God has added a very loyal group of parishioners and all runs quite smoothly as we have followed this unexpected path. As of 2016, we still have full use of this beautiful Methodist facility. We meet at the same time each Sunday morning sharing Sunday School, after-worship fellowship, and many other graciously extended offers as we journey “one in the bond of love” together.

Over the past years, Mac+ and Art+ have been called on a number of times to fill the Methodist pulpit on Sundays when the Sr. Pastor is out of town. Several times a year we find ourselves having joint services together with God’s blessings being enjoyed by all. To our “Confessing” Methodist host, we have become a living symbol of their

own John Wesley Anglican roots and we have learned to be very blessed with their on-going hospitality. They have never raised our rent.

Fr. Mac and Fr. Art share local pastoral and preaching responsibilities 50/50 with each working in their strength areas. Fr. Mac, is rector, and leads this local ministry. Fr. Art is active in the Diocese of Cascadia being a member of the Bishop’s Diocesan Council and was recently appointed Dean of the East Cascades Deanery.

Both Mac+ and Art+ were in attendance at the International Congress of Catholic Anglicans in Fort Worth, Texas, and they look forward to being involved in future Forward in Faith North America events. They, happily, have a strong Anglo-Catholic persuasion and feel most comfortable with our Forward in Faith friends.

Jesus, tanto nomini nullum par elogium!

(Jesus, for so great a name, no praise is adequate!)

FC

Christ the Redeemer worships on Sundays at 10 AM. Their website is: www.tricityanglican.org.

Thinking Out Loud

William Murchison on Lent

Well, we're all Anglicans around here, right? We know about repentance. It's in the prayer book: "We have erred and strayed from thy ways..." "We do earnestly repent, And are heartily sorry..."

Lent was made for Anglicans. We get to eat pancakes and, if we are of a mind to do it, show off our hard-earned ashes: the more valiantly if we managed to inhabit the 7 a.m. service. We get to give up the third glass of wine. And so forth.

A point we might nevertheless wish to notice is the growing relevance of repentance in a society which, according to Pew Research Studies and such like, is shedding religion the way an emergent butterfly sheds its chrysalis.

The presidential campaign brings this point to mind.

We are in a campaign – nor have I the least intention of sorting out here the particular qualifications of particular candidates – whose message is, if you haven't been paying attention, salvation. The candidates are going to save us. They say so – not in so many words but with salvation as the subtext. They are going to save us because things are bad, requiring makeover.

Banks and greedy hedge funds, not to mention male chauvinists and racists, oh, and energy companies -- such are the bogles from whom the two (as I write) surviving Democratic contenders purpose to save us.

The far more numerous Republican candidates propose saving us from the Democrats and from the legacy of the President, Barack Obama, whom one candidate or another, from one party or the other, will be replacing in January.

Very well. Salvation. That's the promise. Things are wrong; the times are out of joint, as young Hamlet phrased it. This is an invitation to reflection, albeit not an invitation that gets grasped often in the heat of the political moment.

Reflection for any period of time will yield recognition that things always are wrong, from the standpoint of any given presidential contender;

or for that matter the standpoint of any political figure who wishes to replace in office. The times are always out of joint. Just when you finally get the man – I should add these days, or the woman – of your choice, something unexpectedly goes haywire. Or maybe all is well for a while. Then it falls apart.

Do we wonder? The human condition is the point that should command our attention. Things always go wrong when humans are in charge for any length of time. Poor Saul, poor David, poor Solomon – exemplars in way or another of the wish really to make things go right; undone by frailty; wracked and ruined by the human passions that never conceal themselves for long beneath monarchical cloak or presidential suit coat.

The idea of remediation via politics is among the least tenable ideas in the marketplace. It is not that politicians lack any notion of things that need doing and of short-term, at least, approaches to making it happen. There have been estimable presidents just as there were estimable kings of Israel. The idea, nonetheless, of enduring reformation – not to mention intelligent reformation – is an idea that crops up too much in politics for anyone's good. In other words, honey, as a late lady of my acquaintance used to say, if it's not one "dee" thing, it's another.

It is – that unassailable idea proceeding from the thoroughly unreformed and unreformable nature we all inhabit. Small wonder the Psalmist (Ps. 146) noted the futility of putting any trust in princes or other child of man.

We always find, according to our well-developed skill at the task, some way or another of messing up what has been carefully constructed, or turned inside-out, for our benefit.

"Come the revolution..." the Reds used to say. Revolutions came, revolutions went, and still the eternal human problems – pride, envy, sloth; the complete catalogue – persisted.

Lent, I would like to argue, has secu-



lar value. It is a religious occasion, yes. But it also an occasion for reflection – I will leave "prayerful" reflection to the prayerfully minded citizen who looks about in wonder at the human mess. And wonders what can be done about it. What can come of it all? Anything?

The question, which the Church poses regularly to the faithful, is equally well directed to the whole of creation; all the packed ranks of fallen men and women hungering for redemption; perpetually asking this or that "leader" to do the heavy lifting; swelling with indignation when the fondest, seemingly best-founded hopes come to naught.

It's a great time for a revival, Lent is; a time for the proclamation of this sublime season's history and meaning. Even the presidential candidates know as much. They just don't know that they know, that's all.

TC

William Murchison is an author and journalist. He lives in Dallas, Texas.

Fighting Temptation

By Fr. Gene Geromel

In the martial arts there are many ways to block a punch. Some are gentle and some are not so gentle. For instance, there is a block used against a punch to the body. Your opponent's wrist is trapped in the crook of your elbow then you pivot and with the forearm of the other arm you strike your opponent's elbow. It is brutal. When students first see it, their eyes widen in shock. Even in practice, when no contact is actually made, the student can see that it would be an act of destruction, and is only to be used only when it is a matter of life and death.

There are other blocks which are mere snaps of the wrist where you strike with the edge of your hand (called the knife edge). In this block, the strike is directed at a very specific spots near the wrist. For the average person the strike is so excruciating that it stops a follow up punch in its tracks.

There is another block which is called the cup block. Hold your hand as if you were taking water from a spring. (Sadly, many of my younger students have no idea what drinking from a spring is like and thus have trouble cupping their hands.) Imagine a straight punch coming to your nose. Keeping your hand cupped, you gently move the fist coming at your nose. It doesn't have to move far. There are only four or five inches to move it past your head and out of danger. It is gentle, effective and has an economy of motion.

Last year, I observed an exorcism. It was done at a Roman Catholic parish not far from where I live. The priest who performed it was the official exorcist of their Archdiocese. You might wonder why a priest would wait until he has been ordained more than forty years before observing such an activity? The answer is simple: such things scare the Hell out of me. However, to my surprise, what struck me the most was the gentleness of the exorcism. The priest sat at his desk. There were three lay women seated in chairs. The person we brought sat in the chair next to the desk. The priest gave the man a bottle of Holy Water and told him to drink some. He placed a little trash can lined with a plastic bag near the man's feet (sometimes bile of various colors is coughed up when a demon is expelled) and then explained the procedure. He made it clear that if something was mentioned, such as "the spirit of murder", it doesn't mean that he, the victim of demons, is being accused of murder. He also told him that if anyone in the group rebuked a spirit, it would not be meant as a rebuke to him.

The priest then began to pray various traditional prayers. At times he would pause and sprinkle Holy Water on the man I had brought. There was a constant invocation of the Saints. There would be quiet prayers asking the wicked Spirit (of lust, anger, abuse,) to depart. The whole process was quiet, gentle and effective.

There is a one-man play about Fr. Damien of the Lepers. Much of it deals with his difficulty with the government authorities and his superiors. However, there is one scene where he talks about visiting a native family. He spends the night with them. In the middle of the night, the teenage daughter crawled into his makeshift bed. She was naked.



When he realized what was happening, he left the house and walked through the forest back to his rectory. For a long time, he was tormented by the image of the naked girl. He would look at the cross and see the naked girl. He would read his lessons and see the girl.

Other than going to confession, there is no indication in the play of how he dealt with these temptations. Many years ago, I knew a priest who left the Altar in the middle of the consecration saying, "I am unworthy." Sadly, he also left the parish ministry and ended up living in what most of us would call a sinful relationship. The Devil tempts us into agreements with wrong attitudes by introducing thoughts like, "Everything goes wrong for me"; "I'm no good"; "I deserve to be punished"; "I will punish myself to feel better."; "No one loves me. I'm all alone"; or "I am guilty of X sin and therefore no good."

Again, I have no idea as to what spiritual methods Damien used to overcome these temptations. If he had totally given in to them he would have gone back to the girl, but he continued to be a faithful priest, albeit a tormented one. If a priest came to me and told me that his imagination was full of sinful visions as he said Mass, I would tell him about the cup block. Merely push the Devil aside: Not to think the thought in the middle of mass that "I am unworthy" but merely say, "sorry, Lord, forgive me, I was distracted for a minute, I'm back now." If in the middle of the Divine Office, a beguiling image appears, merely push it aside and say, for example, "I look forward to the day when I perform her marriage to a good Christian man. Now, back to the office."

Never react with violence or guilt. Never walk away from the Altar. Return to Jesus in his Sacrament.

Sometimes my ju-jitsu students ask how to avoid getting hit. I tell them not to be in a place where people throw punches. Then they say, "Well I have to take my girl someplace," which, of course, is where the trouble begins. Does one really have to go to a bar to have a good time? For some, that seems to be the case. I suggest that when someone calls them out that they say they will meet the fellow out front in five minutes. I then tell them to go out the back door in three minutes.

Think about it, most of us end up sinning, because we end up in places where we are tempted. If you are a glutton you avoid bakeries. If your drinking is out of control, avoid bars and spend time with non-drinkers. If you watch porn on the computer, buy a large screen and put the computer where others can see what you are watching. If a boy and a

girl begin "going too far" when they are alone, then a simple solution is to go on double dates. To put it simply, avoid those occasions that encourage us to sin.

If Father Damien went back to that family every week and stayed the night, what do you think would have happened? All he had to do was visit them for lunch, never be alone with the girl and go home before dark.

The devil may be wily, but he is not invincible. When he attacks you, brush him aside gently and go back to Jesus. When temptation attracts and attacks, you can remember the cup block and let gentleness be your cloak.

FC

Fr. Gene Geromel is Rector of St. Bartholomew's Anglican Church, Swartz Creek, Michigan.

C4SO, Missional And Misguided

Fr. Richmond on Genuine Mission

It is strange how the Bible challenges our pet-programs. We all have them. Sometimes they are hidden, and known only to God. At other times we are aware of them and we make every effort to align our intentions with God's will. In short, once we discover the error of our ways, we repent, believe and behave. By God's grace we turn things around.

There are times, however, when our pet-programs are placed on parade before others. That the program is simply a "parade," pretty but passing, might make us think that some measure of charitable latitude is allowed. If it is "pretty but passing" we think it is easily dispensed with. Although my wife faithfully watches the Rose Bowl parade, it does not in any way influence how she governs her life. Sadly, the "parade" of Churches For The Sake of Others (C4SO, a diocese in the Anglican Church in North America) does govern the lives of many Christians and, in consequence, sets a standard and agenda that is unbiblical. This article's intention, as my title suggests, is to rain on the parade of missional misconceptions by exposing the faulty foundation and, instead, to float an alternate reality more in keeping with biblical revelation.

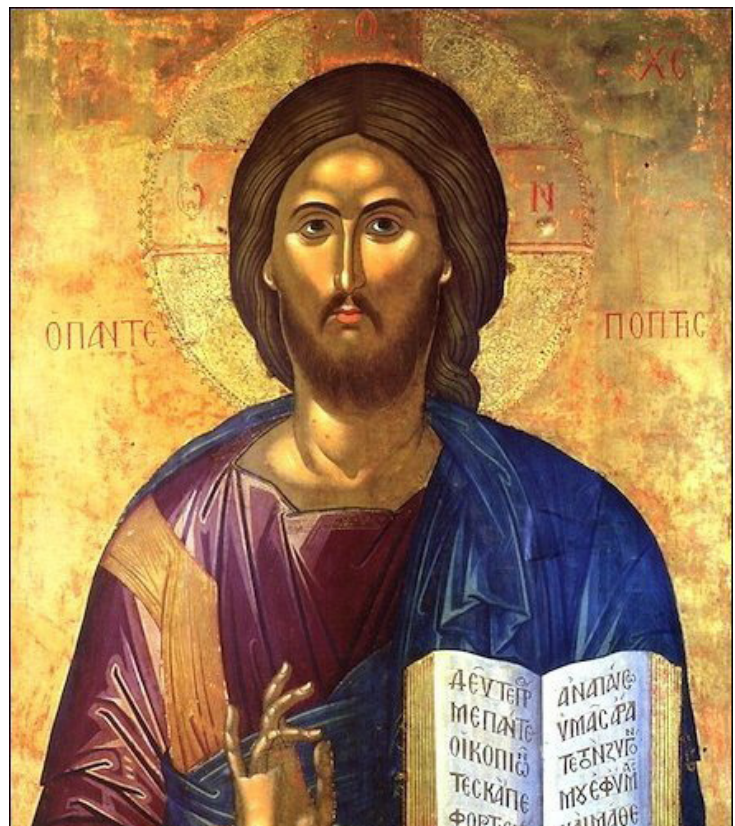
Anglicanism is an historic church that rightly celebrates a rich patrimony. Unless we have begun to embrace creativity above continuity (as it appears some have already done), the process of change is as moderate and as measured as Cranmer's careful reforms. However, by embracing C4SO orientations, programming and expansion are far more evident than Paraclete and prayer. Multiplying churches – a questionable notion at best – is far more prominent than making disciples. Over the past decade we have not kept up our guard. While focusing upon maintaining essential orthodoxy, and this we must do, we have welcomed the Trojan Horse of C4SO orientations into our midst.

We must fight this focus or fail in our God-ordained calling. St. Mark's gospel provides a much-needed correction. When we read St. Mark 3: 13–15 we discover an oft-repeated outline to which we must all be attentive. Jesus called his

apostles to him for three specific purposes. These constitute, line upon line, a process by which Christians are called to engage the world:

To be with [Christ],
To be sent out
To have authority.

When we do not embrace this relational priority and process, which includes pronounced and persistent prayer, we are left only with are structures and programs.





Calling

The Christian has many callings. Among these, although not limited to them, is the call to holiness, the call to evangelism, the call to love, the call to give, the call to carry our cross and the call to die to self. Each of these callings is important and must not be minimized or neglected. If we are not interested in holiness or evangelism (which are, of course, vitally connected) we are likely not Christians. This is critical, and must be clearly understood. Evangelism is the supernatural extension of having life in Christ. Such callings are planted within the regenerate heart. Christians want to be holy and Christians want to evangelize. No one needs to tell true Christians these things. They are, in fact, planted within our hearts upon rebirth. Although “be ye holy” and “go into all the world” are spoken as imperatives, they do in fact reflect the innate desire of the faithful. Holiness and evangelism are our heart’s desire. Strategies may help, but the inspiration of the Holy Spirit as informed by Holy Scripture does help.

Being With Jesus

From the outset, C4SO begins where we should end. It is as misinformed and misguided as catechetical instruction is that begins with evangelization. It puts the proverbial “cart before the horse.” Strictly understood and applied, C4SO dismisses our Lord’s words about being with him, disregards the

process of spiritual formation, discourages the priority of well-ordered worship and entirely distorts a biblical understanding of the human person. Jesus’ first calling, after repentance and belief, is to be with him. We see this in the life of Jesus Christ himself. After being acknowledged by the Father during his baptism, Jesus is led and/or driven into the wilderness to be tempted regarding his identity. The repeated refrain of Satan is “*if you are the Son of God*” [my emphasis]. Jesus came to himself, properly understood, in the desert. He had to be alone with himself, being secure in his identity, before his witness to the world. Person is before proclamation. C4SO functionally forgets or fudges this.

As well, and again contrary to Christ, C4SO neglects (by its very name) the priority of spiritual formation. When Jesus called his apostles he did not immediately send them out. They were nurtured. They were formed. They were called. They began to follow and be instructed. And then, after these things, they were sent out. Evangelism must always begin by being with Jesus. To go out before we are built up is to court shipwreck. If church really is “for the sake of others,” and not just an unfortunate misuse of words, it undermines spiritual formation.

The same is true with worship. The priority, purpose and process of worship is crucial to the church. If we begin worship with “for others” we end up with little more than the consum-

erist orientation that true Christianity entirely rejects. We never begin with “what will attract,” but, far more importantly, “how do we celebrate God with, in and among us?” God is our beginning. God’s will is paramount. His will, works and ways are in focus. This is our beginning. This is our middle. This is our end. To truly worship – in *all* that this means – will be dynamically attractive, but to begin with “for others” is in fact to build Babel and to construct “strange fire.”

Finally, in this regard, C4SO’s emphasis upon evangelism (although proper evangelism is essential) suggests that the human person “does” before the human person “is.” “For others” implies that my essential identity is entirely dependent upon purpose and not upon person. Jesus was identified as God, then, after his wilderness training, he began to preach. And, later still, he chose his disciples and his direction. The same was true for the disciples. The same is true for us. Mary before Martha! Sitting before sharing! Worship before working! Being before doing! C4SO, by its very name, neglects and negates these priorities.

Being Sent Out

These priorities do not diminish our calling to “go” and to “make” and to “baptize” and to “teach.” Rather, and importantly, they prioritize the Source from which they emerge and engage. Jesus sent out his disciples. The calling to be with Jesus led to being sent by Jesus. The priority of “being with” led to the purpose of “going forth.” And this “going” was with specific instructions that led to effectiveness.

The “closet” prepares us for such a commissioning. This is, by priority and practice, “being with” Jesus. Too many pastors want to preach, but have no equivalent interest in prayer. Preparation involves the brain, and the brain is important, but the brain is not sufficiently activated until the knees are engaged. The knees must be as muscular as the mind. In short, in keeping with our theme, we are anxious to “go out” without spending equal or more time “going within.” We want publicity, but we fail to understand that proper publicity can only be safely embarked upon from the willingness to remain prayerfully anonymous. Pastors with

little prayer, without pronounced and persistent prayer, are not worthy of pulpits. Closets prepare us for, and sustain us within, the commissioning. The Great Commission is only as great as our commitment to prayer! C4SO, for all that it might assert, or individual adherents embrace, does not highlight this important priority. To be sent out is to embark upon the inward journey where encounter with Christ is hard-won through private wrestling and private wounding. Blood on the knees provides boldness in the pulpit. We cannot “go out” effectively until we have “been with” sufficiently.

Some time ago I heard about some (I am sure) well-intentioned folk who decided to start a church-plant in a very upscale part of our country. It failed within a year. Certainly there was good intention. Certainly there was strategy. But, with both of these, it did not succeed. I do not know why their efforts did not bear any obvious fruit. Being quite familiar with the area I am well-aware of the hard-tack soil that needed to be worked. However, while success cannot be evaluated upon the basis of numbers or outcome, my inclination is to think that C4SO orientations imposed action before prayerful reflection. If 1000 new churches is the goal, which it has been stated by ACNA to be, then we better set upon our task or we will fail to accomplish this noble purpose. But, of course, Jesus never said nor implied an evangelism-by-numbers approach. Hopefully I am wrong. Hopefully these people were faithful, and yet they failed. Certainly this is far better than doing nothing at all. But, if not this failure, other failures can be rooted to C4SO dysfunctionality.

Let me explain a bit more. Church planting that begins with the priority of numbers is wrong from the beginning. Anglican 1000, or whatever numeric equivalent nonsense, uses business language in order to accomplish business purposes. Or, if we want to be far more charitable, it uses business principles in order to accomplish kingdom priorities. As well, church planting that begins with a theology of attraction is also (at best) suspect. With such a priority we end up with pretty pastors with pretty parishioners who reach out to pretty people in order to enjoy a comfortable middle-class church. It is Orange County Theology to the core.



Where do we find this in Scripture? In fact we do not. We have far too many fashionable priests and purple-panting prelates. Too much glitter and too little guts!

Being Given Authority

Being with God gives us authority. God’s calling gives us authority. God’s sending leads to God’s authority. Just because we are intentional about the Great Commission does not mean we are inspired or empowered. God must call and God must commission. These, by God’s grace, are what we need. Authority resides within the Sender and in being obedient to the sending we have received. This is “success.”

Let me again restate the empowerment process as found in St. Mark 3:

- Being called
- Being with
- Being sent
- Being empowered.

To confuse these is to confound God’s priority and process.

When asked about the nature of success I have always said – and I think without exception – that success is entirely dependent upon obedience. John the Baptist was successful although, by strict human standards, he may not have had the head-count by which many assess success. The same might be said of our Lord Jesus Christ. The same must be said of us.

But do we actually believe that success is obedience? I think not. C4SO suggests otherwise. If we really did evaluate success based upon obedience, why so much emphasis upon attraction, numbers, and “for others”? Why, in fact, are dioceses evaluated upon the basis of “churches” and “finances”? Why is numeric visibility equated with spiritual viability? Why is vitality articulated numerically? There are many obedient and effective servants who have no church and generate little income but who are having tremendous impact for God. Numbers tell us little.

Although it could be argued that I know very little about C4SO orientations, I would encourage a response based upon both the words and the actions that C4SO adherents use and embrace. While I certainly am not a C4SO adherent, I do want our churches to move forward and grow -- but according to biblically revealed priorities, patterns and processes. Be “Missional,” by all means, but follow the Great Commission devoid of all the tedious trendiness that C4SO suggests.

FC

The Very Rev. Dr. Donald P. Richmond, a widely published author and monastic illustrator, is an Anglican clergyman serving with the Church of the Nazarene.

Will The Real Gabriel Please Stand Up?

By Fr. John Jordan

“Every time a bell rings, an Angel gets his wings.” So little Zuzu tells her daddy in the much loved Christmas movie “It’s a Wonderful Life.” We think of Clarence, an Angel (2nd class), earning his wings and, right along with Jimmy Stewart, we smile from ear to ear.

Angels are wonderful. Just a few months ago they came off of the tops of our Christmas trees. They stood near the Christ-Child in our nativity scenes. We pondered them singing “glory to God in the highest” out in the fields near Bethlehem. Back around Epiphany, we were packing away the Christmas decorations (yes, a little bit late) and I was sliding the angel Gabriel back into his styrofoam home for another 11 months, when a long-standing reality hit me: the angel Gabriel is a trouble maker.

At the root of two very different faith traditions, Christianity and Islam, stands an announcement made by Gabriel. For the Christian, Gabriel’s conversation with the Blessed Virgin Mary is really the pivotal moment in history. There, in the womb of Our Lady, God becomes a man. And for the Muslim, Gabriel’s conversation with the Prophet Muhammed in the Cave of Hira is truly the pivotal moment of history. There in the cave, according to Islamic tradition, Gabriel revealed the first verses of the Quran to Muhammed.

Two different conversations. Two very different versions of the Angelic message. Two completely different trajectories. One Angel.

My hand shaking a bit, the tape gun secured the styrofoam box and the climb to the attic began. I couldn’t shake the idea. How could such a beloved figure, God’s messenger to Daniel, to Zechariah, and of course to Mary, be thought of as the key source of Islam? Wouldn’t that be a bit like the Soviets inventing a tale about George Washington to give rise to their claims? The more I considered it, the more it bothered me.

One conversation leads to the birth of the Prince of Peace. The light shines in the darkness due to this child that Gabriel came to announce. Jesus “came and preached peace to those who are far off and those who are near.” (Eph. 2:17) He came to bring “good tidings to the poor, liberty to the captives” (Luke 4:18) and to bring God’s goodness and love to a world that desperately needed it. The result of Gabriel’s conversation with Our Lady is the person of Jesus Christ, whose life and teaching have been such a tremendous source of good in our world.

In the other conversation, the one with Muhammed, Gabriel begins a conversation with him, and him only. What follows over the next twenty-three years (A.D. 609-632) is an alleged series of private revelations from God to his greatest prophet Muhammed. These revelations, recorded in the Quran, become the basis for Islam and supersede the Bible, which Muslims believe to be corrupted. You see, Muslims hold that if the Quran tells a biblical story, something that had already been revealed by God, in a way that is in conflict with the actual biblical story, then it is the Quran that is correct, not the original narrative. This is true for



both the Old and New Testaments. For instance, Jesus does appear in the Quran in several places but in the Quran’s version, He is not divine and was not crucified. There is a story in the Quran of Jesus as an infant, in his cradle, speaking in complete sentences to defend his mother from accusations of fornication. The result of this “revelation” is that confusion reigns for many in their search for God.

This confusion is at the heart of the “Islamophobia” debate that rages in our own day. Of course everyone has an opinion on Donald Trump wanting to temporarily ban Muslims from entering the United States. Debates rage on every “news” program. I made the mistake a few months ago of watching Bill Maher’s program one night and it was a remarkable sight to see Ben Affleck laughably try to defend Muslim countries, despite being presented with the facts about their records on human rights. Several months ago in my own city of Southlake, Texas, I had a gentleman make an appointment with me to tell me that Muslims were taking over the City of Southlake Municipal Government and enacting Sharia Law. Confusion reigns.

And then there’s ISIS and their mission of death, which is closely tied to this confusion. To understand ISIS, we have to understand that the reason they are fighting is because they view themselves as center stage in the events of the apocalypse. In their view of the end times, which are coming shortly, they will rise in power for a period of time, take significant tracks of land, including most of the Middle East, and then be forced to retreat to Jerusalem, where right at their moment of defeat it will be Jesus who will come back to save them and help them win the battle. Yes, you read that right. In a very strange way, ISIS is expressing faith that Jesus Christ will come again on that last great day. They just believe he will be a fighter for ISIS. Confusion reigns.

While some mainstream Muslims would certainly reject this view of the end times, the view itself is on a trajectory

that can be traced back to that first conversation between Gabriel and Muhammed. All of it is part and parcel with the Islamic approach to Special Revelation. Muslims and Christians both believe that knowledge of God has been supernaturally given to humanity. God intervened in the normal course of events and disclosed something of His will or His relationship with humanity to chosen people. Christians believe the full revelation to be the person of Jesus Christ, God the Son. We believe that Jesus did not come to abolish the law and the prophets but to fulfill them. A key belief for Christians is that Jesus is the perfection of all that comes before Him. Jesus doesn't show up and start changing the stories of the Old Testament. He quotes Scripture and He quotes it faithfully.


However, Muhammed does not offer the same approach. Where Christ stands in the Judaic tradition, Muhammed stands against it. At the end of the day, the Muslim must conclude that the Bible just got these stories wrong. In the Quran, there are 50 different people that also appear in Holy Scripture and while not all of these people do drastically different things in the Quran's narratives, many of them do. Islam doesn't attempt to add to Judaism or Christianity, it attempts to change the Judeo-Christian tradition by re-writing some of the most important details of the story. No wonder confusion reigns. The same characters are present but they are doing different things. When they should zig, they zag. While Gabriel's greatest mission is supposed to be announcing the birth of Christ, instead it is when he's in a cave instructing Muhammed.

Ultimately, the two religions offer very different approaches to Special Revelation. Christians see a trajectory of God revealing himself to many throughout Scripture. We see the Bible as a unified revelation, a whole, with a Father who makes promises in the Old Testament and then keeps them in the New Testament. Even beyond the pages of Holy Scripture Christians take this approach. John Henry Newman observed this in his seminal work, *An Essay on the development of Christian Doctrine*. He wrote that one of the very key pieces of information the Christian should look for in determining whether a particular doctrine of Christianity is true, is whether or not it evolves, according to reason, from something that God has spoken or taught before. In other words, the believer asks, "Is there a natural evolution?"

Is this particular doctrine in line with something inspired by God in the past?"

For the Muslim, however, this is not at all a necessary or even desired view of Special Revelation. God revealed himself not to many, but to Muhammed alone, who tells the story of how God interacted with all of the others. Yes, in the Islamic tradition there are other prophets, but only in as much as Muhammed thinks they were prophets. There are even other revelations, such as the Torah, but only in as much as Muhammed wants to reveal them. Certainly, God interacts with His people but Muhammed offers the only key to unlock those interactions.

Islam and Christianity are obviously very different, with very different doctrines and very different versions of the story of God interacting with man. However, it is the foundations of these faiths themselves that provide the most interesting and troublesome juxtaposition to me. Christianity claims as its foundation that God reveals Himself to many in a unified way; that God then incarnates and fulfills that revelation. Islam's foundation is God revealing Himself to one man and that revelation superseding, and even contradicting in several instances, everything else.

Right from this starting point, from the very beginning, the foundations are in dissonance and that leads the unchurched person who searches for God to much confusion. As Islam gains a stronger footing in the West and our secular culture continues headlong into its post-Christian era, there will be many who will be perplexed upon examining this evidence. After all, the same angel is cited as a key authority in both religions. As Christians seeking to fulfill the Great Commission, we need to offer clarity about the very foundations of these religions themselves. Without that, many will be led astray at worst, or confused at best. It would be a sad thing to lay all of this confusion at the feet of the poor angel Gabriel but it does all go back to those turning point conversations with him. Gabriel is a much loved figure in both religions and yet he is caught in a tug of war. Standing at center stage of two religion's vital moments, one has to choose which Gabriel they trust. Will the real Angel Gabriel please stand up? 

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News From Down Under

Br. Ned Gerber Reports From Australasia

Refugees: The topic of political refugees - versus "economic migrants" - continues to be a big issue in the USA presidential debates, and in the European Union. Australia's policy of "turning back" illegal boats has been much discussed. Before this occurred, many made the dangerous journey to Australia (AUS) illegally on the open sea, often in old vessels. Approximately 2,000 are known to have tragically drowned, probably including many women/children. The AUS Government stopped this by publicly saying that those who come illegally will be re-settled in offshore camps, and eventually returned to either their

original countries or to a third (neutral) nation. At the same time, AUS has continued to receive a fairly high intake of legal refugees, often via UN protocols. These persons are settled in Australia, given benefits, and helped towards eventual citizenship. Though this topic is not historically a focus of the FiF Movement, we believe it is good to "discern the times" (as Jesus commanded) and



comment from a Biblical perspective.

We believe the Old Testament policy of “cities of refuge” (Num. 35:9ff.) could be helpful. Persons could flee to these places for sanctuary if, for example, they had committed unintentional manslaughter. The cities of refuge would then - at least temporarily - open their gates until each case could be properly heard. But criminals who wrongly fled there were not allowed to permanently settle. Once a refugee is properly admitted, Biblical teaching is clear. We must love and care for the “alien in our midst” (Deut. 10:18-19). However, we should also be prudent in whom we admit in the first place.

2016 FiF Australasia Annual Conference: The keynote speaker this year will be Primate Anis of Egypt, North Africa and the Middle East. He will be welcomed to the Sydney Cathedral, and will address two topics: (1) The challenge to Christianity of radical Islam (since ISIS is very active in Anis’ Province); and also, (2) The proper role of Primates in the Anglican Church and the Conciliar Movement, with special reference to the Primates Meeting in England. A Dinka African member of Forward in Faith Australasia’s Executive Council will also present a case study on what is happening to the Church in South Sudan, with the lessons provided on the need for deep discipleship that transcends tribal boundaries. Br. Ned Gerber will give the homily at Holy Communion, focusing on the exegesis of Acts 15 as the first, so-called “Proto-Council” in the Body of Christ. This will now be the third Primate who has been featured in Australasia, with other Bishops and Archbishops also coming to Annual Conferences from S. E. Asia, Africa, England and North America.

Cooperation with the AUS Primate: FiF Australasia is pleased to again be working in cooperation with the Most Rev. Freier, Primate of Australia and Archbishop of Melbourne. Primate Freier will be hosting Archbishop Anis later this year in his own home, and will welcome him to Melbourne’s Cathedral, where he will present the second day of the FiF Annual Conference Program. This is now the fourth program where Primate Freier has helpfully assisted

FiF with its efforts. (Primate Freier is careful to note that he holds a different view at present on women’s ministry than the international FiF Movement. However, he has invited open and sincere discussion of this, and welcomes the witness of the FiF Movement in the wider Anglican Church.)

Membership Database: Phillip Maas, the President of FiF Australia - a Liturgist/Musician who trained at the Sydney Conservatory - continues to develop the database here. In the modern era, such electronic back-up has become vital to member support, mailings and fund-raising efforts. By God’s grace, the FiF Movement in Australia, New Zealand and areas beyond will have a core of close to 500 people including Members (pay dues), Supporters (haven’t yet paid dues, but come to programs and register or give offerings), and Other. (“Other” in the local database includes future contacts, persons who have transferred to other Communion, etc.) The process of receiving 2016 dues is also beginning now. Thanks be to God, records from 2015 show that the database has been exceptionally helpful in staying in touch with many friends and associates. During 2015, between 40-50% of all persons so contacted, who paid dues, also made an extra contribution for this ministry, usually without prompting.

Future Programs: God willing, FiF Australasia plans two future parish programs in Australia and/or New Zealand - and possibly East Africa. One will address the “Genius of Genesis” - and focus on how we can be sure the first book in the canon is divinely inspired. (After all, it includes critical texts on sin, salvation, the proper foundation for marriage, etc.) The other will address “Rule of Life” - and focus on how we can encourage believers, especially those in weak or heterodox settings, to maintain a vibrant spiritual life. It will draw from the Rule of St. Benedict, Biblical admonitions on prayer, study, the sacraments and ministry to the poor, and various Tertiary Programs such as that of the Third Order of the Franciscans.

Br. Ned Kerber is Prior of the Anglican Benedictines of Christ the King and VP FiF Australasia.

What is Anglo-Catholicism?

Two priests comment on Anglo-Catholic Identity

Fr. Will Brown

At first glance, Anglo-Catholicism would appear to be a contradiction in terms. The first half of the construction, “Anglo,” (from which we get the more familiar word “English”) refers to the cultural-linguistic patrimony of one tribe of the gentiles who migrated to Britain from their previous home near the Elbe river, around what is today the border between Germany and Denmark, filling the vacuum left by the Roman withdrawal from Britain, as the Roman Empire shrank into itself in the 5th Century, thus inaugurating the European “dark ages” or “medieval” period, and eventually forming what would come to be called “Angle-land” or England.

The second half of “Anglo-Catholicism” - “Catholicism” - is usually said to connote “universality,” and derives from the Greek prefix “kata,” meaning roughly “in accord with” or “with respect to,” and “holos,” meaning “the whole.” Hence the term “Anglo-Catholicism” would appear to connote at once something relating to a very particular cultural space, and something universal, something by definition transcending any cultural particularity.

The trouble in determining what Anglo-Catholicism is, though, extends well beyond that posed by philological considerations such as the above. In a world like ours that discriminates powerfully in favor of individual autonomy, one is hard-pressed to regard any particular definition of any-

thing over another, and hence we are presented with almost as many understandings of what “Anglo-Catholicism” means as there are Anglo-Catholics. And here, by the way, we can see a fault line running between the competing claims of the liberal political order on the one hand, and of the Gospel on the other hand. Both purport to be all-encompassing, “catholic,” if you will, arbiters of individual conscience.

Be that as it may, a broad and therefore minimally controversial, working definition of Anglo-Catholicism might be something like: that tradition, generally found within English Christianity and its colonial offshoots, that prizes the theological and devotional heritage of the Catholic Church. Conspicuous features of the Anglo-Catholic tradition are more easily discernible when they stand in contrast to other traditions of English Christianity. Hence one might note hallmarks like the use of incense during the liturgy, devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary and the saints, prayers for the dead, and the use of devotional aids common among Christians worldwide, but more rare in traditions emanating from the Reformation: the rosary, holy water, candles, sacred images and statues and the like. Anglo-Catholics tend also to hold in high regard those traditions of the universal Church which have been maintained by Anglicans more broadly: the liturgy of the Eucharist, the divine office, the authority of sacred scripture, and the offices of the priesthood and episcopacy (as well as the diaconate).

We should notice and name the fact that all of the foregoing hallmarks of Anglo-Catholicism are entailed by an anterior, tacit commitment to a “high” view of the Church as a mediator of God’s grace, an affirmation of the Lord’s words to St. Peter: “...I will build my church, and the powers of death shall not prevail against it,” (Matthew 16.18). In this affirmation we may discern one of the most fundamental truths of catholic Christianity: that God came to earth in the person of Jesus Christ, and that he established a (single) Church; and that, in the words of the old marriage rite, he worshipped her (!) with his body on the cross, and endowed her with all that he rightfully has and all that he by nature is – and he is “the way, the truth, and the life,” (John 14.6). Hence Anglo-Catholics discern in the economy of the Church – in her liturgy, her prayers, her teaching – the way, the truth, and the life.

Many Anglo-Catholics also appreciate the reserve with which Anglicanism has spoken of itself in its official formularies. The Constitution of the General Convention of the Episcopal Church, for example, speaks of the Episcopal Church not as “the Church,” but as a “member of... a fellowship within the... Church.” Such commendable reserve relativizes and contextualizes our allegiances. In the words of the older version of the Nicene Creed, “I believe one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church.” I may or may not believe some smaller aggregation within the one Church. And when some smaller aggregation appears to be at odds with what the one Church teaches around the world and across time, the allegiances of Anglo-Catholics tend to be with the one Church. In previous generations such divided loyalties were manifest around questions of Eucharistic theology, or the appropriateness of various vestments, or whether candles could or should be placed on the altar. Not surprisingly, today’s loyalties tend to be divided over today’s controversies, for example around questions of gender (the ordination of



women) and sexuality (same-sex marriage). Despite the Anglo-Catholic position’s having been vindicated with respect to the ritual controversies of yesteryear, the diminished and beleaguered status of Anglo-Catholics within Anglicanism today bears witness to our Lord’s words: “Sufficient for the day is its own trouble,” (Matthew 6.34).

Many books have been written about other facets of Anglo-Catholicism. Over the past two centuries it has emerged as a faction in its own right within Anglicanism – initially comprised of the disciples of its first expositors in the Oxford Movement, men like John Keble, John Henry Newman, E.B. Pusey, Charles Lowder, and Arthur Tooth, among many others. And it has divided further into sub-factions – Prayer Book Catholics, Anglo-Papalists, Dearmerites, Tridentines and, lately, liberal-minded “Affirming” Catholics, and Traditionalists. Noteworthy also are those who have left Anglicanism altogether, looking to the rock from which they were hewn and the quarry from which they were dug (cf. Isaiah 51.1), and returned to full, visible communion with the See of Peter, forming the “Anglican Ordinariates” of the Roman Catholic Church.

There is an obvious irony in the division of Christians into factions, and factions of factions, and factions of factions of factions – all ostensibly in the quest for a more integral unity. It is some small consolation to notice that such tensions between locality and universality appear to run down to the roots of the Church. St. Paul, for example, speaks in the opening verses of both of his letters to the Corinthians, of “the [one] church of God” which, notwithstanding its universality, “is at Corinth.” Just so, even though the one Church is the “pillar and bulwark of the truth,” (1 Tim. 3.15), the Son of Man castigates various aggregations within it for various teachings and practices that are at variance with the whole (“catholic”) truth (see Revelation 2).

To my mind there are two primary charisms that Anglo-

Catholics might offer the broader body of Christians. The first is a careful solicitude for tradition, for the teaching and the devotional practices we have received from our forbears in the faith down through the centuries. Anglo-Catholics have a reputation for punctiliousness and conservatism, but at its best this is just an eagerness to be careful custodians of what we have received, a recognition that the faith does not belong to us but that we have been tasked with guarding what has been entrusted to us (cf. 1 Timothy

6.20). The second charism exemplified by Anglo-Catholicism at its best is a recognition of the primacy of worship in the life of the Church. The worship of God has always had pride of place in the life of God's people, stretching right back to Genesis. And Anglo-Catholics, again at their best, have a strong intuition of this being so. The Church may be about many things – helping the poor, mission and evangelism, Bible study, prophetic action, community building, and the like – and it should be noted that Anglo-Catholics have been

on the vanguard of all of these things down through the years – but insofar as we are the congregation of the faithful, our primary “bounden duty and service” is the worship of God in the person of Jesus Christ.

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Fr. John Alexander

Since our position is often described as “high-church,” we can summarize some of the essentials of Anglo-Catholic spirituality in the following nine “high” views:

1. A High View of God. Anglo-Catholic worship at its best cultivates a sense of reverence, awe, and mystery in the presence of the Holy One before whom even the angels in heaven veil their faces.

2. A High View of Creation. At the same time, we delight in the beauty of God's creation. The Anglo-Catholic view of the world is highly sacramental, seeing signs of God's presence and goodness everywhere in the things that he has made. In worship, we gather up the best of creation—as reflected in art, craftsmanship, music, song, flowers, incense, etc.—and offer it all back up to God.

3. A High View of the Incarnation. Our salvation began when Christ took flesh in the womb of the Virgin Mary. God became man in order to transform human existence through participation in his divine life. The Collect for the Second Sunday after Christmas expresses the Anglo-Catholic vision perfectly:

“O God, who wonderfully created, and yet more wonderfully restored, the dignity of human nature: grant that we may share the divine life of him who humbled himself to share our humanity, your Son



Jesus Christ...”

4. A High View of the Atonement. An authentic Anglo-Catholicism looks not only to Christ's Incarnation but also to his Sacrifice. The image of Jesus on the cross reminds us of the depth and horror of human sin, and of the price that God has paid for our redemption. Anglo-Catholic spirituality entails a lifelong process of turning from sin and towards God. Many Anglo-Catholics find the Sacrament of Penance an indispensable aid in this process.

5. A High View of the Church. We come to share in the divine life of the risen and ascended Christ by being incorporated through Baptism into his Body, the Church. Thus, we regard the

universal Church neither as an institution of merely human origin, nor as a voluntary association of individual believers, but as a wonderful mystery, a divine society, a supernatural organism, whose life flows to its members from its head, Jesus Christ, in the power of the Holy Spirit.

6. A High View of the Communion of Saints. The Church, moreover, consists not only of all Christians now alive on earth (the Church Militant), but also of the Faithful Departed, who continue to grow in the knowledge and love of God (the Church Expectant), and of the Saints in Heaven, who have reached their journey's end (the Church Triumphant). We have fellowship with all who live in Christ. Anglo-Catholicism

thus affirms the legitimacy of praying for the dead, and of asking the Saints in Heaven for their prayers.

7. A High View of the Sacraments. We believe that Jesus Christ really and truly communicates his life, presence, and grace to us in the Seven Sacraments, thus enabling us to give our lives to God and our neighbor in faith, hope, and love. Holy Baptism establishes our identity once for all as children of God and heirs of the Kingdom of Heaven (although we can by our own free choice repudiate this inheritance). And in the Holy Eucharist, Christ becomes objectively present in the Blessed Sacrament of His Body and Blood. Eucharistic adoration is thus an integral component of Anglo-Catholic spirituality and devotion.

8. A High View of Holy Orders. Since the days of the Oxford Movement, Anglo-Catholicism has borne witness that the threefold ministry of Bishops, Priests, and Deacons in Apostolic Succession is God-given. The validity of our sacraments, and the fullness of our participation in the life of the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church, depend upon

our faithful stewardship of this divine gift. For this reason, innovations threatening the authenticity of our apostolic orders must be resisted at all costs.

9. A High View of Anglicanism. We affirm that the Anglican Churches are truly part of Christ's Holy Catholic Church. The prophetic vocation of Anglo-Catholicism has been to bear witness to the catholicity of Anglicanism. Yet it can be an uncomfortable vocation that requires us to take unpopular stands against developments that threaten this catholicity. Since the days of the Oxford Movement, our standard has been the faith and practice of the ancient, undivided Church. Our vocation as Anglo-Catholics remains one of holding ourselves, and our Anglican institutions, accountable to the higher authority of the universal Church.

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