

## THE OLD BELIEVER 7

### EDITORIAL

#### *The parting of friends*

The last rites of the former Church of England are all but complete. The year since Synod voted to abandon the Apostolic Ministry has ended in a failed challenge to the decision in the High Court and in its acceptance by both Houses of Parliament. These decisions have paved the way for the "priesting" of women to become enshrined within Canon Law. This is expected on 22nd February. Invalid ordinations could be as early as March.

The Traditional Church of England is no longer an idea, but a fact of life. Places of worship are being found. Over fifty priests already hold licences from the Traditional Anglican Communion.

Our decision to perpetuate true Anglican practice is not a threat but a promise - a promise made before God (blessed be He) at our baptism. In taking the Creed upon our unworthy lips we pledged forever our allegiance to the "Holy, Catholic Church" and the "Communion of Saints". The newly-minted mixed priesthood negates both. Are we to be faithful to Dr. Carey or to our baptism?

#### *Wine into Water*

"Traditionalists" have missed a great opportunity by failing to act together to restore our Church under a bishop of the stature of Graham Leonard or Lunn of Sheffield. People would have identified with decisive belief and action. Funds would have flooded in. We would have risen from the ashes as a phoenix.

Instead we found ostriches and headless chickens. The former buried their heads in the sand, the latter lost with their heads their memories of past mercies and their sense of their Anglican inheritance - and simply bolted for the nearest available Church.

This behaviour was justified as finding the best 'option', as if *submitting* to the theology and discipline of another communion were as trivial as changing one's washing powder. This revealed that too many traditionalists were as theologically bankrupt as the modernists. They were traditionalist in opposing priestesses, but not in affirming all that was Patristic or Catholic within Anglican history, practice and teaching.

Naturally the press and broadcasters colluded with the established church in posing a stark choice - either accept the situation (with or without those mysterious low-flying bishops) or submit to Rome (the post-Conciliar centralism of the Pope, not the traditionalists). Nothing was said of more conservative churches. Typically, the recent Roman convert Ann Widdicombe MP asserted at a debate on 8th November that her Evangelical brother *had nowhere else to go*. Why not the Free Church of England? Why not the Traditional Church of England? Or even the A.C.C. "Missionary Diocese"? It was a neat trick to highlight Rome and obscure the traditionalist churches.

The establishment is succeeding in representing us as the offenders, the schismatics and the 'problem children'. But God is not mocked. It asks "Why cause all this division and unhappiness?"

Apart from the theological issues, our answer is simple and principled: how morally can anyone support any group, let alone a church, when one has no confidence in it, but believes that its teachings and claims (after it has done a spectacular U-turn) are now false? How could

this be morally or intellectually honest or healthy? We are not silly donkeys, but thinking people!

#### *Running away*

The headless chickens claim that to join other existing churches is the way of unity. Maybe, had we all moved together. As it is, this option has simply led to fragmentation, as they splintered into factions favouring different existing communions. A strange unity!

At the time of writing, no serious "Roman" option is available except individual submission. The main practical alternatives to a Continuing Church seem either "Western Rite Orthodoxy" or some nugatory mishmash of the Third Province and the Flying Bishops. The former is Western Christianity with huge chapters torn out - denying the cultus and status of such great saints as Francis of Assisi and Thomas Aquinas as well as by-passing much in the later Eastern tradition; denying also much of the Anglican tradition including the Three Creeds. Newman criticised the "via media" (wrongly, we assert) as *sleeping in libraries*. Western Orthodoxy displays even less continuity.

#### *Mr. Micawber's creed*

We must be careful about those "Flying Bishops". Should they be consecrated by bishops indubitably of the Church of God, and should they then come to lead a continuing Church, with a clearly separate life and order, M.C.C.E. may well want to be part of this, but that is not the synod's plan and we must be able to function as a Church by February. We cannot wait in case pigs fly; for that is what the ostrich option means. The latest Newsletter of the Third Province Movement states that "*The Third Province must be a part of the Church of England or at least a Province of the Anglican Communion... otherwise [it] would be no more than an independent or 'continuing church.'*" How bathetic a conclusion! Either a communion stands for the Apostolic faith or it betrays it (Matthew 12:30). Can valid orders and sacraments be perpetuated in an invalid church? Can what is clean come from what is unclean?

Sacraments do not exist in a vacuum but are built on faith, intention and continuity. Prebendary Donald Bames (Synod 9th November) highlighted the glaring inconsistency that the "flying bishops" would be appointed "*for no other reason than that they oppose the canon law which they have been ordained to administer*".

The High Court has now established that the General Synod does have the power to change belief. A blank cheque has been presented for limitless change. The Church of England has been exchanged for Dr. Carey's Cult. The synodical bishops (and the "flying bishops" must be numbered amongst them until they break all fellowship with error) will no longer be successors of the Apostles, but bland ecclesiastical civil servants. They will no longer be empowered to preach the Apostolic Faith and to drive away strange doctrine. We leave them to preside over chaos and to "manage decline".

#### **End of Page 1 of the original ORTHODOXY AND THE CONTINUUM**

**Joseph P Farrell D. Phil.**

*This article is continued from Old Believer VI. In the first part, Dr. Farrell showed that there were difficulties*

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*in viewing the various Orthodox groupings as One or Holy.*

*Catholic: or The Rhodes to Eames*

From October 30th to November 8th, 1988, the Ecumenical Patriarchate sponsored a conference in Rhodes which issued a statement clumsily entitled "The place of Women in the Orthodox Church and the Question of the Ordination of Women". This document, more than any other, gives perhaps the most sobering picture of the state of world Orthodoxy, particularly because it is the product not simply of North American, but of European Orthodox academies.

It is remarkable for its equivocal use of language. "All Christians, women and men, must come into personal communion (koinonia,) with Christ, who shows no discrimination towards us, for He is the Saviour of each and all in total disregard of any humanly based discriminations."

There are at least two points here that must strike the orthodox Anglican as disturbing. First the use of the word "discrimination", which has been understood, at least in this instance only in the adelpated sense that American society understands it, as the unfair treatment of a person, racial group, minority etc., or an action based upon such prejudice. But it can also mean the ability to discern distinctions and differences. Thus, and secondly, the statement that Our Lord is Saviour "in total disregard of any humanly based discriminations" is manifestly docetic, for it implies a disembodied salvation of an androgynous humanity which does not exist.

That the Rhodes statement does have in mind an intentional equivocation is made clear by paragraph 22: "Witnessing the tragic dehumanisation which we often encounter in our contemporary society, the Orthodox are bound to affirm in the strongest possible way the dignity of the human person, both the female and the male. Any act which denies the dignity of the human person and any act which discriminates against women and men on the basis of gender is a sin."

Here it is important to note not only the equivocation but the fact that those acts which deny the dignity of the human person have been left undefined. Conceivably, if enough like-minded people were in enough positions of influence, one such act might in the future be understood to be the denial of ordination to women. Consequently, the document does leave open, at least theoretically at this one point, a dangerous loophole. This is no idle speculation, for in three devastating paragraphs the Rhodes statement takes aim at the very hierarchical organisation of the Church:

"26. The Church should re-examine potential data, views and actions which do not agree with her unshakeable theological and ecclesiological principles, but have intruded from outside and, being in fact perpetuated, may be interpreted as demeaning towards women.

27. Moreover, the necessity for a specific delimitation of roles in the Church should be emphasised, especially in matters pertaining to ecclesiastical organisation. The Orthodox underline spiritual authority rather than temporal power. When we speak about authority in the Church, we are in no way advocating a sort of bureaucratic organisational clericalism, but rather we are emphasising a special charism in the Church.

28. It follows that when we speak of roles in the Church, we speak of special gifts, (charismata) of the Holy Spirit to be received with gratitude, rather than what may be interpreted as administrative 'ranks' to be enforced by a hierarchical structure. We should here note the importance of highlighting the pastoral dimension that is ours to address issues raised by orthodox women:' (sic)

And as if that were not enough, the statement continues by taking note of the fact that there is "an increasing number of women who are graduates of theology and other fields of advanced study in certain Churches", a situation which the Church is "called to consider constructively". One such constructive response, the statement goes on to suggest, would be to revive the apostolic order of deaconess.

This "revived order" will, it notes, "not be solely restricted to a purely liturgical role or considered to be a mere step on the way" to the priesthood. And all of this is to be guised in a new language tailored and softened to facilitate dialogue "with our non-Orthodox partners", whether "other Christians within the ecumenical environment, non-Christians, atheists, or advocates of specific ideologies and trends of thought".

Given this linguistic agenda, it is not surprising, therefore, that the language of the King James Bible and liturgical English have to go, as a careful reading of paragraph 39 implies: "The issues raised by the feminist movement should be considered by us Orthodox with all reservations and vigilance in their totality as well as in the particular aspects stated by great feminist initiatives such as the following(a) the use of inclusive language which should not be taken lightly by us within concrete limits, (b) The emphasis placed by feminists on the exegesis of specific biblical texts especially in the Pauline writings"

Here, in a fashion approaching the degree of "impaired communion" of the Eames Commission's statement, the Rhodes conference has managed the metaphysically impossible by appearing both to condemn and to accept "great feminist initiatives" such as inclusive language and feminist "hermeneutics of suspicion" regarding Saint Paul.

*Catholic: or COCU, Eastern Style*

One would think that the *Affirmation of Saint Louis* would have sparked some ecumenical interest on the part of the Orthodox Church in initiating dialogue with the Anglican Continuum in the hopes that the promising theological basis of the Continuum would not be allowed to fall into desuetude, and that the Orthodox Church might gain at least a practical basis from which to consider the cultural problems it faces in being Orthodox in a western context. Certainly practical considerations prevented both parties from engaging each other at an official level.

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But there are other reasons which perhaps hover in the background, not the least of which is that to have done so might have proven to be profoundly embarrassing for the modernist Orthodox jurisdictions which are heavily involved in an ecumenical scheme to bring about the union of the Orthodox and Coptic Churches.

Lest I be misunderstood in what now follows, I wish again to make it very clear that I have no intention of

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impugning the intensity of devotion and genuine piety which Coptic Christians possess, nor to diminish their patience and suffering in the hostile context in which many of them live in Africa and the Near East.

My focus is here, as elsewhere, on the underlying principles by which the Orthodox hope to bring about the hoped-for union. In this perspective, the statements of the Orthodox Church and the Coptic Church begin to resonate with the dissonance of COCU statements.

The essence of the dialogue is that for fifteen hundred years, the Copts and Orthodox have been victims respectively of mutual misunderstanding. The Orthodox, who accept the definition of the Fourth Ecumenical Council of Chalcedon that Christ is one person in two natures, are not really Nestorians (as the Copts thought them to be), nor are the Copts, who reject the Fourth Ecumenical Council and teach that Christ is both one person *and one nature* really Monophysites (as the Orthodox thought them to be).

This presents the ecumenists in each camp with an almost insurmountable difficulty. For the Copts, Severus of Antioch is a saint, and commemorated as such in their liturgy. For the Orthodox, Severus was excommunicated and a heretic. The two problems, then, are what to do with the Fourth (and by implication Fifth, Sixth and Seventh) Ecumenical Council, and what to do with each others' saints.

The problem of the Council of Chalcedon is neatly dispatched with the argument that the sole dispute was only over words and terminology, an argument which the Orthodox often hear from the West regarding the *filioque*:

(A distinction is to be made) "*not only between the doctrinal definitions and canonical legislations of a Council, but also between the true intention of the dogmatic definition of a Council and the particular terminology in which it is expressed, which latter has less authority than its intention.*

*. . . the Church has always the authority to clarify the decisions of a Council, in accordance with its true intention*

*... Each council brings forth or emphasises some special aspect of the one Truth, and should therefore be seen as stages on the way to a fuller articulation of the truth."*(1) Thus, it will be the "*responsibility of the Church Uniting as guardian of the apostolic Tradition ... as part of its preaching and teaching office . . . to confess and communicate from time to time the substance of the faith in new language.*" (2) Therefore, it falls within the competence of this "Church Uniting" to undo all those aspects of liturgical practice which serve to distinguish the Coptic and Orthodox Churches: "*The editing of liturgical texts and hymns to eliminate the condemnations is but part of the task of liturgical renewal. We need also to make use of the infinite variety and richness of our liturgical traditions, so that each church can be enriched by the heritage of others.*" (3)

I have deliberately cited each of these documents out of context and sequence in order to make the point that the assumptions and methods underlying COCU and the Orthodox/Coptic dialogue are one and the same, for without the benefit of the footnotes, to which ecumenical discussion group would one assign each quotation? To COCU? To the WCC? Or even to an ecumenical meeting of Roman Catholics and Anglicans?

Nor is the matter a small one, for the greatest of Orthodox theologian saints, Maximus the Confessor, wrote voluminously - and suffered unspeakable cruelties for precisely his stand - against a similar such proposal in his day. The Orthodox participants in this dialogue are, in other words, willing to turn their backs on the theological and spiritual witness of one of the Church's most brilliant saints and theologians. Presumably this is why the WCC statements also call for a "*rewriting of Church history and textbooks*"!

*Apostolic: Ecumenical Patriarch,  
Eastern Pope ?*

Doubtless many traditionalist Roman Catholics and Orthodox were dismayed by the recent appearance of the former Patriarch of Constantinople, Demenios, in Rome on the papal balcony, giving the traditional papal blessing *urbi et orbi*, implying as it does the papacy's claims to universal and supreme jurisdiction. Indeed, the Ecumenical Patriarchate in recent years has assumed an increasingly "papal" tone in its dealings with its brother bishops.

For example. Patriarch Athenagoras, widely hailed for his "lifting" of the anathemas against Rome, wrote to Metropolitan (later Patriarch) Pimen in 1970 that "*our Church of Constantinople ... as the mother Church . . . is at the centre of the internal unity of the entire Orthodox Church*". These assertions are unquestionably "papal" in their conceptions.

Equally illuminating of the state of Orthodox ecclesiology is the reply of the Russian Church to Athenagoras. Metropolitan Pimen replied that "*we cannot avoid in connection with the ... assertion of Your Holiness' letter, to declare again, clearly and categorically, that the primacy of honour, which... belongs to the Throne of Constantinople, does not give her any basis for ... a position of power. In addition, we consider that the centre of the internal unity of ... churches (is) to be found in Our Lord Jesus Christ. We do not consider that the revered Throne of the Patriarch of Constantinople is an indispensable mediator ...*" Indeed such was the position of the Ecumenical Patriarchs themselves earlier in the century, when responding to me Pope's invitations to submit to Rome. And this position is quite similar to the traditional Anglican statements of episcopacy, as for example Bishop John Cosin's affirmation that "*we differ totally from [Roman Catholics] (as they do from the ancient Catholic Church) in these points: 1, that the Church of Rome is the Mother and Mistress of all other Churches in the world. 2, that the pope of Rome is the Vicar-general of Christ, or that he hath an universal jurisdiction.*"

That the Ecumenical Patriarchate has taken on such a tone in recent decades is a symptom of the disorder that lies beneath the seemingly calm surface of Orthodoxy, for in a dogmatic situation that grows increasingly more chaotic, there are only two ways to restore order either by a restoration of unity in truth, or by the imposition of authority.

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#### *A Personal Conclusion*

The foregoing is a personal view of the situation of contemporary Orthodoxy. It is incumbent upon me therefore to state explicitly that it is not a view that one will readily encounter in the Orthodox Church. Indeed,

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outside of traditionalist Orthodox jurisdictions one will be hard pressed to find it stated from the point of view of the underlying assumptions and tactics of apostasy as I have attempted to do here, for such a view implies a genuinely ecumenical point of view, one which nevertheless is not interested in compromise. This brief survey is, while a personal view, nevertheless a considered view.

With this in mind, I beg the reader's indulgence to offer what is now strictly a personal view of the course of action which Continuing Anglicans might consider.

If one converts to Orthodoxy, be aware that the picture the longer one is in it, and the more familiarly one studies it, is hardly ideal. Orthodoxy in most cases is heavily involved in and influenced by the modernist trends in the ecumenical movement. It is even less immune to the effects of western Biblical Criticism than is the West. Its real ecclesiastical situation is one of profound division over fundamental issues involving the Divine Liturgy, holy Orders and even, as we say in the case of the Orthodox/Coptic "dialogue", Christology. If one chooses to convert, therefore, do so, but do so with eyes wide open, and fully convinced of the fundamental truth of Orthodoxy, which will ultimately prevail by the grace of God. Be aware that one will eventually be struggling with the same types of issues even in Orthodoxy. The *sole* motivation for conversion to Orthodoxy should therefore be *truth*. Merely to escape whatever one seeks to escape is not a sufficient basis for such a momentous step, for it denies both to Orthodoxy and to Anglicanism their real and genuine uniqueness. It is in effect to accept the same minimalist principles of truth and ministry that so often characterise the modernism one seeks to escape. If anything, conversion to Orthodoxy will sharpen, and not diminish, one's perception of the serious state of all the churches and intensify one's own personal efforts to live "against the world".

Equally, the Continuum cannot simply strive to maintain the status quo of Anglicanism as it was before the Continuum came into existence. I believe, and I believe profoundly, that the ambiguities inherent in Anglicanism led ultimately to the crisis which gave birth to the Continuum. I believe the *Affirmation of Saint Louis* was one of the most timely documents to be produced by any church in the twentieth century and I believe that it was so because in it a conscious theological effort was made to resolve those and that the effort was largely successful. And I believe the vision that the *Affirmation* offered was one of a Western Orthodoxy. I would respectfully suggest that the full theological implications of the *Affirmation* be patiently and prayerfully considered by Continuing Anglicans, with full realisation that those implications will, over time and if acted upon from parish to parish and diocese to diocese, gradually change the theological character of Anglicanism and strengthen its liturgical ethos. This would require a careful, patient, diligent, prayerful and deliberate theological work, and two examples might help to illustrate what I mean.

Continuing Anglican once asked me if it was not the clear implication of the *Affirmation* that the *filioque* was an amendment, alteration and suppression of the original faith of the ancient undivided Church. I responded that of course this was an implication. But more importantly,

I pointed out that Anglican liturgical worship tends quite often to be binitarian, and not Trinitarian, which is one implication the Orthodox have always seen in the interpolation. Reflect for a moment how often does one hear prayers concluded through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen"? In point of fact, the phrase is a kind of liturgical shorthand. I observed that all Orthodox prayer is always Trinitarian in form; each of the Divine Persons is always mentioned in prayer. If the same rule were rigorously followed, the collects would end "through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen", which is what the liturgical "shorthand" is intended to communicate.

The *Affirmation* does contain within it the ambiguity of supporting the interpolation by its authorisation of the "Athanasian" Creed. The new ambiguity facing the Continuum is therefore which *type* of Catholic theology it ultimately endorses. Make no mistake, the two Trinitarian doctrines, *as doctrines*, are mutually exclusive and not merely alternative "models" of the same truth.

Classical Anglican formularies have always expressed the genuinely Catholic nature of truth. Bishop Cosins gave a preview of the *Affirmation* when he wrote "*If the Roman Catholics would make the essence of their Church (as we do ours) to consist in these following points, we are at accord with them in the reception and believing of . . . All the decrees of faith and doctrine set forth as well in the first four General Councils, as in all other Councils, which those first four approved and confirmed, and in the fifth and sixth General Councils besides (than which we find no more to be General), and in all the following Councils that be thereunto agreeable, and in all the anathemas and condemnations given out by those Councils against heretics, for the defence of the Catholic Faith; The unanimous and general consent of the ancient Catholic Fathers and the universal Church of Christ in the interpretation of the Holy Scriptures, and the collection of all necessary matters of Faith from them during the first six hundred years, and downwards to our own days.*"

This if acted upon as the Continuum establishes its seminaries and curricula, as the rich witness of the Latin and Greek Catholic Fathers, which Anglicanism did so much to promote, begins to work into the minds and hearts of the Anglican clergy and faithful, will resolve of itself the issue of the *filioque* and other outstanding difference between Anglicanism and Orthodoxy. This, I realise, is a vision not all Anglicans or Orthodox will share or readily accept, but it is a way forward. You have the means and the opportunity and the precedents within your own tradition to pursue it. Rome is no alternative, for Rome is institutionally wedded to a doctrine which prevents this type of renewal.

And if I may offer one last observation, let no one belittle what the Continuum has done, nor the tradition which it seeks to renew, as many, I know, in the Orthodox Church tend to do. The fact that the Continuum exists at all is an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace- it takes divine aid to combat the type of vicious institutional apostasy which overtook the Episcopal Church, and to break formally with a beloved institution. Trust in that grace, that the Continuum's very first theological formulation was

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sound it its motivation and the direction it implies, and move forward from there.

1. WCC Does Chalcedon Divide or Unite?
2. COCU The COCU Consensus
3. WCC again. What are these others?

### End of Page 4 of the original LUX MUNDI OR LUX MUNDANA

*A comment by Michael Gray*

What are our choices after Parliament and the October synod? Much depends on how we assess what is now on offer. Is this a worldly compromise, designed to keep us in and paying for the Church Commissioners' errors? Or is it a following of the Light of the World?

We might say it is so obviously worldly that the Holy Spirit is no longer guiding the Church. We might indeed add that the financial losses are a judgement of God. The honesty and straightforwardness of the Bishop of Salisbury in July (like that of the Movement for the Ordination of Women at the October Synod!) condemns the ambiguities of his colleagues, whether they now intend a permanent place for us or not. If so worldly, how can we stay? But most of us will know how worldly the Church has been in the past, and yet God has restored it to life. We must think more deeply.

For those who only believe the ordination of women to be **uncharitable** (wrong as a breach of duty to the rest of the Church of God), not **wrong in itself** (incapable of being legitimised by Pope or Council or any other Christian procedure), the course is clear. They should both stay and accept that the women concerned are priests. The breach of charity is serious, but schism will not heal it and discountenancing the women is a further breach of charity. Their orders would on this view be irregular (not invalid) as regards the Church of God, but not irregular as regards the future canon law of the Church of England. At the most, it might be tolerable to distinguish between those (of either sex) who argued and voted for the error and those women who in the future are merely ordained as a result of it.

But most of us surely believe that the ordination of women is **wrong in itself**. The women will never be priests of the Church of God, whatever ceremonies are performed and whatever the canon law says. Their orders are invalid. So we cannot receive Holy Communion or

Absolution from them. We cannot live a normal Church life alongside them. The men ordained at the same time as them are not priests either - if the sacrament is invalid for some, it is invalid for all who are ordained by the erring bishop.

There are two choices for us who hold this view: take the bishops' system at face value, or join the Continuing Church. (I ignore Rome, for Rome is only an option for those who accept the whole Roman package. "Veritatis splendor" makes this clear, as discussed on page 14. They will not accept us merely because we consider them another Catholic Church. The Orthodox position is less clear, but not ultimately much different - see Dr. Farrell's article on page 2 and in the previous "Old Believer".)

Curiously, the two choices have much in common. Those who take either path will be a minority, having more in common with those who take the other path than with any other group. We will be widely despised and rejected of men. We will largely be on our own, trying to

preserve and develop our continuing Anglican life. Money will be short.

If we look ahead, we can see an emerging crisis of maintaining the historic Church buildings, whatever path we take. After the Commissioners' losses, the payment of compensation to priests who leave the ministry of the Church of England, the diminished number of laity and the uncertainty of the remainder, the Church of England will have a crisis. It will seek more state aid for the buildings. The state will eventually demand its pound of flesh, and will take possession of the buildings, making them available to various bodies. So in ten years' time, both the Continuing Church and those who stay in may have access to the historic buildings.

So what is the difference between continuing outside and continuing inside? A Continuing Church takes its own decisions, controls its own worship, exercises its own discipline and has its own finance. Those who stay in, even if the bishops are faithful to their promises and it remains possible to insist that women are not priests or bishops, nevertheless suffer the wrong decisions, the dubious worship, the indiscipline and the collapsing finances of the General Synod. The erring bishop decides whether they need a priest at all! For all practical purposes, the synodical process will not defend them. The majority does not need to be hostile. Simply by being itself, it makes the life of those who stay very uncomfortable. It cannot be easy to live a full Christian life sulking in a corner. What is being offered, make no mistake, is not a "third province" parallel to the majority church, but a few sacramental concessions, leaving all the power exactly where it is at present. This is magic, not Christianity.

If this is uncomfortable for the clergy, so much more for the laity. There are no guarantees for us! If we find a faithful Church, we are lucky. But the necessities of life force most of us to move to different parts of the country from time to time. It is most unlikely that the Church of England will organise systematic provision for us. So sooner or later, the laity have to choose between total conformity, the Continuing Church, or a purely private faith.

The truth is that even without the inevitable breaking of promises (which has happened everywhere else), everybody will be gradually driven into that choice. We can see it coming. The bishops give us no permanent legal protection.

Our movement, we know, is not just against the ordination of women. Those who try to remain inside reject not merely that but also many other errors. Those who form a Continuing Church hold the same views. Consequently, whichever view we take in the short term, we must keep charity with each other. We belong together. We will need each others' help along either difficult path.

My own opinion (if it matters) is that a Continuing Church is needed. God may not wholly have forsaken the Church of England, but the proposed solution is too incoherent to have any Godly meaning. Visible, external schism is more honest than internal schism - and that is the practical choice before us. So we make the start, trusting God to direct and correct us, but not blaming those who think differently. We expect we will, eventually, welcome them when they are driven out of the erring body.

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### RE-INVENTING THE ORTHODOX CHURCH

*An address to M.C.C.E by Fr. Paul Lansley,  
Secretary of the Anglo-Orthodox Society*

We Continuing Anglicans have defined our position in the Affirmation of St. Louis. We believe in the Scriptures as containing God's revelation, not man's invention. We affirm the Creeds as always in the Catholic Church. We affirm Tradition, the teachings of the Holy Fathers and the Seven Oecumenical Councils. We receive the Seven Sacraments, especially Baptism with the Seal of the Spirit, and the Sacrifice of the Eucharist. We acknowledge Holy Orders in the Apostolic Succession as Christ's gift of ministry to His Church.

A communion of Churches exists today which has affirmed the Affirmation of St. Louis for 1,200 years, which retains the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed as originally defined, which holds to that which has been believed "everywhere, always and by all", without addition or subtraction, which describes itself as the Church of the Seven Councils, which celebrates the Seven Sacraments, preserves the Apostolic Succession, and worships in heavenly splendour in the eucharistic kingdom of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit; which has suffered and borne heroic witness to this Faith through five centuries and more of Moslem oppression, and which in seven decades of atheist persecution has offered up a probably more numerous host of Martyrs than died under pagan Rome.

I am referring of course to the Orthodox Churches. The Orthodox are now the third or fourth largest Christian denomination in this country. We do not have to reinvent the Orthodox Church; it is here! When you come to think of it, re-inventing Orthodoxy is what Anglicans have been doing for the last four hundred years. Last November perhaps marked the failure of these attempts. Re-inventing Orthodoxy no doubt was the only thing to do in the sixteenth century, and in the seventeenth century the Orthodox Church was still distant by a journey of many weeks. It was certainly not very visible. But now, the Orthodox are here - 250,000 of them among us in this country, to say nothing of our bumping into them continually all over our global village.

To many of us nothing seems more obvious than that we should now look to the Orthodox as our natural allies, or even our eventual home. For 350 of those 400 years we have been seeking - even, like Archbishop William Wake in 1725, claiming - communion with them. Their response has been *You (or some of you) may be Orthodox in Faith and practice, but you are in communion with heretics. You must sort out what you really believe.* That situation is in process of changing. In the Affirmation of St. Louis we have declared what we believe. And we are now free of the encumbrance of liberal-modernism. We shall no longer be in communion with those who make up their religion as they go along.

The usual objection - or excuse for making no further effort in this direction - is that the Orthodox Churches are "ethnic". I find this amusing from members of the Church of England. It is analogous to the argument that the Saints of twenty centuries, and Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, were all "culturally conditioned" in not having priestesses - while we in the late twentieth century are not. So the Christians of Constantinople, Alexandria,

Antioch and Jerusalem, of Greece, Cyprus, Russia, Serbia, Romania, Bulgaria, Finland... are "ethnic" - and the Church of England is not. I am quite happy to be ethnic; it is because I believe that I ought to preserve the spiritual heritage of my forefathers that I am a Continuing Anglican. But it is also that Catholic heritage that has taught me to be Orthodox.

So what is happening among those who are taking seriously the prospect of bridging the gap between East and West?

- There has been a steady stream of people who began to learn the Orthodox Faith in the Anglican Church who have transferred to the Orthodox Church. A lot of them have been clergy. Some, not all, have been re-ordained. If you have attended the Liturgy at Oxford, Walsingham and other places you may well feel, as I do, that there is no "ethnic" problem. The Liturgy is sung in English without a foreign accent.
- Others have found their way into Orthodoxy as a body by study. A group of Ugandan Anglicans did this some decades ago. And a larger group of American Evangelicals did so more recently. They studied the early Church, as a result became Orthodox in Faith and practice, and were eventually received by chrismation and ordination of their clergy by the Patriarchate of Antioch.
- Yet others have been received as congregations and have been permitted to retain their rites and practices with minimal adaptation. These now number some twenty Parishes in America, nearly all ex-Episcopalian.

Several clergy of the Church of England are at present seeking to follow this route to be reconciled to the Orthodox Church with congregations. They are receiving a lot of encouragement from the Antiochian Western Rite vicariate; but it seems unlikely that Antioch will sanction this development on its own, or at least without the goodwill of Constantinople - which has the vast bulk of the quarter million Orthodox in this country under its jurisdiction. But even a Western Rite under Constantinople is not ruled out. And the first of the American congregations had their rite sanctioned by St. Tikhon, later Patriarch of Moscow and Martyr under Lenin.

However, I would like to suggest that the immediate task for us Continuers is neither to re-invent the Orthodox Church, nor yet to make everything depend on negotiating a structural incorporation into the Greek, Arab or Russian Church; but simply to be Orthodox in our own Faith and practice. That is the first priority. Questions of structure and jurisdiction follow from that, not the other way round.

### End of Page 6 of the original

When we are consciously "Western Orthodox", when we know that we are truly in communion and fellowship with the Saints, living the eucharistic life according to the traditions received from our fathers, but at the same time taking care to remove incompatibilities between ourselves and our fellow-Orthodox in the unbroken tradition of the Eastern Church - then we can ask them, in all humility, to restore full communion between us. As a body we might even be able to pick up where the former "Anglican Communion" left off. If we study the Agreed Statements of the Anglican-Orthodox Joint

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Doctrinal Commission of 1976 and 1984, we shall probably find that we want to endorse all that they said unanimously, and delete only those bits which represent the liberal-modernist position among the Anglicans.

What we obviously cannot do is to ask the Orthodox to pretend that we are Orthodox while we continue to anathematise them by asserting an extra dogmatic clause in the Creed which they have never received; while we receive Holy Communion without bothering to keep a fast beforehand - or indeed any other fasts to speak of; while we go on regarding the Mother of God as an "optional extra" and the fellowship in prayer with the Saints in heaven as something you can take or leave. I hope the Anglo-Orthodox Society can help in all this.

*Editorial comment: there is much wisdom here, but the more we fit ourselves to the modern Byzantine form of Orthodoxy, the more we depart from the Prayer Book doctrine and usage and so weaken our claim to be Anglicans.*

### PREPARING FOR THE TRADITIONAL CHURCH OF ENGLAND

Very shortly, we will be circulating lists of clergy and lay people so that we can establish our congregations. If you do not want to be included on these lists, please contact Fr. Whiting and M. M. Silver urgently.

Any Continuer can attempt to gather a congregation together. A small advertisement in the "Church noticeboard" column of a free newspaper (if there is one) might be the best tactic. It is probably better to place a small advertisement in several successive issues rather than a large one once. The wording must depend on local circumstances, but it is important to include the name, the objective (to continue the faith and practice of the Church of England free from recent errors) and a name and telephone number so that people can get in touch with you. Once you have a reasonable number of contacts, then you can arrange a meeting. This is wiser than trying to start by advertising a public meeting.

If we consider the experience of the existing Traditional bodies (and indeed of other growing Christian movements,

however imperfect we believe them to be), they are firm about faith and practice and not dedicated to buildings. A sensible room for the congregation you have, with plenty of car parking since many will have to travel some distance, is the best way to start. Of course, priests with "freehold" may be able to retain their churches - for a time.

There will be much more practical advice in the next "Old Believer".

### MEETING

Ecclesia at St. Stephen's Spring Bank, Hull on Saturday 5th February 1994. High Mass probably at 11:45.

Preacher: Bishop Hamlett of the ACC Missionary Diocese of England and Wales.

### LETTER TO THE EDITOR

The Archbishop of Canterbury has advised the Orthodox Churches to "*Welcome the missionary activities of other churches*". Does this indicate that he will welcome the activities of the Continuing Churches in England?

### End of Page 7 of the original SERMON FOR ST. BARTS.

*By Archbishop Anthony Clavier of the  
Anglican Church of America*

This is not an age for heroes. As I shake my grey locks, I remember a different age, surely not so long ago, when it was still fashionable to sing the praises of men and women whose deeds captured our imagination. On my trips to Norwich, the statue of Edith Cavell, the brave nurse executed in the First world War, reminded me of human courage. The story of Captain Oates, giving his life for his freezing companions, served as an example of Christian fortitude and self-sacrifice. We read stories about the Empire and those

who planted the flag in extraordinary places.

Nowadays heroes are an endangered species. Sooner or later someone writes a book or does a TV documentary which exposes the famous to the light of puritanical day. All have feet of clay. A sort of world-weary cynicism has possessed us. Nothing is sacred.

Mind you, this is not all bad. Hagiography, the study of the saints, has at all times produced the most extraordinary rubbish. Such rubbish produces cynicism and more, for the portrayal of saints in terms which makes them so heavenly minded that they are of no earthly use places them in categories we find unreachable. The whole point of acknowledging heroes, whether sacred or secular, is to present us with examples we can hope to emulate. As the children's hymn puts it, "*They are all of them saints of God, and God-willing, I mean to be one too!*"

Look at the biblical example. We meet the first saints in accounts of their doings which give us the whole picture, warts and all. Often the picture is unflattering. James and John are ambitious. They get their mother to ask Jesus to give them the best seats in the kingdom. Jesus nicknames them the "sons of thunder" because they wanted him to bring down thunder on the Samaritan community which didn't welcome Jesus with open arms. Poor St. Peter. He is called "Satan" by Jesus. His betrayal is described in detail. Later he vacillates over admitting gentiles to baptism and St. Paul "withstands him to his face". Even legend portrays his flight from Rome during Nero's persecution, where he meets Jesus carrying his cross to the city and in shame returns to meet his martyrdom.

Two important English saints have tales told about them which show them to be human beings with human faults. St. Augustine, sent to England by Gregory the Great, attempts to abort the mission before he gets through France. He fears those frightful English. St. Wilfred, Sussex saint, comes across as an ambitious and bad-tempered fellow. There are incidents in his life when he reminds one more of Toad of Toad Hall than someone with a halo set in stained glass.

Shall we therefore join the ranks of the cynical? This evening, we meet to honour St. Bartholomew. We hardly know a thing about him. Indeed the fourth Gospel possibly calls him Nathaniel. We can't even get his name straight. We know he was a disciple. If he was Nathaniel, we do have one story we can use.

Nathaniel was a cynic. He came to Jesus doubting his authenticity. He wasn't going to be taken in by this wandering preacher. Jesus tells him that he saw Nathaniel under a fig tree. In Jewish tradition, the fig tree represented the Law of God, or sometimes wealth and prosperity. Whatever the meaning of the term, Nathaniel was mightily impressed and immediately proclaims that Jesus is the Messiah, quite a change of

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tone. Jesus calls Nathaniel an Israelite without guile. There was honesty in Nathaniel's caution and honesty in his conversion. Mind you, if Nathaniel is not Bartholomew, that part of the story won't work in this sermon.

Legend has it that Bartholomew was a missionary to India, and perhaps Armenia. Inevitably he meets a sticky end. He is flayed alive and then beheaded at a place called Derbend, on the Caspian Sea. All this seems far from Brighton and far from our experience. His popularity in England began with King Canute, you remember, the fellow who "tried" to get the tide to stay out. Canute would make a good patron saint for politicians. His wife Emma presented the Cathedral in Canterbury with St. Bart's arm. We are told that no fewer than 165 churches were dedicated in his honour around England. It's wonderful what a spare arm will do! Mediaeval artists had great fun depicting his being flayed alive and statues of him normally show him grasping the flaying knife. I shall resist talking about thin-skinned saints.

At first sight the only element in all this story which we can "grasp" is that of Canute and the waves. At least we have a tide on Brighton Beach! The likelihood of our being flayed alive on North Street seems a bit remote. So have you come out on a Tuesday evening and have I flown the Atlantic to honour someone of whom we have little reliable information?

If Bartholomew is Nathaniel, the first example we may note is that he came to faith through doubt. He was suspicious of Jesus' claims. Nowadays it often seems that people come to doubt through faith. You know what I mean. The Faith is approached not as faith in a person, Jesus Christ, and in His Church and its teaching and fellowship, but rather as a collection of teachings which we may view as a cafeteria - the menu is there and we can pick and choose those items we like and those we don't. The Pope has just been in the USA. The media people made a great fuss about the fact that many Roman Catholics don't accept all of the Church's teachings. They pick and choose. This is seen as a good thing, an exercise in liberty. We know of bishops and clergy who claim to be heroes because they doubt many essential teachings of the Church.

No one, I would suggest, ever reaches the point when they are free from doubt. "Lord I believe, help thou my unbelief" is a cherished verse. The thing about a Christian hero is that he or she faces doubt and seeks to wrestle with it day by day. But always there is that determination to accept the fact that Mere Christianity is there to be accepted. It is not for me to challenge the Faith, or the words of the Lord. It is for me to accept my own fallibility, praying that God will forgive me my lack of faith and my failure to live up to my high calling. A saint makes way for God.

### End of Page 8 of the original

Bartholomew gave his life to his Lord. He accepted that this might mean the loss of everything including life itself. Here again, modern Christians get into the habit of thinking that the practice of religion has as its aim our getting something we need. We may desire peace of mind, a feeling of well-being, changes in society, a cure for an illness or even eternal life. The job of the Church, or parsons and choirs, musicians and professional Christians is to help us to get what we want. If we don't

get what we want, we look for it elsewhere. The parish priest didn't smile at me. I'll find another one. The service isn't to my liking, I'll try another church. I still have terrible headaches - religion doesn't work.

The practice of faith is an exercise in losing oneself in the service of the Living God. The saints know this. We worship because we owe God service. We pray because only in conversation with God can we learn to change. We serve others, because this is our bounden duty. We learn to forgive in order to be forgiven. We learn to abandon self, because self-absorption cuts us off from God and from our neighbour, whether that neighbour is husband wife, parents or children, neighbours or fellow-workers.

There is much dying in all this. That's the problem. We want to live, to get, to obtain.

The Faith of the saints bids us to die to self, die to our own tailor-made religion, die to our genes and environment, die to our resentments and hatreds. As Fr. Robert Llewelyn puts it:

*"We are not bidden to die in order that we may live - this is no nicely calculated venture embarked upon in order to bring rich returns - but rather in the Pauline phrase, it is a matter of "dying and behold we live". What is asked of us looks like loss, has every appearance of loss, and in the nakedness of faith the plunge is taken. Jesus did not die upon the cross in order that He might rise again. He died, was truly dead, and BEHOLD God raised Him. Here is an illustration which has its application to every aspect of the Christian life. With St. Paul the saints die daily, and with every death there is arising to a deeper and fuller measure or resurrection life. So by many deaths are they prepared - as we shall be too - for the final plunge into the ocean of God's love."*

Finally, as we have observed, the saints are ordinary men and women, with ordinary failings. They are capable of ambition, of betrayal, of cowardice, of every human sin. But still they seek to grow into the fullness of the stature of Christ.

Many parents draw a line on the wall to chart the growth of their children. My sons have both grown well beyond my mark. They now pat me on the head! But we can never here reach the mark which measures the Person of Christ. And yet, in faith and trust, we seek that high mark. It's not just a matter of following the good examples of the saints. It's a matter of joining their fellowship.

We believe that here, in this place, now, we worship with angels and archangels and all the company of heaven. The saints, whether named Bartholomew or Nathaniel, Mary or Peter, the mother who taught us to pray, the saintly priest who guided us in youth, all of these join us here.

We ARE surrounded by a company of witnesses, or those who gave their lives and received life. Like Jacob, we see here angels ascending and descending the sacred ladder of Faith. In their company at the altar we meet Jesus, who possesses us, and takes on the task of changing us from glory into glory .

You are called to be saints. Indeed the New Testament gives that title to all Christians. You have no choice about the title. You have a choice about what sort of saint you will be. Nothing disqualifies you, not doubt, nor fear, nor self-love, nor notable sin. All saints are

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prone to these failings. You are qualified. The question is, will you embrace your calling? The feast is spread. The Master awaits. The saints are ready.

*Let us now sing the praises of famous men, and the heroes of our nation's history, through whom the Lord established his renown, and revealed his majesty in each succeeding age. (Ecclus. 44.1)*

The quotation is from Fr. Robert Llewelyn "The Joy of the Saints".

### **End of Page 9 of the original A REPLY TO FATHER STACKPOLE**

*by Michael M Wright of the Anglican Catholic Church*  
Dear Father Stackpole,

I have waited some time before replying to your Open Letter (published in the Old Believer No. 6), knowing that an early response would soon become outdated by events. This letter is written in August in the knowledge that the legislation on priesting women will come into effect next year and that there is no chance of creating an autonomous 'traditionalist' group within the Church of England. Many readers of the Old Believer will in any case have accepted that their loyalty lies with an Anglican Church outside the official communion. The question, or rather the choice, is what kind of Anglican Church?

Since your letter was published, the 'Continuers in the Faith' have resolved that, following upon the promulgation of the 'priestess' canon, a 'Traditional Church of England' (TCE) will be set up. There will therefore be a real choice between the Missionary Diocese of England and Wales (MDEW), with Bishop Leslie Hamlett as its Ordinary, and a second Continuing Church which has asked for episcopal oversight from Bishop Robert Mercer of Canada and linked itself with the Traditional Anglican Communion (TAC).

There is in the Open Letter a number of assertions which may be difficult to sustain. I have not, for example, been able to discover anyone who has been excommunicated by the Anglican Catholic Church (ACC). People have left the fellowship of the ACC and people have returned to it again. If, for some reason, they decided to cut themselves off from the ACC - as did those who created the Anglican Church of America (ACA) at Deerfield Beach - that was their own personal decision. If the attitude of the ACC appears exclusive, I would suggest that such an impression arises from a difference in outlook between the two groups. All that the MDEW has done is to point out that it ministers already in the British Isles. If there is no 'essential point of Faith, Order or Morals in dispute' then a second Continuing Anglican Church seems superfluous. However, if the members of the future TCE feel that the ACC is heading in the wrong direction, why should anyone wish to stop them establishing Continuing Anglicanism here on the correct basis? Certainly the MDEW has no authority to interdict such a move, but it does claim the freedom to pursue its own path in integrity of conscience. There seems to be a hint in the Open Letter that the TAC is dictating to the MDEW what its policy should be - but perhaps I am being over-sensitive.

For the record, I must query the assumption that the TAC represents the 'clear majority of Continuing Anglicans around the world'. Few Continuing jurisdictions publish membership figures (the ACC is an

exception here). However the readers of the Old Believer may not be aware of the actual situation in the USA. After the Synod held at Dallas in the early years, the 'Continuing' movement in the USA split into three main groups: the ACC, the Diocese (now Province) of Christ the King, and the UECNA.

These three, though independent, maintain by custom or agreement a sacramental interchange on the basis of pastoral need. All three received their episcopal ministry from the group of four bishops consecrated for the Continuing Movement at Denver. There is another group of very much smaller Continuing jurisdictions, joined recently (from the Episcopal Church) by the Episcopal Missionary Church, with Bishop Donald Davies as its senior bishop. Thirdly there is the ACA, a combination of the former American Episcopal Church (led by Primus Anthony Clavier) and something approaching 15% of the membership of the ACC. The Church Information Centre (UECNA) calculated the pre-Deerfield strength of the ACC(OP) as 7,000 while the ACC's own published figures for Jan. 1993 give an almost identical number. It looks as though the ACC(OP) made up any loss to the ACA within fourteen months. The CIC put the membership of the AEC at between 2,500 and 3,000; this with an increase of not more than 1,000 as a result of Deerfield, puts the ACA at about 4,000. It is significant that no other jurisdiction has shown any inclination to unite with the ACA/TAC. In America, therefore, the ACA occupies a place on the margin of the wider Continuing movement. What can be said in favour of the claim made by the Open Letter is that the style of the ACA may attract the interest of 'traditionalists' who will decide, in the end, never to leave the shelter of the CofE.

The Open Letter contains a number of quite serious misrepresentations, such as those mentioned above. Unfortunate though these are, a catalogue of them would be tedious and they are, most probably, the result of misunderstanding. One more error, however, I will mention, because it is a misquotation of my own words. I am reported as claiming that the ACC has now "*crossed the line*" into Orthodoxy. My actual words, which occur in an Editorial for 'Anglo-Orthodoxy', are: "*ACC has crossed the line and returned to the central area of authentic Christianity. It is an area shared with the Orthodox Churches and, in that sense, the ACC is an Orthodox Church too - in character, but not in canonical status.*"

I believe that in the ACC we are learning again the language by which we can communicate with the Orthodox, not only in concepts, but in a deeper involvement in the mystery of Christ. Herein is the hope of eventual reunion. There is only one justification for a letter such as this - that it illuminates further the issues which have haunted and divided the Continuing Anglican movement since the time of the Congress of St. Louis. Behind the divisions, which may be explained superficially as the result of differing styles of churchmanship, or of personal rivalries and ambitions, lies the deeper uncertainty about Anglican identity which fuels the more obvious causes of dispute. What kind of Anglicanism has the quality which will enable it to survive, to grow and even, in the end, to contribute to the wider restoration of Catholic and Orthodox unity?

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The Affirmation of St. Louis is the foundation document accepted by the Continuing Anglican movement as a whole.

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The Affirmation is a significant and successful manifesto, setting out the basis of Continuing Anglicanism series of 'fundamental principles'. Some statements in the Affirmation have been overtaken by events, but the general stance remains clear and firm. The 'fundamental principles', however, can be understood in two ways

- As guidelines for a Continuing Anglican movement;
- As essential characteristics of a Continuing Anglican Church.

The Affirmation called for the holding of an Assembly (the Dallas Synod) to approve a constitution and canons for the parishes and dioceses which were coming into existence in this early stage of the 'Continuing' movement. A Church was beginning to manifest itself - the effect of bringing the various communities of believers into a relationship with each other. This Church understood itself to be in continuity with what the Church has always been - as the Affirmation stated, "We do nothing new". The Solemn Declaration, prefacing the Draft Constitution, set out this understanding most clearly. The draft Constitution and Canons, therefore, reflected the character of the primitive Catholic Faith as transmitted through the history of the English Church.

The draft Constitution and Canons interpreted the 'fundamental principles' of the Affirmation as 'essential characteristics' of the Church - this was the natural effect of giving legal expression to the intentions of the Continuing Anglican movement. Those who adopted the Constitution and Canons declared themselves to be no longer a movement but a Church, the manifestation, in Anglican form, of the undivided Catholic Church. A firm basis of identity had been established, and the movement was renamed the Anglican Catholic Church. At the Synod there were those who could not accept this development and withdrew from fellowship but, as mentioned above, the withdrawal was never absolute and a sacramental link has either been retained or reestablished.

Continuing Anglicans from Canada were dismayed by the divisions created at the Dallas Synod - their congregations received episcopal oversight from bishops who were now at variance with each other. Eventually the Canadian Church received its own bishop in the person of Carmino de Catanzaro and determined to maintain fellowship with all other Continuing Anglican jurisdictions, however much they might be alienated from one another. The Canadian insistence upon independence from the continuing Churches of the USA represented, a return to the Anglican idea of a 'Communion' - an association of independent provinces, rather than the primitive model of dioceses and provinces united in a common Faith.

The question of unity among Continuing Anglicans requires careful examination at this point, because it is sometimes said that the ACC claims absolute jurisdiction over all Continuing Churches. The ACC takes its approach to unity from that of the early Catholic and undivided Church, when the local Christian communities, each presided over by a bishop, found

unity among themselves through a mutual correspondence of doctrine, sacraments, ministry and discipline.

Though the rise of metropolitan and, more particularly, patriarchal influence tended to obscure the primitive pattern, the relationship between the Local Churches was always based on the corporate Faith of each community. Interpreting the 'fundamental principles' of the Affirmation as 'essential characteristics' fits well with this Catholic approach to unity.

This same approach to unity is set out in the Constitution and canons of the ACC and allows for an expanding network of Local Churches (Diocese, as we would call them), grouped together in provinces, with the prospect of an eventual coordinating primacy. What binds the ACC together is not a structural jurisdiction with centralised control, but a mutual agreement based on the heritage of the undivided Church. Though the ACC remains faithful to its Constitution and Canons, it is perfectly well able to accept fellowship with other jurisdictions with different canonical provisions, in so far as they maintain faithfully the 'essential characteristics' of the undivided Catholic Church. (In this respect, the Agreement between the ACC and the UECNA allows for the interchange of sacramental ministry, but recognises there remain still areas where full agreement is yet to be achieved.)

The decision to establish a diocese in the UK was therefore profoundly congruent with the character of the ACC. The idea of maintaining 'episcopal oversight' from across the sea, when it is perfectly possible to establish a diocese on home soil, is not the way of the ACC (nor, come to think of it, of St. Gregory the Great). The initiative for the creation of the MDEW came from Anglican Catholics in the UK. At the time the decision was made most commentators expected the legislation to fail narrowly but decisively; the vast majority of 'traditionalist' clergy, also, supported the intention of Cost of Conscience to stay on in the Established Church. There was then, and there is now, no expectation of a mass exodus from the CofE, and the MCCE was committed to action only if 'priestesses' were admitted to the ministry of the Established Church. The Anglican Catholics of the UK acted in accordance with their commitment to the ways of the undivided Church.

It is also possible to take the 'fundamental principles' of the Affirmation of St. Louis as guidelines for a Continuing Anglican movement and work for a unity based on their acceptance. In 1981 the Canadian Church made an agreement on intercommunion with Primus Clavier's American Episcopal Church. The AEC was an 'Anglican type' Church with a history entirely separate from the jurisdictions which shared a common past in the Congress of St. Louis and the Denver consecrations. The Canadian action was controversial because the character of the AEC was unacceptable to other continuing jurisdictions and especially to the ACC. Towards the end of the Eighties the question of a wide-ranging unification of Continuing jurisdictions, beginning with the union of the ACC and the AEC, was put forward by Archbishop Falk and Bishop Mercer. The ACC possessed already a canonical procedure for the unification of separated Churches and the majority of bishops, supported by all sections of the ACC, insisted that this should be followed.

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### End of Page 11 of the original

The AEC, as it stood, could not match up to the canonical requirements of the ACC. It was this impasse which produced a statement by Bishop Mercer and his episcopal colleagues - the Ascension Day 1991 'Call for Unity'. The full text of the words quoted in the Open Letter reads as follows: *"At the same time we want it to be understood that we definitely plan to associate with, be in Communion with, and work with, all those whose primary aim is the unity of Traditional Anglicans on the basis of the principles expressed in the Affirmation of St. Louis and in the Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral, not just in the USA, and not only in the Continuum, but in all Anglican jurisdictions worldwide."* Here fellowship and communion is offered to every Anglican who aims at unity based on the principles of 'traditional' Anglicanism. This relationship is offered regardless of jurisdictional boundaries. The basis is not the corporate Faith of specific jurisdictions, but individual commitment (or the claim to be so committed) to a set of principles. This approach is familiar to Anglicans. We use the term 'Pan-Protestant' to describe the view that adherence to the 'principles of the Reformation' is a sounder basis for unity than particular denominational affiliations. The 'Call' is making the 'traditional' Anglican equivalent of a 'Pan-Protestant' appeal. Undoubtedly the Affirmation can be read in support of this approach and, on this basis, it was possible for Bishop Mercer to ignore the strong corporate rejection of the unity scheme by the ACC. I have maintained that the ACC and the ACA/TAC are following different paths, even though they set out from the same base in Anglicanism. The events leading up to Deerfield and the views expressed by those involved confirm me in this impression.

At Deerfield, the whole episcopate of the future ACA (with the exception of Bishop Boynton, who acted as one of the consecrators) submitted to 'conditional consecration'. Three AEC Bishops, including Clavier, were also conditionally ordained to the diaconate and priesthood. The consecrations were unusual because the consecrators (all drawn from those consecrated in the Official Communion) testified that they cast no doubts on the orders of those they were about to consecrate 'conditionally'. Bishop Mercer had himself been in full communion with all the bishops he re-consecrated. In the days of the primitive Church conditional consecrations were not so uncommon, but they were always performed in situations where there was serious concern that the original orders were bestowed by tainted sources. This of course was not the situation at Deerfield as far as the consecrators were concerned and as they testified. What was required at Deerfield was a public reconciliation of ministries.

For this also the primitive Catholic Church had a procedure of great simplicity - those involved celebrated the Eucharist together (see the account by St. Irenaeus of St. Polycarp's visit to Rome in the time of Pope Anicetus, quoted by Eusebius in his History of the Church). What took place at Deerfield amounted to no more than an attempt to 'top up' the standing of the ACA bishops to make them more marketable within Official Anglicanism. The effect, however, was to create an idiosyncratic episcopate unique to the ACA. This may seem a harsh judgement, but it would be the view of the primitive Catholic church - as it certainly is of the ACC.

I have attempted in this letter to base comment on fact which is not in dispute. It seems to me impossible to observe the creation of a new jurisdiction at Deerfield - complete with two provinces and a provisional set of canons - without drawing the conclusion that those involved were deliberately separating themselves from the fellowship of the ACC. I observe also that the basic character of the ACC was established at the Dallas Synod and has not changed. The choice for me, then, is between a stability based on the faith and practice of the primitive Catholic church - the way of the ACC - and the instability of following a leadership which once solemnly committed itself to the same way, and then revoked that commitment in favour of a Pan-Anglican ideology.

Here I must quote from the Editorial of the same number of the 'Old Believer' in which the Open Letter appeared. *"If loyal Anglicans of whatever background can read this with benefit, and desire part and fellowship with us, we have an obligation to extend to them the "right had of fellowship" in Christ. If they desire to be orthodox, should we not respect them, even when our interpretations of orthodoxy do not coincide?"* This kind of appeal can lead only to further 'Deerfields', as those who 'desire to be orthodox' find they cannot live with 'orthodoxy' as interpreted by their fellow believers. This is not 'clarified Anglicanism'; it is the same old confusion from which the authentic Faith of the undivided Church rescues us.

Let me put the whole matter very simply. Anglican Catholics do not trust the leadership of the ACA/TAC. They recognise gladly the personal sincerity and worth of individual members associated with the TAC, but have no intention of being involved with the ecclesiastical policy of its leaders. The events surrounding the creation of the ACA at Deerfield scarred the ACC, but also restored freedom and integrity to her members. Anglican Catholics will not return whence they came, nor embroil themselves once more in the confusion and limited vision of Pan-Anglicanism. It is best to say this plainly.

Yours in Christ, Michael M Wright.

*Editorial comment- the ACC Missionary Diocese is part of a Continuing Church and we must therefore continue to talk to each other. So M.C.C.E. has a duty to listen. Hence this article. We will respond in due course.*

**End of Page 12 of the original; Page 13 was devoted to "Continuers in the Faith"**

### VERITATIS SPLENDOR

*A comment by Michael Gray.*

The publication of 'Veritatis Splendor' is a proper occasion for us to take stock of the traditional Anglican view on moral teaching and on the authority of the Church of Rome. On moral teaching, there is a wide agreement, and we can welcome this reassertion of traditional teaching. In summary, there is a moral law, which is given to us by God in the way He has made us; our duty is to recognise it, follow and apply it. Compare C S Lewis, particularly in 'The Abolition of Man'. And there is Christian teaching, which is also given to us by God, witnessed to by His Spirit in Scripture and Tradition. Here again, our task is clear, however difficult. There is a narrow way; we do not invent our own. And, most important, the way is one of perfecting holiness, not just of doing the minimum to avoid sin.

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Consequently, the task of conscience is important, but it is a task of recognising truth and applying it in practical situations, not of designing it. All this can be found at length in Anglican teachers such as Bishop Kirk.

Broad is the way that leads to destruction, and it is easily found by those who invent their own Christianity, whether in faith or in morals or in discipline. Those who would ordain women deserve atheist clergy! Again, the warnings can be found in works such as Bishop Gore's 'The New Theology and the Old Religion'.

But we cannot simply accept 'Veritatis Splendor' as a perfect statement of the case. Built into it is the old Roman claim, far older than papal infallibility, to rule other parts of the Church. Indeed, that claim to rule is extended to the moral law. This seems odd; if that law can be recognised, even after the Fall, by any person with diligence and good will, it does not need a regulator!

That claim *is firmly repudiated in the 39 Articles. 'The Church of Rome hath erred, not only in their living and manner of Ceremonies, but also in matters of Faith.'*

Consequently we rejected their claim to rule us, and reverted to the pattern of the early Church. For that has no infallible authority other than God. Each Bishop has authority; Bishops consult together in Councils and such Councils have greater authority; some particular Churches are more trusted, because of their experience or endurance of persecution.

So Rome deserved respect, but not automatic obedience. Saint Cyprian points out that *'the other Apostles were all that Peter was'*; Saint Ambrose commented on his local baptismal practices *'I want to follow the Roman Church in everything, but we too have common sense'*.

In these cases, as indeed in 'Veritatis Splendor', the issue is the authority of the Roman Church or system, not that of the Pope in person. The early Church recognised that the promise to Peter was general to the Bishops, and was about reliability, not propositions. Even if Peter had a special status, why did it pass to bishops at Rome rather than at Antioch?

So we give the present Pope the considerable respect he deserves, not automatic obedience. But what is our own understanding of authority in the Church? Of course we accept Scripture and tradition. For example, the Vincentian principle (what was accepted always, everywhere, by everybody) leads us to the view that the date of Easter is not on the Jewish calculation, that abortion is wrong (with a few standard exceptions), that the marriage of the clergy is acceptable; indeed it leads to the eventual acceptance of the New Testament canon itself. All these decisions were achieved without General Councils; on the authority of these Councils we accept that Jesus is perfectly God and perfectly Man (against Arianism, accepting the "Nicene" creed and the Chalcedonian definition).

But we admit that there are topics in Church life where there is no single tradition. For example, the exact date of Easter, the 'double procession' of the Holy Spirit, leavened bread or not in the Communion, how absolutely Saint Augustine is right and Pelagius wrong. Sometimes we know what early tradition is but believe it right to reject it - for example, we use musical instruments in Church and we are unlikely to revive the 'Kiss of Peace'. Yet we are not making Christianity up for ourselves; we are following a local tradition,

accepting past choices made by Anglicanism within the Christian repertoire that exists, and learning from other traditions. Reform is sometimes needed, but it is the return to a better Christianity, not a new beginning.

We believe as Continuing Anglicans that the Church of Rome has made and now makes again in 'Veritatis Splendor' a claim to unique authority which is false, whether on faith or morals. The ordination of women in the Church of England does not suddenly make the Roman system right.

## THE OLD BELIEVER 7

### PRIVATE JUDGEMENT

*John Henry Newman*

*This poem is dated 1832. We do not need Rome as our authority; the Church of England renewed as part of Continuing Anglicanism is equally - and was long before "Anglo-Catholicism" - a witness to the Faith once for all delivered to the Saints.*

Poor wanderers, ye are sore distressd  
To find the path which Christ has blessed,  
Tracked by His saintly throng;  
Each claims to trust his own weak will  
Blind idol! - so ye languish still,  
All wranglers and all wrong.

He saw of old, and met your need,  
Granting you prophets of His creed,  
The throes of fear to swage;  
They fenced the rich bequest He made,  
And sacred hands have safe conveyed  
Their charge from age to age.

Wanderers! come home! obey the call! A Mother pleads,  
who ne'er let fall  
One grain of Holy Truth;  
Warn you and win she shall and must, For now she lifts  
her from the dust  
To reign as in her youth.