

Newsletter

VOLUME XXIX, NUMBER 1

LENT, 2010

- Proclaiming the Catholic Faith through the beauty of the Anglican Liturgy -

A WORD OUT OF THE ORDINARY

Dear Friends,

You are certainly free to accept the claims of Jesus Christ, or to reject them. However you are never free from the consequences of your choice.

If Jesus is truth, then no man can go to the Father except by Him. If He is not truth, there is no hope of heaven for there is no salvation and you are left dead in your sins.

What you cannot do is be half-hearted by picking and choosing that which you believe is credible or desirable. The claims of Jesus Christ must be either totally accepted, or totally rejected.

All the religions of the world can be wrong! Only one can be right. While some like to emulate that which they find laudable in various religious beliefs, God is a jealous God who will not share His glory with another. He is absolute truth, and you cannot improve upon that which is perfect. Any change made to the truth as it has been received from the Lord through His Prophets and Apostles, means you move from the state of perfection to one of imperfection. One cannot improve upon the Lord.

The trouble with constructing a religious belief system to your own liking, taking a little of this and a little of that, taking what you might find to be the best from all the religious expressions, means that you, and not God, are the final arbiter of truth. You are by nature a sinner, your judgements are tempered with sin and therefore not perfect. Only Jesus is good; He alone is without sin and justified in His claim to be The Way, the Truth and the Life. His is the only Name given among men whereby you must be saved. None other has died for your sins to reconcile you to the Father and give you the hope of heaven.

Most folks who reject the claims of Jesus say they will not have Him to rule over them. They see Jesus to be an infringement upon their liberties to sin as they will. Yet many will also say they at least hope to go to heaven.

Why? If you will not have Jesus to reign over you in this present life, why would you even desire to go to the place where He is enthroned in glory at the right hand of the Father? If you do not find His claims to be credible, how do you suppose to go to the place where He is?

Perhaps you think you are good enough. If you do, then you object to the teaching of Jesus there is none good but God. If God is not good, why would you think that heaven is a desirable place to be? You may hope it will be better than here; but what if it is not? You will only go from bad to worse. Not exactly something to hope for.

It is appointed unto man once to die. There is no argument with that as the daily obituaries attest. Everyone has lost family and friends. The Bible says that with your appointment "comes the judgement." Men do not fear death so much as they fear what might be coming after it.

If this life is all there is, if death is final, then eat, drink and be merry for tomorrow you die. You have nothing to lose. You should satisfy fully every lust of the flesh before the bell tolls. But what if there is something more? Then what? You certainly can speculate on what might be in store, but you have the teaching of Jesus that your blessed hope is the glorious appearing of your great God and Savior to take you unto Himself.

You can live life like the roll of the dice never knowing what to expect. You can gamble on your future and always have that uncertainty of being wrong. Or you can come to Jesus by faith, being made a partaker of Him in Holy Baptism and made an inheritor of the Kingdom of Heaven by His grace. You are strengthened for service by the Sacraments of Holy Church to do spiritual battle against the world, the flesh and the devil. Jesus Christ is the Victor who has overcome the world, and you are made more than overcomers in Him by faith.

You certainly are free to roll the dice. But if you want something more, if you desire life and will attain it for ever, you must take the safer course of faith and have the blessed assurance that greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world. Jesus is the only Name given among men whereby your must be saved.

May you have a spiritually profitable Lent, keeping the fast as it has been appointed.

Faithfully in Christ,



Prayer for the Increase of the Ministry

O Almighty God, look mercifully upon the world which thou hast redeemed by the blood of thy dear Son, and incline the hearts of many to dedicate themselves to the Sacred Ministry of thy Church; through the same thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, One God, world without end. Amen.

Is Lent exactly 40 days or more?

By The Rev'd Peter Toon

Anyone who counts the days from Ash Wednesday (February 17) to Holy Saturday (April 3) will come up with a number that is more than forty. How is this?

The answer is simple: This season in a strict sense comprises 40 days before Easter without counting Sundays which, even though they are called "Sundays in/of Lent," are not days of penance. Church tradition has always excluded fasting and penance on a Sunday, which is the first day of the week and the weekly festival of the Resurrection of the Lord Jesus.

The tradition of a fast in preparation for Easter, the festival of festivals, goes back to the late third century but it varied in duration. The tradition of a 40-day fast was established in Rome between 354 and 384, although it began after the first Sunday (called Quadragesima). The fasting and prayer was not only undertaken by the baptized church members, but also by the catechumens as they prepared for Baptism on Easter Eve.

Later, at the start of the sixth century, the beginning of Lent was moved up to Ash Wednesday in order to guarantee 40 days of effective fasting, and follow literally the example of the Lord Jesus (Matthew 4 & Luke 4).

This moving of the period of fasting back from the Monday after Quadragesima to begin on what became known as Ash Wednesday (the Wednesday after Quinquagesima) is still reflected in the Collect for the First Sunday in Lent in The Book of Common Prayer (editions of 1662, 1928 & 1962).

The Collect for the first Sunday is interestingly one of the very few such prayers addressed to the Lord Jesus Christ, rather than to his Father in heaven; and it does concern the discipline of abstinence and fasting. It was written by Archbishop Thomas Cranmer in 1549 and begins,

O Lord, who for our sake didst fast forty days and forty nights; Give us grace to use such abstinence, that, our flesh being subdued to the Spirit, we may ever obey thy godly motions in righteousness and true holiness, to thy honour and glory.....

The required Prayer (Collect) appointed for Ash Wednesday addresses the Father:

Almighty and everlasting God, who hatest nothing that thou hast made, and dost forgive the sins of all them that 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.

And this Collect contains no reference to fasting at all.

The answer to the question of why no reference to fasting is that back in the fifth and six centuries when the Christian Year, with its Collects, Epistles and Gospels, was created, Lent began on the Sunday which was called Quadragesima for it was about 40 days before Easter (with the previous Sundays being named Septuagesima, Sexagesima and Quinquagesima). Only later was the beginning of Lent put back to the previous Wednesday to make an exact 40 days, not counting the Sundays in the period of Lent. So in the tradition of the medieval Church of England, although Lent began literally forty days (excluding Sundays) before Easter on the previous Wednesday (called Ash Wednesday), the Collect for the First Sunday testified to (and historically belonged to) an earlier period when Lent actually began on the Sunday which was 40 days or so before Easter.

Now back to the special Prayer for Ash Wednesday which is repeated every day throughout Lent. It was composed by Archbishop Cranmer using as his base the Latin Collect prayed at the benediction of the ashes on Ash Wednesday in the medieval English Church. Before the ashes were laid upon the heads of the members of the congregation the priest said, "Remember, man, that thou art ashes [dust] and unto ashes [dust] shalt thou return."

Here is the old Latin Collect in traditional English used with the ashes in an English translation, which seeks to preserve the style of the original:

Almighty and everlasting God, who hast compassion upon all men, and hatest nothing that thou hast made, and dost not impute the sins of men by reason of their penitence; who also dost succour those who labour in necessity; Vouchsafe to bless [+] and sanctify [+] these ashes, which thou has appointed us to bear upon our heads after the manner of the Ninevites, in token of humiliation and holy devotion, and in order to the washing away of our offences; and, by this invocation of thy holy name, grant that all those that shall bear them upon their heads, to implore thereby thy mercy, may obtain from thee both the pardon of all their offences, and also grace so to begin today their holy fasts, that on the day of Resurrection, they may be counted worthy to approach to the holy Paschal feast, and hereafter to receive everlasting glory. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

A final word is in order. Lent, of course, is not about historical research but devotion of both soul and body to the Lord Jesus Christ, who himself fasted and prayed in the wilderness. May our abstinence and fasting in Lent be adorned in Gospel righteousness in real and true preparation for the celebration of the Feast of Feasts, the Resurrection of the Lord Jesus, on Easter Day.

"Whosoever shall be saved, before all things it is necessary that he hold the Catholic Faith. Which Faith, except every one do keep whole and undefiled, without dot he will perish everlastingly."
- Saint Athanasius

Lord God, in thy mercy, BLESS HAITI

(This was produced by Archdeacon Donald B. Rice,
Dean of Christ Church Pro-Cathedral, Metairie, LA.)

A NOVENA

for the earthquake afflicted

A *NOVENA* is a nine-day period of prayer in preparation for some particular feast, or to pray for some special intention. It may be made by an individual or by a group, either in public or in private.

* * *

OUR Father, who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done; In earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, As we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil. *Amen.*

After a Disaster

ALMIGHTY God, who art a very present help in time of trouble: Let not the heart of thy people fail when fear cometh; but sustain and comfort them, until these calamities be overpast; and since this grievous disaster of earthquake has fallen upon men, do thou of thy great mercy heal the wounded, console the afflicted, protect the helpless, and deliver all who are still in peril. Grant this for thy Son's sake, Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

For those who proclaim the Gospel

O MOST merciful Saviour and Redeemer, who wouldest not that any should perish, but that all men should be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth: Fulfil thy gracious promise to be present with those that go forth in thy name to preach the Gospel of salvation. Be with them in all perils, by land and by water, in sickness and distress, in weariness and pain, in disappointment and persecution. Bless them, we beseech thee, with thy continual favour, and grant that thy Word spoken by their mouths may never be spoken in vain. Hear us, O Lord, for thy mercy's sake. *Amen.*

For the Bereaved

ALMIGHTY God, Father of mercies and giver of all comfort; Deal graciously, we pray thee, with all those who mourn, especially thy servants, handmaidens, and children who have been bereaved through the earthquake in Haiti, that, casting every care on thee, they may know the consolation of thy love; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

For The Departed

ALMIGHTY God, we remember this day before thee thy servants, handmaidens, and children who have perished in the earthquake in Haiti, and we pray thee that, having opened to them the gates of larger life, thou wilt receive them more and more into thy joyful service; that they may win, with thee and thy servants everywhere, the eternal victory; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

REST + eternal grant unto them, and let light perpetual shine upon them. May their souls, + and the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. *Amen.*

THE grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, be with us all evermore. *Amen.*

An update on Haiti

First, I would like to thank all of those who have contributed, and are still contributing, so generously to help our brothers and sisters in Haiti. I can report some assistance already conveyed. Father Lerow on behalf of the Missionary Society of Saint Paul has sent a substantial amount of cash by Haiti through Mrs. Bien-Aime, who is travelling by land through the Dominican

Republic. Mrs. Bien-Aime is in a group to help provide security. We hope she will reach Port-au-Prince today or tomorrow. This cash should assist in the most pressing needs of the two dozen orphans immediately under Father Bien-Aime's care in Port-au-Prince and perhaps also the needs of the wider circle of people he helps there.

I am happy to report that an old friend of mine, who is a reporter for one of the major U.S. networks, was able this weekend to deliver to Father Bien-Aime a substantial amount of water, food, medicine, and cash. Again, this helps with the immediate problem.

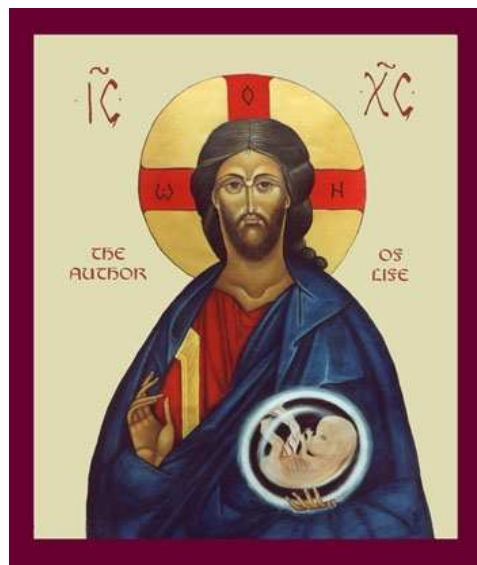
We are not yet able to determine accurately the amount of damage at our mountain parishes in Mannonville and Tapio. At the moment it seems likely that the orphans will be taken further to the north of Haiti, which is relatively free of earthquake damage. A friend of Father Bien-Aime's there has kindly offered space for the children for the time being.

Due to the generosity of our donors, we should be able to replace the orphanage truck, which was destroyed in the collapse of the orphanage. The orphanage itself was rented, so its loss does not pose a long-term problem to us. Apart from immediate care for the orphans and replacing the truck, the funds now in hand will be used to rent an alternative orphanage, help rebuilding in Tapio and Mannonville as needed, and permit Father Bien-Aime to assist others in need. The orphanage has always been a center for a wider circle of help, including a feeding program, assistance with education for children formerly in the orphanage, and medical care for those older children and others in need who do not live in the orphanage itself. Much of this work is on hold of necessity until the children are safely provided for, but I know Father Bien-Aime will resume such work as soon as possible.

Again, I am very grateful to all who are helping us help. When I have significant further news, I will report it.

Yours in Christ,

+Mark Haverland
(The Most Reverend) Mark Haverland
Archbishop & Metropolitan



[Anglican Priests for Life](#)



The Order of The Holy Innocents

Fr. Frederick Bentley *OHI Director*

Pro-Lifers Re-strategize, Advance with 'Personhood'

That is a baby inside the womb. That is a person. Pro-lifers are repositioning the abortion debate by appealing to the consciences of Americans through "personhood" jargon.

WASHINGTON – That is a baby inside the womb. That is a person.

Pro-lifers are repositioning the abortion debate by appealing to the consciences of Americans through "personhood" jargon.

After nearly 40 years of fighting to overturn Roe v. Wade and counting more than 50 million abortion deaths, Christians and other pro-lifers are re-strategizing and are confident they now have the abortion industry running.

"I've seen the abortion industry on its back foot," said Shaun Kenney, executive director of American Life League, at a Washington, D.C., conference Thursday. "They're afraid of personhood."

"Personhood Now!" is the new sign that tens of thousands of youths, adults, Protestants, Catholics and others are carrying Friday – the 37th anniversary of Roe v. Wade – during the annual March for Life up Capitol Hill.

American Life League, one of the oldest pro-life grassroots organizations, defines human personhood as the legal recognition of a human being's full status as a human person that applies to all human beings, irrespective of age, health, function, physical or mental dependency or method of reproduction, from the beginning of their biological development.

Simply, every single person deserves the full protection of U.S. laws.

Personhood language is nothing new. American Life League president Judie Brown recalled hearing the term some 30 years ago at her first March for Life.

But only recently the concept has picked up steam as personhood amendments were introduced in a number of states, and stirred more consciences as discussions were being provoked.

"Do you believe in human rights?" is the common personhood conversation starter.

"This is the conversation we've been wanting to have for a long time," said Kenney, as he urged students to take the message of personhood to the public square. "Ask 'why shouldn't we be on the side of human rights?'"

The concept resonates particularly strongly with African Americans who were stripped of their personhood more than a century ago in the Dred Scott v. Sandford Supreme Court decision. Today, an entire group of individuals are still denied human personhood because of where they live (in the womb, petri dish or fallopian tubes).

For African Americans, ending abortion puts a period to the civil rights movement.

"Blacks understand personhood," said the Rev. Johnny Hunter who leads a prominent African American evangelical pro-life ministry. "We are in a position to literally fulfill the civil rights movement, bring it to total completion."

In a fiery address on Thursday, Hunter told pro-lifers that they can end abortion regardless of Roe v. Wade as history has taught.

"There was no Supreme Court decision that ... overturned Dred Scott. That is not what freed slaves," he noted. "Dred Scott never got overturned and look at me, I'm free."

Rather than focus solely on Roe v. Wade, pro-lifers are being urged to turn much of their efforts to state personhood amendments.

The personhood movement can succeed, said Hunter.

Thirty-two states are pursuing personhood amendments. Composing precise language in the ballot initiatives is critical, medical ethicist Dr. Dianne Irving cautioned on Thursday.

Pro-lifers need to be picky with their words to avoid legal loopholes, she said.

"If you use the wrong science [or] words, it not only leads to a misdefinition of who is a person, it also leads to malformed consciences," Irving told an audience of pro-life youths and adults, while noting that science is on their side. "We need to get the language straight so our consciences can be well formed."

Neither fertilization nor conception is defined as the "beginning of biological development." Rather, the development of a human being begins "the instant when the sperm and the ovum touch" through sexual reproduction, according to Personhood Colorado. And in the case of a cloned human being, his or her biological beginning is when the DNA in the cell/cells is deprogrammed or reprogrammed to the same state of differentiation as a human organism.

While science may explain when life begins, for Christians, the Bible couldn't be clearer on the question.

Reading from the book of Jeremiah, Hunter said, "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations."

God recognizes a person and his or her purpose long before he or she is born, Hunter noted.

Conference attendee Savanna Buckner, 17, couldn't agree more with Thursday's speakers.

"Abortion is just sick," the Stafford, Va., student said. "It's against God's law and against natural law."

Lillian Kwon
Christian Post Reporter

The Anglican Priests for Life provides you an opportunity to contribute to the work of Anglican priest Father Jean Bien-Aime in Haiti who, among other things, runs a small orphanage for children.

<http://www.anglicanpriestsforlife.org/Haitian-Children%27s-Fund.php>

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Anglican Priests For Life

World's largest organization of Anglican Priests for the Sanctity of Life

HOW DO WE WORSHIP THE LORD?

Why Is Incense Used?

Once upon, a time, in a far away land, before the days of Air-wick and indoor plumbing, people's houses would get musty, and the odors of cooked cabbage and garlic would cling to the walls and curtains, and on damp days a crowded house might smell like the locker room of a gymnasium. Folks discovered, probably at first by accident, that if they would burn certain fragrant resins and gums, the smoke would sweeten the air and make life indoors much more pleasant.

However, since these aromatic resins and gums were rare and costly, they were saved for those occasions when company was coming. Thus it came to be that burning incense became a sign of somebody important coming to the house. You walk in, and smell incense and say, "Who is coming?"

Royalty and the aristocracy had incense burned before them on all public occasions. If you wished to honor a friend, you burned incense when he visited you.

Incense was burned in temples and all places of public and private worship in honor of the God who was to visit the temple. It purified the place in anticipation of his visit. The Jews did this and the Christians took over the custom. "From the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same, my Name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered in my name, and a pure offering; for my name shall be great among the Gentiles, saith the Lord of Hosts." (Malachi 1:11).

It is instructive to notice the places in the Church service at which incense is offered. On the entrance into the sanctuary, at the beginning of the Mass, the priest "censes" the altar to prepare it for the coming of God on the altar. Then he himself is "censed" by the deacon or thurifer because the priest himself is to become an instrument through which God acts in the service.

The bread and wine are "censed" at the offertory, because God is going to visit them and make them His habitation. Then the congregation is "censed" for they are going to receive, their communion—God is going to visit them. They further are due honor in their own right as the Mystical Body of Christ through which (with the priest) God acts to consecrate the Holy Sacrifice.

At the moment of Consecration the bread and wine (becoming the Body and Blood of Christ are again "censed" by the thurifer, because God becomes present there.

God is really acting through His priests. God is really present on our altars under the forms of bread and wine; God is really speaking to us through the reading of the Gospel, and finally God is really and actually present in the Christian who receives the Sacraments or hears His Word.

Incense is not used merely because it is pretty, or because it smells sweet, or because we like "high church" but rather because, as a living link with Christians and Jewish antiquity, it assures us that the early Christians believe as we believe, that when we gather together in His Name, God is in our midst, that we do not merely remember a dead Jew but have Communion with a living Christ, that we do not merely long for a heaven that is "up yonder", or "in the sweet by and by", but adore an Eternal Lord who is "right here and now."

It adds to our service an atmosphere of mystery—and well it might. For it signifies an invasion of the Eternal into time, of the Infinite All Holy into the midst of His people.

So when incense is offered, it should properly awe and impress us, with the terrifying fact of the imminent entrance of Him who flung the stars into space and who numbers the hairs of our heads, yet whose tender love is concerned with the sparrow's fall, who willed to be laid in a manger and nailed to a cross that you and I might know His love for all eternity.

Understanding its ancient meaning, as purification before the entrance of an important visitor, incense as the Church uses it is eloquent testimony and a vivid dramatization of the Church's most cherished beliefs and vital experiences: God's coming to man, really and actually, in man's worship of God.

- Fr. Homer Rogers

[THE CANONS OF THE HCC-AR](#)

[THE APOSTOLIC CANONS](#)

[THE SEVEN OECUMENICAL COUNCILS OF THE UNDIVIDED CHURCH](#)

[THE ALLENTOWN TRACTS](#)

[TREE OF FAITH LETTERS](#)

These are a detailed course of instruction in the Faith set forth in a series of Letters written, where possible, at weekly intervals. The writing of these letters provided an opportunity to demonstrate the way in which the Faith revealed in

the Holy Scriptures has been clarified by the Fathers in the face of false interpretations and the intrusion of alien teachings. These Letters were written to provide a sufficient guide so that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments begin to come alive in the way the Fathers experienced them. This is an invitation to a fresh discovery of the spiritual riches of the Catholic Church.

Blessed Mary Ever-Virgin

In the course of the Divine Liturgy you hear Mary referred to as “ever-Virgin.” We are thankful to Father Chad Jones for his work in collecting these thoughts on the Perpetual Virginity of The Blessed Virgin Mary. We trust that these thoughts will be useful to you in understanding this important subject.

For Anglicans who embrace the Faith of the Undivided Church expressed through The Seven Ecumenical Councils, the Blessed Virgin Mary was a Virgin 'before, during and after' (to quote Saint Augustine) the conception and birth of Our Lord. Those who reject the doctrine have the onus of responsibility and burden of proof to demonstrate that the belief should not be held as an edifying and congruous article of Faith and that it is not actually part of the Apostolic Tradition inherited from the earliest Church and, additionally, an ancient and universally-accepted belief related directly to the Creeds themselves. The doctrine was so important for earlier generations of Christians that even Martin Luther, John Calvin, Huldrych Zwingli and John Wesley all continued to believe in the Perpetual Virginity of the Holy Virgin, even as they began and promoted their various reformations. Historically, classical magisterial protestantism professed the Perpetual Virginity. The doctrine was never seriously questioned, even by protestants, until the advent of modern biblical scholarship and criticism, the so-called 'historical-critical' method of biblical interpretation. Anglicans who adhere to belief in Blessed Mary Ever-Virgin keep very good company indeed. In short, I should say that although Anglicans don't strictly *have* to believe it, they should.

Here are a few splendid examples of the early protestant orthodoxy on this question:

Martin Luther

'Christ, our Saviour, was the real and natural fruit of Mary's virginal womb. This was without the cooperation of a man, and she remained a virgin after that.' *Sermons on John, chaps. 1-4 (1539)*

'Christ was the only Son of Mary, and the Virgin Mary bore no children besides Him. I am inclined to agree with those who declare that 'brothers' really mean 'cousins' here, for Holy Writ and the Jews always call cousins brothers.' *Sermons on John, chaps. 1-4 (1539)*

'A new lie about me is being circulated. I am supposed to have preached and written that Mary, the mother of God, was not a virgin either before or after the birth of Christ.' *That Jesus Christ was Born a Jew (1523)*

'Scripture does not say or indicate that she later lost her virginity. When Matthew says that Joseph did not know Mary carnally until she had brought forth her son, it does not follow that he knew her subsequently; on the contrary, it means that he never did know her. This babble is without justification; he has neither noticed nor paid any attention to either Scripture or the common idiom.' *That Jesus Christ was Born a Jew (1523)*

John Calvin

'Helvidius displayed excessive ignorance in concluding that Mary must have had many sons, because Christ's 'brothers' are sometimes mentioned.' *Harmony of Matthew, Mark & Luke, sec. 39 (Geneva, 1562)*

'The inference he [Helvidius] drew from it was, that Mary remained a virgin no longer than till her first birth, and that afterwards she had other children by her husband. No just and well-grounded inference can be drawn from these words; as to what took place after the birth of Christ. He is called 'first-born'; but it is for the sole purpose of informing us that he was born of a virgin. What took place afterwards the historian does not inform us. No man will obstinately keep up the argument, except from an extreme fondness for disputation.'

(ibid.)

'Under the word 'brethren' the Hebrews include all cousins and other relations, whatever may be the degree of affinity.' *Commentary on John (7:3)*

Huldrych Zwingli

'To deny that Mary remained *inviolata* before, during and after the birth of her Son, is to doubt the omnipotence of God, and it is right and profitable to repeat the angelic greeting - not prayer - 'Hail Mary.' God esteemed Mary above all creatures, including the saints and angels - it is her purity, innocence and invincible faith that mankind must follow.' This is from the *Fidei expositio*, the last pamphlet from his pen. There is a special insistence upon the perpetual virginity of Mary. *The Perpetual Virginity of Mary, September 17, 1522*

Zwingli printed in 1524 a sermon on 'Mary, ever virgin, mother of God': 'I have never thought, still less taught, or declared publicly, anything concerning the subject of the ever Virgin Mary, Mother of our salvation, which could be considered dishonourable, impious, unworthy or evil. I believe with all my heart according to the word of holy gospel that this pure virgin bore for us the Son of God and that she remained, in the birth and after it, a pure and unsullied virgin, for eternity.'

John Wesley

I believe Jesus Christ was born of the blessed Virgin, who, as well after as she brought him forth, continued a pure and unspotted virgin.' *'Letter to a Roman Catholic'*

The vast majority of Christians living and dead have held and do hold that the Blessed Mother was preserved in her physical dignity, integrity and chastity the unique and singular human agent of the Incarnation. The doctrine is unquestionably part of what we call the *consensus fidelium*, the whole faith of the whole People of God, the universal, ancient and consentient belief of the whole Church in every time, place and age. The consensus of the Church's greatest Saints, Doctors, Confessors, theologians, teachers and witnesses has always been that the Perpetual Virginity is a genuine teaching of the Gospel. That puts Anglicans who might dissent in a tight spot!

The theological reason why the Church understood from the beginning the history of salvation and the content of Holy Scripture as teaching that the Blessed Mother is Ever-Virgin is the recognition that authentic belief in the Divinity of Our Blessed Lord is intimately connected to, and quite inseparable from, a right belief about the role and ministry of His Mother. The Creeds canonise the title 'Virgin' for the Theotokos, clearly implying as a dogmatic statement of fact that Mary remained a Virgin after Our Lord's miraculous conception and birth. If Mary had had natural marital relations with Saint Joseph and had conceived and birthed other children, the permanent title 'the *Virgin Mary*' would make little historical or theological sense. The Helvidian doctrine would have necessitated such language as 'Mary who was the Virgin.' Why would Mary remain a Virgin? To remain forever a living testimony in her bodily chastity to the unique Deity of Jesus Christ as the only-begotten Son of God. In the Incarnation, Mary became not only an instrument or channel for God the Son, in which and through which He became Man: in the miracle of the Incarnation Mary became God's Mother, the Temple and Throne of God. Her sacred body, and her life, would remain the utterly unique means by which God became Man - Christ having consecrated and sanctified Our Lady's body by His presence in her womb. Out of reverence for her, for the mystery of the Incarnation, and for the received interpretation of the Gospel narratives, the Church has always called Mary *aeiparthenos*, Ever-Virgin. As Father Alexander Schemmann, the famous twentieth-century Orthodox theologian once quipped when a student challenged the Perpetual Virginité, 'What? Do you think the Blessed Virgin was *bored with God?*' His point was well taken, and it still is today! Mary gave her life, body and soul, totally to Jesus – and that is the heart meaning of the Ever-Virginité.

The biblical data tells us, if read within the Tradition of the Church, that Mary was the unique Mother of the unique Son, and so the Church ever held until modern times. The strongest evidence in the New Testament regarding the ongoing virginal state of Our Lady is Saint John 19, where we read that the beloved disciple, Saint John, took the Blessed Mother into his home to care for her upon the death of the Lord. The Lord commended Mary to the care and guardianship of John. If Our Lord had had other natural brothers and sisters born of the Blessed Mother, Jewish Law and custom, the *goel* tradition, would have required Him to commend His Mother to the care and safekeeping of His own blood siblings. The fact that Our Lord did not commend the Virgin to one or more of His brothers or sisters illustrates the fact that He did not have any to whom He could give His Mother, and so the Church has ever held. The references to the 'brothers and sisters' of Jesus in the New Testament have been understood in basically three different ways, only one of which has been deemed heretical by the Fathers of the Church.

1. *The teaching of Helvidius and Jovinian*: This doctrine is the modern protestant view, condemned as heretical by Saint Augustine of Hippo and Saint Jerome, which understands the references to the 'brothers and sisters' of Jesus Christ in the literal sense as biological children of Blessed Mary and Saint Joseph, and hence biological brothers and sisters of Jesus. This interpretation of Scripture was held to be entirely novel, and erroneous, by the Church of the fourth century.

2. *The teaching of Saint Jerome*: Saint Jerome, the biblical expert thoroughly familiar with Jewish tradition and history, as well as Hebrew literary styles and forms, instructs that the references to Our Lord's sisters and brothers are in truth references to blood relations of Our Lord, members of His extended family who are not biological children of Mary and Joseph. Hebrew terminology lacks a specific word for a cousin or more distant relation, and so the New Testament utilises the Greek word *adelphos*, 'brother', to describe a biological brother or a cousin, a relative in the family unit. Saint Jerome's biblical exegesis takes into account the Hebraicism of the New Testament. Saint Jerome's version is the view usually maintained in the Roman Catholic Church.
3. *The teaching of Saint Epiphanius of Salamis*: This venerated fourth-century monk and theologian of the Eastern Church asserts that the ancient tradition reveals the brothers and sisters of Jesus to be children of Saint Joseph sired by him in a previous marriage. Ancient Christian traditions describe Saint Joseph, the guardian and foster father of Our Lord, as a much older person than the Blessed Virgin, which explains his rather brief appearance in the Gospel narratives and his quick disappearance from the story of Our Lord and His Mother. Saint Epiphanius teaches that Saint Joseph married earlier in life and had children by his first wife, who later died. Saint Joseph was then called to marry the Blessed Virgin in order to protect her and her Divine Son. The brothers and sisters of Jesus are therefore held to be the step-brothers and step-sisters of Jesus, children of Saint Joseph but not of the Blessed Virgin. Saint Epiphanius' doctrine is today generally held in the Eastern Orthodox Churches.

Whatever the specific historical situation may have been, the Undivided Catholic Church, without elaborating the precise relationships in the Lord's extended family, proclaimed the Perpetual Virginity of the Blessed Virgin a dogmatic truth at the Fifth Ecumenical Council of Constantinople II in AD 553. Before that time the doctrine was proclaimed a truth of the Gospel by a multiplicity of local and regional synods and councils of the Church Catholic, such as the Synod of Rome in AD 340. All of the ancient apostolic Churches descending from the Undivided Church of the first millennium, with the possible exception of the Anglican Church, dogmatically profess that the Blessed Virgin was the only Mother of her only Son, Jesus Christ our Lord: the Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, Oriental Orthodox, Assyrian and Old Catholic Churches all maintain the doctrine as part of the deposit of faith.

Anglicans who embrace the fulness of the Faith, with the rest of the historic Church, believe that the Blessed Virgin Mary is the Virgin, before, during and after the birth of Our Saviour. The Collect for Christmas states that our Lord was born of a pure Virgin. In the Latin, *Immaculata*. This does not modify Our Lady's virginity, but the fact that she was "full of grace." She is a virgin who is also pure. Jesus was conceived and delivered with the tokens of Mary's virginity intact. We do not speak merely of a virgin conception, but the Virgin Birth. Mary was a Virgin before, during and after. Inasmuch as she was the earthly tabernacle for the Second Person of the Holy and Glorious Trinity who took the fullness of our humanity – sin being the only exception – within her womb, Mary is given the name Ever-Virgin as no other

child dwelt in the place where she carried our Lord. This truth is confirmed as our Lord from His Cross entrusted His Mother to the care of the Beloved Disciple, indicating there were no other children to undertake this responsibility.

Catholic or Protestant?

Anglicans must choose between Protestantism and Tradition, says Vatican

By Anna Arco

6 May 2008

The Vatican has said that the time has come for the Anglican Church to choose between Protestantism and the ancient churches of Rome and Orthodoxy.

Speaking on the day that the Archbishop of Canterbury met Benedict XVI in Rome, Cardinal Walter Kasper, the president of the Pontifical Council of Christian Unity, said it was time for Anglicanism to "clarify its identity".

He told the Catholic Herald: *"Ultimately, it is a question of the identity of the Anglican Church. Where does it belong?" Does it belong more to the churches of the first millennium - Catholic and Orthodox - or does it belong more to the Protestant churches of the 16th century? At the moment it is somewhere in between, but it must clarify its identity now and that will not be possible without certain difficult decisions."*

He said he hoped that the Lambeth conference, an event which brings the worldwide Anglican Communion together every 10 years, would be the deciding moment for Anglicanism. Cardinal Kasper, who has been asked to speak at the Lambeth Conference by the Archbishop of Canterbury, said: "We hope that certain fundamental questions will be clarified at the conference so that dialogue will be possible. "We shall work and pray that it is possible, but I think that it is not sustainable to keep pushing decision-making back because it only extends the crisis."

His comments will be interpreted as an attempt by Rome to put pressure on the Church of England not to proceed with the ordination women bishops or to sanction gay partnerships, both serious obstacles to unity. They have come at an extremely sensitive time for the Anglican Communion, as cracks between different factions in the church are beginning to show ahead of the conference in July.

Dr Rowan Williams faces rebellion from conservative and liberal Anglicans over homosexuality and women bishops. The Rt Rev Gene Robinson, the Anglican bishop of New Hampshire, whose attempts to enter into a civil union with his gay partner have angered conservative Anglicans, plans to attend the public events of the conference despite the fact that he has not been invited by Dr Williams.

On the other side of the spectrum, rebel conservative bishops, headed by Archbishop Peter Akinola of Nigeria, dismayed by the Archbishop of Canterbury's refusal to condemn homosexuality outright, plan a rival conference in the Holy Land in June. Ecumenical dialogue between Rome and the Anglican Communion ground to a halt in 2006. Cardinal Kasper said at the time that a decision by the Church of England to consecrate women bishops would lead to "a serious and long lasting chill". But last month the Church of England's Legislative Drafting Group published a report preparing the ground for women bishops, who are already ordained in several Anglican provinces

Anglicanism is being defined in our day. There are those who have fully embraced Protestantism; there are others who have embraced First Millennium Church. The purpose of The Holy Catholic Church, Anglican Rite, is to restore and perpetuate the Faith, Order, Worship and Witness of the Undivided Church as it existed in Britain from the time of its arrival in the First Century until the Great Schism in 1054 between

the Western and Eastern Church, but especially as taught by the ancient Bishops and Doctors of the Church and all Seven Ecumenical Councils of the Undivided Church of the First Millennium.

Is this Journey Really Necessary? by our late Bishop Michael Wright

In response to the Apostolic Constitution, " Anglicanorum Coetibus", our own Bishop Michael Wright had written the response in terms of the TAC's wanting to go to Rome. The letter was supplied to us by Mrs. Pam Wright, the beloved of the late Bishop Michael M. Wright, published in [Koinonia Advent 2009](#)

Note from the Archbishop of HCCAR: The most recent communique from the Vatican (Anglicanorum Coetibus) to those who have been disaffected by the Anglican Communion, has provoked much discussion in several circles. Although technically we are not among the invitees, some have asked concerning our position to the pastoral provision. In response to those of our jurisdiction who may have concerns as to where we stand, The College of Bishops has unanimously adopted the treatise below written by our dear friend and colleague, the late Bishop Michael M Wright of England. He that is dead, yet speaketh (Hebrews 11:4) and we stand firmly with our brother in embracing the fullness of the Catholic Faith that we have received. In Fide, +Thomas Kleppinger

IS THIS JOURNEY REALLY NECESSARY?

It is now well known that the Traditional Anglican Communion (TAC) is seeking union with the See of Rome. To quote the official statement authorised by the Primate, Archbishop John Hepworth: "The College of Bishops of the Traditional Anglican Communion (TAC) met in Plenary Session in Portsmouth, England, in the First week of October 2007. The Bishops and Vicars-General unanimously agreed to the text of a letter to the See of Rome seeking full, corporate, sacramental union. The letter was signed solemnly by all the College and entrusted to the Primate and two bishops chosen by the College to be presented to the Holy See. The letter was cordially received at the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith....'

The action of the Portsmouth Synod is a courageous step to take as it invites misunderstanding by those of other Churches and even risks rejection by some within the TAC's own membership. Moreover this is a new departure, the first example of a 'Continuing Anglican Church' seeking a wider Catholic unity by stepping outside the area of the 'Continuum'. The question remains however whether this action furthers true Catholic unity.

The Roman Church claims to be the original Catholic Church unchanged from the time of the Apostles onward. For those who think thus - and this seems to be true of the TAC leadership - union with Rome is the first obvious step on the way to restoring full Christian unity. However, in the interest of true union this claim has to be challenged.

The unity of the primitive Catholic Church was established in the following way. Throughout the whole collection of New Testament Epistles there are exhortations 'to be of one mind' and 'to have the mind of Christ' This theme appears notably in the Epistles of Saints Paul, Peter, and John - it is an understanding common to all three. To have a 'different mind' is the same as maintaining a different Gospel because the effect of receiving in

Baptism and Eucharist the life of Christ through the Holy Spirit is to unite believers in one mind - the 'mind of Christ.' We see this concern to maintain a 'common mind' in the face of a particular problem in the account of the First Council of Jerusalem (Acts 15). When the assembly has reached a 'common mind' on the question of dietary regulations it is able to announce that the agreement has been achieved by the guidance of the Holy Spirit. It is left to St. James to summarize the conclusion reached by the Council. James acts as Council's voice. All subsequent Councils of the Church, whether local or involving wider areas of consultation (even to the point of those having ecumenical status) reflect the same pattern - a pattern exemplified at its most basic level by the 34th Apostolic Canon.

Unity is achieved through the maintenance of a 'common mind' with Christ. The achievement of a 'common mind' is proof of the presence and guidance of the Holy Spirit. The unity and identity of the Catholic Church comes about through sacramental incorporation by the Holy Spirit into Christ's risen life - and thus the possession of His mind.

The maintenance of a 'common mind' linking the Apostolic Twelve with their successors the bishops with their flocks is at the heart of what we call the Holy Tradition and this in turn is the consequence of the abiding, active and direct presence of the Holy Spirit within the Church. For the same reason heretics, those of a 'different mind', even if they administer an outward form of Christian baptism, do not receive the grace of the Holy Spirit uniting the believer to Christ and making him a member of His Body, the Catholic Church.

In the course of time the Catholic Church had to come to a 'common mind' over the doctrinal standing of various movements which threatened conflict within the Church. Arianism, for example, was eventually rejected by the 'common mind' established through the first two Ecumenical Councils. Subsequent Ecumenical Councils dealt in a similar 'conciliar' manner with other movements and this accounts for the series of Seven Councils acknowledged by the Orthodox and Roman Churches alike (as also by those Anglicans abiding by the Affirmation of St. Louis). The 'conciliar' ecclesiology was far more than a convenient way of achieving a majority consensus, it was essential to the nature of the Catholic Church.

The Catholic Church therefore is a sacramental fellowship, a koinonia linking heaven and earth, uniting all members, corporately and individually, with the life and mind of Christ through the Holy Spirit. Any challenge to this 'conciliar' ecclesiology overturns the very nature of the Catholic Church and constitutes the intrusion of a 'different mind', marking a departure into heretical isolation.

Historically the Roman Church came to occupy the chief position among the great patriarchal sees of the Church, but its confirmation, along with the other great patriarchates, of the decisions of the Ecumenical Councils indicated no more than that the 'conciliar' process of consultation was now complete. All this changed following the Eighth Ecumenical Council.

It is little known that there is an 8th Ecumenical Council and it is not listed by the Roman Church. In AD 869 a council was held at Constantinople with the purpose of deposing the Patriarch Photios. The council was driven by the political agenda of the then Byzantine Emperor Basil. Ten years later another Council was held which restored St. Photios as Patriarch, declared the previous council null and void, and also condemned any addition to the Creed (the Frankish 'filioque' clause was the target).

This Council was fully endorsed by all five Patriarchs and for almost two hundred years thereafter was recognized universally as the 8th Ecumenical Council (880). Toward the end of this period the Church in Rome, now under the dominant influence of the Frankish Church, inserted the Frankish 'filioque' clause into the Creed. This was done unilaterally, ignoring the authentically Catholic 'conciliar' procedures observed and maintained by all previous popes. Some decades later the Roman Pope ceased, again unilaterally, to recognise the true 8th Council in favour of the earlier abrogated council (this earlier council is the one still listed by the Roman Church as the 8th Council).

These actions mark the replacement within the great Western Patriarchate of the essential Catholic 'conciliar' ecclesiology. The 'common mind' was now to be imposed by a single individual claiming a special delegated authority as the successor of Peter and Vicar of Christ. Although this notion had grown up slowly over many centuries within the Western Patriarchate, this was the first time it was put to the open test and it was never universally received - it was not, in short, the 'common mind' of the Catholic Church. With this action the Roman patriarchate broke away from the Catholic Church and has remained unreconciled to this day, still asserting, as in Vatican II's Dogmatic Constitution of the Church, that:

"In virtue of his office, that is as Vicar of Christ and pastor of the whole Church, the Roman Pontiff has full, supreme and universal power over the Church. And he is always free to exercise this power." (Lumen Gentium, Chapter 3 section 22)

In this way the Roman Church has long since abandoned the authentic Catholic Church and set up a Church with a 'different mind'. Judged by the Tradition of the Catholic Church this is a departure into heresy. From the Orthodox Church point of view the requirement for reunion of the two Churches is the stark demand that the Roman Church repents and repudiates its innovative ecclesiology. A thousand years of separation have also created other doctrinal obstacles, teachings

which have no place in the authentic patristic Tradition - these also would have to be repudiated.

This is a brief blunt sketch of the background against which the decision of the TAC leadership has been made. Much that is written about Christian reunion ignores the gravity of the breach between the Catholic Church and the Roman Church. There is an unfounded assumption that the great divide is between Rome and the Churches of the Reformation and that once this obstacle has been removed the far older dispute will be easily resolved. It would seem that the TAC leadership is taking the road to Rome ignoring (probably not even aware of the far greater gulf between 'East' and 'West'.

On the other hand the Affirmation of St. Louis remains loyal to the original, authentic 'conciliar' ecclesiology of the Catholic Church, firmly rooted in Scripture and Tradition. If the intentions of the TAC are fulfilled and 'full, corporate, sacramental union' with Rome is achieved it will be less a Catholic Church than it is at present - so is its journey really necessary?

Meanwhile it is spiritually dangerous to claim that the Roman Church and, for that matter, all Churches originating in the Western Patriarchate, are heretical and false Churches devoid of grace. Faithfulness to the Holy Tradition can be turned into a new legalism which stifles the voice of the Holy Spirit and creates blindness

toward spiritual reality. It is encouraging therefore to be able to quote another aspect of the Roman Church's Lumen Gentium:

"The Church recognizes that in many ways she is linked with those who, being baptized, are honoured with the name of Christian, though they do not profess the faith in its entirety or do not preserve unity of communion with the successor of Peter. For there are many who honour Sacred Scripture, taking it as a norm of belief and a pattern of life, and who show a sincere zeal. They lovingly believe in God the Father Almighty and in Christ, the Son of God and Saviour. They are consecrated by baptism, in which they are united with Christ. They also recognize and accept other sacraments within their own Churches or ecclesiastical communities. Many of them rejoice in the episcopate, celebrate the Holy Eucharist and cultivate devotion toward the Virgin Mother of God. They also share with us in prayer and other spiritual benefits. Likewise we can say that in some real way they are joined with us in the Holy Spirit, for to them too He gives His gifts and graces whereby He is operative among them with His sanctifying power. Some indeed He has strengthened to the extent of the shedding of their blood. In all of Christ's disciples the Spirit arouses the desire to be peacefully united, in the manner determined by Christ, as one flock under one shepherd, and He prompts them to pursue this end. Mother Church never ceases to pray, hope and work that this may come about. She exhorts her children to purification and renewal so that the sign of Christ may shine more brightly over the face of the earth." (Lumen Gentium, Chapter 2 section 15)

What is remarkable about this statement is that it acknowledges that Christians outside the confines of the Roman Church are united to Christ by baptism and likewise participate in the Holy Spirit. This statement can only mean, if unintentionally, that the Orthodox Church possesses the essential elements which constitute the Body of Christ - is, in fact, authentically Catholic. The same judgement applies also to those Continuing Anglicans committed to the Fundamental Doctrinal and Moral Principles set out in the Affirmation of St. Louis. The Roman Church, of course, insists on a further requirement, acknowledgement of the unique status of the Roman Papacy, but this adds nothing to the Catholic and salvific reality which it admits to be possessed by Churches outside its self-defined confines.

In summary, union with Rome only makes sense once unity is restored between all five ancient patriarchates of the Catholic Church and the 'common mind' broken by the Roman Church is once more restored. The present action of the TAC has no significance in terms of furthering the unity of the Church. Meanwhile it is our responsibility to maintain our present witness to the authentic ecclesiology of the undivided Catholic Church, for this is the standard to which all must return if there is to be the true unity which Christ wills and of which he himself is the abiding foundation

THE MARIAN DOCTRINES

Here is a list of the Marian doctrines which belong to the Faith of the Undivided Catholic Church to which our Constitution and the Solemn Declaration commit us.

In the case of the first four, we name the Ecumenical Councils which proclaimed those doctrines.

1) That Mary is rightly called the Mother of God - Theotokos

Ephesus Canon 1

2) That Mary is 'Ever-Virgin' - Perpetual Virginity

Constantinople II Capitulum 2

3) That Mary is without sin

Nicea II Decree

4) That Mary has been Glorified - Her Assumption or Dormition

Constantinople II

(As accepted in the Undivided Church, this means that Mary, as a whole human being, has been taken into heaven, and that she already shares in the General Resurrection of the body - one step ahead of us. King Alfred the Great described the Assumption as the greatest of Our Lady's Feasts.)

5) That Mary is an intercessor, and that we may seek her prayers

(liturgical sources)

[The Scriptural Rosary](#)

Visit [The Holy Catholic Church - Anglican Rite](#)

Visit [The Diocese of the Resurrection \(HCC-AR\)](#)

Visit [The Pro-Cathedral Church of the Incarnation](#), Quakertown, PA

The purpose of [The Holy Catholic Church \(Anglican Rite\)](#) is to restore and perpetuate the Faith, Order, Worship and Witness of Western Orthodox-Catholic Christianity as it existed in the English Church from the time it arrived on the shores of Britain in the First Century, to the time of the Great Schism in 1054 (or the Norman Conquest of 1066), and as set forth by the "ancient catholic bishops and doctors," and especially as defined by [all Seven Ecumenical Councils of the undivided Church](#).

**WE ARE NOT JUST ANOTHER "CONTINUING ANGLICAN" JURISDICTION
WE ARE CONTINUING CATHOLICS.**

We shall continue to witness to Christ's Good News and maintain our vision of a truly Catholic Church, expressing that Catholicism in an Anglican way. This is not the same as expressing Anglicanism in a Catholic way. We are Anglican Rite Catholics, not Comprehensive Anglicans.