

## TALK TO THE ORDINARIATE CLERGY

Microwave ovens, now a normal part of life, arrived with a bang, or rather a ping, in our kitchens in the late 1970s. Everybody was talking about them; they were magic, space-aged, and the greatest invention since the light-bulb. Originally called 'Magnetrons', this Thunderbirds type nomenclature gave way to the familiar 'Microwave Oven', just as the fulsome praise and dire predictions about their use has given way to – well, nothing really. No one notices them any more on the corner of the counter. We just get on with things. It is remarkable how novelties become commonplace, how revolutions become run of the mill.

In the early 1990s, when I worked in Westminster Cathedral, we had an innovative ecumenical idea. With the authorities at St Paul's Cathedral, we undertook not merely an exchange of pulpits in Christian Unity Week, but an exchange of Clergy and Choirs. I remember the first time this took place, the extraordinary *category shift* of robed Anglican Clergymen presiding on the sanctuary of Westminster Cathedral. And the following week, hearing the 'continental' tone of the Westminster choir in the iconic setting of St Paul's. It was daring, visionary, illuminating. It felt like, and it *was*, a huge step forward in ecumenical relations. This event is now a regular fixture in the Calendar of both Cathedrals: it feels normal. Sometimes, when other events crowd the diary, it can even be something of a nuisance. This bold step has now become regular event in the yearly life of both institutions, a welcome chance to touch base, a familiar routine.

Some revolutions, at the time daring and unprecedented, later become an accepted state of affairs, part of the scenery. That is the back-story of ecumenism itself, in the years since Vatican II's landmark declaration on Ecumenism and the recognition of aspects of the Church outside the borders of the Catholic Church itself.<sup>1</sup> Back then, there was a palpable sense of history in the making; high hopes were entertained for ecumenical possibilities. For Anglicans and Catholics, it seemed, something decisive was just around the corner.

In this heady mood, ARCIC was established, in the wake of the hugely successful and significant visit of Archbishop Michael Ramsey of Canterbury to Rome in 1964. Vatican II had, in the same year, singled out Anglicanism as a tradition in which significant Catholic elements had survived,<sup>2</sup> and hopes were high that something big was going to happen. Something big *did* happen: during the Archbishop's visit to Rome, Pope Paul took off his fisherman's ring and placed it on the finger of the Archbishop – a gesture of enormous significance that seemed to signify some recognition of his episcopal status, perhaps even hinting at a re-visiting of the negative Catholic judgement on Anglican orders.

That was then, and now is now. The exhilaration of those early years has faded – partly for reasons that we all know – but also because we have become familiar with a level of interaction between Christians that was unthinkable in the decades before the Council. Catholics are familiar with our Anglican counterparts, we meet regularly at civic services, Churches Together, running the Food Bank. That is, in its way, good: ecumenism should not be anything out of the ordinary. *It should be* our normal way of doing things.

And it is also the story of the Ordinariate. Launched with significant publicity, some controversy, and much comment, it was unprecedented, intrepid, audacious. It felt as though something mighty were happening, some shift in the tectonic plates of our ecumenical status. I was working for the Council for Christian Unity at the time, and the Ordinariate was at the top of the agenda of every ecumenical discussion, East and West. There were expectations of a new realignment, a new way of doing ecumenism. Nowadays, the Ordinariate is part of the scenery; an increasingly familiar reality within the Catholic Church, an established part of our Catholic (in the strictest sense) tradition. And that is probably as it should be. We need to get over the shock of where people have come from. I recall the relief and delight of my curate, an Anglican convert, when our parishioners ceased referring to him as a 'former Anglican', but simply spoke of him as a 'Catholic priest.' Similarly, it is good for the Ordinariate to move on from being characterised by its origins, to become commonplace in the Church's life, freed from labels and histrionics. That is

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<sup>1</sup> *Lumen Gentium*, 15

<sup>2</sup> *Unitatis Redintegratio*, 13

something to bear in mind when the Ordinariate is no longer making headlines, when it has slipped down the agenda. Honeymoons should not last for ever; exhilaration gives way to a calmer, more grounded, narrative. This quieter reaction does not betoken loss of importance or significance. Quite the opposite: it provides a space to reflect and assess how the Ordinariate can enrich and contribute to the life of the Catholic Church. That is true in many areas: liturgy, spirituality, the exercise of authority, and, notably, ecumenism. In an era when ecumenical dialogue between the Catholic Church and other Christians has become more reflective and meticulous, the Ordinariate can, I believe, give some guidance and impetus to our discussions. It is this topic that I intend to address this morning.

For ecumenism *has* become more reflective. Which is perhaps another way of saying that it is going through a difficult time. It is notable that current phases of several official dialogues, among them ARCIC III, have adopted a more cautious, painstaking approach in their discussions.<sup>3</sup> ARCIC is no longer ‘diving in’ to discuss the hot-topics: Eucharist, Ministry, Authority. Forty years ago, it was assumed that resolving these high-profile issues would bring about rapid re-union. The years have shown that not to be the case, so now the dialogue is going back to basics, to the assumptions that lie behind formulae and agreements that seemed to promise so much – reflecting upon the scriptures and the early tradition of the undivided Church, painstakingly to build up a picture of what Anglicans and Catholics agree upon, what sources we draw upon and how we use them, in formulating our own positions. It is not headline grabbing stuff. No fireworks. No shocking announcements (as there once were) that Anglicans can accept elements of Universal Primacy or Marian devotion.<sup>4</sup> For some, this careful re-assessment is a problem. A frustration. A generation which remembers Pope Paul placing his ring upon the finger of a startled Archbishop Michael Ramsey, is perplexed at the lack of progress on the ecumenical front. Four decades of theological dialogues, nine agreed statements, do not seem to have yielded their anticipated fruit. Many look upon the ecumenical dialogues (in so far as they look upon them at all) as foot-dragging, self-serving, (one journal spoke of a ‘gravy train’) ignoring the desire of ordinary Christians for unity. Anglicans and Catholics meeting in parishes and projects are impatient of official inertia. One such is the former archbishop of Canterbury, George Cary, who, during last year’s Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, labelled ARCIC “irrelevant to the ordinary Christian”.<sup>5</sup>

Even those who take a more positive view of the value of ecumenical dialogue do not doubt that we are going through a difficult patch in the quest for unity among Christians. Keen observers of the ecumenical landscape were already noticing cracks in the relationship as far back as 1982, when a downbeat assessment of the Final Report of ARCIC I by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith questioned the assertion that ‘substantial agreement’ on key disputed matters had been reached.<sup>6</sup> ARCIC II continued its discussions, and Archbishops of Canterbury were unfailingly received with great warmth on official visits to Rome, but as the Church of England proceeded to ordain women in 1992, there was an increasing sense of ecumenical dialogue going through the motions. ARCIC II produced some fine documents, but there was no over-arching theme to them. It was as though the dialogue was unsure of the direction it should take. Justification, Communion, Authority, Mary, Ethics: ARCIC was searching for a thread. One Catholic bishop told me that, in effect, the heart had gone out of the dialogue.

Further difficulties were, of course, to come. In 2003 and 2009, active homosexuals were elected Bishops in the Episcopal Church. Here the issue was moral, as well as doctrinal; it was no longer an issue of what to talk about when we sat down together, but whether we could sit down at all. Many voices in Rome called for ARCIC to be

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<sup>3</sup> Building on 40 years of dialogue, ARCIC III has three tasks:

- To consider the Church as Communion, local and universal, and how in communion the local and universal Church come to discern right ethical teaching;
- To re-examine how the “commitment to the common goal of the restoration of complete communion in faith and sacramental life” is to be understood and pursued today;
- To prepare the work of ARCIC III for reception by the Anglican Communion and the Roman Catholic Church.

<sup>4</sup> Following *The Gift of Authority*, there were eye-catching headlines: cf, for example, The Anglican Journal, 1 June 1999: “Text calls upon Anglicans to accept Pope’s Primacy”; after *Mary, Grace and Hope in Christ*, in the General Synod debate, a typical response was that of David Philips: “The ARCIC report fails miserably to do justice to what Anglicans believe.”

<sup>5</sup> Catholic Herald, 24 January 2014.

<sup>6</sup> [http://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/pontifical\\_councils/chrstuni/angl-comm-docs/rc\\_pc\\_chrstuni\\_doc\\_1991\\_catholic-response-arcici\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/chrstuni/angl-comm-docs/rc_pc_chrstuni_doc_1991_catholic-response-arcici_en.html)

cancelled. These developments were unacceptable in themselves, but they also challenged the achievements of the historic dialogue. ARCIC had published Agreed Statements on Priesthood, Authority, Communion, Eucharist. The Robinson/Glasspool elections called some aspect of each of these into question. Rome, seeing a lack of consistency, began to ask the not unreasonable question, "What was the point of our discussions?"

The issue of consistency is an important one, and one to which I will return in a moment. Roman authorities have looked with increasing anxiety at a series of inter-confessional agreements entered into by some of our dialogue partners, which seem to cast their agreements with the Catholic Church in a different light. A conference last December in Cambridge addressed where Catholics now stand with Lutherans on Eucharistic and other theology, following the Leuenberg agreement with Protestant communions in Europe which contains some very different Eucharistic theology. The 1992 Porvoo Agreement, establishing full communion between the Church of England and northern Scandinavian churches is another case, seeming perhaps in itself no more than a natural alliance, but bearing within it seeds of diverse theological interpretation.

In another way, as you will be all well aware, the ecclesial shock of the Robinson/Glasspool consecrations has been acutely felt, as a rift has developed within the worldwide Anglican communion itself, whereby some Anglican Bishops refuse to recognise the authority of other Anglican bishops, decline to celebrate the Eucharist with them, and declare themselves out of communion with them. All of which leads Rome to ask with plausible bewilderment – "Where is the Anglican communion? Who speaks for it?" There is a de-facto schism within worldwide Anglicanism, so that even the current Archbishop of Canterbury himself wonders whether the Communion can survive the present controversy.

Consistency, and communion: two essential qualities of ecumenism. I believe that the Ordinariate can help re-invigorate, re-apply, and re-tune both these concepts.

You would have to have been holidaying on Jupiter, or at least Torremolinos, in recent days not to have been aware of momentous events in the history of the Church of England. On 26 January, Libby Lane was consecrated Bishop of Stockport at York Minster, the first woman bishop in the Church of England. In the same Minster, on 2 February, what I consider a more significant event took place when Philip North was consecrated Bishop of Burnley by only three bishops, none of whom had participated in the ordination of women priests. Both new bishops claim to stand in the succession historic episcopate as maintained in the Church of England. But one of them, significantly, does not recognise (or, in modern Anglican terminology, "cannot receive") the ministry of the other, although he has had to assent to the Guiding Principle that the Church of England has 'reached a clear decision' on the matter of women bishops.

This succession of events demonstrates the always impressive ability of the Church of England to find a formula for the most seemingly intractable of issues. The Church of England, formed by a Queen who, it was reported, did not want to make windows into men's souls, and consolidated in the golden age of English prose, has a way with words. The solution on display at York, whereby the Church of England found a way to consecrate two bishops whose ministry excludes communion with each other, is a triumph of diplomacy and ingenuity, representing, in the words of the Archbishop of York, "the Church of England's gracious magnanimity, restraint and respect for theological convictions".

That is indeed one way of looking at it. But there is a point where gracious magnanimity and breadth of opinion conspire together to exclude integrity, where acceptance of another point of view demonstrates not only a determination to live together with opposing views, but also a wilful blindness to the consequences of that determination. This runs deep within Anglicanism. I recall, as a parish priest in Notting Hill, being 'phoned by my High Church opposite number asking for the texts for the Mass of the Feast of the Martyrs of England and Wales. Our friendship notwithstanding, I spluttered down the telephone: "How can you celebrate that Feast?! The martyrs died precisely because they would not accept what you are doing: Catholicism without the Pope!" His reply was, "Oh, well, we don't really think it through in that way."

*Thinking it through.* That for me is the crux of the issue. Thinking through what communion means. When I attended the Lambeth Conference, as part of the Catholic delegation, I was in a group with Archbishop Rowan, discussing the subject of Communion. Asked about those bishops present who were refusing to celebrate the Eucharist with other bishops, he tellingly admitted that “we haven’t really thought through” what that means for the communion. The comprehensiveness of Anglicanism is one of its great glories; it is what has made it such a superb national Church. But it is also its flaw, one which cannot face up to serious doctrinal or moral disagreements in a mature or a truthful way. This leads not so much as to respect for different points of view as the loss of a theological compass. The presiding Bishop of the Episcopalian Church speaks of ‘diversity’ as the ‘only road to the kingdom of God’, and has even defined Catholicity as ‘diversity’. I see what she is driving at, I think, but it is not good enough. Not good enough for communion. And in this respect I think Anglicanism has failed to think things through. What does communion mean?

Of the two Anglican Episcopal consecrations of the past week, that of Philip North is the more significant in terms of communion. Women were always going to be made bishops. Once they had been admitted to priesthood, that consequence was inevitable. What is more significant, to my mind, is that a line of bishops has been identified now, within the wider Church of England episcopacy, that considers itself distinct from that episcopacy. As a practical solution, it may well work, at least for a while, and knowing and admiring Philip North I am sure that if anyone *can* make it work it is he. But that will be despite, not because of, the theology. It can only work if you don’t do the theology. Accordingly, one non-consecrating bishop present praised the provision, while acknowledging that some “theological questions and issues were left hanging.”

Where is communion here? Unless you are to define communion in the loosest of terms, as ‘belonging to the same institution’ or ‘standing in the same room’ or ‘drinking sherry together’, I would maintain that it is not possible to recognise communion here. Communion is, of its nature, *more* than a visible unity and certainly more than a formula that enables you to cope with those who disagree with you. Communion is an inner bond of faith, the reality of our membership of the catholic, apostolic Church, that communion of all the faithful united to each other in Christ to form one body.<sup>7</sup> “Whenever differences become embodied in separated ecclesial communities, so that Christians are no longer able to receive and pass on the truth within the one community of faith, communion is impoverished and the living memory of the Church is affected.”<sup>8</sup> Not my words, but those of ARCIC’s own document on Communion.

My question, one which has already been asked by others, is: in what sense are Bishop Lane and Bishop North bishops in the same Church?<sup>9</sup> There are serious ecclesiological and sacramental questions problems here that put into the hazard the Catholic tradition claimed by Anglicanism. Mutual love and respect is not enough. There needs to be consistency. Someone needs to think things through.

I would suggest that the Ordinariate is what happens when you do think things through: when you are rigorous and truthful about the effect of certain actions upon communion; about tensions within communion which become self-contradictory, and eventually destroy communion. Communion is more than affection, or toleration, or elasticity. Communion has a breaking point - for it is a configuring of oneself and one’s community to the universal community of the Church, and certain developments render that configuration impossible, disfigure that likeness. I can only think that certain Anglicans, among whom I count many friends, are simply not thinking through the events of recent years. They have been given a formula which seems to allow co-existence, survival. But, begging Philip’s pardon, that fact that he can walk through a doorway and be photographed together with Bishop Libby is not, in his words, “a wonderful expression of the unity of the Church.”<sup>10</sup> Communion has content; only when they can share the Eucharist can you claim a wonderful expression of the unity of the Church.

So it is that the Ordinariate is a truthful response to the claim to be Catholic, a realistic expression of the unity of the Church. In this it is contributing to a more honest ecumenical project, by demonstrating the need to draw a rigorous theological conclusion from the claims of communion.

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<sup>7</sup> Catechism 1396

<sup>8</sup> ARCIC *Church as Communion*, 30.

<sup>9</sup> Fr Ashley Beck, “Tainted Theology”: Tablet Blog, 30 January 2015

<sup>10</sup> Church Times, 3 February 2015.

Catholics need certainty. Our whole sacramental system is predicated on an assurance given to us that the sacrament is doing what it claims to be; that the sign is authentic, that grace is truly conferred. I am not prepared to be dragged into an argument about whose Anglican orders might or might not be valid; because in the end that is not the question I want answered. I want to know that my priest is truly ordained; that I am really receiving the Body and Blood of Christ, that my sins are forgiven. Ultimately, there is only one guarantee of that: communion. Communion with the Church, and, when all is said and done, Communion with Peter. Anglicans can speak, and did speak last week, of an 'impaired communion' with which they are willing to live. Impaired communion may or may not be communion. Again, for me, that is not good enough; it cannot guarantee the life of grace I need. The Ordinariate bears testimony to that demand for certainty, which is a reasonable demand since our Lord went to such lengths to ensure that his grace, his teaching and his salvation might endure and be available at every moment in history. For the Ordinariate, this championing of certainty is a sign of what our unity needs to include; a rigorous thinking through communion means, and what it takes to guarantee the sacraments.

I'd like to move to a second element of the Ordinariate's contribution to contemporary ecumenism: its embodiment of a goal. The Ordinariate is a model of 'realised ecumenism' which is ever more important both as a prophetic sign and a commitment to faithfulness. One common response to the difficulties of the contemporary ecumenical situation is to say that we have gone as far as we can go. That, given the impossibility of coming together, we should *live with* our differences. This seems realistic - while there may be a way of expressing authentic Eucharistic theology that does justice to different opinions, there is no halfway point between ordaining women and not ordaining them. You have them or you don't. We have reached an impasse, the end of the road. This is only one example of the way in which all ecumenical dialogue seems doomed to failure; the differences are too great, the intransigence of other Christians too deeply rooted. As the Catholic Herald boomed, when the latest round of ARCIC was announced, "Isn't it time to bring this ecumenical farce to an end."<sup>11</sup>

In this case, the task of Christians is co-existence, getting on together, within our distinct traditions. By and large, we do that quite well. As a Protestant pastor once said to me "four hundred years ago we were burning each other at the stake. Now we go to each other's carol services." That is indeed something to celebrate. Peaceful co-existence has been hard won. Moreover, it allays our fears about ecumenism; protecting beliefs, ceremonies and practices that are dear to us. Co-existence, in charity, allows full expression of our own doctrines, and avoids any danger of compromise or watering down difficult issues.

An even more compelling version of this stance notes that just because we cease to do theology, we are not necessarily condemned to ecumenical inertia. There is a *Practical Ecumenism*, which means Christians doing together what we can do together. This, in fact, is the way that most of us encounter ecumenism these days. The opening of food banks, the campaigns against poverty, the work to combat global slavery, joint witness in countless parishes and cities - this is ecumenism at work, where Christian charity knows no distinction of denomination.

There can be no questioning the value of any of this. Vatican II makes that clear when it says: "Cooperation among all Christians vividly expresses that bond which already unites them, and it sets in clearer relief the features of Christ the Servant."<sup>12</sup>

But there is also a danger, alluded to by Pope Benedict, that in a seemingly intractable theological situation, we shrink ecumenism to 'what we can do together' - into *purely* practical ecumenism. Speaking to the CDF in 2012, he warned against reducing ecumenism "to a kind of 'social contract' to be joined for a common interest, a "praxeology" for creating a better world."<sup>13</sup> It is easier to open a food bank than to discuss homosexual unions; it is clearer how to campaign for a local school than to discuss the ordination of women. So we turn from the difficult work of theology, to take refuge in local projects and practical initiatives. Pope Benedict's point is that practical initiatives must not become a *substitute* for the difficult, but ultimately necessary, theological dialogue.

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<sup>11</sup> Catholic Herald, 7 February 2011.

<sup>12</sup> *Unitatis Redintegratio*, 12.

<sup>13</sup> Pope Benedict XVI, address to Plenary of Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, 19 January 2012.

So, we have to do the theology. There is one reason above all why; why we must attempt repeatedly the seemingly impossible task of untangling the knots of our different Christian positions. It is simply the will, the prayer, of Christ: "May they all be one, as you and I are one."<sup>14</sup> Christ did not pray that we simply live peaceable side by side, even that we collaborate, co-operate. He prayed that we may be one, in a unity that reflects the unity of the inner life of the Trinity – "as you and I are one". That Trinitarian unity is an inner bond, a unity of being, although diverse in its relationships. Pope John Paul II was blunt: "To believe in Christ means to desire unity; to desire unity means to desire the Church; to desire the Church means to desire the communion of grace which corresponds to the Father's plan from all eternity. Such is the meaning of Christ's prayer: *Ut unum sint*."<sup>15</sup> This prayer, and the imperative for unity it brings, has been echoed by modern Popes and other Christian leaders.

It is here that the presence of the Ordinariate within the Church is prophetic and exhortative; a reminder both to Catholics and to other Christians that co-existence, even with a communion in which historically the Catholic Church could see a great deal of itself, is not enough. Living in impaired communion is not the will of Christ. For sure, we can collaborate in a great number of things - but collaboration is not journeying. Faithfulness to the prayer of our Lord is to commit ourselves to his agenda, his journey, his prayer; however unlikely or difficult that may seem to us. True ecumenism is not only about sustaining the present bonds of charity; it must direct itself forward, towards its goal, a goal that will be visible in sharing Eucharistic fellowship. The Ordinariate not only represents a realisation of that goal, but an insistence to the Church that where we are is not good enough; not merely untidy – it does not accomplish the will of Christ, and thereby weakens our witness to him in the world. For ecumenism, there is a journey to be made. Your own personal journeys which brought you to the Ordinariate, the sacrifices you made to move forward, re-emphasise the urgency and the cost of the ecumenical imperative - the obligation to make the journey; the need once more to see ecumenism not as an abstract notion, but a reality that makes demands upon us. The Ordinariate, in the end, underlines that in staying where we are, divided as we are, we are lacking in witness to him whose name we claim to bear.

If the Ordinariate restores the sense of movement towards unity, it also models what that unity can look like. Here the Ordinariate's contribution to ecumenism has a potential yet to be unlocked.

Many people are afraid of ecumenism. The unity we seek is - to some - frightening. There is a dread of having to let go cherished traditions and devotions; of having to take on unfamiliar and uncongenial practices. In a revealing exchange at the Catholic-Methodist dialogue, participants confessed what they feared most about unity: for the Methodists, it was the loss of a biblically-based faith; for the Catholics, significantly, it was the loss of a sense of fun, the 'gaiety of the faith'. One Episcopalian Bishop in 2010 warned against any scheme that would "drag the communion down the slippery slope towards a coercive structure like the papacy." Fears by Catholics of watering-down doctrine, by other Christians of Roman centralisation, make the ecumenical goal less than attractive.

In this case, we need to be very careful about what we mean by the unity of Christians. What would be its characteristics? What would be its room for manoeuvre?

In the first place, unity must look solid. Solid in the sense of truthful. Ecumenism *can only* be truthful. It is not, and never can be, compromise. Our unity must be, in the words of Vatican II, "constituted by the bonds of the profession of faith, the sacraments and hierarchical communion."<sup>16</sup> We cannot found our unity on anything less, glossing over difficult bits, on watering down formulae. "You go light on scripture and we won't mention Purgatory..."

But that does not mean that we should use *discernment*. In its newest and most cautious phase, when ARCIC III is contemplating the roots of our common traditions, its methodology is to ask, do we really need to use precise words, specific arguments to describe a theological issue truthfully? Much of the Reformation in Europe happened over the insistence on particular words or phrases: *transubstantiation*; *justification by faith alone*; *sola scriptura*.

A unity which is truthful, also needs to do justice to the diversity of traditions within Christianity. Unity, as Cardinal Muller said in 2012, is not achieved by the elimination of distinctiveness – the requirement that diverse liturgies,

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<sup>14</sup> John 17:21

<sup>15</sup> Pope John Paul II, *Ut Unum Sint*, 1995, 9.

<sup>16</sup> *Lumen Gentium*, 14; *Ut Unum Sint*, 9.

customs and spirituality should be replaced by one, Roman, model.<sup>17</sup> Pope Benedict himself usefully distinguished Tradition (with a capital T), from *traditions*.<sup>18</sup> Pope Francis during his recent visit to the Orthodox Patriarch in Constantinople, significantly said to his hosts, that, in the search for unity, the Catholic Church “does not intend to impose any conditions except that of the shared profession of faith.”<sup>19</sup> It is a simple, but, as ever with Pope Francis, profound statement. It does not mean that we will ignore central doctrines, sit light to Church authority. It *does* mean that we will be sensitive to the concerns and fears of our ecumenical partners, and not ask of them anything that violates their own traditions. Vatican II recognised ‘elements of sanctification and truth’ in other Christian communities,<sup>20</sup> and it is important to honour and respect these elements; and even to learn from them.

Here the Ordinariate has much to offer the wider Church. It holds out a successful and viable model of diversity in unity, a visible sign that proclaims that shared Communion does not mean uniformity of worship, traditions, or even of government. This is a point that has been well made within the Anglican - Roman Catholic dialogue, but it is also a point that needs to be broadcast in wider ecumenical circles: an assurance to other ecumenical partners that the price of unity is not too high, that their fears need not be realised.

The model of unity represented by the Ordinariate is also a reassurance to Catholics themselves, that ecumenism *per se* is not calling for fearful innovation in, or attenuation of, cherished traditions. Rather, ecumenism strengthens who we are, and turns our traditions from a dusty treasure-chest of dubloons buried in the cellar into a resource to be freshly appreciated and used, to help us flourish and grow. The Ordinariate, particularly in the preparation of its texts and liturgies, shows that within the Catholic church all our identities have space to grow. This is not some concession, some little enclave that has been conceded; it is part of what being Catholic is. The Ordinariate is drawing upon the traditions and resources of its Anglican liturgical and spiritual life, in order (and this is the point) to play a fuller part in the life of the Catholic Church. And that is a lesson for us all. Ecumenism is not afraid of diversity; rather, it thrives upon it. The search for unity renders the Church strengthened, more Catholic, in having available within it a richness of Christian heritage. For other Catholics, it is a challenge so see their own cherished traditions, their way of doing things in parishes and dioceses, as more than a *state of affairs*, but rather as a resource to celebrate, strengthen, draw upon, even re-discover, in the search for unity.

I would encourage you to be more pro-active in this. The Ordinariate is not some sheep-pen in which you are given leave to mill about in a curious way to be observed by the great number of Roman Catholics. It is a catechising tool; it is an example in methodology. It has resources which the wider Church needs. It can show how to go about exploring and re-presenting them. Here I think you can make a most significant contribution to modern ecumenical dialogue, both directly, and indirectly. You not only model realised unity; you model how to get there.

For underlying all ecumenical endeavours there is a basic need – to learn more about each other. Much time in formal dialogues, even those conducted by professional theologians, is spent in *un-learning* stereotypes. That lack of knowledge and misunderstanding is all the more prevalent away from academic circles. How many Catholics have a basic idea about Anglicanism? (How many Anglicans do? But that is another point!). At Lambeth in 2008, members of the Catholic delegation were frustrated that the Archbishop of Canterbury did not simply stand up and tell everyone what to do. When Archbishop Rowan met Pope Benedict in Rome at San Gregorio in 2012, it was suggested by Vatican authorities that he wait in a corridor while the Pope prayed before the Blessed Sacrament. Not a few Cardinalatial jaws hit the floor when Archbishop Rowan asked why he could not pray at the Blessed Sacrament also. Ignorance is an enemy of ecumenism, as noted by Pope John Paul when he said that:

Christians cannot underestimate the burden of long-standing misgivings inherited from the past, and of mutual misunderstandings and prejudices. Complacency, indifference, and insufficient knowledge of one another often make this situation worse. Consequently, the commitment to ecumenism must be based upon

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<sup>17</sup> <http://www.zenit.org/en/articles/archbishop-muller-on-anglicanorum-coetibus-and-ecclesial-unity>

<sup>18</sup> <http://www.news.va/en/news/unity-focus-of-popes-address-to-cdf-plenary>

<sup>19</sup> [http://en.radiovaticana.va/news/2014/11/30/pope\\_francis\\_i\\_seek\\_communion\\_with\\_orthodox\\_churches/1113017](http://en.radiovaticana.va/news/2014/11/30/pope_francis_i_seek_communion_with_orthodox_churches/1113017)

<sup>20</sup> *Lumen Gentium*, 8.

the conversion of hearts and upon prayer, which will also lead to the necessary purification of past memories.<sup>21</sup>

This is difficult territory, as those of you glued to Wolf Hall will know. Presuppositions about each other's history, motivations, and practices can be deeply embedded. The Ordinariate has a twofold mission here, grounded in the famed 'exchange of gifts' of which Pope John Paul spoke. The first is to introduce Catholics to Anglicanism. Here I wish to lavish praise upon the splendid *Customary of Our Lady of Walsingham*, which, for the very first time (apart from a few poems in very obscure pages of the Breviary) introduces into the Catholic liturgy prayers and readings from outside its own tradition. For the first time, the treasures of another Christian tradition (apart from hymns) are available to Catholics within their own liturgy. What a powerful arsenal of theology and spirituality it represents! As a priest committed to lengthy readings in the Office of Readings in the Roman Breviary each day, I cannot tell you my relief at being able now to substitute readings from St Augustine's tedious *Sermon on the Shepherds* readings from Lancelot Andrewes, Thomas Traherne, or John Keble. The *Customary* is a resource that can provoke interest, open up to a new audience a world of reasonable, scholarly, accessible writing, and introduce a new readership to the freshness and vigour of the some of the greatest theological minds this country has produced. I hope that you will press our Bishops to make its readings and prayers more widely available; even to make them regular alternatives to the readings of the Divine Office.

The second aspect of the Ordinariate mission is, through sharing of the Anglican theological and spiritual heritage, to oil the wheels of our wider Ecumenical dialogue for Anglicans themselves. In my own research on the Caroline Divines, I have become aware of resources within Anglicanism of which Anglicans themselves need to be reminded. At the General Synod discussion on Mary in February 2011, it was clearly news to many delegates that there was any history of Marian devotion within Anglicanism. The startled and hostile Anglican response to the mild endorsement of some sort of Papal Primacy in ARCIC's statement *Gift of Authority* seemed unaware of the remarkable Caroline statements on the subject. Archbishop Rowan Williams lamented the absence of the moral theology of Sanderson and Taylor in ARCIC's discussion of moral theology. In a host of areas, greater familiarity with the treasures of Anglican heritage, and particularly its sophisticated Anglo-Catholic wing, can reconfigure ecumenical discussion, so that, for sceptical Anglicans, solutions can be achieved that are based not upon what are seen as Roman impositions, but drawn from within Anglicanism itself.

Following from this, my final point is that the Ordinariate's championing of elements of the traditions of Anglicanism can re-introduce Catholics in this country to their own Catholic heritage. There is a common assumption among English Catholics (it was certainly prevalent in my own Catholic schooling) that the Catholic faith disappeared in this country in 1536 and re-started again in 1850. There was simply an intermission, like turning your computer on and off. It was in no way acknowledged that the form of Catholicism restored in 1850 was in many ways unlike that of the middle ages, drawing its identity and spirituality from sources unknown to medieval English Catholicism. Accordingly, the names of Richard Rolle, Julian of Norwich, St Edith of Wilton, St Wilfrid, St Frideswide are virtually unknown to modern English Catholics. They are all there, in the *Customary*. The Ordinariate can help re-present a Catholicism whose spirituality, language, customs and music are grounded in these islands; whose mysticism draws upon not only upon St Theresa of Avila but also the Cloud of Unknowing; not only upon Francis de Sales but also Aelred of Rievaulx; whose piety, as well as Italian and baroque, is also forged in the mists and vales of England; who honours Mary not only at Lourdes and Fatima but also at Walsingham; whose liturgical seasons, as well as marching to the mighty beat of Rome, also recall the native footfall of Sarum. Of course, it is easy to be romantic and over-precious about this, and many have fallen into that trap. Moreover, Catholicism is vigorous because it is universal, and English Catholicism today boasts many cultural strands which enrich and strengthen it. But Anglicanism in particular has preserved something unique, a rich and distinctive flavour of Catholicism that was moulded in this land throughout a millennium, and which will enrich our national treasury of spirituality.

The message with which I would leave you is, that the Ordinariate has a rich potential for ecumenical endeavour which is only just starting to be realised. It has in particular a mission to bring to the fore, for both Catholic and

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<sup>21</sup> *Ut Unum Sint*, 2.

Anglican audiences, those same Catholic elements within the Anglican tradition which were noted by Vatican II, elements within Anglicanism in which the Catholic Church sees itself and which are features impelling us to unity. These elements have a magnetic pull, drawing us together. The Ordinariate has a unique role in distinguishing these elements and, both directly and indirectly, encouraging, reminding and urging onward Catholics and Anglicans in their pilgrimage towards Christian Unity.

Mgr Mark Langham

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