

The Parish of St. Edmund, King and Martyr

(Waterloo, Ontario)
www.stedmund.ca



The Anglican Catholic Church of Canada
(A member of the worldwide Traditional Anglican Communion)

UPDATE

March 7, 2007 - **St. Thomas Aquinas**

April Schedule

April 1	Sunday	Palm Sunday
April 5	Thursday	Maundy Thursday
April 6	Friday	Good Friday
April 7	Saturday	Holy Saturday / Easter Even
April 8	Sunday	Easter Day
April 15	Sunday	The Octave Day of Easter
April 22	Sunday	The Second Sunday after Easter
April 25	Wednesday	St. Mark the Evangelist
April 29	Sunday	The Third Sunday after Easter

Service Times and Location

- (1) All Services are held in the Chapel at Luther Village on the Park - 139 Father David Bauer Drive in Waterloo.
- (2) On Sundays, **Matins** is sung at **10:00 a.m.** (The **Litany** on the first Sunday of the month), and the **Holy Eucharist** is celebrated (sung) at **10:30 a.m.**
- (3) On weekdays - **Major Holy Days** - the **Holy Eucharist** is *usually* celebrated at **7:00 p.m., 10:00 a.m.** on Saturday.

Notes and Comments

1) **The Messenger Journal** - our Parish distributes 90 copies of the Journal. If you don't receive one from us or another source, please let us know. You should be aware of what's happening in TAC around the world!

2) For **Robert's Ramblings - A citizen of no mean city** - see page 3.

3) Some help in countering the gay agenda - **But What do I Say?** - see page 6 - the third of four parts.

4) Refuse to choose - women deserve better - the second of several **Pro-Woman Answers to Pro-Choice Questions** - see page 7.

5) **Claims every Catholic should be able to answer** - the second of twelve parts - see page 7.

6) Some comments on - **The Calendar** - see page 8.

7) "[T]he doctrinal disintegration of Anglicanism is no adventitious phenomenon. It has been unfolding for the best part of a century." - **Commentary on the Anglican Communion Primates' meeting in Tanzania - February 2007** - see page 9.

St. Thomas Aquinas

A brief history

"He will enter the Order of Friars Preachers, and so great will be his learning and sanctity that in his day no one will be found to equal him."

According to legend, these are the words of a lowly hermit to St. Thomas Aquinas's mother, shortly before the Catholic saint's birth in 1225. Aquinas, born to a count and countess in Roccasecca, Italy, would go on to achieve a state of religious learning so profound that no one could match his religious and intellectual abilities.

At age five, the young St. Thomas was introduced to the Benedictine monks of

Monte Cassino for training. While receiving instruction there, St. Thomas was noted for his diligence and prayer, and even his advanced questions, such as "What is God?"

In 1236 the Abbot of Monte Cassino, knowing that this small boy deserved better instruction than his community could provide, sent him to the University of Naples where in a matter of months St. Thomas reportedly began to surpass his professors in knowledge and understanding.

After he had received the habit of the Order of St. Dominic around 1243, his mother, Countess of Teano, having barely seen her child after he was sent to Monte Cassino, conspired to kidnap St. Thomas and tempt him to leave the religious life and return to his family. While St. Thomas was under the Countess's control at the fortress of San Giovanni, she sent an impure woman to tempt him to abandon his religious celibacy, but St. Thomas drove the temptress out of his cell with a brand from the fire.

While he was in captivity for over a year, St. Thomas's sister provided the young scholar with copies of the Holy Scriptures, Aristotle's Metaphysics, and the Sentences of Peter Lombard. When he was released, the Dominicans rejoiced at the intellectual progress St. Thomas had made while imprisoned.

Despite his family's protests, St. Thomas continued to pursue membership in the Dominican Order, finally becoming a member of the Order of Friars Preachers. The Order sent him to study with St. Albert the Great in Cologne and at the University of Paris.

Despite his imposing large build, St. Thomas remained devotedly humble. His peers at the University of Paris referred to him as the "dumb ox," because of his size and meek humbleness to present his knowledge in front of others. However, after a brilliant defence of a difficult thesis in class, his teacher exclaimed, "We call this young man a dumb ox, but his bellowing in doctrine will one day resound throughout the world."

By 1250, St. Thomas had been ordained to the priesthood and was now preaching to

packed crowds in churches in Germany, France, and Italy. People came from miles around to hear his brilliant interpretations of scripture. In 1257, St. Thomas, coincidentally in the same year as the other great theologian St. Bonaventure, received his doctorate in Theology from the University of Paris.

As his fame grew, his life became increasingly hectic. He was simultaneously praying, preaching, teaching, writing, and journeying . . . while also writing his famous book the Summa Theologica. He was in tremendous demand: people flocked to hear his sermons, the Pope demanded his presence in Rome, and Paris claimed the "dumb ox" as its own.

However, his busy life soon caught up with him. By 1273, St. Thomas was experiencing regular religious ecstasies and visions. After the Eucharist in a Naples Church, he was reported to have been contacted by Jesus himself. Three of the brethren reported hearing a booming heavenly voice resound, "Thou has written well of me, Thomas; what reward wilt thou have?" St. Thomas replied, "None other than thyself, Lord."

Soon after, St. Thomas ceased his work on the Summa Theologica, citing the impossibilities of ever truly interpreting the word of God. In 1274, Pope Gregory X called for a general council of the Church at Lyons and St. Thomas, while en route, fell ill near Terracina and was taken in by local Cistercian monks. He died on March 7 of that year at the age of 49.

After his death, his body was given to the Dominican Church at Toulouse, where a shrine was erected. However, it was later destroyed during the French Revolution. As a precaution, his body was later moved to the Church of St. Sernin in Toulouse with his left arm sent to the Cathedral of Naples and his right arm to the Dominican Church of S. Maria Sopra Minerva in Rome.

St. Thomas was canonized by Pope John XXII on July 18, 1323, and was proclaimed Doctor of the Church by Pope Pius V in 1567, becoming the patron saint of all Catholic universities and students worldwide. St. Thomas' feast day is

celebrated internationally on January 28. [Prior to 1963 his feast day was celebrated on March 7!]

By **Joel O'Kane** on the *St. Thomas University* website

Robert's Ramblings

A citizen of no mean city

(Acts 21,39)

"There is no subject about which a man can be so boring as the subject of darkest Africa"
(Rumpole of the Bailey)

Miss Huntley may have been of those for whom Miss Smallwood's Society for the Assistance of Gentlewomen in Reduced Circumstances existed, but I doubt if the Society had heard of her, or she of the Society. Even when the temperature was in the high 90's Fahrenheit she'd sally forth from the faded splendour of the Grand Hotel, dressed in felt hat, gloves and fox fur, to purchase the daily paper for threepence, a coin known throughout Southern Africa as a *tickey*. When I was in my teens I summoned up the courage to ask if she had really been housekeeper to Mr Rhodes. "Dear me, no, not a housekeeper but I did know the dear man". And that was as far as I ever got with questioning the elders. Of course I kick myself now.

When I was a young boy in Bulawayo there were still several people about the town who had been there in its Wild West days, who had known and loved Cecil John Rhodes: Glory Be Cook, Monkeynut Jones, Major Paddon, Cocky Standing. I even failed to interrogate my grandfather who had been a private in the Grenadier Guards during the Boer War, which Afrikaners called the Second War of Independence. Or my grandfather's oldest friend, who in the same Guards was part of Colonel Plumer's attempts to lift the siege of Mafekeng. I was too young to have set eyes on Major Totty Hayes whose wife once pursued him with a *sjambok** into the Bulawayo Club, where no ladies were allowed.

However, I did have the privilege of meeting Mrs Jeanie M. Bogie in the town of Gweru,

author of two unashamedly racist histories about the British conquest of what is now Zimbabwe. My Irish godfather was Rector of Gweru and he retailed stories which seemed too good to be true. Major Bogie, in whose memory his widow erected a clocktower on the intersection of the town's busiest two streets, where cars frequently collide with it, also had a fondness for tots. He would secrete bottles of whisky about his farm. Jeanie would watch his progress through her telescope and summon a servant, "Fetch the Major, he's fallen from his horse". When he died she buried him beside the house but had an intuition he was unhappy there. She dug him up and laid his skeleton on a chaise in the drawing room until she knew what to do. When a dog ran off with one of his bones she buried him beneath the flagpole and its Union Jack on the front lawn.

In Bulawayo Mr Rhodes' wishes were fondly remembered and enacted. Streets were to be wide and lined with trees, though droughts and white ants made it hard for the trees to survive. Litter was to be discouraged. Christian ministers and Jewish rabbis were to have the right to give religious instruction to their own adherents in government schools. Missionaries and clergy were to receive free treatment in government clinics and hospitals, a practice which private dentists and doctors also honoured, as did lawyers. Mr Rhodes' favourite wildflower, the pale blue plumbago from the Eastern Cape, was grown everywhere. On the anniversary of his death sprigs of plumbago were worn in buttonholes, wreaths of it were laid at his statue. A plumbago bush grows in front of the New Wing at Mirfield, close to a loquat tree which never fruits. I suspect Brother Michael Twine of planting these two emigres.

It is not unusual for emigrants to name their new places after their old. In Canada, for example, you will find a Halifax, a London and a Wakefield. The Ndebele or Matabele were no different. When they came north from Zululand they called King Lobengula's capital after one of King Tshaka's: Bulawayo, the place of killing. Since kings had absolute power of life and death over all their subjects, some slaughter was only to be expected. White settlers 60 years later

saw no need to change the name of the place. When eventually they grew some municipal government and were granted a coat of arms by the College of Heralds, they chose neither a Latin nor a Greek motto. The whites stuck to Ndebele, *Si Ye Pambile*, Let Us Go Forward. The arms featured two totem animals of the Ndebele, the dassie and the elephant. One of the principal streets was named after the black King, while three of the white suburbs were named after the King's relatives.

There was a measure of respect between the whites and the Ndebele. Both were freebooters by profession, but they couldn't both come out on top. Since the whites had the repeating rifle and the Gatling gun it was they who, though outnumbered, did the winning. After one skirmish in which all the whites were killed, Allan Wilson's Last Stand, the black warriors paid them a compliment, "They were men and their fathers were men". When Cecil Rhodes was buried the Ndebele chiefs who were present gave him the royal salute reserved solely for their own kings, "*Bayete!*" When the whites won a battle outside Bulawayo, perhaps the last defence fought from a *laager* or circle of wagons, they erected a monument to the heroism of their opponents, listing the various Ndebele regiments who had fought there, Nukulumane, Insukameni, and so on. When the city council built new black suburbs it called them after these same regiments.

Even before legal Independence finally came to Zimbabwe, with Mr Mugabe taking over from Mr Smith, Bulawayo already had a highly competent black Town Clerk running the city. Though this was strictly speaking illegal in the days of Smith, the white city fathers already had a black para council working beside them, ready to take over at Independence. After Independence black citizens voted for white councillors and white citizens voted for black. So good were black-white relations at municipal level that Mugabe thought there must be a *coup* to unseat him, and arrested the white mayor (a Londoner with a Greek name) for being in league with the Ndebele.

In ecumenical matters Bulawayo was also slightly ahead of the average. The first

missionaries to the Ndebele were the London Missionary Society in 1859, a mixture of Congregationalists and Presbyterians (to which Society belonged the great Robert Moffat of Botswana and the great David Livingstone). These gallant Protestants stuck it out for over 20 years without winning a single convert. In the long process of waiting and waiting, Mr William Sykes, originally a grocer in *Mirfield*, and Mr Thomas Morgan Thomas from Wales, fell out so badly that they'd only communicate with each other by letter sent via ox wagon and sailing ship to London and back. In the 1880's came three Jesuits. They too won no converts, save for two lepers expelled from the tribe. In their loneliness the Protestants and the Roman Catholics became good friends and took to visiting each other for tea. Ever since then the LMS have had the primacy of honour among Christian denominations, being regarded as the first regiment of the line. The Roman Catholics, who always seem to have more money, more personnel and bigger buildings than anybody else, have been extremely generous about sharing their resources with other Christians, including the Salvation Army and Seventh Day Adventists. It is the Papists who always seem to take the lead with regard to ecumenical drought relief, legal aid, political protest. And now it is the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Bulawayo, the Most Reverend Pius Ncube, whom all denominations in Bulawayo see as the *de facto* spokesman for the Christian faith in Zimbabwe's current crisis.

Anglicans were latecomers to Bulawayo and Matabeleland generally. Originally the idea had been for denominations not to compete, and the Anglican sphere of missionary influence was to be Manicaland: Penhalonga *et al.* But with the advent of white settlers, and with the advent of some Xhosa Anglican settlers from South Africa, Anglicanism began as a chaplaincy to its own in town, not as a mission. By 1952 there had been sufficient Anglican growth for there to be a new diocese of Matabeleland, and my parish in Bulawayo got bumped up to cathedral status. Several former Mirfield students worked among us, +James Hughes, John Knight, Mark Nichols, Neil Pierce, Raymond Ravenscroft, Jerome Satterthwaite, David Wales, +Mark Wood.

Maurice Bradshaw came occasionally from Penhalonga to hear confessions. Ronald Haynes came from there to retreat the clergy, as did Paul Singleton from Johannesburg.

Our saint was that bush priest on a push bike, that apostle of Matabeleland, Canon Leonard Sagonda OBE, who had trained for the ministry at Penhalonga before CR went there. He once spoke to the men's society of the affluent white suburb where I was the pale young curate. "I have these schools to build, these teachers to pay, these children to inspect. I have so much travelling to do. The infidelity of my people slows me down. Recently because of the drought they gave up on Jesus and went back to the ancestral spirits. So I had to stop everything and challenge them, "You pray to the ancestors for rain under that tree." They did and of course it didn't rain. "Now come under this tree with me where I shall pray to the Father of Jesus". They did and of course it did rain at once. But you see, we have all these distractions in the countryside which you don't suffer from in town". Fr Sagonda was quite unaware that he'd said anything remarkable. But ever since then I've had no problem in believing the story of Elijah and the prophets of Baal (*I Kings* 18) to be historical fact. We could no more have doubted Canon Sagonda than others could have doubted the Cure d'Ars, Mother Teresa or Padre Pio. We loved it when he came to town.

*A thick whip made of tough hide, perhaps even elephant or rhino.

+Robert Mercer CR

The retired, Third Bishop of The Anglican Catholic Church of Canada

From here and there

1) The new totalitarianism: forcing people to be tolerant.

2) **What is High Mass?** The rubrics of the Missal recognize two kinds of sung Mass: (a) Solemn Mass, called in English "High Mass", and (b) the *Missa Cantata*, or "sung" Mass, without Deacon and Subdeacon.

A Solemn, or High, Mass is a Mass celebrated with a Deacon and Subdeacon and at least three other ministers (a thurifer and two acolytes) with music, incense, the kiss of peace and other ceremonies prescribed by the rubrics of the Missal.

From ***The Celebration of the Mass: A Study of the Rubrics of the Roman Missal*** - fourth printing, in 1956 - by **The Rev. J.B. O'Connell**

3) "Equally as crucial for re-evangelization is care for the liturgy. How many have left the Church in disgust over clown Masses and other abuses? Liturgy is the language of the Church. When that language becomes unintelligible, when it has no clear message, when it is a personal platform for this or that priest's 'vision of the church that is being born,' it is no longer Christ's message, but a banal, passing trend." **Mary Jo Anderson** commenting on a **crisis** report about the state of the US Roman Catholic Church, both in the February/March issue of **crisis** magazine.

But What do I Say? - (3 of 4)

The gay-activist movement is finding its way into more and more schools - promoting destructive behavior under the guise of tolerance. How can you ensure that the truth gets a fair hearing?

So what is the problem with homosexuality?

Of course, psychosexual development sometimes jumps the rails; in some people sexual desire is shunted in the wrong direction. In itself, this is not a sin but a misfortune. But now consider what happens when a person who suffers from this unfortunate condition gives in to it - if he uses his sexual powers in ways which deny the complementarity of male and female, in ways which reject instead of embrace the challenge of the other. Just as with a heart, an automobile or anything else that has a design, when we thwart the design things go wrong. Something works badly, stops working or breaks.

This is easiest to see on the physical plane. Because of disease, habitual homosexual behavior cuts years from the average lifespan. Syphilis, for example, is 19 times more common among homosexual than heterosexual women. Male homosexual practices are especially destructive, because the male reproductive organ and the male bodily openings are not made for each other. It's hard to see what is loving about acts that cause tearing, stretching, bleeding, choking, death, disease and pain.

Homosexual behavior makes things go terribly wrong on the other planes too. Both the procreative and the unitive purposes are thwarted.

From a procreative point of view, the most obvious problem with homosexual behavior is that it is sterile. Of course heterosexuals may suffer sterility too, but there is a difference. The sterility of the homosexual act is not an accidental misfortune that befalls some people but not others. On the contrary, it is *intrinsic* to the homosexuality of the act. Same with same cannot make new life.

It may seem that there are ways around the sterility of homosexual acts: two men might adopt or two women might make use of artificial insemination. But the human design cannot be tricked so easily.

For the reasons explained above, even if it doesn't take both a mom and a dad to obtain a child, it still takes both of them to raise and teach the child. The lack of a dad weighs heavily on every single mom, the lack of a mom on every single dad. Is adding Dad's boyfriend or Mom's girlfriend to the picture a solution? The problem is not that homosexuals cannot give loving care; it is that they cannot model normal male-female relationships.

From a unitive point of view, homosexual liaisons don't work either, for the "committed homosexual relationship" is a myth. To put it another way, to the advocates of the gay agenda, "commitment" does *not* mean sexual faithfulness. As the National Association for Research and Therapy of Homosexuality reports, "Although long-term gay male relationships

do, indeed, exist, studies consistently show them to be promiscuous. In fact, gay researchers and writers most typically say that a sexually open arrangement is essential to a gay male relationship's survival." Other research confirms that homosexuals with partners don't stop cruising; they just cruise less.

An argument is sometimes made that if only homosexuals were allowed to "marry," they would become more like heterosexuals. In the final chapter of his book *Virtually Normal*, gay advocate Andrew Sullivan, the most well-known proponent of this view, lets the cat out of the bag: it turns out that what he envisions from homosexual "marriage" is not a change in homosexual behavior, but a change in the meaning of marriage itself. Recognition of homosexual liaisons would be good for the broader society, he says, because there is "more likely to be a greater understanding of the need for extramarital outlets between two men than between a man and a woman." In another book, *Love Undetectable*, he releases still more cats from the bag, defending "the beauty and mystery and spirituality of sex, even anonymous sex."

The long and short of it is this: homosexuality isn't "gay" at all. It's lonely, unfulfilled and a ticket to early death. To offer it to young people as just another way to live is to offer them emotional chaos, disease and self-destruction.

By **J. Budziszewski** - the third of four parts

Pro-Woman Answers to Pro-Choice Questions

So you believe that a tiny speck - a zygote, blastocyst, embryo or fetus - has rights over a woman?

Women aren't stupid. We know it's a baby that is growing just like we did in our mother's womb. That is why most women who feel they have emotional and financial support don't have abortions.

I don't believe in discrimination based on size, age or location. Do you believe that a

child has less of a right to exist because he or she is small? Are large or tall people more valuable than small or short people? By that logic, most women would have fewer rights than men!

For years, abortion advocates have been pitting women against their unborn children, dehumanizing the growing child with misleading phrases like "blobs of cells" and "products of conception."

Fetus is a Latin word meaning "young child" or "young one." But in practice, fetus has become a clinical, dehumanized term for an unborn child.

Imagine if some group tried to deny medical care for *gravidas*. Once someone figured out that was the Latin word for pregnant women, the bewilderment would quickly shift to outrage.

By **Serrin M. Foster**, President, *Feminists for Life* - www.feministsforlife.org

Claims every Catholic should be able to answer - 2 of 12

Freedom of speech is a great thing. Unfortunately, it comes at an unavoidable price: When citizens are free to say what they want, they'll sometimes use that freedom to say some pretty silly things. And that's the case with the 12 claims we're about to cover. Some of them are made over and over, others are rare (though worth addressing). Either way, while the proponents of these errors are free to promote them, we as Catholics have a duty to respond. Hopefully, this special CRISIS Magazine e-Report will help you do just that. These errors are widespread, and it's our responsibility to correct them. So, at long last, I present to you 12 claims EVERY Catholic should be able to answer.

2. "Christianity is no better than any other faith. All religions lead to God."

If you haven't heard this one a dozen times, you don't get out much. Sadly enough, the person making this claim is often himself a Christian (at least, in name).

The problems with this view are pretty straightforward. Christianity makes a series of claims about God and man: That Jesus of Nazareth was God Himself, and that he died and was resurrected - all so that we might be free from our sins. Every other religion in the world denies each of these points. So, if Christianity is correct, then it speaks a vital truth to the world - a truth that all other religions reject.

This alone makes Christianity unique.

But it doesn't end there. Recall Jesus' statement in John's Gospel: "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but by me." In Christianity, we have God's full revelation to humanity. It's true that all religions contain some measure of truth - the amount varying with the religion. Nevertheless, if we earnestly want to follow and worship God, shouldn't we do it in the way He prescribed?

If Jesus is indeed God, then only Christianity contains the fullness of this truth.

By **Deal W. Hudson** in *crisis* magazine

The Calendar

The Calendar in General

1. In the celebration of the daily Sacred Liturgy - the Mass and the Divine Office - the Church follows a rather complicated calendar, which has come into existence, bit by bit, during the nineteen centuries of her existence.

2. This calendar has been created by the superimposition of a festal calendar, based on the date of the month, or a seasonal calendar, based on the day of the week.

3. Starting from the primitive anniversaries of Easter, Ascension, and Pentecost, on the one hand, and Christmas and Epiphany, on the other, the liturgical year has been built up in two great cycles, having Christmas - with its fixed date - as the focal point of one, and Easter - with its variable date - as the focal point of the other, and with the

mysteries of the Incarnation and of the Redemption (accomplished in the death and resurrection of our Lord; and realized and applied in the life of the Church, which was begun at Pentecost) as its foundation.

4. The following table will make clear the scheme of the liturgical year:

A. THE CHRISTMAS CYCLE

The Mystery of the Incarnation

Preparation

Advent (from the first Sunday of Advent to Christmas Eve)

Celebration

Christmas to Epiphany (*i.e.*, Christmastide, from December 25 to January 13)

Prolongation

The time after the Epiphany (from January 14 to Septuagesima)

B. THE EASTER CYCLE

The Mystery of the Redemption

Preparation

1. Remote
Septuagesima (up to Ash Wednesday)
2. Proximate
Lent
3. Immediate
Passiontide

Celebration

Easter and Pentecost (*i.e.*, Paschaltide, from Easter Sunday to Trinity Sunday).

Prolongation

The time after Pentecost (twenty-four Sundays).

From ***The Celebration of the Mass: A Study of the Rubrics of the Roman Missal*** - fourth printing, in 1956 - by **The Rev. J.B. O'Connell**

Commentary on the Anglican Communion Primates' meeting in Tanzania – February 2007

'For nearly two centuries', a wit once remarked, 'politicians have been talking about a solution to the Irish problem. What none of them would ever admit was the nature of the problem. The problem is that there is no solution.'

Much the same is true about the Anglican Communion. No one, it seems, has the courage to admit what must be obvious to all: that the problem with world-wide Anglicanism is not merely with the conduct of individual provinces but with the polity of the whole. Like the Home Office in the parlance of Dr John Reid, it is 'not fit for purpose'.

Not only does the doctrine of Provincial Autonomy make divergence in ethos and doctrine virtually inevitable, but the resulting weakness of common structures (the so-called 'Instruments of Unity') makes disciplining errant provinces severely difficult. And when the erring province is TEC [The Episcopal Church], the predominant source of funding for the Communion's central secretariat, it is impossible.

Whether or not the Director General saw the irony of ending the recent meeting of Primates in Frank Weston's Cathedral in Zanzibar, readers of *New Directions* will probably take the point: the doctrinal disintegration of Anglicanism is no adventitious phenomenon. It has been unfolding for the best part of a century. The Communiqué of the meeting in, for all its vaunted 'unanimity' ('that', said Clifford Longley on another such occasion, 'is a very Anglican use of the word *unanimous*'), cannot hope to turn the tide of history.

What the Communiqué has done, couched as it is in the language of the revisionists themselves, is merely to draw another line in the sand.

The Primates have requested, through the presiding bishop, that the House of Bishops of TEC make an unequivocal common

covenant that they will not authorise any rite of blessing for same-sex unions in their dioceses or through General Convention (see Windsor 143, 144) and confirm that the passing of resolution B033 of the seventy-fifth general convention means that a candidate for Episcopal orders living in a same-sex union shall not receive the necessary consent (see Windsor 134) unless some new consensus on these matters emerges across the communion (see Windsor para 134).

The Deadline for the answer is September 30th 2007.

"If the reassurances requested of the House of Bishops cannot in good conscience be given, the relationship between The Episcopal Church and the Anglican Communion as a whole remains damaged at best, and this has consequences for the full participation of the Church in the life of the Communion."

No one, of course, could reasonably suppose that such undertakings will be given, or that the failure to give them will result in any specific action by any of the 'Instruments of Unity'. But that is hardly the point. The heart of the statement is not in the requests it makes but in the terms in which they are made: '*unless some new consensus on these matters emerges across the communion*'. With that proviso the game is up for the traditionalists.

For the grounds upon which traditionalists oppose gay bishops and same sex unions is not that they go against previous Anglican practice (which might be changed by mutual agreement among the parties concerned), but that they contravene the plain teaching of scripture, which applies in all times and cultures and which neither individual provinces nor the Communion as a whole is competent to change. The issue, for them, is not one of Church traditions but of divine Law.

By signing the Communiqué traditionalist bishops have conceded the very point they were striving to uphold. Having initially refused to sit at the same table as Katherine Schori, and shunned her at the Lord's Table, they have signed a document which

endorses her position and effectively outlaws their own - and elected her to their Standing Committee! To this observer it looks uncommonly like suicide.

But lest you think this judgement harsh, consider the implications of the Communiqué for the future of Anglican moral theology.

Until now it has been assumed that penitence involves not only contrition but amendment of life. When I have sinned I need not only to be heartily sorry for what I have done and firmly to intend not to do it again; I must also seek, so far as possible, to undo what has been done amiss. If I have stolen what is not mine I must return it; if I have entered into a sinful or illicit relationship I must end it.

Not so with The Episcopal Church and the Communiqué. There a half-hearted expression of blanket regret (how many times has your confessor told you to be explicit?) and a future possible undertaking not to do the same again (why the reluctance to renounce wrong-doing in the first place?) is taken as enough. No mention, you will notice, of Gene Robinson.

The removal of Robinson from the Diocese of New Hampshire would, you will say, be too contentious a process and too high a price to ask of The Episcopal Church. But why? No other action, surely, could more powerfully signal sincere repentance. Either Robinson's public conduct in a same sex relationship is 'conduct unbecoming' and contrary to Divine Law, or it is not. And if it is not, what possible grounds (apart from blind prejudice) can there be for barring other such candidates from episcopal office?

We must sadly conclude that in Zanzibar the traditionalist primates were skilfully out-manoeuvred. They conceded the very principles for which they stand; and did so in exchange for assurances which they will probably not get, and which, should they be forthcoming, will be half-hearted and of little effect. All this came about not because those primates are weak or foolish, but because the Communion itself, of which they are an intrinsic part, is structured on principles of democracy and mutual

accountability. Pursued to their limits these principles leave no place for radical obedience to the word of God, which must necessarily be the strong suit of those who oppose same sex partnerships and gay bishops.

It was clear from its ringing endorsement of the politicking which resulted in the ordination of women in some provinces, that the 'Windsor process' cannot, by its very nature, comprehend an appeal to the unchanging word of God as witnessed by catholic tradition. The words of Pope John Paul II: *'declaramus Ecclesiam facultatem nullatenus habere ordinationem sacerdotalem mulieribus conferendi'* [we declare that the Church has no authority whatsoever to confer priestly ordination on women] have no resonance whatever in the official structures of the Anglican Communion, which can only proceed by accommodation and consensus. And Katherine Jefferts Schori, now a member of the Primates' Standing Committee, is the very incarnation of those procedures.

By **The Rev. Geoffrey Kirk**, Assistant Editor, *New Directions*, a publication of Forward in Faith in the UK

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