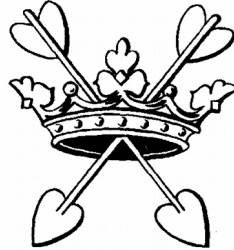


The Parish of St. Edmund, King and Martyr

(Waterloo, Ontario)



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

UPDATE

February 10, 2005 - **St. Scholastica**

March Schedule

March 6	Sunday	-	The Fourth Sunday in Lent
March 13	Sunday	-	The Fifth Sunday in Lent / Passion Sunday
March 20	Sunday	-	Palm Sunday
March 24	Thursday	-	Maundy Thursday
March 25	Friday	-	Good Friday
March 27	Sunday	-	Easter Day

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 - **Holy Days** and **Days of Obligation** - the **Holy Eucharist** is *usually* celebrated at **7:00 p.m.** when the Chapel is available.

Notes and Comments

- 1) Perhaps a reader can answer this question? **Question (and Answer ?)** - see this page.
- 2) The fifth of six parts of an address given at the recent Essentials Conference - **Ecclesial Existence Today** - see page 4.
- 3) An Orthodox explanation of why they don't allow 'open communion' - **The Closed Chalice** - see page 6.
- 4) His Holiness comments on some traditional values - **Pope Urges Opposition to Abortion, Embryonic Stem Cell Research** - see page 7.
- 5) Let's face it - secularism is a religion - **That Other Church** - see page 8.
- 6) Looking for a word to describe "circumvent, outwit, get the better of by cunning or artifice"? - **Overreach** - see page 9, for the first of three parts.

Question (and Answer ?)

The Prayer Book is very clear in its *rubrics* about how the Lessons at Matins and Evensong, and the Epistle/Lesson and Gospel at Mass, are to be announced.

At Matins and Evensong:

"The First [or Second] Lesson is written in such a book, in such a chapter, beginning at such a verse."

e.g. *The First Lesson is written in the Book of Genesis, chapter thirteen, beginning at the first verse.*

At Mass:

"The Epistle [or Lesson] is written in the . . . chapter of . . . beginning at the . . . verse." (The same format is used for the introduction of the Gospel.)

e.g. *The Gospel is written in the fourth chapter of the Gospel according to St. Matthew, beginning at the first verse.*

Here's the question - **Why is there a difference in the way that they are announced?**

The introduction at the Offices names the Book, then the chapter, whereas at Mass, the chapter, then the Book is the order!

Perhaps a reader can provide us with the answer?

St. Scholastica

St. Scholastica, the sister of St. Benedict, consecrated her life to God from her earliest youth. After her brother went to Monte Cassino, where he established his famous monastery, she took up her abode in the neighbourhood at Plombariola, where she founded and governed a monastery of nuns, about five miles from that of St. Benedict, who, it appears, also directed his sister and her nuns.

She visited her brother once a year, and as she was not allowed to enter his monastery, he went in company with some of his brethren to meet her at a house some distance away. These visits were spent in conferring together on spiritual matters. On one occasion they had passed the time as usual in prayer and pious conversation and in the evening sat down to take their reflection.

St. Scholastica begged her brother to

remain until the next day. St. Benedict refused to spend the night outside his monastery. She had recourse to prayer and a furious thunderstorm burst so that neither St. Benedict nor any of his companions could return home. They spent the night in spiritual conferences. The next morning they departed to meet no more on earth.

Three days later St. Scholastica died, and her holy brother beheld her soul in a vision as it ascended into heaven. He sent his brethren to bring her body to his monastery and laid it in a tomb he had prepared for himself. She died about the year 543, and St. Benedict followed her soon after.

From www.catholic.org/saints

From here and there

a) Some people object that they don't get much out of the traditional Mass, that the priest doesn't make the service interesting by getting the people involved - that he even has his back turned to them most of the time, that they would prefer more "upbeat," modern music, etc. What they forget is that the Mass is not meant to please man but to give glory to God. Worship is not a social gathering intended to give us a warm, fuzzy, neighborly feeling inside. It is an acknowledgment of God's sovereignty and His infinite perfections, and an expression of our submission to Him as creatures to their Creator and Lord. From the website of **St. Michael's Church**, Spokane, Washington.

b) 'presenteeism' is the antonym of 'absenteeism'

c) "ECUSA left the Catholic fold of the Church with the ordination of women, and abandoned the Christian religion with the election and consecration of Gene

Robinson [a divorced man who openly lives in a same-sex union - in the Diocese of New Hampshire]." **Bishop Kapinga** of Tanzania

d) 'animus' means both hostility and the masculine part of a woman's subconscious. Now we know where the phrase "Well, if you don't know what's wrong, I'm certainly not going to tell you!" comes from.

e) We can do nothing better or greater for the dead than to pray for them, offering commemoration for them at the Liturgy. **St. John Maximovitch**

f) You have to marvel at the unique lunacy of a language in which your house can burn up as it burns down, in which you fill in a form by filling it out and in which an alarm goes off by going on. When the stars are out, they are visible but when the lights are out, they are invisible. And finally, how about when you want to shut down your computer you have to hit "start". (This does not apply to we Linux users!)

g) Gospel ministry is not just proclamation, evangelism, and pastoral care; it involves contending for the faith once for all delivered to the saints. If, at the end of the day, we have maintained Christian orthodoxy but failed to proclaim the gospel, we cannot claim to have pleased Christ nor fulfilled the New Testament ministry. In just the same way, if, at the end of the day we have proclaimed the gospel but failed to maintain Christian orthodoxy, we will have failed Christ. **The Rev. David Short**

h) Before a man speaks, it is always safe to assume that he is a fool. After he speaks it is seldom necessary to assume. **H.L. Mencken**

i) What I think, said a Scottish wag, is what the Lord would think if he knew the

facts of the matter. Clearly it is no new thing to think that we know better than God. But a novel feature of the modern world is the rash of religious leaders attempting to 'correct' or 'improve on' God, to show where God has 'changed his mind and now agrees with them,' or at least to make clear where they think he ought to be if he were as up to date as they are. [Whatever happened to our Omniscient Lord?]

The first paragraph of an article, *Kissing Judases*, by **Os Guinness**.

j) The good Lord didn't create anything without a purpose, but mosquitoes come close.

k) Many years ago when I worked as a volunteer at Stanford Hospital, I got to know a little girl who was suffering from a rare and serious disease. Her only chance of recovery appeared to be a blood transfusion from her five-year old brother who had miraculously combated the same disease.

The doctor explained the situation to her little brother, and asked the boy if he would be willing to give his blood to his sister. I saw him hesitate for only a moment before taking a deep breath and saying, okay. As the transfusion progressed, he lay in bed next to his sister and smiled, as we all did, seeing the colour returning to her cheeks. Then his face grew pale and his smile faded. He looked up at the doctor and asked with a trembling voice, "Will I start to die right away?" Being young, the boy had misunderstood the doctor, he thought he was going to have to give her all his blood.

Ecclesial Existence Today - 5 of 6

What is to be done?

When Moses returned from the mountain he was instructed by the Lord to put swords in the hands of the faithful and to set them against their brothers. Woe to those who think that this is what must be done today, however figuratively - whether externally through courts of law or internally through parish putsches. When Jesus came to fulfill the law of Moses, and to make effective the gospel of Moses, he established a new economic and strategic order. What Moses did first, he would do second, and what Moses did second, he would do first. That is to say, he would stand first before God with Moses' words on his lips: "Oh, what a great sin these people have committed! They have made themselves gods of gold. But now, please forgive their sin - but if not, then blot me out of the book you have written." He who has borne our sins in his own body on the tree has put but one sword in our hands, the sword of the gospel. What we do now must be a gospel deed.

Our task is to discern together what the gospel requires of us in order to affirm ecclesial existence today, for ourselves and for the sake of our neighbours, in the face of the growing apostasy of the Anglican Church of Canada, an apostasy formalized at General Synod 2004. Let the prophets among us give their counsel - I would rather hear it than my own - but I will not shy altogether from my part in the task or from warning that the deed to be done is one of suffering as well as of rejoicing. What I have to say follows, I believe, from the perspective I have tried to offer here. It will bring us round to some peculiarly Anglican considerations, for the crisis, which is not confined to the Anglican Church, does have Anglican dimensions that we can hardly overlook.

I venture three suggestions. First, it is right that we should offer repentance on

behalf of ourselves and our churches. We are all complicit, we are all responsible for the present church crisis, in so far as we have failed fully to proclaim and to live the gospel.²¹ And we have failed. Only very rarely does our preaching accept as its main burden the task of setting forth Christ. Low church, high church, middle church, any church - all seem to have more important things to talk about. Only very rarely are our liturgies transparent to him. Only very rarely do our neighbours have occasion to marvel at the vitality that can only come from him. Few of us are accused of being full of the Holy Spirit and of power.

Among other things, this repentance will mean fasting, and in many places our fasting may also have to be a eucharistic fast. Certainly we cannot offer together the Great Thanksgiving when our disagreement is so fundamental. If resolution A-134 does indeed represent, as I have charged, a theology of offering incompatible with the gospel, and as such the setting up of false gods, then we cannot make offering together with those who affirm that resolution (just as we cannot make offering together with those who attempt to do so in some other name than that of Jesus Christ, or to some other "God" than the Father). Nor, as members of a church episcopal in structure and theology, can we retreat into private or purely congregational eucharists - there is no such thing - as if isolating ourselves in some vain attempt at purity. What we can do is perform an act of corporate repentance by committing ourselves to morning and evening prayer until the situation is resolved, and unity in the truth is restored under the oversight of catholic bishops.

Exceptions should be made for the sick and the dying, of course, and this fast need not be observed in the same way in dioceses whose bishops publicly repudiate A-134 and discipline those clergy who draw their

flock away into disobedience and apostasy.²² Yet if undertaken it will bring trouble to many, without a doubt. Repentance comes at a cost and for this we must prepare ourselves. (On the whole question of eucharistic fellowship and discipline, I have offered here an appendix that may serve to inform our discussions, though it does not address many of the practical questions sure to arise.)²³

Second, it is right that we should be prepared to give up property and security in pursuit of "free and grateful" service to the Lord of the church. When leaders of the synagogue in Ephesus became obstinate and refused the gospel, Paul and the other believers went out to the lecture hall of Tyrannus. They resumed the mission in rented quarters, and in the space of two years "all the Jews and Greeks who lived in the province of Asia heard the word of the Lord," attending which there were a great many conversions and public acts of repentance, and also, when the economic core of the city was itself touched by the results, persecution and a riot! As long as it is our intention chiefly to protect what is ours - buildings, livings, pension funds, social standing, individual financial "freedom," etc. - we cannot pretend to be undertaking a gospel act like that of Moses or of Jesus.

Third, it is right that we should renew our own devotion to Christian unity. Ecclesial existence today, in the face of local and even national apostasy, may indeed mean to become more authentically Anglican than we have been hitherto, through greater faithfulness both to the scriptures and to the Book of Common Prayer. It may mean binding ourselves together in renewed commitment to the same, even to the breaking of fellowship with those who have set aside the divine authority of the one and the rightful governance of the other. But if the unity we seek is a unity of

the gospel, if it is a unity authentically Christian - a unity in Christ and in the Holy Spirit - then it cannot be a merely Anglican unity. This is a time of reckoning for us all. How far does our devotion to Christian unity go, and how consistent is it? If we find warrant in the gospel for a realignment (to use the popular euphemism) *within* Anglicanism, may we not also find warrant for a realignment *of* Anglicanism?

Of course, if Anglicanism is mere protestantism such questions need not be asked. Fragmentation is our doom. But insofar as Anglicanism aspires, as in the Solemn Declaration, to being catholic and apostolic - a portion of the one church dedicated to the recovery of ecclesial unity - they are crucial. The ecumenical implications of decisions about reconfiguration will have to be considered very carefully, together with the whole business of Anglicanism's *raison d'etre*. Anglicanism, at its best, was the best reform movement the sixteenth century could muster. At its worst it was mere protestantism, not to say a detour into rank Erastianism. Humbled by the fact that it now finds itself a fractured communion, riddled - and not only in the west - with forms of cultural syncretism and political servitude as egregious as any Rome and Orthodoxy have seen, perhaps it is time for Anglicanism to pursue, not its own unity, so much as that of the church.

This will necessarily involve rethinking both the clerical and administrative structures of our Anglican churches, and the relation between the servant priesthood and the royal priesthood - which in any case is desperately needed if our churches are to recover their missionary function. There is much here to be debated, in the right forum, including the vexatious question of the ordination of women and the old but still pressing question of our

relation to Rome. May we not hope to cast new light on all of this? But a word of caution on a closely related and more immediately pressing matter: No service is done internally or externally, from the standpoint of Christian unity, by abandoning the notion of territorial episcopal responsibility, however tortured and tortuous it has become through conflicting claims. That notion requires careful qualification, to be sure, by means of an eschatological analysis that cannot be offered here, but it also calls for a spirit of repentance, not only with respect to the present but with respect to the past. For this too is a question of our collective witness to the lordship of Christ and to the appearing of his kingdom.²⁴

Well, you must judge for yourselves the rightness of my three suggestions - or how they might be made right, for they are but broadly sketched in no very satisfactory manner, though the appendix may help a little. I fear I will be misunderstood at the last, however, if I fail to add these final remarks.

By **Douglas Farrow** - Associate Professor of Christian Thought at McGill University, Montreal

²¹ When I say "live" I do not mean as regards sex only, of course, though I do mean as regards sex also. If we say to our fellow Anglicans that the gospel requires sexual relations between Christians to witness to the higher truth of the bridegroom (Christ) and the bride (the church), and if we insist that same-sex relations cannot do this, what of our own sexual relations? Do they do this?

²² See Rev. 2:12ff.; cf. 2 Tim. 4:1ff.

²³ See "Discussion Paper on Eucharistic Fellowship," which was drafted before General Synod 2004.

²⁴ "Jesus is Lord" - this has implications for the world as well as for the church, hence for the way in which the church construes its relation to the world, even administratively.

Christmas in February

There's a Christmas tree on my window
pane
Complete with sparkles embossed;
It doesn't have baubles or coloured lights,
It was left there by Jack Frost.
It has stayed there in that wintry wind
For most of this cold, dismal day,
Bringing Christmas again in February,
Recalling that warmth for always.

By **Helen E. Glover**

The Closed Chalice

One of the most difficult and sensitive areas that our clergy must deal with when non-Orthodox attend the Divine Liturgy is the "closed chalice." This refers to the teaching and practice of the Orthodox Church worldwide that only Orthodox Christians may partake of the Eucharist (or any sacrament for that matter) at our worship services. It is a simple concept, but one that seems to cause a lot of strife. There are two basic reasons for this: 1) Visitors from Protestant denominations are often used to open chalices where anyone is allowed to come to Communion. This author has observed a Protestant chapel service where the pastor stated that Jesus gave His Body and Blood not to a denomination, but to His disciples. Thus, anyone who felt called to the chalice was welcomed. You could be a Mormon, Catholic, Protestant, etc. and still come to communion at this Protestant chapel; 2) The Roman Catholic Church (Latins, Melkites, and Maronites) teaches that, in a situation where no Roman Catholic Church is present (unheard of in this country) and/or in cases of extreme and dire emergency where no Roman Catholic priest is available

(again, not likely in this country), one can seek out the Orthodox sacraments if they feel it is absolutely necessary. This has led to the misconception amongst the Roman Catholics that one can commune from the Orthodox chalice anytime they visit an Orthodox Christian Church. Let's quickly remind ourselves why these examples are incorrect and then elaborate a unique approach to explaining our closed chalice to the non-Orthodox.

Eucharistic communion is an act of theological and ecclesiological union. Many bishops and priests have written on this subject, and the various authors all say the same thing: Eucharistic communion is not the path to, but the fruit of, the Orthodox Church's ecumenical work. For two church bodies to commune together means that we can look at each other and say, in all aspects, "We are one." However, in today's world, churches are divided along various theological and ecclesiological issues and we Orthodox do not simply "put aside our differences" for the sake of table fellowship with other Christians.

Time and time again, people respond to the notion of the closed chalice by saying, "What does it matter, as long as you believe in Jesus?" It is a valid question. Orthodox Christians believe that Jesus is the incarnate Word of God who was crucified and resurrected on the third day. We believe that Jesus is fully human and fully divine without mixture, confusion, separation, or division (Fourth Ecumenical Council). We believe that the empty tomb signifies for us that Jesus was resurrected from the dead. No argument there, right? Now, imagine a visitor comes to one of our parishes. He comes from a church that is not Orthodox. Let's imagine that he believes Jesus was an incarnate created being - an angel, let's say - and that he was not resurrected, but reincarnated! He does

not believe in the divinity of Christ and he does not believe in the resurrection. Not very Orthodox, is it? Yet, this individual approaches the chalice and wants to receive communion; after all, "What does it matter, as long as you believe in Jesus?"

Just prior to the reception of communion, the Church recites the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed. We verbally confess our Orthodox believe in ". . . one Lord Jesus Christ . . . true God of true God begotten not made, of one essence with the Father . . . and [who] rose from the dead on the third day. . ." Our Orthodox beliefs do not match the beliefs of the visitor. By approaching and partaking of the Eucharist, he is making a statement that he has a common faith with us. But in reality he does not. If he partakes from the chalice, then all of us are allowing that individual to make a liar of himself before God. St. Paul tells us in I Corinthians 11:27-29 that those who partake of the Eucharist without discerning the Body and Blood of Christ eat and drink condemnation unto themselves. Who among us would wish that upon a visitor to one of our churches, and what judgment is upon us if we allow that to happen?

The reality of the closed chalice is not that Orthodox Christians are somehow bigoted and insensitive. Quite the opposite, we Orthodox are called to love and respect other Christians and their beliefs. In fact, we love and respect other Christians so much, whether Roman Catholic or Protestant, that we will not allow them to make liars of themselves before God by receiving sacraments in a Church with beliefs that are different than their own. It is a matter of maintaining the personal integrity of those who visit our churches. The example used for this article is a bit extreme; however, the same logic applies to any Christians who have any beliefs that are not in agreement with ours - whether

those beliefs are about Scripture and Tradition, Ecclesiology, the Sacraments, the authority of the bishop of Rome, the Immaculate Conception of Mary (the belief that Mary was conceived by her parents, Joachim and Anna, without the original sin that all mankind is born under), iconography, etc. The reason that there are tens of thousands of Christian denominations in this country is that there are tens of thousands of ways to believe differently from us Orthodox Christians; thus, we are not in communion with those Churches.

So, allowing Protestants or Roman Catholics (Latin, Melkite, or Maronite) to commune from the Orthodox chalice makes them state that they reject their Church's teachings. We are inviting them to lie. That is disrespectful, insensitive, and un-Orthodox. Asking a non-Orthodox visitor to refrain from partaking of the chalice maintains the personal integrity of the visitor and demonstrates the Orthodox Church's respect, but not acceptance, of the differences that divide us. That is respectful, sensitive, and Orthodox. Let us pray that one day the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Truth, will bring all worshipping Christians to the True Faith so that all Christians will be one and that all may partake of the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins and life everlasting.

By **Fr. Steven C. Salaris**, M.Div, PhD., pastor of St George Antiochian Orthodox Church, Albany NY, and Assistant Professor of Biology at Concordia College, Bronxville, NY.

Pope Urges Opposition to Abortion, Embryonic Stem Cell Research

The Vatican - In his annual address to foreign diplomats that he traditionally gives at the beginning of the year, Pope John Paul II reiterated the Catholic Church's strong opposition to abortion and embryonic stem cell research.

He said that defending life was one of the biggest challenges of 2005 because of the attacks to it on many fronts. The Pope said the "challenge to life has grown in scale and urgency in recent years." "It has involved particularly the beginning of human life, when human beings are at their weakest and most in need of protection," he said.

Pope John Paul told the delegates that the government of each nation "has as its primary task precisely the safeguarding and promotion of human life."

The pontiff said "reason and science" support the church's position against abortion, human cloning and assisted reproduction. "The Church's position, supported by reason and science, is clear: the human embryo is a subject identical to the human being which will be born at the term of its development," he explained. "Consequently whatever violates the integrity and the dignity of the embryo is ethically inadmissible."

"Scientific research in the field of genetics needs to be encouraged and promoted, but, like every other human activity, it can never be exempt from moral imperatives," he said. "[A]ny form of scientific research which treats the embryo merely as a laboratory specimen is unworthy of man," the pontiff added.

The Pope said the next year must focus on "strengthening the common bonds of our humanity and . . . making them prevail over all other considerations." "The arrogance of power must be countered with

reason, force with dialogue, pointed weapons with outstretched hands, evil with good," Pope John Paul said.

Speaking in French, the Pope addressed ambassadors from 174 nations across the world. Because of his deteriorating health, exacerbated by the effects of Parkinson's disease, the Pope read only the first and last paragraphs of his speech. According to a Catholic News Service report, an aide read the rest.

By **Steven Ertelt**, *LifeNews.com* Editor, January 10, 2005

That Other Church

***Let's face it: Secularism is a religion.
Let's treat it as such.***

A 2004 survey of religion and politics revealed a religious minority that constitutes at least 7.5 percent of the American population. It referred to this informal denomination as "Secular."

Sponsored by the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, the poll shows the fairly uniform political orientation of secularists: only 21 percent regard themselves as politically conservative. A large majority, 79 percent, favor what the survey terms "gay rights" and support legal abortion.

For each element in the Judeo-Christian family of faiths, secularism has its counterpart: a strict ethical code, albeit focusing on health issues ("Thou shalt not smoke," etc.); the use of shame when individuals disregard ethical rules (e.g. fat people); a related promise of eternal life through medical advances; a creation story (Darwinian evolution); and so forth. All that's missing is a deity, but not every religion has one, as the case of Zen

Buddhism attests.

The secular church is populous and dynamic, with a membership far exceeding that figure of 7.5 percent. Many individuals who identify nominally as Jews or Christians in fact are devout secularists.

All this would be fine - after all, America is a big country with plenty of room for every spiritual predilection - but for the tendency of secularists to use aggressive means in advancing their political agenda and spreading their faith.

Consider state education, where the secular church has ensured that its creation account alone be taught. According to the Discovery Institute, Ohio, Minnesota, and New Mexico are exceptions to this rule, now requiring students to know about scientific evidence critical of Darwinian evolution. Everywhere else, evangelism for this secular doctrine is a staple of 10th-grade biology class.

The prejudice on behalf of the secular faith emanating from the media is likewise hard to ignore. HBO's Bill Maher, raised Catholic but later converted to a harsh secularism, is among the frankest of news and entertainment industry figures in his contempt for competing religions, notably Christianity. The host of Real Time with Bill Maher speaks of himself as "spreading the anti-gospel."

Americans outside the secular fold need to develop responses to the encroachments of secularism in the public square. Mutual understanding is key. Many secularists live in isolated enclaves (Beverly Hills, San Francisco, certain New York City neighborhoods, etc.) with few members of other faiths present. Some sort of interfaith dialog, matching representatives of secularism with believing Jews, Christians, and members of other religions,

would do some good.

But it's not the entire solution. So that everyone can know where everyone else stands, it's time to start identifying the secular faithful as such. The word *Secular* should be capitalized, indicating a distinctive philosophical orientation. So, just as Mel Gibson is always referred to as a Catholic filmmaker, Michael Moore should be identified as a Secular one.

The influence of Secular institutions on education needs to be reexamined. Young children are plainly being targeted for conversion to Secularism, whether in schools or otherwise. The Anti-Defamation League - a group that is Jewish only in the sense that bagels are Jewish - has been advocating a reading list of books for children of kindergarten age through sixth grade. While the emphasis is ostensibly on "anti-bias education," any child who takes to heart the message of these books would be adopting, among other things, a bias in favor of the Secular teaching on homosexuality.

Two of the recommended books, for third-graders and under, are Gloria Goes to Gay Pride ("A young girl participates in the Gay Pride Day parade," as the ad's website summarizes the book) and My Two Uncles ("A young child's grandfather has trouble accepting the fact that his son is gay"). This amounts to targeting kids for conversion to the Secular teaching on homosexuality. Incidentally, "targeting for conversion" is what the ad charges that Christian missionaries want to do to Jews.

Finally, since raising public awareness is the best way to counter conversionary efforts, it would be helpful if a nonprofit organization were established to educate the citizenry about the tendency of the Secular Church to overstep that precious line that is supposed to keep our public

institutions free of undue church influence. Such an organization would be dedicated to protecting American civil liberties. You could call it the American Civil Liberties Union.

Oh wait, no, that's taken.

By **David Klinghoffer**, a columnist for the *Jewish Forward* - from *Christianity Today*, January 2005

Overreach - 1 of 3

(The Windsor Report, discussed below, was commissioned by the Archbishop of Canterbury to address the current crisis within the Anglican Communion brought to a head by the consecration within the Episcopal Church of the United States of a divorced man who openly lives in a same-sex union, and the decision of the Bishop and Synod of the Diocese of New Westminster in The Anglican Church of Canada to permit and provide for the blessing of same-sex unions in church.)

The Windsor Report offers a series of snapshots of the Anglican Communion. It will, of course, be analyzed to death and from a variety of different points of view, each vying to wrest some claim to integrity and justification for their respective positions. But perhaps, it is best read by flipping through it as through a pack of cartoon stills to give the illusion of something dynamic.

At its best and with respect to the presenting issue of the actions of the North American Churches about human sexuality or, more truthfully, the sexuality of those who call themselves *'homosexuals'*, the report is abundantly clear that the Diocese of New Westminster in British Columbia, Canada, and the Diocese of New Hampshire in the United States, together with ECUSA itself, have overreached themselves in

allowing for the *"blessings of same-sex couples"* and for the ordination to the episcopate of a self-proclaimed *'homosexual'*. The Report is clear that such decisions have broken *"the bonds of affection"* in the Anglican Communion. But in what way?

By way of the violation of process. By acting unilaterally and precipitously. While the report acknowledges that there are matters of scriptural and theological principles at stake for many in the Communion on this question, it fails to recognize in an open and clear way that there are any properly constituted theological principles that define the Anglican identity within the Church Universal. In this respect, the report is a snap-shot, whether as a series of moving stills or not, of the doctrinal and intellectual bankruptcy of the Anglican Communion. It assumes as primary matters of process.

In this respect the report is a perfect mirror of the intellectual character of the reigning liberalism in politics and law. The assumption, championed by the leading architects of American jurisprudence such as Kingman Brewster and others who were of his circle, such as Paul Moore who became Bishop of New York, is captured by Brewster's biographer Geoffrey Kabaservice as process thinking, the idea *"that any decision was fine as long as the process leading to it was fair . . . the idea of process was in a sense the credo and self-justification of the liberal establishment"*.

From the standpoint of the Windsor Report, the problem is that the North American Churches were too hasty and lacked the patience that would allow for the policy of reception to take its course. What is missing is the idea that there are any governing principles on fundamental theology with respect to essential doctrine,

orders or morality that are in any way definitive. *The Articles of Religion, The Ordinal* and *The Book of Common Prayer*, for instance, with their clear sense of the principle of doctrinal sufficiency or restraint have been sidelined if not silenced by the primacy granted to the process of reception, a process which has been violated by the North American Churches and has resulted in the situation of impairment. The Communion is fractured. It is, in fact, a fiction.

In some ways, the report is the best and the worst that could be expected. At best, it might provide some breathing room for the recovery of the principles which should and must inform the life of the Body of the Christ in the institutional moments of the various churches of the Communion. At worst, it shows the serious intellectual limitations of the Anglican Communion in its inability to define the theological principles of its own being, throwing the Communion open to the political winds of power and compromise without recourse to the anchors of doctrine. The principle is the process. In effect, there is no doctrine.

The problem is one of Episcopal and Synodical overreach. The problem lies in the restlessness of the liberal ascendancy to accept and to live within any set of limits - even those which are accepted by them are never really binding but only transitional until there is a measure of acceptance for whatever new concern emerges. Yet, it remains unclear what the measure of acceptance could really ever be

since the Communion has never established any mechanisms that can hold the various churches of the Communion accountable to one another, let alone to matters of basic Christian doctrine. In effect, the Windsor Report is the whine of the invented magisterium of '*the Committees of the Stratosphere*' such as the Anglican Consultative Council, the Lambeth Council, and the Primates themselves in various configurations, to make up what constitutes the belief of the Anglican Communion over and against the claim of the local and national dioceses synodically and episcopally to define what constitutes the "*Faith*"; in short, to constitute themselves as the magisterium - the doctrinal authority.

By **The Rev. David Curry**, Rector of Christ Church, Windsor, Nova Scotia - December 29, 2004

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