

Mutual recognition of separated ministries and churches

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provisional and preliminary

1. In this short, ^{paper} for ARCIC II it is assumed that our conversations are not much interested in superficial generousities and courtesies between acquaintances who intend to keep their distance, but are engaged in a search for fraternal recognition based upon unity of faith in the gospel mediated through word and sacrament. We need to ask how difficulties specific to the ordained ministry can be correctly stated and properly resolved. But the reconciliation of ministry is evidently a question that asserts a primary place on the agenda when community rivalry is already in process of being purged away and when there is already a growing convergence in understanding concerning eucharistic faith. We cannot usefully address our minds to the pain caused by restrictive rules about mixed marriages and by negative decisions on ministerial validity, which are both symptoms rather than causes of division, until it is reasonably clear that in principle a road towards unity in the one Lord of the one Church is open for us to follow. In other words, our task may be seen as that of ensuring that contentions about peripheral matters do not obstruct clear vision in the central questions. I venture to put this at the beginning of the paper because experience shows how few Anglicans and Roman Catholics perceive the symptomatic rather than causal nature of disputes about validity of orders. It is very common to meet Anglicans who take it for granted that *Apostolicae Curae* in 1896 was intended to be as painful as possible, who are aware that it not only remains 'on the statute book' but is enforced by authority - with renewed vigour since Archbishop Coggan's request for Intercommunion in 1977- and who think it axiomatic that 'Rome' cannot be seriously interested in any rapprochement with those in communion with the

see of Canterbury so long as the present policy remains official. In their eyes the operations of ARCIC are hardly to be taken seriously. On the other side of the garden hedge I meet very thoughtful English Roman Catholics who would be delighted to see *Humanae Vitae* cancelled but horrified if *Apostolicae Curae* were to be removed. With the splendid confidence born of heart-warming renewal in England during the last twenty years since Vatican II, they feel that the policy of total rejection of Anglican ministry is the very *raison d'être* of Roman Catholicism in the UK. To concede or compromise at this point would prejudice the distinctive self-consciousness of the RC community as representing the authentic rejection of secularism (with which some of them feel Anglicanism is, by the law of its ^{political} origins, a compromise), the true voice of a courageous moral stand e.g. on abortion and birth-control, and the orthodox teaching Church which knows how to deal with formal heretics ^(material heretics are another matter.) within the fold. On both sides, therefore, there are many - probably more than we think - for whom the issue of ministerial validity is virtually the touchstone or heart of the ecumenical problem. It is like the ugly boil on the nose; but cured more by penicillin in the stomach than by antiseptic ointments externally applied.

2. The church historian is much aware that disputes about ministry are a frequent accompaniment of the suspension of eucharistic communion. This phenomenon arises from the interaction of two theological principles, and of the effect of practical division upon the way they are developed.

3. The first of these principles is that the ordained ministry can have no proper existence apart from the Church in which it is called to exercise its function and office. The second is that the gift of God's grace through word and sacrament is not created by, or dependent for its objective reality and 'causality' upon, the meritorious disposition or godly state of feeling of either the minister or even the recipient of the sacrament.

In situations of eucharistic separation, quite different positions will be adopted in accordance with the priority of the first principle over the second, or vice versa. The baptismal controversy between Cyprian and Pope Stephen turned on the validity of baptism received through a schismatic clergyman. Cyprian stands on the first principle: granted that there is no salvation outside the Church, the ark of salvation, the sacraments of both heretical clergy and orthodox schismatics are equally null and void.

Stephen answers him with the immemorial tradition of the Roman community that returning dissenters are to be received by laying on of hands as penitents (i.e. in the same form as in confirmation). To reiterate baptism is to fail to respect the majesty of Christ's name: i.e. it is his sacrament, not the minister's, as Augustine summarised the matter (Tr.Joh. 5,11). Be[^]ware of 'quod ministri, tot baptismata' (Tr.Joh. 6,6); St Paul spoke of my gospel, not of my baptism. Therefore the question to be asked is not whether the right sort of minister conferred the sacrament, but whether the sacrament has been given as God wills in water and in true faith in the name of the Trinity. Validity and efficacy depend on God, not man: ex opere operato, non ex opere operantis (in 12th century language).

(It may be noted that in Pope Stephen's way of reconciling schismatics by laying on of hands, there is an ambiguity: it is declared by Stephen to be the reception of a penitent, restored to communion after a period of disciplinary exclusion from the eucharist. But the contemporary Anonymous De Rebaptismate shows that this laying on of hands is also understood to be Confirmation. The two formulas in the Gelasian sacramentary for reconciling heretics baptised outside the Catholica are identical with the prayer at the laying on of hands in Confirmation. The fact that imposition of hands may bear more than one meaning reappears in modern proposals for reconciling separated ministries by mutual laying on of hands, where the one act signifies both penitence and reconciliation, both the overcoming of past division and the invocation of the Spirit for the commission for the future.)

4. Augustine brings a necessary qualification to this stress on the objectivity of sacramental efficacy. The personal holiness of the minister may be less than is desirable and the faith of the charcoal-burner recipient may be faltering and flickering, but subjectively the minister, ^{however dimly,} must at least intend to do what the Church does. Total insincerity becomes invalidating. Baptism is not valid if caricatured at the music hall. But if the recipient is insincere in his vows, Augustine affirms the baptism to be valid, for it is an act of the Church not dependent on how the recipient feels about it (Bapt. 7,102; c.Jul. 6,12). If he has received baptism with wilful mendacity, that is to his condemnation. So due form and authentic intention emerge as the criteria for validity: the minister may not do otherwise than Christ commanded to be done, nor intend to do other than what the Church does in this sacrament. Wherever the baptism is received, provided that form, matter, and intention are not clearly defective, that sacrament should not be reiterated.

5. The problems become acute when this principle is extended (as Augustine extends it) from baptism to ordination in the case of orthodox schismatics. The African Donatists acted on Cyprian's principle that ministry is subordinate to Church, and sacraments apart from the one Church are inauthentic. So they denied all validity to Catholic sacramental acts, polluted by the apostasy of bishops who surrendered Bibles and sacred vessels in the great persecution. The episcopal succession in the Catholic church was to them a diabolical counterfeit. Catholic clergy were mere laity who chanced to know the celebrant's prayer. Government support for the Catholic church proved that Antichrist had come indeed. Donatists believed that at the altar Catholic clergy offered something unmentionable. Tension was sustained by rows over mixed marriages and by extremist atrocities on the Donatist side, including suicide martyrdoms which left

peaceful Catholics wondering why they bore the odium of responsibility.

5. Augustine sought to overcome the rancour by proposing a doctrine of the Church world-wide which made Donatism look like petty regional patriotism, and by insisting on the recognition of Donatist orders. Nevertheless Augustinian principles were slow to be acted on in the ensuing centuries. In situations of division, it seemed the short way with dissenters to declare their orders invalid from the start. But in both East and West distinctions between different kinds of dissenter began to be made. The Greek churches took a negative view in principle of sacraments outside the Church, but in particular cases could relax this austerity. After 451 the Chalcedonians came to recognise the validity of Monophysite ordinations, thereby facilitating conversions to orthodoxy; the Monophysites, after some hesitations at first, rejected Chalcedonian orders and reordained converts. A temporary alteration of Chalcedonian policy under the patriarch John Scholasticus, a trained canonist (patriarch 505-77), provoked orthodox protests. The quinisext council in Trullo (692) did not include Nestorians and Monophysites among the heretics whose orders are null (can.95). The pull of the short way declaring separatist ordinations null was nevertheless strong at all times. In Britain the tensions between the Celtic or British Christians and the newly installed see of Canterbury centred upon the date of Easter and the tonsure. The Roman party in Britain reordained those^{Irish} who dissented on the computation of Easter, especially in the time of Theodore of Tarsus who came to Canterbury with a background in Greek canon law. In the medieval West whenever passion ran high, the orders of the separated body were declared invalid and null - most dramatically when Pope Formosus offended the princes of Spoleto by crowning the emperor Arnoul.

1. H.E.J. Cowdrey, 'The dissemination of St Augustine's doctrine of holy orders during the later patristic age', JTS 20, 1969, 448.

His corpse was exhumed for synodical trial, and all his ordinations declared null. In the fierce campaign for the suppression of simony in the tenth and eleventh centuries, the reformers declared simoniac ordinations not merely uncanonical but wholly invalid, a thesis vehemently advocated by the passionate Cardinal Humbert and opposed by Peter Damian. The schoolmen did not find that the authorities of the past left them with any single view of the matter. Peter Lombard (Sent. IV, 25) records as one among a number of opinions that 'sacraments celebrated according to the form of the Church are true, for the clergy of the separated body do not lose the power to ordain and to celebrate mass, and those who have received orders from them are not reordained on being reunited with the Church.' It was not an opinion much favoured when feeling was running high. In fact, a survey of medieval and patristic decisions imposes the conclusion that there was not a unanimously held set of principles resulting in a single harmonious policy about the reordination (or not) of clergy who, for one reason or another, found themselves on the wrong side of the divide, and that the vehemence of feeling involved was more often than not the decisive factor. Papal rulings were often contradictory.

b. In the case of the Donatist/Catholic and the Monophysite/Chalcedonian splits, it is noteworthy that the African Catholics were willing to go immense distances to meet the Donatists' demands (even, at the start of the colloquy of Carthage 411, declaring their willingness to stand down in favour of the Donatist bishops if the verdict went against them), and that in the sixth century the Chalcedonians approved virtually every formula dear to the Monophysite heart. Newly published (Jacobite) documents of the Chalcedonian/Monophysite colloquy of 532 reveal a quite dramatic degree of acceptance of Monophysite contentions by the Chalcedonians and Justinian. But to no purpose. It seems

to be the normal pattern in church history for the side which rejects the validity of orders in the other camp to manifest the greatest resistance to moves towards rapprochement. Rejection of orders is somehow the ultimate expression of anger and abhorrence.

7. Within medieval Catholic discussions, there was one escape route where reordination was seen to be so offensive as to be something to be averted at any price. This lay in the belief that the successor of St Peter at Rome possesses such a power of the keys that he has a dispensing power. Normally his role was to see that canon law was strictly observed. But as early as St Augustine the Pope has a quasi-imperial authority not to enforce canons where rigour will produce scandal. When Hincmar in the 9th century was forced, against his will, to concede to Pope Nicolas I the validity of the ordinations of Ebbo of Reims (who had supported a rebellion against Hincmar's patron Lothair), he admitted no error in his sacramental theology or canonical jurisprudence, but granted the Pope to have dispensing power to validate the invalid.

8. The Reformation was primarily experienced, on the Catholic side, as a rebellion against the Church. The initial issue of indulgences soon yielded to that of justification by faith, which in turn came to take second place to disputes about the Eucharist and about Priesthood. The Protestants wanted ordination to be more widely defined than a specific, distinctive commission to celebrate the Eucharist and to pronounce absolution to the penitent. They wanted priesthood to be seen as that of the whole Church, within which a pastoral and evangelistic ministry is devoted to preaching. Some among them regarded a specific priesthood as a survival of pagan magic, or not as an anachronistic continuation of the Levitical priesthood ended by Christ. They disliked claims to mediate between God and man through the performance of a ritual sacrifice requiring permanent specialists

set apart by celibacy as a special caste which may feel greater obligations to its own members than to the community it serves. Among Protestants a wide variety of positions came to appear. On 18 September 1562 the Council of Trent began lengthy debates about a set of disparate propositions: that all baptised Christians equally are priests, among whom the magistrate may appoint one as minister for a time after which he reverts to lay status; that New Testament ministry is exclusively preaching, not special responsibility for sacraments; that presbyters have power to ordain equal to bishops; that ordination is no sacrament ^{with} invisible grace and outward sign (CTrid. IX 5).

9. The Trent discussion of sacraments in general (7th session, March 1547) and of ordination in particular (23rd session, 1562-63) reveals what variety of opinion about order was found among the bishops and theologians present. Most of the long discussion was not about the Lutheran theses about ordination (as one delegate trenchantly remarked, CT IX 181), but on whether the agreed superiority of bishops to presbyters rested on 'divine right'; or if that derogates from the unique divine right of the Pope, whose legates feared the implication that bishops receive their commission direct from God and in independence of the Pope. On the essential matter of ordination, different speakers found it in one, two, or all three of unction (prescribed by Innocent III), the handing of chalice and paten (prescribed by Eugenius IV, 1439), and imposition of hands. Eugenius IV's decree to the Armenians placed the essence of ordination in the *porrectio instrumentorum* with the words 'Receive power to offer sacrifice and to celebrate masses for the living and for the dead, in the Name of the Lord, Amen.' One theologian at Trent explained that imposition of hands is inessential 'though since the apostles used it, it is not useless' (CT IX 35). The bishop of Segovia, on the authority of scripture and the Fathers, saw imposition of hands as essential, not the *traditio calicis* which was introduced about the 11th century. The draft before the Council (canon 5) anathematised those who say unction is not merely unnecessary but pernicious and to be despised. This form of words distressed one delegate (87) who thought the *traditio calicis* essential, unction inessential and feared the anatnema might affect his view. The Dominican Gaglio (25) saw both unction and imposition of hands as necessary, and distinguished the power of priestly order bestowed at the *porrectio instrumentorum*, with

the words 'Receive power to offer sacrifice...', from the power of jurisdiction and absolution ^{subsequently} conferred at the laying on of hands with the words 'Receive the Holy Spirit; whose sins you remit, they are remitted, and whose sins you retain, they are retained.' It is noteworthy that no one at Trent ^{in 1562-63} articulates the view that the necessary form for ordination should be located in the prayer or collect ^(Exaudi nos) preceding the Sursum Corda and Preface. ^(Can. canon 3) All speakers take it for granted that the powers bestowed in ordination are given in the imperative, and do not consider that the form ought to be precatory. The question simply did not arise. The Tridentine fathers assumed what everyone of the time assumed; the same assumption evidently moulded the English Ordinal. That assumption first began to be overthrown with the magistral work of Jean Morin, Commentarius de sacris ecclesiae ordinationibus (Paris, 1655). Morin meticulously studied all known ordination rites in the universal Church and observed differences between eastern and western usages. He concluded that the imposition of hands and appropriate prayer are constant for all orders and of divine institution, while other ceremonies are of ecclesiastical institution and variable in time and place; yet the omission of the latter on private initiative against the authority of the Church may suffice to render an ordination not merely illicit but even invalid, and the Church has power to define conditions of validity. Morin saw that 'validity' is not a wholly objective concept, and that what is accepted as valid in one community at a given time and place may be deemed invalid in another context.

10. More recent Catholic theology has moved wholly away from the notion that the handing over of chalice and paten, with the accompanying words 'Receive power to offer sacrifice...', is a necessary constituent of ordination to the presbyterate. Pius XII's Sacramentum Ordinis (30 November 1947) rules that

the matter in ordination is the imposition of hands (in silence), while the form, indicating the power of order and the grace of the Holy Spirit is found in the preceding Preface, not in the imperative 'Receive...'. For the ending of controversy, it is ruled that the handing over of chalice and paten is no necessary ceremony. I leave to Father Yarnold and others to trace the developments of the present day.

11. Trent and the Counter-Reformation were faced with so radical a challenge to traditional eucharistic formulations and concepts of ministry that no question of recognition of protestant ministry could arise. But the conservatism of the English Reformation presented intricate problems. The preface to the English Ordinal emphatically affirmed that the threefold ministry, which had existed since the apostles' time, was one to which no one could appoint himself, and that this ministry was being 'continued'. The matter consisted in the laying on of hands. Uction was dropped. The form at the ordinations of all three orders was understood to be in the imperative: e.g. at the ordination of priests the collect prays for those 'now called to the office of priesthood' that they may be replenished 'with the truth of thy doctrine and adorned with innocency of life...' but the conferring of the power of order is imperative: 'Receive the Holy Ghost (for the office and work of a priest in the Church of God, now committed unto thee by the imposition of our hands), Whose sins thou dost forgive, they are forgiven; and whose sins thou dost retain, they are retained. And be thou a faithful dispenser of the word of God and of his Holy Sacraments; in the name...' The newly made priest is then handed a Bible, 'Take thou Authority to preach the word of God and to minister the holy sacraments in the congregation where thou shalt be lawfully appointed thereunto.'

1. The bracketed words and a similar clause in the order for bishops were added in 1661 to avert presbyterian claims that bishops and presbyters are equal. (So the contemporary evidence of H. Prideaux.) There may also have been a wish to counter Roman Catholic criticism, to which Bramhall (p. 484) replied that the old form was identical with that in the Pontifical.

12. The rite confers the commission to celebrate the Eucharist. It neither denies, nor particularly specifies (as the Roman Pontifical does), that what is distinctive to priesthood is the power to offer in the eucharist a sacrifice for the whole Church. The masterful controversialist Stapleton thought it a sufficient ground for thinking ordinations by this rite to be invalid that it was not the Roman rite. He did not argue about details of form and intention. He was of course right in thinking that the moving ecclesiastical minds in the English reformation (in so far as it was not just a political necessity imposed on the English government by its ambitions to get papal jurisdiction out of England and to be independent of both France and Spain) wanted the mass not to be a propitiatory offering by the celebrant on behalf of a passive congregation but an active participation where all communicants share in the sacramental body and blood of Christ, once sacrificed for our redemption. The papal excommunication of Elizabeth in 1570 was answered by the authorisation of the 39 Articles of 1571 denying Roman jurisdiction in England (art. 37). The articles also associated the Church of England with the reformation at two points of eucharistic doctrine: in rejecting the term Transubstantiation as an annihilation of the metaphysical substance of the bread and wine and therefore a transformation of the sign into the thing signified without remainder; and in echoing Melancthon's censure of the notion (not, it must be said, characteristic of medieval eucharistic theology and, in truth, a theological man of straw) that the once for all sacrifice of Christ atoned for original sin, while the mass is a propitiatory offering for the remission of the pain and guilt of actual sin (art. 31, following the *Concessio Augustana* and its Apology). So the silence of the English Ordinal about the offering of sacrifice for the living and the dead mountingly emerged as a crucial issue, in which each side seems to have misrepresented the other. In RC eyes, the Anglicans were under Zwinglian influence: defects in the Ordinal

resulted from disbelief in the Real Presence and from Puritan pressure to say that episcopate and presbyterate are identical ranks of ministry. Bramhall describes Anglican belief as faith that the sacrifice of the eucharist is identical with that of the Cross, not a new meritorious satisfaction or new supplement to the merits of Christ's Passion: 'We do readily acknowledge an eucharistical sacrifice of prayer and praise; we profess a commemoration of the sacrifice of the Cross; and in the Language of Holy Church, things commemorated are related as if they were then acted.... We acknowledge a Representation of that Sacrifice to God the Father, we acknowledge an Impetration of the benefit of it, we maintain an Application of its Virtue. So here is a Commemorative, Impetrative, Applicative Sacrifice. Speak distinctly and I cannot understand what you can desire more.' (Works, ed. 1677, p. 35-6 cf. 255.)

'In the holy Eucharist our consecration is a repetition of that which was done by Christ, and now by him that consecrates in the person of Christ; . . . Likewise in Episcopal consecration... In both consecrations Christ himself is the chief consecrator still. Then if power of consecration be nothing else but power to do that which Christ did and ordained to be done, our priests want not power to consecrate.' It was a claim that English Roman Catholics could hardly be keen to admit. The Anglicans resolutely affirmed the validity of Roman Catholic orders and did not reordain unless there were very serious doubts indeed. The Roman Catholics regarded Anglican orders as null and therefore reordained convert clergy, though not without doubts and hesitations sufficiently widespread to make *Apostolicae Curae* a felt need in 1896.

1. It will be recalled that among French theologians, 1723-32, there was a vigorous debate about the validity of Anglican orders, with Courayer for and Lequien against. Both that controversy and the debate of the 1890s had as their background hopes (or fears) of replacing a Catholic policy of converting individual Anglicans one by one with a programme for 'corporate reunion' by simply removing the barrier of excommunication.

13. The Anglicans, however, who felt the hurt they were intended to feel by Roman refusal to recognise validity in their orders, soon found themselves in virtually the same situation in relation to non-episcopal churches. In 1661 those who came to power in the restored Church of England did not easily forget that during the Commonwealth the Presbyterians and Independents had killed the King, executed the Archbishop of Canterbury, proscribed episcopacy as if the thin end of the Counter-Reformation wedge, and persecuted those who continued to use the Book of Common Prayer. Fellows of Oxford and Cambridge colleges had been turned out to starve. Now their friends were in control again. To make it clear that episcopal ordination was essential in the Church of England, they modified the wording of the preface to the Ordinal to make this wholly unambiguous, and thereby experienced the exodus of Baxter and other Presbyterian ministers who could not accept reordination since it implied some lack in their previous ministry. Archbishop Bramhall sought to comprehend these ministers by inserting into their Letters of Orders a clause declaring episcopal ordination not to imply the invalidity of their previous ministry but to be supplemental, to comply with the canons, to heal schism, and to remove all doubt from the faithful. In other words, the reordination was in effect being interpreted as a conditional or supplemental sacramental act. The ex-presbyterian ministers were not being treated as rebellious schismatics, but as authentic ministers of the Gospel who, through the imposition of hands, were being received into communion with the historic episcopal order.

14. Catholic theology is familiar with the practice of conditional baptism where there is doubt or hesitation. To extend this to holy order is simplicity itself. The Anglicans of the late 17th century were powerfully attracted by this path as an approach to the Nonconformist ministers whose departure from the Church of England

had been rooted in their inability to think their non-episcopal ministry deficient. In 1689 a commission was appointed to propose revisions in the Prayer Book to facilitate comprehension, and considered a suggestion that non-episcopal ministers be offered conditional ordination with the implication that their present ministry was not deemed null and void, yet something was needed for its fuller perfection. The commission's labours came to nothing, but evoked from William Beveridge the prescient warning that such language ran the risk of equivocation - the ordainer believing the previous ordination to be in fact invalid, the ordained believing his previous ordination sufficient.

15. Conditional Ordination can be a non-controversial method of reconciling separated ministries only if the ordination to which doubt attaches was by a bishop in due succession. It might perhaps be asked if (on Hincmar's principles) a restoration of communion between Rome and Canterbury would be facilitated by the dispensing power of the Apostolic See. But in reconciling episcopal and non-episcopal ministries it is not easy to see how or where any dispensing power can be found within the normal framework of traditional theology of the sacrament of order. This problem has beset regional church union schemes where Anglicans and non-episcopal churches have come together. In the Church of South India all ministers were accepted as equal from the day of inauguration in 1947, but it was pledged that no minister not episcopally ordained would be forced on a congregation not convinced of the sufficiency of his orders; all new bishops accept consecration in the historic succession; clergy in the threefold ministry are ordained under an Ordinal which stands out for its exceptional merits. Nevertheless the temporary presence of ministers without episcopal ordination troubled some, and the Lambeth Conference of 1948 asked that in future unions the ministry be united from the start. (Controversy in England about S. India had been divisive and passionate.)

though the bishop may be himself in schism or heresy

16. Since the ministers of non-episcopal churches regard episcopal ordination as a wholly negative judgment on the sufficiency of their ministry, and since on the Anglican side episcopal ordination is necessary, the provision of a unification rite is taxing and difficult. Can ministries be united simply by mutual imposition of hands with prayer? It would then be understood that the prayer would be to God to make up whatever is lacking in the orders being reconciled. It would not be reordination, but a sign of mutual acceptance and validation. In 1975 the Groupe des Dombes (Roman Catholic and Reformed from France and Switzerland) proposed reconciliation of ministries by mutual laying on of hands on the express understanding that on the Catholic side this would mean ordination within the normal episcopal succession but not a rejection of the substantial reality of ministry in the Reformation churches whose value is manifested by its fruits, while on the Protestant side it would signify recognition of the reality of the ministry of word and sacraments in the Catholic church. (See Modern Ecumenical Documents on the Ministry, SPCK 1975). It must be stressed that the Groupe des Dombes had already gone far towards mutual recognition in eucharistic faith. That the French Protestants were able to put their names to the proposals is in itself a significant breaking of the ecumenical ice. The Dombes proposals avoid all suggestion of supplemental ordination. It is presupposed that the Reformed church is not without the apostolic succession but lacks the fulness of the sign of apostolic succession.

17. Supplemental ordination is not easy to define precisely. It had some vogue in English discussions about 1947-48. Its presupposition is that the divided state of the Church limits all ministries: Anglican priests can minister only in Anglican churches, Methodists in Methodist churches, etc. Division makes all ministries limited, relative to their own community, and therefore imperfect. Could union be brought about between two ecclesial bodies if all the ministers of one were to receive ordination, in the customary form, at the hands of the other, and vice versa? This would at least have the merit of expressing the different understandings of ministry and order that the two bodies may well have. Or would it be correct to interpret the supplement as consisting in jurisdiction rather than in the grace and power of order? The main difficulty, clearly, is to reconcile the conviction^(a) that in ordination through a bishop in due succession there is a valid act entailing permanent consequences for the person ordained, with the notion^(b) that Christ's commission somehow needs to be supplemented by some administrative ecclesiastical formula. Therefore the tendency since the Lambeth Conference 1948 (which sharply criticised the notion of supplemental ordination) has been to leave as undefined as possible what is being conveyed from one side to the other in the act of reconciliation, other than mutual recognition and acceptance.

18. The union of churches in North India and Pakistan in 1970 was brought about through a rite for unification of ministries. The rite began with a statement of intention to unite the ministries, and to continue the threefold ministry; with a declaration that the Holy Spirit had used all the ministries, but separation had brought limitation; now by prayer and ^{mutual} laying on of hands (on representatives) they asked God to give whatever

fullness of Christ's grace, commission and authority each might need.' Nothing suggesting supplemental ordination was admitted to the language or the actions of the unification rite. But critics (especially from the Church of South India who felt their way had been better) observed that the form of rite contained all the elements of episcopal ordination: if the Anglican bishops who took part in the rite regarded former non-episcopal ministry as thereby validated, they were guilty of themselves undergoing a kind of repetition of their own consecration to be bishops. It was an evident point of weakness that the rite did not expressly claim to be providing episcopal ordination.

19. Similar imprecisions troubled the Anglican-Methodist union scheme in England which failed in the 1960s. The reconciliation of ministries was to be achieved by a unification rite which contained every essential element of episcopal ordination with mutual imposition of hands. That is, the rite was in effect both an ordination and an act of mutual commissioning and recognition. The rite was never described as an ordination of Methodist ministers taking part, but was very obviously a conditional ordination, the condition however being of an unusual kind. It was not, in effect, being said: 'If you have not already received ordination by bishops in due succession', but 'If God requires episcopal ordination in due succession to confer valid ministry in the historic order...' The unification rite was therefore offensive to High Anglicans and to Anglican Evangelicals, both being certain on the point which was supposed to be in doubt (though certain in opposite directions - the High Anglicans that it is required, the Evangelicals that it is not). On this rock the scheme sank.

(1980-2)

20. The English Covenant scheme¹ for uniting the Church of England in eucharistic fellowship and ministerial order with the United Reformed and Methodist (and smaller) bodies avoided ambiguities about a unification rite which would be an ordination to some and a commissioning to others, and sought to achieve the goal by establishing episcopal ordination for all future ordinations but deeming it sufficient for all existing non-episcopal ministries to be brought into communion with the diocesan bishop. This imaginative scheme may have suffered more from the way (and the timetable) in which it was presented than from defects inherent in the scheme. Nevertheless, it was not obviously compatible with the Catholic conception of apostolic succession in which the due succession of bishops and episcopal ordination are the sacramental sign and instrument. The Covenant scheme, in short, seemed to its critics to presuppose that the Church of Christ consists of a large number of charismatic bodies, none of which is seen to approximate to the one flock under One Shepherd for which Christ prayed, but all equally true or equally defective, then coming together in mutual recognition. It goes without saying that apostolic succession is a much wider thing than episcopal succession, but the way in which Anglicans have discovered their own self-definition in their past, especially in the period from Jewel to Thorndike and John Johnson, from 1570 to 1720, while warning them against 'unchurching' non-episcopal bodies, has also stopped them from thinking the episcopal order & succession a merely secondary and dispensable matter. It was no doubt a serious further cause of damage to the ^{Covenant} scheme that the proponents had said little about eucharistic faith.

1. As embodiment of Christ's saving action in this world, the Church assures the validity of sacramental acts, and declares (for example) that this is what the Church means by Eucharist. But where division has come in, it is not easy to guarantee that over there God does not act, or that the inefficacy of 'those' ministries is certain. All we may say is that one cannot act on doubt.

21. This paper started (para.4) from the uneasy interaction between two principles, both in themselves edifying and non-controversial: a) the ordained ministry properly exercises its function and office only within the one Church; (b) God's grace in word and sacrament is not dependent on human dispositions; which is not to say that intention and faith are not required. We all accept these principles but then apply them differently. As between Canterbury and Rome, it seems clear that Rome has given greater weight to the first principle at least in its dealings with the phenomenon of Anglicanism, while Canterbury has acted more on the second; neither perhaps with strict consistency (e.g. Roman Catholic authority recognises the validity of orders conferred by *episcopi vagantes*, though never allowing those so ordained to exercise ministry, whereas Anglicanism has not recognised the validity in ordinations by schismatic bishops with valid orders who pass out of communion with the see of Canterbury). Anglican approaches to unity have tended to start from strong affirmation of the operation of God's grace as fruitful among all disciples who love and serve the Lord; but their tenacious hold to episcopal succession and ordination has generally been felt by non-episcopal churches to be incomprehensibly intransigent - as if we had a fetish. Anglicans have not always succeeded in communicating now they see the episcopal order as a sign of unity and continuity in the universal Church, and as a vehicle and safeguard for apostolic doctrine and practice. Episcopal succession and apostolic succession are not interchangeable synonyms, but the first is a visible and indeed sacramental sign to serve the second. Anglican stress on the second of the two principles above has led to an often exaggerated and distorted stress on orders apart from ecclesiology and eucharistic faith. The fault is part of our Augustinian inheritance. If this observation is just, it follows that in our quest for mutual recognition of ministry we should not get very far if we ^{only} concentrated on old questions of the essentials of order, form, intention, etc. (though we shall certainly not be able to neglect them); we cannot ask sensible questions about the ordained ministry except in the context of ecclesiology and eucharistic faith. In Roman Catholic ears, for example, 'intercommunion' has generally come to mean a superficial, well-meaning hospitality presupposing that God intended his Church to consist of numerous groups, each feeling itself called by the Spirit and then asking rival communities to acknowledge authenticity in the fruits of evangelistic zeal and holiness - but remaining essentially separate in faith, order, life, and work, and not coming together in fundamental faith on such central matters as eucharist.

22. The second Vatican council evidently regarded a valid eucharist as the sine qua non for the recognition of a community as Church. It did not affirm the existence of churches and deduce that, because they exist, their eucharists are valid. In 1896 that which was understood to be supremely characteristic and distinctive of the Catholic doctrine of priesthood was the power to offer propitiatory sacrifice in the mass for the living and the dead. The concept of priesthood in the documents of Vatican II and other Roman Catholic statements since the council, in addition to the new liturgies and now almost universal practice of the congregation receiving communion, looks like a major movement towards rapprochement. ARCIC-I's Windsor statement on eucharistic doctrine, at certain points filled out in the Canterbury statement on Ministry and Ordination, mapped out a route of consensus we can travel together. After long pondering of the CDF Observations and other criticisms from other quarters, I remain persuaded that the road mapped remains a good one, though it may need some better fencing here and there. I will not restate here considerations which I was allowed to print in THE MONTH, May 1983, but believe that some of the necessary fences are contained there.

1. I have been unable to discover whether in the debate preceding Apostolicae Curae consideration was given to the Prayer of Oblation in the Anglican Communion rite in the Book of Common Prayer (repeated in Rite B of the English Alternative Service Book, where the celebrant prays God to 'grant that by the merits and death of thy Son Jesus Christ and through faith in his blood, we and all thy whole Church may obtain remission of our sins and all other benefits of his passion.' A substantial phalanx of 17th century Anglican theologians understood these words to mean a pleading of Christ's sacrifice on behalf of the whole Church, militant and in paradise, and to be applying the benefits of Christ's propitiation in such a sense as to justify them in affirming the eucharist to be propitiatory sacrifice - but not in any sense an addition to or an offering independent of Calvary. While the Caroline divines did not think Trent's eucharistic language utterly felicitous, they were more deeply concerned about the withholding of the cup from the laity, in which they were most reluctant to see a thing indifferent.