

Suggested amendments or additions to the Norwich paper

1. Through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ God reconciled men to Himself, and, in Him, offers unity to all mankind. Our relationship with one another as children of God is inaugurated by baptism into Christ, through the Holy Spirit, and is expressed and deepened through the Eucharist.

2. In the course of the Church's history several traditions have developed in expressing Christian understanding of the Eucharist: for example, various names have become customary as descriptions of the Eucharist: Lord's Supper, Liturgy, Holy Mysteries, Synaxis, Mass, Holy Communion. Some of these have acquired emotive content after divisions have arisen, and have been taken as slogans. Perhaps the Eucharist has become the most universally acceptable term. Underneath the use of differing terms lie the real problems of belief and practice.

Insertion of II (2, 3 & 4) of Venice documents as under: -

- ii) The Eucharist is central in the obedience and worship of the People of God. It was instituted by our Lord in the context of the Passover. The Passover was the celebration of Israel's deliverance from slavery and of their constitution as God's people sealed by the Covenant of Sinai. It foreshadowed the universal deliverance from sin offered for the reconciliation of all men by Christ through the New Covenant sealed with His blood.
- iii) Christ's whole life, culminating in his death on the Cross, was the one true perfect and sufficient sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. He was raised from the dead and entered into His glory. He is the head of His body, the Church, and through the Holy Spirit in the Eucharist He deepens the union of His members with Himself in His death and resurrection.

iv) God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son to the end that all who believe in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. It is God the Father who in Christ is reconciling all men to Himself.

When the Church gathers for the Eucharist it is Christ the Lord, crucified and risen, who gives thanks and unites us with His thanksgiving for all God's mercies in creation and redemption.

It is Christ the Lord who offers to the Father the total self-surrender which found its supreme expression in His death, and unites us with His perfect obedience to the Father

It is Christ the Lord who brings us to repentance, forgives our sins and gives us grace to amend.

It is Christ the Lord who unites us with Himself in His intercession for ourselves and for all mankind.

It is from Christ the Lord that we receive the bread of life and the cup of salvation, and in Him that we are offered anew to the Father's service.

In the Eucharist therefore it is the whole Church which shares Christ's priesthood and is associated with His sacrifice although the ordained minister who presides has particular liturgical functions as the representative of Christ and His people.

3 We agree that when His people gather for the Eucharist to commemorate His saving acts for our redemption, Christ sacramentally present makes effective among us the eternal benefits of his victory on the cross and elicits and renews our response of faith, thanksgiving and self-surrender. By Christ's activity through the Holy Spirit in the Eucharist the life of the Church is built up, its fellowship strengthened and its mission furthered. In the Eucharist the Church becomes most intensely itself. The identity of the Church as the Body of Christ is both expressed and effectively proclaimed by its being gathered around, and partaking of,

His Body and Blood. In the whole action of the Eucharist, and in and by His sacramental presence given through bread and wine, the Crucified and Risen Lord, according to His promise, offers Himself to His people.

4. In the Eucharist we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. Receiving a foretaste of the kingdom to come, we are spurred on to hasten its present realisation on earth. We look back with thanksgiving to what Christ has done for us: we greet Him present among us, we look forward to his final appearing in the fulness of his kingdom when "The Son also himself (shall) be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all" (1 Cor. 15:28). By partaking of the one loaf and gathering around the same table in this communal meal at the invitation of the same Lord, we are one in commitment not only to Christ and to one another, but also to the mission of the Church in the world. (*)

5. As for the relation which exists between the Eucharist and the unique sacrifice of Christ, we all accept Christ's death and resurrection as having taken place once and for all in history. Christ's death on the Cross, the culmination of his whole life of obedience, was the one, perfect and sufficient sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. Any attempt to express a nexus between the sacrifice of Christ and the Eucharist must not obscure this fundamental fact of Christian faith. Yet we believe that The Lord's Supper, a gift of God to His Church,... is a means whereby the sacrifice of the Cross, which we proclaim, is operative within the Church. A recourse to the notion of memorial, as understood

(*) Christ and the early Church, in expressing the meaning of His death and resurrection, found the language of sacrifice indispensable. For the Hebrew, sacrifice was a traditional means of communication with God. This involved a wide range of expression; for example, the Passover, which was essentially a communal feast, the Day of Atonement, which was essentially expiatory; the Covenant, which was essentially the establishing of communion between God and man. In the mind of the early Church there was a close nexus between the Cross as a sacrifice and the Eucharist. It was around this point that controversy was later to rage. Some parties took any sacrificial content in the Eucharist to detract from the 'once and for all' nature of Christ's self-offering on the Cross, because they thought it meant regarding the Eucharist as a repeatable sacrifice in its own right. Others insisted on the sacrificial character of the Eucharist and by their language and practices appeared to lend colour to these suspicions. We believe that this conflict can be transcended by a fresh understanding of the Passover.

5 Cont)

in the Passover celebration at the time of Christ (i.e. the making effective in the present of an event in the past) opens the way to a fresh understanding of this relationship. For the Eucharistic memorial is not only a calling to mind of what is past, or of its significance, it is the Church's effective proclamation of God's mighty acts. Christ instituted the Eucharist as the memorial (anamnesis) of the whole of God's reconciling action in him, and by this communion with Christ the Church participates in that reality (cf. op. cit.)

We approve and accept the Lutheran-Roman Catholic statement: "The members of the body of Christ are united through Christ with God and with one another in such a way that they become participants in his worship, his self-offering, his sacrifice to the Father. Through this union between Christ and Christians, the eucharistic assembly "offers Christ" by consenting in the power of the Holy Spirit to be offered by him to the Father. Apart from Christ we have no gifts, no worship, no sacrifice of our own to offer to God. All we can plead is Christ, the sacrificial lamb and victim whom the Father himself has given us".

6. It is communion with Christ presupposes his true presence, in a mysterious fashion, effectively signified by the bread which is his body and by the wine which is his blood, that are given for the spiritual nourishment of his people. It is a dynamic presence, finding its fulfilment in the unity of Christ with the Church, which is his body. The term 'dynamic' denotes that by the power of the Holy Spirit the natural elements are raised to a new level of being. Under the sacramental signs of bread and wine the glorified Lord becomes present in a unique way, and his body and blood are given to believers for life everlasting.

7. We endorse the words of the Lutheran-Roman Catholic statement in affirming "that God acts in the Eucharist, effecting a change in the elements". In the light of contemporary Catholic expositions it is clear to Anglicans as to Lutherans that "the dogma of transubstantiation intends to affirm the fact of Christ's presence and of the change which takes place, and is not an attempt to explain how Christ becomes present..... it is a legitimate way of attempting to express the mystery even (for those) who believe that the conceptuality associated with 'transubstantiation' is misleading, and therefore prefer to avoid the term".

7 (cont)

The objectivity of the mysterious change (mirabilis conversio) effected by the power of the Holy Spirit is clearly affirmed in Anglican formularies, e.g.

by the words of the Prayer of Humble Access:

"So to eat the flesh of thy dear Son Jesus Christ, and to drink his blood...."

and by the words of administration of Holy Communion:

" the body of Our Lord Jesus Christ.....
the blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ....."

- 8 We agree that it is impossible precisely to define any particular moment at which the sign becomes truly efficacious, and of the manner in which this occurs. We believe, however, that the words of institution and the reception of the elements by the faithful are moments of special significance in the Eucharist.
- 9 Omitted
- 10 We submit to the Commission the question whether we have attained a sufficient measure of agreement for the subject of the Eucharist no longer to constitute an obstacle to reunion.

ADDITIONAL NOTE TO NORWICH STATEMENT PARAGRAPH 5

The words employed in the Roman Catholic tradition and liturgy, which speak of our offering the Sacrifice of Christ to the Father, appear [to some Anglicans] to deny the fact of the once-for-all nature of the Cross. The implicit intention of this language of 'offering' is to emphasize the truth that we can offer nothing to God except through the sacrifice of Christ. The self-offering and thanksgiving of the Church are the result of salvation.

Possibly our mutual misunderstandings spring from emphasis on different facets of the atonement, a subject which the New Testament expresses in a variety of ways. In one, the stress is laid upon the self-offering and obedience of Christ in his humanity, [which helps to explain the Roman Catholic emphasis.] The other approach emphasizes the unique action of God for man's justification through the death of the Cross, [which explains the concern of some Anglicans over Roman Catholic usage. However, both these approaches can be found in each of our two communions.]

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