

ANGLICAN/ROMAN CATHOLIC INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION

AUTHORITY AND MINISTRY - In Theory and Practice.

An Anglican View

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I shall begin by acknowledging that within the Anglican Communion there is both "diversity of opinion and diffusion of authority" on the matters I am about to discuss.

"There is no specifically Anglican corpus of doctrine and no king-pin in Anglican theology, such as Calvin, nor is there any tendency to stress specific doctrines, such as predestination, or specific philosophies, such as Thomism or nominalism, or any other one of the several medieval brands of philosophy"<sup>2</sup>

By this, I mean to indicate not only that there are varieties of opinions and interpretations about the nature and function of Authority (in itself never easy to define accurately) and not only that among us there are diverse "theologies" of Ministry - all this is at least true, as I suspect is the case in every ecclesial community - but also that the Anglican Communion consists of some 19 Provinces, each, while careful to maintain communion with the See of Canterbury, autonomous, and responsible for defining its own life and worship. This is to highlight the reason why the Anglican Communion is often referred to as a Federation of independent Provinces.

"She has plenary authority within herself, and has no need to recur to any other Church to direct her what to retain and what to do".<sup>3</sup>

So wrote Archbishop Wake of the Church of England: and this conclusion has been written into the Constitution of every Province of the Church since that time (See e.g. Ch.2 pp4 The Constitution of the Church of England in Australia).

It is not my intention, here, however, to discuss the nature of the relationship between the several Provinces, but to draw attention to the fact that there are real constitutional differences in the ways in which Authority is conceived and defined by the member Churches of the Anglican Communion, as well as real differences in the status of the ministries of Bishops and Priests as men under authority, which result in a variety of manners of exercising Authority in the same Communion.

Some of these differences are of major importance, and cannot be overlooked in a presentation such as this. Extreme care must be taken when using even such authoritative works as "Anglicanism" by More and Cross, or Bishop McAadoo's "The Spirit of Anglicanism", if you would apply their views to the whole communion. Not only do such works describe and assess (magnificently, I think) Anglicanism at one period of its history (and that an authoritative one) but describe an Anglicanism which does

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not exist in precisely that form in either this country or in the United States of America, even if it does continue in England.

One important example of this can be seen in the Church of England in Australia, which, following the lead of the (then) Protestant Episcopal Church of the U.S.A., adopted a form of synodical government into its Diocesan structures over 100 years ago - as of course did most other Provinces of the Anglican Communion as they came into being. In the Australian Church's protracted effort to arrive at a suitable constitution - which was achieved in the early 1960's - no hesitation at all was felt in making such synodical provision part of the national constitution. Thus, as in each Diocese, the Bishop, the clergy and the (representative) laity constitute the synod, so in the General Synod of The Church of England in Australia, there are three Houses, of the Bishops, of the clergy and of the laity. Each House may vote independently of the others, and each enjoys the status of absolute equality with the other two. No measure, canon or regulation etc., is deemed to have been passed unless each House, by a majority of its members passes that measure, canon, etc. These provisions pertain not only to the necessary commitments for the good government and administration of the Church, but also to matters of faith and order.

Dr. E. Pusey, famed leader of the Oxford Movement in England regarded this development as "radically wrong" and believed it to be the result of the "adoption of a principle belonging to bodies who reject the Apostolic succession...."

"Yet in so saying, I do not mean (God forbid) that she (the American Church) has thereby forfeited her claim to be part of the Church. She has abandoned a bulwark of the faith, a function of the office inherited by her Bishops, not the faith itself or the Apostolic succession...the admission of laymen to a co-ordinate voice in the Councils on the faith is not an heretical act. Yet it is an innovation upon that rule which the inspired Apostles left with the Church."<sup>4</sup>

It is fair to add that this "innovation" is presently being planned and implemented in England itself: and to say that rarely, if ever, has it been the cause of any usurping of Episcopal prerogatives, though it has proven an admirable restraint on the exercise of prelatical authoritarianism and a reasonable limitation on the manner and the spheres of Episcopal authority, in general.

It follows, too, from such an example, that there is a considerable difference in the ways in which various Provinces of the Anglican Communion make authoritative statements, and differ widely in the way in which they implement them.

Thus you will appreciate that my own presentation here must be a partial one, because of the diverse fashions in which Authority and Ministry are inter-related, both in theory and practice, within Anglicanism. With such diversities, you will not be surprised if I attempt only to

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present to you what seems to me a central line in Anglican thought, with a minimum of side excursions into Australian or English, or "high" or "low" (etc.) interpretations.

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In using the term Authority, we raise the seemingly innumerable questions - not only of interpretation and opinion, but even of definition. So, I begin with a general definition and say that Authority is the word used to indicate the delegation of power from the source of all power, God Himself, As such, it involves not only the power, but also the right to decide issues, or "to enforce obedience" (Oxford Dictionary).

As in any Christian view, authority, its structures and patterns, has to do with the Church's decisions as to where the power and the right to decide issues about doctrine, discipline, worship, ministry and service must lie, and the means of enforcing obedience, As given and exercised within our Church, the authority is acknowledged to be God's through Jesus Christ, in the power of the Holy Spirit in the Church which is itself a responsible community, responsible to Him. The Church has the authority order its own life and conduct in such ways as shall best conserve and proclaim the revelation of God Himself, by God Himself, to the ultimate end that the whole creation is absorbed into a voluntary and loving participation in God's own work and kingdom.

The problem is, and always has been, the criteria and the means by which we may judge and implement in a specific instance the exercise of relevant authority within the Church which really does conform to the guidance and direction of the Holy Spirit.

Theoretically and formally, the criteria are readily discernible in all our formularies:

"The distinctive strength of Anglicanism rests on equal loyalty to the unconflicting rights of reason, Scripture and tradition".<sup>5</sup> Sometimes the order of these is varied: sometimes they are spelled out in different words (e.g. Holy Scripture, antiquity, general consent). But the intent seems always constant: to acknowledge the unshakable necessity and supreme authority of the Holy Scriptures, to appreciate the historical context within which the Christian faith was born and by means of which the continuous experience and knowledge of God through Jesus Christ in the Holy Spirit has been transmitted to us, and to affirm our present responsibility for maintaining and proclaiming His Gospel.

It is at this point that I should draw attention to the place of the Ministry within our Communion. For any definition of our Orders and patterns of Ministry will always relate itself directly to the creative calculus involved in presenting and maintaining these criteria, both in the Church and to the world. And I think it not impossible to claim and to show that the inter-relatedness of the 3 Orders of the ordained Ministry or our Church is best to be understood in terms of the degrees in which each order is responsible to God in the Church for the maintenance of the life of the congregation, for nurturing the faithful,

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in the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and for the furtherance of the Gospel. Before moving into that area, however, a word about the "forms" of the three criteria mentioned.

#### The form of Scripture.

As this varies between the Churches of God, I would here simply remind you that along with the other Reformed communions of the West, we receive as canonical the books of the Old and New Testament: our clergy are admitted to Holy Orders only on the condition that they are persuaded that the Holy Scriptures contain all doctrine required as necessary for eternal salvation through faith in Jesus Christ, and are determined to teach or maintain nothing as necessary for eternal salvation but that which they may be persuaded to be concluded and proved by the same.

The books of the Apocrypha, the deutero-canonical literature of the Old Testament are recognised as containing, possibly, guidance in manners - but not for doctrine.

All of this is set out in Article 6 of the 39 Articles of Religion, an article which is received in every Province of our Communion.

Thus do our formularies : define the form of Scripture. It is a matter of debate among us as to the extent these formularies commit us view of the nature of Scripture, or the manner in which the books of the Bible may be applied authoritatively in any instance. It may be affirmed, generally, I think that to the Scriptures we assign this singular status and primary significance because primary, decisive and essential in the witness to God revealed and made known to us in His eternal nature through Jesus Christ, who is both crown and criterion of all revelation. We would impress upon people the necessity of banishing from their lives all ideas concerning the character of God which are inconsistent with the character of Jesus Christ. Similarly, it may be said, that Scripture has this primary significance among us, too, for the decisive witness and meaning of "man of God's own choosing" has for man.

To the best of my knowledge, everything else we regard as having authority is subordinate to the primacy accorded to the Holy Scriptures - Councils, Creeds, Sacraments, and Ministry.

#### The Form of Tradition

The historical context in which the Church determined the Canon of Scripture was the context of the ancient Church. In so proclaiming and defining the canon, the Church publicly testified to her tradition, of which the Scriptures were an essential, perhaps the central, portion. This tradition and those Scriptures were seen to be authenticated by the public Apostolic ministry, Where originally it was extremely difficult to disentangle the Form of Scripture from the Form of Tradition, eventually "tradition" was accorded a distinct authority

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of its own - for a variety of reasons. (Examples of these - the authorization of certain liturgical practices, as the sign of the cross in Baptism, or of official interpretations of Scripture itself, as with Prov.8.22) One distinctive feature of the English Reformation, when compared to the reforms effected by the continental reformers, was the refusal to discard many of the results of such traditions: every controversial aspect of the traditional life of the Church, doctrine and worship was radically scrutinised, and where necessary reformed. The tenor of their work may be appreciated better from one or two examples.

The "Ten Articles" of 1536 state that the people: -

"must utterly refuse and condemn all those opinions contrary to the said articles (sc Of the Creeds) which were of long time past condemned in the 4 Holy councils, that is to say the Councils of Nice, Constantinople, Ephesus and Chaldonense (sic!)"

Those same words recur in "The Institute of a Christian Man", drawn up by Archbishop Cranmer and a committee of Bishops, Archdeacons and scholars in 1537, and are re-iterated, with one slight alteration in "The King's Book", approved by Convocation in 1543.

But in 1553, the 22nd of the 42 Articles (which now stands as Article 21 of the 39 Articles, appended to the Book of Common Prayer) made its appearance, headed "Of General Councils".

"General Councils may not be gathered together without the commandment and will of Princes. And when they be gathered together, (forasmuch as they be an assembly of men, whereof all be not governed with the Spirit and Word of God), they may err, and sometimes have erred, even in things pertaining unto God. Wherefore things ordained by them as necessary to salvation have neither strength nor authority unless it may be declared that they be taken out of Holy Scripture".

It is a matter of record that this does not mean, nor was it intended to mean, the ascription of no authority in the first 4 General or Ecumenical Councils. References both to the law of the Realm and to later canons of the Church (e.g. On Preachers.1571) prove this. But it does mean that the first 4 Ecumenical Councils were regarded as were authoritative and binding not because they were infallible, but because they represented the Church's agreed interpretation of Scripture.

Again, before 1553, it was obligatory for faithful members of the Church of England to repute, hold and take the Creeds

"for the most holy, most sure, and most certain and infallible words of God, and such as neither ought, nor can be altered or convellid by any contrary opinion or authority".

After 1553, they were not under any such obligation, but rather were thoroughly to receive and believe the 3 Creeds (Apostles, Nicene and

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Athanasian, so-called) since in the words of Article 6 of the 39:-

"for they may be proved by most certain warrants of Holy Scripture".

("Of interest is the fact that Fundamental Declaration 1, of the Constitution of the Church of England in Australia reads:

"The Church of England in Australia being a part of the one Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church of Christ, holds the Christian faith as professed by the Church of Christ from primitive times and in particular as set forth in the creeds known as the Nicene Creed and the Apostles' Creed."

And in Chapter 2, /4 is added, as first of the Ruling Principles: "This Church...retains and approves the doctrine and principles of the Church of England embodied in the Book of Common Prayer ...and in the Articles of Religion sometimes called the 39 Articles but has plenary authority at its own discretion to...)

Students of Anglicanism will thus appreciate the extent to which the Form of Tradition has been submitted to continuous examination by our Church, and in all its contents made subordinate to but an interpreter of Scripture. Such students will also know that though there is no doubt that such subordination represents the "mind and heart" of Anglicanism, considerable and extremely powerful influences have persisted in challenging such conclusions, and have affected all subsequent thought - i.e. from the 1830's to the present day - on the matters of both Authority and Ministry, to which, in fairness, I must make more than passing reference.

Dr. Pusey's open letter "The Eironicon", written perhaps with the thought of the Vatican Council 1 was but 5 years away, records for us matters, which have had wide credence among us. Thus, commenting on the statement "The Church hath authority in controversies of faith", he says:

"The statement in the Articles, The Church hath authority in controversies of faith, in itself implies a Divine authority (p.43)...As the truth, 'God cannot contradict Himself' does not set men free to criticize any portion of His revelation, so neither does the truth 'His Church may not lay down as necessary for salvation what God has not revealed in His Word' set men free to criticize what He has taught His whole Church to declare and receive as saving truth (p.47)...It is a matter of faith that the whole church shall never be led into any formal acceptance of error by virtue of our Lord's promise; and on this ground the Church of England receives the Six General Councils (p.93)...God the Holy Ghost exercises the office of Teacher, which He vouchsafed to take both by teaching the children of God....and by giving them the supernatural gift of faith, as of grace; and He maintains in the Church everywhere the tradition of the great body of the faith, infallibly fixed.(p.93)...We do not need the present agency of an infallible Church to assure us of the truth of what has been ruled infallibly.(p.93)".

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It is a fascinating series of statements, both from a logical and theological standpoint. Without evidence or authority cited, he has increased the number of Councils accepted by the Church of England and attributed to them Divine authority, with the logical corollaries - the necessary preservation of the Church from error and the suspension of human reason in the acceptance of authority. Again, he has proposed the logical absurdity that although the Church was once necessarily infallible, it is so no longer. Despite these criticisms, it cannot be denied that his immense influence ensured that these opinions and themes became part of the background of all subsequent Anglican thought, either attracting or repelling, and, as far as I can trace, are the source of a static, authoritarian stream which has run strongly.

Opposition and criticism of these views is to be found in the writings of such "catholically" minded leaders and scholars as Dean Church (of the original intimate circle of the Oxford Movement) and Bishop Gore's essay in "Lux Mundi", as well as pervading the theological attitudes of that whole circle of essayists: and this means of course that the theological successors to the Oxford Movement, and their successors, have, on the whole, never occupied anything like that ground, yet it remains a fact of our life that there persist exponents of his views, most certainly in small, vociferous groups in England and the U.S.A., and even here in Australia.

But in keeping with my aim of presenting a central Anglican line, we should return to such a man as Fr. J. N. Figgis, C.R., in whose book "The Fellowship of The Mystery" is sounded a note of more authentic resonance in Anglicanism.

"While the..critical pronouncements of the Church organs at momentous epochs are in all ages to be received with deference, and indeed may come to us with a weight which is only not overwhelming, I can see no ground for supposing that they are infallible in such a way as to deny the living power of the Church in the present and in the future, or to deliver us bound to the 'dead hand'. It is this enslavement of the present to the past which is to be feared by many just now; nor are their fears altogether without ground - so mistaken is the conception of authority entertained by so many, and the confusion of the real weight to be attached to tradition with a certainty which would only too literally be 'dead'" (p.196f.)

Of course this is an all too brief excursion into an important field of thought. The whole history of the status and form of tradition in recent Anglican Theology would require a detailed examination of the works of men like Bishop Gore, Canon Henry Scott Holland, J.K. Mozley, Fr Figgis, and the essayists of "Essays Catholic and Critical" - especially of Bishop Rawlinson and W.L.Knox, both of whose work received the same critical storm as did the earlier essay by Bishop Gore in "Lux Mundi", and from the same source - the intransigent and arbitrary minority who hold to an infallible ancient Church which

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deposited infallible Councils by means of infallible Councils. A small but important book "The Gospel of God and The Authority of the Church" edited by A.R.Vidler and W.L.Knox brings us back, full circle, to that positive, lively and rational theology of the Carolines. They are a plea for regarding the Catholic Faith as

"an organic whole, the truth of which is guaranteed more by its intrinsic value as proved by past experience than by the oracular infallibility of certain isolated definitions."<sup>6</sup>

#### The Form of Reason

is less easily defined, being always involved in the interpretation of both Scripture and Tradition. Its best theological basis is, I believe, what is often referred to as the principle of the Incarnation, first expounded by Archbishop Laud in his assessment of conciliar authority. That is to say, in addition to the belief that man is made in the image of God, and created by the Logos and so enabled, by God, to apprehend Christ as the Truth, there is the fact that the Church rejects those Christological theories which would involve the absorption of Christ's humanity, and ours, by the deity (e.g. Apollinarianism and Eutrycheanism) or which would discard that humanity (like Photinianism) and thus deny for humanity its ultimate glorification in Christ in the heavenly places. The Incarnational principle, in our theology, is, if you like, a radical application of what Irenaeus called Recapitulation, i.e. in Christ all creation, including humanity, is summed up and perfected: it is not swallowed up in divinity, nor discarded as being no longer serviceable. In Christ, human reason, too, becomes a form of mediation of His presence through the Holy Spirit.

To summarise this section:

The ultimate, final, infallible authority for anything and everything the Church says and does is given by God Himself and God alone. He alone has primary authority. On occasion, God does confer His authority immediately upon a particular person, but more often, and more conformably to our sinful condition, he reveals His authority to us mediately, through the humanity of His Son, through the Apostolic witness, through the words of Scripture, through the Church, her ministry and her worship, the continuous and living experience of God through His Christ in the power of the Spirit realised in the Gospel sacraments as the continuation of the resurrection appearances of the Risen Lord. It is still God's authority, even though mediated. It is known to be God's authority - which we hold by faith and know by experience, but it is seen and known "through a glass, darkly".

"Our Lord's authority is God's authority, but it is God's authority mediated through the manhood which He took for our salvation. The Church's authority is God's authority, but it is God's authority mediated through the clergy and laity of the historic Church, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic. The authority of the Scripture is God's authority, but it is mediated through the minds of those whom He chose to inspire"<sup>7</sup>

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This is the authentic voice of our communion, I believe. The insistence on the mediatorial nature of authority is a theme that has pervaded Anglican divinity for over 400 years. It is one of the means by which we remind ourselves that God takes the initiative and calls us into His fellowship, eliciting from us the response of faith in the community of love - neither coercing, overwhelming nor dictating but preserving the fulness of a free response. By these same means we have sought to guard ourselves against ecclesiolatry, bibliolatry, and even episcopolatry. Such total surrender as these have demanded is a "caricature of the self-surrender elicited by our heavenly Father, because it involves the abandonment of sense and reason instead of the humble dedication of them both to God"<sup>8</sup>

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It is in this context, too, that our view of the Ministry of the Church is to be understood. The Ministry of Apostolic witness and the manner of Apostolic presence has been maintained among us by an almost unquestioned loyalty to the three-fold Orders, of Bishops, Priests, and Deacons. We are as aware as anybody else that the Bishop of the 2nd Century is rarely recognisable in 1st century terms. But we take it as fact that the Apostles and their successors, the Bishops, were the focal points of the Church's life and faith, being, normally, the centre of the Church's liturgical worship. And whereas we have never specifically defined the nature of Apostolic Succession in official formularies, we have adopted just about every conceivable device to defend the position that in and through the Church's Episcopal Ministry there has been maintained the authentic Apostolic Succession, of Apostolic life, Apostolic mission, and Apostolic faith.

This is tantamount to saying that if you would understand the view of the Ministry as we understand it, you begin by relating the ministry of our Bishops to that of the Apostles, and ultimately thereby to that of Christ, and continue by relating the ministries of Priests and Deacons to that of our Bishops. As is the case in the Roman, and other episcopal communions, we too are coming to a richer understanding of what it is that has been deliberately maintained among us, through the vast wealth of Biblical, Patristic and Liturgical scholarship made so readily available in these past 3 decades. Specifically, I have in mind here the manner in which as a result of the work of Biblical exegesis of every Church, we can now appreciate much better the nature of the dynamic relationship which Scripturally and traditionally is seen to exist between the Priestly Ministry of the whole People of God, the Priesthood of Christ, and the Priesthood in the Church of the ancient (Western) Sacros (Bishop). There have been notable authors who have argued for the thesis that the Church's priestly ministry was to have been understood from the continuous presence of priests in it, or at least since the 3rd century.

As is well known, it is impossible almost to conceive of the idea of Anglicans seriously undertaking a scheme for the re-union of Churches unless Episcopacy stands high on the first agenda. Equally well-known

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is our lack of unanimity about the reason why this should be so! Is it because Bishops are of the "esse", the "bone esso", or even, more recently, and certainly less popularly and feasibly, the "plene esse" of the Church? Nevertheless, and in despite of such fashions of thought, the significant feature is our continuous undeviating loyalty to the Episcopate. Similarly, whether the Apostolic succession is to be defined, finally, in terms of factual, lineal or charismatic succession, there has been undoubtedly maintained in and through our Episcopacy both the historic continuity and the sacramental status of the Apostolic Ministry and ancient Priesthood. So we believe.

We are accustomed to refer to our ordained Ministry as that of the Word and Sacrament. It is in this reference that we appreciate our historical Ordinals. The Bishop, there, is seen to be chief Pastor, the one charged with exercising oversight of the Church and its affairs in the world. In some ways he is primarily charged with the conservation of the whole Christian heritage, of faith and order, discipline and worship: but he is also regarded as responsible for the well-being of the Church of which he is local head; anciently this meant that Bishops developed an economic responsibility as well as pastoral oversight, from which they are still visibly not free; existentially, it seems that they are now as always overburdened with administration.

"The Bishop is a person to whom is entrusted (ideally by the whole Church, the mystical Body of Christ, invoking His authority and guided by His Spirit) discretion to decide in appropriate situations what course is for the true good of the Church, and tends to the fulfillment of God's purpose. Responsibility of some such kind is implicit in the general idea of Christian ministry, but it is especially characteristic of the office of bishop...One situation stands out before all others in which the bishop's discretion is absolute, This is when choice must be made of fit persons to serve under him in the ministry...For if we say that only a Bishop can ordain or consecrate, we are saying that the final judgement in the choice of her ministers is placed in the hands of the bishop by the Church, because he is the most responsible and discretionary of her existing ministers"

The function of the episcopate is thus seen to consist in conserving, nurturing and proclaiming the Gospel of Christ in the Church and to the world, to mediate the life and presence, of the Risen Christ to those within and without. Every episcopal communion in Christian history has in some way limited that office, either by centralising some aspects, or by sharing, through the formation of episcopal Synods, or by establishing in some way the participation of the whole People of God as well as the "inferior" clergy in such responsibilities - or even by combinations of all of these: But none of these devices has managed to free the Bishop from awesome responsibilities.

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The authority and ministry of both Priest and Deacon is best understood in terms of our Ordinals, as a delegated authority and ministry, sharing is specific, though not quite all, episcopal functions, or by extending that ministry in certain directions. As mentioned, the final choice of fit persons to serve either as priests or deacons still rests with the Bishop of a diocese, no matter how many buffers and aids to that responsibility have been provided in some Provinces of the Church. He remains, invariably, and no doubt exhaustingly, the one who admits every person to the fellowship of the Holy Communion. Like the Bishop at his consecration, priest and deacon make public declarations and vow to uphold the faith, to preach and teach the Gospel, to submit to the Acts of the local Synod, and, in most cases, but not all, to assent to the 39 Articles and profess loyalty to the Crown. This too is one of the features which differs between Provinces: a diocesan Bishop in those Provinces which enjoy synodical government must assent to every act of Synod - or he may, on a vote "by Orders" veto any such Act. It's rarely done, but remains a distinct possibility, and in fact has happened in Australia.

The relatedness of the ministry of Priests and Deacon to that of the Bishop is again a matter of consistent appraisal. Probably something of the same authoritarianism that was evident in Pusey's assessment of the authority of General Councils, helped nurture views about the 'inferior' status of the Priest (presbyter) and the Deacon which suggested that there was almost a spiritual progression through the various Orders - out of the laity to the diaconate, and on to the priesthood. Aberrant discussions of the appropriate gift of the Holy Spirit for each such office can be found on the shelves of some libraries (of course we had no monopoly on these ideas at any time), the only possible basis being (it seems to me) a thorough misunderstanding or at least a radical narrowness of the meaning of the Latin "inferior". For according to our Ordinal, the Priest is related to the Bishop as one who shares many of the episcopal functions of conserving and nurturing: the deacon's office, historically at least, was related in yet another, equally specific, fashion to the episcopal functions. Pragmatically, however, (and we have a deep streak of the same) I think we must confess that for a long time now we have been unable to see the diaconate as little more than a probationary priesthood.

As I understand our tradition, the ordained Ministry, of Bishop, Priest and Deacon, has primary responsibility, by Word and Sacrament, of setting forth among the People of God and for the sake of the world the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Whatsoever authority in ministry is enjoyed by the "ordered" within the Church - whatsoever power and rights they have to decide issues and enforce obedience - they have and hold because they are themselves, evidently in the sight of the Church, men under God's authority and calling, mediated to them as to the whole People of God by Word and Sacrament - through Scripture, Tradition and Reason, joint-heirs in the whole Apostolic mission of the fruit of the redeeming work of God, and servants of the freedom with which He makes us free. None of these have ever been able to safeguard us from

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prelacy, authoritarianism, inefficiency or even stupidity. But they have, nevertheless, and in spite of all these possibilities, preserved for us the priceless heritage we enjoy.

Eventually, questions and discussions of both Authority and Ministry involve us all in larger questions, which seem to me to focus on the meaning of Christian discipleship and Christian maturity, of the possibility of finding and enjoying profound personal integrity and freedom within the shared life of a responsive community of faith and of love. That freedom and integrity, that shared life, and pervading love we know in and through the Church - mediated by God through His Son, His Church, His Ministry, His Sacraments, His Fellowship, His Holy Bible. Our history and our thought, specifically on the nature of Authority and Ministry, show us to be a Church of His making. Perhaps like all our fellow Christians we have yet to discern the true nature of that Ministry and the true form of mediating His authority in the world: this surely is to be seen in our attempts to give adequate and cohesive structure to the life of the people of God, in the sometimes halting, even unwilling, appropriations of new thought and fashions of discipleship.

But I believe we do bear witness not only to the human and intellectual precariousness of the whole Christian enterprise but also to the glorious liberty of the children of God and to the gracious presence of the eternal Triune God.

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#### Footnotes

1. Paul Elmer More - essay, The Spirit of Anglicanism, in "Anglicanism" eds P.E. More and F.L. Cross SPCK London, 1935 p.xx
2. Archbishop Wake, quoted by Parry, Church History, Vol III, p.46, and quoted here from F.R. Arnott "Anglicanism in the 17th Century" in Anglicanism, More & Cross, p.lxxii.
3. Bishop H.R. McAdoo - "The Spirit of Anglicanism" A. & C. Black London 1965 p.1
4. E.B. Pusey - Councils of the Church Chiefly as to Their Constitution pp 24-27.
5. Paget, in his Introduction to the Vth Book of Hooker's Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity. Quoted in McAdoo, see previous note.
6. "Essays Catholic and Critical" 3rd Ed. p.115
7. K.J. Woolcombe, art. in The Anglican Theological Review, April 1962, entitled "The Authority of the First Four General Councils in the Anglican Communion" p.23
8. *ibid* p.25-26
9. W. Telfer "The Office of A Bishop" Daryon, Longman and Todd, London, 1962 pp vii - viii.