

PROCEEDINGS OF THE

NIGERIA ANGLICAN ROMAN CATHOLIC COMMISSION

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PREFACE
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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

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The Nigeria Anglican Roman Catholic Commission (NARCC) that started in 2002 in Nigeria was put in place to discuss at a local level the conversation between Anglican Communion and the Roman Catholic Church at the universal level by the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC) which was created and sponsored in 1969¹ by the Anglican Consultative Council and the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity. From 1967 to 1968, the Anglican–Roman Catholic Joint Preparatory Commission (ARCJPC) had meetings in Italy and Malta. The fruit of these meetings was the Malta Report.

The first phase of ARCIC (1970-1982) was held under the aegis of Henry McAdoo (Anglican Archbishop of Dublin) and Alan Clark (Roman Catholic Bishop of East Anglia). The co-Secretaries were Anglicans Colin Davey and Christopher Hill and the Roman Catholic William A. Purdy. ² In 1970 and 1971 the theme discussed was Eucharistic doctrine with an agreed statement and elucidation which was issued in 1979.³ In 1972 ARCIC I deliberated on the subject of ordination. There was an agreed statement from Canterbury and an elucidation was issued in 1979.⁴ In 1977, 1979 and 1980, the Gift of Authority was discussed and a statement was made at Venice. ⁵ In 1981, a final statement on the gift of authority was issued by ARCIC I⁶ with responses from both the Lambeth Conference⁷ and the Catholic Church.⁸ In 1983 further clarifications on the Eucharist and Ministry were issued.⁹

The Second Anglican–Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC II) from 1983 to 2006 was co-chaired by the Anglican bishops Mark Santer, Frank Griswold, and Peter Carnley, and the Roman Catholic bishops Cormac Murphy-O'Connor, and Alexander Joseph Brunett. A number of Anglican and Roman Catholic clerics served as co-secretaries. It is worthy of note that a Nigerian

¹James, Barry (19 May 1992). "Anglican Leader Challenges Vatican Stand on Birth Control". *New York Times*. Retrieved 13 January 2012.

²Davey was co-secretary until July 1974 and Hill was co-secretary from August 1974.

³Anglican – Roman Catholic International Commission (1979-01-29). Written at Salisbury, England. "Elucidation [on the 1971 'Agreed Statement on Eucharistic Doctrine']". *prounione.urbe.it*. Rome, IT: Franciscan Friars of the Atonement – via Centro Pro Unione.

⁴Anglican – Roman Catholic International Commission (1979-01-20). Written at Salisbury, England. "Elucidation [on the 1973 statement on the doctrine of the ministry]". *prounione.urbe.it*. Rome, IT: Franciscan Friars of the Atonement – via Centro Pro Unione

⁵Anglican – Roman Catholic International Commission (1976). Written at Venice. "Authority in the Church I". *prounione.urbe.it* (agreed statement). Rome, IT: Franciscan Friars of the Atonement – via Centro Pro Unione.

⁶Anglican – Roman Catholic International Commission (1981). Written at Windsor, England. "The Final Report". *prounione.urbe.it*. Rome, IT: Franciscan Friars of the Atonement – via Centro Pro Unione.

⁷Lambeth Conference (1988-08-14). "Resolution 8 – Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC)". *anglicancommunion.org*. London: Anglican Communion Office.

⁸Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity (1991-12-16). "The Catholic Church's response to the Final Report of ARCIC I". *L'Osservatore Romano*. **50** (1220) – via vatican.va.

⁹Second Anglican – Roman Catholic International Commission (September 1993). "Clarifications of certain aspects of the agreed statements on eucharist and ministry". *prounione.urbe.it*. Rome, IT: Franciscan Friars of the Atonement – via Centro Pro Unione.

(Rev. Fr. Dr. Peter Damian Akpunonu, then Rector, Catholic Institute of West Africa, Port Harcourt, Nigeria) was a member of the Commission. The topics covered by ARCIC II included the doctrine of Salvation, Communion, teaching authority, and the role of Mary the mother of God.

In 2000, ARCIC II supported a meeting of 13 pairs of Anglican and Roman Catholic bishops from around the globe at Mississauga, Ontario, Canada. This meeting set up the International Anglican-Roman Catholic Commission on Unity and Mission (IARCCUM), which began to meet in 2002, but was suspended from 2003-2005 in view of the consecration of an openly gay Anglican bishop in the USA. IARCCUM is not about reaching theological agreement so much as finding ways to put into practice the agreements which ARCIC has reached and have been accepted by the two Churches.

In 2007 IARCCUM issued *Growing Together in Unity and Mission* which was the summary of the nine Agreed Statements of ARCIC. This states that "The Roman Catholic Church teaches that the ministry of the Bishop of Rome (the Pope) as universal primate is in accordance with Christ's will for the Church and an essential element of maintaining it in unity and truth."¹⁰ Not only that but the document goes on to say that "We urge Anglicans and Roman Catholics to explore together how the ministry of the Bishop of Rome might be offered and received in order to assist our Communion to grow towards full, ecclesial communion."

The third Anglican–Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC-III) commenced from May 17-27, 2011 to the present¹¹ at the ecumenical Bose Monastic Community in northern Italy.¹² ARCIC III started with fundamental questions regarding the *Church as Communion – Local and Universal*, and *How in Communion the Local and Universal Church Comes to Discern Right Ethical Teaching*. The opening meeting also noted Catholic-Anglican tensions over the creation of the Personal Ordinariate of Our Lady of Walsingham, directly subject to the Holy See, earlier the same year in order to make easier the transition by Anglican congregations (not just individuals) wishing to move into communion with the Catholic Church.¹³

The co-chairmen of this phase are Bernard Longley, Roman Catholic Archbishop of Birmingham and David Moxon, Director of the Anglican Centre in Rome and former Anglican Archbishop of New Zealand. Roman Catholic members: Arthur Kennedy, Auxiliary Bishop in Boston; Paul Murray, professor of theology and religion at Durham University; Janet Smith, professor of moral theology; Vimal Tirimanna, Redemptorist father and professor at Rome's Alphonsianum University; Henry Wansbrough, a Benedictine father from Ampleforth Abbey; Teresa Okure, Sister of the Society of the Holy Child Jesus, Nigeria; Adelbert Denaux, presbyter and former professor at the Catholic University of Leuven and member of ARCIC II, (currently) dean of the School of Catholic Theology of Tilburg University. Anglican members: Paula Gooder, canon

¹⁰Gledhill, Ruth (2007-02-19). "Churches back plan to unite under Pope". *The Times*. London.

¹¹*Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission III (ARCIC-III): communiqués & press releases*. iarccum.org. International Anglican-Roman Catholic Commission for Unity and Mission. Archived from the original on 2015-09-27. Retrieved 2016-01-13.

¹²"*Anglican—Catholic Dialogue opens new phase*". zenit.org. New York: Innovative Media. Zenit News Agency. 2011-02-03. Archived from the original on 2011-02-15.

¹³"*Communiqué: ARCIC III at Bose, Italy*" (Press release). International Anglican-Roman Catholic Commission for Unity and Mission. 2011-05-27. Archived from the original on 2016-01-14. Retrieved 2016-01-14.

theologian of Birmingham Cathedral; Christopher Hill, former Bishop of Guildford; Mark McIntosh, canon professor at the University of Durham; Nkosinathi Ndwandwe, Bishop of Natal, Southern Africa; Linda Nicholls, Bishop Suffragan of Trent-Durham in the Diocese of Toronto; Michael Poon from Trinity Theological College in Singapore; Nicholas Sagovsky, former ARCIC II member and retiring canon residentiary at Westminster Abbey; Peter Sedgwick, principal of St. Michael's College; and Charles Sherlock, former ARCIC II member and Registrar of the MCD University of Divinity in Australia.¹⁴

The Nigeria Anglican Roman Catholic Commission (NARCC) has been discussing and publishing Newsletters and Proceedings on the subjects of ARCIC. The last proceeding published by NARCC was “THE HOLY EUCHARIST” (2010). The present edition is on THE CHURCH AND COMMUNION in ARCIC II and III. These conversations cover eight unequal chapters. In chapter one Msgr. Jerome Madueke discusses “Salvation and the Church, a catholic appraisal of ARCIC II bilateral Agreement.” Msgr. Jerome traces the dispute on justification to the time of the Reformation in the search for full ecclesial communion between the Anglicans and Roman Catholics.

In Chapter two, Archbishop Ikechi Nwachukwu Nwosu, discusses Salvation and the Church, an Anglican appraisal of ARCIC II bilateral agreement. Archbishop Ikechi applies the subject of communion in Nigeria context in the pursuance of the restoration of full ecclesial communion between the Anglican Communion and the Catholic Church. Citing ARCIC II on the Church as Communion, Ikechi calls the two Churches to this enquiry: “*How can we bear true witness to the good news of a God who accepts us, unless we can accept one another*”. He calls on the Nigerian Catholics and Anglicans to search for the answer to this question the path dialogue. He is optimistic that dialogue and sincere purpose and desire to implement the agreements of ARCIC could lead to visible unity.

In Chapter three, Fr Anthony Akinwale, O.P gives a critical commentary on the mandate of ARCIC III, “The Church as Communion, Local and Universal.” He traced a road map that points to the route through which the Anglicans and Catholics must travel. The route includes various forms of ecumenical initiatives and activities. Among the concerns of ARCIC III were to defrost what looked like ecumenical freeze that made some people think that both Churches were no longer interested in continuing the work of ARCIC; to promote mutual reception of agreed statements with prayerful and careful study and to identify our point of departure. This point of departure was that there was very little or no ecumenical interaction between Anglicans and Roman Catholics prior to the historic meeting of Pope Paul VI and Archbishop Ramsey. Our destination is the goal of ecumenical dialogue which is not a political consensus but the restoration of full and visible unity among all Christians. Fr. Akinwale traces the origin of the Church through a secular age to the present where we now take seriously the need for ecumenical dialogue.

In Chapter four Msgr. Jerome Madueke discusses the “Challenges to Communion in Truth and love. He traced this major challenge to the sin of separation and division that now makes unity looks unrealistic thus make Christ's priestly prayer, “that all may be one” relative and subject to the

¹⁴https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anglican%E2%80%93Roman_Catholic_International_Commission

interpretation of different Churches. Msgr. Madueke recalled that since 1968 Lambeth Conference, the Church of Nigeria joined the rest of the churches in the Anglican Communion to adopt this model of communion. Unfortunately, the crisis of women ordination, the admission of homosexuals into the Anglican clergy, gay marriage became a major challenge and obstacle to Communion. Msgr. Madueke notes that the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) rejected these innovations. He said: “We extol the Anglicans in Nigeria for remaining together as Church of Nigeria, despite the crisis that severed them from Canterbury.” He listed the areas that we need cooperation as religious freedom, leadership on moral and ethical issues, initiatives for justice and peace. The creed should bring us together in a way and manner that we are converted to the truth.

In Chapter five, Father Anthony Akinwale, O.P examines the issue of the “The ordained ministry in the documents of ARCIC. This chapter is introduced in these proceedings because of the role of the clergy in the promotion of Communion in the Church. In a world of proliferation of Churches and self-made ministers, the Commission sought to express basic doctrinal agreement on ordained ministry rooted in a deeper understanding of the ministry that is in consonance with Scripture and with the traditions inherited in common by Anglicans and Roman Catholics. Fr. Akinwale listed areas where consensus has been reached on the different issues.

In Chapter Six, Andrew Igenzoza discusses “Life in Christ: Morals, Communion and the Church.” Although an Anglican Scholar, Prof. Igezoga references the Second Vatican Council to buttress the fact that ‘There can be no ecumenism worthy of the name without interior conversion. For it is from newness of attitudes of mind, self-denial and unstinted love that desires of unity take their rise and develop in a mature way.’ Navigating through the previous papers that had been presented in NARCC meetings in Umuahia (July 2003) to the meeting held in Sokoto (October, 2011), he said that his paper was a rejoinder to the paper: "Life in Christ: Morals, Communion and the Church" that was presented by Fr. Prof. Anthony Akinwale OP in the attempt to explore what moral values Anglicans and Catholics have in common, as well as the areas of divergence. He concludes that the trend of events in contemporary global Anglicanism would suggest that the Roman Catholic position on morals, especially on the issue of homosexuality is difficult to reconcile with the position of some Anglicans in North America and England. But at the local Nigerian level, the two Communion hold a common position. This creates room for unity, cooperation and understanding.

In Chapter seven, Fr. Anthony Akinwale, O.P, discusses the question: “Is Christian unity necessary for salvation? He analyzes some areas of difficulty like the understanding of the faith, the understanding of justification itself, the relationship between faith and good works, and the role of the Church in the work of salvation. Whereas the Protestants emphasized an absolute doctrine of divine predestination that encouraged the need for holiness of life. Protestants accused Catholics of lacking confidence in the sufficiency of Christ’s work thus over-relying on human efforts. There is the difficulty about the relationship between good works and salvation and the role of the Church in the process of salvation. The conclusion appears to answer the question based on the willingness of those who want to get involved in the race to full union and salvation.

In Chapter eight, Rt. Rev. Duke T. Akamisoko discusses “The Church as a Communion; Local and Universal” from the perspective of Scriptures and Church history. He concluded that the closer we draw together the more acutely we feel the pains of separation. The more we strive to

live in communion, the more together with all Christians, Anglicans and Roman Catholics would realize that they are called by God to continue to pursue the goal of complete communion of faith and sacramental life.

These papers were presented in the meetings of NARCC in Umuahia, Abuja, Onitsha, Calabar, Owerri, Benin, Sokoto, Osogbo, etc. In each of the presentations, Catholics and Anglicans during the opening ceremonies made contributions and asked questions on the relationship between the Anglican Communion and Catholics in Nigeria. Among the contributions was the conversation on justification from the point of view of the Reformers like Martin Luther. The participants were made to understand that in Roman Catholic doctrine in ARCIC II, the doctrine of salvation was consummated by Christ's self-sacrifice. While the Reformers interpreted salvation through justification, the Catholic Church maintained that faith is an integral ingredient in the doctrine of salvation and commitment to God is an evident of faith (James 2:10). Faith should be constantly nurtured in the life of an individual because absence of faith is blindness. In Pauline theology, the Church has a role to play in the lives of its members. The Church is an instrument of salvation to humanity hence it should be a living expression of the gospel. The church being the agent of reconciliation between God and the world needs constant purification, therefore the message of the church is not only in extreme piety but also in action (II Cor. 5: 1 0).

The participants asked series of questions like: What is the view of the Commission on Mixed marriages? What is the role of NARCC in the politics of Anglican and Roman Catholic? How do we take the spirit of the relationship to the mission schools? Is the work of this Commission limited to Spiritual matters or it is extended. What will it cost an Anglican Priest to officiate in a Roman Catholic Church and a Catholic Priest to officiate in an Anglican Church? These questions were exhaustively discussed. From the conversation, it was highlighted that the Commission's work is not limited to spiritual matters; it is also extended to spiritual Ecumenism, Theological ecumenism, dialogue of life and witness to Jesus Christ. Anambra State in Nigeria was used as a case study in breaking the wall of partition between the two Churches. It was stated that God allowed the meeting twice in Onitsha within five years which was a rare privilege.

Another issue that came up in the course of the meetings and paper presentations was “*Growing Together in Unity and Mission: Building on 40 years of Anglican - Roman Catholic Dialogue*, an Agreed Statement of the International Anglican - Roman Catholic Commission for Unity and Mission (IARCCUM)” The Agreed Statement *Growing Together in Unity and Mission* aims to stimulate local co-operation and ecumenical development among Anglicans and Roman Catholics. The Statement is set out in two parts. First is to offer an honest assessment of the degree of convergence in faith discerned in the ARCIC dialogue, and second, to translate that into practical ecumenical co-operation. The Provinces of the Anglican Communion are therefore asked, if possible in co-operation with the local Roman Catholic hierarchy or their representatives, to respond to these questions: “Is the degree of convergence in faith described in the document as well as the areas noted for further discussion in the document accurately described from your perspectives?” “Are the possibilities for co-operation set out in the document appropriate and/or workable and/or practiced in your region?” “These are questions which we can keep asking and which could encourage a continuation of a cordial relationship between Anglicans and Catholics after each NARCC meeting. Otherwise, the NARCC meetings will end up only as annual ceremonies.

Fr. Prof Anthony Akinwale's presentation, 'IS CHRISTIAN UNITY NECESSARY FOR SALVATION' that is a synthesis of the papers of Msgr. Jerome Madueke and Rt. Rev. Dr. Ikechi Nwosu generated many questions. This paper was presented on Owerri. Most Rev. Dr. Anthony Obinna, the Catholic Archbishop who hosted the meeting in his welcome address referred to the creation of an Ordinariat for some members of the Anglican Communion by Pope Benedict XVI. He asked the Anglicans if they are aware of three Anglican bishops that were ordained into catholic priesthood in England. Venerable ThankGod Eche, an Anglican delegate did not see that move as a way forward in the journey towards the unity that Prof. Akinwale OP presented. Bishop Lucius Ugorji referred to the Lambeth conference he attended but the African Anglican Bishops did not attend because they do not support Anglican Bishops being ordained into the Catholic Church. It will be necessary to revisit the Malta report he advised. Bishop Ugorji stressed that we should think of more practical ways of achieving ecumenism from the hierarchy to the bottom.

For Ven Dr. Sola Igbari who was the Anglican Co-Secretary said that Fr. Akinwale's paper is soul searching for the two churches. He asked how the members of the two churches relate at the moment. We are more into theory than practical. He advised that we look at visible unity among the ministers of the two churches. The meeting should bring out concrete results that will go to the grass root. Another question that followed this enquiry was, "to what extent has the two Churches gone in the race towards unity? This calls for a way to deepen the relationship that already existing between the two Churches. Msgr. Jerome Madueke highlighted that not sharing in communion should not be as if nothing is happening between the two churches rather it should be the last thing to achieve in order to complete the unity goal (full communion). Rt. Rev Prof Odedeyi suggested that a prayer rally be organized by the two Churches to break down the barriers we have against each other and against segregation. Then we rely on the Spirit of God to do the final work.

Rev. Fr. Oliver Onwubiko; the diocesan director on Ecumenism, Ahiara diocese dramatically showed that the two Churches are standing together but facing different directions. If we are together, we should be looking at same direction. He advised we work and pray towards being together on a slow pace until we are one. Rev. Sr. Dr. Agnes Acha DMMM in her response said that we should enlighten the lay faithful of both Churches on the unity of the two churches. The theological difference should also be looked into. Bishop Charles Hammawa, the then Catholic Co-Chairman reminded the participants that the conversation is ongoing. A final communiqué has not been made from ARCIC I because the issues are not finally resolved. The hierarchy will be involved in the ecumenical unity which will then trickle down to the grassroots. Bishop Adebola proposed that a committee be put in place to bring out a communiqué which will be sent to the bishops of the two churches and be published in the proceedings. Rev. Fr. Prof Anthony Adewale thanked all those that contributed to his paper presentation. He said the contributions are signs of unity which are obvious both nationally and internationally. I deliberately ended this introduction with this brainstorm to let the readers of this proceedings appreciate what follows, it is hoped that this book would further strengthen the communion of both Churches at all levels.

CHAPTER ONE

SALVATION AND THE CHURCH (A Catholic appraisal of ARCIC II Bilateral Agreement) Very Rev. Msgr. Jerome Madueke PhD

Introduction

The doctrine of justification in the context of the Continental Reformation was the bone of contention which divided the Christendom. It should be observed that during the sixteenth century controversies, the doctrine of justification - central in the dispute between Roman Catholics and Continental Reformers - did not play major role in the English Reformation. In the subsequent centuries, "the Church of England substantially adopted the principles expressed in the moderate Lutheran formulations of the Augsburg and Wurttemberg Confessions" (n. 2).

Expectedly in the search for full ecclesial communion between the Anglicans and Roman Catholics, the doctrine of justification should have a considerable place. The Second Anglican/Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC II Commission) settled on its joint statement about justification in September 1986 and published its declaration in January 1987 under the title *Salvation and the Church*. The Co-chairmen admitted in the preface that the doctrine of justification "raises issues of great complexity and profound mystery." A particular Pauline notion of justification was used by Luther, which later crystallized into rule of faith for the Reformers, especially Continental Reformers. To avoid the impasse created by this particular interpretation, the Commission related it to other more comprehensive biblical notions of justification, considering Luther's a stage in the process of salvation. Though not an authoritative declaration by the Roman Catholic Church or by the Anglican Communion, the document sought to restore balance and coherence to the issues distorted during the polemics of the Reformation and Counter-Reformation. It restored the role of the Church in Christ's saving work. The Commission raised optimism that differences of theological interpretation or ecclesiological emphasis which still exist on justification in the two Communion, Anglican and Roman Catholic, are no longer weighty to justify separation.

As we summarize the Commission's doctrine, we shall in this paper make our observations and criticisms from the Catholic viewpoint, as part of ongoing local reception of the world-wide efforts towards full unity. ARCIC II Commission began by articulating the common faith of the Anglican and Roman Catholic Churches with regard to the doctrine of salvation. God the Father revealed His unconditional and gratuitous love for the world by sending His Son, Jesus Christ, who by his Incarnation and Pasch ransomed humans from evil, sin and death, restoring and elevating them to the glory of God. God also sent His life-giving Spirit into His sons and daughters to unite them into one body (*koinonia*) in Christ. God's grace at work in the human person and his faith-community inspires an authentic and personal response of faith from the individual, as well as the corporate life of the Church (nn. I-3).

The Commission identified two limitations in the theology of the Reformers which led to controversy how grace is to be related to human response: (i) failure to integrate justification in the process of salvation, and (ii) failure to appreciate the role of the Church in the process evident

in too-excessive concentration on the individual. Martin Luther, the father of the Reformation, regarded the Church as Babylonian captivity from the shackles of which the whole of Christian believers should be rescued. With his slogans of *sola fide*, *sola scriptura*, *sola gratia*, he established principles which continue to shape contemporary Protestantism.

While the first principle polarized the gift of faith and human efforts, the second rejected role of Church authority and tradition in shaping faith, while the third emphasizing the absolute gratuity of God's saving acts, underlined the futility of Christian merits in the works of faith. ARCIC II Commission employed the biblical concept of salvation as key and horizon to address the four major traditional areas of disagreement, namely, faith, justification, good works and the role of the Church.

Salvation and Faith

ARCIC II Commission sought to widen the concept of faith as divine gift - restricted by the Reformers to particular meaning of *sola fide* - to include the human response to faith. The Commission also sought to rescue the notion of the gift of faith from mere individualistic interpretation to communitarian dimension from which individual faith derives its source, nourishment, growth and fulfillment. The Commission boldly stated that God's unmerited love for His creatures as expressed in Christ's Pasch continues in the Church, the mystical body of Christ, through the activity of the Holy Spirit who makes the fruits of Christ's sacrifice actual within the Church through Word and Sacrament (n. 9). For the Commission, this is grace which forgives our sins, enabling us to conform to the image of Christ. It affirms that "the human response to God's initiative is itself a gift of grace, and is at the same time a truly human, personal response" (n. 9).

The act of faith is a free act. God addresses His word to the human conscience which remains free, not coerced, to accept or reject His invitation. The Commission maintained not only the freedom of the individual towards God's self-offering, but that the confidence and assurance of salvation it inspires 'must come from our whole being.' Faith enables us to taste in advance the light of the beatific vision and the goal of our journey here below. This it does without reducing its risks and challenges, the discipleship of suffering and cross - the lot of every authentic Christian witness. The human response to faith makes the divine gift a project, a commitment and a promise or hope.

That is why the Commission stated that "faith, therefore, not only includes an assent to the truth of the Gospel but also involves commitment of our will to God in repentance and obedience to his call; otherwise faith is dead (James 2:17) (n. 10).

Out of His undeserving love, God addresses Himself to humans endowed with intellect and will, inviting them to a share of His divine life. Man responds to God's invitation in faith, i.e., God's prevenient gift of grace or supernatural virtue infused to the human soul which enables him to enter into communion with Him. This gift of faith is to be constantly preserved, nurtured and exercised. In communicating Himself to the individual, God imparts the Holy Spirit who moves the heart and converts it to God, who opens the eyes of the mind and 'makes it easy for all to accept and believe the truth' (DS 377; 3010). By faith, man completely submits his being to God, giving assent to revelation in obedience (Latin *ob-audire*, to hear or listen to) of faith.

Although grace precedes, sustains and perfects faith, believing is authentically a human act. It is a deliberate human response consciously undertaken and concretely expressed in freedom. Authentic faith demands this active, full and conscious decision or participation of the individual and assent of faith is 'by no means a blind impulse of the mind.' (DS 3008). A believer seeks to know God better whom he has put his faith, to understand His revelation better (*fides quarens intellectum*) and penetrate His mysteries in order to be more consumed by the fire of His love. Hence, the document affirms that "living faith is inseparable from love, issues in good works, and grows deeper in the course of a life of holiness. Christian assurance does not in any way remove from Christians the responsibility of working out their salvation with fear and trembling" (Phil 2:12-13) (n. 10).

The Second Vatican Council states that faith is an intellectual assent to the revealed truth as well as the giving of oneself to God in an 'obedience of faith'. Obedience of faith is a call to the Commandments and to the New Law of the Gospel in social justice and development. Recent Roman Catholic Theologians, such as Karl Rhaner and Hans Kung, have attempted to reconcile the Reformers' notion of faith as trusting faith, *fides fiducialis*, with the position of the Council of Trent. Faith is not just fiducial, but has objective content which constitutes its nature and character. Act of faith includes the assent of the mind to the revealed truths, aided by God's grace. Knowledge of God, however, is not to be limited to cognitive or intellectual sense (*fides quae*), but should include trust and total commitment of the self, heart and mind, to God (*fides qua*).

The Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) clearly states that "God's free initiative demands man's free response, for God has created man in his image by conferring on him, along with freedom, the power to know him and love him. The soul only enters freely into the communion of love. God immediately touches and directly moves the heart of man. He has placed in man a longing for truth and goodness that only he can satisfy. The promise of 'eternal life' responds, beyond all hope, to this desire" (CCC 2002).

In affirming the inseparable link between the three theological virtues of faith, hope and charity, the Commission warned that 'Christian assurance is not presumptuous.' It noted that although the word of Christ and his sacraments can confer absolute certitude for salvation, it is a fact that 'the baptised and justified may still sin', (cf. Col 1:22 ff; Heb 10:36 ft). The Commission raised the issue whether the excessive emphasis laid in the understanding of the faith as assurance of one's final salvation should not appropriately belong to Christian hope. As part of the subjective state of an individual, should this confidence not belong to the Christian project of working out one's salvation in fear and trembling? Experience shows the gift of faith may be lost or diminished by habitual sin and carelessness. Beyond Luther's notion of *simul Justus et peccator*, the Commission re-established the traditional notion of battle of faith, the struggle for perfection. Hence, its caution: "Christians may never presume on their perseverance but should live their lives with a sure confidence in God's grace. Because of what God has revealed of his ultimate purpose in Christ Jesus, living faith is inseparable from hope" (n. 11)

Salvation and Justification

The Commission moved from Luther's restricted notion of justification based on the Greek verb *dikaioun* which usually means 'to pronounce righteous', to fuller understanding as reflected by various New Testament authors. In contrast to the narrow meaning, the Commission enumerated

other interpretations of justification, such as: “the abiding presence and action of the Holy Spirit in the Church, of his present gifts of grace, and of our continuing life and growth in this grace as we are transformed into the likeness of Christ” (n. 12).

Relating justification to the process of God's saving deeds, it disclosed a wide variety of language associated to the New Testament's concept of salvation, such as deliverance, restoration, expiation, liberation, adoption, rebirth, sanctification, and justification (n. 13), stating that 'there is no controlling term or concept; they complement one another.' Above all, the Commission emphasized the role of the Church, stating that “Salvation in all these aspects comes to each believer as he or she is incorporated into the believing community” (n. 13). The Commission recommended as solution to the historical dispute on justification the integration of the doctrine in the wider understanding of salvation and the recovery of the role of the Church in the process.

The Reformers emphasized that the unrighteous is accepted by God solely "on account of the obedience of Christ and the merits of his passion." (n. 5) Catholics understand this as objective redemption which awaits the subjective response of the individual who responds by his repentance and baptism - the sacrament which regenerates and incorporates him into Christ's body to share in the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit. Remarking that Anglicans and Catholics initially agreed on the relationship between justification and sanctification, the Commission observed that Catholics of the counter Reformation apologetics emphasized sanctification, i.e., ways individuals could attain salvation, without laying corresponding emphasis on the meaning of justification as God's absolute gratuitous gift of love and mercy.

No. 15 of the document made an attempt to appropriate justification and sanctification to divine act (1 Cor6: 11), simultaneously operative in the believer. According to the Commission, this justification is indissolubly linked with his sanctifying recreation of us in grace ... worked out in the course of our pilgrimage, despite the imperfections and ambiguities of our lives (n. 15).

The Commission further illustrated the inseparable nature of justification and sanctification as found in the community of believers. The indwelling Spirit given as gift as source of the Church's life and activity is the agent who sustains the Church's ongoing renewal communicated in the sacrament of justification, i.e., baptism, and in the sacrament of incorporation into Christ, Le., Eucharist (cf. 1 Cor 6:11; 1 Cor 11:26; 12:12-13; Gal 3:27). Sanctification, here, becomes the 'work of God which actualizes in believers the righteousness and holiness', enabling them 'to produce works which are the fruit of the Holy Spirit.' Hence, God's righteousness is not only declared in favor of sinners, but given as a gift to make them righteous (n. 17).

There is no denial of the fact that the polemics of the Reformation and Counter Reformation took their toll with regard to doctrine in the shift of emphasis and choice of language. ARCIC II mentioned some factors which foster ecumenical understanding, namely, 'renewal of biblical scholarship, the development of historical and theological studies, new insights gained in mission and the growth of mutual understanding within the ecumenical movement'. The teaching of the Council of Trent which represents the Catholic position on issues of controversy has improved since the Second Vatican Council and further elaborated using biblical language.

Following the biblical and Patristic teaching, the Roman Catholic Church teaches that justification is conferred upon believers as gift at baptism - the sacrament of faith. Here, the

righteousness of God makes a Christian inwardly just by the power of His mercy. But justification establishes cooperation between God's grace and man's freedom expressed by man's free assent of faith to the Word of God. According to the Council of Trent, "when God touches man's heart through illumination of the Holy Spirit, man himself is not inactive while receiving that inspiration, since he could reject it; and yet, without God's grace, he cannot by his own free will move himself towards justice in God's sight" (DS 1525).

In giving birth to the 'inner man', justification entails the sanctification of man's whole being. The first work of justifying grace is the conversion of the individual, which over and above instantaneous and sometimes euphoric experience, is an ongoing transformation in Christ. Justification not only heals a sinner, it draws him away from sin to live God's life. Hence, the Council of Trent stated that "justification is not only the remission of sins, but also the sanctification and renewal of the interior man" (DS 1528)

God's gratuitous and justifying mercy forgives sins, reconciles, and frees from the slavery of sins, healing and restoring the believer. Justified by Christ's death and resurrection, the baptized dies to sin and is born to a new life, to become member of Christ's Body, the Church. Sharing in the mission of the Church and impelled by the Spirit, individual Christians are able to witness Christ's life and to increase in good works for the glory of God and the sanctification of the world. St. Athanasius would put it thus: "By the participation of the Spirit, we become communicants in the divine nature ... For this reason; those in whom the Spirit dwells are divinized". This brings us to the next consideration by the ARCIC II, salvation and good works.

Salvation and Good Works

In order to safe-guard the all sufficiency of Christ's atoning death for salvation and the sovereignty and unconditional freedom of God's grace, the Reformers denied the value of human works in God's sight. Included in good works were the Church's sacraments, worship and practices. The Commission stated that the Anglican theologians of the Reformation age shared in the Roman Catholic position with regard to the relevance of good works to salvation, even though 'imperfect' and 'inadequate'. For them, good works are 'necessary demonstration of faith' which themselves are inseparable from hope and love (n. 6). The Commission sought to re-establish the link between living faith and active charity in the life of a believer. It began by stating that "faith is no merely private and interior disposition, but by its very nature is acted out: good works necessarily spring from a living faith" (Jas 2: 17 ff). Drawing from the Christology of the new humanity in Christ, it stated that "salvation involves participating in that humanity, so as to live the human life now as God has refashioned it in Christ" (cf. Co13: 10).

It cautioned, however, that while Christians are for good works (Eph 2:8), they are not saved because of works. It described good works as the fruit of grace and freedom in Christ, which is not merely 'the natural freedom to choose between alternatives,' but "the power of the Holy Spirit, to live faithfully as God's people and to grow in love within the discipline of the community, bringing forth the fruit of the Spirit" (n. 19)

Boldly, the Commission re-established the place of human responsibility in relation to God's initiative and ongoing favour by stating that 'God involves us in what he freely does to realize our salvation' (Phil 2: 12 ff). Quoting St. Augustine that "the God who made you without you, does

not make you just" (Sermons 169,13), the Commission affirms the value of human efforts in the process of salvation. While acknowledging necessity of grace as source, sponsor and guarantor of authentic human response to faith, it boldly stated that 'from the divine work follows the human work: it is we who live and act in a fully human way'.

Christian freedom and responsibility are discussed by the Commission, not in an individualistic and egoistic sense, but having great communitarian implication. According to the Commission, "Our liberation commits us to an order of social existence in which the individual finds fulfillment in relationship with others. Thus freedom in Christ does not imply an isolated life, but rather one lived in a community governed by mutual obligations. Life in Christ sets us free from the demonic forces manifested not only in an individual but also in social egotism" (n. 20).

Church and Salvation

The role of the Church in the salvation of the individual was totally ignored by the sixteenth century Reformers. In their discussion on faith, righteousness and the place of good works in salvation, the Reformers rejected the mediatorial role of the Church, contrasting it with Christ's unique mediatorship between God and man (cf. I Tim 2:5). Catholics believed that Protestants were abandoning or at least devaluing the Church's ministry and sacraments, which were divinely appointed means of grace; also that they were rejecting its divinely given authority as guardian and interpreter of the revealed Word of God.

A ground was broken by ARCIC II to strengthen the role of the Church in the process of personal salvation, especially given that the two Communion preserved the traditional elements of ecclesial communion, as against the Evangelicals who promote individualistic Christianity and free churches. The Commission then illustrated ways the Church supports individual believers in their pilgrimage of faith, such as promoting a communion of prayer, remitting sin, and deepening repentance through penitential disciplines and devotional practices. Without putting God under obligation, the Commission extolled the role of the Church in the proclamation, appreciation and acceptance of God's mercy (n. 22).

The language of 'merit' was discussed by the Commission at this juncture to mean the glorification of God in the believers who in freedom and love - the gift of the Holy Spirit - keep His commandments. These believers, the document states, shall be object of God's commendation and reward (cf. Mt 6:4; 2 Tim 4:8; Heb 10:35, 11 :6). It, however, cautions that, to inherit eternal reward, believers should always rely on Christ's strength, humble and unassuming (Lk 17: 1 0). In discussing on merits, *the Catechism of the Catholic Church*, n. 2007, observed the same caution, stating that, with regard to God, there is no strict right to any merit on the part of man. Between God and us there is an immeasurable inequality, for we have received everything from him, our Creator. Instead of basing merits on human achievements, the Catechism further spoke of the triune God as the source, possibility, ground, and goal of all Christian merits:

The merit of man before God in the Christian life arises from the fact that God has freely chosen to associate man with the work of his grace. The fatherly action of God is first on his own initiative, and then follows man's free acting through his collaboration, so that the merit of good works is to be attributed in the first place to the grace of god, then to the faithful. Man's merit, moreover, itself is due to God, for his good actions proceed in

Christ, from the predispositions and assistance given by the Holy Spirit (CCC. 2008).

In crowning the merits of His saints, God is crowning His own gifts (cf. Preface I of the Saints in the Roman Missal). Already by our filial adoption, we have become 'co-heirs' through baptism, worthy of receiving the promised inheritance of eternal life. (DS 1546) While no one can merit the initial grace of forgiveness and justification at the beginning of conversion, each Christian, as St. Paul exhorts, should work out his salvation with fear and trembling (Phil 2:12), run like good athletes intending to win the everlasting crown (cf. 1 Cor 9:24-27; 2 Tim 2:5). Hence, St. Augustine's caution that God who created the human person will not save or justify him without him. What is stated regarding merit is found to be reflected by the ARCIC II Commission as follows:

The language of merit and good works, therefore, when properly understood, in no way implies that human beings, once justified, are able to put God in their debt. Still less does it imply that justification itself is anything but a totally unmerited gift. Even the very first movements which lead to justification, such as repentance, the desire for forgiveness and even faith itself, are the work of God as he touches our hearts by the illumination of the Holy Spirit (n. 24).

The idea of intercession and reparation sustained by the Church of the New Testament times implies that Christians, as individuals or as a body, can merit for another some favour. It is in this sense that the Catechism n. 2010 states: Moved by the Holy Spirit and by charity, we can then merit for ourselves and for others the graces needed for our sanctification, for the increase of grace and charity, and for the attainment of eternal life. This is the sense by which the Church as body of Christ continues his priesthood on earth in extending his saving works. St Paul rejoiced in his suffering for the sake of his community, since in this manner he completes in the flesh 'what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the Church.' (Col 1:24) Christians are in like manner sent to be another Christ for people to encounter and be inwardly or subjectively transformed.

As earlier stated, the ARCIC II discussed the doctrine of salvation in relation to its doctrine of the Church. Revealing God's power of justification and salvation, the Church is the reconciled community destined to be sign and instrument of reconciliation. God's life of grace achieved through the once-for-all atoning work of Christ *ephapaxis* communicated by the Holy Spirit in the life of the Church. In the life of the Church, the plan of God at creation, at redemption and at the consummation is realized. But the Church experiences her fulfillment in time through the Christ-like *kenosis* and through the discipleship and suffering in Christian witness. Thus, the Commission affirmed that, "when for Christ's sake the Church encounters opposition and persecution, it is then a sign of God's choice of the way of the cross to save the world" (n. 26).

The Commission stated that the vocation of the Church to be sign, steward and instrument of God's design, qualifies it to be sacrament of God's saving work. Through their baptismal incorporation into the Church and daily Christian witness, those who respond in faith to the Gospel come to the way of salvation. They join other members of the Church in the stewardship of proclaiming the Gospel, celebrating the Eucharist and living pastoral life. In this way, the Church becomes an instrument of salvation for humanity. Consequently, she is expected as custodian-servant of the Gospel to faithfully preach and live it out, without altering its content or

minimizing its demands, especially with regard to the cross. Totally relying on the Holy Spirit and not on unaided human efforts, the Church efficaciously exercises its role as steward of God's grace.

ARCIC II Commission recognized the Church as the ordinary means of salvation, while acknowledging the fact that the Holy Spirit could act outside the community of the believers. "As this instrument, the Church is called to be a living expression of the Gospel, evangelized and evangelizing, reconciled and reconciling, gathered together and gathering others" (n. 28). The theology of the Church as a sacrament returns to the biblical and Patristic understanding of the body of Christ. As Jesus Christ is the sacrament of God the Father, the Church is the sacrament of Christ through the Holy Spirit, the Trinitarian life it manifests and the life it efficaciously communicates in the sacraments, especially of baptism and the Eucharist.

However, the credibility and merits of the Church's witness are undermined by the sins of its members, the shortcomings of its human institutions, and not the least by the scandal of division. Hence, the Church as the one and holy Body of Christ is in constant need of purification. This shortcoming, notwithstanding, does not diminish its divine purpose and merit as organ for drawing humanity into communion with God and with one another (n. 29), and as foretaste of the reconciled humanity (n. 30).

Embodying believers who are by grace justified and sustained through Word and Sacrament, the Church bears the message of forgiveness, truth, justice, compassion and peace for humanity. The Church should, given the earthly vicissitude, remain firmly rooted in her Lord and relying entirely in the power of the Holy Spirit, in order to be able to transcend any historical idiosyncrasies, contemporary ideologies and other human limitations. For the message of the Church is not a private pietism irrelevant to contemporary society, nor can it be reduced to a political or social programme.' (n. 30) However, the Church can speak with integrity to a world tom by hatred and division, only when she truly becomes 'a reconciled and reconciling community, faithful to its Lord'. (n. 30) By and by, the Church as seed of God's Kingdom - ARCIC II Commission notes - 'is the beginning and not yet the end, the first fruits and not yet the final harvest' (n. 30).

God's fidelity in Christ and to humanity, here, becomes the source and guarantee of the Church's hope. This hope brings with it some socio-ethical concerns and responsibility, such as affirming 'the sacredness and dignity of the person, the value of natural and political communities and the divine purpose for the human race as a whole'. Without canonizing any form of socio-political-cultural structure of renewal, Christians should constantly denounce sin and evil and everything that degrades man, announce the Gospel of repentance and forgiveness, and lead in the intercessions for the world. If the Gospel meaning of salvation includes the realization of the justice, human dignity and rights, and ecology, the divided Church can here find common cause and unity of mission for the salvation of the world.

CHAPTER TWO

SALVATION AND THE CHURCH Anglican appraisal of ARCIC II Bilateral Agreement Archbishop Ikechi Nwachukwu Nwosu

Preamble to ARCIC II Document Status

The statement on the topic regarding its status states *inter alia*: "It is not an authoritative declaration by the Roman Catholic Church or by the Anglican Communion, who will evaluate the document in order to take a position on it in due time ... The Commission will be glad to receive observations and criticisms made in constructive and fraternal spirit. Its work is done to serve the progress of the two communions towards unity."¹⁵

It is on this understanding that this contribution is presented in pursuance of the purpose of ARCIC II which is, "... the restoration of full ecclesial communion between us."¹⁶ Please notice that on this agreed proposal on the doctrine of "**Salvation and the Church**", ARCIC II Committee made a fundamental statement in a question from which says, "... how can we bear true witness to the good news of a God who accepts us, unless we can accept one another".¹⁷ May I urge us in Nigeria that this becomes a searching question seeking an answer and implementation as we continue on this path of dialogue! May we continue to hope that our dialogue gives way to visible unity!¹⁸

Introduction

The sole act of God in redeeming this creation and man, infected by sin, through the Incarnation, the Passion, the Resurrection, the Ascension and the Hope of eschatology sums up teaching on Salvation.¹⁹ According to ARCIC II, the two communions (Anglican and Roman Catholic) do not disagree on the doctrine of salvation. The difficulty arises when each makes attempt to state the process through which salvation is expressed in the life of the community. The document goes on to identify four major areas of difficulty in which each misunderstood the other as follows: Faith; Justification; Good works; and the role of the Church in all this.²⁰

Let us briefly summarize the position of each church under the areas:

Faith: The Anglican doctrine on faith focuses on the assurance of what God says in His word that He will do when a sinner repents - **Forgiveness**. Anglican doctrine believes that **Predestination** cannot alter what God intends for each but guarantees it - total salvation.²¹ The exercise of faith,

¹⁵ARCIC II, p. 33

¹⁶ARCIC II, p. 34

¹⁷ARCIC II, p. 36

¹⁸Anglican Document

¹⁹George Eddon Ladd, 'A theology of the New Testament', Lutterworth Press (1981), pp. 70f.

²⁰ARCIC II, p. 36

²¹E. A. Litton, 'Introduction to Dogmatic Theology on the Basis of the Thirty-Nine Articles', Classical Anglican Press, Texas (2000), pp. 349.

rather than questioning how, is what is required. It is in the understanding of this faith that misunderstandings arise!

The Roman Catholic doctrine does not differ from this position. What it is worried about (according to ARCIC II document) is that Anglican teaching that over-emphasizes Assurance or Confidence in God with extreme doctrine of Predestination makes nonsense of a saved life called to a life of holiness. If the Anglican doctrine of Predestination is that the one who is saved is predestined for eternity, this doctrine, if not qualified could lend itself to *antinomian* attitude of faith! The Anglican doctrine hinges it's teaching on the Hope that it is only God who calls any in Christ to be destined or elected for salvation. The Anglican theologians' response to the accusations of the Roman Catholic theologians is that the Roman Catholic doctrine on faith has little or no confidence in the sufficiency of the finished work of Christ for salvation. This then lends the Roman Catholic teaching to emphasize the effort of man to make faith tangible. Anglican theologians refer to this as "Salvation through Works", which has little hope on God and ends in legalism.²²

Justification

The Anglican doctrine makes much on the justification of the sinner by God on the account of Jesus Christ only. This it refers to as the imputation of righteousness.²³ When the disobedient turns to Christ, God declares (imputes) the one righteous. When the justified falls into sin and repents, God makes the person right with him (righteous), but this is more of impartation of righteousness, which comes to the repentant from time to time depending on the state of repentance. The Anglican doctrine makes it clear that although we are forgiven when we turn to Christ (imputation), we still are mindful of the habitual fall into sin to which we constantly need forgiveness (impartation).²⁴

The Roman Catholic theologians do not accept the Anglican teaching on the imputation of righteousness as a concept because it tends to convey a legal concept prevalent in social law suits. For them, imputation is a legal fiction that may not have any moral impact on the recipient because the essential sinfulness may not be altered.²⁵

The Anglican theologian sees this act of God as implying that the sinner is regarded by God as free from sin, made righteous as if he had not sinned. To the Roman Catholics, this position denies the sinner of any responsibility to account for his or her sins. The Anglican position is that as the sinner joins with Christ in an act of repentance, the righteousness of Christ becomes his or her portion. The person is justified before God.

The Anglicans accuse the Roman Catholic theologians of making so much about individual responsibility that their understanding of justification becomes an entitlement arising from their being responsible (not Christ's finished work on the Cross) of their good deeds.²⁶

²²E. A. Litton, 234 - 247

²³Philip Secor, 'Richard Hooker on Anglican Faith and Worship - of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity; Book V - A Modern Edition, SPCK London (2003), pp. 250; pp. 163f and 250f.

²⁴ARCIC II, pp. 38f.

²⁵ARCIC II, pp. 38f

²⁶ARCIC II, pp. 38f

Good Works

The Anglican theologians, starting from the premise of the fallen nature of man, sees no good in humanity. Even after redemption, all acts of man that may be seen to be good are tinted with base motives! Therefore, human actions are of no worth in God's sight.²⁷ The Roman Catholic theologians see this position as negating human freedom and responsibility. They argue that man is capable of doing good. Therefore they emphasize the value of good works and religious practices and ceremonies as evidence of appreciation of what God has done in salvation.²⁸ Anglican theologians actually argue that good works may not be irrelevant but they are not perfect and therefore not adequate. They prefer to see good works as inseparable from faith and hope and love.²⁹ When reduced to mathematical equation, we have: Faith + Justification + Good works = Salvation.

The Church

The Anglican theologians considering the indices on either side of the equation considers the scripture as the final court of appeal for clarifications. In all matters of dispute considering faith, justification and good works, the Anglican theologians would want the texts of Holy Scriptures to dictate the pace and direct the path after every other thing has been considered including church tradition, creeds and sacraments.³⁰ The Roman Catholic theologians accused the Anglican theology of devaluing the church ministry and sacraments (the means of grace) of the church as well as denial of the church as the guardian and interpreter of revealed WORD of God.³¹ The Anglican theologians on the other hand accuse the Roman Church of non-acknowledgement of the authority of the scriptures over the church and inadvertently usurping the place of Jesus Christ as the "Sole Mediator" between God and man.³²

Clarifications of Issues

The disputes between the Anglican and Roman positions regarding Salvation were (are) thus identified. They centered mainly on the relationship of faith, righteousness and good works to Salvation of the individual and the community and the role of the church in all this. Salvation is central to the faith of Israel (Judaism) and its continuing Christianity. The Anglican and Roman disputes were not the first based on understanding of Salvation.³³ The dispute between Mr. and Mrs. Eve Adam in the Garden of Eden with the snake (Satan) bordered on **Salvation** - Obedience to God or being like God!³⁴ The first murder in the Holy Bible of Abel by Cain had to do with **Salvation** - the voice of Abel cries unto God (for salvation).³⁵ The destruction of the world of Noah by flood

²⁷ Litton, pp. 138, 154

²⁸ ARCIC II, pp. 39f.

²⁹ ARCIC II, pp. 39f

³⁰ Litton, p. 238

³¹ ARCIC II, pp. 40f.

³² ARCIC II, pp. 40f

³³ Martin Onyemka Egbuogu - Christianity and the De-Sacralization of State Power - An Insight into Theological Basis of Democracy, SNAAP Press Ltd (2006), p. 49f.

³⁴ Gen. 3:1-5

³⁵ Gen. 4:10

suggests a world in need of **Salvation**- for God saw that the wickedness of man was great.³⁶ The first "labour union" recorded in the Holy Bible that went wrong producing the building of the Tower of Babel concerned **Salvation**- let us build towards heaven ... lest we be thrown out and scattered abroad.³⁷ Time and space will fail me to discuss the **Salvation** episodes of Abraham and Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, and Moses and the Exodus event! The prophets of Israel entered the arena of worship and governance driven by the force of **Salvation**. Hebrew Psalmody is littered with lyrics about **Salvation**. The entire New Testament (New Covenant) can be summed up (with its stories of faithfulness, faithlessness, apostasy) as Salvation History!³⁸ The background to the theological conflict of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries between the Anglican and Roman Church need to bear the foregone in mind as well as take to heart (i) the state of the church and society at the time was apostate; (ii) the driving force of the Reformation period was **Salvation** of the church and society. The more secularization took a hold on all spheres of life and the more the modern economic system came to prevail, so much the more did unremitting diligence, strict discipline and a lofty sense of responsibility become the virtues of secular man now come of age in the "industry society". All round "ability" became the virtue par excellence, 'profit', the way of thinking, 'success', the goal, 'achievement', the law, of this modern 'efficacy-oriented society' .. , man tries to realize himself through his own achievements".³⁹ We will do well to understand this concern of our forebears in faith and know that the words, phrases, concepts used to translate their concern for **Salvation** would only be a matter of details!!

Let it be stated here that the Roman Catholic anxiety over doctrine of Salvation and faith centred more on the Lutheran and Continental Reformers not originally directed towards Anglican doctrines. It was the Anglican theologians who later, not necessarily defending Anglican position but supporting continental Reformers against the Roman Catholic position, made their theological position appear as if it were anti-Rome.⁴⁰

Salvation and Faith

We need to remind ourselves (the Anglican and Roman Catholic theologians) that the one sacrament that forms the basis of even discussing "Salvation and the Church" is Baptism. Baptism is sacrament of **faith**⁴¹. Baptism reflects the **passion** of Christ. Baptism reflects the **forgiveness** of the sinner at **repentance** and entrusting **faith** in Christ; thereby a **restoration of communion** between God and the person and by extension between persons. This is more of **resurrection**, authored by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit presence gives a seal and guarantee of a **new life** that is **sanctified** because it has been **regenerated**, not because there is no longer any sin, but because God has **justified** the repentant sinner and **pre-destined** the person for **redemption**. As the baptized is daily **transformed** from one degree of Christ likeness to another, the person becomes an agent of God in the **reconciling** process of the world to Himself initiated by God in Christ, which eventually would be made complete at the

³⁶ Gen. 6:5

³⁷ Gen. 11:4

³⁸O. Cullmann - Christ and the Times, SCM (1964), p. 198.

³⁹Hans Kung - On being a Christian, Collins (1980), pp. 584f.

⁴⁰ARCIC II, p. 36

⁴¹ARCCUM - Growing Together in Christianity and Mission, Mississauga Canada (2006), pp.5, 11-13.

eschaton when all things are gathered for *judgment* and some made ready for eternal *damnation* or *Salvation*. In baptism, we respond to God's call in love for Salvation.⁴²

We have used baptism here as a visual aid of sort, to enable us capture the struggles Anglican and Roman Catholic theologians have in *explaining* (not in understanding) Salvation. We may all think we understand what salvation is but it may be a different thing when we all are called upon to explain in details what we understand. If there is any explanation about the apparent conflict between the Anglican and Roman Catholic theologians, this is it!

In this area of belief, we notice that baptism is related to faith because, in an act of submitting to it, faith is put into practice.⁴³ And yet in attempt to explain baptism, words and concepts used include among others forgiveness, repentance, faith, restoration, communion, resurrection, new-life, sanctification, regeneration, justification, predestination, redemption, transformation, reconciliation, eschatology, (Judgment and Salvation), love and call of God and our response. Just as baptism is visible sign of Christian attitude towards the Holy, so also faith ought to be exemplified in our day to day lives as tangible evidence of the presence of the Holy in us - confirming the essence of the Holy Scriptures.⁴⁴

In doing theology in Africa (Nigeria) whether Anglicans or Roman Catholics, we must avoid the pitfall of European - American mode of thought that is too cerebral. We must be seen to be communicating what we understand by "faith" which is in line with the Holy Scriptures and aids us in the work of Mission and Evangelism.⁴⁵ We will do well to try and understand ARCIC II report and translate same in the language of our people to enable them make their contributions.⁴⁶

Salvation and Justification

We cited baptism above as the sacrament of faith. Here, we notice that the Eucharist is the sacrament of Justification. Recalling the words of ARCIC II quoted above, "*... how can we bear true witness to the good news of a God who accepts us, unless we can accept one another?*", we hasten to add that it is as we fellowship in the Eucharist (Holy Communion; the Lord's table) that evidence of acceptability of God and humanity, on one hand, and on humanity one with another, on the other, speak so eloquently. In the unpacking of the concept and word baptism above, some other words were called to assist in the explanation. This is also true of the Eucharist.

In the institution of the Eucharist, all the Gospel accounts agree that Judas Iscariot, was present at the Table and did partake of the last supper, an event that mirrored the Death and Resurrection (Salvation) of Christ. The Eucharist, for Anglican theologians, clearly shows God as the one who justifies with the implication of "eating" with us. While Anglican theology in this vein may be adjudged as lavishing God's grace upon a sinner, it comes alive in the fact that the last supper episode where all the disciples (including Judas Iscariot) were gathered, participating in the

⁴²Philip Secor - Richard Hooker on Anglican Faith and Worship - of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity; Book V - A Modern Edition, SPCK, London (2003), pp. 220,250.

⁴³James 2:17

⁴⁴ARCCUM, op. cit, pp. 5

⁴⁵AlooOsotsiMojola, 'Communicating to Africans', in TokunbohAdeyemo (ed) _ African Bible Commentary, Zondervan House (2006), p. 1315.

⁴⁶Sarah Rowland Jones (Ed): The Vision Before Us: The Inter-Anglican Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations (2000 - 2008), p. 173.

Eucharist becomes a community process of Justification which is a different thing from being a Justification for Judas Iscariot as a person. In other words, we all gather at the Lord's table, a necessary evidence of a community within the process of making good the Justification on account of the complete work of the Cross of Calvary.

Anglican theologians in their study as it concerns the relationship between Justification and Sanctification (necessary conditions or state of the mind and life expected from those who are called to the Lord's Table) believe that when God pronounces any repentant sinner justified, the person is right with God outside the person's ability. The Roman Catholic theologians apart from believing that the Anglicans trivialized Justification without responsibility, may have been guided by the Latin fathers choice of the word "*make*" instead of "*pronounce*" righteous - God's word to the repentant sinner.

The disagreement here bordered on one point, that is, at the point God "pronounces" one justified, righteousness and sanctification is set in motion. The Roman Catholic theologians see that point of making one to be numbered for Salvation as sanctification. For the Anglicans, Sanctification arises out of a heart that endeavours to depict gratefulness for the Salvation of Christ, but this follows the Justification elicited by God already through the agency of the Holy Spirit. The Roman Catholic position may seem to be emphasizing sanctification and righteousness, to the detriment of salvation. The Anglican position may seem to deny any human responsibility in salvation. Both the Anglican and the Roman Catholic positions do not need to lead to opposition but to progress. Justification of a sinner is not an act of man but God. Sanctification of repentant sinner is not by the human strength but through the Holy Spirit of God. Neither does any man author salvation but Almighty God. What we are to become is what we are but for sin.⁴⁷ This is why the liturgy of both Anglicans and the Roman Catholics have one common underlining theology.⁴⁸ Although in Baptism, it is an act performed once, but each time we hear a Priest in a liturgical worship pronounce absolution after confession of sin, *the spirit of baptism is re-enacted in the Word (without the water!)*. This same message is clearer in the Eucharist because ... "*so often as you do this, you proclaim the death of Christ until he comes again*" (1 Cor. 11:26). What keeps a Christian alive is daily strivings in all aspects, through the grace and presence of the Holy Spirit, to make evident that we do not belong to this world but to heaven, the abode of Christ, the head of our Salvation.

Salvation and Good Works

The divergence of theologies between the Anglican and the Roman Church stems from emphasizing different aspects of the same salvation goal. In summary, the Roman Catholic theologians may be emphasizing, (according to St James) that Faith without works is dead.⁴⁹

Anglican theologians emphasize St Paul in Ephesians that we are created in Christ (that is new creation, new birth) for good works.⁵⁰ In essence, the two theologies emphasize different aspects of our belief that while God has acted for our salvation, we need to respond in works that are obvious tokens of our appreciation. Having said this, the little difficulty in the Roman Catholic position as opposed to the Anglican is that with so much of ecclesiastical "authority", having been given the

⁴⁷ ARCCUM, p. 6

⁴⁸ Philip, pp. 108 - 109.

⁴⁹ James 2:17

⁵⁰ Ephesians 2:8ff

position as a community of faith (a church) to pronounce repentance to a repentant sinner, she goes ahead to build a theology of restitution. Restitution is mainly a penitential discipline with specific prescriptions on what to and how to do them. Anglican position allows individual sinners, when they, following the teaching of the church to repent, to make use of their spirit induced decision, to do what would further grant them peace of heart. The meeting point between these positions is that of bringing a sinner to repentance. The divergence is that of providing tenable religious obligations to assist stabilize the sinner (Roman position), or that of allowing individual consciences to engage in what is scripturally beneficial within the person's ability, to keep the faith. There is no disagreement to the fact that God rewards every work - good or bad. It is frightening to note that it is possible to be rewarded here on earth by the church and be cast off at the day of the judgment of Christ.⁵¹

Returning back to our analogy above on baptism, it is clear that acts of charity (love) are interwoven as one takes the call to follow Christ as well as other spiritual indices, like faith, sanctification, and reconciliation. All works that are good have their origin from God. To pursue such with our whole being must be inspired, directed and approved by God Himself. In this Anglican and Roman Catholic theologians agree.

The Church and Salvation

Recalling the salvation mathematically put in an equation above viz: Faith + Justification + Good works = Salvation; it becomes imperative to state whose responsibility it is, humanly speaking, to identify correctly what makes up or who authenticates the indices on either side of the equation. The answer to this is that the church has been given this responsibility until He, Christ, returns for judgment. It has been established above that the salvation of Christ is pure and holy and complete. It has also been stated above that all human derivate arising from this pure and finished work of Christ is tainted with human failure and sin. In this case, although the church has the authority to direct and determine what indices constitute salvation, she can be in error sometimes, in the discharge of this duty, due to sin. This undermines the credibility of the witness and mission of the church, especially the sin of division.

As the analogy of baptism puts it forcefully above, the church is in dire need of repentance and renewal to enable her to continue the work of proclamation of the Gospel and being the sign of God's judgment upon unrighteous systems. With this, there is no need to put up fences between the sister churches in attempt to establish seniority or authenticity. The authenticity of the church is seen in its faithfulness to the apostolic faith, teaching and mission through worship. The Holy Spirit makes authentic such a community that shares in the weakness, suffering, injustice, division and strife of the world and yet derives its strength to continue to wage war against these injustices with the sole aim of manifesting the Kingdom of God, either in her midst, or in the society and in the world.

CONCLUSION

The ARCIC II document on "Salvation and the Church" to all intent and purposes is the most celebrated, at least from the Anglican theological circles. There is a balance and coherence of the

⁵¹Matth.7:21-23

constitutive elements (indices) with copious scriptural references without lacking in patristic touch. Part of the concluding remarks calls for quotation: *"We believe that our two communions are agreed on the essential aspects of the doctrine of salvation and on the church's role within it".*⁵² Everyone and every institution is in dire need of Salvation, temporal and eternal. If division and acts of uncharitableness can constitute a stumbling block to attaining this Salvation, we will either consciously do away with such sins, or keep and hang on to them, and portray our God and faith as idol and idolatry. The choice is ours. We thank God that Anglicans and Roman Catholics in some parts of the world are already acting upon ARCIC II's recommendations. What is reproduced below is a fitting conclusion, to raise the hope of Nigeria ARC (NARC) Commission to act on her convictions.

⁵²ARCIC II, p. 42

CHAPTER THREE

The Church as Communion, Local and Universal: Commentary the Mandate of ARCIC III Fr Anthony Akinwale, O.P.

The fifth meeting of the third phase of ARCIC took place at Villa Palazzola in Rome from April 28 to May 4, 2015, in what the Communiqué at the end of the meeting described as “an atmosphere of shared prayer and friendship”. This third phase has as its mandate promotion of “the reception of the previous work of ARCIC” through the presentation of its corpus, that is, the five agreed statements of ARCIC II, and an exploration of the theme “The Church as Communion, Local and Universal”, and how, in this communion, the local and universal Church can discern “right and ethical teaching”.

This paper is a modest attempt to participate in the work of ARCIC III, that is, to explore and deepen appreciation of the notion of Church as communion, local and universal. The immense corpus of writings of Jean-Marie Tillard, who, alongside Hans Kung and Joseph Ratzinger, was one of the youngest theological experts at the Second Vatican Council, and an active participant in the ecumenical movement in general and in ARCIC in particular, offer a profound and precious explanation of these terms of the mandate of ARCIC III.⁵³ But before examining these terms, some preliminary remarks are in order.

First, in the period between ARCIC II and ARCIC III, there were heightening concerns about what was perceived in some quarters as an ecumenical freeze. It was as if the Roman Catholic Church and the Anglican Communion were no longer interested continuing the work of ARCIC. Some felt that very close to five decades since the historic meeting of Pope Paul VI and Archbishop Michael Ramsey, decades of affective communion, effective communion ought to be at least within visible historical distance. Mutual reception of previous agreed statements of ARCIC is yet to take place. The sharing of one body and one cup in the Eucharist still seems to be far off. These and related concerns have led to calls for a “road map” in the ecumenical journeying together of Anglicans and Roman Catholics.

Secondly, precisely because of these concerns, the work of ARCIC III is timely and necessary. Mutual reception of agreed statements needs to be preceded by a prayerful and careful study of the statements. This is what ARCIC III has set out to do. On its part, the Nigerian Anglican Roman Catholic Commission (NARCC) has, in recent years, devoted its meetings to such prayerful study. This is no mean achievement. Yet, some of our interventions at such meetings point to the need for a more careful study on our part.

Thirdly, to speak of a road map is to speak of a navigational tool that guides our trajectory from our *terminus a quo* (point of departure) to our *terminus ad quem* (destination). Our point of

⁵³Read for example his *L'Eglise locale. Ecclesiologie de communion et catholicite* (Paris : Cerf, 1995). Read also Joseph Komonchak, “The Local Realization of the Church” in *The Reception of Vatican II*. Eds Guisepppe Alberigo, Jean-Pierre Jossua and Joseph Komonchak (Washington, DC : CUA Press), 77-90, and Adrien Nocent, “The Local Church as Realization of the Church of Christ and Subject of the Eucharist” in *The Reception of Vatican II*, 215-229.

departure was where we were prior to the historic meeting of Pope Paul VI and Archbishop Ramsey, a point where there was very little or no ecumenical interaction between Anglicans and Roman Catholics. Our destination is the goal of ecumenical dialogue. And that goal is not political consensus. It is the restoration of full and visible unity among all Christians, the overcoming of a division which, in the words of the Second Vatican Council, “openly contradicts the will of Christ, scandalizes the world, and damages that most holy cause, the preaching of the Gospel to every creature”.⁵⁴ The goal of ecumenism would not be reached simply because we share the one bread and the one cup, but because our Eucharistic sharing is itself a visible sign that we have arrived at a common comprehension and application of apostolic teaching transmitted by one body of pastors, as was the case with the college of apostles.

A road map points to the route through which we must travel and the milestones to be reached in the course of a journey. In the route we must pass through are the various forms of ecumenical initiatives and activities we must undertake. The Second Vatican Council wisely identified them:

Every effort to avoid expressions, judgments and actions which do not represent the condition of our separated brethren with truth and fairness and so make mutual relations with them more difficult. Then, “dialogue” between competent experts from different Churches and communities; in their meetings, which are organized in a religious spirit, each explains the teaching of his communion in greater depth and brings out clearly its definitive features....more intensive cooperation in carrying out any duties for the common good of humanity.⁵⁵

In the course of our ecumenical journey, we have reached milestones in the agreed statements. One of such milestones is the establishment of the Anglican Roman Catholic International Commission and its agreed statements, and of course, the Nigerian Anglican Roman Catholic Commission. Ecumenical initiatives move slowly. But while the speed may be so slow that it is imperceptible, it is real. The Roman Catholic Church and the Anglican Communion have been slow in receiving the agreed statements. What we make of them through prayerful study undertaken together will enable us to continue on the long and difficult journey to visible unity and effective communion celebrated in the Eucharist where we share one bread and one cup because we have reached a common comprehension of apostolic teaching. The alternative will be patched up differences, or a house built hurriedly and on a shaky foundation such as described by our Lord at the conclusion of the Sermon of the Mount in the Gospel (Matt 7:24-27).

The Church was born in a given place

Where and when was the Church born? An answer to this double question enables us to understand the nature of the Church, and understanding the nature of the Church is of vital importance to our ecumenical undertaking. For if we do not know what the Church is, we may not know the type of visible unity we ought to desire. The Second Vatican Council in the document *Lumen Gentium*, the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, explains the origin of the Church in figure, in history, in this last age and at the *eschaton*. The words of the explanation

⁵⁴Second Vatican Council, *UnitatisRedintegratio*. Decree on Ecumenism, 1.

⁵⁵Second Vatican Council, *UnitatisRedintegratio*, 4.

deserve to be quoted. Taking its inspiration from the riches of Scripture and Patristic tradition, the Council asserts:

Already present in figure at the beginning of the world, this Church was prepared in marvelous fashion in the history of the people of Israel and in the old Alliance. Established in this last age of the world, and made manifest in the outpouring of the Spirit, it will be brought to glorious completion at the end of time. At that moment, as the Fathers put it, all the just from the time of Adam, “from Abel, the just one, to the last of the elect” will be gathered together with the Father in the universal Church.⁵⁶

A careful reading of what has just been quoted shows that the Church did not begin to exist at Pentecost. “Already present in figure at the beginning of the world” she was made manifest at Pentecost. Pentecost was not her “date of birth” but the day of her manifestation in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit who endowed her with power from on high. In the same way, Jerusalem was not her “place of birth” but the place of her manifestation, the place where she received power from on high. In this regard, the Church “born at Pentecost”—it is difficult to avoid saying she was born at Pentecost—is local. Her manifestation as an assembly endowed from on high in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit took place in Jerusalem.⁵⁷

This assembly that the Church is was already convoked by God in the vocation of Israel, the *QahalYahve*, in the desert. As Jean-Marie Tillard would point out, the vocation of Israel, the people in whose history the manifestation of the Church was prepared in a “marvelous fashion”, pointed to Jerusalem.

The call of God, addressed first of all to Israel, finds its definitive echo in the Holy City, with the Twelve who are symbolically attached to the twelve tribes. Certainly, since—as seen in the Deutero-Isaiah and the traditions which we [Tillard] have evoked—the call of God echoes beyond Israel to all peoples, that is, to the whole universe, this totality is implied in the theophany in Jerusalem by the presence, which in itself is also symbolic, of proselytes coming from all over. However, this presence is specified by the place where it is realized.⁵⁸

On the day of Pentecost, the day the Church was made manifest by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, the disciples met together in a given place (*epi to auto*), in Jerusalem, to be precise. In this

⁵⁶ Second Vatican Council, *Lumen Gentium*, 2. The Patristic sources of this insight are worthy of attentive reading. See for example Cyprian of Carthage, Epistle 64, 4; Hilary of Poitiers, Commentary on Matthew, 23, 6.

⁵⁷Read also Rudolf Schnackenburg, *The Church in the New Testament* (London and Turnbridge Wells: Burns and Oates, 1974) who wrote about the outpouring of the Holy Spirit thus: “It is not indeed the hour of the Church’s birth, at least not in the sense that from then onwards Jesus Christ’s community existed (it was already in the Acts 1:15); but it is the moment of its endowment with the ‘power from on high’ (Lk 24:49; Acts 1:8), which alone qualifies it for its earthly task, its work of salvation in the world, and confers on it the mystery of its supernatural mode of existence” (15).

⁵⁸Jean-Marie Tillard, *L’Église locale*, 34-35.

apparently insignificant detail in the Pentecost narrative, we learn what it means to say the Church is local. The Church of God is local because she is made manifest in a given place. This manifestation of the Church in a given place, Jerusalem, is anything but accidental. The rich symbolism of Jerusalem points to something more, namely, the universal significance and vocation of this place, Jerusalem.

The *Ekklesia* appears in a place where God willed that Christ die and resurrect because it is the place where the heart of Israel beats. The cross was planted in this heart. Jerusalem in fact the place where God fixed his dwelling place (1 Ch 22:5-19; Ps 78:68-69; 132: 13-18), the symbol of unity of the People of the Covenant (2 Kgs 23:4-27), the city called to become the mother of all peoples (Ps 87), the theatre of final of judgment (Joel 4:9-17), and the place of the eschatological feast of all peoples (Is 25:6). To this let us add that Abraham would have offered Isaac there, on the hill of Moriah (2 Ch 3:1; Gen 22:2).

The Church born in Jerusalem at Pentecost is model of the Church-as-local because it manifests the nature of the Church as local. Jerusalem is a city of universal significance and vocation. The Church born in Jerusalem bears the mark of a place, the mark of Jerusalem as a locality. But this place, this city is of universal significance because she is “mother of all peoples”, the place where all peoples will gather to be nourished at the eschatological banquet. Consequently, the Church made manifest at Pentecost in this locality bears the mark of this locality in her own universal vocation. She is made manifest at Pentecost as a gathering of all peoples, a gathering from which no one is excluded and from which no one excludes himself.

This Church made manifest at Jerusalem is an assembly convoked by God in a given place (*locus*), convoked to fullness, plenitude and integrality of communion. This integrality is what catholicity (*katholou*) is about. She is also “the community in which divine *oikonomia* attains its moment (*kairos*) of plenitude”. Her universality is not to be understood in geographical terms. It is instead “the realization in her integrality of what constitutes the call (or convocation) made by God”.⁵⁹ She is local because she is the realization of the one Church of Christ in a given place. But the gift that is in her surpasses her locality. This gift is fully in the Church. Yet, the gift that is fully in the local Church is greater than the local Church. That is why she is also universal. The Second Vatican Council pointed to this universality, saying:

The one People of God is accordingly present in all the nations of the earth, since its citizens, who are taken from all nations, are of a kingdom whose nature is not earthly but heavenly. All the faithful scattered throughout the world are in communion with each other in the Holy Spirit so that “he who dwells in Rome know those in most distant parts to be his members’ (*qui Romaesedet, Indosscit membrum suum esse*).⁶⁰

The Patristic insight that the Eucharist makes the Church and the Church makes the Eucharist comes into play here.⁶¹ This insight shows that there is a parallel Patristic theology between the Eucharistic and the Church which sheds light on what is being said here. The Eucharist is the body of Christ, and the Church is the body of Christ. The Church, which is the body of Christ,

⁵⁹Jean-Marie Tillard, *L'Église locale*, 34.

⁶⁰Second Vatican Council, *Lumen Gentium*, 13.

⁶¹For a study of this insight, read Jean-Marie Tillard, *Chair de l'Église, chair du Christ. Aux sources de l'ecclésiologie de communion* (Paris : Cerf, 1992).

makes the Eucharist, which is also the body of Christ; and the Eucharist, which is the body of Christ, makes the Church the body of Christ in so far as the Church realizes her true self when she gathers at the Eucharistic banquet. The Church receives the body of Christ and becomes the body of Christ. She becomes what she receives. Here, one must recall the famous words of Augustine in his famous Easter homily addressed to the newly baptized, in which he said: “if you receive them in the right disposition, you become what you receive.”⁶² Now, Christ is fully present in the broken bread which the Church receives and shares, even as Christ is bigger than the broken bread. In the same way, Christ is fully present in the local Church even as Christ is bigger than the local Church. The word of God is in the Bible but not contained by the Bible. Christ is in the bread but not contained by the bread. In the same way, the fullness of salvation is in the local Church but not contained by the local Church.

The local Church is bearer of catholicity in the sense that she bears the fullness and wholeness (*katholou*) of the gift of God meant for the whole world. The Church in a given place bears the fullness of the gift of salvation. That it is located and therefore limited does not diminish the fullness, the wholeness of the gift of God that is found in her, the gift that she bears.

The universality of the Church is not a reality whose primary significance is geographical extension. It is not because Christians are found all over the world that the Church is universal. What makes the local Church universal is deeper and richer than that. It is primarily the fact that she is the place of communion in the will of God that all peoples be saved, “communion with each other in the Holy Spirit”.⁶³ This local Church is universal because in her resides the consciousness that “the grace by which she is constituted must radiate beyond geographical and cultural limits”.⁶⁴ That is why, from Jerusalem, the word of the Gospel goes out to all the world. It is the good news of salvation offered by God to all the world.

Preaching this good news to all peoples will lead to the foundation of other Christian communities, local Churches: Antioch (Acts 11:26), Cilicia (Acts 15:41), Caesarea (Acts 18:22) Ephesus (Acts 20:28). It is not a case of the Church of Antioch but of the Church of God in Antioch, not the Church of Cilicia but the Church of God in Cilicia, not the Church of Caesarea but the Church of God in Caesarea, not the Church of Ephesus but the Church of God in Ephesus. Jacques Dupont, whom Tillard quotes, points out how this is clearly manifest in the manner in which Paul addressed his letters: “to God’s beloved in Rome” (Rom 1:7); “to the Church of God that is in Corinth” (1 Cor 1:2; 2 Cor 1:1).⁶⁵ The same formula is found in the way Ignatius of Antioch addresses his letters to the Churches: to the Church of God in Smyrna, to the Church of God in Philadelphia, to the Church of God in Rome, to mention but this. The Church of God is always present in a place and is always referred to a place.

The nature of the Church as universal points to her apostolic origin. She is made manifest in the proclamation of the good news by the apostles. The apostles are sent to all the world. It is in

⁶²Augustine, *Sermon 227*.

⁶³Second Vatican Council, *Lumen Gentium*, 13.

⁶⁴Jean-Marie Tillard, *L’Église locale*, 37.

⁶⁵Cf. Jacques Dupont, *Le Discours de Milet* (Paris, LD 32, 1962), 178-181, cited in Jean-Marie Tillard, *L’Église locale*, 40. Note an exception in Gal 1:2 where Paul uses the expression “the Churches of Galatia”.

fulfilling this apostolic function of proclaiming the Gospel to all the world that the Church, made manifest in Jerusalem, becomes manifest in other places,, always in communion with all the saints dispersed throughout the world. Fullness of the gift of God (*katholou*) is present in each of these communities founded on apostolic proclamation and nourished at the Eucharistic banquet. They commune in the gift of God without being appendices to the Church in Jerusalem. Each of these communities is the Church of God (*EkklesiatoTheou*) in a given place, in its locality. In other words, there is no universality simply because there are Christian communities all over the world, but because these Christian communities are in communion with one another, a communion in the gift of God, in the teaching of the apostles and in the broken bread and outpoured wine, a sharing in the body and blood of Christ. As Tillard further explains, this communion

Neither means addition, nor concretization of a genre in multiple individuals. The word signifies an entry into integral sharing in the full and definitive (already eschatological) gift of God, made first of all into the local community whose place in the *oikonomia* of salvation is a prerogative, a prerogative which, however, is for the good of the whole of humanity....It is a communion of all these Churches in the “once-and-for-all” nature of the Pentecost event, inseparable de the *Ekklesia* which the Spirit made manifest in a predestined place, Jerusalem, and in the apostolic community still rooted in Israel of the Sinai.⁶⁶

God gave the Holy Spirit, the fullness of his grace, to his *qahal* in Jerusalem at Pentecost. Through and in the same Spirit, he now constitutes communities in different localities in which the same grace is fully present, such that the Church is not more present in Jerusalem than in other places, not more universal than local. The Church of God in a given place is the fullness of the *EkklesiatoTheou* in that place. She lacks none of the gifts that constitute the Church as Church is missing. Ignatius of Antioch emphasizes this plenitude of the Church in each place by addressing his Letter to Smyrna in these words:

Ignatius, also called Theophorus, to the Church of God the Father and of his beloved Son Jesus Christ, which has *obtained all gifts* by mercy, filled with faith and charity, *which is not lacking in any gift*, divinely magnified and bearing sacred objects, the Church which is in Smyrna of Asia, in an irreproachable spirit and in the word of God, every joy.

Addressing his Letter to Ephesus, he wrote in similar words:

Ignatius, also called Theophorus, to she who is *blessed in greatness in the fullness of God the Father*, predestined before the ages to be at all times, for a glory which does not pass away, unshakably united and chosen in the veritable passion [of Christ], by the will of the Father and of Jesus Christ our God—to the Church, worthy of being called blessed, which is in Ephesus of Asia, greetings in Jesus Christ and in irreproachable joy.

I have chosen to emphasize references to fullness of God and to absence of deprivation of any gift in the local Church by using italics in the quotations. But to Tillard belongs a richer explanation.

⁶⁶Jean-Marie Tillard, *L'Église locale*, 41.

He [the Spirit] thus gives them the integrality (the *katholou*) of what this implies, in particular apostolic teaching, apostolic ministry, apostolic baptism, apostolic “breaking of bread”, apostolic mission. What is thus given to them is not a part of the gift of “plenitude” of ecclesial life which the *Ekklesia* in the city of Jerusalem enjoys. The Church of the saints in Jerusalem does not have greater Word, or greater ministry, or greater sacramental reality, or greater apostolic mission than all the Churches of the saints.⁶⁷

The Church is local because she is manifestation of the fullness of God’s gift of salvation in a given place, in a concrete terrain of concrete humanity. She is the presence in a given place of what Schnackenburg describes as “God’s eschatological redeemed community” in a given place.⁶⁸ She is the incarnation of the grace of word and sacrament in a given place. She is also universal because she is inserted in every situation.

Each local Church can thus be described as the human space (geographical, cultural, historical, sociological) where the Gospel of God—“accomplished” in Jerusalem in the Passover of Christ and at Pentecost which brings about its effect—comes to grasp the whole *homo* (the human being) et the *humus* (the soil) where it germinates, the *homo* on this *humus*, the *homo* and the *humus*.⁶⁹

Described in these beautiful words of Tillard, she is the manifestation of salvation in every existential situation in a communion of saints dispersed all over the world in the fullness of this gift. Her nature is not to be mistaken for that of a “sacred United Nations”, or a multinational corporation whose branches would be the local Churches, because her universality is not one of aggregation but of communion. Her nature as communion is made manifest in different places all over the world in such a way that the Church in one place does not share more or less in the fullness of salvation, and, one must add, in such a way that there is no Church where there is no common comprehension of apostolic teaching proclaimed by a body ministers in communion.

The attainment of such visibly expressed common comprehension is the goal of ecumenism. Attaining it means we must journey together, even if the journey can be wearying, and in our weary, we become impatient and discouraged. But when we are weary because of the slow steps we make on our journey, we ought to find consolation in the affective communion which we already have. For it is a necessary step towards journeying together. Without this affection for unity, this *votumunitatis*, we would not be exploring ways of finding visible expression of unity.

Ecumenical discernment of right ethical teaching in a secular age

The mandate of ARCIC III is not just to explore the nature of the Church as communion, local and universal, but also to discern how, in communion, the local and universal Church can discern right ethical teaching. This points to the task that the search for the good is an ecumenical quest which highlights the necessity for a body of pastors in communion. Just as understanding the nature of the Church in an ecumenical climate makes it imperative to journey together towards a

⁶⁷Jean-Marie Tillard, *L’Église locale*, 40.

⁶⁸Read Rudolf Schnackenburg, *The Church in the New Testament*, 118-123.

⁶⁹Jean-Marie Tillard, *L’Église locale*, 53.

reawakening of the apostolic origins of the Church, understanding how we are to discern ethical teaching also makes it imperative for us to journey together. But I wish to underline a distinction.

The inclusion of how to discern right “ethical” teaching in the description of the mandate of ARCIC III calls for a distinction between morality, ethics and legality, a distinction which has been surreptitiously collapsed in contemporary discourse, and which the mandate of ARCIC III, as formulated, seems to ignore. But the three do not always coincide. Morality is about rightness or wrongness of an action. Ethics is about acceptable behavior. Legality is about what is permissible in law. The law may permit an act that is not acceptable, just as acceptable behavior may in fact be immoral. An on-going cacophonous debate has been intensified by the recognition of same-sex unions as having the legal status of a marriage in some countries of the world. The morality of accepting such unions as marital is not accepted by all. Even within local Churches and ecclesial communities, there is widespread divergence on the issue, and discordant voices are deafening. The same applies to issues of abortion, contraception, divorce, euthanasia, the environment, to name but this. On these and on some other issues, law, ethics, and morality are evidently not converging. That this is an issue that must be of ecumenical concern explains why the inclusion of how to discern right “ethical” teaching is included in the mandate of ARCIC III. That the distinction is taken into account is not evident in the formulation of the mandate.

The Church as communion, local and universal cannot run away from facing the challenge of taking responsibility for morality. But we live in a secular age, and the task is made even more enormous by an increasingly aggressive secularism which has further accentuated division within Christianity.⁷⁰ While the secular age questions the right and competence of Christianity to take a stance on moral issues in public, contemporary Christianity is itself divided into three camps. There is division between those who would capitulate before secularism and thus accept its principles and ethics in an undifferentiated manner, those who would fight back and reject secularism in an undifferentiated manner, and those who would seek to engage secularism in a differentiated manner, that is, neither accepting all nor rejecting all there is to secularism. This makes it even more difficult for Christians to discern together when moral issues arise. The Christian sense of what is right and what is wrong is very much affected by secular climate. That compounds the task of ecumenism.

But our generation of Christians is not the first to confront a non-Christian, even anti-Christian culture. Early Christians did. And, in this respect, we have the Patristic writers as models. They were wise and intelligent in engaging the non-Christian culture around them, using the intellectual infrastructure of the same culture to express mysteries of the Christian faith. As our ecumenical journey passes through a hostile territory, the territory that the secular age is, it has become evident that neither scripture alone nor faith alone would suffice. Mastery of language of the secular age will be needed to dialogue with the secular age. not suffice in our encounter.

⁷⁰Read Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (Cambridge, MA and London: Belknap/Harvard University Press, 2007); William Barbieri, *At the Limits of the Secular: Reflections on Faith and Public Life* (Grand Rapids, MI/Cambridge, UK: William B. Eerdmans) 2014.

CHAPTER FOUR

Challenges to Communion in Truth and Love By Very Rev. Msgr. Jerome Madueke

Introduction

We are once again gathered as members of the Nigerian Anglican! Roman Catholic Commission (NARCC) for our annual bilateral conversation on issues affecting faith and life in our communions. We recall that the October 2011 NARCC Meeting held in Sokoto discussed the theme, *Life in Christ: Morals, Communion and the Church*. We are revisiting the theme to reflect how both communions can witness together and contribute to moral and ethical growth of our people and nation.

The Second Vatican Council which this year celebrates the fiftieth anniversary of its opening recalls the Church's declaration of her imperative for ecumenism and dialogue with other believers. Some believers, including Catholics, criticize the Council for conservatism on the one hand and for being progressive on the other. The Council did not pretend to offer timetable or maps for full unity. Rather than rhetoric, human calculations or diplomacy, the Council emphasized the need for spiritual ecumenism that is conversion of heart⁷¹ expressed by repentance from sin that causes division and holiness of life according to the Gospel to genuinely witness to Christ, as well as public and private prayer for Christian unity.⁷²

The term communion (from Latin *communio* literally meaning common union, sharing in common) derives from the New Testament Greek *κοινωνία*, often translated as "fellowship" and widely applied to various contexts to mean fellowship in the Trinity,⁷³ with Christ's Eucharistic body and blood,⁷⁴ with fellow Christians in their faith, works and sufferings.⁷⁵ Communion involves shared memory and common heritage in the pilgrimage of faith. The meaning relates to the Body of Christ as it exists in history which strives as the Church community of the Acts of the Apostles to be bound together in the Apostolic Teaching, the Breaking of Bread and Witness of life (*diakonia*), so as to be 'one mind and one spirit in Christ'. The Triune God offers the gift of effectual Communion to His people gathered in Christ's name, leading them on a journey to the plenitude with the heavenly hosts in the communion of the Saints through the Holy Spirit. Communion is the Church's highest treasure strengthened in truth, but above all in love.

The gathering of God's people into an assembly or communion is the action of the Holy Spirit. It is the Spirit who calls them out (*ek-klesia*) of slavery to sin and worldly standards to mission unto unity and communion with God and of human race. Far from being a mere human contrivance or sociological unit, and therefore beyond political, social and economic manipulations, the Church has divine mandate with two-fold mission - spiritual and human. It is the Body of Christ that has

⁷¹Cf. *Unitatis Redintegratio*, n.7 §3.

⁷²Cf. *Ibid.*, n. 8 §1.

⁷³Cf. 2 Pt 1:4; 1 In 1:3,6; 1 Cor 1:9; Phil 2:1, 3:10; 1 Pt 4:13,5:1; 2 Cor 13:14).

⁷⁴Cor 10:16 contrasted with fellowship with pagan sacrifices in 1 Cor 10:18-20.

⁷⁵Cf. Acts 2:42; Rom 12:13; 15:26-27; 2 Cor 1:7, 8:4,23, 9:13; Phil 1;5-6,17, 14-15; Gal 2:9, 6:6; 1 Tim 6:18; Heb 10:33, 13:16; 1 In 1:3, 1:7; Rev 1:9.

as goal communion with God in the Spirit, and at the same time destined to penetrate, transform and prepare this world for its final consummation in God.

The proclamation of the Word of God serves as the basis for conversion and renewal, and worship especially the Eucharistic communion - as means of nourishing and strengthening her in her earthly pilgrimage, with the Holy Spirit calling the Church members in *diaspora* to be united as the body of Christ here and now 'in truth and grace' for common mission.

With regard to communion, the sin of separation digs deep and continually takes its toll by limiting our vision and mission as Christian people and strengthening the walls of division, so that Church unity is no longer perceived by some as concrete and possible reality to aspire to, but as mere spiritual ideal and eschatological call to be realized at the end of Christian pilgrimage in heaven when Christ would hand everything to his Father and be all in all. Thus, Christ's priestly prayer, "that all may be one", is variously interpreted, depending on the kind of unity and communion a particular individual presupposes. The Eastern churches, for example, offer a model of communion whereby each of the accephalous churches of the Orthodox Tradition remain autonomous in rites of worship and ecclesial governance, but nevertheless hold and profess the same creed and moral. Being strongly rooted in and faithful to the Ancient Christian faith and practice enable them as group of Churches, despite the vicissitudes of history, to retain the substance and internal relationship of communion with each other.

Since 1968 Lambeth Conference, the Church of Nigeria joined the rest of the churches in the Anglican Communion to adopt this model of communion.⁷⁶We regret the crisis introduced by women ordination and the admission of homosexuals into the Anglican clergy, followed by controversy over Christian teaching on gay marriage. The Pontifical Council for Christian Unity stated that these developments further jeopardized the existing unity between the Catholic Church and the Anglican Communion. We note that, with the deepening crisis of moral leadership in the world-wide Anglican Episcopate, the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) had to sever from Canterbury and to amend her Constitution which reposed the final authority to teach and to interpret all questions of Faith, Doctrine and Discipline on the decisions of its Ecclesiastical tribunals.

We extol the Anglicans in Nigeria for remaining together as Church of Nigeria, despite the crisis that severed them from Canterbury. The separation was effected to "maintain the Historic Faith, Doctrine, Sacrament and Discipline of the one Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church as the Lord has commanded in His holy word and as the same are received as taught in the Book of Common Prayer and the ordinal of 1662 and in the Thirty-Nine Article of Religion". The Anglican hierarchy in Nigeria, no less their Catholic counterpart,⁷⁷ has special responsibility to preserve in the truth of Christian doctrine and maintain purity of faith and integrity of Christian life and worship. Having less geographical area of operation and sociological factors to contend with, the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) might in a sense be better focused to mobilize and

⁷⁶Anglican Communion existing within Nigeria was in 1979 constituted into a separate Province of Nigeria.

⁷⁷The Catholic Church in Nigeria is governed and directed by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Nigeria (CBCN).

harness her energies for evangelization at the grassroots. Through diocesan Synods and ecclesial bodies on national level, they may with dispatch attain supreme decisions to shape the Anglican faith and moral in Nigeria. We pray that the Communion would remain courageous in the Historic Faith, Doctrine, Sacrament and Discipline, and deepen cohesion needed to remain together as Communion. This implies more patience in their relationship with the Roman Catholic Communion. Not only that the supreme authority is the Pope as the universal primate, the Catholic Bishops of Nigeria must sit with other Catholic Episcopal bodies round the world for genuine Catholicity and Apostolicity in faith and moral. ARCIC II has through *The Gift of Authority* appealed for "a universal primacy exercised by the bishop of Rome as a sign and safeguard of unity within a re-united Church," a recommendation the Church in Nigeria (Anglican Communion) may now seriously consider. Through the granting of special jurisdiction to the churches of Anglican Communion which wish to unite with Rome, the Catholic Church more deeply declares her openness and readiness to embrace and exchange with members of Anglican Communion, thus affirming that ecumenism is not something added on, but stands at the very heart of Christ's mission.

We may ask at this juncture whether the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) may qualify as ecclesial Communion? Some churches see in the meeting of CAN a realization of the goal of Christian unity and communion. There is tendency to regard it as a confederation of Christian churches, with the Chairman of CAN as primate of all the bishops existing in the five constituent blocs. Some already propose the need for establishing an ecclesiastical tribunal to define the rights and duties of CAN members. This development demonstrates growing consciousness in the organization for 'one voice' and greater solidarity and common action on issues through the 'primate'. It is important, however, to note that among the five constituent blocs of CAN, only two blocs, namely the CSN (i.e., the Catholic Church) and the CCN or Christian Churches of Nigeria (comprising the Anglican Communion and her sister churches) have effective episcopates with election, authority and mandate lying beyond the wish of the individual ministers. Although the PFN or Pentecostals have bishops and overseers solely determined by individual minister, the OAIC or Organizations of African Instituted Churches, and the TEKANIECWA, have Senior Apostles and Elders respectively. The competence and effectiveness of these later blocs are limited to their particular congregations. Efforts towards Church communion should begin in the blocs to internally deepen unity in faith and action. But Church communion should not derive from search for lowest common denominator, nor base on consensus and negotiation. Otherwise, such communion constantly wobbles whenever there is change in equation for existing unity or communion - and there are myriads of human factors which threatening the faith and decimate confessional bodies. We note that the apparent attempt of CAN to transit to become MEGA church with a 'primate' is an aberration from its objective.

Purpose of this Essay

Both the Catholic Church and the Anglican Communion have the gift of the episcopate (*episcopo* and *presbyteroi*) to cherish which respectively oversees, corrects and directs the faith and life of their members. We are nonetheless aware of many issues which still hamper unity and Communion of the two Churches, especially divergences in the understanding and exercising authority. While ARCIC II's *Life in Christ* proposed closer ecumenical dialogue between the two Churches as remedy for moral confusion of contemporary times, effective remedy from Catholic

viewpoint should lie in the firmer exercise of papal and Episcopal authority.⁷⁸ Despite deep divergences in ecclesiology and doctrine, especially over Church authority, the International Anglican-Roman Catholic dialogue did not postpone dialogue on ethics, until there are bilateral consensus and implementation.⁷⁹

Although, division exists between the two Churches over moral and ethical matters, such as abortion, contraceptives, and divorce, etc., we remind ourselves of the nexus between moral life and the life of faith. *Life in Christ n.1* affirms that Anglicans and Roman Catholics 'share the same fundamental moral values'. We have personal consciences that are shaped by Bible, ecclesial tradition and magisterial teaching to articulate and provide moral vision for Christian life.⁸⁰ Progress toward Christian unity is today slowed down more by differences over moral and ethical issues than doctrinal differences inherited from the Reformation era. Many Christians, including the clergy of both Churches, are not as bothered by doctrinal differences, as by what daily affects the social, political and economic life of their respective communities. They are concretely being confronted respectively by their responsibilities to God, to their society, and to the world. Besides, the purpose of Jesus Christ is to unite all peoples into one Family of God with love and service as its vital principle. Even the grace of Baptism through the obedience of faith ought to impel Christians to deepen communion with God and with one another. Genuine ecumenism should eschew irenicism, propaganda or manipulations. While we respect the Eucharistic hospitality practiced in Anglican Communion churches which allow members of other churches to share in their Eucharist Table, Catholic Church restricts sharing in the Eucharist communion to members who prepare themselves in the traditional way. For Catholics, Church communion is genuinely expressed by unity of faith, common celebration of the Sacraments and ecclesial governance. While advocating for patient effort to full communion of which the Eucharist is the source, sign and instrument, she admits of grave need to close ranks in approaching to moral and ethical issues of our time.

This paper argues the possibility for the two Churches to have one voice on moral! ethical issues. The common Christian heritage we share is capable of throwing light on human sexuality, family, social, economic and political life as they are in the plan of God. Such united witness is needed to save our society from moral collapse and amnesia. Cooperation in the pursuit of social justice, common good and solidarity offer prospects for advancing in communion with one another and overcoming difficulties with regard to unity of faith. Christians of both Communion will strive in practical life to witness to their faith in Christ, for whom love is the hallmark of true discipleship.

Today Relativism and Need for Communion in Truth and Love

Nigeria is part of current globalization process that tends to deny or distort the absolute truths, and to replace them with vague and contradictory principles derived from ideological or demographic sources. There is a view of progress which regards religion as inherently divisive and harmful to the human society and to individuals, retarding human development and technology. There are efforts to replace the biblical and theological foundations of moral and

⁷⁸JOHN PAUL II, *Veritatis Splendor*, nos. 114 – 116

⁷⁹See the Second Anglican Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC II), *Life in Christ: Morals, Communion and the Church*, published in 1994.

⁸⁰See *Ibid.*, nos. 43-53

ethical teachings with welter of theories from sociology, anthropology, philosophy and psychology. The universal precepts of Natural Law are jettisoned along with tradition and concept of authority, in favour of exploration of human freedom that is dissociated from its essential and constitutive relationship to truth. Overall, traditional moral doctrine is today systematically called into question, beyond the previous limited and occasional dissent. Although, everything is not religion, we must acknowledge that everything, - whether political, socio-cultural, economic, or technical - comes from God and, therefore, subject to His providence and sovereignty. Despite attempts to deny it, religion remains relevant, and constitutes a great force in the lives of people.

Three major trends subvert Christianity which uphold man as measure of all things. First, is atheistic humanism which strikes at the roots of faith and morals by denying absolute truth and reducing it to the quilms of groups and individuals. There is agnosticism which states that there is no way of conclusively knowing the truth, subjecting the search for truth to demography, relativism or subjectivism. The third is liberal Christianity which attempts to redefine Christian truth or values beyond particular Church creeds, confessions, or traditions, for a new humanity, peace and harmony in a global planet. Religions are in this scheme reduced to symbols, and religious language metaphors to be manipulated and fused into more rational, utilitarian and pragmatic schemes. We have Catholic pro-choice group, for instance, who claim to be defenders of the truths of the Catholic faith and morals by clinging to their erroneous perceptions and interpretations. There are 'silent apostates' who disconnect from their faith communities to long for 'a new, freer, united, more just, peaceful and happy' world of their dreams.

Given the avalanche of anti-Christian trends, there is grave need for ecumenical cooperation in the proclamation of the Gospel, capable of leading the society in the discernment of divine will for earthly progress. Unlike the Christian countries of Europe and America which capitulate to humanistic ideologies to legalize abortion, euthanasia and gay marriage, we still cherish the African traditional values of respect for life, elders, marriage and family values. Though threatened by modernity, this good heritage may through joint Gospel-proclamation be consolidated, purified and strengthened.

There is need for common platform of action to address our moral and ethical problems. The Nigeria Anglican Roman Catholic Dialogue already serves as organ for both communions to initiate cooperation and solidarity. As communion, we have acted apart and sometimes in opposition to each other. It is not uncommon to subterfuge each other, becoming rivals in politics, education and social life. Development is stalled in some cases due to polemics which traditional or civil ruler to install, Catholic or Anglican. The failure of one communion is exploited to be gain or success of the other communion. Division among the Christian bodies is often exploited by greedy politicians should imbue the socio-economic and political order with the values of the Gospel, striving to protect personal and civic rights and disapprove any attempt to use public authority for self-interest. We hardly encourage fraternal knowledge of one another,⁸¹ nor engage in serious ecumenical formation of our pastoral agents⁸² in view of addressing the dangers of religious fundamentalism and fanaticism. The name of God is

⁸¹cf. *Unitatis Redintegratio*, n. 9.

⁸²cf. *Ibid.*, n. 10

blasphemed among the Gentiles because of ember of hatred and mutual exclusion among the Christians. If the Christians can unite in dialogue⁸³ on issues that affect Gospel witnessing in view of collaboration in service,⁸⁴ the society would be better and healthier.

To effectively remedy the institutions and conditions of Nigerian society, especially when the latter are an inducement of sin, Anglicans and Catholics should combine forces to favour the practice of virtue rather than hinder it, and build a just and peaceful society. Given that “development is impossible without upright men and women, without financiers and foliticians whose consciences are finely attuned to the requirements of the common good,”⁸⁵ Christian Churches, especially Catholics and Anglicans can close ranks to promote probity and good governance in the public domain.

AREAS IN NEED OF COOPERATION

Religious Freedom

In its journey as a nation, Nigeria is saddled with myriads of social, moral and ethical problems. Fundamental rights, especially the freedom of religion and of worship, continue to be threatened. In the name of religion, the members of the Muslim sect BOKO HARAM continue to unleash its senseless crusade, bombing innocent citizens and houses of worship. Christians in some parts of the North are denied permission to acquire land and erect places of worship, or to publicly express their faith.

Some communities in the South continue to attach certain fetish practices to traditional thrones, customs, or titles, which deprive practicing Christian access to social prerogative within their respective communities. African Traditional Religion is in most cases confused with culture. In the name of culture, Christians are constrained to observe pagan rites, or be penalized. Anglicans and Catholics can join together in such neo-pagan environment to defend the integrity of Christian faith.

Religious freedom is not just freedom to proclaim Christ and celebrate his mysteries in our various faith-communities, but includes the opportunity to contribute as free partners in progress to the building up of the society. It presupposes public recognition and respect for authentic religious values to meet man’s deepest concerns, as well as to supply the ethical motivation for personal and social responsibilities.⁸⁶

Leadership on Moral and Ethical Issues

Moral and ethical issues - if they are not mere illusions as some atheistic philosophers attempt to dismiss them, but real issues affecting man in his relationship with one another, his Creator and

⁸³Cf. *Ibid.*, nn. 4; 9; 11.

⁸⁴Cf. *Ibid.*, n. 12

⁸⁵BENEDICT XVI, *Caritas in Veritate*, n. 71.

⁸⁶BENEDICT XVI, 2007 Message for Lent, "They shall look on Him whom they have pierced" (In 19:37).

the universe - fall within the provenance of religious faith. Respect for human life and sexuality continues to be compromised amidst endless debates that attempt to erode our African heritage legacy in the area of life, marriage and the family. Under the guise of population control, eradication of HIV-AIDS, and the promotion of so-called women's reproductive health and rights, there is an unrelenting political and financial pressure to promote sexuality divorced from ethical references. Abortion, sterilization, contraception, even euthanasia are copiously made available which promote the culture of sexual promiscuity and death. We note the activities of foreign agencies which, instead of directing resources to the real needs of Nigerian citizens, such as education, agriculture, industry, pre-natal and post-natal cares, intensely lobby for anti-life and anti-family agenda, including the legalization of same-sex union. Not only that these evils are abominations in the traditional African society, they directly infringe on God's law.

Pope Benedict XVI reminded that openness to life, especially of the unborn, is not a mere pious sentiment, but "is at the centre of true development. When a society moves towards the denial or suppression of life, it ends up no longer finding the necessary motivation and energy to strive for man's true good ... The acceptance of life strengthens moral fibre and makes people capable of mutual help."⁸⁷ Same-sex union, not only vitiates openness to life, it is intrinsically disordered and an act of great depravity.⁸⁸

Anglicans and Catholics in Nigeria should be united in upholding the sacredness of life, the human community, motherhood, fatherhood, joy and celebration of children, and respect for the elderly.

Other Issues

The two Communion can unite in initiatives for justice and peace. The Gospel teaching on the sacredness of life of the human person entails the compassion of Christ to liberate the unjustly condemned and reduce tendency to criminality. The two communions can influence lawmakers to enact good laws, and the executive to ensure the renewal of law-enforcement agents for security of life and property, as well as modernize their apparatus of defence. They should intensify their respective programmes for the development of youth, and bring public authorities to do the same. The Gospel teaching on the sacredness of life demands the rehabilitation, not the elimination, of dangerous criminals. In other words, it condemns the use of capital punishment as ready recourse. Anglicans and Catholics should unite as ombudsman to promote clemency which amplifies the opportunity criminals have for repentance and rehabilitation. Is it impossible for the two communions to join ranks to effectively initiate dialogue and negotiation to bring the current protracted strike of the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) to an end?

Truth is Grasped in the Church's Communion

The Personal and Communitarian Aspects of Faith

⁸⁷SECOND SPECIAL ASSEMBLY FOR AFRICA OF THE SYNOD OF BISHOPS, *Instrumentum Labaris*(Vatican City, 2009) n.20.

⁸⁸*cf.* Gen 19:1-29; Rom 1:24-27; 1 Cor 6:10; 1 Tim 1:10

The creed, a *symbolon* received and professed by Catechumens at baptism, remains the heritage through which Christian belief is handed over from one generation to another. The Creed is professed not just by mere lips, but celebrated, lived and prayed. To believe is not a private act, but a public testimony and commitment. To believe is to choose to be with Christ the head and his body, the Church. Profession of faith is an act both personal and communitarian.⁸⁹ The quality of a believer's faith in Christ is measured by the extent he is in communion with the Church. He cannot claim to love Christ and hate his body, the Church.

I believe is the faith of the Church professed personally by each believer at baptism that is daily renewed, to reflect and conform to the faith of the Church which the bishops (*episkopoi, presbyteroi*) are appointed to oversee. The 'we' of faith nourishes, purifies and confirms the 'I' of believing. In this way, the Church as mother⁹⁰ is the bosom which gives birth to believers. The Church as teacher guides believers in their journey of faith, and as bulwark confirms them in the truth, guaranteeing the harmony between 'I believe' and 'we believe' as communion of love.

Authority at the Service of Truth and Communion

Catholics believe that the Holy Spirit is the agent who enlivens and actualizes the Church in the grace and truth of our Lord Jesus Christ. The gift of authority bestowed upon the college of Apostles headed by Peter is preeminent among the charisms of the Spirit for fidelity to the Apostolic tradition (*diachronic*) and communion of churches round the world (*synchronic*). It enables believers as part of an organic whole to be "shielded from deception only when thinking and desiring in accordance with the mind and the heart of all."⁹¹ Through the faithful preservation, transmission and sharing of common heritage made possible by the gift and exercise of authority, the perception and interpretation of individuals, or particular churches, are proactively formed through the catechesis, moral exhortations, worship and common life witness, so that individual peculiarities are addressed, healed and reconcile within the Church's faith and communion.

Collegiality is the specific expression of this affective and effective communion of the worldwide episcopate. Collegiality, while opposing isolationism and self-sufficiency, promotes the sharing and exchange essential for the integrity of the self-understanding and growth of each local church. A particular church risks its life when it loses link with the universal Church. Its internal unity suffers too, as it endangers its freedom in the face of various negative forces?⁹²

It is through communion with the whole body, subject to the Magisterium, that the totality of the Christian truth is genuinely grasped. The authentic meaning of the Bible is explained and understood in the communion of the Church. Doctrine and morals are espoused, corrected and clarified under the guidance of the Spirit within the Church's deposit of faith and communion in truth, by means of the teaching of the Magisterium, Councils, Synods, etc. Ambivalences are

⁸⁹PortaFidei, n. 10

⁹⁰The Fathers of the Church often used this term to emphasize the Church as source of maternity, nurture and ... of faith.

⁹¹Quoted in by YVES CONGAR, *True and False Reform in the Church*, trans by Paul Philibert, (Liturgical Press, Minnesota, 2011) p. 230.

⁹²Cf. PAUL VI, Apostolic Exhortation, *EvangeliiNuntiandi*, 8-XII-1975, n. 64/b.

thus resolved in favour of orthodoxy. A Christian has to be in communion with the Church before he can comprehend the truth of faith in its totality.

Faith as Supernatural Gift with Diverse Expressions

Faith is divine gift and not an invention or product of human reasoning or will. Faith itself enables a Christian to renounce himself, take up his own cross and follow after him who alone is the way, truth and life (In 14:6). Faith precedes us and is always greater than the human mind or heart. The Church, as community of faith, can never be reduced to a democracy, which bases on consensu of the majority.⁹³ It is not a club, a party, or human construct, but the Body of Christ. "A church based on human resolutions becomes a merely human church. It is reduced to the level of the makeable, of the obvious, of opinion. Opinion replaces faith. And in fact, in the self-made formulas of faith with which I am acquainted, the meaning of the words 'I believe' never signifies anything beyond 'we opine'⁹⁴ Issues touching faith and morals must be amply explained to create genuine path for self-determination to affirm individuals in their Catholic identity.

Room exists for plurality and diversification which while not obstructing essential unity in faith and morals confer upon it the character of 'communion'. Some people have invented the word 'pluriformity' to stress the essential unifying element found in the diversification. Legitimate diversity of ministries, charisms, forms of life and apostolate within a particular Church, even diversity of traditions in liturgy and devotions, are elements which enrich the Church's faith.

While Catholicity promotes legitimate diversity, it does create room for individualism, democracy, personal autonomy, or parochialism, such as advocated by 'pro-choice Catholics' on ethical and moral issues that pertain to sex, family and life. The Church announces the saving truth entrusted to her by Christ, including moral principles relating to social order, so that Christ's flock is never left without a shepherd to guide them to pasture. In making moral judgments, rather than confining themselves to individualistic considerations, genuine Catholics consider the good of all as expressed in the moral law - natural and revealed - letting their consciences and reasons guided by the authoritative teaching of the Magisterium. They do not allow humanist agenda to take sway which propagate the evils of abortion, euthanasia, contraception, sterilization, or same-sex union or use of sex outside marriage.

Conversion as Basis of Communion in Truth and Catholic Piety

Conversion is the basis for obedience of faith, true love of Christ and his Church. Conversion entails an exodus or journey of faith which leads an individual away from the prison of self interest and parochialism through repentance and asceticism (purification), to genuine freedom and fidelity in Christ with recommitment to unity and communion of faith, and solidarity with humankind. The inner man liberated by the truth, attains a unity of life that deepens adoration and communion and safeguards against idolatry and endless dispersions. God infuses in the soul the gift of piety,⁹⁵ so that the practice of religion is no longer a burdensome duty, but a delightful

⁹³JOSEPH CARDINAL RATZINGER, *Called to Communion, Understanding the Church Today*, (San Francisco 1991) p. 139.

⁹⁴JOSEPH CARDINAL RATZINGER,

⁹⁵Cf. Romans 5:5.

service, expressed in obedience of faith and loyalty to the Church's hierarchy. Piety inspires growth in virtues and devotion which leads a soul to detachment and acceptance of the cross, as well as openness to neighbours. It is a true filial spirit towards the Church, the flowering of the baptismal grace to love Christ, as head represented by the Pope and Bishops, and to unite in the profession of faith, worship and life with members of his Body.

Against the popular notion of faith that yearns for instant gratification, Catholic faith insists on orthodoxy consonant with the Apostolic proclamation handed down from generations (Apostolicity), and consonant with the faith universally confessed (Catholicity) with other churches round the world. The word, 'Orthodoxy' (*ortho-* order, *doxia-* glory or splendour), etymologically, means order by which the divine glory may emerge - this case, in preaching and in the celebration of divine mysteries. There is to be order or way of reading, preaching and understanding the Scriptures, if the glory of God may emerge and not distorted or eradicated, and there is to be an order in worship if believers are to be transformed. Danger exists to empty the Word of God and banalize worship, subjecting them solely to utilitarian and pragmatic principles. The Word of God is increasingly interpreted to gratify human psycho-physical and social needs, instead of revealing the mystery of the Word made flesh which culminated in his Pasch, and his beatitudes. The Word is preached in manner to intimidate, proselytize or hypnotize the hearer, with the cross excluded as means by which God's love manifest and be expressed in the lives of Christians. The Word of God goes beyond gimmicks for human consolation to disrupt, convert, purify, illuminate, and bring to perfection.

Orthodoxy, sadly, is negatively seen as dry and suffocating intellectualism nourished by human and cultural accretions which distort the pristine word of God, leading to archaism and unhealthy conformism. Against such notion of orthodoxy is self-illumination and unrestricted sense of charismatic gifts. Far from restricting human thought and will from reaching their full stature, or promoting immature dependency,⁹⁶ orthodoxy exists to guide and preserve genuine freedom for creative fidelity which is fruit of 'obedience of faith' that manifests through love. In matters of faith and morals, the faithful endeavour to adhere to the Church's teaching with religious assent, and to be guided by their pastors. This religious submission of mind and will extends to the authentic teaching of the Pope, even when he is not speaking 'ex cathedra' (L.G. 25, G.S. 25).

All this means that Catholic loyalty does not mean external conformity that is servile, superficial and mechanical, but a conscious, personal, docile, and generous submission to the heritage of faith. Obedience and loyalty requires that members be fully alive and conscious, actively participating in the lives of their faith communities. Genuine Catholics live their lives as members of the Church, professing the same faith and sharing in her life and mission. Solidarity in faith enables them to think and desire with the spirit and heart of the whole body of Christ, the Church, fully aware of the unity, holiness, Catholicity and Apostolicity of their faith - the basis of their communion with the saints in Christ.

A Church community grows dynamically in five major ways of Prayer; worship, proclamation of the Word, community caring and sharing, outreach to neighbourhood, and stewardship/accountability. Through these endeavours, members of Christ's faithful are enabled to acquire *sensusjidelium*, i.e., certain mental and behavioural attitude that shapes their *sensus Ecclesiae* (sense of the Church), which in turn nourishes their *sentire cum Ecclesia*, i.e., Catholic passion

⁹⁶JOSEPH CARDINAL RATZINGER,p. 135

and docility for the faith, and solicitude with the Church's concerns.

As the Church continues to preserve and nourish the unity and communion of the Body of Christ which 'subsists' in her, she does not slam door on any individual or group who share in the faith of Christ, but engages with them in a dialogue of salvation?⁹⁷ She strives each day to “beget:” herself anew (*Nam et Ecclesia quotidie gignit Ecclesiam*) through the work of the Holy Spirit who renews her ‘in truth and grace’ and gathers ‘the scattered people of God’ in Diaspora. Through the ecumenical endeavours, the church offers her body of wisdom and moral insights to other Christians, uniting with them in the proclamation of the Gospel that enlightens all peoples and cultures. The Nigeria Anglican Roman Catholic Dialogue is indeed organ for both communions to develop common platform of action to address the myriads of moral and ethical problems of our times.

⁹⁷Pope Francis, for instance, has called for an extraordinary session of the Synod of Bishops October 2014 to discuss pastoral care of marriage and the family, especially as it touches divorced and remarried Catholics.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Ordained Ministry in the Documents of ARCIC

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After the Agreed Statement on Eucharistic Doctrine (Windsor 1971), and in accordance with its programme adopted at Venice in 1970, the Anglican Roman Catholic International Commission met in Canterbury in 1973 to examine the doctrine of ordained ministry in the life of the Church and offered an Agreed Statement to Anglican and Roman Catholic authorities for their consideration. Given the wise saying that statements are not just statements, they are answers to questions, the purpose of my presentation is to examine, from the perspective Roman Catholic theology, the statements of ARCIC on ordained ministry. To be borne in mind are the questions they set out to address and how they have been addressed.

What ARCIC said on Ordained Ministry

The Commission sought to express basic doctrinal agreement on ordained ministry rooted in a deeper understanding of the ministry that is in consonance with Scripture and with the traditions inherited in common by Anglicans and Roman Catholics. While noting that within the Roman Catholic Church and the Anglican Communion there is a diversity of forms of ministries, some undertaken without particular initiative from official authority, others undertaken with a mandate from ecclesiastical authorities, the Commission asserts that “the ordained ministry can only be rightly understood within this broader context of various ministries, all of which are the work of one and the same Spirit” (2).

The reconciling, sanctifying and salvific self-offering of Christ is the source and model of service to God and man. While the Commission recognizes that it is difficult to obtain a precise portrait of an apostle from the New Testament designation of the Twelve, Paul and others as “apostles”, it is nonetheless noted that apostles had a special relationship with the historical Christ and received their mandate from him to the world. It is thus said that “The Church is apostolic not only because its faith and life must reflect the witness to Jesus Christ given in the early Church by the apostles, but also because it is charged to continue in the apostles' commission to communicate to the world what it has received. Within the whole history of mankind the Church is to be the community of reconciliation.”

It is also recognized by the commission that all ministries are instruments of edification of the Church in the hands of the Holy Spirit. Already, in the New Testament, those who exercise ministerial functions in the Church did so with “some form of recognition and authorization”, thus showing “elements which will remain at the heart of what we today call ordination”. The ministerial office “played an essential part in the life of the Church in the first century”, leading the Commission to express the belief that provision of such ministry is part of God’s design for his people. Moreover, the New Testament contains “normative principles governing the purpose and function of the ministry” (e.g. Mk 10:43-45; Ac 20:28; 1 Tm 4:12-16; 1 P 5:1-4). There may have been a great deal of diversity in the structure of pastoral ministry. Yet Commission found no evidence that bishops and presbyters were appointed everywhere in the primitive period.

The Commission explains the purpose ordained ministry by referring to the priestly character of the Christian community itself. It is said that the Christian community “exists to give glory to God through the fulfillment of the Father’s purpose” and that “all Christians are called to serve this purpose by their life of prayer and surrender”. With this in mind, the Commission affirms that the goal of the ordained ministry is to be at the service of the priesthood of all the faithful. Through the ordained ministry, the Holy Spirit provides the Church with the focus of leadership and unity which every human community is in need of.

The ministry of “oversight” (episcopate) is an essential element of this ministry. This ministry, which presbyters exercise in communion with the bishop, involves “fidelity to the apostolic faith, its embodiment in the life of the Church today, and its transmission to the Church of tomorrow”. It is “ministry of the word and the sacraments”, including “authority to preside at the Eucharist and to pronounce absolution”. While deacons have no such powers, they are associates and assistants of the bishops in the ministry of word and sacraments. Deacons, although not so empowered, are associated with bishops and presbyters in the ministry of word and sacrament, and assist in oversight. In the Church’s continuing mission of proclaiming the reconciling love of Christ, the “central act of worship” is the Eucharist, “the memorial of that reconciliation” which “nourishes the Church’s life for the fulfillment of its mission”. For this reason, as evidence from the era of Ignatius of Antioch shows, the one who has oversight in his Church presides at the celebration of the Eucharist. (Letter to the Smyrnaeans 8:1).

According to the Commission, early Christians, “despite the fact that in the ever called ‘priests’ (hieries)”, came to see these ministries as reflecting the unique priestly sacrifice of Christ, as well as his continuing High Priesthood and described them in priestly terms. “Because the eucharist is the memorial of the sacrifice of Christ, the action of the presiding minister in reciting again the words of Christ at the Last Supper and distributing to the assembly the holy gifts is seen to stand in a sacramental relation to what Christ himself did in offering his own sacrifice.” While noting that the use of priestly terms to speak of the ordained ministry in the two traditions to “our two traditions commonly used priestly terms in speaking about the ordained ministry, the Commission does not see this usage as implying “any negation of the once-for-all sacrifice of Christ by any addition or repetition”.

The Commission was careful in saying that the ordained ministry is “not an extension of the common Christian priesthood but belongs to another realm of the gifts of the Spirit”. “It exists to help the Church to be ‘a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s own people, to declare the wonderful deeds of him who called them out of darkness into his marvelous light’” (1 Pt 2:9).

In both the Anglican and Roman Catholic Churches, ordination is unrepeatable because it denotes Christ’s gift of calling the faithful to life-long discipleship. “Ordination denotes entry into this apostolic and God-given ministry, which serves and signifies the unity of the local churches in themselves and with one another. Every individual act of ordination is therefore an expression of the continuing apostolicity and catholicity of the whole church.” The rite of ordination signifies this apostolicity and catholicity. Thus writes the Commission: “Both presbyters and deacons are ordained

by the bishop. In the ordination of a presbyter the presbyters present join the bishop in the laying on of hands, thus signifying the shared nature of the commission entrusted to them. In the ordination of a new bishop, other bishops lay hands on him, as they request the gift of the Spirit for his ministry and receive him into their ministerial fellowship. Because they are entrusted with the oversight of other churches, this participation in his ordination signifies that this new bishop and his church are within the communion of churches. Moreover, because they are representative of their churches in fidelity to the teaching and mission of the apostles and are members of the episcopal college, their participation also ensures the historical continuity of this church with the apostolic church and of its bishop with the original apostolic ministry. The communion of the churches in mission, faith and holiness, through time and space, is thus symbolized and maintained in the bishop. Here are comprised the essential features of what is meant in our two traditions, by ordination in the apostolic succession.”

What then are clearly discernible statements in this document? The Agreed Statement affirms the Christological and pneumatological foundations of ordained ministry by affirming its apostolic origin. The ministry is the gift of Christ and the Holy Spirit to continue the apostolic mandate to build the Church which proclaims the self-giving reconciling love of Christ in the ministry of the word and in the celebration of the Eucharist. In these statements, therefore, is the inseparable link between the ordained ministry and the Eucharist. “There is in the Eucharist a memorial (anamnesis)³ of the totality of God's reconciling action in Christ, who through this minister presides at the Lord's Supper and gives himself sacramentally. So it is because the Eucharist is central in the Church's life that the essential nature of the Christian ministry, however this may be expressed, is most clearly seen in its celebration; for, in the Eucharist, thanksgiving is offered to God, the gospel of salvation is proclaimed in word and sacrament, and the community is knit together as one body in Christ. Christian ministers are members of this redeemed community”.

But if, as has been said, statements are answers to questions, what was the problem, what was the question that these statements sought to answer?

The Problem

The problem has been described as “a creation of the past two centuries”. In the first half of the 18th century, the history and the rite of ordination in the Anglican Church became a subject of polemics among several French theologians. The question raised was: whether the rite of ordination in the Ordinal is capable of doing what is done by the rite of ordination in the Pontifical? While the government of King Edward VI, under the theological influence of Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury, and the political pressure of Protector Somerset, imposed the Ordinal of 1550 and 1552, the Ordinal of 1662 was the outcome of alterations introduced at the restoration of the monarchy.

In his effort to reform the Anglican Church, Archbishop Cranmer introduced Martin Luther and John Calvin's theology of justification. It has in fact been noted that Cranmer's theology of justification was closer to Calvin's than to Luther's. We are justified by perfect faith, that is, by nothing but perfect trust and confidence in God's promise of mercy, by the mediation of Christ. God accepts our imperfect works as if they were perfect.

The implications of this theology of justification for the sacraments would find themselves in the Ordinal, especially as it regards the rite of ordination. Regarding the Eucharist, he wrote: “the sacrament of the altar was not instituted to be received by one man for another, but to be received by every man for himself.” It is not faith in the sacraments that saves, it is faith in God’s promise. Using the Christological principle of Calvin, the *extra Calvinisticum*, according to which the divinity of Christ is both in the body assumed at the Incarnation, and outside this body, he would assert: “Christ (as concerning his body and manhood) is in heaven, and shall there continue until he come down at the last judgment.” In other words, since he is in heaven, his body and blood cannot be in the sacrament on earth. Cranmer would completely disconnect the sacramental body and blood of Christ from the Incarnation when he wrote: “We say that they [the fathers and prophets of the Old Testament] did eat his body and drink his blood, although he was not yet born nor incarnated.” As George Tavard puts it, “Cranmer logically rejected all doctrines and theologies according to which there is something in the sacrament that is actually done by the Church through the ministry of priests. He therefore denied the real presence, transubstantiation, and the offering or sacrifice.”

Cranmer’s denial that the Eucharist may be called sacrifice or offered as sacrifice, if at all it is called sacrifice, “it is a memory and representation of that very true sacrifice and immolation which before was made on the cross.” And in the changes Cranmer introduced to the Ordinal, the exhortation in the rite of priestly ordination does not contain any reference to the celebration of the Mass and the consecration of the Eucharist.

Later, in 1896, Pope Leo XIII’s *Apostolicae curae* would *judge* the rite of ordination in the Ordinal as defective in intention and form. He judged the form defective because it does not express “the order of priesthood or its grace and power, which is pre-eminently the power ‘to consecrate and offer the true body and blood of the Lord,’ in that sacrifice which is no ‘mere commemoration of the sacrifice performed on the Cross.’” As for the consecration of a bishop, Leo argued that it is not specified that the episcopacy is “the high priesthood, the sum total of the sacred ministry.” For this reason, it cannot confer the episcopate more than it can confer the priesthood.

Regarding the defect of intention, in Catholic theology, it is a basic principle that the minister must intend to do what the Church does for a sacrament to be effective. The intention to do what the Church does is identical with what is said in the rites and formulae of the visible Church. The question of intention is tied to the question of form. If references to the Eucharist as sacrifice and to the priest as one who offers the sacrifice are expunged from the rite, it becomes impossible to say that there was an intention to ordain the priest for the sacrifice of the holy Eucharist.

On the grounds of this argument that the rite of Anglican Orders in the Ordinal are defective in form and intention, Pope Leo XIII judged Anglican Order null and void. Thus came the problem referred to as the problem of Anglican Orders. The problem is can it be said that the Anglican rite of ordination intends to ordain the priest for the sacrifice of the holy Eucharist? Can it be said that in Anglican theology of the ordained ministry, the understanding of the priesthood is tied to the understanding of the Eucharist as sacrifice. Can it be said that Anglicans and Roman Catholics have arrived at a point where there can be mutual recognition of ministries? These and related issues were what the experts who drafted the Agreed Statement on the Doctrine on Ministry attempted to resolve.

What the Agreed Statement Achieved and what it did Not Achieved

The Commission was quite modest in assessing its own achievements. In the Conclusion to the document, it writes: “We are fully aware of the issues raised by the judgment of the Roman Catholic Church on Anglican Orders. The development of the thinking in our two Communion regarding the nature of the Church and of the Ordained Ministry, as represented in our Statement, has, we consider, put these issues in a new context. Agreement on the nature of ministry is prior to the consideration of the mutual recognition of ministries. What we have to say represents the consensus of the Commission on essential matters where it considers that doctrine admits no divergence. It will be clear that we have not yet broached the wide-ranging problems of authority which may arise in any discussion of ministry, nor the question of primacy. We are aware that present understanding of such matters remains an obstacle to the reconciliation of our churches in the one Communion we desire, and the Commission is now turning to the examination of the issues involved. Nevertheless we consider that our consensus, on questions where agreement is indispensable for unity, offers a positive contribution to the reconciliation of our churches and of their ministries.”

On her part, the Roman Catholic Church, in response to ARCIC I Report, recognized that it is “a result of an in-depth study of certain questions of faith by partners in dialogue and witnesses to the achievement of points of convergence and even of agreement which many would not have thought possible before the Commission began its work. As such, it constitutes a significant milestone not only in relations between the Catholic Church and the Anglican Communion but in the ecumenical movement as a whole.” Yet, the journey, for the Roman Catholic Church, is far from completed. Hence, she states: “The Catholic Church judges, however, that it is not yet possible to state that substantial agreement has been reached on all the questions studied by the Commission. There still remain between Anglicans and Catholics important differences regarding essential matters of Catholic doctrine.” I shall concentrate here on the important areas of consensus and differences identified by the Roman Catholic Church regarding Ministry and Ordination. For while the Catholic Church recognizes that there are “matters of significant consensus and of particular importance for the future development of Anglican-Roman Catholic dialogue, she sees the need for greater clarification of some statements.

The Catholic Church acknowledges that consensus has been reached on the following issues:

1. The Agreed Statement explicitly differentiates between the priesthood common to all the baptized and the ordained ministry. This enables the Commission to see them as “two distinct realities which relate each in its own way to the high priesthood of Christ” and not “an extension of the common Christian priesthood”.
2. Ordination is described as a "sacramental act" (MO 15) and the ordained ministry as being an essential element of the Church: "The New Testament shows that the ministerial office played an essential part in the life of the Church in the first century and we believe that a ministry of this kind is part of God's design for his people" (MOE 4).
3. The Ordained Ministry, the sacramental understanding of the Church is affirmed, to the exclusion of any purely congregational” presentation of Christianity.

What then are the areas in need of clarification? According to the Roman Catholic Church, a more explicit affirmation of the points that follow would have more clearly reflected her faith:

1. "That in the Eucharist, the Church, doing what Christ commanded His Apostles to do at the Last Supper, makes present the sacrifice of Calvary. This would complete, without contradicting it, the statement made in the Final Report, affirming that the Eucharist does not repeat the sacrifice of Christ, nor add to it" (E 5; EE 5);
2. "That the sacrifice of Christ is made present with all its effects, thus affirming the propitiatory nature of the Eucharistic sacrifice, which can be applied also to the deceased. For Catholics 'the whole Church' must include the dead. The prayer for the dead is to be found in all the Canons of the Mass, and the propitiatory character of the Mass as the sacrifice of Christ that may be offered for the living and the dead, including a particular dead person, is part of the Catholic faith".

This prepares the way for a more direct comment on the ordained ministry. On this, it is believed that the following points would need to be made clearly":

1. "That only a validly ordained priest can be the minister who, in the person of Christ, brings into being the sacrament of the Eucharist.
2. "He not only recites the narrative of the institution of the Last Supper, pronouncing the words of consecration and imploring the Father to send the Holy Spirit to effect through them the transformation of the gifts, but in so doing offers sacramentally the redemptive sacrifice of Christ"
3. While members of the Commission believe that the principles on which its doctrinal agreement rests are not affected by the ordination of women, the Catholic Church believes that the subject of ordination is linked with the nature of the sacrament of Holy Order;
4. The Catholic Church sees the need for further clarification of statements bearing on the apostolicity of ordained ministry. For example, regarding the participation of bishops at the ordination of a new bishop, the Agreed Statement explains: "because they (the ordaining bishops) are entrusted with the oversight of other churches, this participation in his ordination signifies that this new bishop and his church are within the communion of churches"; and "because they are representatives of their churches in fidelity to the teaching and mission of the apostles and are members of the episcopal college, their participation also ensures the historical continuity of this church with the apostolic church and its bishop with the original apostolic ministry". For the Catholic Church, however, the apostolicity of ordained ministry is "both an unbroken line of episcopal ordination from Christ through the apostles down through the centuries to the bishops of today and an uninterrupted continuity in Christian doctrine from Christ to those today who teach in union with the College of Bishops and its head, the Successor of Peter." In other words, in the perspective of the Catholic Church, the ARCIC statement that apostolicity of ordained ministry is signified by the participation of bishops in the ordination of another bishop, while it is true, needs to be completed by an affirmation of the causal relationship between the unbroken lines of Episcopal succession and apostolic teaching. The teaching of the apostles is preserved and faithfully transmitted by those who were appointed bishops by the apostles themselves, and through their successors down to our time. Those who were appointed bishops by the apostles, as well as those who succeeded

those appointed by the apostles, these are the ones who pass the teaching of the apostles to us. They are those who pass on the apostolic seed.

If, as the Commission states, “agreement on the nature of ministry is prior to the consideration of the mutual recognition of ministries”, we must also add that since the nature of ordained ministry and the nature of the Eucharist are inseparably, agreement on the nature of ministry must go hand in hand with agreement on the nature of the Eucharist. And agreement on the nature of the Eucharist celebrated by one body of ordained ministers is prior to and sign of the effective and visible communion that needs to be attained. But we are not yet there, and the distance that we must cover is long ahead of us. And only those who are patiently docile can undertake the journey of ecumenical dialogue.

CHAPTER SIX

LIFE IN CHRIST: MORALS, COMMUNION AND THE CHURCH

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Introduction

In March 1966, the Most Revd Michael Ramsey, the Archbishop of Canterbury and nominal Head of the Anglican Communion world-wide, visited Pope Paul VI in Rome. A Common Declaration was made to foster cooperation and communion, as a result of which a Joint Preparatory Commission was established. This Commission realized that:

Growing numbers in both our Communions accept that, in the words of the Second Vatican Council's Decree on Ecumenism: 'There can be no ecumenism worthy of the name without interior conversion. For it is from newness of attitudes of mind, self-denial and unstinted love that desires of unity take their rise and develop in a mature way.'⁹⁸

The Commission further recognized that both Anglicans and Roman Catholics claim that they have been baptized into one hope by the Holy Spirit; that they both have faith in the one true God; preach the same Christ and have the same inheritance in the Scriptures, particularly in the New Testament. All these form enough bases for unity. The reciprocal visit by Pope John Paul II to Canterbury during the primacy of Archbishop Robert Runcie in 1982 resulted in the following Common Declaration:

The new international Commission is to continue the work already begun; to examine especially in the light of our respective judgments on the Final Report, the outstanding doctrinal differences which still separate us, with a view to their eventual resolution; to study all that hinders the mutual recognition of the ministries of our Communions, and to recommend what practical steps will be necessary when, on the basis of our unity in faith, we are able to proceed to the restoration of full communion. We are well aware that this new Commission's task will not be easy but we are encouraged by our reliance on the grace of God and by all we have seen of the power of that grace in the ecumenical movement of our time.⁹⁹

⁹⁸ The authors of this Report cited *Unitatis Redintegratio* para. 7. See Documents produced by the Anglican – Roman Catholic International Commission. The Final Report, Windsor, 1981, p.2

⁹⁹"Life in Christ: Morals, Communion and the Church: Second Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission, Preface by the co-Chairmen, p.1

The co-Chairmen of Commission II (ARCIC II) that produced the Report on "Life in Christ: Morals, Communion and the Church", duly observed that among the many international dialogues between divided Christians world-wide, the ARCIC is the first to directly attempt to deal with the subject of morals. This in itself is very commendable.

These top-level ecclesiastical contacts have led to the replication of Anglican-Roman Catholic contacts at the national and local levels as well; hence it has become possible to establish the Nigeria Anglican-Roman Catholic Commission (NARCC) about ten years ago. It has been customary to hold the meetings almost bi-annually, rotating them between the two Communion. From the available records, the first NARCC meeting was held in Umuahia in July 2003.¹⁰⁰ The last meeting before this one happened in Sokoto at the Holy Trinity (Anglican) Cathedral from 18^t to 20th October, 2011. The theme of that meeting was the same as that of this gathering, namely: "Life in Christ: Morals, Communion and the Church." At that meeting, Rev. Father Anthony Akinwale, Professor of Theology at the Dominican Institute, Ibadan, presented the paper with the question mark title: "Share the same fundamental moral Values?" Father Anthony Akinwale's answer to this question seems to be in the affirmative with some qualifications. This paper is a rejoinder and reflection on Father Akinwale's paper in the attempt to explore what moral values Anglicans and Catholics have in common, as well as the areas of divergence.

It is important for us to explore what position historic orthodox Anglicanism holds on these issues, but more significantly the stand of the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) in the light of recent events in global Anglicanism.

Share the Same Fundamental Values?

It was in order for Professor Akinwale to refer to the Preface to 'Life in Christ: Morals, Communion and the Church' in which the co-Chairmen of ARCIC observed that our two communions accept the same fundamental moral values, share the same vision of humanity created in the image of God and re-created in Christ, and confess the one hope in the final consummation of the kingdom of God (Church as Communion, nn. 44, 45). Any careful consideration would equally confirm that "Anglicans and Roman Catholics derive from the Scriptures and Tradition the same controlling vision of the nature and destiny of humanity and share the same fundamental moral values". The areas of common conviction include the proclamation of the same Gospel and the acceptance of the same injunction to mission and service. Other areas of agreement include holding similar views on war and peace, euthanasia, freedom and justice. They opine that exaggeration of the outstanding differences would weaken the witness of both Communion before the watching world, which is already in danger of losing its way. There is therefore the need to counter this wide-spread assumption in the eyes of this watching world that the differences of teaching on certain particular moral issues signify an irreconcilable divergence of understanding which would appear to pose an insurmountable hurdle to shared witness. The ARCIC therefore proceeded to argue that even on moral issues where disagreements exist, both Communion share a common perspective and acknowledge the same

¹⁰⁰NARCC Newsletter, Vol 2 No 1, 2011, p.2

underlying values. The Commission then proceeded to elaborate on this common perspective and those underlying values. They include the response to what God has done in Christ for us; the shared vision of God in the face of Jesus Christ through the Incarnation; a vision of a new humanity renewed and fulfilled in Christ; a new creation which makes possible the existence of a new community and a new pattern of social relationships. This heritage also includes the acceptance of the missionary imperative to preach and live the Gospel within difference cultures (Life in Christ, 14). In the Scriptures we have the origins of our common heritage. "Scripture is fulfilled in Christ, whose Gospel is the coming of the Kingdom of God, the redemption of the world by Jesus, the forgiveness of sins and new life in the Spirit and the hope of glory" (Life in Christ, 17). It is the Gospel which makes the new humanity possible, and this new humanity is present in the community which belongs to the new world inaugurated by the resurrection of Christ. and which lives according to the law of the Spirit written in our hearts (2 Cor. 3 :2).

The Commission recognizes that the world is full of moral perplexities, but that the Christian lives the moral life according to the mind of Christ which remains in the Church through the presence of the Paraclete, the Holy Spirit. It is the Spirit that mediates the mind of Christ to the believers through the remembered teaching of Jesus.

The Commission duly acknowledges that the method of arriving at practical decisions on new and complex moral and pastoral problems may vary, but it affirms that both our Communion agree on the use of practical reason in interpreting Scripture, tradition and experience. Knowing the mind of Christ, however, is not a once-for-all accomplishment but a continuing process which involves listening, learning, reflecting and teaching. In this process every member of the community of faith has a part to play in the common task of discovering what obedience to the gospel of grace and the law of love entails. This calls for continuous discernment, constant repentance and the renewal of the mind as enjoined by Paul in Romans 12:2.

However, the discernment of the mind of Christ in history is characterized by change. In the course of history our two Communion have been led through divergent paths. This has resulted in differences which according to the Commission must be acknowledged with honesty and patience.

The Resultant Differences

As put by the ARCIC, the resultant differences do not arise from disagreement on the sources of moral authority or on fundamental moral values:

Rather they have arisen from different emphases which our two Communion have given to different elements of the moral life. In particular, differences have occurred in the ways in which each, in isolation from the other, has developed its structures of authority and has come to exercise that authority in the formation of moral judgment. These factors, we believe, have contributed significantly to the differences that have arisen in a limited number of important moral issues. We cannot, of course, hope to do justice to the complex histories that have shaped our two Communion and given each

its distinctive ethos. However, we wish to draw attention to two strands in our histories which, for present purposes, are of special significance: first, structures of government and the voice of the laity; and secondly, processes of moral formation and individual judgment (Life in Christ, 37).

What is said above is true of the relationship between the Roman Catholic Church and the Church of England. However, the world-wide Anglican Communion is larger than and, in most cases, very different from the Church of England.

The Church of England is the established Church of the country with the Sovereign as its Head, and with the British Parliament dictating the direction it should go. This is not true of the Anglican Church in Nigeria or of most other Anglican Provinces outside Britain.

As the Commission duly realizes the renunciation of the authority and supremacy of the Pope, the acknowledgement of the Sovereign as Supreme Governor, the adoption of English as the language of worship "all combined to weave together the Life of the Church (of England), the culture of the nation and the Law of the land." This situation had implications for the voice of the Laity within the structures of the government of the Church. The Lay voice was exercised through Parliament and this conferred on it a substantial measure of authority in the affairs of the Church. Till today, it is the Prime Minister, acting as the voice of the Parliament, who appoints the Archbishop of Canterbury and sends the name to the Sovereign before public announcement.

As far as Roman Catholicism was concerned, the Reformation and the Enlightenment led to a stronger affirmation of the authority of the Pope. The Roman Catholic Church was eager to uphold its independence from the State, and to re-affirm and strengthen its unity in the face of challenging forces. This lent to the Papacy a renewed significance, and provided the context for the solemn definition of Vatican Council I (1869 - 1870) which clarified the universal jurisdiction of the Bishop of Rome and his infallibility (Life in Christ, 40). Vatican Council II (1962 - 1965) however stressed the shared authority of the bishops, of whom the Bishop of Rome is one. "Yet the claim made for the Pope includes the ability to speak infallibly on special occasions on matters of faith or morals and the authority to intervene in any part of the Church where it is felt necessary".¹⁰¹ It needs be realized, however, that the Vatican City in Rome, is itself a state with the Pope as its head wielding both secular and ecclesiastical authority. This is precisely why the Pope appoints and sends nuncios to other countries as his ambassadors. We also need to remind ourselves that the infallibility of the Pope covers his pronouncements *ex cathedra* only.

Though there have been significant developments in the Roman Catholic Church through which the laity participate in the discernment and articulation of the faith of the Church in liturgical roles, catechesis, pastoral work, involvement in theological education, etc this did not affect the authority of the Pope. Anglican Primates carry a different kind of authority, because they do not

¹⁰¹Julian Charley 'Governing the Church' in, Robin Keeley, et. al. (eds). *The Lion Handbook of Christian Belief* (Tring, Herts: Lion Publishing 1982), p.409.

make such exclusive claims for themselves. As much as possible, official moral teaching should be commendatory rather than prescriptive and binding. Roman Catholics however emphasize the necessity for central authority to ensure unity and to offer clear and binding teaching (Life in Christ, 49).

Roman Catholic moral teaching emphasizes the absoluteness of certain moral laws and prohibitions which allow no exceptions. When the ARCIC says that Anglicans acknowledge the same ultimate values without accepting that laws as we apprehend them are necessarily absolute, this is obviously with reference to the Church of England and some Anglican Communion in the Western World. Like the Roman Catholics Nigerian Anglicans and most of their Global South counterparts believe that certain actions are intrinsically disordered and therefore objectively wrong. This explains why most African Bishops and their counterparts in the Global South did not attend the 2008 Lambeth Conference over the homosexuality controversy.

Another area of difference identified by the Commission between the Roman Catholics and the Anglicans is the practice of the private confession of sin before a priest as it obtains in the Roman Catholic Church. Basing their arguments on Scriptures like John 15: 16; 16:23-24; 1 John 2:1-2; Eph 2:18; Heb 4.16, etc the Reformers emphasized the direct access of the individual sinner to God. This made the Anglicans to reject obligatory private confession of sin before a priest, though they believed that it was still a wholesome means of grace. As a result provision was made for its practice in the Prayer Book "for those with an unquiet and sorely troubled conscience".

Many Anglicans highly value mutual confession of sin based on James 5:16 which says: "Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other that you may be healed". The issue is not really on the confession of sin, only to go on committing the same sins, but to confess and have the grace to forsake them. (Prov. 28: 13). Some Anglicans would see confession of sin before a priest as both unhelpful and unnecessary. It is enough for the Scriptures to speak directly to their consciences, offering assurance of forgiveness and practical guidance through the Holy Spirit. For Anglicans who do, or do not, confess their sins privately, general confession and absolution by the priest remain an integral part of public worship. In addition, Anglicans often consult their priests and lay advisers for moral and spiritual counsel. For Roman Catholics, the practice of the private confession of sin before a priest has remained an important avenue for moral teaching and the nurturing of spiritual life.

Marriage of Divorcees and Contraception

Both Anglicans and Roman Catholics see human sexuality as part of God's good creation (Gen 1:26-31). Both recognize that sex can be disruptive or uniting, destructive or creative. Christians of both Communion therefore see the need 'to integrate sexuality into an ordered pattern of life, which will nurture a person's spiritual relationships both with other persons and with God' (Akinwale, 6).

To obtain such an integration, sexual abstinence, faithfulness and self-control (traditionally called chastity) are required (Life in Christ, 56; cf Matt 5:28; 1 Thess 4:1-8; Gal 5:23; I Cor 6:9, 12-20).

Both Communion recognize that the sex drive could be ordered either towards marriage or celibacy. Both also agree that the new life in Christ calls for a radical break with the sin of sexual self-centredness which would inevitably lead to individual and social disintegration (Akinwale, 6). The right ordering and use of sexual energies according to Scripture is an essential aspect of life in Christ, in order to avoid lust, fornication and adultery, and other sexual sins (cf Mk.10:9; John 8:1-11; 1 Cor 6:9; Gal 5:19; Heb. 13:4; etc). This point is underscored in Christian tradition including the time Anglicans and Roman Catholics parted ways (Life in Christ, 57).

In the same way both Communion view marriage with high regard. It is part of the creation ordinance; a mutual covenant between man and wife; provides for communal and social stability and the God-given channel for the preservation of the human race through procreation (Gen 1:28; Provo 2:7; Mal 2: 14-16).

The marriage of Christian couples is a mystery as it symbolizes the relationship between God and his people, Christ and his Church (Eph 5:31-32). As Akinwale points out while Anglicans emphasize the breadth of the grace of God in creation, Roman Catholics emphasize the depth of God's grace in redemption. According to him, these two views have led to differences of discipline and pastoral practice regarding marriage and divorce (Akinwale, 6). For the Roman Catholics, when a sacramental marriage has been consummated, the covenant is irrevocable, and that this firm legal framework is the best protection for the institution of marriage. Even when the relationship of love and trust has broken down and there no longer exists the possibility of salvaging the marriage, the covenant is indissoluble until after the death of one of the partners. Anglicans also see the covenant of marriage as a lifelong union which can only be terminated by death. But when a marital bond has irretrievably broken down, and the past has been forgiven and healed, then a new covenant may be made in good faith (Life in Christ, 25). When an old covenant has been broken, a new covenant can be made. This is based on the principle that God is the God of the second chance who overlooks and forgives past sins. There are some Anglicans who believe that divorced Christians should not remarry as long as the partner is alive. Though the Roman Catholic Church may not allow divorce or remarriage for any reason whatsoever so long as one of the partners is alive, the Church allows separation from board and bed, *divortium a mensa et thoro*, and may have reasons to annul a marriage altogether if it is believed that the marriage had been unlawfully contracted *ah initio*, and therefore had never existed.¹⁰² The Constitution and Canons of The Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion), 2002, provides grounds for annulment or dissolution of marriage, and remarriage, even when one of the partners involved in the dissolution is still alive. Canon XVII (2) (4) states:

- a) Any member whose marriage has been annulled or dissolved by a civil court of competent jurisdiction or by a recognized authority or in a recognized manner shall, if he or she desires to have such a union solemnized by the Rites of the Church during the life

¹⁰²John Murray, *Divorce*, Philadelphia, The Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co. 1974 edn, pp. 35-39.

time of a former partner, apply to the Bishop for judgement.

b) The Bishop with the concurrence of the majority of two or more assessors sitting together or by correspondence with one or more of them shall issue a judgement to the applicant which shall grant or withhold the permission for such solemnization.

c) No case shall be considered until at least one year until after the dissolution of the former marriage.

d) Applications shall be made to the Bishop not less than three calendar months before the date of the contemplated marriage.

Canon XVII (3) (3) which address the issue of non-Christians where one of the couple becomes a Christian later on states as follows:

A marriage contracted by non-Christians is not raised to the status of Christian marriage by the baptism of one of the partners only. If after such baptism the unbaptized partner is unwilling to remain peacefully and without offence to God with the baptized partner without seeking to induce him or her to break any Christian Law or prevent the baptism and Christian upbringing of the children, it is possible for the baptized partner to take advantage of the *Privilegium Paulinum* (1 Corinthians 7: 12-16). If this course is desired, application shall be made to the Bishop who shall satisfy himself by direct approach to the unbaptized partner that such unwillingness exists. If he be satisfied of it, the Bishop may on the dissolution of the marriage permit the baptized partner to contract a new Christian marriage.

This *Pauline Privilege* of 1 Corinthians 7: 12-16 may be contrasted with the *Petrine Privilege* granted by the Roman Catholic Church whereby a polygamist who wishes to join the Church is allowed to retain his preferred wife (not necessarily the first one as recommended by most Protestants), provided the preferred wife agrees to be baptized with the husband. Grounds for the annulment of marriage in the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) are also stated in the Canon XVII (6) as follows:

The following shall be impediments to the solemnization of Holy Matrimony which, should the marriage have been contracted, may be grounds for Nullity in the Church -

- 1) Marriage within the prohibited degrees as set out in the Book of Common Prayer 1662, as amended in 1946 or the Book of Common Prayer of the Church of Nigeria, and such other degrees of relationship as are normally prohibited by local or tribal custom;
- 2) Mistake as to the identity of either party;
- 3) Lack of freewill and competent consent on the part of either (including fraud, duress, mental deficiency, insanity);
- 4) Impotence or sexual perversion; and
- 5) Bigamy¹⁰³

¹⁰³The Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) Constitution and Canons 2002, Lagos CSS Press, pp 34-38.

Concerning contraception, Anglicans and Roman Catholics agree that procreation is one of the divinely ordained reasons for marriage and that responsible parenting is enjoined. Thus, both oppose excessive use of contraception (the so-called "contraceptive mentality"). Anglicans understand "the good of procreation to be a norm governing the married relationship as a whole." Roman Catholics, however, hold that every act of intercourse should be "open to procreation". (Life in Christ, 80). The typical English couple does not have more than one or two children or none at all. This is not true or typical of the Nigerian Anglican who may have up to six or more children from the same woman.

Abortion and Homosexuality

Concerning abortion, the ARCIC II points out that there is no disagreement between the two Communion at the level of fundamental moral values except on implementation and practical judgment. It is observed that Anglicans have no agreed position on when precisely a new life in the womb is to be protected as a human being. However, there are some Anglicans who hold the same position as the Roman Catholics namely that, in all circumstances and without exception, protection of the unborn child must be given from the time of conception. Roman Catholic teaching rejects every form of direct abortion. This means absolute prohibition. However, Anglicans hold that in certain cases, direct abortion is justifiable (Life in Christ, 85). It would be interesting to inquire into what actually happens among professing Anglicans and Roman Catholics regarding abortion in Abuja or Lagos, for example.

As far as homosexuality is concerned both Anglicans and Roman Catholics affirm the significance of human friendship and affection between the sexes, whether married or single. Both affirm that all persons, including persons with homosexual orientation are made in the image of God, and that a faithful and lifelong marriage of man and woman provides the context for sexual relationship. Both appeal to Scripture and nature as the sources of their position on the issue and deny that homosexual and marital relationships between a man and a woman are moral equivalents. For Roman Catholics, homosexual activity is intrinsically disordered and, therefore, objectively wrong. But as observed by the Life in Christ document, "Anglicans could agree that such activity is disordered; but there may well be differences among them in the consequent moral and pastoral advice they would think it right to offer to those seeking their counsel and direction" (Life in Christ, 87). This could be true of the British context or the Western World generally. But for the African and Global South context generally, homosexuality is not only intrinsically disordered, it is also objectively a taboo, an anathema. There may be a few dissenting voices here and there due to Western influence, but for most Africans homosexuality is unscriptural, unnatural and un-African.

Historic Anglican Orthodoxy

The seeds of Anglicanism were sown when Pope Gregory sent Augustine the monk to England in

597 to further the work of the Gospel by organizing the Christian converts already there under the jurisdiction of Rome. When the Church of England broke away from Rome at a later date the Church could still maintain its apostolic succession in as much as the line of ascendancy to the bishopric of Canterbury remained intact. When Henry VIII unsuccessfully sought the annulment of his marriage to Catherine of Aragon, widow of Arthur, his deceased brother, from the Pope, and then later divorced her, the process was precipitated which led to the break of the Church of England from Rome. A theological separation between England and the Vatican had been foreshadowed by certain movements within the English church such as the Lollards.¹⁰⁴ The marriage of Catherine of Aragon to King Henry VIII appeared defective *ab initio* since Catherine was the widow of Henry's brother. However, due to pressure from Emperor Charles V of Spain, Pope Clement VII was reluctant to grant annulment. Though theologically a Catholic, the English monarch then decided to become the Supreme Head of the Church in order to ensure the annulment of his marriage. In this way, the English Reformation obtained a political boost.¹⁰⁵

Thus, in 1534, the Parliament declared Henry VIII the Supreme Head of the Church of England on earth. Even with this rift in the making, there was still some rapport between the English Crown and the Papacy. Henry VIII disdained some aspects of Luther's work as a result of which Pope Leo X awarded him the title 'Defender of the Faith'. After the rift, Henry VIII continued to use the title and it was subsequently validated by Parliament in 1544.

Biblical interpretation was also at the heart of the split between Rome and Canterbury during the Reformation. The Roman Catholic Church of the period taught that salvation came only to those who had done their best to become righteous; though God helped people with his grace they still had to prove themselves worthy to receive divine assistance through good works. This position was based on the interpretation of James 2: 14-26 that faith without works is dead. The problem lay in what James meant by 'faith'. Did it mean total commitment which leads to obedience or mere theoretical accent which the demons also have (James 2: 19)?

Archbishop Thomas Cranmer (1489-1556) who was at the centre of nascent Anglicanism, however argued that salvation was not a reward for the pursuit of personal purity but entirely an act of God's grace that freely gave to humankind what they could never even partially earn. This did not mean that good works had no place in God's scheme. Good works are performed in gratitude to God and in service to humanity for salvation already received and not as a means to obtaining it. (Gal 6:9, 10; Rom 12:20-21; Eph 2:8-10).

Anglican Ecclesiology, as in Roman Catholicism, is built on the principles of Scripture, tradition and reason, but seen from different perspectives. The Anglican position is due largely to the work of Richard Hooker (1554-1600). Anglicanism encouraged its members to study the Bible for themselves, and that it should be made available to people in their own language. However, Scripture only enunciates broad principles and may not indicate what should be done in specific

¹⁰⁴See G. G. Nmadu, *Anglicanism at a Glance*
Kaduna, M. O. Press and Publishers Ltd, 2010, p. 62

¹⁰⁵See G. G. Nmadu, p. 62

situations. Therefore, the Bible has to be interpreted and made intelligible in the context of the worshipping community, and in harmony with the collective wisdom of antiquity - what has been believed everywhere, always and by all.¹⁰⁶

This means appealing to the ancient Church Fathers who had connection with the Apostles, who were first-hand witnesses of the life, death and resurrection of Christ. The Apostolic tradition is consistent with Scripture and both of them are inter-dependent. As regards appeal to reason this is based on the principle of the perception of right and wrong. This is not mere human ability to think in whatever direction one wishes. It has to be logical thinking in harmony with Scripture and tradition.

In the words of Samuel Ramsey "reason increases and enlarges human understanding of divine revelation through its own workings, so long as reason is used in humble dependence upon God who gave it".¹⁰⁷ Both Scripture and tradition have been historically defined, but reason is an ongoing process. Properly applied, it cannot be at variance with Scripture and tradition. For the Anglicans tradition is encapsulated in the three Creeds, (the Apostles', the Nicene and the Athanasian), as well as in the four Ecumenical Councils of Nicea (325 AD), Constantinople (381), Ephesus (431) and Chalcedon (451). Thus the Anglican Church rejects all the heresies which these Councils set out to tackle. It was Richard Hooker who was first to establish Anglican Moral Theology which owed a lot to Thomas Aquinas.¹⁰⁸ From the preceding, it can be concluded that authentic and historic Anglican orthodoxy is predicated on divine grace and practical trust in Jesus Christ, solidly anchored on the Scriptures, the tradition of the Church Fathers and reason, which is consistent with the rule of faith.

Despite the bond of Scripture, tradition and reason, Anglicanism does not present a homogeneous landscape in terms of the style of worship or churchmanship. In recent times the four broad categories of churchmanship are the Anglo-Catholics, the Evangelicals, the Charismatic and the Liberals. The Church Missionary Society which brought Anglicanism to Nigeria in the 19th Century belonged to the evangelical tradition. Liberalism came with the Age of Enlightenment of the 17th and 18th centuries and has deeply affected Christianity worldwide. The Evangelicals and the Anglo-Catholics, contended with liberalism just as the Roman Catholics have done (Akinwale, 4).

Contemporary Anglicanism

Over the past decade or so, the Anglican Communion has been troubled by the actions of the

¹⁰⁶Cf. Samuel Ramsey, *The Anglican Spirit* (New York: Church Publishing Incorporated 2004) p 17, citing St. Vincent.

¹⁰⁷Samuel Ramsey, *ibid.* cf also Alastair Redfern, *Being Anglican* (London: DL T, 2004) p.21.

¹⁰⁸Richard Hooker, *Treatise of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*, 1594; See Anglican Moral Theology by N. J. Biggar, *New Dictionary of Christian Ethics and Pastoral Theology* IVP 1995; 160 - 161.

Churches especially in Canada and U.S.A over the issue of homosexuality.

Despite a clear statement by Lambeth Conference of 1998 in Resolution 1 (I 0) that the practice of homosexuality was incompatible with Scripture, the Episcopal Church in the USA chose a practising homosexual, who had divorced his wife and started living with another male whom he called his marriage partner, as bishop in 2003. The Global South bishops

(Le. from Africa, Asia and South America) denounced this action but the Archbishop of Canterbury the nominal head of the Anglican Communion was unwilling or unable to stop the practice. Thus, it was becoming increasingly clear that connection to Canterbury may no longer be necessary in defining who is an Anglican but rather obedience to the Scriptures. As a result the Anglican Church in Nigeria sought to re-define who the Anglican of the future would be through a constitutional amendment in 2005, thus:

The Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) shall be in full communion with all Anglican Churches, Dioceses and Provinces that hold and maintain the historic faith, doctrine, sacrament and discipline of the One Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church as the Lord has commanded in His holy Word, and as the same are received and taught in the Book of Common Prayer and the Ordinal of 1662 and the thirty-nine Articles of Religion.¹⁰⁹

Prior to the Lambeth Conference of 2008, the African Bishops warned Canterbury that if any renegade homosexual bishop was invited, they would not attend. This warning went unheeded. With this development, the African bishops with their Global South counterparts organized the Global Anglican Future Conference (GAFCON) in Jerusalem from 22nd to 29th June, 2008. Prominent among the leaders was the then Primate of All Nigeria (Anglican Communion), the Most Revd. Dr. Peter J. Akinola. Over 1000 delegates with 280 bishops were in attendance.

From that Conference emerged the Fellowship of Confessing Anglicans. That Conference generated much interest from the Vatican, the Pentecostals and other denominations. GAFCON issued a Statement of 14 declarations which include the following:

We acknowledge God's creation of humankind as male and female and the unchangeable standard of Christian marriage between one man and one woman as the proper place for sexual intimacy and the basis of family. We repent of our failures to maintain this standard and call for a renewed commitment to lifelong fidelity in marriage and abstinence for those who are not married. We are committed to the unity of those who know and love Christ and to building authentic ecumenical relationships. We recognize the Orders and jurisdiction of those Anglicans who uphold orthodox faith and practice and we encourage them to join us in this declaration ... We reject the authority of those Churches and leaders

¹⁰⁹Bishop M. O. Fape, *Knowing the Fundamentals of Anglicanism*, Shagamu; Nigeria: Joas Press 2010 reprint p.79

who have denied the orthodox faith in word and deed...¹¹⁰

From this Jerusalem Declaration, it seems clear that the Fellowship of Confessing Anglicans of which the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) is a part, rejects homosexuality in all its totality and all other forms of heretical beliefs and practices, and is committed to ecumenism and Church unity based on John 17:20-21 that all Christians "may be one".

Conclusion

The trend of events in contemporary global Anglicanism would suggest that the Roman Catholic position on morals, especially on the issue of homosexuality is difficult to reconcile with the position of some Anglicans in North America and England. But at the local Nigerian level, the two Communion hold a common position. This creates room for unity, cooperation and understanding. Co-operation and understanding at the local level would have a way of influencing events at the highest levels of our two Communion. In his address entitled 'The Church and Salvation' at the Abuja meeting of NARCC, 2nd September 2010, the Primate of All Nigeria (Anglican Communion), the Most Revd. Nicholas D. Okoh, observed that it is time for the talk to be at the highest level, to translate to action our vision and goal, and that for this discussion to reach full communion, it is meant for the people at the top, that is, the Church hierarchy in Rome and Canterbury.¹¹¹ A similar opinion was voiced by Bishop Charles Hammawa in Owerri in February 2011 when he said that the hierarchy will have to be involved in ecumenical unity which will then trickle down to the grassroots.¹¹² It is the Holy Spirit who creates unity. Jesus prayed "that they all may be one" (John 17:21). The prayer of Jesus cannot but be answered by the loving heavenly Father at the appointed time. Our own duty is to be humble and remain sensitive to the guidance of the Holy Spirit: "endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace ... " (Eph 4:3).

¹¹⁰Stephen Noll, 'The Jerusalem Declaration:
<http://fca.net/resources/theJerusalemdeclaration/>). 12 Dec 2008, p.2

¹¹¹NARCC Newsletter, Vol 2 No 1, 2011, p.6

¹¹²NARCC Newsletter, 2011, p.7

CHAPTER SEVEN

IS CHRISTIAN UNITY NECESSARY FOR SALVATION?

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In the Preface to the Agreed Statement on Salvation and the Church, the Co-Chairmen, Catholic Bishop Cormac Murphy-O'Connor and Anglican Bishop Mark Santer said the following: The primary task of ARCIC II is to examine and try to resolve those doctrinal differences which still divide us. Accordingly, at the request of the Anglican Consultative Council (Newcastle, September 1981), we have addressed ourselves to the doctrine of justification, which at the time of the Reformation was a particular cause of contention. This request sprang out of a widespread view that the subject of justification and salvation is so central to the Christian faith that, unless there is assurance of agreement on this issue, there can be no full doctrinal agreement between our two Churches. We have spent more than three years on this task. The doctrine of justification raises issues of great complexity and profound mystery. Furthermore it can be properly treated only within the wider context of the doctrine of salvation as a whole. This in turn has involved discussion of the role of the Church in Christ's saving work. Hence the title of our agreed statement: Salvation and the Church. It is the will of God that all creatures be reconciled to him in Christ. That reconciliation is already taken place in those who live in communion with one another in Christ through the sacrament of baptism. 'Koinonia with one another is entailed by our koinonia with God in Christ. This is the mystery of the Church' (ARCIC I The Final Report, Introduction 5).

Let us recall that the complex issue of the doctrine of justification was a major point of disagreement between Roman Catholics and continental Reformers in the 16th century. Let us also recall that it was not a point of disagreement with Anglicans until Anglicans substantially adopted the doctrine of the Lutherans' Augsburg and Wurttemberg Confessions. To these two facts we must add that the Decree on Justification of the Council of Trent did not have Anglicans in mind since, as at that time, Anglicans had not adopted the doctrine of justification according to the Reformers.

Is the Church necessary for salvation?

This question belongs to wider context, namely, the context of four areas of difficulty between Roman Catholics and 16th century Reformers. The first three difficulties actually provide the context and source of the fourth difficulty. The debate on the instrumentality of the Church issues from the debate on the relationship between salvation and human freedom. The first concerned the understanding of the faith that justifies, the second was on the understanding of justification itself, the third was on the relationship between faith and good works, and the fourth was on the role of the Church in the work of salvation.

Concerning the first, Catholics thought the Protestants emphasized an absolute doctrine of divine predestination that encouraged the need for holiness of life. Protestants accused Catholics of lacking confidence in the sufficiency of Christ's work thus over-relying on human efforts.

The second concerned the understanding of justification and related concepts like righteousness and justice. Not wanting to make justification depend upon entitlement, Reformation theologians emphasized the righteousness of Christ in his obedience and passion by which God declared the unrighteous righteous. Catholics saw this a nominal and imputed righteousness, a legal fiction external to the believer leaving unchanged the sinfulness of the individual excluding the inner regeneration by the indwelling Spirit. For their part, Anglican theologians saw imputed and imparted righteousness as logically distinct but liturgically and existentially inseparable. While we are made truly righteous, we are still conscious of our need for forgiveness.

The third difficulty was on the relationship between good works and salvation. Reformers understood emphasis on good works by Roman Catholics as compromising divine sovereignty in matters of grace. Catholics understood Reformers as affirming that our human actions are worthless before God, denying human freedom and responsibility, and the fact that even supernaturally inspired work is to be rewarded. For their part, Anglican theologians of the Reformation age, understood salvation “by faith alone” as meaning “only for the merit of Christ”. They therefore held the position that good works are relevant but imperfect and inadequate to salvation. They demonstrate faith and are inseparable from hope and love.

A fourth difficulty is the role of the Church in the process of salvation. On this, the Reformers felt that Catholics did not acknowledge the authority of Scripture over the Church, placed the mediatorial role of the Church above the role of Christ as “sole mediator between God and man” (1 Tim 2:5). Catholics, for their part, believed the Protestants had abandoned or devalued the Church’s ministry and sacraments which were divinely chosen means of grace, as well as the divinely given authority of the Church as guardian and interpreter of divine revelation. What directly concerns us here is the fourth difficulty. As Jean Marie Tillard asked: “Is the Church entirely outside the work of salvation? Is it only the fruit of it?” What is the role of the Church in the process of salvation?¹¹³

The Agreed Statement on Salvation and the Church recognizes that Christ fulfilled God’s purpose of creation and salvation by reconciling us to God and to one another through his sacrifice on the cross. Thanks to the Holy Spirit, the fruits of this sacrifice of reconciliation are present in the Church through word and sacrament. The Church is the community of those reconciled by the Gospel she has received, as well as the community that reconciles the world to God by the Gospel she proclaims. The atoning work of Christ, accomplished once-and-for-all on the cross, is made present in the Church in the holy Eucharist, thanks to the action of the Holy Spirit. In her ministry of word and sacrament, therefore, the Church is called to be, and by the power of the Spirit actually is, a sign, steward and instrument of God’s design. For this reason it can be described as sacrament of God's saving work. However, the credibility of the Church's witness is undermined by the sins of its members, the shortcomings of its human institutions, and not least by the scandal of division. The Church is in constant need of repentance and renewal so that it can be more clearly seen for what it is: the one, holy body of Christ. Nevertheless the Gospel contains the promise that despite all failures the Church will be used by God in the achievement of his purpose: to draw humanity into communion with himself

¹¹³ Jean Marie Tillard, *Church of Churches: The Ecclesiology of Communion* (Collegeville, MN: Michael Glazier/Liturgical Book, 1992) 230. Subsequent references will be given in the text.

and with one another, so as to share his life, the life of the Holy Trinity.” (*Agreed Statement on Salvation and the Church*, 29).

From what has been said so far, it is possible to conclude that the will of God is that we live in communion with him and with one another. The will of God is our salvation. Salvation is thus communion with God and with one another. The Church as sign and minister of communion is “sign, steward and instrument of reconciliation.” According to Jean Marie Tillard,

That the ‘yes’ of faith, which indicates a free acceptance of the design of God and expresses basing one’s entire life on the Word of the Covenant is required, no one has ever doubted it. Even more so, theologies of the Reformation, reacting against a Christianity which was too ‘social’ and insufficiently ‘personal,’ have often give this ‘yes’ a capital importance. Therefore, it is admitted by all of the traditions that the absolute gratuitousness of salvation is in no way equivalent to an aggression on the part of God. It is necessary at least that the human person accept being taken hold of by the power of the Agape (*Church of Churches*, 230-231).

But in saying this, we recognize that we are not saved because we are free, we are saved that is why we are free. Our free response to God’s design of salvation in communion is not what causes our salvation. It is our salvation the causes our free response to God’s design of salvation. The Church is the community of those who have given a free response, a “yes” to God’s work of salvation. Salvation is neither accomplished by our freedom nor accomplished without our freedom. Let us, in this regard, remember the wisdom of St Augustine of Hippo: that the God who created us without our consent will not save us without our consent. God’s gratuitous offer of salvation does not depend on our obedience in freedom but awaits our obedience in freedom. God’s “yes” is not conditioned by our “yes” but awaits our “yes”. To be saved is not only to be forgiven, it is also to receive forgiveness. Salvation is God’s gift of reconciliation in communion which can only be received when the human being says “yes” to this gift in freedom. The Church is the assembly of those who have said “yes” to this gift, “yes” to the design of God. It is precisely by being such an assembly that she is sign and instrument of salvation.

It is important to recall, as the *Agreed Statement* does, that differences between Roman Catholics and Anglicans occurred after continental Reformation. The adoption of Lutheran doctrine of justification by Anglicans was a later development. Nonetheless, the *Agreed Statement* confidently affirmed that there is now a substantial agreement. On the basis of our common understanding of baptism, we can, and in fact we do agree that it is baptism that brings us into the Church, the assembly willed by God as sign and instrument of his will of reconciliation in communion.

Roman Catholics and Anglicans would agree that the Church is necessary for salvation. There ought to be no break “between belonging to Christ, the source of Salvation, and belonging to the Church” This affirmation of necessity does not mean God is compelled or constrained to use the Church as means of salvation. It means God has willed to use the Church as instrument of salvation. God, in the gratuity and sovereignty of his saving act, can bring about salvation without and outside the Church. Yet, in the paschal event, in which the Son of God who was lifted up drew all to himself, God drew all to himself. To affirm the necessity of the Church for salvation is to say that no one can be in Christ

without being incorporated in him, that is, without being part of his body the Church. Whoever belongs to Christ through baptism belongs in some way to the community of the baptized. “One is saved by being made a member of the Body of Salvation which is the body of Christ.” If the answer to the question: whether the Church is necessary for salvation, is to be answered in the affirmative, there is need for another inquiry.

Is Christian unity necessary for salvation?

Given the consensus arrived at by Roman Catholics and Anglicans on the doctrine of salvation in the Church, it would seem that the question is no longer about the necessity, possibility and modality of the salvific instrumentality of the Church. If we agree that the Church is necessary for salvation, the next question we should have the courage to raise is whether the restoration of Christian unity is necessary for salvation? It is another way of asking whether the ecumenical initiatives we have been undertaking has any bearing with salvation.

The Church is sign and instrument of salvation by being servant of the word of God and of the sacraments. She preaches the Gospel that Christ preached to bring together the children of God. She herself is the assembly called together by the Gospel and calling humanity together by the Gospel. The body of believers needs to bear a common witness to the truth of the Gospel in order that its celebration of the Eucharist not be a replica of the scandalous celebration in Corinth. The Apostle Paul rebuked the Church in Corinth that their celebration of the Eucharist in a divided Church, rather than immersing them in the mystery of reconciliation, brought them into condemnation. In that apostolic rebuke alone, we are able to see that Christian unity is necessary for salvation.

The credibility of the witness the Church bears flows from her unity. Absence of Christian unity is an erosion of the witness value of the Church. When the Church assembled by God becomes a Church who assembles for God, and when the Church reconciled by God lives out her vocation as a Church who reconciles for God, the division that erodes our common witness would have been overcome. “Gathered together by the Spirit of the Lord, and him alone, the Church knows that it is given the responsibility to act as a mediator for the gathering together of humanity *en Christo*.” (*Church of Churches*, 248).

Our salvation is in our sharing in the life of the Trinity, the life of love of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The community of believers is called to mirror this unity. That is the meaning of the prayer of Christ, “that they may be one as you Father and I are one”. If God, who reveals himself as the eternal communion of three Persons, has willed to save the world through the Church as sign and instrument of communion, as a community that bears witness to the unity in the Trinity, this communion needs to be safeguarded. The ministries given to the Church by the Holy Spirit are for this purpose. Like all other charism of the Holy Spirit, they are for the edification and safeguard of the Church as communion. The nature of ministry flows from the being of the Church itself. The Church’s deepest being is communion. Therefore, ministers are not above the Church but in the Church and at the service of communion. But these ministers cannot be servants of unity, of communion, if they are not themselves united in a visible way.

The profound communion which the Eucharist—and it alone—accomplishes emerges in a visible way only when those who preside at the Eucharistic celebration today everywhere in the world and who

have presided at it since Pentecost as an image of Christ ‘gathering together in unity’ the people of God, are themselves united in one single ministerial body. They form in this way, in the multitude that they are, one single instrument of ecclesial gathering together. Tradition says that they are a college having for their core the ministry of unity of one among them. It sees there a requirement of communion” (*Church of Churches*, 256).

The visible unity of one ministerial body is essential for the unity of the Church, and the unity of the Church is the fulfillment of the will of God. In local Churches in communion with Rome, this ecclesial communion is realized when they recognize each other in the apostolic witness protected, defended and promoted by the Church of Rome and its bishop.

Communion with this Church and this bishop constitutes, they affirm, an essential element in the realization of full ecclesial communion which responds to the design of God. They know, certainly, that everywhere where there is baptism with water and an authentic faith, there is true integration in the community of salvation. They also proclaim that wherever a ‘true’ Eucharist is celebrated the Church is ‘truly’ present and manifested. But they specify that this ecclesial community is fully manifested as a cell of visible communion willed by the Lord only if the one who presides at its Eucharist—where the reality which constitutes the very heart of the apostolic witness is proclaimed and celebrated—is explicitly linked to the Episcopal college in whose centre the Bishop of Rome exercises the function we have described” (*Church of Churches*, 307-308).

Anglicans and Roman Catholics are unable to celebrate the Eucharist together now because of the absence of a visible ecclesial communion in one visible ministerial body. This is not because Roman Catholics do not recognize the baptism of This is not a sign that Roman Catholics do not accept Anglicans. This is rather an acknowledgement of our sin of division, a sin we are yet to overcome. In this regard, the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church of the Second Vatican Council, *Lumen Gentium*, has this to say:

This Church, constituted and organized as a society in the present world, subsists in the Catholic Church, which is governed by the successor of Peter and by the bishops in communion with him. Nevertheless, many elements of sanctification and of truth are found outside its visible confines. Since these are gifts belong to the Church of Christ, they are forces impelling towards Catholic unity (*Lumen Gentium*, 8).

In addition, The Church knows that she is joined in many ways to the baptized who are honored by the name of Christian, but who do not however profess the Catholic faith in its entirety or have not preserved unity or communion under the successor of Peter. For there are many who hold sacred scripture in honor as a rule of faith and of life, who have a sincere religious zeal, who lovingly believe in God the Father Almighty and in Christ, the Son of God and the Saviour, who are sealed by baptism which unites them to Christ, and who indeed recognize and receive other sacraments in their own Churches or ecclesiastical communities. Many of them possess the episcopate, celebrate the holy Eucharist and cultivate devotion to the Virgin Mother of God. There is furthermore a sharing in prayer and spiritual benefits; these Christians are indeed in some real way joined to us in the Holy Spirit for, by his gifts and graces, his sanctifying power is also active in them and he has strengthened some of them even to the shedding of their blood. And so the Spirit stirs up desires and actions in all

of Christ's disciples in order that all may be peaceably united as Christ ordained, in one flock under one shepherd (*Lumen Gentium*, 15).

And Tillard explains, To declare that the Spirit of baptism acts equally outside of the limits of the Churches in communion with Rome, is to declare that the Church is equally present there, even if one does not think that it has in it all its splendor. The baptized in these communities are in Christ only by being in Church (*Church of Churches*, 313-314).

There are lessons to be learnt by asking: if Christian unity is necessary for salvation, what do we make of the present disunity? Does it mean our generation of Christians will be deprived of salvation. Here again, we must differentiate between necessity and necessity. This is not a necessity that compels or constrains God. It is a necessity in which God has willed to save us as a united body of disciples. Yet, in extraordinary ways, in ways that are beyond our comprehension because the grace of God is beyond our comprehension, God is able to accomplish his work of salvation. Our sin of division cannot impede the love of God in the Spirit which groans in us for reconciliation in communion. We must neither overlook nor fail to be grateful to God for the *votumunitatis*, the affective unity we have right now. For in the very heart of our desire for unity there is unity.

The fact that we are already united in our desire for unity finds an expression in the words of *Lumen Gentium* of the Second Vatican Council. The Agreed Statements of ARCIC I and II, and the fact that ARCIC III is about to begin, despite some setbacks, are all signs that the Spirit of unity has not abandoned the Church. To use the language of athletics, the goal of ecumenism is not achievable by those who would rather a long distance at the speed of sprinters. It is achievable by those who are willing to run a long distance race. The long distance we have travelled in ecumenical discussions might have made many of us weary. And when we look at the distance yet to be covered we are probably discouraged. But if the Spirit has brought us thus far, the same Spirit can take us to our goal if we say yes to the Spirit

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE CHURCH AS A COMMUNION; LOCAL AND UNIVERSAL BY RT. REV. DUKE T. AKAMISOKO

Introduction

The term Communion is derived from Latin communion (sharing), the corresponding term in Greek is *κοινωνία*, which is often translated as ‘fellowship’. In Christianity, the basic meaning of the term communion is an especially close relationship of Christians, as individuals or as a Church, with God and with other Christians. Communion implies that the Church is a dynamic reality moving towards its fulfillment. Communion embraces both the visible gathering of God's people and its divine life-giving source. We are thus directed to the life of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, the life God wills to share with all people. There is before us the vision of God's reign over the whole of creation, and of the Church as the first fruits of humankind which is drawn into that divine life through acceptance of the redemption given in Jesus Christ. Moreover this focus on communion enables us to affirm that which is already realized in the Church, the Eucharistic community. It enables us also to acknowledge as a gift of God the good that is present in community life in the world: communion involves rejoicing with those who rejoice and being in solidarity with those who suffer and those who search for meaning in life. To explore the meaning of communion is not only to speak of the Church but also to address the world at the heart of its deepest need, for human beings long for true community in freedom, justice and peace and for the respect of human dignity.¹¹⁴

Furthermore to understand the Church in terms of communion confronts Christians with the scandal of our divisions. Christian disunity obscures God's invitation to communion for all humankind and makes the Gospel we proclaim harder to hear. But the consideration of communion also enables Christians to recognize that certain yet imperfect communion they already share. Christians of many traditions are coming to acknowledge the central place of communion in their understanding of the nature of the Church and its unity and mission. We will examine how the Church as communion is sacrament of the merciful grace of God for all humankind. What follows would be a treatment of the relationship of communion to the apostolicity, catholicity and holiness of the Church and a consideration of the necessary elements required for unity and ecclesial communion.

Communion Unfolded in Scripture

The relationship between God and his creation is the fundamental theme of Holy Scripture. The drama of human existence, as expounded in Scripture, consists in the formation, breakdown and renewal of this relationship. The biblical story opens with God establishing his relationship by creating human beings in his image and likeness; God blesses and honors them by inviting them to live in communion both with him and with one another as stewards of his creation. In the unfolding saga of Genesis the

¹¹⁴http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_council_of_the_laws_of_ecclesiastical_polity, Bk. Vol. 3

disobedience of Adam and Eve undermines both their relation with God and their relation with each other: they hide from God; Adam blames Eve; they are expelled from the garden; their relationship with the rest of creation is distorted. What ensues in Genesis illustrates this recurrent pattern in human history.

In the variety of literary styles and theological traditions coming from every period of the long history of the people of Abraham, the books of the Old Testament bear witness to the fact that God wants his people to be in communion with him and with each other. God's purpose is reaffirmed in covenant with his people. Through Abraham God gives the promise of blessing to all the nations (Gen 12:1-3). Through Moses God establishes a people as his own possession, a community in a covenant relationship with him (Ex 19:5ff). In the Promised Land the Temple becomes the place where God chooses to set his name, where he dwells with his people (Deut 12:5). The prophets consistently denounce the community's faithlessness as threatening this relationship. Nevertheless, God's fidelity remains constant and he promises through the prophets that his promise will be accomplished. Although division and exile follow upon the sins of the chosen people, reconciliation of the scattered people of God would spring from a radical transformation within a new covenant (Jer. 31:31). God would call a servant to fulfill his purpose of communion and peace for his chosen people and also for all the nations (Is 49:6; cf. also Mic 4:1-4).

In the fullness of time, God sends his Son, born of a woman, to redeem his people and bring them into a new relationship as his adopted children (Gal 4:4). When Jesus begins his ministry he calls together a band of disciples with whom he shares his mission (Mk 3:14 d. Jn. 20:21). After Easter they are to be witnesses to his life, teaching, death and resurrection. In the power of the Spirit given at Pentecost they proclaim that God's promises have been fulfilled in Christ. For the Apostolic community the baptism of repentance and faith bestowed in this New Covenant does more than restore that which was lost: by the Spirit believers enter Christ's own communion with the Father (Rom 8:15; Gal 4:6). In the Eucharist, the memorial of the New Covenant, believers participate in the body and blood of Christ and are made one body in him (1 Cor 10:16-17; 11:23-27). It is communion with the Father, through the Son, in the Holy Spirit which constitutes the people of the New Covenant as the Church, "a people still linked by spiritual ties to the stock of Abraham".¹¹⁵

On Calvary the hideous nature of sin and evil is clearly exposed. On the Cross are found God's judgment upon the world and his gift of reconciliation (2 Cor 5:19). Through the Paschal victory all estrangement occasioned by differences of culture, class, privilege and sex is overcome. All those who are united with the death and resurrection of Christ have equal standing before God. Moreover, because Christ is the one in whom and through whom all things are created and reconciled, the proper relationship between humanity and the rest of creation is restored and renewed in him (Coil: 15-20; Gal 3:27-29; Col 3:11).

¹¹⁵Gibson, Edger C.S. The Thirty-Nine Article of the Church of England Methuen & co (1912) p.666 & p667

However, the life of communion is still impaired by human sin (1 Cor 1:10ff). The failure of Christians to respond to the demands of the Gospel gives rise to divisions among Christians which obscure the Church's witness. The New Testament affirms that there is a constant need for recourse to the repentance and reconciliation offered by Christ through the Church {Mt 18:15-20; cf. 1 Jn. 1:5-10}. In the New Testament, the word *koinonia* (often translated "communion" or "fellowship") ties together a number of basic concepts such as unity, life together, sharing and partaking. The basic verbal form means "to share", "to participate", "to have part in", "to have something in common" or "to act together". The noun can signify fellowship or community. It usually signifies a relationship based on participation in a shared reality (e.g. 1 Cor 10:16). This usage is most explicit in the Johannine writings: "We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ (1 Jn. 1:3; cf. 1 Jn. 1:7).¹¹⁶

In the New Testament the idea of communion is conveyed in many ways. A variety of words, expressions and images points to its reality; the people of God (1 Pt 2:9-10); flock (In 10:14; Acts 20:28-29; 1 Pt 5:3,4); vine (In 15:5); temple (1 Cor 3:16-17); bride (Rev 21:2); body of Christ (1 Cor 12:27; 1 Cor 10:16-17; Rom 12:4-5; Eph 1:22-23). All these express a relationship with God and also imply a relationship among the members of the community. The reality to which this variety of images refers is communion, a shared life in Christ (1 Cor 10: 16-2 1; d. Jn. 17) which no one image exhaustively describes. This communion is participation in the life of God through Christ in the Holy Spirit, making Christians one with each other.

It is characteristic of the Apostle Paul to speak of the relationship of believers to their Lord as being "in Christ" and of Christ being in the believer through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit (Rom 8:1-11; 2 Cor 5:17; Col 1:27-28; Gal 2:20; d. also Jn. 15:1-11). This relationship Paul also affirms in his description of the Church as the one body of Christ. This description is integrally linked with the presence of Christ in the Eucharist. Those who share in the supper of the Lord are one body in Christ because they all partake of the one bread (1 Cor 10:16-17 and 12:23-30). This description underlines the intimate, organic relationship which exists between the Risen Lord and all those who receive new life through communion with him. Equally it emphasizes the organic relationship thus established among the members of the one body, the Church. All who share in the "holy things" of the sacramental life are made holy through them: because they share in them together they are in communion with each other.

The New Testament reflects different dimensions of communion as experienced in the life of the Church in apostolic times. At the center of this communion is life with the Father, through Christ, in the Spirit. Through the sending of his Son the living God has revealed that love is at the heart of the divine life. Those who abide in love abide in God and God in them; if we, in communion with him love one another, he abides in us and his love is perfected in us (cf. 1 Jn 4:7-21). Through love God communicates his life. He causes those who accept the light of the truth revealed in Christ rather than

¹¹⁶Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church (Oxford University Press 2005 ISBN 978-0-19280290-3), article 'receptionism'

the darkness of this world to become his children. This is the most profound communion possible for any of his creatures. Visibly, this communion is entered through baptism and nourished and expressed in the celebration of the Eucharist. All who are baptized in the one Spirit into one body are united in the Eucharist by this sacramental participation in this same one body (1 Cor 10:16-17; 12:13). This community of the baptized, devoted to the apostolic teaching, fellowship, breaking of bread and prayer (Acts 2:42) finds its necessary expression in a visible human community. It is a community which suffers with Christ in anticipation of the revelation of his glory (Phil 3: 10; Col 1:24; 1 Pt 4:13; Rom 8:17). Those who are in communion participate in one another's joys and sorrows (Heb 10:33; 2 Cor 1:6, 7); they serve one another in love (Gal 5:13) and share together to meet the needs of one another and of the community as a whole. There is a mutual giving and receiving of spiritual and material gifts, not only between individuals but also between communities, on the basis of a fellowship that already exists in Christ (Rom 15:26-27; 2 Cor 8:1-15). The integrity and building up of that fellowship requires appropriate structure, order and discipline (1 Cor 11:17-34; and the Pastoral Epistles). Communion will reach its fulfillment when God will be all in all (1 Cor 15:28). It is the will of God for the whole creation that all things should be brought to ultimate unity and communion in Christ (Eph 1:10; Col 1:19-20). Already in the New Testament these different dimensions of communion are discernible, together with a striving towards their ever more faithful realization.

Communion: Sacramentality and the Church

God's purpose is to bring all people into communion with himself within a transformed creation (cf. Rom 8:19-22). To accomplish this, the eternal Word became incarnate. The life and ministry of Jesus Christ definitively manifested the restored humanity God intends. By who he was, by what he taught, and by what he accomplished through the Cross and resurrection, he became the sign, the instrument and the first fruits of God's purpose for the whole of creation (Col 1:15-17). As the new Adam, the Risen Lord is the beginning and guarantor of this transformation. Through this transformation alienation is overcome by communion, both between human beings and above all between them and God. These two dimensions of communion are inseparable. This is the mystery of Christ (Eph 2:11-3:12). Communion with God through Christ is constantly established and renewed through the power of the Holy Spirit. The Church as communion of believers with God and with each other is a sign of the new humanity God is creating and a pledge of the continuing work of the Holy Spirit.

The communion of the Church demonstrates that Christ has broken down the dividing wall of hostility, so as to create a single new humanity reconciled to God in one body by the cross (Eph 2:14-16). Confessing that their communion signifies God's purpose for the whole human race the members of the Church are called to give themselves in loving witness and service to their fellow human beings. To be united with Christ in the fulfillment of his ministry for the salvation of the world is to share his will that the Church be one, not only for the credibility of the Church's witness and for the effectiveness of its mission, but supremely for the glorification of the Father. God will be truly glorified when all peoples with their rich diversity will be fully united in one communion of love. Our present communion with God and with each other in the Holy Spirit is a pledge and foretaste here and now of the ultimate fulfillment of God's purpose for all, as proclaimed in the vision of "a great multitude which none could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and tongues ... crying out with a loud voice 'salvation belongs to our God who sits upon the throne, and to the

Lamb!" (Rev 7:9-10).

The sacramental nature of the Church as sign, instrument and foretaste of communion is especially manifest in the common celebration of the Eucharist. Here, celebrating the memorial of the Lord and partaking of his body and blood, the Church points to the origin of its communion in Christ, himself in communion with the Father; it experiences that communion in a visible fellowship; it anticipates the fullness of the communion in the Kingdom; it is sent out to realize, manifest and extend that communion in the world.

Communion: Apostolicity, Catholicity and Holiness

The Church points to its source and mission when it confesses in the Creed, "We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church". It is because the Church is built up by the Spirit upon the foundation of the life, death and resurrection of Christ as these have been witnessed and transmitted by the apostles that the Church is called apostolic. It is also called apostolic because it is equipped for its mission by sharing in the apostolic mandate.

Tensions inevitably appear. Some are creative of healthy development. Some may, cause a loss of continuity with apostolic Tradition, disruption within the community, estrangement from other parts of the Church. Within the history of Christianity, some diversities have become differences that have led to such conflict that ecclesial communion has been severed. Whenever differences become embodied in separated ecclesial communities, so that Christians are no longer able to receive and pass on the truth within the one community of faith, communion is impoverished and the living memory of the Church is affected. As Christians grow apart, complementary aspects of the one truth are sometimes perceived as mutually incompatible. Nevertheless the Church is sustained by, Christ's promise of its perseverance in the truth (*cf.* Mt 16:18), even though its unity and peace are constantly vulnerable. The ultimate God-given safeguard for this assurance is the action of the Spirit in preserving the living memory of Christ.

In recognizing the canon of Scripture as the normative record of the revelation of God, the Church sealed as authoritative its acceptance of the transmitted memory of the apostolic community. This is summarized and embodied in the creeds. The Holy Spirit makes this, tradition a living reality which is perpetually celebrated and proclaimed by word and sacrament, pre-eminently in the Eucharistic memorial of the once-for-all sacrifice of Christ, in which the Scriptures have always been read. Thus the apostolic tradition is fundamental to the Church's communion which spans time and space, linking the present to past and future generations of Christians.

In the creeds the Church has always confessed its catholicity "I believe in ... the holy catholic church". It gets this title from the fact that by its nature it is to be scattered throughout the world, from one end of the earth to the other, from one age to the next. The Church is also catholic because its mission is to teach universally and without omission all that has been revealed by God for the salvation and fulfillment of humankind; and also because its vocation is to unite in one Eucharistic fellowship men and women of every race, culture and social condition in every generation. Because it is the fruit of the work of Christ upon the cross, destroying all barriers of division, making, Jews and

Gentiles one holy people, both having access to the one Father by the one Spirit (cf. Eph 2:14-18), the Church is catholic.

Throughout its history the Church has been called to demonstrate that salvation is not restricted to particular cultures. This is evident in the variety of liturgies and forms of spirituality, in the variety of disciplines and ways of exercising authority, in the variety of theological approaches, and even in the variety of theological expressions of the same doctrine. These varieties complement one another, showing that, as the result of, communion with God in Christ, diversity does not lead to division; on the contrary, it serves bring glory to God for the munificence of his gifts. Thus the Church in its catholicity is the where God brings glory to his name through the communion of those he created in his image and likeness, so diverse yet profoundly one.

Catholicity is inseparable from holiness, as is evident from the early liturgical traditions which often speak of “the holy catholic church” and from early forms of the creed which includethe words “We believe in the Holy Spirit, in the holy Catholic Church” The Church is holy because it is “God's special possession”, endowed with his Spirit (cf. 1 Pt 2:9-10; Eph 2:21-22), and it is his special possession since it is there that “the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure” is realized, “to bring all things in heaven and on earth ,” together under one head, Christ” (Eph 1:9, 10). Being set apart as God's special possession means that the Church is the communion of those who seek to be perfect as their Heavenly Father is perfect (Mt 5:48). This implies a life in communion with Christ, a life of compassion, love and righteousness.

When the Creed speaks of the Church as holy, catholic and apostolic, it does not mean that these attributes are distinct and unrelated. On the contrary, they are so interwoven that there cannot be one without the others. The holiness of the Church reflects the mission of the Spirit of God in Christ, the Holy One of God, made known to all the world through the apostolic teaching. Catholicity is the realization of the Church's proclamation of the fullness of the Gospel to every nation throughout the ages. Apostolicity unites the Church of all generations and in every place with the once-for-all sacrifice and resurrection of Christ, where God's holy love was supremely demonstrated.

The Church, since apostolic times, has always included belief in its unity among the articles of faith (e.g. 1 Cor 12:12ff; Eph 4:f). Because there is only, one Lord, with whom we are called to have communion in the one Spirit, God has given his Church one gospel, one faith, one baptism, one Eucharist, and one apostolic ministry through which Christ continues to feed and guide his flock. For a Christian the life of communion means sharing in the divine life, being united with the Father, through his Son, in the Holy Spirit, and consequently to be in fellowship with all those who share in the same gift of eternal life. This is a spiritual communion in which the reality of the life of the world to come is already present. But it is inadequate to speak only of an invisible spiritual unity as the fulfillment of Christ's will for the Church; the profound communion fashioned by the Spirit requires visible expression. The purpose of the visible ecclesial community is to embody and promote this spiritual communion with God.

For a local community to be a communion means that it is a gathering of the baptized brought together by the Apostolic preaching, confessing the one faith, celebrating the one Eucharist, and led

an apostolic ministry. This implies that this local church is in communion with all Christian communities in which the essential constitutive elements of ecclesial life are present. For all the local churches to be together in communion, the one visible communion God wills, it is required that all the essential constitutive elements of ecclesial communion are present and mutually recognized in each of them. Thus the visible communion between these churches is complete and their ministers are in communion with each other. This does not necessitate precisely the same canonical ordering; diversity of canonical structure is part of the acceptable diversity which enriches the one communion of all the churches.

The constitutive elements essential for the visible communion of the Church are derived from and subordinate to the common confession of Jesus Christ as Lord. In the picture of the Jerusalem church in the Acts of the Apostles we can already see in nascent form certain necessary elements of ecclesial communion which must be present in the Church in every age.

In the light of all that we have said about communion it is now possible to describe what constitutes ecclesial communion. It is rooted in the confession of the one apostolic faith, revealed in the Scriptures, and set forth in the Creeds. It is founded upon one baptism. The one celebration of the Eucharist is its pre-eminent expression and focus. It necessarily finds expression in shared commitment to the mission entrusted by Christ to his Church. It is a life of shared concern for one another in mutual forbearance, submission, gentleness and in the placing of the interests of others above the interests, of self; in making room for other in the body of Christ; in solidarity with the poor and the powerless; and in the sharing of gifts both material and spiritual (cf. Acts 2:44).

Also constitutive of life in communion is acceptance of the same basic moral values, the sharing of the same vision of humanity created in the image of God and recreated in Christ and the common confession of the one hope in the final consummation of the Kingdom of God. For the nurture and growth of this communion, Christ the Lord has provided a ministry of oversight, the fullness of which is entrusted to the episcopate, which has the responsibility of maintaining and expressing the unity of the churches. By shepherding, teaching and the celebration of the sacraments especially the Eucharist, this ministry holds believers together in the communion of the local church and in the wider communion of the churches.

This ministry of oversight has both collegial and primatial dimensions. It is grounded in the life of the community and is open to the community's participation in the discovery of God's will. It is exercised so that unity and communion are expressed, preserved and fostered at every level - locally, regionally and universally. In the context of the communion of all the churches the Episcopal ministry of a universal primate finds its role as the visible focus of unity. Throughout history different means have been used to express, preserve and foster this communion between bishops: the participation of bishops of neighboring sees, particularly with the See of Rome. The practice of holding synods or councils, local, provincial, ecumenical, arose from the need to maintain unity in the one apostolic faith.

All these inter-related elements and facets belong to the visible communion of the universal Church. Although their possession cannot guarantee the constant fidelity of Christians either can the Church

dispense with them.. They need to be present in order for one church to recognize another canonically. This does not mean that a community in which they are-present expresses them fully in its life.

Christians can never acquiesce with complacency in disunity without impairing further their communion with God. As separated churches grow towards ecclesial communion it is essential to recognize the profound measure of communion they already share through participation in spiritual communion with God and through those elements of a visible communion of shared faith and sacramental life they can already recognize in one another. If some element or important facet of visible communion is judged to be lacking, the communion between them, though it may be real, is incomplete.

Communion between Anglicans and Roman Catholics

The convictions which this Commission believes that Anglicans and Roman Catholics share concerning the nature of communion challenge both our churches to move forward together towards visible unity and ecclesial communion. Progress in mutual understanding has been achieved. There exists a significant degree of doctrinal agreement between our two communions even upon subjects which previously divided us. In spite of past estrangements, Anglicans and Roman Catholics now enjoy a better understanding of their long-standing shared inheritance. This new understanding enables them to recognize in each other's churches a true affinity.

We therefore urge our clergy and faithful not to neglect or undervalue that certain yet imperfect communion we already share. This communion already shared is grounded in faith in God our Father, in our Lord Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Spirit; our common baptism into Christ; our sharing of the Holy Scriptures, of the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds; our common Christian inheritance for many centuries. This communion should be cherished and guarded as we seek to grow into the fuller communion Christ wills. Even in the years of our separation we have been able to recognize gifts of the Spirit in each other. The ecumenical journey is not only about removal of obstacles but also about the sharing of gifts.

In some areas there is collaboration in Christian education and in service to local communities. For a number of years, Roman Catholic and Anglican scholars have worked together in universities and other academic institutions. There is closer co-operation in ministerial formation and between parochial clergy and religious communities. The responsibility for the pastoral care of inter-church families is now increasingly entrusted to both churches. Meetings of Roman Catholic and Anglican bishops are becoming customary, engendering mutual understanding and confidence. This often results in joint witness, practical action and common statements on social and moral issues. The growing measure of ecclesial communion experienced in these ways is the fruit of the communion we share with the Father, through the Son, in the Holy Spirit.

We cannot, however, ignore the effects of our centuries of separation. Such separation has inevitably led to the growth of divergent patterns of 'authority accompanied by changes in perceptions and practices. The differences between us are not only theological. Anglicans and Roman Catholics have now inherited different cultural traditions. Such differences in communities which have become

isolated from one another have sometimes led to distortions in the popular perceptions which members of one church have of the other. As a result visible unity may be viewed as undesirable or even unattainable. However, a closer examination of the developments which have taken place in our different communities shows that these developments when held in complementarity can contribute to a fuller understanding of communion.

Grave obstacles from the past and of recent origin must not lead us into thinking that there is no further room for growth towards fuller communion. Despite our distinct historical experiences, this firm basis should encourage us to proceed to examine our continuing differences. Our approach to the unresolved matters we must now face together will be shaped by the agreed understanding of communion we have elaborated. An appreciation both of the existing degree of communion between Anglicans and Roman Catholics as well as the complete ecclesial communion to which we are called will provide a context for the discussion of the long-standing problem of the reconciliation of ministries which forms part of our mandate.

Our distinct cultural inheritances have sometimes led us to treat of moral questions in different ways. Our study will explore the moral dimension of Christian life and seek to explain and assess its significance for communion as well as the importance of agreement or difference on particular moral questions. It is evident that the above issues are closely connected with the question of authority. We continue to believe that an agreed understanding of the Church as communion is the appropriate context in which to continue the study of authority in the Church.

Serious as these remaining obstacles may seem, we should not overlook the extent of the communion already existing between our two churches, which we have described in the last part of this Statement. Indeed, awareness of this fact will help us to bear the pain of our differences without complacency or despair. It should encourage Anglicans and Roman Catholics locally to search for further steps by which concrete expression can be given to this communion which we share.

Paradoxically the closer we draw together the more acutely we feel those differences which remain. The forbearance and generosity with which we seek to resolve these remaining differences will testify to the character of the fuller communion for which we strive. Together with all Christians, Anglicans and Roman Catholics are called by God to continue to pursue the goal of complete communion of faith and sacramental life. This call we must obey until all come into the fullness of that Divine Presence, to whom Father, Son and Holy Spirit be ascribed all honour, thanksgiving and praise to the ages of ages. Amen.

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