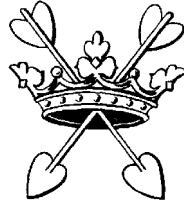


The Parish of St. Edmund, King and Martyr

(Waterloo, Ontario)



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

UPDATE

December 13, 2006 - **St. Lucy, Virgin and Martyr**

January Schedule

January 1	Monday	The Octave Day of Christmas / The Circumcision of Christ
January 6	Saturday	The Epiphany of Our Lord
January 7	Sunday	The First Sunday after The Epiphany
January 13	Saturday	The Octave Day of The Epiphany / The Baptism of Our Lord
January 14	Sunday	The Second Sunday after The Epiphany
January 21	Sunday	The Third Sunday after The Epiphany
January 25	Thursday	The Conversion of St. Paul
January 28	Sunday	The Fourth Sunday after The Epiphany

Service Times and Location

- (1) All Services are held in the Chapel at Luther Village on the Park - 139 Father David Bauer Drive in Waterloo.
- (2) On Sundays, **Matins** is sung at **10:00 a.m.** (The **Litany** on the first Sunday of the month), and the **Holy Eucharist** is celebrated (sung) at **10:30 a.m.**
- (3) On weekdays - **Major Holy Days** - the **Holy Eucharist** is *usually* celebrated at **7:00 p.m.**, **10:00 a.m.** on Saturday.

Notes and Comments

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- 2) For **Robert's Ramblings - EN ROUTE TO ROOT** - see page 3.
- 3) Commentary on - **THE SENDING FORTH OF THE PEOPLE** - from a booklet entitled **The Ceremonial of High Mass** - see page 6.
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St. Lucy, Virgin and Martyr (283 - 304)

Lucy's name means "light", with the same root as "lucid" which means "clear, radiant, understandable." Unfortunately for us, Lucy's history does not match her name. Shrouded in the darkness of time, all we really know for certain is that this brave woman who lived in Syracuse lost her life in the persecution of Christians in the early fourth century. Her veneration spread to Rome so that by the sixth century the whole Church recognized her courage in defense of the faith.

Because people wanted to shed light on Lucy's bravery, legends grew up. The one that is passed down to us tells the story of a young Christian woman who had vowed her life to the service of Christ. Her mother tried to arrange a marriage for her with a pagan. Lucy apparently knew that her mother would not be convinced by a young girl's vow so she devised a plan to convince her mother that Christ was a much more powerful partner for life. Through prayers at the tomb of Saint Agatha, her mother's long illness was cured miraculously. The

grateful mother was now ready to listen to Lucy's desire to give her money to the poor and commit her life to God.

Unfortunately, legend has it, the rejected bridegroom did not see the same light and he betrayed Lucy to the governor as a Christian. This governor tried to send her into prostitution but the guards who came to take her away found her stiff and heavy as a mountain. Finally she was killed. As much as the facts of Lucy's specific case are unknown, we know that many Christians suffered incredible torture and a painful death for their faith during Diocletian's reign. Lucy may not have been burned or had a sword thrust through her throat but many Christians did and we can be sure her faith withstood tests we can barely imagine.

Lucy's name is probably also connected to statues of Lucy holding a dish with two eyes on it. This refers to another legend in which Lucy's eyes were put out by Diocletian as part of his torture. The legend concludes with God restoring Lucy's eyes.

Lucy's name also played a large part in naming Lucy as a patron saint of the blind and those with eye trouble.

Whatever the fact to the legends surrounding Lucy, the truth is that her courage to stand up and be counted a Christian in spite of torture and death is the light that should lead us on our own journeys through life.

From www.catholic.org

The Supernatural

The higher the religion the more all-pervading is its "givenness," until in Christianity we find a religion whose very life is divine. Insistence upon the necessity of the Christian Faith is no mere intellectual conservatism, but loyalty to given truth; insistence upon the necessity of the Christian Sacraments no mere

delight in ceremonies, but the acceptance of given life; its emphasis from start to finish and in all departments is upon the action of God . . . not upon the action of man . . .

This doctrine does not in any way impugn the freedom of the human will - there must always be a human response to the divine action, a response which is real and not forced; but where it is right it is a response, and not self-initiated. When we come to the Christian Religion we find that which is uniquely given in the Person of Jesus Christ, Who is Himself the Way, the Truth and the Life.

If this is so it is clear that the Christian life is essentially supernatural. It is the ignoring or denying of this element which is the cause of most of the ineffectiveness of present-day religion. Supernatural religion is not popular, but that does not make it untrue. Protestantism dislikes it, the Reformation was largely a movement for its dethronement; Modernism dislikes it - the pathetic desire to find a merely human Christ and the condemnation of sacramental action as "magic" attest as much; Science dislikes it because it appears to the scientist to introduce an incalculable and undemonstrable element into Nature; the Man in the Street dislikes it because it is beyond his comprehension, and it is a common human weakness to fear and therefore to hate the unknown; it remains for the catholic uncompromisingly to nail his colours to the mast and live supernaturally, confident that on that level alone will he find fully Him for Whom his soul thirsts.

From *The Elements of the Spiritual Life: A Study in Ascetical Theology* by **F.P. Harton**, sometime Dean of Wells

Robert's Ramblings

EN ROUTE TO RooT

"How long will you go limping with two opinions?" (*I Kings* 18,20).

RooT or Religious of Orthodox Tradition is a small informal fellowship of traditional Anglican monks and nuns who, among other things, do not accept the ordination of women. The practice has already introduced division into their several communities. In one order those sisters who favour the practice live in one convent, those who oppose the practice live in another convent. In another order both opinions co exist in the same convent. When a priestess "celebrates", perhaps one of the nuns who has been "ordained", a male priest comes in to provide an alternative eucharist for the opposition. If no such male priest can be provided, then for those nuns who can not accept the priestess no eucharist is available. Communities are now anguished about the inevitability of bishopesses. Because I have been out of England I have so far been unable to attend RooT meetings. In September 2006 I was able to do so for the first time. I thoroughly enjoyed fellowship with such good people, though I have to admit that they remind me of members of the Prayer Book Society and of Forward in Faith. They wring their hands, huff and puff, but continue to find reasons to remain embedded in an heretical organization.

At its meeting in Oxford RooT was addressed by an enclosed contemplative nun, an Anglican, a doctor of medicine; by a Russian Orthodox nun who came to faith late in life, a painter of icons; and by Fr Aidan Nicholls OP, a Roman Catholic Dominican friar who is knowledgeable about and sympathetic to Anglicans. He has written a critical but fair book about Anglicanism called *The Panther and the Hind*. I got to the RooT meeting after two weeks of travelling with some Canadian pilgrims, ably led by Fr David Marriott of our four Vancouver parishes. The pilgrims were: Mr George Ferguson of St Patrick's, Pitt Meadows; Mrs Karen Gale of Ss Peter & Paul, Vancouver; Mr Fred Norton of St Anselm's, Sequim. The principal event of the pilgrimage was prayer in Walsingham, where we were joined by others: Fr and Mrs Noel Dickson, now retired in Cheshire, but originally from Ulster in the Church of

Ireland; Fr and Mrs Peter Price, our rector in Herefordshire. He's a Brit who went to BC for adventure, met and married Deanne, entered the Anglican Theological College. Subsequently they worked in BC, Kent, St Helena Island remotely out in the Atlantic Ocean, and Wales.

Ours was not the first party of Continuing Canadians to go on pilgrimage. Fr Peter Jardine has taken two parties to Medugorje in the former Yugoslavia, one of them comprised of Anglicans and Roman Catholics together. In May 2006 Bishop Peter Wilkinson took a party of his clergy to pray for unity in Rome. The previous year he had gone with Fr and Mrs David Skelton of Edmonton.

As I wrote about Walsingham in last month's *Update* there is no need for me to repeat anything here. The tour began at Whalley Abbey in Lancashire, now the retreat-conference centre for the diocese of Blackburn, but previously a monastery and then the country mansion of a gentleman. Henry VIII murdered its last abbot. The place is close to Accrington, Fr Marriott's home town where Fr Henry Dickinson ministers, no stranger to our parishes on the West Coast of Canada, whom he visits and helps each year entirely at his own expense. The parishioners of St Mary Magdalene's in "Ackey", where Fr Henry celebrated and preached, welcomed us with a wine party, after which the vicar sat us down to a three course dinner he cooked and served himself. Then we finished the day with a simple evensong in a schoolroom-chapel on the edge of the town, almost on the moors.

It was a delight to hear how Fr Marriott's accent became more and more Lancashire as he pointed out places of his childhood, told stories about his family. But since there were also connections with Yorkshire and Cumbria, he could do those accents too. Fr Marriott pointed out the direction of Giggleswick, the posh and spartan boarding school for boys in Yorkshire, where he had been educated preparatory to his going on to a degree in French and

philosophy at Lancaster university. He drove us past Sedbergh, the posh and spartan boarding school for boys in Cumbria, where Fr Michael Shier had learned Greek and Latin preparatory to his going on to a degree in Arabic and philosophy at Durham university. Fr Marriott drove us to Sunday service in the domestic chapel of the Marquis of Zetland, a gorgeous building with a 16th century feel to it even though it's 19th century. There we were joined by some of Fr Ian Westby's parishioners and by Fr Peter Adamson, his colleague. We stayed in Scargill, an independent retreat-conference centre in a remote Yorkshire dale. There we were joined by Fr Ian Westby, rector of our Northern Brit parish, no stranger to our people on the East Coast of Canada whom he has visited several times at his own expense. He preached at an ordination in Newfoundland. From Fr Marriott we learned about becks, ghylls, gills and rills; about lakes, meres, tarns and waters; about hows and scars; about gritstone, limestone, sandstone and slate.

Fr Marriott drove us to Rydal Hall in Ambleside of the Lake District, formerly the country mansion of gentlemen but now the retreat-conference centre for the diocese of Carlisle. Fr Henry Dickinson is somewhat sniffy about the English lakes, "When you've seen the lakes of Canada you'll reckon nowt to these". But size isn't the point. There is gentleness, soft rain and wreathing mist, a water colour landscape, and there are associations. The artists Turner and Constable painted there. William Wordsworth the poet lived there. We saw the church of which he was warden. We saw the acre next to the church, set aside for daffodils which bloom each year in his memory. "I wandered lonely as a cloud/When all at once I saw a crowd/A host of golden daffodils". We tried to get into the house and farm of Beatrix Potter but the house was closed and our view of the farm was blocked by tall bushes. She farmed herdwick, the local variety of sheep, famous for wool of durability and scratchiness. We met an elderly gent who as a boy scout had seen

Beatrix Potter in the last year of her life, covered in old sacks against the rain. I am now richer by a fridge magnet of Mrs Tiggywinckle. We stayed five days at Rydal Hall, from where we drove to Cartmel, Grassmere, Langdale, Rydal Water and Windermere. Over and over again did we marvel at the dry stone walls of Cumbrian buildings, not a speck of mortar to be seen, but rising up to three and four stories, plumb straight and almost as smooth as the proverbial baby's bottom. I am not talking about farm walls but of houses, post offices, art galleries and even hotels.

In Walsingham we were almost always in church. Elsewhere it was more leisurely. We had time for quiet and for solitude. We walked briskly or strolled gently. In Walsingham we had the use of the Barn Chapel, severely plain with a stunning larger than life crucifix made entirely of wire mesh. There we had retreat addresses and discussion of the Bible. We took part in a large torchlight procession one night. In every other place where we stayed we had the use of its domestic chapel for daily mattins, mass and evensong. At Rydal Hall we invited a Quaker to tell us about his church. We avoided cities. We avoided the South. We confined ourselves to Northern countryside. Although the Lakes are notorious for rain, we experienced only half a day of it the entire fortnight. We certainly revelled in God's good creation. He "saw everything that He had made and behold it was very good" (*Genesis* 1,31). "O all ye works of the Lord, O ye mountains and hills, O all ye green things upon the earth; bless ye the Lord praise Him and magnify Him for ever," (*Benedicite* pages 26 and 27 of the Prayer Book).

Fr Marriott toys with the idea of a pilgrimage next year? Any takers?

+Robert Mercer CR

The retired, Third Bishop of The Anglican Catholic Church of Canada

From here and there

1) Of all bad men religious bad men are the worst. **C.S.Lewis**

2) **Success:** A successful man is one who makes more money than his wife can spend. A successful woman is one who finds such a man.

3) To sin by silence when they should protest makes cowards of men. **Abraham Lincoln**

4) If your dog is fat, you aren't getting enough exercise!

5) It is not possible to be genuinely catholic and orthodox while you are connected to an institution that not only will not discipline heretics and apostates but promotes them to positions of leadership within it. From an article, *Fleeing the Madhouse*, by **The Rev. Samuel L. Edwards**, explaining his flight from ECUSA to one of the American Continuing Churches - The Anglican Province of Christ the King.

6) Those who can make you believe absurdities can make you commit atrocities. **Voltaire**

7) **Neologism**, n. - The introduction of new words, or the use of old words in a new sense. Some examples:

Coffee, n. - the person upon whom one coughs

Flabbergasted, adj. - appalled over how much weight you have gained

Abdicate, v. - to give up all hope of ever having a flat stomach

Espanade, v. - to attempt an explanation while drunk

Negligent, adj. - describes a condition in which you absentmindedly answer the door in your nightgown

Lymph, v. - to walk with a lisp

Gargoyle, n. - olive-flavoured mouthwash

Flatulence, n. - emergency vehicle that picks you up after you are run over by a steamroller

Balderdash, n. - a rapidly receding hairline

Oyster, n. - a person who sprinkles his conversation with Yiddishisms

From the **Washington Post**

8) **Wal-Mart** recently joined the National Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce, which celebrated the involvement of the corporation as "part of the company's ongoing commitment to advancing diversity among all of its associate, supplier and customer bases." The company contributed \$60,000 in 2006 to the activist group Out & Equal, an organization dedicated to promoting the homosexual lifestyle, including same-sex marriage. (*I trust no editorial comment is required! GF*)

9) The Vatican is at odds with the Church of England over moves to allow **passive euthanasia** in exceptional circumstances for some seriously disabled newborn babies.

"The life of an innocent being cannot be rubbed out, by whatever direct or indirect means," Cardinal Javier Lozano Barragan told the *Corriere della Sera* daily.

"Euthanasia is never accepted . . . be it for the terminally ill or for babies, even when they are born with severe handicaps," said Barragan, the head of the Vatican Council for Pastoral Assistance to Health Care Workers.

10) More from the **Lefty Lexicon**:

Class - grouping people by the contents of their wallet rather than, say, how they think, feel, or behave as individuals.

Critique - When a Lefty alleges that

someone's writing is 'riddled with factual inaccuracies' then mysteriously fails to identify any.

Egalitarian - "if I can't have one, then neither can you."

The Ceremonial of High Mass

THE SENDING FORTH OF THE PEOPLE

With the Post-Communion prayer, the main action of the Mass is complete. From the beginning of the Introit until now, the Church has joined its children together in prayer and praise, in instruction and the profession of its faith. It has, with all due solemnity, done what its Lord did at the Last Supper: taken bread and wine, blessed them, broken the consecrated Bread, and given the sacred gifts of Holy Communion. What follows is the closing of the service, as it were by an epilogue to the main action, in a way corresponding to the heralding of that action by the prologue of preparatory prayers. What we have called the epilogue consists of the formal dismissal of the people, with the blessing of the Priest before he leaves the altar, and the Last Gospel which provides him and them with a final act of devotion.

A certain ceremoniousness is natural in so solemn an act as public worship and the epilogue to the Mass brings the whole rite to a close in a way that corresponds to our sense of fitness. Yet we ought not to think of it only as the end of something done, but as the transition from the worship of the Altar to our life in the world in which we carry out the purpose of God and into which we have been caught up and live by the grace we have received. It is the whole of human life that Christ would hallow; the whole world is the sphere of his activity. From the altar of God, his servants are to go forth into all the world as the light that illumines its dark places, and the salt that preserves it from corruption (Matthew 5:13-14).

After the salutation of the people ("The Lord

be with you") the Priest - or, at High Mass, the Deacon - bids them depart. The ancient Latin words of the dismissal (*Ite, missa est*, literally "Go forth, it is the dismissal") are probably the source of the word "Mass" as a name of the rite. On days when the Gloria in excelsis is not used, the dismissal is replaced by the words, "Let us bless the Lord," because on fasting days the people in ancient times did not leave the church after Mass, but remained for further devotions. In Masses of the Dead, a prayer for their repose is substituted.

From ***The Ceremonial of High Mass*** by Priests of the Society of the Holy Cross, and available from The Convent Society

More than Peace in Our Time

Just when you think no one can come up with a genuine modern analogy to Nazi Germany, someone does. Benjamin Netanyahu, the leader of the conservative Likud Party in Israel, offers a scary and wholly plausible comparison. "It's 1938 and Iran is Germany," he told the annual General Assembly of the United Jewish Communities the other day in Los Angeles. "When someone tells you he is going to exterminate you, believe him - and stop him."

No sooner than he completed his speech the Iranian newspapers reported that Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad was boasting that "we will soon witness [Israel's] disappearance and destruction." Ahmadinejad and his men are preparing a Holocaust that Hitler would envy, not limited to a tiny fledgling democracy in the Middle East. The Iranian nuclear program poses a threat to the entire West.

"Israel would certainly be the first stop on Iran's tour of destruction, but at the planned production rate of 25 nuclear bombs a year . . . [the arsenal] will be directed against 'the big Satan,' the U.S., and the 'moderate Satan,' Europe," Mr. Netanyahu told the assembled Jewish communities. But the ordering of events

has changed. Hitler started a war first and began work on the atomic bomb; Ahmadinejad is building nuclear weapons first.

To do nothing is to appease, which is yet another allusion to the careless international diplomacy before World War II: "No one cared then and no one cares now." Hitler went on building a formidable military machine while the world pretended not to notice. Winston Churchill was the lonely prophet whose warning went unheeded. "Appeasement," he said, is "a bit like feeding a crocodile hoping that it would eat you last." This time everyone notices what Iran is doing, but wants to go about business as usual: "What, me worry?" The first missiles will have Europe in range, then America. Israel will be the canary in the coalmine, the first to disappear as a warning to everyone else.

Ahmadinejad isn't trying to sell a Holocaust analogy; he insists the original never happened. But the 5 million Jews in Israel understand that rhetoric precedes the reality. Erasing Israel from the map is real to them. "Because Auschwitz really happened, it has permeated our imagination, become a permanent part of us," says Nobel Prize-winning novelist Imre Kertesz. "What we are able to imagine - because it really happened - can happen again."

While Netanyahu was speaking on the West Coast, the man who now represents "the little Satan," Prime Minister Ehud Olmert of Israel, met President Bush in Washington. They talked for several hours and mostly about what to do about Iran. Both men have been weakened since the last time they met. Mr. Olmert suffered because he was slow to react with enough ground troops for the war in Lebanon. George W. Bush had a really bad hair day on Nov. 7.

Thus, their rhetoric rings a little hollow now, suggesting that their countries have deeper divisions than they're ready to admit. Israel worries that the American weakness in Iraq might compel the

president to press Israel to make unwise concessions to the Palestinians in order to organize a coalition of Arab states to support sanctions against Iran. The United States worries that Israel's military image was tarnished in the war in Lebanon, making it appear less fearsome. This war in Lebanon was not exactly the Six-Day War.

Israel has strong friends in America, particularly among evangelical Christians. Nearly everyone has known this for a long time, but some people always find out late. The New York Times discovered it only last week, and put the news of its late discovery on Page One. These Christians frequently invoke Biblical references, but they're quick to draw analogies to the Third Reich. "Hitler told everybody what he was going to do, and Ahmadinejad is saying exactly what he is going to do," says Dr. James Dobson, founder of Focus on the Family, the faith-and-family advocacy organization. "He is talking genocide."

The Rev. John Hagee, pastor of a megachurch in San Antonio, says the Iranian leader's remarks about a second Holocaust prompted him to establish Christians United for Israel. He compared the Ahmadinejad Iranians to a biblical villain: "Pharaoh threatened Israel and he ended up fish food."

After President Bush and Prime Minister Olmert concluded their private meeting in the Oval Office, they spoke in a unified voice that they cannot accept a nuclear-armed Iran. The question of how they would stop it remains unaddressed - in public. But both men obviously know that taking a nap is not the route to peace in our time.

By **Suzanne Fields** on
www.JewishWorldReview.com - November
20, 2006

Communion in the hand?

The tradition speaks

In an interview with Mother Teresa of Calcutta on Good Friday of 1989, Father George Rutler asked, "Mother, what do you think is the worst problem today?" Without any hesitation, Mother Teresa said, "Wherever I go in the whole world, the thing that makes me saddest is watching people receive Communion in the hand." For most of us, Mother Teresa's comment is startling - why does she not name one of the more obvious candidates: famine, disease, abortion? And, if Mother Teresa is right to identify communion in the hand as "the worst problem today," why does holy mother Church permit it? Perhaps our surprise at Mother Teresa's intense dislike for communion in the hand is because of our own ignorance on this issue.

Communion in the hand was never a universal custom or practice in the history of the Church. Popes St. Sixtus (115-165) and St. Eutychian (275-283) both forbade the faithful from receiving communion in the hand; St. Basil (330-379) permitted this practice only in times of persecution; St Leo the Great teaches, "one receives in the mouth what one believes by faith." Eventually, communion in the hand was forbidden universally because, as Paul VI states, "with the passage of time as the truth of the eucharistic mystery, its power, and Christ's presence in it were more deeply understood the usage adopted was that the minister himself placed the particle of the consecrated bread on the tongue of the communicant" [*Memoriale Domini*, 8]. If Catholics did not believe in the Real Presence, then to argue over which mode was more reverent would be superfluous and ridiculous. The Protestant Reformers themselves were keenly aware of the great significance attached to receiving the Eucharist on the tongue - witness how Martin Bucer ordered Cranmer to change the rubric in his 1552 Book of Common Prayer by enjoining the faithful to adopt the new rite of receiving in the hand because to do otherwise (i.e. on the tongue) would be

to fall prey to Romish superstition (i.e. belief in the Real Presence). Throughout the centuries, the prevailing opinion of the Church has been that greater reverence is shown to the Blessed Sacrament when one receives on the tongue. Has the Church changed her opinion on this matter of discipline?

In 1965, Cardinal Suenans, Archbishop of Belgium, introduced the practice of receiving communion in the hand to his diocese. Pope Paul VI addressed this flagrant act of disobedience in 1969 with the release of his encyclical *Memoriale Domini*. Pope Paul VI explains in his encyclical why communion on the tongue is the norm of the Church and enumerates the many dangers attached to receiving communion in the hand. Communion on the tongue is the preferred norm of the Church because it "more effectively ensures that communion is distributed with the required reverence, decorum, and dignity; that there is less danger of disrespect for the Eucharistic elements . . . [and so] caution is exercised which the Church has always counseled regarding the particles of the consecrated bread" [11].

In addition to Pope Paul VI's concern for the safety of the Eucharistic elements, by receiving communion directly on the tongue one also recognizes and gives reverence to the consecrated hands of the priests ("because out of reverence towards this sacrament, nothing touches it but what is consecrated" [Aquinas, S.T., VIII, Q. 82, Art. 13]).

Pope Paul VI's abundant praise for communion on the tongue is withheld when he turns to speak of communion on the hand; his tone changes to one of caution and worry: "A change in so important a matter that has its basis in an ancient and honored tradition does not simply affect discipline, but can also bring with it dangers that, it is feared, may arise from the new way of administering communion.

In particular, *these dangers are both the possibility of a lessening of reverence*

toward the august sacrament of the altar, its profanation, and the watering down of the true doctrine of the Eucharist" [12, emphasis mine]. Paul VI is concerned that the changing of this discipline will cause a weakening of faith. So great was his concern over the question that he polled his entire episcopate. The results were overwhelming: 1,233 bishops opposed such a measure compared to 567 in favor. Having examined the issue at length and having consulted the counsel of the bishops, the pontiff decided "not to change the long-accepted manner of administering communion to the faithful" [18]. He then urges the faithful "to obey conscientiously the prevailing law, now reconfirmed" [19]. Paul VI closes his encyclical by permitting communion in the hand not as a preferred practice but only in "special circumstances" [20]. The widespread extension of this practice, then, attests to the failure of the clergy and laity to heed the counsels and intentions of the Church on this matter.

Let us return once more to Mother Teresa. Can we now perhaps begin to understand why the most remarkable woman of the 20th century could declare that communion in the hand gave her the greatest sadness? What is implicit in her sadness is made explicit by Father John Hardon, S.J., who writes, "Behind Communion in the hand - I wish to repeat and make as plain as I can - is a weakening, a conscious, a deliberate weakening of faith in the Real Presence."

Communion in the hand, even though it is permitted, departs from the tradition as it is expressed in the teachings of the popes, the writings of the saints, and the councils of the Church.

By **Matthew Schultz** in *The University [of Dallas] News* - posted November 10, 2004

Faith of Our Fathers

Two incompatible religions

Many clergy and laity want to preserve the orthodoxy of Anglicanism, but emerging

within the Anglican Communion are two incompatible and competing religions. The authority of experience, the basis of liberalism, is set against the authority of divine revelation, fundamental to orthodoxy.

For liberalism, belief is a matter of personal opinion based on contemporary experience; an experience in which Scripture and liturgy and engagement with various social causes provide data for reflection. Religion then becomes not so much a matter of Truth (with a capital T) but of truths that are subject to continual change, revision and adjustment, to make them relevant to contemporary secular culture. The Church in a democratic world must decide their truths by majority vote of representative councils, synods, or other political mechanisms.

For the orthodox, Truth (with a capital T) has been definitively revealed in holy Scripture, and authoritatively interpreted in the Christian tradition. The Christian responds in belief, understanding and obedience. Relevance is a matter of seeking to apply established doctrinal and moral standards to the situation in which the Church is. Here the Church is divinely commissioned in faith and order, to maintain the faith 'once for all delivered to the saints', and is responsible for maintaining those standards, essentially unchanged from one age to another. The dividing line is not a bold black or white but carries grey areas where some have tried to compromise their accommodation on one side or the other. Its mission is to convert the culture, not to be accommodated to it.

Authority is fundamental, resting upon the revelation of God in Jesus Christ that has not been delegated to a consensus in meetings, synods or among bishops. In the absence of an Ecumenical Council, the Book of Common Prayer has defined us as Anglicans in worship and as the basis of our theological method. It has been the standard of doctrine and practice. Anglicans hitherto have held and

maintained the doctrine, sacraments and discipline of Christ as the Lord has commanded in holy Scripture and as the Church of England has received and set out in the Prayer Book and the Thirty-Nine Articles.

It would not have occurred to most Anglicans that serious questions of doctrine and worship could be decided by local, provincial or even national synods. The Prayer Book tradition was the standard. Today, liturgy is used to introduce theological changes incompatible with the doctrine expressed in the Book of Common Prayer, making polarization within the church sharper and widespread. Laity becomes demoralized when unable to accommodate to the new religion emerging in their parishes and the shepherd's attitude of 'take it or leave it.' Dean Inge pointed out that the church that is married to the present age is a widow in the next.

This new emergent, fashionable religion is out-of-date in a profound sense because it is theologically inflexible and narrow, expressive of a school of thought which has already passed its peak. Even Harvey Cox realized that he got it wrong in *The Secular City*, so that the secularization of the Church is expressive of a generation now passing away. Nevertheless, though the Church of England is a few steps behind America and Canada, recent trends in General Synod indicate the presence of two incompatible religions in England.

By **Canon Arthur Middleton** in *New Directions*

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