

Restoring All Things in Christ:

Some Reflections on the Pastoral Provision

For the Anglican Use of the Roman Rite

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In June of 1980, Pope John Paul II approved a special Pastoral Provision for the reception of converted Episcopalian priests together with their congregations into full communion with the Catholic Church while retaining elements of their Anglican liturgical tradition. Though ratified with little fanfare and attracting scant attention at the time, this Pastoral Provision represents the first tentative steps toward fulfilling a set of possibilities with roots deep in the Anglican schism of the sixteenth century. At last, belatedly, auspiciously, converts from Anglicanism were coming home to Rome, not as scattered individuals but as a body of the faithful, bringing with them their shared gifts and offering – indeed restoring – to the Catholic Church their distinctive spiritual patrimony.

Responding to petitions from a group of American Anglicans who sought a canonical means of reunion with the Holy See, the Pastoral Provision was promulgated by decree of the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith and issued through the National Conference of Catholic Bishops.¹ The decree provided for the ordination of

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Anglican clergymen (even married ones) to the Catholic priesthood, for the confirmation of Anglican laity so disposed, and for the establishment of “common identity” parishes preserving those features of the Anglican liturgical heritage compatible with Catholic faith and doctrine. Toward this end, the Pastoral Provision established a framework for developing a distinct Anglican usage of the Roman Rite, composed from sources in the Book of Common Prayer and Anglican traditions of worship. In 1987, the Vatican’s Congregation for Divine Worship approved the liturgical texts of the Anglican Use under the title of *The Book of Divine Worship*.² Today, there are some half-dozen active Anglican Use Catholic congregations, all in the United States, and most of those in Texas, including my own parish, Our Lady of Walsingham in Houston.³ Though these “common identity” parishes are as yet few in number and while their future is still unfolding, the Pastoral Provision represents something more than the concession of a “half-way house” for “recovering” Anglicans. It is a remarkable ecclesial and liturgical development in its own right, and however “provisional”, it may be the Anglican Use can be understood as one of the fruits of post-conciliar renewal with intriguing implications for understanding the progress of liturgical reform, the pontificate of John Paul II, and the dynamics of Catholic tradition.

On the evening of 19 August, 1980, the day before the press conference announcing the approval of the Pastoral Provision, Archbishop John R. Quinn of San Francisco, then President of the NCCB, is reported to have said, “I’m not sure what all this means.”⁴ Twenty-two years later, the meaning of the Pastoral Provision is still far from obvious, but already the Anglican Use has established itself as an important model of “reconciled diversity” with further promise of enriching the Church and building up the Body of Christ. Here I want to reflect on the fascinating story of how the Anglican Use came to be and to assess its importance as a liturgical and ecclesial development, one that is uniquely English in origin, yet decidedly American and pervasively Texan in character. It is, as we shall see, a story fraught with irony and riddled with paradox. In order to

appreciate what England, America, and Texas have to offer the Universal Church through the organic development of this local and particular usage, we need first to understand the larger context of Anglican conversions to Catholicism, some of the anomalies of the English Reformation and its aftermath, as well as the evolution of a Catholic and sacramental sensibility through worship with *The Book of Common Prayer*. Finally, then, to glimpse how this sensibility has been restored to its proper origins and authenticated in the Catholic Church, it is worth offering a brief descriptive overview of the Anglican Use liturgy as celebrated in the “common identity” parishes, together with some comment on their distinctive ethos of congregational worship.

I

The record of Anglican conversions to the Catholic Church stretches back to the seventeenth century – nearly to the beginnings of Anglicanism itself – but the number and pace of these conversions picked up after the Oxford Movement stimulated a revival of Catholic faith and practice within the Church of England. Especially since the reception of John Henry Newman in 1845, a steady stream of converts from Anglicanism has immeasurably enriched the Catholic Church. Counting among their number such figures as Henry Manning, Gerard Manley Hopkins, G. K. Chesterton, Ronald Knox, Robert Hugh Benson, Christopher Dawson, Evelyn Waugh, and Graham Greene, these and other converts, both clerical and lay, from the Church of England as well as the Episcopal Church in the United States, contributed significantly to the Catholic intellectual revival in the English-speaking world.⁵ As they embraced the Roman Catholic Church, they brought with them into the Church and offered in service to the Church their remarkable literary and artistic talents, their wit, their apologetic zeal, and their vigorous and articulate sense of Catholic Faith and Truth. They also carried with them a special temperament forged as Anglicans and honed on worship according to *The Book of Common Prayer*. Anglicanism served them, in a way quite distinct from the experience of other converts, as a kind of nursery or seedbed in which a distinctively

“Catholic” religious sensibility grew and matured. Their faith and their gifts were fertilized in the soil of ground laid waste at the Reformation but subsequently reclaimed and re-cultivated with the rich humus of a sacramental and incarnational religious tradition.

However much these Anglican converts contributed to the Catholic Church, what they received was infinitely greater – the fullness of communion, the voice of authority, and the assurance of grace. But their experience was, as it remains for many Anglican converts today, marked with a certain ambivalence. Cardinal Newman’s semi-autobiographical novel narrating an Anglican layman’s anguished path to Rome is aptly titled *Loss and Gain*.⁶ In Newman’s time, the sense of loss was mostly social, cultural, and aesthetic in character: often estranged from friends and family, leaving behind the traditions and associations of Anglican parish life, and turning wistfully away from the familiar cadences of the Prayer Book, English converts found themselves in a Church that seemed “foreign” and – worse – predominantly Irish! But the loss was not only or exactly a loss of “Englishness.”

Newman and many of his fellow converts began their trek to Rome with the recognition of an authentic tradition of residual Catholicism within the Anglican Church. This tradition, while often obscured and at moments seemingly moribund, found its living expression in the Prayer Book and in a devotional ethos stretching back to the seventeenth-century Caroline divines and beyond to the color and vitality of English Catholicism before the Reformation. Because of the peculiar circumstances of the English schism and owing to the subsequent persecution of recusant Catholics, something of the native genius of late medieval English Catholicism was effectively lost to the Roman Catholic Church. Much was destroyed, but much was also preserved and submerged within the Church of England, later to be reclaimed, even co-opted, by those Anglicans who forged and followed the Oxford Movement.⁷ First, the Tractarians (focusing on doctrine) and, then, the Anglican ritualists (emphasizing liturgy) fashioned

an articulate and energetic Anglo-Catholic movement, undertaking in the nineteenth century their own work of Catholic renaissance. They virtually disowned their Protestant lineage and instead sought to recover the resources of patristic and medieval Catholicism and to enrich the Anglican vernacular liturgy with the whole heritage of Catholic devotion and sacramental worship. The effects of this Catholic revival in the Anglican Communion were curious and even counter-intuitive: while the logic of Anglo-Catholicism pointed ineluctably to Rome and reunion with the Holy See, the accomplishments of the revival, however limited, convinced many of its adherents that they were already truly “Catholic” (or at least on par with the Eastern Orthodox churches as another “branch” of the One True Church) and encouraged them to work from within in hopes of a long-range, corporate rapprochement with the Roman Church. The sequence of “defections” to Rome, beginning with Newman, far from undermining the Anglo-Catholic position, as often as not challenged those who remained behind to demonstrate ever more clearly and prayerfully the conviction of their own “Catholicism.” With each high-profile conversion, “swimming the Tiber” became more natural but also, paradoxically, more difficult.

“Submitting to the Roman obedience,” as Anglo-Catholics sometimes described conversion with a sigh of gloomy inevitability, came to involve, then, a sense of loss that was not only cultural but also poignantly religious. To become fully Catholic they had to give up much that seemed authentically Catholic, including a vernacular liturgy with patristic and medieval roots, the habit of active participation in congregational worship, and a dynamic traditionalism extraordinarily receptive to the riches of the Christian past, particularly those of the Eastern churches. But this story of loss and gain is even more complicated. Many Anglo-Catholics, often embattled and isolated in their own communion, perceived the weaknesses of their position. In the absence of an authoritative magisterium and lacking an altogether coherent dogmatic theology, they could not resist the corrosive effects of liberalism and modernism, even in their own

ranks. While they succeeded in enriching the sacramental and devotional life of the Anglican Church, theirs was something of a “paper religion,” and in practice could occasionally sink into the decadent aestheticism of “dressing up and playing church.” Still, at its best, Anglo-Catholicism was a genuine force of renewal, often counter-cultural in effect, proclaiming a kind of radical orthodoxy and unsettling conventional Anglican propriety with a real call to holiness. But at its heart, the movement felt the wound of schism and increasingly came to be animated by a longing for the fullness of communion in the Universal Church.

By the beginning of the twentieth-century, Catholic-minded Anglicans in Britain and the United States regularly prayed for the reunification of the Church and offered at mass (as they pointedly called the Anglican Eucharist) suffrages for the Pope as the “the Patriarch of the West.” With the advent of the modern ecumenical movement, many hoped for some form of corporate reunion and a few even dreamed of an Anglican uniate church in communion with the Bishop of Rome. Such dreams were to prove shortsighted and premature, not the least because those bent on reunion with Rome never amounted to more than a small minority in the Anglican Communion.

For those Anglo-Catholics who had managed to study, argue, meditate, and pray themselves into a theological position largely consonant with Roman Catholicism (in all things save the final – and fundamental – acceptance of the Petrine office), the Second Vatican Council seemed both to encourage and inhibit visions of corporate reunification. On one hand, the Council’s Decree on Ecumenism offered an olive branch to the Church’s separated Anglican brethren, if only in acknowledging a distinction between the status and claims of Anglicans, in particular, and those of Protestants, at large. And the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy suggested a program of liturgical reform reminiscent of what Anglicans themselves had long ago pioneered.⁸ But in the giddy aftermath of the Council, it seemed to many conservative Anglo-Catholics that the Roman Church herself was giving way to the same liberalizing tendencies that were progressively attenuating

Catholic faith and doctrine in the Church of England and in the American Episcopal Church. Thus many Anglicans rationalized their position, and even though individual converts continued to walk their solitary way to Rome a great many chose to sit tight, hunkering down in their own Anglo-Catholic “fortress parishes.” Notwithstanding their high-minded notions of church polity, they were little more than congregationalists practicing a religion of desperate wishful thinking. As the dust settled from the Council, it became clear that the Catholic Church went on being Catholic, but all the smoke from Anglo-Catholic thurifers could not conceal the fundamentally Protestant character of the Anglican schism.

Our story brings us, then, to the papacy of John Paul II and the initiative of a group of American Anglicans that resulted in the Pastoral Provision. In 1976, the General Convention of the Episcopal Church unilaterally voted to ordain women to the priesthood, thereby dealing a deathblow to the prospects of ecumenism and decisively rejecting the Catholic understanding of the apostolic ministry. But women’s ordination was only one issue among many and symptomatic of a larger, long incubating Anglican departure from the historic content of Christian faith and doctrine. Traditionalist Anglicans, both of the catholic and the evangelical variety, found themselves at sea, tossed overboard from a ship that had been high-jacked by those who put their own cultural agenda before the mission and identity of the Church as the Bride of Christ. Well before the Convention, Pope Paul VI had addressed a cautionary letter to the Episcopal Church, but this letter and its contents were deliberately withheld from the Convention’s delegates meeting in Minneapolis.

Not long after the 1976 General Convention, Catholic-minded Anglicans began concerted efforts to establish links with the Holy See. In the leadership of the heroic churchman Canon Albert Julius du Bois, long-time president of the American Church Union (the association of American Anglo-Catholic clergy committed in principle to reunion since its founding in 1859), Anglicans seeking communion with Rome found a

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Moses to lead them out of Egypt.⁹ The contacts forged through Canon DuBois and the discussions that ensued for the next several years, from the last days of Paul VI through the first year of the pontificate of John Paul II, met with favorable reception from several members of the American Catholic hierarchy and from Franjo Cardinal Seper, then head of the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. On the Solemnity of All Saints, 1 November 1979, Father DuBois and the contingent he led signed a formal petition for reunion on the altar of the North American Martyrs at the North American College in Rome. From there, the petition was received by Cardinal Seper and warmly approved by Pope John Paul II. The result of this extraordinary convergence of good will, faith, and prayer on all sides was the Pastoral Provision, which was officially ratified and announced just weeks after Canon DuBois's death in 1980. Three years later, after a process of assessment and discernment for priests, catechesis and preparation for laity, and much consultation on the liturgy, the first "common identity" parish was erected with the ordination of Father Christopher Phillips and the formation of the Church of Our Lady of the Atonement in San Antonio, Texas.[†]

II

As Canon DuBois and his fellow converts knew very well, the roots of this ecclesial and liturgical development lie deep in the anomalous character of the English schism and in the peculiar historical dynamics whereby Catholic sacramental worship survived and then came to assert itself in the Anglican religious tradition. It is well beyond the scope of this paper to narrate the whole complex history of the Protestant Reformation in England, but let me suggest the outlines of a framework of interpretation that may help make sense of the Pastoral Provision and explain how the Anglican Use of the Roman Rite came to assume its place in the Church's patrimony of worship.

The sequence of events by which England fell out of communion with the See of Peter – King Henry's defiance of papal authority, the declaration of royal supremacy, and

the final break with Rome in 1534 – forever and tragically changed the religious and cultural landscape of England. But these events, it is worth remembering, were hammered out of historical and political contingency, and the schism, at least in its initial stages, did not represent a movement of popular rebellion or even much disaffection from traditional Catholic doctrine or practice. Kings and popes had quarreled before, kings and popes would quarrel again. Though the martyrs St. Thomas More and St. John Fisher shrewdly perceived the implications of Henry’s usurping of ecclesial and spiritual authority, that the king had declared himself the “Head” of the Church in England did not necessarily preclude reconciliation with Rome, and, at first, Catholic life went on much as it had before.¹⁰ Henry’s daughter, Mary Tudor would during her short reign exercise royal supremacy to restore Catholicism in England. For more than a century the nation’s religion hung in the balance with the hopes of some and the fears of others that this or that monarch would turn “papist.” While Edward VI and Elizabeth I unambiguously proclaimed their Protestantism, James I and Charles I (both married to Catholics) seemed at moments to flirt with Catholicism; Charles II died a Catholic, James II reigned briefly as a Catholic, and only with the so-called “Glorious Revolution” of 1688 was the Protestant religion firmly and constitutionally established. The political contingency of the schism both shaped and reflected a deeper set of conflicts in a nation that came to define its identity in opposition to “popery” but which could not entirely expunge the legacy of “popishness” from its religious and cultural life.

The English Reformation, forged in equivocation, compromise, and ambiguity, was a process that lasted across a century and involved both a systematic attack on traditional religion and the simultaneous preservation of a strong current of vestigial Catholicism. The contradictory character of the Reformation in England has occasioned great debate among historians and generated some complex and contentious historiography venturing to trace and apportion elusive relations between causes and effects.¹¹ Yet an impressive and growing consensus of historians, including J. J. Scarisbrick, Christopher Haigh, and

Eamon Duffy, now argue convincingly that the Reformation from its inception was imposed on a largely resistant population by an alliance of avaricious, power-hungry politicians and a small cadre of militant Protestant agitators seeking to exploit the king's conflict with the papacy.¹²

The successive waves of state-sponsored Reformation under Henry VIII, Edward VI, and Elizabeth I amounted to a wholesale assault on the cultural vitality and spiritual richness of late medieval Catholicism. Power and Greed joined hands with Sacrilege and Iconoclasm to work the burning of missals and breviaries, the desecration of shrines and chantries, the despoliation of the monasteries, and the smashing of altars, rood screens, statues, and stained glass windows. Such destruction entailed not only a massive loss of artifacts but also an attack on a distinctively English Catholic spirituality, an ethos of prayer, a culture of devotion, and a particular kind of Marian and eucharistic piety. By Shakespeare's time the English landscape was littered with "Bare ruined choirs, where late the sweet birds sang" (Sonnet 73), and already folks spoke of "the old religion," sometimes with contempt but as often with nostalgia.

The impulse toward destruction was consistently met with a countervailing, though often quiet, ethic of preservation. But quite aside from the holy things that were hidden away or salvaged, something of the spirit of "the old religion" was retained and internalized among the faithful to live on within the walls of the old churches and cathedrals under the dispensation of the new order. For Englishmen of the late sixteenth century the alternatives were stark: they could embrace persecution and martyrdom, on one hand, or, on the other, choose conformity, however grudging or merely nominal, to the established church. Most opted for the latter, and the Church of England included among its clergy and laity a considerable though indeterminate number of so-called "church papists," those who remained Catholic at heart but who outwardly or minimally conformed to the state religion.¹³ While the degree of their influence in the English church is virtually impossible to assess, the very category of "church papists" and the

fears they aroused in doctrinaire Protestants bespeak the undisputed reality of a widespread conservative sentiment in the church, or at least a disposition willing to accommodate contingent circumstances in hopes of better days.

Such ambiguities and the difficulties of defining the exact character and content of early modern Anglicanism point to another important dimension of post-Reformation English church history. The Sovereign Power in England could command public conformity to the state church, but it could not beyond certain limits compel or probe the depths of conscience – nor did it even seek to do so. The Articles of Religion, eventually codified as thirty-nine in 1563, railed against “Romish” abuses but were so ambiguously worded as to admit a wide latitude of interpretation and, with some mental gymnastics, could accommodate a broad spectrum of belief, including much that was genuinely Catholic.¹⁴ The Elizabethan Settlement settled very little, in fact, but rather had the effect of displacing religious conflict from overt disputes about theology to noisy quarrels over worship and ceremonial. Thus liturgy became the great battlefield of Anglicanism, and thus, to paraphrase Christopher Haigh, at the beginning of the seventeenth-century England was a nation neither fully “de-Catholicised” nor completely “Protestantised.”¹⁵

The tangled history of Anglicanism is closely bound up with the development of Anglican traditions of worship and the evolution of *The Book of Common Prayer*.¹⁶ For most of the first fifteen years after the schism, until after the death of Henry VIII, the Mass and offices continued to be said in Latin according to the traditional English variations of the medieval Roman Rite (the “uses” of Salisbury, Hereford, York, Bangor, and Lincoln). In 1544 the Archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Cranmer was commissioned to translate and adapt the liturgy from the Salisbury missal and manual (the Sarum Use) in the composition of the first English Prayer Book. Imposed in 1549, this first Book of Common Prayer incited armed rebellion throughout the west of England (as the decree of royal supremacy had not), and the good men of Cornwall rejected the new liturgy on the grounds that they couldn’t understand English! But

despite the shock of the vernacular and some departures from the old rite – the elaborate ceremonial of the Sarum Use was proscribed and veneration of the saints repressed – Cranmer’s Order of Holy Communion, “Commonly called the Masse,” represented a fairly faithful, though streamlined rendering of the essential elements of the Latin Mass. When Cranmer’s rival, the conservative Stephen Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester, insisted that the 1549 Prayer Book was fully compatible with the theology of the Catholic Mass, he only expressed what many thought – or hoped – to be the case. But such ideas were hardly a source of comfort since these sentiments provoked Protestantizers in the church to demand a thoroughly reformed service book, resulting in the Prayer Book of 1552. With its “black rubric,” emphatically denying the Real Presence, the 1552 book marks a kind of low point of Anglican regression. The “black rubric” disappeared from every subsequent edition of *The Book of Common Prayer*, and the fitful trajectory of Prayer Book revision thereafter (beginning with the Elizabethan Prayer Book of 1559) was in the direction of restoring the substance of the 1549 book and re-introducing language more consonant with a theology of the Real Presence and Eucharistic Sacrifice.

Despite the contention it aroused, *The Book of Common Prayer* served the Anglican Church as the source and seal of unity – or as sign of as much unity as Anglicans could ever claim – and from its Catholic origins it carried and conveyed through the centuries the memory and the possibility of sacramental participation in the Body of Christ. Throughout the seventeenth century, Puritans in the English church fumed against lingering vestiges of “popishness” in the Prayer Book and sought to reduce its rites to a platform for preaching and Bible reading, but on the whole the language and ritual of the Prayer Book came to inspire a broad following and a deep attachment.

Yet the accomplishment of *The Book of Common Prayer* owes not only to the elements of continuity it provided with pre-Reformation worship but also to the particular vernacular medium in which that continuity was expressed. In translating the Roman

Rite and borrowing features from the Greek liturgies, Cranmer made the most of his classical and humanist education, and he seized the full resources of the English language at a remarkable stage of its development. With astonishing linguistic skill and literary talent, he fashioned a vernacular liturgical idiom capable of expressing with euphony, precision, and clarity the subtle and supple richness of the Latin rite and some of the Greek.¹⁷ Cranmer's translations of the Roman collects, for example, are one of the undisputed glories of the Prayer Book and unrivalled as works of beauty, capturing in limpid rolling periods much of the concision, emotional range, and theological nuance of the Latin originals.¹⁸ Arguably, what was preserved in the Prayer Book was deeper and truer than anything else in Anglican experience.

Lacking a clear structure of authority and a coherent body of doctrine, Anglicans perforce were thrown back upon the flexible resources of their liturgy to expound their faith. In both its strengths and limitations, Anglicanism became a particular testing ground, a five-hundred-year laboratory for the principle of *lex orandi, lex credendi*. The offices of the Prayer Book could be recited with Calvinist austerity, but its rites would also be celebrated with Tridentine panoply. The Catholic core of *The Book of Common Prayer* provided the context and something of a stimulus for a series of Catholic revivals, beginning with the Caroline divines of the seventeenth century. Their association with currents of Counter-Reformation spirituality and their (falsely) alleged "crypto-popery" helped provoke the English civil wars and the Puritan revolution. Quite apart from the ensuing conflict, the revival shaped by Lancelot Andrewes and John Cosin, among others, enriched the Anglican devotional ethos, anticipating the Oxford Movement and influencing what would become the Episcopal Church in the United States.¹⁹

In adopting the 1637 Scottish Prayer Book (the version informed by the Caroline revival) as the model for the first American Book of Common Prayer, Episcopalians on these shores acquired some rich resources for sacramental worship. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, American Anglo-Catholics shared with the Oxford Movement the

challenge and the opportunity of recalling the Anglican Communion to its Catholic roots. American Anglo-Catholicism grew in tandem with its British counterpart, but freed from associations with the monarchy and the established church it also developed its own independent character and robust spirit. (It is perhaps a tribute to this character and to an American sense of openness, on the part of Anglicans and Catholics alike, that an American initiative led to the Pastoral Provision and that the Anglican Use has yet to be instituted in the country from whose history it takes its origins.) Yearning for the fullness of communion yet deeply attached to their own spiritual tradition, English and American Anglicans did what they could within their own churches to rectify the damage done at the Reformation.

In an effort further to enrich, supplement, and correct *The Book of Common Prayer* and to bind themselves more closely to the central liturgical tradition of Western Christendom, some Anglicans beginning in the late nineteenth century produced complete English translations of the *Missale Romanum*, using the Prayer Book as a stylistic template. These “Anglican Missals,” in both English and American editions,²⁰ represent the penultimate stage of development in the long and fitful Anglican pilgrimage to reclaim the spirit and the substance of the Catholic faith first planted in England when St. Augustine of Canterbury arrived in Kent with his commission from Pope St. Gregory the Great in the year of Our Lord 597. But this work of restoration only came to its proper fulfillment in 1979, All Saints’ Day, when Father DuBois and his delegation signed the petition for reception into the Catholic Church on the altar of the North American Martyrs and then made their way to the Church of St. Gregory, the very place from which the Roman pontiff had sent his missionary to England almost fourteenth-century years before. There, taking nothing for granted and feeling the full historical weight of the moment, they knelt and prayed for the complete reunion of Christ’s Church.

III

Such, sorely abbreviated, is the essential historical background for understanding how and why in the waning years of the twentieth century a small band of American Anglicans approached the Holy See seeking incorporation back into the Universal Church. And such is a brief account of the historical experience necessary for appreciating the special character of the Anglican Use parishes formed under the auspices of the Pastoral Provision. But that character is also significantly the result of some important developments within the Roman Catholic Church and of their convergence with the modern growth of English-speaking Catholicism. The way to the Second Vatican Council was paved in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries with the advent of the liturgical movement, the Catholic intellectual revival, and the work of theological renaissance. Simultaneously, the Church in Britain, after Catholic emancipation and the restoration of the hierarchy, emerged from centuries of legal persecution, and the Church in America came together and developed its own character from the diversity of its immigrant communities. All of these vectors of influence, like so many beams of light, refracted through the prism of the Council and focused by the pontificate of John Paul II, combine with the Anglican inheritance to constitute the witness of a particular kind of dynamic traditionalism that is the special charism of the Anglican Use congregations. Insofar as the Anglican convert Cardinal Newman is rightly hailed one of the spiritual fathers of Vatican II, something of his vision and temperament has come to fruition in the Holy Father's provision for "the common identity" parishes of the Anglican Use.

This "common identity," then, is rich and multifaceted and defies easy definition. It involves much more than the accommodation or "inculturation" of a peculiar Anglo-Saxon "ethnicity." Rather and more fundamentally, it represents a fully earned realization of, and a particular way of living out, the Catholic symbiosis between the rule of prayer, an ethos of worship (*lex orandi*) and the rule of belief, a body of doctrine (*lex*

credendi). If the history of the Anglican tradition teaches anything, it instructs us that modes of liturgical prayer do indeed shape, prompt, and reflect habits of belief and focal points of truth, but it also teaches that even deeply ingrained customs of worship require for their authentication the abiding, living voice of authority in the fullness of communion. Anglican Use Catholics seek, then, to be faithful to the rule of Holy Scripture, Sacred Tradition, the Chair of Peter, and the Church's Magisterium and to demonstrate that fidelity in and through their dedication within their local parish communities to a particular liturgical apostolate.

Yet the phrase "liturgical apostolate" sounds perhaps grander and loftier than what most Catholics of the Anglican Use perceive themselves as doing in living the Catholic faith through their diverse gifts and callings. The "common identity" parishes are, in many respects, much like other parishes in their dioceses. Formed around a small nucleus of Anglican converts, each of the "common identity" parishes now includes several converts from other religious traditions and a considerable number of life-long Catholics, men and women of various backgrounds, and many large families. They are active in all the religious life and charitable work of their diocesan communities, but what draws them together and gives them their special character is a common reverence for the liturgy of the Roman Rite in its Anglican Usage and with this reverence a shared style of congregational worship and parish life.

With the best of Catholic liturgy through the ages, congregational worship in the Anglican Use parishes is stately and dignified, rich and clear, simple and ceremonious. The Divine Liturgy, celebrated as Solemn Mass at the principal Sunday service and major Holy Days, aims to work the sanctification of time and space and souls through a liturgical ethos that is catechetical, kerygmatic, eschatological, mystagogic, iconic, dramatic, and always incarnational— qualities that would require a dissertation to explain in detail! Ritual actions and gestures are clear, precise, and deliberate. The language is robust and hieratic. The active participation of all the faithful is normative with a clear

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delineation of the roles and functions of the celebrant, deacon, servers, cantor, choir, and congregation. Music is integral to the unfolding of the liturgical action (it never consists of “performance pieces”), and Anglican Use parishes delight in congregational singing, with a rich repertory of traditional hymns carefully chosen to fit the propers of the day and season. Vigorously making a joyful noise, the people sing every last verse of every hymn, and seldom does the choir sing or chant anything that is not also sung or chanted by the whole congregation. Plainsong and Anglican chant feature prominently. Hymnody and psalmody are carefully balanced and integrated.

When the Divine Liturgy does not open with the chanting of a processional Introit followed by the *Asperges* or the *Vidi aquam*, Solemn Mass on Sundays often begins with some other preparatory service of psalms and canticles. In penitential seasons, the liturgy starts with the singing of Psalm 51 (*Miserere mei, Deus*) and Psalm 43 (*Judica me, Deus*), or else the office of sung Morning Prayer with the Invitatory Psalm (the *Venite*) and the Song of Zechariah (the *Benedictus Dominus Deus*), together with the psalms appointed for the day, a lesson, and responsorial suffrages. The Holy Eucharist proper commences with the celebrant’s greeting (“Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit”), followed by the Collect for Purity, taken originally from the Sarum Use and featured in the Anglican Prayer Book as an introductory invocation for the entire rite:

“Almighty God, unto whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of Thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love Thee, and worthily magnify Thy holy name, through Christ our Lord.”²¹

Then follows the Summary of the Law and the *Kyrie*, sung in Greek or English, and the *Gloria*, in English or Latin, then the Collect of the day, the lessons, gradual psalm, and the Gospel (typically chanted by the deacon from the center of the nave). After the homily and the Nicene Creed, the Prayers of the People next take place, followed by the

Penitential Rite consisting either of the Prayer Book's General Confession or the *Confiteor*, concluding then the Liturgy of the Word with the exchange of the Peace (in a location here different from its placement in the *Novus Ordo* of the common Roman Rite). The Liturgy of the Faithful opens with an offertory anthem, the offertory responses, and the celebrant's preparation of the altar and the gifts. The Eucharistic Prayer proceeds with the celebrant facing the people, intoning the *Sursum corda*, and then turning toward the altar, *ad orientem*, for the Preface, *Sanctus*, and the Canon of the Mass. The Anglican Use Canon is the traditional Gregorian Canon of the Roman Rite, in the translation from *The English Missal*, a vernacular rendering that bears affinities to the sixteenth-century English translation commonly attributed to Miles Coverdale. The *sanctus* bell rings at the elevations of the Sacred Body and the Sacred Blood. The consecration is interpolated with the contemporary Roman Rite's proclamation of the Mystery of Faith. Following the *Our Father*, the priest breaks the host, saying "Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us," and the people respond, "Therefore let us keep the feast." After the *Agnus Dei*, the entire congregation says the Prayer of Humble Access, a distinctively Anglican prayer composed by Cranmer with phraseology from medieval collects and from the Greek Liturgy of St. Basil:

"We do not presume to come to this Thy Table, O merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in Thy manifold and great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under Thy Table. But Thou art the same Lord whose property is always to have mercy. Grant us therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of Thy dear Son Jesus Christ, and to drink His blood, that we may evermore dwell in Him, and He in us."²²

With the invitation and communion antiphon, the congregation communicates, kneeling at the communion rail, and receiving the sacrament from the hands of the priest or deacon, by intinction. A prayer of thanksgiving and the blessing draws the Mass to a

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close, and the rite concludes then with a recessional hymn or else the Sarum Recessional Chant, consisting of the Last Gospel, as the priest and servers make their way from the sanctuary to the sacristy.

The Divine Liturgy according to the Anglican Use contains all of the essential elements of the post-conciliar Missal of Paul VI, together with components and ceremonial from the Roman Missal of 1962, and the medieval Use of Sarum, not to mention echoes here and there of the Byzantine Rite and the Eastern Catholic liturgies, all woven seamlessly together in the prayerful vernacular of the historic Book of Common Prayer. The Anglican Use liturgy offers, in fact, a compact résumé of the history of the Catholic Mass, with strata from the whole sequence of its long and organic development from patristic to modern times. It also contains within itself the whole Anglican story of loss and gain, of destruction and preservation, attenuation and restoration, and of vestigial Catholicism attacked, afflicted, and then reclaimed and refined. But the Anglican Use liturgy is hardly an archaeological relic, nor is it a contrived museum piece; it is rather very much a living liturgy, newly adapted to be sure, but substantively continuous with the order of Mass celebrated by the “common identity” parishes long *before* their reception into the Catholic Church. As the Congregation of Divine Worship prepared to draft the liturgical texts of the Pastoral Provision in consultation with their Anglican petitioners, the Vatican made it clear that the “common identity” liturgy should grow from the actual, recent, and ongoing liturgical practice of those seeking to translate their own religious heritage and sensibility into the context of Roman Catholic worship. For all its distinctiveness, the Anglican Use liturgy is still an embodiment of the Church’s historic Roman Rite, and one, moreover, that fulfills to a singular degree the norms for the restoration and renewal of the Roman Rite contained in the Council’s Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, and one that accords fully with the most recent Vatican directive on the translation of liturgical texts, *Liturgiam Authenticam*.²³ On the principle of “restoring all things in Christ,” the

Pastoral Provision has effected in the “common identity” congregations of the Anglican Use a remarkable enrichment of the Church’s liturgical and ecclesial life.

But the Pastoral Provision remains provisional – it was issued *ad tempus non determinatum* and subject to juridical modification – and its future depends not only on the good graces of the bishops who have approved the formation of the “common identity” parishes in their dioceses but on the ability of Anglican Use Catholics to remain true to their distinctive identity and tradition while proving themselves faithful and integral to the Universal Church. The accomplishments to date give reason for cautious optimism: six thriving congregations, others taking shape, the construction of several handsomely appointed churches, one splendid parochial school, some seventy Episcopal priests ordained to the Catholic priesthood under the auspices of the Pastoral Provision (though obviously only a few of these actually serve “common identity” congregations), not to mention an impressive number of vocations and seminarians. There are also long-range plans and hopes of organizing a “common identity” religious order and of establishing a house of study to assure the continued growth and vitality of the Anglican Use.

The Pastoral Provision is a remarkable development for several reasons. First, quickly and graciously approved by John Paul II, it is illustrative of the Holy Father’s approach to carrying out the mandates of the Second Vatican Council, both in spirit and substance. Second, the Pastoral Provision is also significant as a precedent for licit liturgical diversity. The Anglican Use is the first canonically certified variation on the common Roman Rite approved for parishes especially designated for its celebration. It is also noteworthy as the fruit of an *American* initiative for reconciling an ecclesial community on the model of incorporation rather than assimilation. (For complicated reasons, proposals for a version of the Pastoral Provision for Great Britain have come to nothing, owing in part to some resistance from the Catholic hierarchy in England and Wales.)²⁴ The contrast with Britain is instructive and points to another important

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implication of the Pastoral Provision's adoption in America, namely the challenge and opportunity of collegiality. As the decree specifies, Anglican congregations and their priests seeking reception under the terms of the Pastoral Provision must do so with the permission of the local ordinary, and the "common identity" parishes formed thereby fall under the jurisdiction of the diocesan bishop working in concert with the Vatican-appointed Ecclesiastical Delegate for the Anglican Use. The parishes formed so far bespeak in their very existence the grace of charity, openness, and understanding both from those seeking and from those offering a home in the fullness and richness of the Church.

Cardinal Newman suggested that the Anglican Church, with all its flaws and imperfections, nevertheless carried within itself just enough residual Catholicism to serve as a providential blessing for the deliverance of her stepchildren back into the arms of Holy Mother Church.²⁵ Countless other Anglican converts would surely concur. Now we also wait to see if such providential grace refracted through the converts' experience of loss and gain may bear further fruit through the Anglican Use to redound to the greater gain and more perfect good of the whole Church. In the meantime, those Roman Catholics of the Anglican Use can sing with a newfound gusto and a particular resonance the words of Psalm 122 (reclaiming its language from its Anglican associations as the text of the British coronation anthem), singing thus with a proud American accent:

*"I was glad when they said unto me, we will go into the house of the Lord.
Our feet shall stand in thy gates, O Jerusalem.
Jerusalem is builded as a city that is at unity in itself.
O pray for the peace of Jerusalem; they shall prosper that love thee.
Peace be within thy walls, and plenteousness within thy palaces."*

Notes

¹ The text of the decree of the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith promulgating the Pastoral Provision is most readily available as Appendix A of Fr. Jack D. Barker's "The Pastoral Provision for Roman Catholics in the U.S.A.," <http://www.stmarythevirgin.org/index.htm>. Fr. Barker's essay provides a detailed history

of the Pastoral Provision from the petitions to the Vatican from Anglican clergy—Fr. Barker was one of the signatories—through the erection of the first Anglican Use Catholic parishes. For many details of this essay, I am indebted to Fr. Barker’s account.

² The full text of The Book of Divine Worship can be found in pdf format at <http://www.bookofdivineworship.com/>, and hereafter will be cited as BDW.

³ The principal Anglican Use Catholic congregations to date are Our Lady of the Atonement (San Antonio, Texas), Our Lady of Walsingham (Houston, Texas), St. Mary the Virgin (Arlington, Texas), St. Anselm of Canterbury (Corpus Christi, Texas), and St. Athanasius (Boston, Massachusetts). See the official website of the Pastoral Provision at <http://www.pastoralprovision.org>. The websites of these congregations contain a wealth of information about the history, development, and character of the Anglican Use

⁴ As reported by Barker, “The Pastoral Provision for Roman Catholics in the U.S.A.,” loc. cit.

⁵ For the stories of such converts, see Joseph Pearce, *Literary Converts: Spiritual Inspiration in Age of Unbelief* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2000); and Patrick Allitt, *Catholic Converts: British and American Intellectuals Turn to Rome* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell Univ. Press, 1997).

⁶ John Henry Newman, *Loss and Gain: The Story of a Convert*, ed. Alan G. Hill (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1986).

⁷ There are several useful studies of the Oxford Movement; especially commended is Christopher Dawson’s *The Spirit of the Oxford Movement* (London: Sheed & Ward, 1945). See also Geoffrey Rowell, *The Vision Glorious: Themes and Personalities of the Catholic Revival in Anglicanism* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1983).

⁸ See the Decree on Ecumenism, *Unitatis redintegratio*, and especially the “Joint Declaration on Cooperation, Paul VI and Archbishop Michael Ramsey, 24 March 1966”; as well as the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, *Sacrosanctum concilium*, in *Vatican Council II: The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents*, ed. Austin Flannery, OP, Revised Ed. (Northport, NY: Costello, 1988).

⁹ For an appreciation of Canon DuBois, with an overview of his ministry and an account of his role in the development of the Pastoral Provision, see Fr. James T. Moore, “The Anglican Use: Some Historical Reflections,” *The Catholic Social Science Review* 5 (2000): 401-407. See also Barker, loc. cit.

¹⁰ See Henry Chadwick, “Royal Ecclesiastical Supremacy,” in *Humanism, Reform and Reformation: The Career of Bishop John Fisher*, ed. Brendan Bradshaw and Eamon Duffy (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1989), pp. 169-203.

¹¹ For an overview of this historiography, see Rosemary O’Day, *The Debate on the English Reformation* (London: Methuen, 1986).

¹² See J. J. Scarisbrick, *The Reformation and the English People* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1985); Christopher Haigh, *English Reformations: Religion, Politics, and Society Under the Tudors* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1993); and Eamon Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England 1400-1580* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press,

1992).

¹³ See Alexandra Walsham, *Church Papists: Catholicism, Conformity and Confessional Polemic in Early Modern England* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1999).

¹⁴ Yet it needs saying that the Thirty-Nine Articles have always been a stumbling-block for Catholic-minded Anglicans; the Articles have been tortured into some semblance of conformity with Catholic belief, but more often they have been quietly ignored or defied. As Fr. Daniel Callam points out in his essay for this collection (“Jane Austen’s Catholic Sensibility,” note 7), “The plot of Newman’s novel *Loss and Gain* pivots around the hero’s inability to swear to, or even to comprehend, the Thirty-Nine Articles.” Famously, Newman’s own Tract 90, “Remarks on Certain Passages in the Thirty-Nine Articles,” ventured unsuccessfully to interpret the Articles from a Catholic perspective and provoked such a flurry of response that it helped precipitate Newman’s conversion.

¹⁵ Haigh, *English Reformations*, pp. 288-90

¹⁶ On the history and development of the Anglican liturgy and its relation to the Roman Rite, see Dom Gregory Dix, *The Shape of the Liturgy* (Westminster: Dacre Press, 1945), particularly Chp. XVI. Useful resources for understanding the development and evolution of the Book of Common Prayer include F. E. Brightman, *The English Rite*, 2 vols. (London: Rivingtons, 1915); E. C. Ratcliff, *The Booke of Common Prayer of the Church of England: Its Making and Revisions 1549-1661* (London: SPCK, 1949); and Massey Shepherd, *The Oxford American Prayer Book Commentary* (New York: Oxford Univ. press, 1950).

¹⁷ Even Hilaire Belloc, never accused of being soft on anything from the reformed tradition, acknowledged the compelling style with which Cranmer captured and incorporated Catholic liturgical tradition in the Prayer Book. See *Characters of the Reformation* (Garden City, NY: Image Books, 1958), pp. 78-79.

¹⁸ For a short study and appreciation of Cranmer’s rendering of the Roman collects, see Eamon Duffy, “Rewriting the Liturgy: The Theological Implications of Translation,” in *Beyond the Prosaic: Renewing the Liturgical Movement*, ed. Stratford Caldecott (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1998), pp. 110-122. See also Edward Meyrick Goulbourn, *The Collects of the Day: An Exposition Critical and Devotional of the Collects Appointed at the Communion*, 2 vols. (New York: E. & J. B. Young, 1881).

¹⁹ On the character of seventeenth-century Anglicanism, see *Anglicanism: The Thought and Practice of the Church of England, Illustrated from the Religious Literature of the Seventeenth Century*, ed. Paul Elmer More and Frank Leslie Cross (London: SPCK, 1935).

²⁰ See *The English Missal* (London: W. Knott, 1933) and *The People’s Anglican Missal in the American Edition* (Long Island, NY: Frank Gavin Liturgical Foundation, 1946).

²¹ BDW, p. 291.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 322.

²³ The text of *Liturgiam Authenticam*: “On the Use of Vernacular Languages in the Publication of the Books of the Roman Liturgy” is available at

<http://www.ewtn.com/library/CURIA/CDWLITAU.HTM>.

²⁴ For an account of why the model of the Pastoral Provision has not, to date, proved viable in Britain, see William Oddie, *The Roman Option: Crisis and the Realignment of English-Speaking Christianity* (London: Harper-Collins, 1997).

²⁵ See, in particular, Newman's *Certain Difficulties Felt by Anglicans in Catholic Teaching* (London: Longmans, Green, 1918).

† Concurrent with the efforts of Canon DuBois, Fr. Jack Barker, and Fr. W. T. St. John Brown, and unknown to them, another group of Episcopalians was making a similar request for union with the Holy See, but through different channels. Father James Parker, SSC, initiated contacts on behalf of members of the Society of the Holy Cross, an Anglican priestly fraternity, one of the tenets of which was to seek union with Rome. Although it may have delayed the process a little bit, Rome sorted it all out, and both groups' petitions were combined as one. Father Parker was the first married priest to be ordained to the priesthood of the Catholic Church under the Pastoral Provision. He served under Cardinal Law for several years as Secretary to the Ecclesiastical Delegate for the Pastoral Provision. He is now the Pastor, not of a common identity parish, but of a regular Roman Catholic Parish in South Carolina. *Editor*.