

Divine Worship and the Liturgical Vitality of the Church

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Liturgy and doctrine have intersected in a striking way in the development of the liturgical provision for use by the Personal Ordinariates erected following the publication of the Apostolic Constitution *Anglicanorum Coetibus* (2009). In 2011 the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith and the Congregation for Divine Worship established the *Anglicanae Traditiones* Interdicasterial Commission to undertake this task. Since that time, the commission has authorized a Lectionary for the Ordinariates based on the Revised Standard Version of the Bible (Second Catholic Edition),¹ and has produced two liturgical books. The first, which was published in April 2014, is *Divine Worship: Occasional Services* containing the approved rites for Baptism, Holy Matrimony, and Funerals for the Personal Ordinariates.² The second, *Divine Worship: The Missal*, will be available to the parish communities of the Ordinariates for the celebration of Mass on the First Sunday of Advent 2015.

In providing a structure for groups of Anglicans entering full communion with the Catholic Church, the Apostolic Constitution *Anglicanorum Coetibus* affirms the following principle about the liturgical heritage of these groups:

Without excluding liturgical celebrations according to the Roman Rite, the Ordinariate has the faculty to celebrate the Holy Eucharist and the other Sacraments, the Liturgy of the Hours and other liturgical celebrations according to the liturgical books proper to the Anglican tradition, which have been

1 A three-volume edition of this *Lectionary* was published “for use of the Holy See and the Dioceses of the Bishops’ Conferences of Botswana, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Nigeria, South Africa, Swaziland, Zimbabwe and of those countries where the Bishops have given approval” (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2012).

2 *Divine Worship: Occasional Services* (London: Catholic Truth Society, 2014).

approved by the Holy See, so as to maintain the liturgical, spiritual and pastoral traditions of the Anglican Communion within the Catholic Church, as a precious gift nourishing the faith of the members of the Ordinariate and as a treasure to be shared.³

With the inclusion of such a liturgical provision in *Anglicanorum Coetibus*, the Holy See acknowledges the legitimate patrimony of ecclesial communities coming into full communion. An essential part of that patrimony must be liturgical since worship expresses in a most tangible way not only the ethos of a community, but also the faith that prompted it to seek full communion in the first place. Just as it would be unthinkable to describe the Catholic Church without reference to its liturgical and sacramental life, so it would in some sense be for every ecclesial body. The manner in which an ecclesial community worships uniquely expresses its inner life.

Furthermore, the publication of *Divine Worship* is of historic significance in that this is the first time the Catholic Church has acknowledged the value of liturgical forms arising from a Reformation community and has undertaken to incorporate them. To be sure, the Church has drawn elements of the Reformation musical tradition—such as hymns, motets, and chorales—but never official liturgical texts.

In order to understand the context and orientation for *Divine Worship*, several elements merit attention here. Primary among these is the pastoral motivation for undertaking the project in the first place. Then, by examining the notion of English patrimony, we can better grasp the significance of its incorporation into Catholic worship for *both* the Church herself and the relationship with other Christian communities.

THE PASTORAL PROJECT OF *DIVINE WORSHIP*

Naturally, practical concerns in part prompted the established of a joint commission. As we have seen, because the Apostolic Constitution *Anglicanorum Coetibus* granted the Ordinariates the faculty of celebrating the sacred liturgy according to “the liturgical books proper to the Anglican tradition,” it became necessary

3 Pope Benedict XVI, Apostolic Constitution on Providing for Personal Ordinariates for Anglicans Entering into Full Communion with the Catholic Church *Anglicanorum Coetibus* (4 November 2009) Art. III.

to detail concretely how those celebrations would be structured and the necessary texts composed.

But this practical motivation should not distract from the broader pastoral motivation: the salvation of souls through access to sacramental grace. This pastoral concern informed the English liturgical patrimony from its earliest beginnings. Many will undoubtedly be aware of the famous exchange between Pope St. Gregory the Great and St. Augustine of Canterbury (as recorded by St. Bede) regarding the structure and content of liturgical worship in newly-evangelized England. It is an exchange that loses none of its relevance in the present day and can be said to provide the theological structure of the Commission's work. Indeed, Gregory's response could serve as a "charter" for the entire liturgical project of the Ordinariates, and so it bears citation here:

Augustine's second question: Since we hold the same Faith, why do customs vary in different Churches? Why, for instance, does the method of saying Mass differ in the holy Roman Church and in the Churches of Gaul?

Pope Gregory's reply: My brother, you are familiar with the usage of the Roman Church, in which you were brought up. But if you have found customs, whether in the Roman, Gallican, or any other Churches that may be more acceptable to God, I wish you to make a careful selection of them, and teach the Church of the English, which is still young in the Faith, whatever you can profitably learn from the various Churches. For things should not be loved for the sake of places, but places for the sake of good things. [*Non enim pro locis res, sed pro bonis rebus loca amanda sunt.*] Therefore select from each of the Churches whatever things are devout, religious, and right [*quae pia, quae religiosa, quae recta*]; and when you have arranged them into a unified rite, let the minds of the English grow accustomed to it.⁴

Things should not be loved for the sake of places, but places for the sake of good things. One can think that St. Gregory plays with the word for "places" here, meaning not only geographical places, but textual "places," or diverse formulae and traditions of worship. Such liturgical "inculturation" is only good if it nurtures faith and re-

4 Bede, *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, trans. Leo Sherley-Price (London–New York: Penguin Books, 1990) I, 27.

sults in something devout, religious, and right, something unified and unifying that people can grow into.

This pastoral concern is the overarching context in which the inclusion of Anglican liturgical patrimony into Catholic worship should be seen. *Divine Worship* is not a museum piece, but rather the Holy See's prudent grafting of proven Anglican shoots on the rooted, living trunk of the Roman Rite to promote new and healthier growth. In other words, Anglican patrimony is not really worth preserving *in itself*. Rather, its value and virtue is measured to the degree that it positively contributes to making better Catholics and more Catholics by fanning the flames of faith, hope, and charity.

THE IDENTIFICATION AND INCORPORATION OF THE ENGLISH LITURGICAL PATRIMONY

The recognition that, despite its Catholic deficits, there is a unique English tradition worthy of preservation, was affirmed by Blessed Paul VI in 1970 when he canonized the forty English and Welsh martyrs. On that occasion he praised "the legitimate prestige and worthy patrimony of piety and usage proper to the Anglican Communion."⁵ In saying this, the Pontiff in effect declared that the separation of Anglicans and Catholics since the 16th century notwithstanding, the English Catholic tradition preserved in Anglican patrimony has nourished the Christian faithful in that Communion and so has enriched the Church.

Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, later Pope Benedict XVI, clearly shared this conviction. Well before he signed the Apostolic Constitution *Anglicanorum Coetibus* into law, the then-Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith had written:

Much of Catholicism remained in Anglicanism, as a matter of fact...On the one hand, England separated itself from Rome, distanced itself very resolutely from Rome...[O]n the other hand, there is a firm adherence to the Catholic tradition. In Anglicanism there have always been vital currents that have strengthened the Catholic inheritance.⁶

5 Pope Paul VI, *Homily on the Occasion of the Canonization of Forty Martyrs from England and Wales* (25 October 1970).

6 Joseph Ratzinger, *Salt of the Earth: The Church at the End of the Millennium* (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1997) 145.

According to Cardinal Ratzinger, this Catholic inheritance or “potency” in Anglicanism has not only been preserved, it has also been strengthened as the rule of faith that more or less consistently informed the Prayer Book tradition. It is only in relatively recent times that the traditional Prayer Book has faded in favor of more contemporary forms of worship. In this way, the transformative power of the *lex orandi* embodied by the Prayer Book is diluted in practice as each local community seeks to design its worship to express its own theological and ecclesiastical outlook.

It is remarkable that the Catholic Church should undertake a formal process such as the *Anglicanae Traditiones* Commission to identify and incorporate the richness of Anglican liturgical practice. In constituting a body of authoritative texts duly approved and promulgated by the Holy See, *Divine Worship* is true to the fundamental character of a liturgical “patrimony.” The liturgical books comprised by *Divine Worship* arise from an exercise of Peter’s authority over the churches that recognizes the authentic faith of the Church expressed in Anglican forms of worship and confirms that expression as a treasure or patrimony for the whole Church. In other words, the Church recognizes the faith that is *already hers* expressed in a new idiom or felicitous manner. The elements of sanctification and truth that are present in the Patrimony are recognized as properly belonging to the Church of Christ and thus as instruments of grace that move the communities where they are employed towards the visible unity of the Church of Christ subsisting in the Catholic Church.⁷ By further enriching those expressions through access to the Magisterium that authentically interprets the Word of God and preserves Christian teaching from error, the Catholic Church proposes this form of worship anew as an efficacious means of sacramental grace for future generations.

To be sure, the sources are Anglican, and many of the liturgical texts in *Divine Worship* have their origin in a situation of ecclesial rupture. Yet there is a powerful dynamism at work in the reintroduction of these texts in communities now in full communion with the See of Peter. It is not just that they are given a “new lease on life” in a new context or successive generation. These

7 Cf. Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church *Lumen Gentium* (21 November 1964) 8.

liturgical forms “return” to the Church having been purified and transformed in Catholic communion. Words pronounced at other times and in other contexts are no longer simply Cranmer’s poetry or an English assertion of independence from Rome, or now merely the eloquence or piety of the priest celebrant who speaks them, but rather the words of the Church and her faith.

PATRIMONY AND ECUMENISM

The English tradition both before and after the Reformation has left its mark on Catholic theology, worship, and pastoral practice. One need only think, for example, of Blessed John Henry Newman whose influence on the Second Vatican Council has been well documented and acknowledged. With the publication of *Anglicanorum Coetibus*, there is now a structure within the Catholic Church that both gives that English tradition concrete expression as well as fosters its growth. The Ordinariate, with its “catholicized” English liturgical patrimony, is being invited to be a guardian and promoter of its own long and varied tradition as a gift to be shared with the whole Church.

The institutional importance of *Divine Worship* for the Ordinariates is considerable. More than simply giving the Ordinariates an outward distinctiveness that creates a profile for their parishes in the vast sea of Catholic parochial life, *Divine Worship* gives voice to the faith and tradition of prayer that has nourished the Catholic identity of the Anglican tradition. There is much in this tradition that remains to be recovered: the zeal for sacred beauty, parochial experience of the Divine Office, a robust devotional life, a developed biblical piety, the vast treasure of sacred music.

At the same time, the importance of *Divine Worship* is not limited to the parochial communities of the Ordinariates. The ecumenical contribution of this provision should not be underappreciated. In a lecture at Queen’s College, Canada, in 2010, Cardinal William Levada, former Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, noted:

Twenty-eight years ago, the great historian of ecumenism, Fr. Yves Congar, wrote that if we take seriously that the Holy Spirit has been working among our fellow Christians, we have to take seriously the ways they express their beliefs. When their particular expression of faith adds harmony to ours, and ours add harmony to theirs, the logical step is to pass from talking long-

ingly about unity to living in unity, a unity whose essence is revealed in harmonious diversity.⁸

Divine Worship and the Personal Ordinariates represent, in many ways, a *realized* ecumenism. Here, the unity of faith allows for a rich diversity in the expression of that faith, creating a space wherein the cadences of the Coverdale Psalter and the sobriety and disarming frankness of the Prayer Book will continue to resound and call to faith. Article III of *Anglicanorum Coetibus* had it right: this is indeed a treasure to be shared.

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8 William Cardinal Levada, "Five Hundred Years After St. John Fisher: Pope Benedict's Initiatives Regarding the Anglican Communion," St. John Fisher Visitor Lecture Series, Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario (6 March 2010).