

A large, dark blue silhouette of a bishop, seen from the back, wearing a mitre and holding a crozier. The silhouette is set against a bright blue sky with scattered white clouds. The text of the book title is overlaid on the central part of the silhouette.

# Episcopal Innovations 1960-2004

*Theological & Historical Reflection  
on the Current Crisis in ECUSA*

*By*

The Rev. Dr. Peter Toon M.A., D.Phil.

Preservation Press of the  
Prayer Book Society of the USA  
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# Chapter One

## Goodbye to Reformed Catholicism

*They have forsaken the LORD, the fountain of living waters.*  
Jeremiah 17:13.

The religion professed by the Protestant Episcopal Church of the USA from the 1780s through to the 1960s is best described as Reformed Catholicism. That is, neither Roman Catholicism nor Orthodox Catholicism of the East, but that form and shape of Christianity which originally came into being as the Church of England underwent a reformation and renewal in the middle of the sixteenth century. From this Reformed Church of England, worship, doctrine, discipline and polity were taken around the world, including to the thirteen colonies of Britain in America. Thus after American Independence, English Reformed Catholicism was the religion given a specifically American dress and context in the Formularies (local editions of the traditional Book of Common Prayer, Ordinal and Articles of Religion) by the newly organized Protestant Episcopal Church of the USA. The churches of the thirteen colonies became the first dioceses of this national Church [PECUSA], later to be a province in the Anglican Communion of Churches, and they embraced Reformed Catholicism. Some of them expressed it as “Low Church” or “Latitudinarian” and others as “High Church” and later in the nineteenth century it had “Anglo-Catholic” and “Evangelical” expressions as well.

From the 1960s, if not earlier, this Reformed Catholicism, with its various forms of churchmanship, was subject to all kinds of pressures to change, usually in a liberal theological direction. And these influences for change were not isolated to doctrine, they also included liturgy, morality, order, discipline,

polity, mission and so on. Thus by the 1980s the religion of the PECUSA (now called by a decision of its General Convention, the Episcopal Church [ECUSA]) may be described as Liberal Catholicism. The Church believed that it still had a Catholic character through its commitment to the Threefold Ministry and to the principle of increasingly elaborate liturgical worship (and thus it preferred to call all male priests, “Father” to distinguish them from “Protestant” pastors); but, it also believed that it had a vocation to be “prophetic” and demonstrate to others what truly being relevant in post-modern society is all about, and how “peace and justice” are to be implemented in society and church. It is worth noting that in the name of this Church the modifier “Protestant” was deliberately dropped from the title page of the Prayer Book of 1979. This puts the ECUSA in the odd position of referring to itself as the PECUSA in its Constitution but as “The Episcopal Church” in its official Prayer Book, which is legally a necessary part of its Constitution. Critics ask, Is this a kind of Nominative Schizophrenia?

Students of American mainline denominations (e.g., Methodist, Presbyterian, United Church of Christ and Lutheran) are aware that what happened within the PECUSA was not unique. In fact mainline churches are noted for their accommodating stance to modernity (and post-modernity) and what they share is a commitment to what sociologists of religion tend to call “Golden-Rule Christianity.” This is the belief that Christianity is essentially about love, loving God (however defined) and doing unto others as you would like them to treat you, and commending this via egalitarianism, pluralism, the dignity of persons, the importance of human rights and tolerance.

#### SIGNIFICANT CHANGES

Obviously, when a Church goes through major changes, all of which are voluntary and effectively implemented by majority votes (often after vigorous debate) in an autonomous General Convention, there are those who pursue the changes passion-

ately, those who are moderately for them, those who are dragged along in favor of them and those who oppose them moderately or intensely. However, those who stay within the Church after a major change tend gradually to accept it and also adjust to other changes as well. (Here it may be noted that after 1970 the membership of the ECUSA, which had peaked in the late 1960s, went into serious decline, suggesting that many voted with their feet and walked away.)

As major changes were implemented, only a minority of clergy and laity persistently remained opposed to those changes that had occurred in the past and were now part of the received doctrine of the Church. Further, those who joined the Church at any stage during its continuing adoption of major changes tended to accept the Church as they found it and defended its position as they embraced it. From this point of entry either they became, for example, part of the progressive, liberal membership and pressed for more changes or they joined the traditionalists, called themselves “orthodox” and sought to maintain the status quo by resisting radical innovation. So those who joined the ECUSA in say 1990 accepted what they found, a Church using the 1979 prayer book and persecuting those who sought to use the traditional *Book of Common Prayer* (1928), employing women clergy in most dioceses, giving God’s blessing to couples involved in serial monogamy, and using inclusive language for both humanity and God. From this point onwards the incomers could, for example, either support further innovations like the blessing of same-sex couples or oppose them.

In this essay an attempt is made to show that there is not a co-incidental but a direct logical connection between all the major innovations passed by the General Convention of the Episcopal Church between 1960 and 2004 (1960 is chosen for this is the year that the contraceptive Pill first became generally available in the USA and it is the beginning of the notorious ’60s after the conventional ’50s). Here is a list of the major innovations made into church law by the authority of General Convention:

- (a) changing the doctrine of marriage, including making the marriage of divorcees in church an option (yet not fully a



- right because an individual rector can say “no” leaving the couple the right to go to another parish);
- (b) introducing “inclusive language” for humanity and God so that God is “She” and “It” as well as “He”; and further, removing the traditional addressing of God as “Thou/Thee” and the doctrine and piety associated with it;
  - (c) beginning the ordaining of women to all orders of the Threefold Ministry;
  - (d) calling an experimental “Book of Varied Services” by the Name of the traditional “Book of Common Prayer” as if it were a real edition of this ancient text (first edition 1549), and thus embodying a falsehood within the daily life in the Church’s life;
  - (e) rejecting the received Formularies of the PECUSA and of the Anglican Way and thus cutting itself off in worship, doctrine, and discipline from the classic and historical Anglican Way;
  - (f) admitting small children to the reception of Holy Communion and thus rejecting the order where first communion follows knowledge of God the Father through knowing the Catechism and receiving Confirmation;
  - (g) accepting that there is a specific group in society known as “homosexual” with a permanent built-in “orientation” towards the same “gender” and sex; and
  - (h) ordaining and consecrating such persons who are in active “homosexual” partnerships.

In examining this list of innovations one may not at first see connections between the varied items. However, if one delves a little below the surface, a similarity will begin to manifest itself, and this connection should be evident by the final chapter.

In fact, the argument will be made that there is a strong connection between all the innovations, and that they all come forth from the same spring. So, the acceptance of some and the rejection of others would seem to be not a consistent position to hold in 2006. To accept them all makes sense and is logical and reasonable. Likewise, to reject them all is logical and reasonable. To accept all of them (fully or in part) except those relating to

“homosexuality,” for example, would appear irrational because it fails to recognize the true source and real character of each of the innovations and their inter-relatedness. But this would seem to be the position of those who now call themselves “the orthodox.”

By 2005 there was in ECUSA a significant vocal minority, organized as the American Anglican Council and The Anglican Communion Network, which described its members as “orthodox” and referred to the leadership in General Convention as “revisionists.” This activist group certainly rejects the innovations with regard to “homosexual” persons. At the same time, most of its membership also accepts (at least in part) the new provisions for marriage of divorced persons, the ordination of women and the introduction of a prayer book bearing a false title as the formulary of the ECUSA.

One possible reason that some new Episcopalians (especially from evangelical backgrounds) accepted the innovations which were in place by 1980 is that most of them only entered the ECUSA during the late 1970s and 1980s. They accepted the ECUSA as it was then, for they were on “the Canterbury trail” of liturgy. Inside they then felt free to become its critics in terms only of further innovations as they occurred in the 1990s. It may be recalled that whilst there was a large evangelical party in the PECUSA in the nineteenth century, this virtually disappeared between 1914 and 1970. In fact, it was only revived in ECUSA in the 1970s by missionary work from Australia and England and its major institution is Trinity School for Ministry in Ambridge, PA! (See Gillis J. Harp, “The Strange Death of Evangelical Episcopalianism,” *Anglican and Episcopal History*, 2000, vol. LXXIV, no.2.)

#### THE PRACTICAL THEOLOGY OF LOVE

Perhaps it is appropriate to note here that these innovative decisions by General Convention after 1960 occurred within a theological context that one might term “the practical theology of the Episcopal Church.” This “theology” is not specifically

the theology that is behind and within the 1979 Prayer Book. Rather it is what is assumed as true by many in the leadership at diocesan and parish levels and it is a consensus that has been growing and spreading since the 1960s. Put simply, it is that God is Love and also, and importantly (and here is the innovation), that all real love and loving action in the world is of God (or is God in action). Thus God embraces everyone “just as they are” and loves them for who they are. This God (He/She/It) is not judgmental but welcoming and gracious. This God is the God of kindly therapy. So the Episcopal Church claims to be an inclusive church welcoming all, especially those who find acceptance elsewhere problematic or difficult. Accordingly, ECUSA’s worship, agenda and its mission are to reflect this inclusiveness of “Love,” working (as the Baptismal Covenant of the 1979 Prayer Book states) “for peace and justice”—terms which are interpreted through the prism of human rights and secular descriptions of harmony.

Dr. John Booty, the Archivist of the General Convention, described the Episcopal Church as “A fellowship in the love of God” (*The Episcopal Church in Crisis*, 1988, pp.18ff.). He based this description on the words of John Knox, a well-known professor of New Testament, who wrote in a Report to the 1967 General Convention in Seattle, “The Church is by definition a fellowship in the love of God, and its mission is to be the constantly growing sphere of a constantly deepening reconciliation.” Earlier, radical Episcopalian Professor Joseph Fletcher had argued in his *Situation Ethics; The New Morality* (1966) that in each specific moral situation we are to be guided by the application of “love” and not by inherited and complex commandments and laws. Christian ethics, he said, “is not a scheme of living according to a code, but a continuous effort to relate love to a world of relativities through a casuistry obedient to love; its constant task is to work out the strategy and tactics of love for Christ’s sake” (page 158).

Also, one must recall that the House of Bishops never took seriously its duty to defend the Faith, to banish erroneous doctrine and to discipline the wayward, as for example, in the case of

the infamous Bishop James Pike of California, author of *A Time for Christian Candor* (1964). He was a man involved in serial monogamy, who was accused of espousing and propagating heresies and denying the doctrines of the Virgin Birth, Incarnation and the Trinity. Yet the House of Bishops did nothing substantial to stop him or to discipline him in the 1960s. Eventually, he died in the desert in Palestine in 1969. Then there was the case of Bishop John Spong of Newark, who from the early 1980s came dangerously near to denying all the basic truths of historical Christianity, and who went ahead in implementing the homosexual agenda in his diocese in defiance of appeals from his colleagues not to do so. Spong's assistant bishop, Walter Righter, who was involved in serial monogamy having married three wives in succession, and who in 1990 ordained a man who was known to be living with a same sex partner, was brought to trial not for his "adultery" (which seemed to be uncontroversial) but for his ordaining this "gay" man with a same-sex lover. In 1996, Righter was exonerated by a church court which ruled that there was no core doctrine of the ECUSA prohibiting his action.

It is, of course, impossible to be absolutely sure as to all the factors and influences present in causation in the affairs of a human assembly, especially one that is involved in the controversies of the day. But what is true, and what can be shown, is that there is a direct relation of one kind or another between all the major innovations introduced by the General Convention of the Episcopal Church from the 1960s, and that they are connected to the continuing rejection of the received religion of the Anglican Way, that which we call Reformed Catholicism, and to its commitment to the final authority of Holy Scripture in Faith and conduct.

*Lord of all power and might, who art the author  
and giver of all good things: Graft in our hearts the  
love of thy name, increase in us true religion, nourish  
us with all goodness, and of thy great mercy keep us  
in the same; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

## Chapter Two

# Dis-Order in Liturgy and Formulary

Often in the last several decades we have heard from Anglican bishops and liturgists the Latin tag, “*Lex orandi, lex credendi*,” [literally “the law of praying is the law of believing”], and meaning in practical terms that what we pray in the Sunday service we (come to) believe in life. Whatever noble intentions were in some minds, there was apparently a general agreement from the late 1960s amongst the leadership of western Provinces of the Anglican Communion that churches needed a breath of new life; and, by the use of contemporary liturgy and new forms of service, church members would learn new and improved doctrine and practice. And the reforms in the Roman Catholic Church, especially the translation of the text of the Mass into the vernacular, begun by the Second Vatican Council 1962–1965, gave ecumenical impetus to the call for change and the use of contemporary English. Thus there was in the 1970s a massive output of new experimental services, with a different structure, shape and content to those rites and texts previously used everywhere from the various local editions of the one, historic and classical *Book of Common Prayer* (e.g., 1662, 1928 or 1960 editions in England, USA and Canada).

In the mother church of the Anglican Communion, there was published, after a decade or more of trial services, a collection of new services under the title, *An Alternative Service Book* (1980); at the same time it was made clear that the primary and official Prayer Book remained *The Book of Common Prayer* (1662) and that the content of the new book should be interpreted by the doctrine within the official Book. The same situation applied in Canada with the publication of *A Book of Alternative Services* (1985) in relation to *The Book of Common Prayer* (1662/1962).

Not a few people celebrated the arrival and the availability of these new services, with a different shape and content to the services of the historic Prayer Book, as a good thing, indeed, a very good thing. They saw the possibility of reaching out to young people with simplified, relevant and attractive forms of service. At the same time, they did not fully realize the difficulty of finding in contemporary English ways of praying that would be both reverent and relevant. Nor did they realize how the new forms could smuggle in heterodox doctrine.

In ECUSA, a different approach was taken by the Liturgical Commission and then by the General Convention in the 1970s to that of other Anglican Provinces. Instead of producing a new book of varied and multiple services to exist alongside the traditional *Book of Common Prayer* (USA, 1928) and under its doctrinal authority, the American Province produced a new Prayer Book, similar to the English one of 1980, and called it not by a name that truly reflected its experimental content, but by the very name used since 1549 of the historic *Book of Common Prayer*! In two readings of the legislation in 1976 and then 1979 the General Convention authorized the book of varied services under the title, “The Book of Common Prayer” (1979), and sent the traditional edition of the Prayer Book (that of 1928) off to the archives.

It is important to recognize that what the General Convention did in its two readings of the legislation in 1976 and 1979 was perfectly legal and done according to the rules. Yet, at the same time, the critics said, it was like an act of piracy! For the title of a specific form of Prayer Book that had for five centuries a particular shape, content and style (not to mention a long literary and religious history and influence) was taken by legal force and used as the title for a new Prayer Book which was not—by any stretch of the imagination—an updated and gently revised edition of the one *Book of Common Prayer*, but was a totally new form of Anglican Prayer Book. Further, and this is worrying to say the least, it is not to exaggerate to call this actual naming the public telling of a lie, an untruth, by an ostensibly Christian body.

In short, despite the majority vote, what happened was a

disordered act which helped to propel this Church into further disorder by making disorder part of its very system of worship. The revision of the 1662 edition in 1789; the revision of the 1789 edition in 1892; and the revision of the 1892 edition in 1928 were all revisions of the one book, done with a sense of reverence and respect, whilst the purported revision of the 1928 edition in the 1970s was in fact the creation of a wholly new book. (Here it may be recalled that in 2003 the same Convention also acted legally and according to its rule book in the approval of Gene Robinson as bishop-elect for New Hampshire. Yet it acted also against reason and contrary to the plain sense of Scripture and the godly advice and exhortation from the rest of the Anglican Communion. What was done in 1979 served as a precedent for what was done in 2003!)

By acquiring a new Prayer Book, the Episcopal Church also acquired new Formularies. Inside the 1979 Prayer Book are ordination services to replace the classic Ordinal and there is an “Outline of Faith” to replace the historic Catechism and Articles of Religion. Thus this one Book became in 1979 the one Formulary of ECUSA as the traditional Formularies were relegated to the status of “historical documents.” Effectively, the Episcopal Church placed itself outside the historic Anglican Way; but, very regrettably, at this time Provinces overseas were so busy with their own liturgical work and with the controversy over the ordination of women, that they did not appear to digest fully the momentous decisions taken by General Convention and their implications for ECUSA, and, indeed, for the whole Communion of Churches. In more recent times, a few Provinces have followed the example of ECUSA in calling a Book of Varied Services by the name of “Common Prayer,” and these include, perhaps surprisingly, the Church of the West Indies and the Church of Ireland. Once again and regrettably, little has been said in criticism of these acts, probably because the autonomy of each Province has been a basic article of faith for the Communion of Churches for so long.

Thus disorder, not only in the sense of abandoning the order of the Anglican Way of Reformed Catholicism but also in

the sense of bringing in new doctrines through the new Liturgy, entered the very life of the ECUSA as an institution, as a confederation of dioceses, and as a society of worshipping people. Let us now note some of the changes in doctrine embedded in the new Book, changes that assisted or confirmed the practical setting aside of ordered relations between men and women and persons in general within this Church. (See further for more details, *Neither Orthodoxy Nor a Formulary* by Louis R. Tarsitano and Peter Toon, Prayer Book Society, 2003.)

## 1. FIXED ORDER VERSUS VARIETY

In the real *Book of Common Prayer* the word “Order” appears often in “The Contents.” There is an Order for the reading of the Psalter and a further Order for reading the rest of Scripture. Then there is the Order for Morning and Evening Prayer, for the Ministration of Holy Communion, for Baptism, for Confirmation, for the Visitation of the Sick and for the Burial of the Dead. The idea is that each service or rite has a beginning, a middle and an end, that is a fixed order with a fixed content. There is a beginning, a means and an end. One thing is first and another is last; one thing follows and leads into another. First this is done, and then that, and afterwards the service is ended. So each service is an ordered whole and the constancy of the order prevents disorder in worship and through continual use produces ordered minds, ordered that is to the knowledge and service of Almighty God.

In the so-called “Book of Common Prayer” of 1979 the word “Order” comes three times in the Table of Contents—“A Penitential Order,” “An Order for Marriage” and “An Order for Burial.” It will be noticed that each begins with “a” not “the” for all are part of a system that encourages variety in forms of worship. In this the beginning, the middle and the ending are not constant and this flexibility can have an effect over time on the piety and faith of the users of these services. Variety in worship may lead to variety in piety and then disorder in life.



## 2. NO CLARITY CONCERNING THE RECEIVED DOGMA OF THE HOLY TRINITY

The Prayer Book of 1979 sends out an unclear message concerning the Church dogma of the Holy Trinity. On the one hand, for the few who say the Daily Offices the use of the Gloria is recommended if not required after Canticles and Psalms. This attributes equal glory to each of the Three Persons, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Yet, on the other hand, virtually the whole membership who attend “the Holy Eucharist” hear Sunday by Sunday, the acclamation, “Blessed be God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. And blessed be his kingdom, now and for ever. Amen” In and of itself, this is hardly fully Trinitarian for its natural meaning, based on its grammar, is that there is One God, with Three Names, who has a kingdom. The original text on which this acclamation is based is in the *Divine Liturgy* of the Orthodox Church and is much clearer doctrinally. It is: “Blessed be the kingdom of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, now and always even unto ages of ages.”

Those who attend the Sunday Eucharist also usually join in the recital of the Nicene Creed (regrettably in Rite Two in an inaccurate translation) which if carefully studied will provide an entry into the richness of the patristic dogma of the Trinity.

When we turn to the “Outline of Faith,” or Catechism, within this Prayer Book, there we find an inadequate statement of who/what is The Trinity. In answer to the question, “What is the Trinity?” [note “what” not “who”] the answer provided is, “The Trinity is one God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.” Again the meaning of this, based on the grammar, is that there is One God who has Three Names. This is very different from the definition in the first article of *The Articles of Religion* (1813) where the classic Church dogma is stated that there is One God[head] and Three Persons.

What is missing in the text of the services, instructions and teaching of the 1979 Book is consistently clear teaching that the Holy Trinity is the ordered relation of the Three Persons of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, all of whom possess fully

the one Godhead, so that the Father is of the same substance as the Son and the Holy Spirit. And because of this lack of content and clarity, it is difficult if not impossible for the people of God to learn of, or begin to appreciate, the ordered relations in the created order and in the church of God that are based upon the revealed nature of God the Holy Trinity. (See further chapter six below.)

Within one year of the appearance of the 1979 Book, the Standing Liturgical Commission published *Prayer Book Studies* 30. In one of the Eucharistic Prayers there is, perhaps surprisingly, a clear presentation of panentheism—that is the doctrine that the world is in God (which was a favorite doctrine of feminist theologians). God is said to have prepared the world before creation and then given birth to all things, as a mother gives birth to her child.

### 3. NO CLARITY CONCERNING THE RECEIVED DOGMA OF THE IDENTITY OF JESUS CHRIST

Again, if we read the “Outline of Faith,” which is a summary of the teaching within the Rite Two texts of the Prayer Book (on the basis that the law of praying is the law of believing), we do not find anything like a clear commitment to the full dogma of the Early Church concerning the Person of Christ as it was set forth by the Council of Chalcedon (451)—even though that statement is printed in very small type as a historical document at the back of the 1979 Book. The dogma teaches that Jesus of Nazareth is One Person made known in two natures, divine and human. He existed as the Person of the Son of God with his divine nature from all eternity but he took to himself human nature in the womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and did so without in any way losing or diminishing his divine nature. (For this patristic dogma see also Article II of *The Thirty-Nine Articles*.)

Regrettably, the questions and answers in the section with the heading, “God the Son,” in the “Outline” can be interpreted as teaching that Jesus was adopted as the Son of God at his Conception or Birth or at his Baptism. There is no attempt to

explain the important principles of his Personhood and duality of natures. This is regrettable for unless we think rightly about the Lord Jesus, we cannot think rightly about personhood and human nature in ourselves as man, male and female, or about who are appropriate candidates for ordained ministry.

Further, there is a very weak doctrine of the passion and atoning death of Jesus upon the Cross, and this is matched, as one would expect, by a weak doctrine of human sinfulness right throughout the Rite Two material and in the 1979 Catechism. Sin is presented as the wrong use of freedom and the making of bad choices; but, it is not also presented as a permanent, disabling disease of the soul and thus there is no sense of the bondage of the human will to sin and a bias towards evil in the heart. Such a doctrine obviously does not require of the Savior a full, complete substitutionary sacrifice and atonement for sin.

#### 4. LANGUAGE TO DISTINGUISH WOMEN FROM MEN

Over the centuries the recital, chanting, praying and meditating upon the Psalter has been an essential part of Christian devotion. Jesus himself prayed the Psalms and his Church followed him in praying them, and praying them not as Jewish prayers but as the prayers of the Body of Christ, through, in and with Christ Jesus himself. Therefore, references in the Psalms to the King, the Son, the Lord and the Man were seen as prophetic of Jesus the Messiah, King of Israel and King of kings, the Son of David and the Son of God, and the Man for others, the Son of Man.

By its commitment to inclusive language in the Psalter of the 1979 Book, the Liturgical Commission reduced the possibility of praying the Psalms in a traditionally Christian way. For example, Psalm 1, which had been seen as a the introduction to the whole Psalter and which speaks (in the Hebrew) of “the Man” (= Jesus for the early Church), was changed from a literal rendering, “Blessed is the Man...,” to a dynamic equivalency rendering

as "Happy are they..."! Instead of being ordered towards Jesus and through him to the Father, the Psalter in the 1979 Book became an experiment in developing inclusive language from a Hebrew text and praying the psalms in a novel way.

Translations of the Bible (e.g., most recently the New Revised Standard Version) were introduced which contained much inclusive language, and these, together with the inclusive language canticles and Psalter of the 1979 Book, have served to undermine the doctrine of order contained in the use of language, where "man" includes man, woman and the children of a family. This new usage, confirmed in all liturgical publications authorized by the General Convention after 1979, had the effect of proclaiming the separation of man and woman as two different types of humanity, each of whom has to be given a fair place in the scheme of things, including all offices in church and in the running of families. Thus this type of language imposed by General Convention leads to, and in fact incorporates, the rejection of divine order in creation as also in the new creation, the Body of Christ.

## 5. INITIATION COMPLETE IN BAPTISM, EVEN OF INFANTS

Although there is a service of Confirmation in the 1979 Prayer Book it is different in kind and purpose to that in editions of the traditional *Book of Common Prayer*. It is not intended to be the completion of Baptism and the normal prerequisite for receiving Holy Communion for it is optional and pastoral rather than sacramental and ordered. This is because entry into the fullness of membership of the Church is presented for both adults and infants as taking place in Baptism (usually administered with chrism). This means in turn that infants and children before they have understanding and commitment are given Holy Communion. The effect of this is to take away an established discipline and order and to introduce what in the short and long term leads to dis-order in both the administration of Holy Communion and belief concerning its nature as a sacrament.

## 6. MARRIAGE WITH OR WITHOUT PROCREATION

There is nothing in the 1979 Book to suggest that same-sex couples are worthy recipients of the blessing of the Church, for this doctrinal and liturgical development came well after the Book was published. However, what is found in “The Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage” is an accommodation in the doctrine of marriage to powerful trends at work in society concerning the rights and role of women.

In the preface the Celebrant states:

The union of husband and wife in heart, body and mind is intended by God for their mutual joy; for the help and comfort given one another in prosperity and adversity; and, when it is God’s will, for the procreation of children and their nurture in the knowledge and love of the Lord.

This entirely sets aside the divine order for man and woman together in holy matrimony. Their becoming one flesh is both for procreation and for union of hearts, minds and bodies in mutual joy. In fact, if the “God-reference” is removed this statement could be a secular statement of the purpose of getting married—for personal fulfillment of sexual needs, for companionship and, if it seems right and is convenient, to have children. This statement stands clearly within a 1970s culture of artificial birth control and the fulfillment of psychotherapeutic ends. (Regrettably the Lambeth Conference of Anglican Bishops had commended the use of artificial birth control at their 1930 meeting and this in turn led to the first major statement from the Vatican against this practice.)

And if, of course, it is placed in the context of the revised canon law of the ECUSA then it is also in a culture of divorce, for by 1979 a divorcee had the right to seek out a priest and parish where she or he could be re-married using the rites of the Church. In 1973 the General Convention meeting in Louisville had made the canonical change which officially allowed the re-marriage of divorced persons in church, and gave sanction to a practice that had been going on for a decade or more in many

dioceses. (See further chapter three below on “Marriage.”) More precisely the canonical change allowed the remarriage in church of persons whose previous union had not been determined by competent ecclesiastical authority to have been a nullity on the basis of the application of objective standards.

## 7. ORDINATION

A key event in the Episcopal Church in 1970 was the Graymoor Conference, organized by women active in the Episcopal Peace Fellowship. The conference had grown out of the secular women’s movement and included participants who were young, militant feminists who felt peripherally connected to the ECUSA but very wounded by it. The discussion and resolutions in turn led to the founding of the Episcopal Women’s Caucus in 1971 composed mainly of young, seminary-trained women who wanted to be priests. Thus the pressure to ordain women intensified.

So, perhaps not surprisingly, four retired, liberal bishops ordained eleven women to the priesthood in Philadelphia in 1974 in violation of canon law. But in 1976 the General Convention made the ordination of women legal in the ECUSA and this provision was backdated to cover the ordinations of 1974. And, it may be recalled, there was recent precedent for the General Convention’s post-act “validation” of the 1974 ordinations. In 1970, all deaconesses were declared to be “within the diaconate” by a resolution of the Convention after Bishop Pike had “ordained” Phyllis Edwards using the rite for ordaining deacons rather than the order for setting apart deaconesses provided on the authority of the Convention in *The Book of Offices*.

Therefore the 1979 Prayer Book contained in the section called “Episcopal Services” the Ordination Rites for Bishop, Priest and Deacon. In the Preface to the three new rites, we read of “the *persons* who are chosen by the Church as being called of God...,” and then in the rites themselves the word “man” is not used; but, the words “his” and “him” and “brother” are used yet always in italics, which means that they can become, as needed,

“hers” and “her” and “sister.” Women were ordained as priests from 1976 onwards; but, it was not until 1989 that a woman became a bishop. Barbara C. Harris was elected Suffragan Bishop of the Diocese of Massachusetts in 1988 and then consecrated on February 11, 1989. Since then there has been a growing number of women bishops in the ECUSA.

Not only has the nature of the historic Threefold Ministry of the Church been changed by the inclusion of women, but also the role and vocation to which this Ministry is committed have been revised, as the content of the new services in the 1979 Book reveals. First, the vocation of the bishop to be “Father in God” of the people of the diocese has disappeared and with it the calling of the parish priests to share in this form of spiritual and moral fatherhood. In the second place, the commitment to the Faith as received and the duty to drive away erroneous and false doctrine are reduced. (See chapter four “Father in God” below.)

At the General Convention in 1997 canon law was changed which required that women now have the right of access to ordination in every diocese and the right to exercise their ordained ministry in every diocese. This legislation was strengthened at the next Convention in Denver in 2000. Every office-holder in the ECUSA is now required to accept the ordination of women as a fact, despite the doctrine of reception which had been developed by the Eames Commission in the 1980s for the whole Anglican Communion and which specifically allowed for freedom of conscience in this matter. (See further Peter Toon, *Reforming Forwards? The process of reception and the consecration of women as bishops*, The Latimer Trust, London, 2004.) Therefore we see in the ECUSA not only the setting aside of the received divine order for the Ministry but also the attempt to enforce upon all the implementation of this disorder!

*Grant to us, Lord, we beseech thee, the spirit to think and do always such things as be rightful; that we, who cannot do any thing that is good without thee, may by thee be enabled to live according to thy will; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

## Chapter Three

# Man as Male and Female

*And God said, Let us make man in our image, and after our likeness.... And God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. Genesis 1: 26,27.*

*For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the twain shall be one flesh; so that they are no more twain but one flesh. Mark 10: 7-8.*

All members of the Church of God enter by the same route, that of holy Baptism. There is not one rite for boys/men and another for girls/women. The service of Baptism in the editions of the traditional *Book of Common Prayer* (1662, 1789, 1892, & 1928) as well as in the new Prayer Book (1979) expects candidates to be both male and female. Both receive exactly the same Sacrament and its effects and benefits by grace. And the same is true of Confirmation.

In his command to evangelize the Lord Jesus sent his apostles into the world to preach the Gospel to all people (male and female), to make disciples, to baptize them in the Name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, and to teach them to keep his commandments (Matthew 28: 18-20). Thus the apostle Paul can say of the Church of God: "There can be neither Jew nor Greek, there can be neither bond nor free; there can be no male and female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:28). For the assembly of Christians "there is one body and one Spirit, even as ye were also called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through and in all" (Ephesians 4:4-6). Clearly, in terms of standing before God, relation to God and blessing by the Holy Trinity, men and women are equal and have a common dignity, bestowed by God himself.



But, after the 1950s an increasing number of American Christians wanted more for women than such equality and dignity. Thus new approaches to sexuality, marital ethics, family pluralism, “gender” roles and child socialization emerged in the mainline Churches from the 1960s. They were caused by, or were responses to, at least five cultural factors in the American scene—a progressive orientation to social change; a commitment to inclusiveness in the midst of heightened racial, ethnic, and moral pluralism; the viewing of public issues through a social justice prism; a therapeutic pastoral ethic which emphasized personal fulfillment over adherence to received moral principles, and support for an egalitarian type of feminism. The last of these meant that individuals (very specifically women) were seen as having distinctive rights and moral standing *qua individuals* and not as members of natural groups (e.g., the family). In this commitment the mainline Churches proclaimed their acceptance of the canons of cultural modernity and thus the erosion or overthrow of received doctrine were inevitable.

#### MAJOR CHANGES FOR WOMEN IN THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

A frequent message in the Episcopal Church in the second half of the twentieth century was that women are equal to men before God, in human dignity, and in ability and they should have equal opportunities in education, work, and leadership in church and society. In 1970, after decades of trying, women were first seated as delegates in the General Convention of the Episcopal Church and then in 1976 the same Convention passed the legislation to allow women to be ordained to all three orders of the Ministry.

As women achieved more seats in the Convention and in local parishes and diocesan Conventions, and as the number of female clergy increased, the demands for equality extended into language, first for human beings and then for God. The traditional style of long centuries where “man,” “he” and “brethren” had been used to cover both men and women became suspect, and so people began to say “man and woman” and “he and she”

(or the plural “they”) and “brothers and sisters.” One sees evidence of this changing situation in the text, especially the Rite Two services and the Psalter, of the Prayer Book authorized by the General Convention in 1979.

But this was only the beginning. Feminists claimed to feel that the traditional way in which God was addressed in worship and described in theology suffered from the diseases of patriarchy and sexism. They objected to a religious vocabulary which spoke primarily of God as “the Father” and “the King” and “the Lord” and used only the masculine pronoun “he.” One common statement was, “If god is male, the male is god!” Feminist theologians called for a language and piety that got “beyond God the Father.” So in the 1980s and 1990s the Liturgical Commission of the Episcopal Church produced several sets of services wherein an attempt was made to remedy this perceived wrong and to address God in a variety of names and images and to use “she” as well as “he” of the Deity (see, e.g., *Supplemental Liturgical Materials* and *Enriching Our Worship*). And in many congregations, the texts within the 1979 Prayer Book were edited locally so as to make them less “offensive” and more neutral in the naming and addressing of Deity. God as approachable Deity had to be conformed to humanity’s perceptions.

At the same time, it was taught and commonly assumed that the reason for the dominance of patriarchy (the rule of men) in the biblical texts was that the cultures of the time of Moses, Elijah, Jesus and Paul (and later of such bishops as Augustine, Cranmer and Seabury) were thoroughly sexist and androcentric. An oppressive patriarchy was said to be definitely in place in their times and teaching. So one of the tasks of the modern student of the Bible, it was said, is to separate the foundational doctrine and principles, together with the Gospel message, from the thick cultural dress in which they are presented in the ancient texts. It is also to separate Jesus as the unique “androgynous Child” of God from the corruption of his message by the evangelists, especially of the excessively patriarchal Paul, and the “Fathers” of the early Church!

In a real sense, those who drove the feminist agenda (and of

course they were men as well as women) claimed to be able to distinguish the true from the false in the biblical text because they knew what they were looking for! What they regarded as the kind of things God approves and, further, what the character of God the Deity is, they gathered apparently from the “enlightened” philosophical and moral views propagated by the “wise” in their own western society. In fact, they held that the Deity often reveals her/his/its will concerning humanity through the sure knowledge reached by scientific endeavor and social, psychological and anthropological study, and, further, they believed that such accounts of humanity were superior to the doctrines of the Bible (as normally understood) for the latter belong to pre-scientific and pre-enlightenment times.

## MARRIAGE

It was in 1973, at the height of the impact of the revolutionary 1960s and of the sexual revolution, that the General Convention revised its canon law on marriage, based on much study by the Human Affairs Commission and vigorous debate in the Convention. This was the first major revision since 1946 and its declared aim was to place the matter of divorce and remarriage in a pastoral rather than a legalistic context. And there it has stayed ever since. The Convention did this in part to regularize and get control over what was actually already occurring at the diocesan and parish level (we recall the serial monogamy of the notorious Bishop Pike of California) and also because there was terrific pressure from the surrounding society and within the ECUSA for this Church to act “pastorally and compassionately” in the fast developing American divorce culture.

To this point, officially speaking, bishops had the authority to allow re-marriage of church members in church; but the canonical basis for such permissions was a limited one, based on a judgment of nullity of the first marriage. Henceforth, the judgment as to who was allowed to re-marry in church was given to the parish priest as guided by the bishop. Effectively this meant that any marriage discipline, worth the name, was no longer

present in the ECUSA. Both clergy and laity made use of this open door and very soon a sizeable minority of the total membership was divorced and remarried. Though there was no actual right given to members to have a second or third marriage in church, they had the right if turned down in one parish to go to another and find a willing priest.

By the 1980s the prevalence of divorced, and divorced and remarried, members was so much taken for granted that the marital status of a person was rarely taken into consideration when he or she was being considered for an office in the parish or diocese, or becoming a candidate for holy orders or being considered for the post of rector or bishop. By the 1990s advocates for the "Gay" cause were using this laxity as a justification for the acceptance of their demands for recognition in the Church. "If the Church has set aside the laws of Christ and the canonical law tradition in order to be pastorally sensitive to the divorced," they said, "Why can't it have the same attitude to those who are 'homosexual persons' and also have needs?" (At the trial of Bishop Walter Righter in Wilmington, Delaware, 1995, at which I was present and seated by his third wife, I heard this kind of question several times from the lawyers and advisers working for him.)

Looking back, it seems surprising that it was not until 1868 that the PECUSA actually adopted a Canon on Holy Matrimony. After this there were regular debates in General Convention over matrimony and in these discussions four positions were presented and defended: (a) the position of the Canon Law of the Church of England that marriage is an indissoluble bond not affected by civil divorce and so re-marriage is not possible at all, until one of the original spouses dies; (b) the position stated in the Westminster Confession of Faith [1648] that the committing of adultery by either spouse has the effect of nullifying the marriage and allowing the "innocent" party to be re-married in church, (c) the liberal Protestant position that there can be and are causes other than adultery which have the effect of dissolving or nullifying a marriage and that this is an area here for discernment and decision by the Bishop, and (d) the traditional

Western catholic position that if the existence of certain circumstances at the time of the wedding (called diriment impediments) can be demonstrated, then the Bishop may declare the marriage to have been no true marriage in a sacramental sense.

There were revisions to the Canon on Holy Matrimony in 1877, 1904, 1931, 1946 and 1973 and a study of these does not reveal a logical order of development but a movement this way and that. However, the revisions in 1973 made this Canon to be very different from all its previous forms, particularly suited to the social and cultural situation in the USA. What it means is to be seen in the Marriage Service in the 1979 Prayer Book.

#### SOCIAL AND CULTURAL CONTEXT

Back in the 1950s it seemed for a while that a wonderful stability for families had arrived. America witnessed the wide-acceptance of the establishment of the love-based, male breadwinner marriage as the dominant form of matrimony. This had been over a century in the making but in the revolutionary decades after the 1950s it took less than twenty-five years to dismantle it! In the 1960s and 1970s getting married lost its position as the dominant event governing young people's sexual desires, the assumption of adult roles, their job choices and their move into parenthood. People began marrying later often to finish college, marriages fell apart, divorce rates rose dramatically and premarital sex became the norm with the use of safe birth control. And the division of labor with the wife as the homemaker and the husband as the breadwinner became impractical as women increasingly joined the labor force.

The "liberation" of women was assisted by the courts through the Civil Rights' Act of 1963, even though it was not extensively enforced until the 1970s. Title IX of the Education Act of 1972 prohibited discrimination based on sex in any program receiving federal aid, forcing colleges to begin funding women's athletics and other programs for women. Then, in 1972 by the famous Supreme Court Ruling, "Roe v. Wade," women had the right to choose abortion. In 1975 the financial freedom of mar-

ried women was extended when it became illegal to require a married women to have her husband's written permission to get a money loan or credit card. In short what happened was the all "head and master" laws were removed from the books and in their place marriage was defined as a contract and association between two equal individual persons. Further, an outcome of the civil rights ethos of this period was the cessation of the traditional role of marriage in defining legitimacy, something which had been important for various reasons for centuries. This had various consequences one of which was that the one parent family became common and it was supported in law.

During this period there was also diminishing support for conformity to inherited social roles in and around marriage and a growing focus on self-fulfillment, intimacy, fairness and emotional gratification. Further, acceptance of singlehood, unmarried cohabitation, childlessness, divorce and out-of-wedlock childbearing increased everywhere. In fact, with the arrival of the revolution in human reproduction all the formerly taken for granted fixed relations and roles between marriage, procreation, conception, childbirth and parenting have been shaken up and apart. Now with sperm banks, frozen embryos and in vitro fertilization it is possible for a new born child to have five different "parents"—a sperm donor, an egg donor, a birth mother, and the adoptive man and women who raise the child!

In the Episcopal Church, as the study of the Journals of Conventions well illustrates, the liberation of women and their claiming equal rights, progressed rapidly from 1970. But there occurred other significant developments, which further undermined the received tradition of the PECUSA in terms of ordered sexual relations. First, there was the embracing of the right to abortion for women, passed by the General Convention in 1976 and re-affirmed in 1979 and 1982. The second was the changing of the purpose of holy matrimony, as reflected in the changed marriage service found in the 1979 Prayer Book. The third was the gradual move to the recognition of a permanent "orientation" in some persons towards the same sex, and then to accepting "same-sex" partnerships, lesbian and gay, as means of

holiness before the Lord. The fourth was the tacit acceptance of the practice of cohabiting, and the fifth was the changed attitude to the place of children.

If women were to enjoy equality of dignity and opportunity, then they needed to be free of the major constraints that had kept women locked in their homes in previous times and generations. An efficient form and use of artificial birth control through the use of the “Pill” arrived in 1960 and its availability brought a revolution in the lives of many women. They could have sexual relations without the fear of pregnancy! And, as an extension of this, the possibility of choosing to have an abortion was seen by the General Convention as a right that women generally ought to have (even if they did not ever use it) since having a baby could interfere dramatically with the mother’s freedom and plans for life.

Therefore, it is not surprising that procreation ceased to be seen as a primary purpose of marriage. Instead it became an optional one—and this is reflected in the text of the 1979 marriage service as well as in the decrease in the size of families in membership of the Episcopal Church from the 1960s. In fact, marriage was seen by many Americans, who were influenced by the contemporary popularity of psychotherapy, as a means to personal satisfaction and fulfillment in terms of friendship, companionship and sexual enjoyment, and the having of children was optional. So, it is not surprising that divorce and remarriage became very common both in American society and amongst the membership of the Episcopal Church. (See further, David Popenoe & Barbara Defoe Whitehead, *The State of Our Unions*, 2000.)

Further, as procreation was seen as optional and emotional with sexual fulfillment as virtually necessary by so-called “heterosexual couples,” encouragement was given to those who pressed for full rights for those who claimed to be “homosexual” persons. For, if sexual relations did not include procreation, why should not persons of the same-sex enjoy sexual intimacy and companionship? And, further, why should not a man and a woman freely agree to cohabit without marrying? With regard

to the latter, it appears to be the case (from anecdotal evidence of clergy) that the majority of couples who now present themselves for marriage in the ECUSA (and in other mainline denominations) are already co-habiting. For them, as for the culture in which they live, "living in sin" is an old phrase for what is now seen as a free and equal "relationship" between consenting adults, a partnership that is fine if it hurts no-one.

One key reason why broad-minded couples who have children attend the mainline Churches, including the ECUSA, is to expose their children to religious and moral teaching that they hope will bring meaning and purpose to their lives. However, the teaching that has been given since the 1970s is usually very different from what was taught in the 1950s, the decade of traditional familism, where children, though highly cherished, were to be seen but not heard in church services, and who waited to receive Holy Communion until confirmed and could understand what the Sacrament was about.

Usually the modern approach has an egalitarian, child-centered focus which treats children as autonomous moral agents. So the methods and content of teaching and forms of worship today generally assume that children are naturally good (not having the problem of original sin!); that they should be reasoned with in ways which respect their autonomy (for they too are moral agents who have rights) and that they should not have always to defer to the authority of adults. Thus, being equals and having rights, children should not sit with their parents in the pew as quiet observers; rather they should have their own "children's talk," "children's church" and be regarded as full communicant members of the church and receive communion from the earliest years. In the Episcopal Church the moves to admit infants and children to full participation in the Eucharist, though often justified by what was claimed to be the practice of the ancient Church and the Orthodox Church today, were driven primarily in the 1970s and 1980s by the commitment to the canons of modernity which include the autonomy and the rights of children.



## KEY WORDS

In terms of language used during this changing situation, the word “relationship” came into popular use from the 1960s onwards as a description of a sexual partnership or liaison of any kind, long or short. So it came to be used to describe that which in the 1950s and earlier would have been called “fornication” or “adultery” or even “sodomy”; but by the late 1960s such forms of relating began to lose their immoral aspects and became a “relationship.” In fact, the word also gradually also became the word of preference to describe “holy matrimony” for it seemed to acknowledge without embarrassment that, (a) with the high rates of divorce and remarriage, the partnership of marriage was not necessarily “until death us do part,” and (b) that personal emotional and sexual fulfillment is now a basic part of modern marriage.

Another key word which reflects the changing scene is “gender” which has increasingly come into use to replace the word “sex”. If we go back a little—not too far—in the use of the English language the word “sex” was used in line with its Latin origins from the root *sexus* or *secus* with the meaning of to “divide” or to “halve.” So “sex” is the division of the human race into two kinds, the male and the female, each with a specific body shape designed to fit with and into the other in *coitus* for the purpose of procreation as one flesh.

Only in the twentieth century did “sex” come to be used of “sexual intercourse,” of an activity rather than on objective, fixed state of being. (Apparently D.H. Lawrence helped to pioneer this usage of referring to carnal intercourse as “having sex.”). As “sex” became an activity rather than as a fixed state of being, so the word “gender” was called out of the field of grammar in the 1960s into a new use—to refer to the objective biological fact of the identity of a human being as either male or female. This use of the words was taken up by the powerful feminist movement from the 1960s and by its influence it has been generally accepted—along with inclusive language for human beings—by academia, business, media, government, and churches, even otherwise conservative churches

Once this distinction is in place, then developments from it came quickly and easily. "Sex" is not only activity, it was said, it is also the internal wiring or passion of the soul / body that produces the desires for such intimate activity. Further, this disposition or wiring is not always towards the opposite "gender"! It is sometimes towards the same gender. Thus "orientation" as describing this inclination, disposition and wiring of the sexual drive was used increasingly. And, as the years went by, and the "Gay" lobby developed, the reality of such [a permanent?] orientation was supposedly confirmed by psychologists and psychiatrists. In this context individual human beings came to be described as "homosexual" or "heterosexual" or even "bi-sexual" which words, of course, do not make rational sense if "sex" is the division of the human race into male and female! (See further R.V. Young, "On Inventing Homosexuality," *Touchstone*, December 2005.)

#### MARRIAGE IN THE REFORMED CATHOLIC TRADITION

"The Form of Solemnization of Matrimony" within *The Book of Common Prayer* (1662) is the place one goes to see how marriage was understood within the historic Anglican Way. Of course, this service whether in its sixteenth century (1549 & 1552) form or in its seventeenth century form (1662) belonged to a very different political, social and cultural situation than that which people in America in 2006 know and experience. What it contains may be described as a gentle patriarchy with a union of a man and a woman according to the order given by God in creation and symbolized by Christ in his relation to his Church as his Bride.

In the Preface it is stated that matrimony was ordained by God after the Fall of man for three purposes, which are to be seen as a whole not as in order of importance:

First, it was ordained for the procreation of children, to be brought up in the fear and nurture of the Lord, and to the praise his holy Name.

Secondly, it was ordained as a remedy against sin and to avoid fornication; that such persons as have

not the gift of continency might marry, and keep themselves undefiled members of Christ's body.

Thirdly, it was ordained for the mutual society, help and comfort, that the one ought to have of the other, both in prosperity and adversity.

Here what it means in Christ's teaching of the two becoming one flesh it set out. As one flesh they come together permanently for both intimacy of friendship and of procreation. Further, by so doing they place themselves in a union where they can avoid fornication.

As the service proceeds the man is asked: "[Name] Wilt thou have this woman to thy wedded wife, to live together after God's ordinance in the holy estate of matrimony? Wilt thou love her, comfort her, honour and keep her, in sickness and in health; and, forsaking all other, keep thee only unto her, so long as ye both shall live?" To which in good faith he replies, "I will."

Then the woman is asked: "[Name] Wilt thou have this man to thy wedded husband, to live together after God's ordinance in the holy estate of matrimony? Wilt thou obey him, and serve him, love, honor and keep him, in sickness and in health, and, forsaking all other, keep thee only unto him, so long as ye both shall live?" To which in good faith she replies, "I will."

Note that the question put to the woman is longer for it contains the implications of God's order given in creation—"God made man, male and female made he them." And, as explained by St Paul, the man is the "head of the woman." The wife promises both to obey and serve her husband as well as to love, honor and keep him. To modern ears and tastes these promises seem outrageous for they appear to make the woman inferior and subservient. So not surprisingly, revised forms of this service in modern times leave out these verbs. However, the promises do reflect the biblical doctrine of marriage and they are to be understood within the teaching of Jesus and of St Paul to which reference is made in the Exhortation which begins the service. The husband is to love his wife with the depth of commitment and care that Christ has for his Bride, the Church (see Ephesians 5: 22-32). The husband is to mirror and provide a gracious, gen-

erous and caring patriarchy which reflects the Fatherhood of God! Perhaps it needs to be explained that “love” here is not romantic love but is the dedicated, commitment of doing continual good to and for the other within the relation of intimacy and faithfulness.

There are, of course, serious questions to be asked and answered how such a relation of profound love between husband and wife can be given practical reality in the modern world in the West, where women have full civil rights and are encouraged to enjoy them all and where men are taught that to be patriarchal is evil and bad. Happily there are today those who are seeking to live out the traditional doctrine of marriage. In his most informative book, *Soft Patriarchs, New Men. How Christianity shapes Fathers and Husbands* (2004), W. Bradford Wilcox presents important data and insights. His research shows that where there is genuine “male headship” these days it usually functions as “a soft patriarchy” and the result is most usually familial harmony, relational happiness and emotional health in the family. In other words, if the father is consciously imitating the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ in word and action, attitude and relation, then the patriarchy is not oppressive but generous and gracious, or to use his chosen expression, it is not abusive or authoritarian headship but “soft patriarchy,” where the father is the “servant leader.” The “softness” is primarily because of the use of therapeutic techniques (which conservatives have learned from modernity!) and the emotional dedication to the welfare and happiness of wife and children. To put it another way, the father connects the traditional theological familist and patriarchal beliefs to an active and expressive style of familial commitment and involvement.

What we may call the neo-traditional order of family life is found amongst conservative Christians in both Roman Catholicism and Protestantism (including Anglicanism), amongst Orthodox Jews and Mormons, and is commended by such magazines as *Touchstone*. It is not to be equated with the patriarchal ordering of the American family in the 1950s (with its strong lines of demarcation between what the husband’s and

wife's roles were), even though it has similarities to it. Rather, it is a fresh attempt in the face of modernity and post-modernity, and in the complexity of western culture, to live out practically God's ordering of human relations as given in the Book of Genesis and as confirmed by Jesus Christ and his apostles.

*O Merciful Lord, and heavenly Father, by whose gracious gift mankind is increased: We beseech thee, assist with thy blessing these two persons, that they may both be fruitful in procreation of children, and also live together so long in godly love and honesty, that they may see their children Christianly and virtuously brought up, to thy praise and honor; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

## Chapter Four

# Father in God not CEO

*I bow my knees unto the Father from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named. Ephesians 3:14.*

*The bishop must be without reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, orderly, given to hospitality, apt to teach...one that ruleth well his own house. 1 Timothy 3:2-7.*

**T**he contents of the Bible (when read in the Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek or in a traditional English translation) are saturated with patriarchy (literally, the rule of the father or the eldest male with descent reckoned through the male line). The great heroes of faith and of the covenant of grace of the first book of the Bible are patriarchs—e.g., Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and the sons of Jacob. Jesus chose only men to be his apostles; and the apostles ordained only men as presbyters (elders) and bishops (overseers) in the churches they founded. The bishops of prominent churches or sees in the early Church were called “Patriarchs” (e.g. in Alexandria, Antioch, Jerusalem, Constantinople and Rome). Further, each individual bishop was called “a father in/under God” to the flock. And all importantly, the Name of the God of the Lord Jesus Christ is the “Father” who becomes also the “Father” of the disciples of Jesus. In his *Mere Christianity*, Professor C.S. Lewis saw the “headship” of the father in the family as part of basic Christian doctrine and ethics. Patriarchy assumes that God made man and woman as two related but different and equal creatures and that in this relation the man is the first in order in the family (thus not a matter of superiority and inferiority). There is a God-given “headship” for the male, and, of course, there is with it a God-given responsibility to be a generous and gracious patriarch!

## GRACIOUS PATRIARCHY

It is well known that patriarchy has been the subject of not only attack but also of scorn for the last thirty or more years in both academia and in progressively liberal churches. Much has been made of the claim that the relations within patriarchy as a system of society are socially constructed and do not belong to anything that is truly a natural aspect or part of men and women. In this context it is interesting to note that in the twenty-first century the older view that sexual differences of being male or female are “hard-wired,” that is to say that they are biologically and genetically determined (more than they are socially constructed) is very much on the table again in academia, after its virtual disappearance for several decades.

This much may be learned from the study of two recent important and influential books: *The Essential Difference* (2003) by University of Cambridge Professor Simon Baron-Cohen and *Taking Sex Differences Seriously* (2004) by Steven Rhoads of the University of Virginia. The message of these books needs to be on the discussion table inside the churches in talk of relations of man and woman! And they have been taken into account in the contents of an important recent symposium, *Consecrated Women?* (edited by Jonathan Baker; 2004), which was published as a contribution to recent debate in the Church of England over women bishops. In this book the various contributors attempt to describe the functioning of the male imagery of sacred Scripture in terms of a “gracious” or “kenotic” [see Philippians 2:5–11] patriarchy. Male language about God as Father, Lord, Master and King (and the very maleness of the Incarnate Son himself) exists precisely, they suggest, not to exalt but to correct and soften those aspects of masculinity which, in a fallen and evil world, serve to oppress others, both women and men. That is, pure and sinless patriarchy is the will of the God of Jesus Christ, but it is only truly of God when it is genuine and gracious patriarchy. In a debased form it is not the presence of divine order but, as feminists have claimed, is oppressive because it is disordered.

By divine appointment, the calling of the father in the family and the bishop/priest in the church is to image that generous and benevolent patriarchy that belongs to God as the One Lord. The appreciation of gracious patriarchy as the understanding of the necessary maleness of imagery about God and of the Incarnation, based on an understanding of sexual differences as “given” rather than contingent and constructed, liberates the churches from the need for the complicated types of interpretation in dealing with the text of the Bible, which have generally characterized much feminist exegesis of Scripture since the 1970s. It also places before the Church the vocation of fathers and bishops/priests to mirror the divine patriarchy in their relations with the family and the people of God. Indeed, the restoration of genuine and gracious patriarchy makes possible the reflection of divine order in the human race and in the Church, to the glory of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ (for this see further, Charles F. Caldwell, *Head and Glory, Sacred Order or Secular Chaos*, 1996.)

#### THE BISHOP AS PATRIARCH

In “The Form of Ordaining or Consecrating of an Archbishop or Bishop” in the Anglican Ordinal, the Archbishop is addressed as “Most Reverend Father in God” and it is assumed that each Bishop is a “Father in God” to his diocese. The newly consecrated Bishop is charged to “be to the flock of Christ a shepherd and not a wolf” and to feed and not devour the flock. He is “to hold up the weak, heal the sick, bind up the broken, bring again the outcasts and seek the lost.” He is to teach wholesome and sound doctrine and drive away all strange and erroneous doctrine. He is to call his clergy and people to holiness and to be an example of such to them. His vocation is not to be a Chief Executive Officer running a diocese as a corporation, or a Chief Liturgical Officer ruling over the details of worship in congregations. Rather, he is the “Father in God” first to the clergy and then through and with them to all his people, the whole flock of



Christ in the diocese. He is to provide a living example of generous and gracious patriarchy in the Name of God the Father in obedience to Jesus Christ, the Great Shepherd of the sheep.

The presbyters (priests) who serve under and with him are also as individual pastors to be “father in God” to their local parish/congregation. They share in his vocation as father rather than have a separated role. This is the basic, yet not the only, reason why Anglo-Catholics in the late nineteenth century began to call parish priests by the name of “Father” (which as a title is less accurate than “Father in God” used of the Bishop).

Although Jesus Christ himself chose only men to be his apostles, though his apostles set apart only men to be the overseers and elders in the first churches, and though the Church through history only had men as bishops, presbyters [priests] and deacons, women have been ordained as deacons, presbyters and bishops since the 1970s in the Episcopal Church and in other Provinces of the Anglican Communion. There is little doubt but that the driving force for this massive change were the liberation forces within Western society generated by the human rights and feminist movements, who called for equality of opportunity for women in all areas of society and life. However, theological arguments were also offered to seek to anchor this call for change in the Ministry on biblical foundations.

The argument which the Archbishop of Canterbury, Robert Runcie, offered to Cardinal Willebrands and the Pope in a Letter of December 1985 was simple and positive. Jesus, the resurrected and exalted Messiah, is our High Priest in heaven. Because he is One Person made know in two natures, divine and human, and in his possession of perfected humanity he represents a total humanity, male and female, then he should be represented on earth by ordained ministers who are also both male and female. For, if Christ, the High Priest, is represented by only a male priesthood then the representational nature of the ministerial priesthood on earth is weakened, especially in societies where male leadership (patriarchy) has effectively disappeared. Justice in representation requires both female and male priests.

This approach claimed not to make a critical judgment on

what has been in the past (when patriarchy was in place). Rather it argues that where patriarchy is on the way out and where women are in visible leadership positions, then both male and female priests are required in order to reflect and symbolize the inclusive nature of the humanity of the one Lord Jesus Christ, Prophet, Priest and King and of his Body, the Church of God.

What is wrong with this argument? The simple answer is that it sets aside divine order in creation and reflected in language where “man” is an inclusive term, referring also to women and children, and all that follows from the one, the man/husband/father, who has the primacy in order. Jesus Christ as Incarnate Man represents all humanity and thus male bishops and presbyters in the ministerial priesthood also represent all males and females in their congregation, flock, and diocese.

Dr. Runcie’s argument presents male and female as if they are two different specifications in a common genus, or complementary opposites which participate in a whole (humanity). That is, male and female are for him exclusive terms, which are united in a common human quality that is neuter in gender. (Note that here “male” and “female” are adjectives and relate to a noun, “humanity,” which is the common generic reality.) The response based on order uses the noun “man” and refers to a concrete, historical reality. It insists that common humanity belongs to “persons” who are not simply “individuals” but rather subsistent and substantial relations of order (i.e., men and women).

#### LIGHT FROM THE EARLY CHURCH

In accordance with the Anglican intention to be guided by the Early Church, it is now appropriate to gain more insight into the importance of divine order with respect to ordination and to do so by going to the teaching common in the Early Church, teaching which develops the scheme of order set forth by the apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 11:2ff. – **God the Father - Christ - man - woman**. We go to what is called *The Apostolic Constitutions*, which is a collection of church law made in the fourth century, but in its origins going back into the previous century. Further,

in what it presents with respect to ordination, it reflects a background that is not the usual context for modern debates over the ordination of women. The law set forth as constitutions in this document belongs to a situation where the Church was making converts in a pagan society (which knew of female priests) and there was debate over the question, Should women be allowed to baptize converts? Dr Charles Caldwell sums up the situation well when he writes:

The issue concerning the ordination of women was not so much whether such an action were permitted, justified, required or forbidden; nor was the issue spoken of in terms of validity and whether a woman could receive the grace of “orders” if she were ordained. Rather, the issue concerned the peril, danger, wickedness and impiety of such action. It was asserted that it is not advisable or permissible for a woman or one of the laity to perform any of the offices of the priesthood, not so much because they could not do the ministerial work, or even because God would not communicate his grace, nor simply that nothing would happen, but precisely because something might happen and that something would be “gravely disordered” and thus contrary to the principles of order given by God in creation, providence and salvation.

St Paul’s statements about the woman being the glory of the man who is her head are used to assert that “the man is the head of the woman.” This accords with the principles of creation and with providence after the Fall, which says that the man shall rule over the woman (Genesis 3:16; Cf. 1 Timothy 2:8-15). Although the ignorant Gentiles do have women priests, that is not according to the “order and harmony” instituted by God through creation, providence and salvation. The constitution given by Christ and the apostles forbids “women to teach in the church” on the practical grounds of Christ’s example, the apostolic witness and the danger of

disorder. Women deaconesses assist in the baptism of women so that there is no necessity that the “women be seen by the men.” The deacon anoints the forehead with oil, then the deaconess anoints the rest of the body, and finally the bishop anoints the head at the “laying on of hands.” The ministry of anointing may be done by the deaconess but it must be done according to the principles of order. It is ministry done out of a kind of necessity, and not the claiming of an official responsibility. [*Head and Glory*, 1996, p.97.]

Here now is what the *Apostolic Constitutions* state in Book Three:

THAT WOMEN OUGHT NOT TO BAPTIZE,  
BECAUSE IT IS IMPIOUS, AND CONTRARY TO  
THE DOCTRINE OF CHRIST.

IX. Now, as to women's baptizing, we let you know that there is no small peril to those that undertake it. Therefore we do not advise you to it; for it is dangerous, or rather wicked and impious. For if the “man be the head of the woman,” and he be originally ordained for the priesthood, it is not just to abrogate the order of the creation, and leave the principal to come to the extreme part of the body. For the woman is the body of the man, taken from his side, and subject to him, from whom she was separated for the procreation of children. For says He, “He shall rule over thee.” For the principal part of the woman is the man, as being her head. But if in the foregoing constitutions we have not permitted them to teach, how will any one allow them, contrary to nature, to perform the office of a priest? For this is one of the ignorant practices of the Gentile atheism, to ordain women priests to the female deities, not one of the constitutions of Christ. For if baptism were to be administered by women, certainly our Lord would have been baptized by His own mother, and not by John; or when He sent us to

baptize, He would have sent along with us women also for this purpose. But now He has nowhere, either by constitution or by writing, delivered to us any such thing; as knowing the order of nature, and the decency of the action; as being the Creator of nature, and the Legislator of the constitution.

THAT A LAYMAN OUGHT NOT TO DO ANY OFFICE OF THE PRIESTHOOD: HE OUGHT NEITHER TO BAPTIZE, NOR OFFER, NOR LAY ON HANDS, NOR GIVE THE BLESSING.

X. Neither do we permit the laity to perform any of the offices belonging to the priesthood; as, for instance, neither the sacrifice, nor baptism, nor the laying on of hands, nor the blessing, whether the smaller or the greater: for “no one taketh this honour to himself, but he that is called of God.” For such sacred offices are conferred by the laying on of the hands of the bishop. But a person to whom such an office is not committed, but he seizes upon it for himself, he shall undergo the punishment of Uzziah.

THAT NONE BUT A BISHOP AND PRESBYTER, NONE EVEN OF THE INFERIOR RANKS OF THE CLERGY, ARE PERMITTED TO DO THE OFFICES OF THE PRIESTS; THAT ORDINATION BELONGS WHOLLY TO THE BISHOP, AND TO NOBODY ELSE.

XI. Nay, further, we do not permit to the rest of the clergy to baptize,—as, for instance, neither to readers, nor singers, nor porters, nor ministers,—but to the bishops and presbyters alone, yet so that the deacons are to minister to them therein. But those who venture upon it shall undergo the punishment of the companions of Corah. We do not permit presbyters to ordain deacons, or deaconesses, or readers, or ministers, or singers, or porters, but only bishops; for this is the ecclesiastical order and harmony.

The full argument from divine order is not made much today—at least in popular presentations—probably because it requires knowledge both of the Bible and of the dogma of the early Church, and few people are patient to acquire and then accept the foundational premises in order to appreciate what it is all about.

It is worth remembering that the Southern Baptist Convention did make in 1984 a very clear statement on the headship of the male within family and church wholly in scriptural terms and based upon such passages as 1 Corinthians 11:2-5; 14:33-36; Ephesians 5: 22 – 6:4; Titus 2:1-10 & 1 Timothy 2:12ff. This statement is paralleled by similar ones from evangelical leaders like James Dobson of “Focus on the Family” in the book, *Straight Talk to Men and Their Wives* (1996).

Anglicans who are Reformed Catholics accept what the Baptists and Dr. Dobson agreed upon for they too seek to conform to Scriptural doctrine. Also, because they seek to be guided by the mind and practice of the Early Church, they also accept the arguments offered today by Catholics and Orthodox that (1) Jesus chose only men as his apostles and that they in turn appointed only men as bishops and presbyters; and (2) Jesus in his assumed manhood as the God-Man, the One Mediator between the Father and human beings, was really and truly male, and thus only male persons can be his icon and truly represent him in his High Priesthood on earth. Yet they prefer to start from divine order as a large scriptural concept and as supported by the patristic dogma of the Holy Trinity.

*Almighty God, who by thy Son Jesus Christ didst give to thy holy Apostles many excellent gifts, and didst charge them to feed thy flock: Give grace, we beseech thee, to all Bishops, the Pastors of thy Church, that they may diligently preach thy Word, and duly administer the godly discipline thereof; and grant to the people, that they may obediently follow the same; that all may receive the crown of everlasting glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen*

## Chapter Five

# Objectively Disordered Affection

*God gave them up unto passions of dishonor; for their women changed the natural use into that which is against nature; and likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another, men with men working unseemliness, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was due. Romans 1: 26-27.*

Until very recently the word “orientation” was primarily used of such things as (a) the activity during the day or two before the beginning of semester when incoming students were prepared for their new home and academic vocation in the college; (b) the direction in which the priest traditionally faces as Celebrant in the Eucharist—towards the Orient [East], and (c) the direction of someone’s interest(s).

Now “orientation” is widely used to refer to the direction in which the supposed “internal wiring” of a human being leads or directs a person in sexual desire, either towards someone of the same “gender” and “sex” or towards someone of the opposite “gender” and “sex,” or even towards both. Thus there is the LesBiGay (Lesbian, Bisexual & Gay) movement that presses for full rights for people according to their supposed inbuilt, incapable sexual orientation. And this movement, through persistence, skilled lobbying and marketing, association with the human rights movement, and the use of moving testimonies of persons allegedly finding divine love in same-sex affections, has made great progress in the Episcopal Church—even as it has many successes in society, commerce, industry, education and business.

Its crowning triumph within the ECUSA was the election of

a divorced man, now living in a same-sex partnership, as the Bishop of New Hampshire. This “relationship,” was celebrated in the Episcopal Church as a sign of holiness, the progress of the Gospel of Jesus and justice for all. This followed forty years of continuing and intense debate, resolutions and setting up of study groups and commissions by the General Convention. Any one reading through the Journals of the triennial Conventions from 1967 to 2003 could easily come to the conclusion that the ECUSA was obsessed with the theme of homosexuality. And, it may be suggested, there is a reason for this obsession. Of all the innovations this most clearly to the average person, who knows little theology or liturgy, is a major change, indeed a massive change in the way that she or he thought a Church as a moral society should act. So there is a “gut” reaction here which is not so obvious with the other innovations.

#### FOCUS ON NEW HAMPSHIRE

When there was an outcry from a minority within the ECUSA and by a majority from other Provinces of the Anglican Communion, ECUSA was asked by various Anglican bodies and publications, including the Primates’ Meeting and *The Windsor Report*, to present a rationale and explanation for its recognition of same-sex unions and its election and consecration of Gene Robinson as the Bishop of New Hampshire. The Presiding Bishop, Frank T. Griswold, appointed a team of theologians to assist him and they produced a document entitled, *To Set Our Hope on Christ*, which was submitted to the meeting of the Anglican Consultative Council in June 2004 and then distributed far and wide. Here, the attempt was made to explain how ECUSA came to develop its thinking about same-sex affection, how it may be justified from a careful and sophisticated study/interpretation of Scripture and modern medical and psychiatric study, and how in personal experience it can be a means of holiness unto God and the promotion of the Gospel, together with peace and justice.

Where the Presiding Bishop’s team was on solid ground was



in its explanation that what took place with regard to Gene Robinson's election and consecration was wholly lawful, for it was done according to the canons and rules of the diocese of New Hampshire and the General Convention of ECUSA. At all times and on all occasions there had been respect for and submission to the canon law of the Church locally and nationally. This claim is true at the level of procedure, process, voting and approving. However, it is hardly true at the level of the professed doctrine of the Church, for, though there were many resolutions over the period from 1970 to 2003 committing the church to understanding and supporting persons who called themselves "Lesbian" or "Bisexual" or "Gay," there was no actual change in the doctrine of the Church (a) permitting the blessing of partnerships of same-sex persons and providing an official liturgy for this and (b) allowing a person in such to be ordained and consecrated Bishop. Thus, although technically legal as the act of an autonomous, self-governing Province of the Anglican Communion, the consecration of Gene Robinson was not lawful in a deeper doctrinal sense in terms of the explicit teaching of Holy Scripture, and especially so, when it was done against the multiple appeals of many overseas bishops and archbishops to delay or cancel the event.

I wrote a response to the book, *To Set Our Hope on Christ*. It appeared under the title, *Same-Sex Affection, Holiness, and Ordination. A Response to Presiding Bishop Frank T. Griswold* (Prayer Book Society, August 2005). In this essay, I attempted to show that the acceptance of same-sex unions was not a development but a corruption of doctrine, that its claimed Scriptural moorings did not truly exist, and that it arose because "experience" in the secular world was used as a source of new revelation and doctrine, which were preferred to traditional teaching.

#### LIGHT FROM THE VATICAN

Since then a very important document has been published by the Vatican with the general title, *On Priesthood and Those with Homosexual Tendencies. Instruction from The Congregation*

for *Catholic Education* (November 2005), and with the subtitle, "Concerning the Criteria for the Discernment of Vocations with regard to Persons with homosexual tendencies in view of their admission to the Seminary and Holy Orders." This responds to the real problems of active homosexuality amongst seminarians preparing for the priesthood and of parish priests involved in the "gay culture." The teaching states:

*According to the constant Tradition of the Church, only a baptized person of the male sex validly receives sacred ordination. By means of the sacrament of orders, the Holy Spirit configures the candidate to Jesus Christ in a new and specific way: the priest, in fact, sacramentally represents Christ, the head, shepherd and spouse of the Church. Because of this configuration to Christ, the entire life of the sacred minister must be animated by the gift of his whole person to the Church and by an authentic pastoral charity. The candidate to the ordained ministry, therefore, must reach affective maturity. Such maturity will allow him to relate correctly to both men and women, developing in him a true sense of spiritual fatherhood towards the Church community that will be entrusted to him.*

Further, it explains:

*From the time of the Second Vatican Council until today, various documents of the Magisterium, and especially the Catechism of the Catholic Church, have confirmed the teaching of the Church on homosexuality. The Catechism distinguishes between homosexual acts and homosexual tendencies. Regarding acts, it teaches that Sacred Scripture presents them as grave sins. The Tradition has constantly considered them as intrinsically immoral and contrary to the natural law. Consequently, under no circumstance can they be approved. Deep-seated homosexual tendencies, which are found in a number of men and women, are also objectively disordered and, for those same people, of-*

*ten constitute a trial. Such persons must be accepted with respect and sensitivity. Every sign of unjust discrimination in their regard should be avoided. They are called to fulfill God's will in their lives and to unite to the sacrifice of the Lord's Cross the difficulties they may encounter.*

*In the light of such teaching this Instruction, in accord with the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, believes it necessary to state clearly that the Church, while profoundly respecting the persons in question, cannot admit to the seminary or to holy orders those who practice homosexuality, present deep-seated homosexual tendencies or support the so-called 'gay culture'.*

*Such persons, in fact, find themselves in a situation that gravely hinders them from relating correctly to men and women. One must in no way overlook the negative consequences that can derive from the ordination of persons with deep-seated homosexual tendencies.*

*Different, however, would be the case in which one were dealing with homosexual tendencies that were only the expression of a transitory problem—for example, that of an adolescence not yet superseded. Nevertheless, such tendencies must be clearly overcome at least three years before ordination to the diaconate.*

It is both right and significant that this Instruction works within the general concept of the order of creation and nature, God's order for human persons as sexual beings. The proper ordering is of male to female and female to male and with this goes a maturity in affections and emotions. Only the man who shows evidence of having reached "affective maturity" can be a candidate for holy orders, even as a man and woman before entering into holy matrimony should also reach "affective maturity" for, if either or both of them, do not then there will be disorder within their relation. A man who shows a continual tendency to

relate sexually to other men is described as not merely “disordered” but “objectively disordered” since God’s plan for human beings includes the complementarity of male and female, for God made man as male and female.

#### REFORMED CATHOLIC

The basis of the Reformed Catholic position has to be sought from the Scriptures (as interpreted by the guidance of the mind of the ancient Fathers), and the Formularies. In the latter case from such texts as (a) the marriage service in the BCP of 1662, especially the Preface; (b) the services of ordination in the Ordinal, especially the promises made by the priest and bishop; and (c) the homilies on “Whoredom and Adultery” and “The State of Matrimony” in *The Books of Homilies* to which the Articles of Religion point for doctrine.

As far as I can tell, Reformed Catholic teaching wholly agrees with the teaching presented by the Vatican that distinguishes acts from tendencies, calling the first grave sins and the second disordered. Where both the Roman Catholic and the Reformed Catholic take a different position to much popular Evangelical teaching (which has dominated the conservative Anglican response) is their reluctance or refusal to speak of “sexual orientation,” which allows the suggestion and then the doctrine (firmly in place in the ECUSA) that some people are “objectively ordered” towards the same sex.

The one point where Reformed Catholic and Roman Catholic teaching part is over the matter of priestly celibacy. The Roman priest is to be celibate and affectively mature so that as a man he is ordered towards the female sex. However, by the assistance of the Holy Spirit he is, as the representative of Christ the Bridegroom, to be ordered towards the congregation of Christ’s disciples as the Bride of Christ, to care for them. The Anglican priest/bishop may be either celibate or married. If the former, then he may be described in the same terms as the Roman priest. If married, then united to his wife as one flesh for life, he is also, in affective maturity, both to love her and to love with

her help, in the Bridegroom's name, the flock of Christ entrusted to his care.

Where "orientation" enters into the description of homosexuality, then the biblical and historic Christian teaching on sexual relations has to be set aside, at least in its fullness, and the door is wide open to changed doctrine, and this is happening right now within Anglicanism worldwide. One recalls a similar change in doctrine with consequences still occurring, when the Lambeth Conference of Bishops in 1930 departed from the common ground of both Roman and Reformed Catholicism and recommended that artificial contraception be encouraged for use by Christian couples.

It is of course both possible, good and right, as the Instruction states, for the people of God together, and for individual Christians alone, to treat persons who describe themselves as "gay" or "bi-sexual" or "lesbian" with dignity and respect and to make sure there is no unjust discrimination against them. It is also good and right for the Church to seek to understand that which is called "homosexuality" in medical, psychiatric and anthropological terms. However, it can and ought to do these things as it continues, in submission to the Lord our God, to seek to implement and support God's order for his creation. In that it is going in entirely the opposite direction the Episcopal Church is truly "disordered."

*Blessed Lord, who thyself hast borne our griefs and carried our sorrows: Hear thou our prayer for all that are in trouble, distress and pain. Draw them, we pray thee, to thyself, that they may find the comfort and strength which thou alone canst give; and grant to all of us an understanding mind, a loving heart and a ready hand to help, that graciously serving the needs of others we may show forth our love and gratitude to thee, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.*

## Chapter Six

# Relations within God and Man

*The head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man, and the head of Christ is God [the Father].* <sup>1</sup>

Corinthians 11:4.

*Let all things be done decently and in order... for God is not a God of confusion but of peace.* 1 Corinthians 14: 40 & 33.

There is a real and vital relation between the Lord God who is adored and praised in authentic Christian worship and the way in which (a) the Church is ordered and organized on earth as the Body of Christ and Household of God; and (b) human beings are to relate one to another in families. The high privilege of the assembled Body of Christ on the Lord's Day is to bow before and to address the LORD God, that is, to worship the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit in the beauty of holiness and in spirit and truth. It is to know in the communion of charity the Father as his adopted children and fellow heirs with Christ Jesus, his Son, and to be known by him in spiritual union unto salvation. Further, it is to experience the love of God the Father, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Incarnate Son, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit. Then, also, it is to join in the Holy Spirit with the hierarchies of "angels and archangels" and "all the company of heaven" as they laud and magnify the Triune Lord.

### A TRINITY OF PERSONS, HOLY ORDER

For too many Christians the doctrine of the Blessed, Holy and Undivided Trinity of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit is remote and difficult, to be remembered only or especially on Trinity Sunday! This is a matter for great regret for, in fact, the confession of God as the Holy Trinity is the very basis of

all thoughts and things Christian. It is good and encouraging to note that “Faith in the Holy Trinity” is most appropriately the title of the first Article of *The Thirty-Nine Articles* (England 1572; USA 1813), one of the Three Formularies of Reformed Catholicism, the Anglican Way, and thus of the PECUSA.

God, the Holy Trinity, is the Creator and Preserver of the cosmos, the Redeemer, Savior, Sanctifier and Judge of the world. The creation of the whole physical cosmos and of the invisible world of heaven; the self-revelation by God through space and time; and the saving work of God in space and time, are executed from the Father through the Son (who becomes Incarnate) and by the Holy Spirit. In turn, the response of the created order, of man as male and female and of the Body of Christ, is to the Father, through the Incarnate Son, and with the Holy Spirit in sacrificial consecration, service, prayer and worship. Therefore the assembly of Christians often exclaims: “Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost: as it was in the beginning is now and ever shall be, world without end . Amen.” And the Celebrant in the Orthodox Liturgy blesses the people as he cries out: “Blessed be the kingdom of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and always, even unto ages of ages.” In singing or reciting the Ecumenical Creed, the Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed (381), the people of God effectively use three paragraphs devoted in turn to the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. And in the Blessing at the end of the service the faithful hear, “The Blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost be amongst you and remain with you always.”

Within God as God, as God-is-unto-himself as the Holy Trinity, there is holy, divine Order. The Father is the Father of the only-begotten Son, and the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father through the Son. In order, the Father is first, the Son is second and the Holy Spirit third; but in essence, being and substance, the Three are wholly equal for each One possesses in entirety the whole divine essence, being and substance. Also in the external acts of the Holy Trinity—creation and redemption, for example—there is order and it is always from the Father

through the Son and with/by the Holy Spirit, and all Three perfectly working together as the One God. (See further Peter Toon, *Our Triune God*, 2000.)

Since, according to this Order, God as God the LORD has made himself known to us, it would be entirely wrong for us to contradict it and say, "Glory to the Holy Spirit, the Son and the Father...." Or to give the Blessing in "The Blessing of the Son, the Holy Spirit and the Father, One God, be with you." Further, it would be wrong for us in collects and prayers to have a form of words which addressed the Holy Spirit in the name of the Father and with the Son. "Let all things be done decently and in order," taught the apostle.

Occasionally, in public prayer it is appropriate to address the Lord Jesus Christ directly for he is our Lord and Savior; and, likewise, it is sometime appropriate to address the Holy Spirit directly for he is a divine Person and he is the Paraclete (Advocate and Comforter) who acts on behalf of Christ the Lord towards and in us (see John 14-16). Several of the Collects of the Christian Year are addressed to the Lord Jesus and direct prayer is offered to the Holy Spirit, for example, to descend upon candidates for ordination to the episcopate and priesthood in the ordination services.

Within the Bible, the Creeds, the historic Liturgy and authentic devotion and piety, the people of God learn of their bounden duty and high privilege to relate to the Father as his adopted children in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the inspiration and the presence of the Holy Spirit. This is the way that God as the LORD God has revealed and which in his great love he requires. Only if his children relate in this way will they truly know his blessing and see the principles and reasons—that is the inbuilt order—that he has placed within divine institutions and relations.

To proceed, we may note that according to Christian understanding of God-as-he-is-unto-himself there is within the Godhead of Three Persons both equality and subordination (where subordination does not mean inferiority, but second and third in order). We glorify the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,



for each Person is God and possesses the Godhead fully and entirely. We also pray to the Father, through his only-begotten Son and with the Holy Spirit, for this is how God as the LORD is known and approached by us. There is a divine communion of holy love between the Three Persons and also an eternal order of relations between and among the same Three. And here we see the Trinitarian principles of monarchy (One God the King & LORD in relation to the many in creation), patriarchy (God the Father as the First Person in order—see the Nicene Creed) and hierarchy (the ordered and holy relation of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit—see the Athanasian Creed). In fact, reflection upon the received dogma of the Trinity may help us not to confuse monarchy with democracy, patriarchy with autocracy and hierarchy with bureaucracy (note that “-archy” indicates a principle and “-cracy” a power); our concern here is with relations of order, not relations of power.

#### ORDER IN CREATION

Even as there is order within God-as-God-is-unto-himself and within God-as-God-is-towards-us, so God the Holy Trinity as the Creator and Redeemer placed order and equality (a) within his creation, specifically in the relation of man, woman and family, and (b) within his new creation, the Church as the Body of Christ. At the same time, the very foundational fact that God as the LORD is Three Persons in a unity of love establishes the dignity of human persons, for they are made in his image and after his likeness (Genesis 1:27).

Perhaps it needs to be made clear that “order” is not about obeying the “orders” of a dictator, boss or military commander. Neither does it refer to the bureaucratic notion that there should be a place for everything and everything in its place. Nor it is an ideology. Rather it points to the fact that God has so made his world that there is a first, middle and last; there is a beginning, a means and an end. One thing is first, another second and yet another last and all things and persons are related according to God’s design.

The sexual difference between man and woman is a sign of an ordered relation, not a sign that they are different species within the same genus or complementary opposites participating in the same dialectically developing whole. Their difference is not to separate them into two kinds of being, nor are the oppositions such as to make one or the other only partially human. Both the man and the woman are whole and entire and their difference shows that they are related one to the other. In this relation of order all that belongs to the man, also belongs to the woman, and will also belong to the children.

The ordered relation between the man and the woman is presented symbolically in the second chapter of Genesis where we read:

“And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; and God took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh instead thereof: and the rib, which the LORD God had taken from the man, made he a woman and brought her to the man. And the man said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman because she was taken out of man.” (verses 21-23).

Matthew Henry, known for his *Commentary* on the whole Bible, made this delightful comment on these verses: “Not made out of his head to top him, nor out of his feet to be trampled on by him, but out of his side to be equal with him, under his arm to be protected, and near his heart to be beloved.” The removal of a piece of the man in order to create the woman implies that neither is complete without the other. There is complementarity and equality of the sexes. However, there is also an ordered relation between them where the male is first and the woman second: “In the image of God, created he [God] man; male and female created he them.” (Genesis 1:27)

Following the brief description of the creation of the woman there is a profound statement which Jesus himself used as the word of God in his own teaching (Mark 10:7) as a foundational text for holy matrimony: “Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and they shall be one flesh.”

In harmony of soul and body, united in coitus, they are to be co-workers with God in the work of creation. In the ordered exchange of coitus as one flesh, what is the man's does not cease to be his because given to the woman, and the child who is conceived does not cease to be hers because it is for him and has a life from them both. And here man, as made in the image reflects likeness to God in terms of monarchy, patriarchy and hierarchy, for these principles guide and order the substantial relations by which man exists as male and female persons. The one man (patriarchy) is both husband and father (patriarchy) in an order of marriage and generation (hierarchy).

As the apostle Paul expressed it in 1 Corinthians 11:4, Christ Jesus, as the Incarnate Son, is head of both the human race and the Church of God, but his headship does not remove the relation of order between man and woman and, further, it does not deny that he, himself, is subject to the Father in the order and historical accomplishment of redemption. As the LORD God relates to man in creation and salvation, the Father is first and the Son second, in order, and, further, as the Son assumes our human nature to do the Father's will, then the Father is also Head of the Son in the order and work of redemption. There is a hierarchy which has the order: **God the Father – Christ – man – woman**. Each of the three members of the hierarchy is the head of the member following. And this relation remains and stands whether we understand the word "head" (Gk., *kephale*) to mean on the one hand, "chief" and "ruler" (the older understanding), or, on the other hand, "source" and "origin" (the newer understanding).

Even as we humbly accept, respect, reverence and adore the Order that is within God as the Triune LORD and of God-as-he-is-towards-us, so we are also to accept the Order that he has placed within the angelic host of heaven (with its archangels and angels), within the cosmos and within the Church, the new creation of grace. With respect to the cosmos, this order is more than respect for the seasons of the year, that night follows day, and so on. It is also, and importantly, respect for, and submission to, the ordered relation between man and woman as persons of dignity made in God's image to reflect his glory, as well

as to the ordered relation of members of the new creation, the Body of Christ, to Christ, his Ministers and to each other as members of the Body.

#### IN SUMMARY

This brief reflection upon God the LORD as Holy Trinity and his relations of order is absolutely necessary if we are to appreciate what kind of revision the Episcopal Church and the mainline Churches have made since the 1960s to the historic Reformed Catholicism of the Anglican Way, which was the precious heritage of PECUSA. Its revision can be described as the rejection and the abandonment of divine order along with the adoption of a varied secular order in its place.

Practically speaking, the Episcopal Church has rejected St Paul's advice that "all things be done schematically and according to order" and has set aside:

1. The Order that is in God as the LORD and as The Trinity of Persons, through its adoption of a new forms of language for addressing God, together with its setting aside of the historic and classic Formularies of the Anglican Way wherein divine Order is proclaimed;

2. The Order that God has placed within the created world by (a) its adoption of new definitions of marriage and the relations of man and woman; and (b) its acceptance of same-sex/gender partnerships as normal; and,

3. The Order that God has placed in the Church through Christ Jesus by (a) the ordination of women to all three orders of the Ministry and (b) the ordaining and consecrating of men living disordered sexual lives.

In rejecting God's Order the Episcopal Church has embraced the secular order by its use of inclusive language, relativism in doctrine and morals, parts of the human rights program, psychological and therapeutic descriptions of humankind, and secularized notions of freedom, peace and justice. In embracing insights and principles from the secular order it has usually given them "God-names" and thus given the impression that they are from divine revelation. Instead of receiving the basic doctrines

of Scripture, through the light of sacred Tradition from the early Fathers and via the standard Anglican divines, the Episcopal Church has chosen to modify and change them by the supposed “light” shed by contemporary “Experience.”

*To God the Father, who first loved us, and made us accepted in the Beloved; to God the Son, who loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood; to God the Holy Ghost, who sheddeth the love of God abroad in our hearts: to the One true God be all love, praise and glory for all time and eternity.*

## Chapter Seven

# Innovation and Apostasy

**I**nnovation is highly prized in the modern world, especially where it is seen as bringing improvement and efficiency. Indeed without innovation modern capitalism would grind to a halt. In this situation and ethos it may seem natural or even desirable for the Church also to innovate in order to improve its position in society. However, when it is recalled that Christian doctrine and worship are based on divine revelation recorded in the past, and that the Church has been seeking to understand and follow this revelation for twenty centuries, then innovating in churches becomes problematic except perhaps in terms of using the latest technology for heating, lighting and sound systems. What the Church believes, teaches and confesses is written clearly in the decrees, creeds and confessions of faith of councils and synods, and is set forth in Catechisms, as well as in books of devotion and hymnody. Certainly there is the continuing necessity laid upon the Church to translate and to interpret its treasury of doctrine to each generation but this, when done aright, does not produce new doctrine.

However, where the local church is captive to the dominant, secular spirit of the age, then the creation of new doctrines will seem to be a necessity in order for that church to conform and to appear to be relevant, credible and acceptable. In general, this seems to be what has happened to the Episcopal Church in its desire to innovate continually. In chapters two through six, evidence is presented to show that the Episcopal innovations are all related in the basic sense that they are all rejections of Reformed Catholicism; and, at a deeper level, rejections of the Order which God as Creator has placed in his creation and which God as Redeemer has placed in his new creation, the Body of Christ. Of course, in stating this, one is also accepting that the innovations were produced by the powerful winds of change that were

blowing through society and church, especially from the 1960s onwards. Further, one is also accepting that there is within man a bias to seek his own ends and to rebel against God's will and order. For the innovations to be rejections of divine order they are also at the same time manifestations of sinfulness and rebellion against God, not only at the personal level, but at the corporate level.

Also the evidence provided suggests that the innovations are also related to each other in that certain of them had to occur first to make the others possible and, as it were, to clear a space for them. If there had not been major changes in the way that people began to think about and then engage in matrimony after World War II, with the subsequent massive rise in divorce and re-marriage, and all this in the context of women's rights, then it is most probable that women's ordination would not have been pushed with the zeal that it was from the founding of the Episcopal Women's Caucus in 1971. Further, it is highly unlikely that the LesBiGay movement and agenda would have made serious inroads in the Episcopal Church had not the traditional doctrine of marriage as between a man and woman as one flesh for life been so weakened and replaced by a doctrine that emphasized personal satisfaction and fulfillment without necessary procreation. After all, the demand is for the acceptance of faithful, covenanted partnerships of same-sex affection (with the option of adoption) which mirror modern "heterosexual" marriage.

Further, the rejection of the historic Formularies of the Anglican Way and the creation of a new Prayer Book as the new Formulary for modern times is related to all the innovations as a theological and liturgical basis and justification for them. The 1979 Prayer Book embodies the new doctrines of matrimony and the ordained ministry as also the new doctrines of God as Trinity and Jesus Christ as Savior. Further, in its claim that initiation is complete in Baptism and by changing the meaning and purpose of Confirmation, it brings disorder into the family of God by presenting children for Communion before they are prepared and ready. At the same time, without providing a

rite for the blessing of same-sex couples, it provides them and their supporters with the ideas and principles (e.g., within the interpretation of the “baptismal covenant”) on which to make their case.

Of course, the roots and causes of changes and innovations from the 1960s onwards may be traced back to changes in philosophy, theology, biblical studies and cultural forces occurring since the Enlightenment of the eighteenth century. After all, the United States of America could hardly have been born and given shape had it not been for the stimulation and ideas of the European Enlightenment. This said, the major innovations took place from the 1960s into the new century and their immediate causation has to be sought in these four decades when culture and society were experiencing massive and speedy changes.

In conclusion, the question arises—and is a vital one for those traditionalists who do not think that the innovations are good and right—“Is the ECUSA reformatable?” For God all things are possible, said Jesus, and so in theory one must accept that the God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ can and does work miracles. Thus he is able to give the right persons the vision, the energy and the wisdom to work for and see the beginnings of reform in the ECUSA.

However, to date in American religious history, mainline Churches have not experienced such reformations and U-turns. As they have proceeded with the progressive liberal agenda, slowly or quickly, some of their “orthodox” and “traditionalist” clergy and laity have left them and sought to create new churches or denominations where purity in the preaching of the Word and the administration of the Sacraments is sought. This has been happening since the late 1970s with respect to the ECUSA with the formation of various continuing Anglican jurisdictions and, more recently, of both the Anglican Mission in America, sponsored by the Province of Rwanda in Africa, and the linking of congregations in the USA to a growing number of overseas bishops within the Anglican Communion. Further there has been in existence since 1873 the Reformed Episcopal Church, which is also still active today.



What seems possible, but improbable, is the formation of a new orthodox Province of the Anglican Communion in the USA or North America, wherein all those who long for the fullness of the Anglican Way of Reformed Catholicism can find a home within its comprehensive and gracious ethos. Suggestions as to how this improbability could become a real possibility is perhaps the topic for another essay!

*Most gracious Father, we humbly beseech thee for thy holy, catholic Church, and especially for that jurisdiction known as Anglican. Fill it with all truth; in all truth with peace. Where it is corrupt, purge it; where it is in error, direct it; where anything is amiss, reform it; where it is right, strengthen and confirm it; where it is in want, furnish it; where it is divided, heal it, and unite it in thy love; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

The Prayer Book Society of the USA exists to commend the use of the historic *Book of Common Prayer* primarily in its American edition (1928), but also in its English (1662) and Canadian (1962) editions.

The Society seeks to keep the 1928 edition in print for use in the USA. It also publishes books and pamphlets and produces compact disks to assist people to appreciate and understand the classic Prayer Book.

For more information, call 1-800-PBS-1928 and ask for a free copy of the magazine *The Mandate*.



## **ALSO FROM THE PRESERVATION PRESS OF THE PRAYER BOOK SOCIETY:**

### ***Worshipping the Lord in the Anglican Way* (2005).**

Here in parallel are presented the basic services of the classic *Book of Common Prayer* and a functional equivalent in contemporary English. The purpose is to invite people to go through the modern equivalent to the classic service and appreciate its style, its doctrine and its relevancy.

### ***Worship without Dumbing Down: Knowing God through Liturgy* (2005).**

This is a virtually total re-write by Peter Toon of his *Knowing God through the Liturgy* (1992). It seeks to show that there is a congregational and corporate, as well as personal, knowing of God in the worship of the Holy Trinity in spirit and in truth, through the use of classic and traditional services.

### ***Neither Archaic Nor Obsolete* (2003).**

Here is a first-class explanation and defense of the authentic English language of prayer, universally used in hymns, bible translations and liturgies from the sixteenth century until the 1960s. Dr Tarsitano & Dr Toon provide the reader with much to ponder about the right way to address the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost.

### ***Neither Orthodoxy Nor a Formulary* (2004).**

The 1979 Prayer Book is not only the official book of services for the Episcopal Church, it is also its doctrinal foundation. Dr Tarsitano and Dr Toon show through careful examination that this prayer book does not consistently contain received orthodoxy, and further it is not an appropriate formulary for an authentic Anglican Church/province. At best it is a Book of Varied Services, to be used alongside the classic *Book of Common Prayer* (latest edition 1928).

### ***The Annotated Order for Holy Communion of the BCP, 1928* (2004).**

For each page of the service there is on the facing page an explanation of the basic meaning. Most useful for deepening devotion .

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