

# DOCTRINE COMMISSION

## MEMBERSHIP

- The Most Reverend Philip Freier, BAppSc, DipEd, MEdSt, BD, PhD (Chairman).
- The Reverend Canon Peter Adam ThL, BD, MTh, PhD.
- The Right Reverend Glenn Davies, BSc, MDiv (Hons), ThM (Hons), DipA, PhD.
- The Reverend Canon John Dunnill, BA (Hons), DipTh, CertEd, PhD.
- The Reverend Canon Andrew McGowan, BA (Hons), BD (Hons), MA, PhD.
- The Reverend Dorothy Lee, BA (Hons), BD (Hons), Dip Ed, PhD.
- The Reverend Michael Stead, BCom, BD (Hons), DipMin, PhD (Secretary)
- The Reverend Mark Thompson, BA, BTh (Hons), MTh, Dip Min, D Phil.
- Dr Heather Thomson BSW, BTh, MTh, PhD.

The current panel of the Doctrine Commission was appointed by the Primate, on the advice of the General Synod Standing Committee, in March 2008 for a five year term until February 2013. Also appointed to the panel were the Reverend Canon Scott Cowdell and Dr Theresa Lau, who have since resigned.

## MEETINGS

The Doctrine Commission met in Melbourne in February 2008, February 2009 and February 2010.

## AGENDA ITEMS UNDERTAKEN 2008-2010

### ***DOCTRINE COMMISSION WEBSITE***

Reports and publications of the Doctrine Commission are now available on the internet. A temporary site ([www.doctrinecommission.com](http://www.doctrinecommission.com)) has been established, until such time as this material can be incorporated into the General Synod website.

### ***ESSAYS ON THE THEOLOGICAL ISSUES SURROUNDING SEXUAL ABUSE***

At the last session of General Synod, the Doctrine Commission presented a preliminary report on this topic in response to General Synod Resolution 35/04(f), and indicated that work was underway on more substantial reflections. During 2007 and 2008, members of the Doctrine Commission prepared a series of essays on this topic, which were published in a special edition of the *St Mark's Review*, entitled "Sexual Abuse and the Church" (no. 205 – August 2008), which contained the following:

- |  |                              |
|--|------------------------------|
| 1. Introduction (incorporating the preliminary report) | Peter Jensen                 |
| 2. Pastoral Responses to Sexual Abuse                  | Muriel Porter                |
| 3. Church Culture and Abuse                            | Scott Cowdell                |
| 4. Power and Authority                                 | Peter Adam                   |
| 5. A Biblical Appreciation of Sex                      | Glenn Davies & Michael Stead |

- |                             |                 |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|
| 6. Sin and Sexual Abuse     | John Dunnill    |
| 7. Forgiveness              | Heather Thomson |
| 9. Truth and Reconciliation | Andrew McGowan  |

A copy of this special edition was sent to all members of General Synod. Copies of the essays are available on the Commission's website.

### **ANGLICAN–UNITING DIALOGUE**

By resolution 78/07, the General Synod asked the Doctrine Commission to elaborate on its response to the report 'For the Sake of the Gospel' (2001) by indicating which parts of Sections 4-6 of that report may be used to guide ongoing dialogue in the quest to develop a preliminary Covenant of Association with The Uniting Church in Australia. Andrew McGowan and Scott Cowdell produced a report on behalf of the Doctrine Commission, which was submitted to the Standing Committee with the request that they disseminate this report to the Anglican Church of Australia–Uniting Church in Australia Dialogue. A copy of the report is appended, and is available on the Commission's website.

### **ESSAYS ON ECOLOGICAL THEOLOGY**

By resolution 74/07, the General Synod asked the Doctrine Commission to identify those areas of doctrine and theology that support the inter-dependent relationship between humanity and the natural world. This resolution also asked for discussion material to be prepared on the identified areas of doctrine and theology; and that this material be made available for use in parishes and theological colleges.

In addition, by resolution 77/07, the General Synod asked the Doctrine Commission to develop a Christian theology for a sustainable future including a global ethic.

The Doctrine Commission has addressed both of these references by writing a series of essays on ecology and the environment, which incorporate discussion material and questions. These essays are to be published in a special issue of *St Mark's Review* (July 2010), with copies sent to all Synod members and Anglican Theological Colleges. It contains essays on the following topics.

- |   |                 |
|---|-----------------|
| 1. Introduction   | Philip Freier   |
| 2. 'To Rule' and 'To Subdue' in Genesis 1                         | Michael Stead   |
| 3. Sabbath and Ecology  | Glenn Davies    |
| 4. Ecology and the Johannine Literature                           | Dorothy Lee     |
| 5. Groan But Not As Those Who Have No Hope                        | Mark Thompson   |
| 6. Fallen Images and Redeemed Dust: Being Human in God's Creation | Heather Thomson |
| 7. Creation, Worship and the Body                                 | John Dunnill    |
| 8. To Use and Enjoy: Augustine and Ecology                        | Andrew McGowan  |
| 9. Christ and Creation  | Peter Adam      |
| 10. Trinitarian Experience and the Ecological Imperative          | Duncan Reid     |

Parishes can purchase copies of these essays through the General Synod office.

**COMMENTS ON THE IASCER RESPONSE TO CDF ASPECTS OF THE DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH**

At the February 2009 meeting of the General Synod Standing Committee, the Doctrine Commission was asked for its comments on the IASCER paper titled *An Evaluation of the Document of the Roman Catholic Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith: 'Responses to some Questions Regarding Certain Aspects of the Doctrine of the Church'*. Comments from members of the Doctrine Commission were sent to the Anglican Communion Office for forwarding to IASCUFO (the Inter-Anglican Standing Commission for Unity, Faith and Order). A copy of this report is appended, and is available on the Commission's website.



## ***The Doctrine Commission Of the Anglican Church of Australia***

### **ADVICE TO THE STANDING COMMITTEE OF GENERAL SYNOD**

#### **Parts of Sections 4-6 in the 2001 report *For the Sake of the Gospel* that could guide ongoing dialogue toward a preliminary Covenant of Association with The Uniting Church in Australia**

Scott Cowdell & Andrew McGowan, Presbyters

In resolution 78/07, the 14<sup>th</sup> General Synod asked the Doctrine Commission to elaborate further on the 2001 Report *For the Sake of the Gospel: Mutual Recognition of Ordained Ministries in the Anglican and Uniting Churches in Australia*, by specifying which aspects of parts 4-6 'may be used to guide ongoing dialogue in the quest to develop a preliminary Covenant of Association with the Uniting Church in Australia'. This task was delegated to Drs McGowan and Cowdell in the first instance.

The request is timely as the Joint Working Group, first appointed in 1998, is eager to move this project along. Its report, abovementioned, has been submitted to IASCEC, the Inter-Anglican Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations, which reported back in December 2007, basing its comments in part on an initial November 2007 paper by Dr Paul Avis. The key issues mentioned there have also occurred to us, with some other considerations that in part reflect local knowledge.

In 2001 the Doctrine Commission reported on *For the Sake of the Gospel* in the person of its then Chairman, Archbishop Carnley, the full commission being engaged on other tasks at that time. Dr Carnley's reflections were focussed on the ministerial priesthood, arguing that it represents a 'different order of the gifts of the spirit', following ARCIC in disagreement with BEM, and in particular taking issue with the book *Transforming Priesthood* by Anglican writer Robin Greenwood. Dr Carnley's point was that ministerial priesthood is not simply a focus of the Church's wider priestly ministry but is itself a distinctive action of Christ. While ministerial priesthood is a major issue that the Joint Working Group must address, and for that reason Dr Carnley's paper is no doubt of real value, nevertheless a fuller response engaging the substance of the joint report had been hoped for by some on the Joint Working Group.

This document before you is not required to provide that fuller response, but in addition to what has been received from IASCEC and Dr Avis, as well as Dr Carnley, we hope that these brief comments may be a helpful contribution. There is also the Standing Committee-authorized document *Steps to Unity: An Outline Process for Ecumenical Convergence from an Anglican Perspective* that must form the basis of dialogue from our perspective, and that document also stands in the background of the present task.

The following observations refer to sections 4-6 of *For the Sake of the Gospel*.

#### **A. GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS REFLECTING INTRA-ANGLICAN DIFFERENCES**

- 4.5 Some Anglicans will wish to understand the phrase 'saving action in word and sacraments', as 'saving action set forth in word and sacraments'.
- 4.8. The statement on worship may not state sufficiently clearly that the two traditions share a specific common heritage and commitment, not simply to 'worship' as such but to the tradition of common prayer and to the celebration of the biblical sacraments.
- 4.9. Many Anglicans would want to add specific mention of bringing people to Christ under the definition of mission.
- 4.11. Issues of ministerial order and Eucharistic presidency remain in this section. There is lack of clarity about 'authentic celebration of...the eucharist' (cf 5.9), reflecting concerns also expressed by Dr Avis and the IASCEC report, both of which feel that such lack of clarity contributes to undue optimism in the level of agreement claimed. There is a body of Anglicans with a higher view of Christ's presence in the Eucharistic action and the ministerial priesthood (which is its guardian and celebrant), with similar problems for this dialogue anticipated as faced the communion at the inception of the Church of South India, and in England's Anglican-Methodist dialogue.

#### **B. ANGLICAN-UNITING ISSUES FOR FURTHER DIALOGUE**

- 5.4.2. The attempt to present the looser 'communal episcopé' of the Uniting Church as equivalent to Anglican polity at its most collaborative is not convincing. Rather than a 'communal episcopé', ours is more of an 'episcopé exercised communally'—that is, by Bishops retaining the fullness of episcopé in their own persons yet sharing it with others in a more collaborative way (Synods being the classic example). Anglicans increasingly recognise the scope for broadening episcopé', and the share that presbyters and laity can have in it, but this is quite different from the consensus approach of all councils and levels in the Uniting Church. This

is not just a matter of theology but of a very different culture, that becomes evident to all who work closely with members of the other Church.

- 5.4.3. A further example of this difference is evident in different Church polity in matters of consensus. The Constitution of the Anglican Church of Australia protects dioceses from the National Church imposing on them, while the whole cannot legislate in a way that dismisses the parts. Anglicanism works by checks and balances rather than consensus, however, believing that 'Councils may err' (Article XXI).
- 5.5. The plain recognition here that doctrines of ministry and Church polity are the central issues is good to have stated. We would suggest that there are deeper roots in Eucharistic theology and ecclesiology behind this, however, and a different understanding of how the Spirit guides the Church (see 5.4.3 comment, above).
- 5.7.1 & 2. The Anglican priest does not answer to the congregation (despite today's plethora of covenants etc) quite as the Uniting Church minister does, specifically to the Elders. IASCER notes the incorrect suggestion in 5.7.2 that the Anglican priest has ministry delegated from that of the Bishop at ordination. Archbishop Carnley also emphasises the restriction of the laying on of hands at presbyteral ordination to bishops and fellow presbyters in the Anglican Church, and not the laity who are involved in ordaining Uniting Church Ministers of the Word. This restriction secures the important symbolism of a distinctive historical mission that is not reducible to the Church's ministry as a whole being focussed in the ordained ministry.
- 5.8. A significant agreement on the diaconate nevertheless acknowledges the continuance of prior orders by those ordained to consequent ones in Anglican but not Uniting Church theology. As noted, diaconal presidency at the Eucharist is not widely supported or accepted in Anglican circles.
- 5.9. The significant agreement on the presbyterate has not resolved the issues Archbishop Carnley raises of the more Catholic understanding of the priest, beyond being a focus and enabler of the Church's generic priesthood. It is not necessary to separate talk of 'role' (Protestant) and 'being' (Catholic), however, as it is clear from the Ordinal that role and being are integral in the Anglican vision of ministry. Further dialogue would explore resources in the Uniting Church's traditions for a more ontological nature of the presbyterate manifest in the execution of its characteristic ministry.
- 6.4. Here the issues sharpen, as was also pointed out by IASCER. Although the section addresses ministry, the problems have in large part to do with Eucharistic sharing and the relationship between these proposals or their implications, and those presently allowed according to guidelines in *Steps to Unity*. Something more like the 'Interim Eucharistic Sharing' of *Steps to Unity*, section 8.3 seems to be envisaged. *For the Sake of the Gospel*

departs from what has been called 'the ecumenism of need', as envisaged by *Steps to Unity* as an acceptable state of affairs between Anglican and Uniting Churches currently. It is recommended that the Joint Working Group pay particular attention to language here.

## **CONCLUSION**

Section 5.9 encapsulates what we believe to be the achievement but also the limitation of this report. It is right about the high level of agreement between our Churches overall, but details remain problematic. At the point that similarities in presbyteral and Episcopal ministry are listed, which are real and significant, nevertheless matters upon which many Anglicans insist are not addressed.

What the report calls 'personal episcopé' on behalf of bishops, and its equivalent for presbyters, is more important in the Anglican context, apart from the ministry of the whole Church. Similarly, as IASCER points out, the use of the word 'authentic' for the Eucharist in the joint report does not address traditional concerns about the 'validity' of the Eucharist (as in our dialogue with Roman Catholicism). The great gains of ecumenism, symbolized in the Lima Document *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*, are all evident in this Joint report, but the extent to which God is invested in sacramental specifics (as in the Eucharistic elements, and the person of the priest) as against a more inclusive presence in the Church's life, remain to divide us. This brings to issues of sacrament and ministry not only the specific element of personal episcopé but the deeper issues of God's action in the world, the objectivity of that action apart from human concurrence, and the role of the institutional Church in mediating that action. These issues remain, despite the very real agreement on so much that *For the Sake of the Gospel* represents.



# ***The Doctrine Commission Of the Anglican Church of Australia***

## **Comments on the IASCER response to CDF *Aspects of the Doctrine of the Church***

At the February 2009 meeting of the GS Standing Committee, the Doctrine Commission was asked for its comments on the IASCER paper titled *An Evaluation of the Document of the Roman Catholic Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith: 'Responses to some Questions Regarding Certain Aspects of the Doctrine of the Church'*.

We offer these comments to the Anglican Communion Office that they might be forwarded to IASCUFO (the Inter-Anglican Standing Commission for Unity, Faith and Order) when that body comes into existence.

The Doctrine Commission of the Anglican Church of Australia is far from monochrome in its theological position. Indeed, we are perhaps as diverse as any in the Anglican Communion, spanning the full spectrum from liberal to conservative evangelical. Our diversity is reflected in the six responses from members of the commission which form the substance of our comments, and which follow as appendices.

Notwithstanding our diversity, there was considerable agreement on the following two points.

1. The CDF claim that the whole church “subsists in the Catholic Church”.

The claim of *Lumen Gentium* that the one church of Jesus Christ “subsists in the Catholic Church, which is governed by the successor of Peter and by the bishops in communion with him” and the subsequent clarifications of this phrase in more recent proclamations alike claim too much. The one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church does not “subsist in” any one Church, nor is it “present in” other Churches; rather they subsist and are present in it. We affirm the dictum of Ignatius that “wherever Jesus Christ is, there is the catholic Church” (Ep.Smyrneans 8) but do not accept the premise that the “catholic Church” is coterminous with the Roman Catholic Church.

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The IASCER response is not strong enough in objecting to the language of subsistence.

2. The IASCER claim that we share the “genuine and integral substance of the Eucharistic Mystery”

The Decree on Ecumenism of the Second Vatican Council, 1964 expressed the hope that “as the obstacles to perfect ecclesiastical communion are overcome, all Christians will be gathered in a common celebration of the Eucharist, into the unity of the one and only Church, which Christ bestowed on his Church from the beginning. This unity, we believe, dwells in the Catholic Church as something she can never lose, and we hope that it will continue to increase until the end of time.” (§1.4).

In light of this hope, for the response from the IASCER to assert that we retain “the catholic sacraments, including the genuine and integral substance of the Eucharistic Mystery” is potentially misleading, in that our Roman Catholic brothers and sisters understand the Eucharistic Mystery very differently to Eucharistic theology of the Book of Common Prayer.

For these reasons, we feel that the IASCER response is inadequate. We trust that these comments might further inform that work of the forthcoming Inter-Anglican Standing Commission for Unity, Faith and Order.

+Philip

The Most Rev. Dr Philip L. Freier  
Chairman of the Doctrine Commission of the Anglican Church of Australia

11 June 2009

## APPENDIX 1

### RESPONSE FROM REV. DR ANDREW MCGOWAN

As other commentary has indicated, the content of the *Responsa* is a restatement of positions put forward in the Vatican Council's Dogmatic Constitution *Lumen Gentium* and then more recently in the declaration of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith *Dominus Iesus*. Although the first document was hailed as a progressive breakthrough and the more recent ones as conservative or retrograde, they teach in effect the same relatively nuanced version of traditional Roman Catholic ecclesiology. The key elements are that the Church is a particular and historic community or institution, which "subsists" in the Roman Catholic Church, but that the Church is in some sense "present" in other "ecclesial communities". This notion has displaced or revised the older RC doctrine, that the relationship between that one historic community and the RC Church was simply one of identity.

Assessments of these statements by Anglicans and other Christians might well involve two related elements: first, whether these ecclesiological reflections are well-grounded in and of themselves; and secondly, whether and how in context they affect the relationship between the Anglican Communion and its constituent national Churches and their members on the one hand, and the Roman Catholic Church on the other.

#### THE NATURE OF THE CHURCH

The effect of the newer ecclesiological formulation is a compromise between the older identification of the Roman Catholic Church as the historic community which is the Church of Jesus Christ, and a view which has been more influential in some Protestant circles, where the Church is not so much the concrete institution or community as a spiritual reality, whose relationship to the actually-existing set of Christian communities is inexact, but eschatologically-real.

The English text of the *Responsa* gives a misleading translation of the *Lumen Gentium* text, where it renders "coetus adspectabilis et communitas spiritualis" as "visible and spiritual community". The authorized translation of *LG* more accurately has "the visible assembly and the spiritual community", indicating two aspects of the Church which is thus a single but complex entity with a dual nature, understood "by no weak analogy" with the incarnation (*LG* 8). The theory underlying these formulations seems to be that the two elements, historic and spiritual, are inextricably bound up, yet that in reality their union is experienced variably.

If the position given in the *Responsa* be read in conjunction with *Lumen Gentium* itself it continues to express a doctrine of the Church which gives due weight both to the reality of the historic community and, if less clearly, to its limitations. It avoids the extremes of the more traditional Catholic position which tended both to exclusivity, and to collapsing claims about the Church as it will be ultimately with the present and all-too-obviously fragile and broken institution. Unsurprisingly it also avoids the extremes of that Protestant "invisibilist" ecclesiology, wherein the relationship between the visible community and the real fellowship of like-minded believers is somewhat arbitrary.

There are nonetheless some difficulties with this position. It is not clear what it means both to speak of the Church as this complex unity of visible and spiritual dimensions along the lines of the incarnation, and also to speak of it as a more purely spiritual thing which can “subsist in” the Roman Catholic Church or be “present and operative in” other “ecclesial communities”. These formulations seem to be using a form of the more invisibilist tradition of ecclesiology (or substituting a Platonist for an Aristotelian paradigm) to arrive at a form of special pleading. They undermine the “strong” incarnational analogy, insofar as in this sense “Church” seems more like the Spirit which blows where it wills, than like the Word who became flesh and dwelt, in a costly and ineradicable way, among us.

There is a need to acknowledge and celebrate the reality of the Church as an actual historic community without, as in former Roman Catholic ecclesiology, claiming for it the fullness of what it ultimately means to be Church. I would prefer to suggest that the Church has a real being and meaning which “subsists”, but is variously revealed in history and variously understood by its members. The Church does not “subsist in” any one Church, nor is it “present in” other Churches; rather they subsist are present *in it*. There is no other spiritual “Church” that can subsist, or be “present or operative”, in the one historic Church brought into being by Jesus Christ and sustained by the work of the Spirit, and which consists in its baptized members. Their varying degrees of faithfulness and understanding are the condition for the truth of their new being as Church to be visible, but they are no less Church for that. In their fragmentation and in their disobedience, all are compromised, including those who are most faithful. None can properly claim the sort of privilege implied in the language of “subsistence”, or for that matter in any other ecclesiological formulation which implies adequacy without the other members of the whole, insofar as all suffer loss in the failures of the whole and in the disobedience of all.

## **THE ANGLICAN COMMUNION AND THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH AFTER THE *RESPONSA***

As already stated, I do not think the *Responsa* makes any new or startling claims. It seems that some Anglicans engaged in ecumenical endeavour are disappointed that there has not been progress from the time when *Lumen Gentium* opened up a new set of possibilities for conversation by acknowledging that other “ecclesial communities” might have elements of sanctification and truth in them.

By implication some Anglicans seem to be hoping that the Roman Catholic Church would take a more positive attitude to the ecclesial character of our Churches and Communion. We should ask, however, whether it would be helpful or not to receive such recognition on the basis of an ecclesiology which itself seems wanting. To be recognized as Church or Churches, when the nature of Church is itself still needs to be better understood and taught, is not as great or positive a step as it might at first seem to be.

One further positive challenge may be noted. In present conversations within the Anglican Communion there is also arguably some less-than-coherent ecclesiology at work. Some of the concerns driving current discussions such as those around a Covenant imply that the Anglican Communion is “a Church”, or otherwise attribute to the Communion properties which are really only those of the universal Church. For

that matter our local or national Churches are spoken of as though their bonds of affection with others in the Anglican Communion were more fundamental to the truth of being the Church than, say, their relationships with other baptized Christians in their own or other places, whose claims on their affection are entirely as real.

While the current Roman Catholic discourse is not entirely adequate, its strengths include the refusal to reduce all untidy or inadequate relationships, theologies, and forms of community to a radical choice between “Church” and “not-Church”. Speaking as they do, *Lumen Gentium* and its documentary offspring remind us that the adequacy of doctrine and practice are of fundamental importance to being the Church, yet also that our specific inadequacies do not amount to a failure of the Gospel or the Spirit. At least by analogy, Anglicans may have to think harder about how to view other Anglicans and other Christians generally, without collapsing into ecclesiological or theological relativism.

IASCER is correct in hoping for dialogue through ARCIC III or other means on the nature of the Church, and the relation between local Churches and the universal Church.

## APPENDIX 2

### REV DR. PETER ADAM

Here is a quotation from the report 'Responses to some Questions...' produced by IAS CER

As Anglicans, we understand ourselves as standing in visible continuity with the Church of the West, reaching back to the Scriptures, the Apostles, and the ancient common traditions of the Church of the Fathers of East and West, retaining both the priestly ministry of bishops and presbyters in apostolic succession, and the catholic sacraments, including 'the genuine and integral substance of the Eucharistic Mystery'. Therefore we do not recognize ourselves within the *Responsa*, and certainly not as one of the 'Christian Communities born out of the Reformation of the sixteenth century' (Question 5), though we would accept that we, in common with all Western Churches, were shaped by the reforming movement of those times.<sup>1</sup>

I agree with the concluding sentence. However I am sure that we cannot assert that our doctrine of the catholic sacraments includes 'the genuine and integral substance of the Eucharistic Mystery', nor that our understanding of 'the priestly ministry of bishops and presbyters' intends this doctrine of the Eucharist. For if Vatican Two is still the defining text, then the Roman Catholic Church must still assert the following, and then presumably the following is part of 'the genuine and integral substance of the Eucharistic Mystery'

The celebration of the Eucharist which takes place at Mass is the action not only of Christ, but also of the Church. For in it Christ perpetuates in an unbloody manner the sacrifice offered on the cross, offering himself to the Father for the world's salvation through the ministry of priests. The Church, the spouse and minister of Christ, performs together with him the role of priest and victim, offers him to the Father and at the same time makes a total offering of herself together with him.<sup>2</sup>

While this view may be held by some Anglicans, it is not compatible with the Eucharistic theology of the Book of Common Prayer. Nor is this doctrine of the Eucharistic offering expressed in the Ordinal of that Book. Yet the BCP as a doctrinal standard is included in the Constitution of the Anglican Church of Australia.

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<sup>1</sup> *Response to some Questions....* IAS CER, The Report of the Department of Ecumenical Affairs, page 22.

<sup>2</sup> *Documents of Vatican II, 'Sacred Liturgy,'* 9: 3.

This Church, being derived from the Church of England, retains and approves the doctrine and principles of the Church of England embodied in the Book of Common Prayer together with the Form and Manner of Making Ordaining and Consecrating of Bishops, Priests and Deacons and in the Articles of Religion sometimes called the Thirty-nine Articles but has plenary authority at its own discretion to make statements as to the faith ritual ceremonial or discipline of this Church and to order its forms of worship and rules of discipline and to alter or revise such statements, forms and rules, provided that all such statements, forms, rules or alteration or revision thereof are consistent with the Fundamental Declarations contained herein and are made as prescribed by this Constitution. Provided, and it is hereby further declared, that the above-named Book of Common Prayer, together with the Thirty-nine Articles, be regarded as the authorised standard of worship and doctrine in this Church, and no alteration in or permitted variations from the services or Articles therein contained shall contravene any principle of doctrine or worship laid down in such standard.<sup>3</sup>

The Book of Common Prayer is also cited in Canon A 5 of the General Synod of the Church of England.

The doctrine of the Church of England is grounded in the Holy Scriptures, and in such teachings of the Ancient Fathers and Councils of the Church as are agreeable to the said Scriptures.

In particular such Doctrine is found in the *Thirty-nine Articles of Religion*, *The Book of Common Prayer*, and the *Ordinal*.<sup>4</sup>

S. W. Sykes comments:

The Book of Common Prayer, the Thirty-Nine Articles, and the Ordering of Bishops, Priests and Deacons....constitute what in the Church of England is spoken of as its "inheritance of faith" [see Canon C. 15]...insofar as they define the faith inheritance of the See of Canterbury, and insofar as communion with that See defines what it means to be to belong to the Anglican Communion, these documents have significant authority among Anglicans throughout the world.<sup>5</sup>

The Book of Common Prayer does not teach that the Eucharist is the perpetuation of the sacrifice of Christ on the cross, nor that this offering happens through the ministry of priests, nor that the church performs with Christ the role of priest and victim.

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<sup>3</sup> *Constitution of the Anglican Church of Australia*, Ruling Principles, 4.

<sup>4</sup> *Canons of General Synod*, The Church of England, Canon A 5.

<sup>5</sup> Stephen Sykes, 'The Anglican Character' in Ian Bunting, ed., *Celebrating the Anglican Way*, London, Hodder and Stoughton, 1996, pp. 21-32, p. 23.

We should not promise what we cannot deliver, and we should not give the impression of conformity if it does not exist.

I think that the proposed response is inadequate, and that these issues need to be raised. I think that discussions subsequent to Vatican Two have not resolved these issues, and that in any case we may be seeing a return to a stricter interpretation of the documents of Vatican Two.

## APPENDIX 3

### CANON SCOTT COWDELL

My hope is that the logic of the CDFs reading of the developing ecclesiological views expressed in conciliar and papal statements of recent decades might allow Anglicanism to find a special place *vis a vis* the Church of Rome, somewhere between that extended to the 'Eastern Churches' and denied to the 'ecclesial communities' originating with the Reformation. I base this on two considerations: the first dealing with the notion of subsistence and how it is imagined by the CDF, and the second concerning strong similarities between Anglicanism and the Eastern Churches.

#### ***SUBSISTENCE***

It is clear that Rome's concern at one level is to affirm the Church of Jesus Christ's manifest reality in history, and to acknowledge saving elements of that fullness across the Christian spectrum, not least as an extension of Christianity's deep incarnational logic. Views of the Church as invisible or else eschatological, which attempt to deal with present division and imperfection in the Church, fall well short of Rome's worthy ambition to honour Christ's triumph in history, while still acknowledging the fact of sin among the Church's members and the need for the Church's fullness to progress towards greater visible unity (see CDF commentary, following footnote 16).

This acknowledgement of sin and incompleteness is salutary as far as it goes, but having painted itself into a corner on papal infallibility, Rome seems to have difficulty in acknowledging serious structural failure in the Church apart from the sin of individual members and the failure of separated brethren to return. However, it is precisely because the key 'ecclesial elements' of repentance and faith are widely perceived to be absent in the resurgent Curialism of post-Vatican II Catholicism, and because institutional defensiveness has tended to characterise Rome's response to recent scandals which cast light on its closely held teachings about sexuality, priestly celibacy and clerical distinctiveness, that other Christians manifesting good will towards Rome and sympathetic to the logic of her claims nevertheless feel that, on balance, they are just as well off remaining among those whose lack of 'ecclesial elements' seems no worse than a similar lack they perceive in Rome, despite claims for the true Church's subsistence there.

I am among those Anglo-Catholics who, sharing the CDFs conviction that unity with Christ demands ever greater unity with his people, would feel obliged to make personal submission to Rome if I became convinced that Rome was prepared to demonstrate more of the reality of Christ's subsistence in its institutional life by being more institutionally penitent, more eschatologically assured hence more open to criticism of present forms, and more willing to allow scripture to question tradition (eg. on the matter of papal infallibility, compulsory clerical celibacy and women's ordination).

Further, I am certainly not alone among Anglicans in remaining to be convinced that the logic of subsistence must be exclusive. The fullness of Christ subsists in the

persons of (though without being exhausted by) any number of saints acknowledged by the Roman Church, for instance. Such confidence in the concrete manifestation of his life in continuing history, despite its multivalence, seems parallel to the ecclesial context.

### **ANGLICANISM AND THE EASTERN CHURCHES**

I share the conviction of the IASCER Evaluation that Anglicanism is a true part of the ancient Catholic Church of the West, with its roots in the faith of the undivided Church of the creeds, rather than a *novum* of the Reformation, while rejoicing in the Reformation heritage that has born such visible fruit in the Western Church, not least in a number of Vatican II 'clarifications' and developments in Rome itself. However, no Australian Anglican can in good conscience pretend that there are not different ecclesial paradigms nurtured within our common ecclesial structure, with both evangelical and liberal Christian versions of an essentially non-ecclesial primacy of the individual before God, and a primarily sociological assessment of the sacraments, that (if doctrine be the ecclesial measure) make of us at least three Churches in one. In this I both acknowledge the role of the BCP in defining Anglican Doctrine, along with its limits in capturing the diversity of actual Anglican conviction. Certainly the diversity of faith's expressions within the Roman Communion is a fact well known to the CDF, but at the official level this diversity is not dogmatically significant and *Roma locuta* as one. The Anglican Communion, nowhere more evidently than in its Australian member, cannot speak with such a single voice, and frank admission of this must affect the nature of any dialogue that follows.

However, Rome's palpable amity towards Eastern Churches, which is evident in the CDF documents before us, suggests that similar diversity in that quarter does not represent as significant a difference as Rome perceives between herself and the Reformation 'ecclesial communities'. The valid celebration of the Eucharist and, more broadly, the recognition of full ecclesial identity in local and national Churches based on a healthy Eucharistic logic is affirmed by Rome in the Eastern vision, and symbolized by the presence of Bishops in valid apostolic succession (see the CDF Commentary, as cited from footnotes 7 to 10). While the logic of a universal primacy, one of the essential 'ecclesial elements' Rome claims for herself 'in revelation' (CDF Commentary, text cited at footnote 12), is missing from the Eastern Churches, still they are very close to the Roman obedience in which the fullness of Christ's Church is claimed by Rome to subsist.

It is significant, however, that sacramental theology, ecclesiology and the doctrine of ministry are all articulated in the Eastern Churches in ways that are significantly different from those of Rome. The sacerdotalism and sacrificial focus of official Roman Eucharistic doctrine, with none of the East's eschatological qualification and emphasis on mystery in defining the nature of Christ's presence, also its autocephalous conception of the Church and greater emphasis on the local diocese than Rome allows, suggests real affinity with much Anglican belief and practice. If absence of belief in a sacrificing priesthood and the lack of any desire to convey the same in ordination, along with the absence of papal approval for the consecration of bishops, officially puts paid to the validity of Anglican orders as far as Rome is concerned (*Apostolicae Curiae*, 1896), then similar 'flaws' are evident in the Eastern Church as well. If apostolic succession is acknowledged by Rome in the Churches of the East, however, despite significant Eucharistic and ecclesial differences, and

notwithstanding an unresolved legacy of actual antipathy towards Rome and its claims among Eastern Christians, then all Anglicanism seems to lack is a valid succession to make it a real Church, despite its own particular differences on Eucharist and ecclesiology. Indeed, opinions are held within Anglicanism that are far closer to post-Vatican II Eucharistic theology and theology of ministry than one would find anywhere in the East.

So, if all that Anglicanism requires for Rome to deem it a Church, like the autocephalous Eastern Churches, is a valid succession, with which even Churches holding views wider of the Roman mark than many Anglicans hold remain valid Churches, then surely the claim of most current Anglican Churches to have received the valid succession through the Old Catholic line bear closer examination. If sundry villainous *episcopos vagantes* are deemed by Rome to be valid if irregular ministers, without sharing Roman doctrine or obedience, then surely Rome's rejection of Anglican orders warrants review.

The logic of my case also cuts in the direction of possible full communion with Rome on the part of Churches, provinces and dioceses of the so-called Traditional Anglican Communion. There Rome must surely be able to find bishops and clergy at one with them in doctrine (eg. regarding the Eucharistic sacrifice, and the repudiation of women's ordination), readiness to accept the Petrine primacy, and as much evidence of valid succession as is deemed adequate in other cases. Perhaps it is her diplomatic hopes regarding the Anglican Communion as a whole that prevents Rome from extending the offer of full communion to Anglicanism's own 'separated brethren'.

### **SO IN SUM MY CASE IS**

1. That some key 'ecclesial elements' seem currently lacking in Rome, so that many potential Anglican converts like me conclude that on balance we are no worse off remaining where we are—that the subsistence of the Church of Christ in the Roman obedience needs to be more comprehensively imagined and empirically displayed, apart from which Rome has yet to adequately establish the exclusive logic of its case for subsistence.
2. That if a robustly non-Tridentine view of mass and priesthood, a vigorously non-Vatican I view of papal authority and a considered non-Vatican II view of what constitutes the fullness of a local Church does not stop the Eastern Churches from being counted Churches in Rome's eyes, then might not Anglicanism—which has in recent decades experienced the 'leavening' of its ordinations through the Old Catholic line (apart from any other historical or doctrinal considerations)—have a comparable claim on Rome's spiritual and pastoral generosity?

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## APPENDIX 4

### DR HEATHER THOMSON

I concur with what has been said already by Andrew McGowan, Scott Cowdell and Peter Adam, and offer further comment on the theology of the church that is contained in the above document.

My concern is with the fundamental assumption of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF) that the Catholic Church was instituted by Christ, and from this flows the arguments that it is the one, true church (Response to the Second Question). There are several comments to be made in response to this:

1. Christ did not establish 'only one Church', but a diversity of churches of which the New Testament bears witness. The fact that there are four gospels and not one is a testimony to the diversity that existed in the early Christian era, each gospel writer tailoring its message to its own community's needs and hopes. Then there are the various churches to which Paul ministered. There never was a golden era of one, true church being instituted by Christ, and going out from him like the pure source of a river. Unity came from diversity through faithfulness to the apostolic ministry and mission, and from the ecumenical creeds and councils.
2. Structures of the church developed as needed, and should be assessed as to their ability to serve the church and to enable it to remain faithful to the gospel. It is theologically suspect to read back into the scriptures a particular church's present structure and to see this as 'instituted by Christ', along with concomitant claims for being the one, true church. The foundation for this claim is itself suspect, and then on that basis, other churches are regarded as 'defective'.
3. Apostolicity is narrowly defined in this document as the unbroken laying-on of hands, whereby authority is 'conferred' from the top down. As mentioned above, apostolicity is better conceived as faithfulness to the mission and ministry of the apostles, and this is not confined to ordained ministries. All Christians are called to be so faithful, the criteria for which needs to be considered and reconsidered in ever new times and places. A broader theology of apostolicity would allow for churches to be considered more or less true to the gospel, and no one church, as a whole, to be considered the one, true church.
4. The Catholic theologian, Francis Fiorenza, in *Foundational Theology* (1986) makes a sustained argument against the Catholic Church's assumption that its foundation rests on its historical institution by Christ. He sums up one section by saying: "The conviction within Roman Catholic fundamental theology that Jesus' institution of the Church can be historically demonstrated has perdured despite criticism of each of the supporting pillars of the argument." The issue is not merely historical arguments or scriptural exegesis, but the implications made on this foundation (of Jesus' institution) that allow the CDF to argue that other churches are wounded and defective, or as not actually churches, and to

see itself as the 'Mother' church from which her children have strayed (CDF Commentary on Q 5). Unity then is only conceived as returning to Mother, or to the One Shepherd (meaning the Pope rather than Christ, as it does not concede that Christ is truly represented in any other church).

So my main objection is to the foundational assumptions on which the CDF builds its ecclesiology. This leaves us with the need to articulate alternative theologies and ecclesiologies, and to make clear in the Anglican Church what we mean by unity, apostolicity and the relation of Jesus to the church. I have said what I object to in the CDF document, but the larger challenge of coming up with something better has to be tackled in a different forum.

## APPENDIX 5

### RT REV. DR GLENN DAVIES

I have appreciated reading the various comments of members of the Doctrine Commission on the IAS CER response. I am in broad agreement with the salient points which have been expressed and therefore do not wish to add to the burden of more words other than to make the following points:

1. The IAS CER response is not strong enough in objecting to the language of subsistence, namely, the claim that the Church of Christ subsists in the [Roman] Catholic Church. The language of subsistence is the consequence of confusing organisational structure (whether it be the Roman Catholic Church or the Anglican Communion) with the ekklesia of God. This is evident in their assumption of the primacy of the Bishop of Rome as opposed to the headship of Christ in defining a local congregation/church.
2. When Paul writes to the Corinthian saints, he describes them as “the church of God in Corinth” (1 Cor 1:1), yet at the same time he can speak of certain practices as true of “all the churches of the saints” (1 Cor 14:33). In 1 Thessalonians he describes his readers as “the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.” (1:1). The true church of God existed separately, though not unrelated, in different cities. Paul recognised that each local assembly of baptised persons who confess Christ as Lord are worthy of the description as God’s church (A similar point is made by Andrew McGowan and Heather Thompson).
3. I also concur with Peter Adam on his criticism on the definition of Anglicanism on page 22, which fails to reflect the robust language of the BCP and the 39 Articles, especially on the nature of the Holy Communion.

## APPENDIX 6

### REV. DR JOHN DUNNILL

I am grateful to Andrew, Peter, Scott, Heather and now Glenn for toiling in the heat of the day on this matter. I find myself closest to Heather's perspective while suitably instructed by all the rest.

I have only this to add.

By indicating that the teaching that 'the Church of Christ subsists in the Catholic Church' is to be understood as claiming 'the full identity of the Church of Christ with the Catholic Church', the slippery compromise term 'subsists in' is avoided, so the statement is at least clear. We have to wonder, of course, why the Council did not say 'is' if that is what it meant.

But problems of coherence remain. Insofar as Christ 'established here on earth' only one Church and instituted it as a "visible and spiritual community" it has always had a plurality of forms. St Peter was perhaps given some kind of primacy, but not a monopoly. The church's unity is therefore a spiritual, not an institutional unity and Andrew has commented on the tangle which this document seems to be falling into in trying to simplify and abridge the more nuanced Consiliar doctrine. The Response to the Second Question appears to hold that because the creed expresses belief in 'one ... catholic ... church', and because there is a body which calls itself 'the Catholic Church', the one must be referring to the other. This is not the case, in logic or in fact.

Perhaps this document, though somewhat unfortunate in some of its choices, may assist Anglicans in thinking more clearly about these matters, and a response from ARCIC or IASCEC is needed.