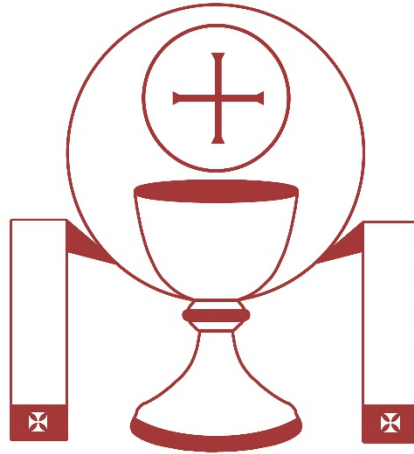


## Holy Orders

*λάβετε φάγετε· τούτο μού εστι το σώμα το υπέρ υμών κλώμενον*



By Albert J. Risdorfer

Candidate for the Order of Priest in The Catholic Apostolic Church in North America

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***Ad Maiorem Dei Gloriam***

This paper will explore the Roman Catholic understanding of Holy Orders especially in light of Pope Leo XIII's Papal Bull *Apostolicæ Curæ*, what other concepts in sacramental theology have to say about the nature of valid Orders and the implications of all of this for CACINA.

This is a very timely topic. Recently, on Sunday, June 2<sup>nd</sup> 2018, I gave my first homily as a new Deacon in CACINA. It so happens, that day fell on the *Solemnity of the Body and Blood of Christ*, and I made the statement that this feast is "...all about the priesthood, because as Christ planned it – No Priest – No Eucharist." Starting with the Apostles, even to the present day, Jesus empowered and charged his new priesthood to consecrate bread and wine in his memory so that His Paschal sacrifice would be reenacted on our altars for all time. Thus He is able to feed His lambs and feed His sheep: "For whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood will have eternal life and I will raise them up on the last day. For My flesh is real food, and My blood is real drink." (John 6:54-55)

I also said that these two sacraments – Holy Orders and The Eucharist - uniquely define us as Catholics because only us "Catholics" – Roman, Independent and Orthodox – continue the establishment of both. I said almost all of our other Christian brethren, who embraced the doctrines of the Reformation, have definitively disavowed the legitimacy of an ongoing sacrificial memorial and therefore the need for priesthood. They not only deny the doctrine of transubstantiation, but some, like Luther, consider it idolatry.

I did not call out the Anglican Communion for being on either side of the issue. The reason I did not is - well it's complicated.

### **High Church - Low Church**

One reason is that there does not seem to be a unified belief across the Anglican Communion about the nature of or the need for priests, the mass or the other sacraments. Anglicans speak of themselves as being "high Church" or "low Church" or "broad Church" each of which holds different theological views. With help from Webster's Dictionary:



*"Low Church tending especially in Anglican worship to minimize emphasis on the priesthood, sacraments, and the ceremonial in worship and often to emphasize evangelical principles." By contrast: "High Church tending especially in Anglican worship to stress the sacerdotal [priestly], liturgical, ceremonial, traditional, and Catholic elements in worship." While the Anglican tradition tended to gravitate to "high church" forms of worship, even within those traditions the influence of "low church" approaches are present. "Broad Church" indicates a middle ground. These parishes are the most common within The Episcopal Church (USA)."*

Anglicans are diverse as to their understanding of right worship, because they are diverse as to their understanding of the theology regarding the Eucharist and this influences their understanding on the mission and power of the priesthood.

- Most High Church and Broad Church Anglicans (Anglo-Catholics) believe in corporeal presence thru *transubstantiation*, where the substance of bread and wine are miraculously transformed into the body and blood of Christ. This is effected by a validly ordained priest, using proper sacramental matter, form and intent. This is what Roman, Independent Catholics and Orthodox also believe.
- Other Broad Church and some Low Church Anglicans believe in corporeal presence also effected by an ordained priest through *consubstantiation* where the substances and bread and wine co-exist with that of the body and blood of Christ or where the manner of the presence of Christ is simply a mystery of faith.
- Most Low Church Anglicans believe in a pneumatic presence where those who receive the physical sign of bread and wine in faith, receive also the spiritual body and blood of Christ. Those who receive the sign without faith, or for those who are wicked, Christ is not present spiritually, and they consume only the physical signs of this holy presence, which further adds to their wickedness. (Ref: Article XXIX of the *Articles of Religion* published in 1563 by Elizabeth I).

### The Theological Root Cause

In my research, I found the work by Fr. Brendan McCarthy, M.A., most helpful. Father Brendan recounts that although Martin Luther (1483-1546) originally intended to



reform the Catholic Church, by 1520 he had totally broken with the Church - and the Church with him. From there on, he and his followers wanted nothing to do with "the Romish Church." From this point onward Luther persistently, thoroughly and viciously attacked the Sacrifice of the Mass. And he was not alone. Virtually all Reformers were in agreement on this. 'What I am attacking,' declared Luther in 1520, 'is something

deep-rooted and seemingly impossible to eradicate, since it has been established by the practice of so many centuries and approved by the consent of all men. We shall have to cast out the greater part of the books now in honor, and to change almost the whole face of the Church."

Other "reformers" such as Zwingli in Switzerland went further. In 1523 he declared the Lord's Supper to be a memorial only, and not a sacrifice, which he now called a "blasphemy." John Calvin (1509-1564) matched both Luther and Zwingli in the vehemence of his language. "This horrible abomination," he wrote in the *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, "took its origin ... when Satan blinded almost the whole world with the pestilential error of believing that the Mass is a sacrifice and oblation for obtaining the remission of sins".

### The Anglican Edwardine Ordinal

As the influence of the Reformation penetrated into the thinking of the post-Henry VIII, Church of England, it also began to diminish its view of priesthood and the sacrifice of

the Mass. Consequently, in 1550, then Archbishop Thomas Crammer and his associates, published a new “Ordinal” for ordination, that became known as the Edwardine Ordinal (after Henry’s son, Edward VI), although they kept the sacrament’s matter by imposing hands, they significantly altered the form and intent of ordination. This new rite of ordination was essentially a commissioning service to preach the Word of God. The idea behind it was that preaching the Word of God is more in keeping with the Reformers *sola scriptura* view of the basis for faith, than the Sacrificial Mass of the Roman Missal.

Although there was a revision made to the Ordinal in 1552 the authors did not change the fundamental Reformation bent of the 1550 Ordinal. The phraseology added in 1552, was only a slight further delineation of the powers that were to be conferred:

*“Receive the Holy Ghost, whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them ... and be a faithful dispenser of the Word of God and of His Holy Sacraments.”*

During the attempted restoration of Catholicism under the brief reign of Mary Queen of Scots (1553-1558), the papal legate Reginald Pole, who was assigned by Rome to decide what was to be done with those ordained under the Edwardine Ordinal, concluded that the form used in this Ordinal was not capable of validly ordaining priests since the reason for its introduction in the first place was to exclude what Catholics understand to be the essence of the priesthood, namely the mandate to celebrate of the Sacrifice of the Mass. Instead the Anglicans reformers intended to ordain gospel ministers – preachers if you will - like the other Reformers, and confessors but apparently – again like the other Reformers - not sacrificial priests as they had previously done before the split with Rome. If you no longer believe in need for sacramental sacrifice, you have no need for sacerdotal priests. So, the Roman Church at the time concluded that the form of the Anglican ordination rite was flawed because it was aligned with the flawed underlying intent.

### **The Oxford/Anglo-Catholic Movement**

The evolution of the religious trends within England is long and involved. By the mid-nineteenth century for example, England saw the birth of the "Second Spring" and “Oxford Movement” among High-Anglicans. These movements rekindled interest in defining theological and ecclesiological 'legitimacy' including the eventual reunion of Canterbury and Rome. The conversion of high-profile leaders such as John Henry Newman, Henry Edward Manning and others to Catholicism added to the momentum, as did the emancipation of Catholics across the entire kingdom and the re-establishment of the Catholic hierarchy in England in 1850. These “Anglo-Catholics” as they became known, sought to give the Eucharist a more prominent place in both theology and worship and in so doing, uphold belief in the real presence of Christ in the sacrament through transubstantiation. They also began to seek clarity as to the validity of Anglican orders since as I said earlier- no priest – no Eucharist.

## **Apostolicæ Curæ**

In response to such calls for clarity, Leo XIII formed a commission to look into the possibilities. This commission split in its recommendation, but the Pope decided with the more conservative view. He noted the findings of Cardinal Pole who had recommended that, based on his understanding of the form and intent in the Edwardine Ordinal, that any priest ordained under it, needed to be re-ordained since, in his opinion, the Anglican ordination was invalid. Leo also noted that although they did not categorically state that all Anglican orders were invalid, the Popes Julius III and Paul IV agreed with Pole on the need for re-ordination.



Pope Leo's claim regarding Anglican Orders, was although the material succession through the imposition of hands seems to have remained in tact, Anglican form and more fundamentally, Anglican intention, were deficient and therefore the Anglican Rites could not validly confer the sacrament of Holy Orders. The Pope stated "...a new rite for conferring Holy Orders was publicly introduced under Edward VI, the true Sacrament of Order as instituted by Christ lapsed, and with it the hierarchical succession..." (AC3)

*Apostolicæ Curæ* presents a theological defense of this tradition of Vatican rejection of the validity of Anglican orders. It is based on the argument that the Church of England ordinal was defective in 'intention' and 'form'. By

'defect of intention' Leo XIII meant that by the omission of any reference to the Eucharist as a sacrifice and to a sacrificing priesthood in the ordination ritual of the 1552 Book of Common Prayer, the Church of England intended to introduce a radically new rite into England, one markedly different from those approved by the Roman Catholic Church. By 'defect of form' Leo XIII meant that the words of the Anglican ordination prayer, 'Receive the Holy Ghost', did not signify definitively the order of the Catholic priesthood with its power to consecrate and offer the body and blood of Christ in the Eucharistic sacrifice.

For Leo XIII, and I would argue for us as well, historical proof of a continuation of sacramental validity with the Church of England was not the central question between Anglicanism and Catholicism. History is not the question. Theology is the question. For there to be sacramental validity within the Church of England from the perspective of Rome, Anglicans and Roman Catholics must be in one institutional community of faith, which implies agreements about the theology of sacraments – including the Real Presence and the nature of priesthood. As of today however, some Anglicans remain reluctant to move toward belief in the Eucharist celebration as a sacrifice.

## **Is Unity Possible**

The zeal for Roman and Anglican unity remained strong even within the papacy of Leo XIII. For example, in the Malines Conversations in March 1897 the Archbishops of Canterbury and York replied to *Apostolicæ Curæ* in the encyclical letter *Sæpius Officio*. Here the Anglican archbishops argued that the Anglican Church makes it clear that it intends to confer the office of priesthood instituted by Christ and all that it contains, and contended that the Church of England teaches the doctrine of the Eucharistic sacrifice in terms at least as explicit as those of the canon of the Roman Mass.

In addition, the Lambeth Conferences of 1908, 1920, 1930, 1968, and 1988 continued to stress that the Anglican Communion always did intend to establish a sacerdotal priesthood and that if the Pope had read deeper and further into the Edwardine Ordinal he would have seen that. Others have pointed out that other early Christian Ordinals, for example, the Eastern Rite of St. Serapion, the Gregorian and the Gelasian Sacramentaries, as well as the Spanish Mozarabic rite, in their matter and form are very close to that of the English Reformation Ordinal. Several Anglican bishops have pointed out that the words and acts required by the pope in 1896 are not found in the earliest Roman ordinals, so that if their omission renders an ordination invalid, the orders of the Church of Rome are on no surer footing than those of the Church of England.

On the Roman Catholic side, the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) was the most important event that signaled, what in 1985 Jan Cardinal Willebrands, recognized as 'a new context.' This is due to new discussions of Anglican orders within the two Communions regarding the nature of the Eucharist and ordained ministry. That said there are also new complications such as the ordination of women and openly practicing gay people to the priesthood and episcopate within the Anglican Communion, the ordination of Bishop Robinson of the Episcopal Church in 2003 being a case in point. Nonetheless, gestures by Paul VI, John Paul II, Benedict XVI and Francis I, and their Anglican counterparts continue to give credence to the mutual desire that the dialogue remain open. Pope Francis for example, has called for Christian denominations to act as if they are already united and leave the theological disagreements to be resolved later. As Cardinal Francesco Coccopalmerio, former President of the Pontifical Council for Legislative Texts and one of the Vatican's top legal minds said, "What does it mean when Pope Paul VI gave a chalice to the Archbishop of Canterbury? If it was to celebrate the Lord's Supper, the Eucharist, it was meant to be done validly, no?"

Ultimately, perhaps this is a simply a matter of the "power of the keys": what one Pope has bound in heaven another will loose. In God's time, someday we pray that all will again be ONE... just as the Lord is one with the Father...perhaps for CACINA too.

## **Implications for CACINA**

I am well aware that I am at the 5-page limit, but after several attempts, I can't seem to delve into the implications for CACINA without considerably adding to volume. So if you will permit me another page, I suggest that here I merely and briefly describe my view of

a few of the implications for CACINA and would ask for an in-person discussion to develop these thoughts further.

As I began, for me, this entire discussion centers on our understanding of the priesthood. For me, it is clear both in the lessons of Christ himself and in how the early Church as described in Acts and the Epistles, that priests are meant to be pastors, shepherds, and servants but with leadership, kerygmatic, didactic, sacramental and benedictory duties and powers. Hence I see several discussion points arising for our “Catholic, Apostolic Church” that I’d love to discuss further:

1. **Catholic Charism:** We claim to be a “Catholic” Church. In fact it is the “Catholic” charism that attracts many to CACINA. If we are “Catholic” then we are a Sacramental and Eucharistic Church... and therefore a priestly church. We are not adherents of the priest-voided Reformation movement where ministers are merely “presiders” of a prayer service. Although CACINA’s Canons 7 and 11 respectively describe the conduct of liturgy and sacraments, and duties of our priests, they are heavy on regulatory parameters. I would like to see CACINA develop a clear theology of priesthood and the sacraments they bring and expound further on their spiritual importance and value for the faithful.
2. **Anti-clericalism:** I see and hear a pervasive and persistent anti-clericalism in CACINA even among other clergy. This at times feels more like a Reformation mind-set than a Catholic one. I am well aware that many of us came to CACINA because of painful experiences inflicted by Catholic priests. As gay men, Tony and I have had many such experiences. Clearly we must be empathetic to this reality but to despise the priesthood itself seems an extreme response. How do we emphasize the value and proper charter of our priestly orders, while requiring that our clergy be gentle in carrying out their functions? I would like to see overt efforts to tap this down and emphasize instead the beauty the CACINA sees in its clergy.
3. **Form, Matter and Intent:** If we are a Sacramental and Eucharistic Church, how do we ensure our priest and bishops are trained to rigorously adhere to the proper matter, form and intent – and I’d add choreography - in the administration of sacraments – especially Orders and the Eucharist.

## **Conclusion**

We seem to be fascinated by the innovation being played out by Nativity Parish in Timonium Maryland as described in the book *Rebuilt*. Mother Martha’s well-executed summary at the GA is an example of our fascination. My reading of that book is that they addressed many of these same issues and I’d welcome a continued robust and frank conversation in order to build CACINA and thereby better fulfill Christ’s mission to “make disciples of all peoples.”