

# What is happening in the Church?

*This column strives to keep the reader up to date with some of the more important statements, events, challenges that confront the Church in Canada, Rome and the world. Keeping in mind the fact that the Church militant does not just consist in the works of Tradition, but in all those who keep the true Faith, even if they do not love and defend it as they ought, it hopes to keep Catholics aware of good and positive developments, as well as the betrayals of modernism, in order to understand the situation of the Church in all the complexity of its reality.*

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## Anglicans to be received into the Church

The November 4 Apostolic Constitution of Pope Benedict XVI opened up a new path for Anglicans "to be received into full Catholic communion individually as well as corporately" (*Anglicanorum coetibus*). It is a revolutionary new approach to the problem of "separated brethren", and one which some have called the Church's boldest move since the 'Reformation'. The novelty here is that Anglicans are being treated in the same way as the schismatic Eastern Orthodox when they return to the true Church. They will be allowed to retain their Anglican identity at the same time as becoming Catholic. They will be canonically and liturgically distinct from the rest of the Catholic Church, and will consequently be allowed their own parishes, bishops, married priests, liturgical and spiritual customs. This is normal for the Eastern rite Christians who return from schism to the bosom of the Church, for their liturgy, spirituality and traditions are ancient, just as those of the Latin rite. Moreover, they are essentially schismatics, not heretics, the few heresies being of recent origin and easy to correct (such as the denial of Purgatory, the Immaculate Conception or Papal Infallibility). Is this a just and correct analogy? A careful examination shows a multitude of differences:

1) There is first of all the motivation. The majority of those who request to enter into the Catholic Church have already separated themselves from the Anglican "Communion", such as it is.

They have done so not so much because of their rejection of Anglicanism itself, but because of the new orientation of the Anglican church since 1991, that has opened the priesthood and episcopate to women and active homosexuals, and blessed same sex unions, all of which are manifestly opposed to the Bible, foundation principle of Protestantism.

2) The second major difference is that Anglicanism has invalid orders and consequently no other sacraments than baptism and matrimony, unlike the Orthodox who have all seven valid sacraments.

3) A third difference is that Anglicanism is from its very origin entirely heretical and Protestant. From the time of Thomas Cranmer down, all the Anglican divines embrace the theories of Luther and the other Protestant reformers. Anglicanism truly is a form of Protestantism, which is why intercommunion with all Protestant sects has always been accepted. If it is true that the Oxford movement in the mid 19th century, brought a return towards a more traditional form of spirituality, worship and piety, this was not a rekindling of interest in Catholic aspects of Anglicanism, for these never existed. It was a discovery of some of the treasures of the Catholic Church. However, these High Church Anglicans, as they became called, did not follow Cardinal Newman's conversion of 1845, but chose to

stay Anglican. High Church Anglicans then did not have the courage to convert to the true Church, just as now.

4) A fourth difference and consequence of the fact that Anglicanism is a Protestant sect, is that it has no doctrinal authority or unity. There are as many different brands of Anglicanism as there are Anglicans. It is this broad latitude that they like, so that each one can choose his religious practice for himself.

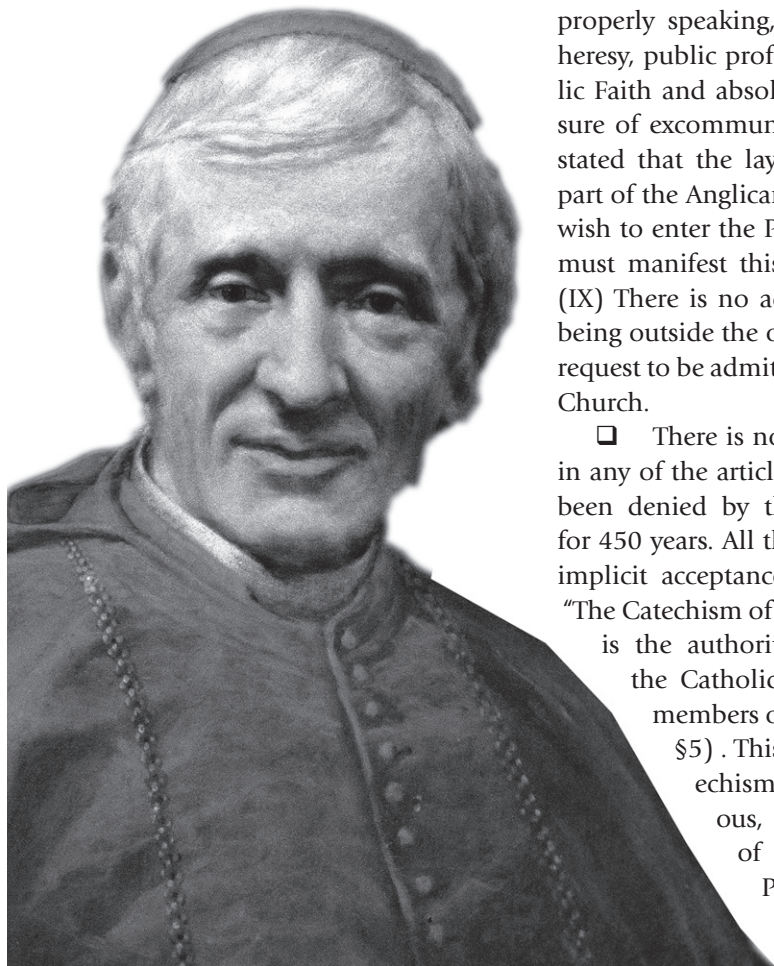
5) A fifth difference is that Anglicanism does not have the spiritual and monastic Tradition of the Eastern rites. It was the founder of Anglicanism, the King of England Henry VIII, who was responsible for the destruction of 1,000 monasteries in England. If in the past century some little effort has been made to form some religious communities, it is only by the rubbing off of some Catholic spirituality, not because it is an Anglican tradition.

6) A sixth difference is that there is in Anglicanism no liturgical uniformity. The entirely Protestant prayer books of 1549 and 1661 pretended to give such uniformity, but they have been supplanted in recent years, and the High Church Anglicans have in large part rejected or adapted them, following a variety of combinations between the new Anglican liturgy, and certain borrowed uses such as resurrecting the old Sarum rite in use in England before the "Refor-

mation", or the Tridentine rite in English, or the New Mass. There is no such thing as an Anglican liturgical Tradition, if it not be the 1661 prayer book.

Why, then, would the Pope be so determined to treat them in the same way as the Eastern Orthodox? He gives the explanation very clearly in this very Apostolic Constitution; namely the new definition of the Church of Christ given by Vatican II. It is said to "subsist in" the Catholic Church, rather than to be identical to it. It is for this reason that divisions among the baptized are to be considered as divisions within the Church, and are considered to harm the mark of unity that characterizes the true Church. Hence it is that Benedict XVI states in *Anglicanorum coetibus* that "every di-

**Venerable John Henry Newman, (21 February 1801 – 11 August 1890) was a Roman Catholic priest and cardinal, a convert from Anglicanism in October 1845.**



vision among the baptized in Jesus Christ wounds that which the Church is and that for which the Church exists". Hence it is that unity amongst the baptized is an absolute to be sought after at any cost, so much so that it is now "unity in diversity" that is the goal to be sought after. Traditional Catholic teaching makes the Faith, worship and sacraments the absolute, that determine the unity of the true and Catholic Church, as can be seen from the definition of the Church in the catechism. The separation of heretics and schismatics, as deplorable and sad as it might be, in no way harms Catholic Faith, worship, sacraments and hierarchical authority, because the Church of Christ is identical to the Roman and Catholic Church.

The consequences of this urgent need for a false unity with little real foundation cannot be acceptable to the Catholic mind. Hence are some of them:

□ There is to be no conversion properly speaking, with abjuration of heresy, public profession of the Catholic Faith and absolution from the censure of excommunication. It is simply stated that the lay faithful "originally part of the Anglican Communion, who wish to enter the Personal Ordinariate, must manifest this desire in writing." (IX) There is no admission of fault in being outside the one true Church, nor request to be admitted into the one true Church.

□ There is no profession of Faith in any of the articles of Faith that have been denied by the Anglican church for 450 years. All that is required is the implicit acceptance of this statement: "The Catechism of the Catholic Church is the authoritative expression of the Catholic Faith professed by members of the Ordinariate" (I, §5). This 1992 Vatican II catechism is quite ambiguous, especially on points of doctrine in which Protestants disagree with the Catholic Church, and the

implicit acceptance of this statement is something quite different than the oath condemning all the Protestant heresies found in the Tridentine Profession of Faith of Pius IV.

□ Anglicans are allowed to retain their Anglican liturgical books and prayers, their Anglican spirituality and pastoral customs: "The Ordinariate has the faculty to celebrate the Holy Eucharist and the other Sacraments, the Liturgy of the Hours and other liturgical celebrations according to the liturgical books proper to the Anglican tradition, which have been approved by the Holy See, so as to maintain the liturgical, spiritual and pastoral traditions of the Anglican Communion within the Catholic Church" (III). The small proviso of approval by the Holy See does not take away from the profoundly novel character of this provision that considers anti-Catholic Protestantism and liturgy to be a tradition that is to be maintained within the Catholic Church. The document goes on to state that all of this is a "precious gift" and "a treasure to be shared". What an insult to Catholics such as St. Thomas More, St. John Fisher and St. Edmund Campion who gave their lives rather than become Anglicans, and to true converts such as Cardinal Newman, who willingly, but necessarily, abandoned the invalid, heretical Protestant Anglican ceremonies to become true Catholics.

□ Married priests are to continue to be a way of life in this Ordinariate, as in the Anglican Church. Married ministers who enter the Ordinariate can be ordained, and future priests who are already married can be ordained. This is a very effective way of undermining the treasure of clerical celibacy, one of the great outward signs of the Church's holiness. If married Anglican 'bishops' cannot be accepted, such men can become priests with jurisdiction of an Ordinary all the same (Cf. Note published by the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith on October 20), thus getting around the "problem" of clerical celibacy that these Anglicans are not will-

ing to embrace. The tragedy of all this is that these Anglicans will be considered as Catholics and as Anglicans at the same time, thus blurring greatly the distinction between truth and error, Faith and infidelity, submission and independence. Cardinal Levada himself admits this, when he describes the tenuous and vague basis of this unity: "They have declared that they share

the common Catholic Faith as it is expressed in the catechism of the Catholic Church and accept the Petrine ministry as something Christ willed for the Church. (What does that mean? Papal infallibility? Real power of government, or just a place of honor?) For them, the time has come to express this implicit unity in the visible form of full communion." (Ib. in zenit.org). If we must

certainly fear that this acceptance confuse Catholics and only confirm these Anglicans even more in their false principles and traditions, we must nevertheless pray that they eventually truly convert to the full and entire practice of the Catholic Faith, outside of which there is no salvation.

## European Court of Human Rights forbids crucifixes

Catholics throughout Italy and Europe were shocked by the November 3 decision of this institution of the European Union, forbidding the display of crucifixes in public schools, as a violation of religious freedom. It is of course the ultimate conclusion of a secularism that entirely separates religion from public life, and excludes the public profession of our Faith in the divinity of our Crucified Savior. The Italian government has appealed the ruling on the grounds that in Italy the crucifix is a "national symbol of culture and history".

Cardinal Bertone, Secretary of State of the Vatican also objected to this ruling, pointing out the anomaly that symbols of Halloween are tolerated, whereas those of Faith are not: "This Europe of the third millennium only leaves us the pumpkins of the feasts repeatedly celebrated and takes away from us our most cherished symbols". Explaining the crucifix as a "symbol of universal love, not of exclusion, but of acceptance", he then wondered "if this decision is or is not a reasonable sign". (Zenit.com November 3 & 5). It is more of a wonder that the Cardinal cannot see and declare more clearly that this decision is a war on God, a direct and frontal attack on the right of Christ Crucified to rule over society, and of the right of Catholics to public profess their Faith by such a sign. The Holy See's permanent observer to the Council of Europe, Monsignor Aldo Giordano, had an interesting explanation of the ide-

ology behind this decision, referring it back to a particular kind of secularism or laicism that characterizes the workings of the court. It uses "a concept of laicism in an exclusivist sense: that is, a laicism that tends to exclude, hence a laicism that creates an empty space." (Ib.) He is indeed right: all laicism excludes God from society, and denies his rights and teaching and legislative authority. It certainly creates a huge empty space in human life. However, he is wrong in affirming that there is another kind of laicism that "creates space for all positive contributions, for the social, for man, to address the great problems of humanity", as if there were no contradiction in allowing equally all religions and philosophies, true as well as

false, to publicly present their solutions for the problems of mankind. At least the court has understood that if laicism is not exclusive of preference for all religion, it is going to have to approve and live a contradiction, the contradiction of religious liberty. Laicism that is inclusive of religious signs and practices is certainly not so perverse as the radical laicism of the European court, but this radical laicism is really not more than the logical conclusion of the separation of religion from public life, thus making society incapable of professing any Faith. The answer is consequently not that of an inclusive laicism, but rather it is no laicism at all, but instead the public profession of the one true Faith in Christ the King.



## Communion on the tongue forbidden in Calgary

Bishop Fred Henry of Calgary has publicly refused the ruling of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith on the question of the traditional manner of receiving Holy Communion on the tongue. In effect, the Congregation ruled on July 24 of this year that it is not licit to deny reception of Holy Communion on the tongue, despite the current threat of the AH1N1 influenza virus. The good



bishop of Calgary, however, does not feel himself bound to respect the decisions of this highest office in the Roman Curia that shares the Popes authority on doctrinal questions.

It was on November 25, 2009 that Bishop Henry wrote a letter to "Fr. Blust and My Brothers and Sisters of the Latin Mass Community of St. Anthony's" in Calgary. After reminding the priests of the Fraternity of St. Peter and their faithful that he is the chief liturgist in the diocese, he ordered the temporary suspension of Communion on the tongue. His argument is that it is not a doctrine of Faith, or an absolute, and of course this statement is a correct one, but used in a sophistic manner. What he omits to say is that in our present times the reception of Holy Communion on the tongue is a necessary expression of the Catholic doctrine of the Real Presence, undermined and destroyed by the disrespect that almost invariably accompanies Communion in the Hand. He likewise omits to

say that this is the only way of protecting the particles of the Host, in which Christ is truly present, and is for this reason also a necessary expression of Faith in the Real Presence. He omits to say likewise that this is the most ancient Tradition and expression of reverence and adoration towards Christ Our God, and that it is not a privilege, but a necessary and inviolable part of the sacred Roman liturgy, over which no local bishop has any power. All that his argument proves is that Communion may have been administered in the hand in the early centuries of the Church, and that this is not a denial of the Faith.

Of course, his real reason for forbidding Communion on the tongue is not at all any real or imagined danger of spreading a virus. It is his dislike for the personal prayer and adoration that characterizes Communion on the tongue, so different from the community centered approach of a meal that everybody shares, that is characteristic of the *Novus Ordo*. This is his reasoning: "This is a difficulty for some, but we must remember that a Catholic spirituality is not an in-

dividual affair but communitarian from the get-go. For the love of our brothers and sisters we have mandated the sacrificing of a person preference in the manner of Eucharistic reception for a temporary period."

The priests of the Fraternity of St. Peter decided, rightly of course, to refuse to comply with his order. Clearly, they do not accept him as the "chief liturgist in the local Church", as he calls himself, and rightly so. The consequence was quite simply that they were suspended from functioning in the diocese, as was their Latin Mass community. The consequences of their compromise in placing themselves under the authority of a modernist bishop are only too evident. Particularly enlightening was the response of the Bishop, when presented with the clear and obvious contradiction between his decision and that of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. It is very short, but quite to the point: "I am well aware of what the Congregation decided but, quite frankly, it is not their call. It is mine." Who are the schismatics in the Church?

### Doctrinal discussions with the Society begin

In a communiqué issued on October 26, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith confirmed the conclusion that day of the first meeting with representatives of the Society of Saint Pius X to examine "the doctrinal differences still outstanding between the Society and the Apostolic See". It stated that the main doctrinal questions to be examined will "concern the concept of Tradition, the Missal of Paul VI, the interpretation of the unity of the Church and the Catholic principles of ecumenism, the relationship between Christianity and non-Christian religions, and religious freedom."

It is not expected to hear of any results of these discussions any time soon. They will continue at least once every three months. The great progress is that finally traditional theologians have the opportunity of presenting the Catholic and traditional viewpoint on all these modernist errors, as Archbishop Lefebvre originally requested in 1985. It is an implicit admission that traditional theology is not condemned by the Church, regardless of statements to the contrary by modernist theologians, such as Cardinal Schonborn of Vienna: "The SSPX will be told very clearly what is not negotiable for the Holy See. This includes such fundamental conclusions of the Second Vatican Council as its positions on Judaism, other non-Christian religions, other Christian churches and on religious freedom as a basic human right". Such seems not to be the attitude of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.