

to the earth in glory (*Jn 1:1-14; Mt 1:18-25; Heb 4:14-16; 1 Cor 15:3-4; Jn 14:1-4*).

Salvation is a free gift, merited by Christ, bestowed by God's grace in the sacrament of holy Baptism, and received by faith animated with love (*Eph 2:4-10; Titus 3:4-8; Jas 2:14-26*). Holy Baptism gives us a share in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ by incorporating us into his mystical Body (*Rom 6:1-4*).

The Catholic Church is the bride of Christ (*Eph 5:25-33*) and the mystical Body of Christ (*1 Cor 12:12-31*). The local Church, in a territory called a "diocese," is governed by godly men called bishops, assisted by the priests and deacons (*Titus 1:5ff*).

In her sacramental worship, the Church offers herself in union with the perfect offering of Christ through the holy Sacrifice of the Altar, and in the Eucharist, receives divine life in the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ under the forms of bread and wine (*Rom 12:1; 1 Cor 11:26-29; Jn 6:51-58*).

The purpose of the Church on earth is to glorify God by our worship, by our service, by loving our neighbors, and by fulfilling the last command of Jesus to make disciples (*Mt 28:18-20*) until he returns to earth in glory.

### What binds Anglicans together?

With the spread of the British colonies, Anglicanism evolved into a world-wide communion of churches. We are joined by a common heritage and a faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. In addition, the *Book of Common Prayer* in its various editions is used for worship.

Among other "instruments of unity" are the Archbishop of Canterbury (the spiritual head of the college of bishops) and his Lambeth Conference of Anglican bishops every ten years. The primates of the communion (chief provincial bishops) meet on a more frequent basis. And ministries

around the globe are coordinated through the Anglican Consultative Council and the Global Anglican Future Conference (GAFCON).

### What can I expect?

If you have ever worshiped in a Lutheran or a Roman Catholic parish, a Sunday morning in an Anglican church will look very familiar. Our main service of worship on Sundays is the Holy Eucharist, also called the Holy Communion, the Lord's Supper, the Liturgy, or the Mass.

The words in our worship services are written in the *Book of Common Prayer*. It is our guide for liturgical worship. Liturgy comes from a Greek word meaning "a work for the people," so you can expect to be involved in the worship service.

When you visit our parish you will be respected as our guest. As you enter the church, you will notice an atmosphere of quiet and reverence. Many people kneel for a few moments of silent prayer to prepare their hearts for worship.

Generally, we stand to sing, sit to listen, and kneel to pray. Many people make the sign of the cross during the liturgy. Do not feel pressured to do anything you are not comfortable with. The first part of the service is centered around reading and preaching the Word of God. The second part is centered around the Altar.

Visitors who are baptized Christians, who repent of their sins and have faith in the Real Presence of Christ in the Sacrament and who receive it in their own church may receive Holy Communion with us. Anyone is welcome to come forward to receive a blessing (you may cross your arms over your chest to indicate a blessing).

We hope you are blessed by worshipping with us. For more information about Anglicanism or to join, we invite you to speak to our priest.

*A newcomer's guide to . . .*

# The Anglican Church



*By Fr. Timothy Matkin, SSC*

**“We profess the holy Catholic and Apostolic Faith professed by the whole Church before the disunion of East and West; more particularly, as professed by the Church of England . . .” —Thomas Ken, Bishop of Bath and Wells, England (d. 1711)**

## What is Anglicanism?

Anglicans are Christians who belong to the Church of England or its daughter churches throughout the world that maintain a fellowship in what is called the Anglican Communion. Christianity came to Britain in the first or second century, probably brought there by merchants. Legend says that the gospel was brought there by St. Joseph of Arimathea. When Pope St. Gregory the Great sent a monk named Augustine to England in 597 to establish a Roman mission at Canterbury, he found there was already a British church with its own bishops and customs.

The two church traditions existed side-by-side until the Synod of Whitby, presided over by the abbess Hilda in 663. For the sake of Christian unity, it was decided that Roman customs would be followed in England and that the realm would come under the jurisdiction of the pope. That relationship continued in England through most of Anglican church history.

As church structure was increasingly centralized in Rome around the turn of the first millennium, some argued that the pope had no formal authority in England. In 1208, a confrontation arose between King John and Pope Innocent III over rights in the church which led to England being placed under interdict and King John being excommunicated for five years.

Good relations were interrupted again in the 1530s, when King Henry VIII, desiring to obtain an annulment of his marriage, renounced the jurisdiction of the pope or any other foreign bishop in the English realm. Communion was restored briefly in 1553. Unfortunately, relations were severed again in 1570 with the excommunication of Queen Elizabeth I by Pope Pius V. The Church of England became an independent body at that

point and would continue to follow its own laws and customs thereafter.

The Anglican church in the American colonies became a separate ecclesial body along with the birth of the United States. Anglicans used the name “Episcopalian” almost exclusively after the Revolutionary War. However, they noted that this new Episcopal Church “is far from intending to depart from the Church of England in any essential point of doctrine, discipline, or worship; or further than local circumstances allow” (*The Book of Common Prayer*, p. 11).

The word “episcopal” comes from the Greek word *episcopo* (“overseer”) that the New Testament uses for the office of a bishop who oversees a local church. The word “church” comes from the Greek word *ekklesia* (“assembly”) that the New Testament uses for God’s people gathered into an assembled congregation. So the term “episcopal church” means a church overseen by bishops, according to the New Testament model.

“Episcopal” was first used to distinguish Anglicans in Scotland from those in the established (Presbyterian) Church of Scotland—governed by *presbyters* (“elders”). There are seven provinces of the Anglican Communion in which Anglicans are commonly referred to as “Episcopalians.”

## Are you Catholic or Protestant?

One of the blessings we have through historical accident is the way our church has embraced the best features of both Catholicism and Protestantism. The goal of the Church of England was to maintain continuity with its past, but also to be a truly *reformed* Catholic Church.

Some of the things we gained from our Reformation heritage are: common worship in the vernacular (the language of the people), the primacy of Scripture, an emphasis on personal Bible study and evangelism, a stress

on salvation by God’s grace, and the discipline of a married clergy.

Some of the things we retained from our Catholic heritage are: apostolic orders of ministry (bishops, priests, and deacons), the monastic life (monks and nuns), ancient liturgical forms in our worship, the seven biblical sacraments of the Church, and a reverence for sacred Tradition and the early Church Fathers.

## What do Anglicans believe?

As disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ, Anglicans share with other Christians the historic biblical faith of the undivided Church of the first millennium. We believe the doctrines taught in the Bible. You will also find our statements of belief in the Creeds, the writings of the early Church Fathers, the Ecumenical Councils of the Church, the Catechism of the *Book of Common Prayer*, the Thirty-Nine Articles, and in the language of our prayers.

In short, we believe in one true God, eternally existing in a Trinity of Persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit (*Is 44:6; Jn 1:1,14; 15:26*). As members of the Universal (or “catholic”) Church established by our Lord Jesus Christ, Anglicans accept the apostolic Tradition (both oral and written in holy Scripture) to be authoritative in disclosing the fullness of God’s revelation in Jesus Christ (*2 Thes 2:15; 2 Tim 3:16-17*) which is expressed in the Creeds.

Since the disobedience of our first parents, human beings have been sinners from birth (*Ps 51:5; Rom 5:12; Eph 2:1-3*). This wounding of humanity is what we call original sin. Jesus Christ is the only Son of God—fully human and fully divine—who was born of a pure and holy Virgin, died on the cross for the sins of mankind, rose from the dead on the third day, and will return