

A Pastoral Exhortation to the Faithful in the Anglican Communion

1. We, under-shepherds of the one, holy, catholic and apostolic church of Jesus Christ, bring greetings to the faithful in the Anglican Communion. Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. For in his great love for us, we are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God's people and members of God's household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit (Ephesians 2: 19-22).

2. The Vatican announcement on Apostolic Constitution ([*Note of The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith about Personal Ordinariates for Anglicans entering the Catholic Church*](#)) gives us an occasion in making the following pastoral exhortation.

3. We welcome Pope Benedict XVI's stance on the common biblical teaching on human sexuality, and the commitment to continuing ecumenical dialogue.

4. At the same time we believe that the proposed Anglican Covenant sets the necessary parameters in safeguarding the catholic and apostolic faith and order of the Communion. It gives Anglican churches worldwide a clear and principled way forward in pursuing God's divine purposes together in the one, holy, catholic and apostolic church of Jesus Christ. We urge churches in the Communion to actively work together towards a speedy adoption of the Covenant.

5. In God's gracious purposes the Anglican Communion has moved beyond the historical beginnings and expressions of English Christianity into a worldwide Communion, of which the Church of England is a constitutive part. In view of the global nature of the Communion, matters of faith and order would inevitably have serious ramifications for the continuing well-being and coherence of the Communion as a whole, and not only for Provinces of the British Isles and The Episcopal Church in the USA. We urge the Archbishop of Canterbury to work in close collegial consultation with fellow Primates in the Communion, act decisively on already agreed measures in the Primates' Meetings, and exercise effective leadership in nourishing the flock under our charge, so that none would be left wandering and bereft of spiritual oversight.

6. As Primates of the Communion and guardians of the catholic and apostolic faith and order, we stand in communion with our fellow bishops, clergy and laity who are steadfast in the biblical teaching against the ordination of openly homosexual clergy, the consecration of such to the episcopate, and the blessing of homosexual partnerships. We also urge them, as fellow Anglicans, to continue to stand firm with us in cherishing the Anglican heritage, in pursuing a common vocation, in expressing our unity and common life, and in maintaining our covenanted life together.

7. In the closing words of the Anglican Covenant: With joy and with firm resolve, we offer ourselves for fruitful service and binding ourselves more closely in the truth and love of Christ, to whom with the Father and the Holy Spirit be glory for ever. Amen.

"Now may the God of Peace, who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, make you complete in everything good so that you may do his will, working among us that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen." (Hebrews 13.20, 21)

25th October 2009

By the Global South Primates Steering Committee

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