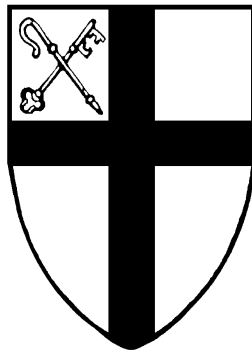


CONSTITUTION  
OF THE  
ANGLICAN CATHOLIC CHURCH



2001 †

(WITH THE AFFIRMATION OF ST. LOUIS)

† As amended through the XIV<sup>th</sup> Synod of the Original Province (Denver, 2001), and editorially reviewed by the Committee on The Constitution and Canons, 21-22 June 2002.

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# CONSTITUTION OF THE ANGLICAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

## THE SOLEMN DECLARATION

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

We, the Bishops of the continuing Anglican Catholic Church,<sup>1</sup> together with the clerical and lay Delegates from the Diocesan Synods, answering the call of the Affirmation of St. Louis, now assembled in our First Synod, and intending, with God's blessing and under His guidance, to consider and determine upon such matters as shall appear necessary for the re-ordering of such godly discipline as will strengthen us, and by which we may be soundly unified and governed, and to preserve the common heritage of the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, received by us through the Church of England, whose sons and daughters we are, and for the welfare of the Church in these lands, desire to express our most humble and hearty thanks to Almighty God, that it has pleased Him in His Providence so to unite us into one Church, and thus enable us, as in the ancient days, to assemble as one body, under the direction of His Holy Spirit, Whose aid we now invoke, and in the Name of His only-begotten Son, for the consolidation and advancement of His Kingdom.

Before entering on the business for which we are at present assembled, we desire publicly, for the avoiding of all misunderstanding, and solemnly, to declare the principles upon which we propose to proceed.

We declare this church to be, and desire that it shall continue, in full Communion with all Anglicans throughout the world who remain faithful to Apostolic Order (including the male Episcopate, Priesthood, and Diaconate), as an integral portion of the one Body of Christ composed of Churches which, united under the One Divine Head and in fellowship of the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, hold the one Faith revealed in Holy Writ, and defined in the Creeds as maintained by the undivided Primitive Catholic Church in the Seven Ecumenical Councils; receive the same Canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, as containing all things necessary to salvation; teach the same Word of God; partake of the same Divinely ordained Sacraments through the Ministry of the same Divinely instituted Apostolic Orders; and worship one God and Father through the same Lord Jesus Christ, by the same Holy and Divine Spirit Who is given to them that believe to guide them into all truth.

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<sup>1</sup> Official Footnote: The words "Anglican Catholic Church" as used in this Declaration and The Preamble were shown in the Official Transcript of the Constitutional Synod held at Dallas, TX, October 19-21, 1978 (pp. 280-285), to be descriptive only. The legal name of this Church, as registered in the United States Patent Office, is set forth in Article I below.

And we are determined by the help of God to hold and maintain the Doctrine, the Seven Sacraments, and the Discipline of Christ as the Lord hath commanded in His Holy Word and as this Church hath received and set forth the same in the Book of Common Prayer; to maintain the Scriptural and Apostolical Form of Episcopal Church Government; and to transmit the same sacred trust unimpaired to our posterity.

We desire no control or authority over any but those who are or shall be members of this Church.

Proceeding upon these principles, we humbly commit ourselves to His good guidance, and we firmly rely upon His continual blessing and mercy; and we humbly pray that He, Who is the God of unity and peace, may ever be with us, and so chasten our affections, purify our motives, and guide our judgement, that we may the more be enabled to contribute to the good estate of Christ's One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church and the extension of His Kingdom in these lands; and to the attainment of these ends, to which we firmly do believe God has vouchsafed to call us, and according to these aforesaid principles, we do set forth this Constitution.

#### THE PREAMBLE

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. *Amen.*

The Anglican Catholic Church is a constituent member of the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church of Jesus Christ, faithfully continuing the Anglican tradition. This Church upholds the historic Catholic Faith, Apostolic Order, Orthodox Worship, and Evangelical Witness as set forth in the 1962 Canadian and 1928 American editions of the Book of Common Prayer, and accepts as binding and unalterable the received Faith and Traditions of the Church, and its teachings, including the male Episcopate, Priesthood, and Diaconate, as set forth in the Holy Scriptures; the Apostles', Nicene, and Athanasian Creeds; the writings of the "ancient Catholic Bishops and Doctors"; and especially as defined by the Seven Ecumenical Councils of the Undivided Church.

We fully receive and consider ourselves bound, both as to Custom <sup>2</sup> and the General Canon Law,<sup>3</sup> by the Common Law of the Church <sup>4</sup> as received through the Church of England.

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<sup>2</sup> *Consuetudo and Mos.*

<sup>3</sup> *Corpus Juris Canonici.*

<sup>4</sup> *Commune Jus Ecclesium.*

## ARTICLE I - OF THE NAME OF THE CHURCH

The name of this part of the historic Church shall be The Anglican Catholic Church.

## ARTICLE II - OF THE DIOCESES

### SECTION 1. OF THE FUNDAMENTAL STRUCTURE OF THE DIOCESES.

Each Diocese of this Church shall be duly organised with a Constitution or Canons, or both, as follows:

**(a) The Ordinary.** Each such Diocese shall have an Ordinary who shall be a Bishop in the line of Apostolic Succession and who shall possess and exercise such inherent power, authority, and jurisdiction as is recognised by Ancient Canons and Tradition for such Bishop to possess and exercise, subject to the provisions of this Constitution.

**(b) The Synod.** Each such Diocese shall have a Synod which shall have and possess the legislative jurisdiction therein and which Synod shall consist of three constituent authorities, namely:

- (1) the Ordinary thereof;
- (2) all the other Clergy canonically resident in that Diocese concerned;  
and
- (3) Delegates of the Laity from each of the congregations in union with that Diocese concerned.

Such legislative jurisdiction shall be exercised by such Synod aforesaid provided that all the foregoing constituent authorities shall agree.

Such legislative jurisdiction shall be subject and subordinate to the Common Law of the Church, this Constitution, and Canons enacted pursuant to this Constitution.

No enactment or resolution in any such Synod shall have effect without the Assent of the Ordinary, which Assent is not lightly nor without the gravest cause to be withheld. The reason for any withholding of Assent shall be given in writing.

**(c) The Diocesan Court of the Ordinary or Consistory Court.** Each such Diocese shall have either a Diocesan Court of the Ordinary or a Consistory Court, through which the judicial authority of the Ordinary shall be exercised, and which Court shall have jurisdiction within that Diocese over:

- (1) the Clergy, excepting Bishops, and the Laity for the trial of offences against Ecclesiastical Discipline and Law;



- (2) constitutional and canonical controversies; and
- (3) all other Ecclesiastical Causes.

Appeals from the Diocesan Court may be taken to the Provincial Court, as provided for by Canon.

SECTION 2. OF THE RESERVATION OF THE LEGISLATIVE JURISDICTION OF THE DIOCESES. All legislative jurisdiction not otherwise provided for by this Constitution, and the Canons enacted in pursuance thereto, shall be reserved to the Dioceses.

SECTION 3. OF VARIANCE OF TERMS AND COMPOSITION. Any Diocese, Missionary Diocese, Missionary District, or other such jurisdictions of this Church, other than those composing the Original Province thereof, shall be free to continue to designate its Synod and Diocesan Court of the Ordinary or Consistory Court by whatsoever name or names, as well as to continue to designate the composition or authority thereof, or both, as the case may be, that heretofore may have been customary in that place concerned.

### ARTICLE III - OF THE ESTABLISHMENT AND ADMISSION OF NEW DIOCESES

SECTION 1. OF THE CONVENIENT ESTABLISHMENT OF NEW DIOCESES. New Dioceses may be established from the territory of one or more existing Dioceses with the consent thereof or from territory not part of an existing Diocese with the consent of the Provincial Synod exercising missionary jurisdiction over such territory.

Dioceses and Provinces shall adopt Constitutions or Canons, or both, consistent herewith, allowing for the convenient establishment of new Dioceses.

No Diocese or Province shall unreasonably withhold or delay its consent to the establishment of a new Diocese that meets the provisions of this Article when petitioned to give such consent by the appropriate numbers of congregations and priests.

SECTION 2. OF PROVISIONAL AND PERMANENT GOVERNANCE OF NEW DIOCESES. Whenever a new Diocese is established from the territory of one or more existing Dioceses, it shall have as its Constitution and Canons, those of the Diocese from which the new Diocese drew the greater number of its founding congregations or, if such cannot be ascertained, then those of the oldest of the Dioceses from which it has drawn any of its founding congregations, except as local circumstances may prevent, until it shall have opportunity to adopt a Constitution or Canons, or both, of its own.

When a new Diocese is established from territory not part of an existing Diocese it shall adopt and operate under a provisional Constitution or Canons, or both, until it shall have adopted a permanent Constitution or Canons, or both.

SECTION 3. OF THE SIZE OF NEW DIOCESES. Every new Diocese shall have not fewer than five (5) Priests and shall be composed of not fewer than ten (10) non-dependent congregations, each of which shall have had continuously, for the six (6) month period next preceding the formation of the new Diocese, not fewer than twenty (20) baptized adult members, of whom not fewer than ten (10) shall be communicants; provided, however, that the establishment of a new Diocese shall not result in a previously existing Diocese being reduced to a size of fewer than fifteen (15) non-dependent congregations or fewer than eight (8) canonically resident Priests with Cure.

SECTION 4. OF THE TERRITORIAL CONTIGUITY OF DIOCESES. Every Diocese shall form a territorially contiguous unit, except that congregations which were without the territory of the Diocese with which they were already affiliated as of September 21, 1978, may continue such Diocesan affiliation until not later than the first Sunday in Advent, 1980, by which time they shall have affiliated with the respective Dioceses within whose territory they are located.

SECTION 5. OF THE ASSIGNMENT OF TERRITORY BY THE ADOPTING SYNOD. The Synod adopting this Constitution shall by Canon assign territories to the Dioceses represented thereat, and shall make appropriate provisions for the establishment of new Dioceses and the exercise of episcopal authority in other areas.

SECTION 6. OF THE MAXIMUM SIZE OF ANY DIOCESE. In no case shall any Diocese contain more than thirty-five (35) congregations, meeting the criteria set forth in Section 3 above, for a period of longer than three (3) years.

SECTION 7. OF MISSIONARY JURISDICTIONS. When, in the opinion of the College of Bishops, there is the need therefor, the College may create a Missionary District in any area outside of the United States of America, with a Bishop, even where there are fewer Clergymen and congregations than are required for a Diocese.

#### ARTICLE IV - OF BISHOPS

SECTION 1. OF THE QUALIFICATIONS FOR THOSE TO BE ORDAINED AND CONSECRATED BISHOP. In order to be ordained and consecrated a Bishop in this Church, a man shall have been rightly baptised and confirmed and rightly and canonically ordained to the Diaconate and the Priesthood.

He shall meet the Scriptural, Apostolical, and Patristic qualifications for ordination and consecration, and he shall be free of sufficient objection that he is justly liable to evil report, either for error in religion or for viciousness of life.

He shall preserve chastity, and he shall not have disavowed a valid marriage, nor shall he be married to a woman who has done so.

He shall be of sound mind and body.

He shall meet such other qualifications as Canons shall prescribe.

SECTION 2. OF THE CALL FOR ELECTION. <sup>5</sup>

**(a) Writs of Election to Vacant Sees.** Whenever a See falls vacant, the Metropolitan, or the College of Bishops in the absence of a Metropolitan, shall issue forthwith the Writ of Election to such Diocesan authority as may be specified in the appropriate Diocesan regulation.

Upon receipt of such a Writ of Election said authority shall forthwith issue its Writ of Summons to the Diocesan Electors according to the regulations provided by that Diocese.

**(b) Writs of Election to other Bishoprics.** For election to Co-adjutor, Suffragan, Assistant, or Auxiliary Bishoprics, the Writ of Election shall be issued upon petition of the appropriate Diocesan authority only with the consent of the Metropolitan and the College of Bishops of that Province, and upon the procedures required in the foregoing sub-Section (a).

**(c) Commission to Preside at Elections to Bishoprics.** The Metropolitan, or the College of Bishops in the absence of a Metropolitan, shall commission such person or persons to preside over said election as may be specified in the Canons or other regulations of the Diocese concerned.

If no provision has been made, the Metropolitan shall preside in person or by episcopal deputy.

SECTION 3. OF THE CONDUCT OF ELECTION. <sup>6</sup>

**(a) The Majority Required for Election.** Each election shall require the Suffrages of no fewer than a two-thirds ( $\frac{2}{3}$ ) majority of the Electors in each Order present and voting, a canonical quorum being present.

**(b) The Modes of Election.** Elections shall be by one or more of the following modes as defined in the Canons of this Church:

**(1) Inspiration.**

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<sup>5</sup> Amended by the Xth and XIth Synods of the Original Province (Kansas City, MO, 1993 and San Mateo, CA, 1995) to delete former Sections 2 (“Of the Certification of Candidates for the Episcopate by a Provincial Synod”) and 3 (“Of Additional Candidates”), and to renumber former Section 4 as Section 2.

<sup>6</sup> Added by the Xth and XIth Synods of the Original Province (Kansas City, MO, 1993 and San Mateo, CA, 1995).

- (2) Ballot.
- (3) Compromission.
- (4) Postulation.

Upon failure to elect by any of the foregoing modes within the period prescribed by the Canons of this Church, the election shall devolve by right upon the College of Bishops of the Province concerned.

SECTION 4. OF CERTIFICATION OF ELECTION. Any man elected to the Office of Bishop in this Church must be approved for ordination and consecration by at least three-fourths ( $\frac{3}{4}$ ) of the Bishops of the Province concerned, meeting collegially, and by the Metropolitan thereof, and in accordance with other provisions as set forth in this Constitution or the Canons, or both, of this Church.<sup>7</sup>

SECTION 5. OF THE METROPOLITAN'S TAKING ORDER FOR CONSECRATION. When such election is duly certified to the Metropolitan, he shall take order for the Consecration.

SECTION 6. OF THE AGE AND CONSECRATION OF A BISHOP. No man shall be ordained and consecrated Bishop until he shall have attained the age of forty (40) years, nor shall he be consecrated by fewer than three (3) Bishops, unless for grave cause the Metropolitan, or the College of Bishops, shall so direct.

SECTION 7. OF EPISCOPAL ACTS IN ANOTHER DIOCESE. A Bishop shall confine the exercise of his Office to his own Diocese unless he shall have been requested to perform Episcopal Acts in another Diocese by the Ecclesiastical Authority or the Guardians of the Spiritualities thereof, or unless he shall have been authorised by the Metropolitan, acting with the advice and consent of the College of Bishops, to act temporarily in case of need within any territory not yet organised as a Diocese of this Church.

SECTION 8. OF THE INHERENT AUTHORITY OF BISHOPS. Nothing contained in the legislative jurisdiction of the Holy Synod or the Provincial Synod shall limit or affect the powers, jurisdiction, and authority inherent in the Office of Bishop as Apostle, Shepherd, Prophet, Evangelist, and Teacher or exercised collegially by the Bishops of the Church, excepting that Office and Government shall not be in conflict with this Constitution or the Canons enacted pursuant hereto. And it is hereby declared to be the particular duty of the high priestly Office of Bishop, as a Steward of God and an Ambassador of Christ, to proclaim the Word of God and the Gospel of Christ to all men, sanctify the faithful committed to his charge and safe-keeping, and, together with other Clergy and the Laity, guard and defend the Church's Faith and Moral Teaching.

SECTION 9. OF EPISCOPAL RESIGNATIONS. Any Bishop holding an Episcopal Office may resign that Office at any time by written notice to his superior or to the next senior Bishop.

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<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

SECTION 10. OF EPISCOPAL RETIREMENT. Upon attaining the age of seventy-five (75) years, a Bishop serving in any Episcopal Office shall annually submit to the appropriate Synod concerned his offer to retire.

If his offer is accepted by that Synod, his retirement shall become effective in thirty (30) days.

Such retired Bishop may perform spiritual acts at the request of the Metropolitan, the Ecclesiastical Authority, or the Guardians of the Spiritualities of a Diocese.

## ARTICLE V - OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF PROVINCES

SECTION 1. OF THE ORIGINAL PROVINCE. Those Dioceses represented at the Synod at which this Constitution shall be proposed, and which shall accede thereto, shall be established as the Original Province of this Church.

SECTION 2. OF ADDITIONAL PROVINCES. After not fewer than fifteen (15) nor more than twenty-one (21) Dioceses shall have acceded to the Constitution of this Church, the Provincial Synod shall provide by Canon for the formation of two (2) additional Provinces, which Provinces shall have the authority to adopt their own Constitution and Canons in conformity with the Constitution and Canons of this Church.

SECTION 3. OF THE AUTHORITY OF THIS CONSTITUTION. This Constitution shall remain the Constitution of the whole Church and shall be binding on each Province thereof.

SECTION 4. OF THE TIME PRIMATIAL STRUCTURES TAKE EFFECT. Upon the formal establishment of three (3) Provinces of this Church, all Articles and provisions of this Constitution in regards to the Primacy, the Holy Synod, and the High Court of the Holy Synod shall take effect and be operative.

SECTION 5. OF THE ACCESSION OF REGIONAL OR PROVINCIAL CHURCHES TO THIS CHURCH. A regional Church or a Province of the Church or jurisdictions or other such portions thereof, being of undoubted Catholic Faith and Apostolic Order, already constituted, in existence, or established may accede to this Church by formal petition of their Bishops or Bishop or appropriate Synod or Synods concerned, or both, as the case may be, to the Primate of this Church, who may receive such aforesaid ecclesiastical entity or entities provisionally under his jurisdiction and authority.

The Primate shall investigate the matter and, upon his being fully satisfied therein, may accept and receive such aforementioned Church or Province or jurisdictions or portions thereof into full union with this Church with the advice and consent of the College of Bishops of this Church and with other canonical consent as may be necessary.

However, when any such action aforesaid is to be taken within a six (6) month period prior to any meeting of the Holy Synod, then the Primate may accept and receive

such aforementioned Church or Province or jurisdictions or portions thereof into full union with this Church with only the advice and consent of the Holy Synod.

Until there be a Primate, a College of Bishops, a Holy Synod, and a High Court of the Holy Synod of this Church, the authority, functions, duties, and jurisdiction assigned to such entities or authorities aforesaid shall be exercised respectively by the Metropolitan, the College of Bishops, the Synod, and the Court of the Metropolitan or Provincial Court of the Original Province of this Church.

SECTION 6. OF VARIANCE OF TERMS AND COMPOSITION. Any Province of this Church, other than the Original Province thereof, shall be free to continue to designate its Metropolitan, College of Bishops, Provincial Synod and the various Houses thereof, and the Court of the Metropolitan or the Provincial Court thereof by whatsoever name or names as well as to continue to designate the composition or authority thereof, or both, as the case may be, that heretofore may have been customary in that Province concerned.

#### ARTICLE VI - OF THE OFFICE OF THE METROPOLITAN

SECTION 1. OF THE METROPOLITAN OF EACH PROVINCE. Each Province of this Church shall have as its Chief Bishop and Pastor a Metropolitan, who upon entering his Office shall have the title and dignity of Archbishop of the See of which he shall be the Ordinary, that See becoming the Archiepiscopal See during his tenure of Office as Metropolitan. Upon vacating the Office of Metropolitan, he shall retain the title of Archbishop.

SECTION 2. OF THE ELECTION OF THE METROPOLITAN. The Metropolitan of each Province of this Church shall be the Ordinary chosen by two-thirds ( $\frac{2}{3}$ ) vote of the Council of Bishops and consented to by two-thirds ( $\frac{2}{3}$ ) vote each of the Senate of the Clergy and the Assembly of the Laity of that Provincial Synod.

SECTION 3. OF THE TERM OF OFFICE OF THE METROPOLITAN. The Metropolitan shall serve for life unless he shall resign, retire, or be removed in accordance with this Constitution and the Canons.

SECTION 4. OF A VACANCY IN THE OFFICE OF THE METROPOLITAN. In the event the Office of Metropolitan of a Province of this Church becomes vacant between meetings of the Provincial Synod concerned, the Ordinary most senior in respect to consecration shall act in the capacity of the Metropolitan until the next meeting of that Provincial Synod concerned, at which time a Metropolitan shall be chosen as prescribed in Section 2 of this Article.

SECTION 5. OF THE TEMPORARY INCAPACITY OF THE METROPOLITAN. If for any reason the Metropolitan is temporarily unable to fulfil his duties, the most senior Ordinary of that Province by right shall function in his stead, until that Metropolitan is able to resume his duties or his Office is vacated.

SECTION 6. OF THE DUTIES OF THE METROPOLITAN. The Metropolitan of each Province of this Church shall convene and preside over the College of Bishops of that province and be its President, and he shall convene the Provincial Synod and be the President thereof, shall preside over the Council of Bishops in such Synod and all joint sessions of the Synod, shall forward non-privileged decisions of the College of Bishops of that Province as a whole, and shall, after consultation with the Bishops of that Province and any body so authorised by the Provincial Synod, speak in the name of the Province.

Such Metropolitan shall have the Charge of that Province concerned, together with the General Pastoral Concern and the Metropolitan Jurisdiction thereof.

SECTION 7. OF METROPOLITICAL VISITATIONS. The Metropolitan shall visit and consult with each Diocese in his Province and its Synod at least once every three (3) years and, upon the petition of at least one-third ( $\frac{1}{3}$ ) of either the clerical or the lay constituent authority of the Diocesan Synod, mediate any Diocesan controversy.

SECTION 8. OF VARIANCE OF TERMS OR CUSTOMS. <sup>8</sup> Where in any Province of this Church it has been customary for the Metropolitan thereof not to be styled an Archbishop, such Metropolitan may continue to be styled in accordance with such custom.

Also where in any Province of this Church it has been customary for the Metropolitan See not to be designated an Archiepiscopal See, such See may continue to be designated in accordance with such custom.

In cases where any Metropolitan See of this Church has been customarily a fixed See, such See may then continue as before with its customary mode of election of its Metropolitan, or the Province so concerned may at any time choose to conform to the provisions respectively of Sections 1 or 2, or both, of this Article.

## ARTICLE VII - OF PROVINCIAL SYNODS

SECTION 1. OF THE LEGISLATIVE JURISDICTION OF PROVINCIAL SYNODS. Legislative jurisdiction in a Province shall be exercised by a Provincial Synod, such legislative

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<sup>8</sup> Official Footnote: The previous Section 8 of this Article, the text of which follows, was rendered moot at the V<sup>th</sup> Synod of the Original Province (Orlando, FL, 1983), at which a Metropolitan was chosen pursuant to this Constitution and the Canons.

“SECTION 8. OF THE EFFECT OF THE ARTICLE.

Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 of this Article shall take effect at the 1983 Provincial Synod or at such earlier time as may be authorised by the College of Bishops.

Until that time the authority vested in the Metropolitan shall be exercised by the Bishops of the Province collegially through the College of Bishops.”

jurisdiction to be subject and subordinate to the Common Law of the Church and this Constitution, which Synod may enact Canons not in conflict herewith, provide for the execution of said Canons, provide for the general interests and well-being of the Church within that Province, provide for the general administration of the Province in accordance with this Constitution, receive tithes from the Dioceses, establish a treasury and expend funds therefrom as necessary, provide for the governing of ecclesiastical discipline in that Province and the regulation of the ministrations of the Clergy and others, and provide, with the consent of the Holy Synod where necessary, for the creation, division, adjustment, or rearrangement of Dioceses within that Province.

## SECTION 2. OF THE STRUCTURE OF PROVINCIAL SYNODS.

**(a) Each Provincial Synod to have Three Houses.** Each Provincial Synod shall consist of three (3) Houses:

- (1) A Council of Bishops, consisting of all the Bishops of the Province;
- (2) A Senate of the Clergy, consisting of not to exceed eleven (11) Clergymen from each Diocese, the exact number to be fixed by Provincial Canon, and chosen in accordance with Diocesan Canons; and
- (3) An Assembly of the Laity, consisting of not to exceed eleven (11) lay Delegates from each Diocese, the exact number to be fixed by Provincial Canon, and chosen in accordance with Diocesan Canons.

**(b) Provision for Representation from Jurisdictions other than Dioceses.** Delegates in either House from other Jurisdictions under Provincial Authority may be provided for by Provincial Canon.

**(c) Composition, Officers, and Rules of Procedure.** The Composition, officers, and rules of procedure of each such House shall be as provided for by Canon.<sup>9</sup>

SECTION 3. OF THE ENACTMENT OF LEGISLATION. Any House may initiate legislation, and a majority vote of those present and voting in each House, there being a canonical quorum present therein, shall be sufficient for passage thereof, except for adoption and amendment of Canons, which shall require a concurring three-fourths ( $\frac{3}{4}$ ) majority of those present and voting in each House, there being a canonical quorum present therein.

Nothing is to be deemed an Act or Canon of a Provincial Synod unless it shall have received the Assent of the Metropolitan, which is not lightly nor without the gravest cause to be withheld. The reason for any withholding of Assent must be given in writing.

In cases of dissent by the Metropolitan, the matter shall stand over to the next regular Synod, when, if the same is concurred in by not fewer than three-fourths ( $\frac{3}{4}$ ) of the total membership of each House of the Synod, it shall be deemed a valid enactment and take effect.

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<sup>9</sup> See Canons, Title VIII.



SECTION 4. OF THE TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING. The frequency with which each Provincial Synod shall meet and the method of selection of the place and time of meeting shall be as provided for by Canon.

#### ARTICLE VIII - OF THE OFFICE OF THE PRIMATE

SECTION 1. OF THE SELECTION OF THE PRIMATE. The Primate of this Church shall be the senior Metropolitan willing and able to undertake the duties and Office of the Primacy of this Church, except that the first Primate shall be chosen by two-thirds ( $\frac{2}{3}$ ) vote of the Council of Bishops and consented to by two-thirds ( $\frac{2}{3}$ ) vote each of the Senate of the Clergy of the Holy Synod and the Assembly of the Laity of the Holy Synod.

SECTION 2. OF THE PRIMATIAL SEE. Such Metropolitan shall be styled Primate of the Anglican Catholic Church and the Metropolitan See of which he may be Archbishop shall, so long as he retains the Office of Primate, be also the Primatial See of this Church.

SECTION 3. OF THE PRIMATE'S PRECEDENCE. The Primate shall take precedence over all other Bishops, Archbishops, and Metropolitans of this Church.

SECTION 4. OF THE TERM OF OFFICE OF THE PRIMATE. The Primate shall serve for life unless he shall resign, retire, or be removed in accordance with this Constitution or Canons.

SECTION 5. OF THE DUTIES OF THE PRIMATE. It shall be the duty of the Primate to convene and to be President of the College of Bishops of this Church, to convene and to be the President of the Holy Synod, and to preside over all joint sessions thereof, to preside over the College of Bishops and the Council of Bishops in the Holy Synod, to forward non-privileged decisions of the Holy Synod and the College of Bishops throughout the Church as a whole, and, after consultation with the other Metropolitans and the College of Bishops of this Church and any body so authorised by the Holy Synod, to speak in the name of the Anglican Catholic Church.

SECTION 6. OF THE ABSENCE OF THE PRIMATE. In case of the absence of the Primate from the Holy Synod for any cause, the Metropolitan next senior by appointment or election, or if there be no Metropolitan present, the Bishop elected as President of the Council of Bishops at the Holy Synod, shall be and shall act as President of the Holy Synod in his stead.

SECTION 7. OF THE ACTING PRIMATE. In the case of illness or any other cause of incapacity of the Primate to fulfil his duties, the next senior Metropolitan able and willing to act shall have authority to perform all the duties of the Primacy and shall be styled Acting Primate.

## ARTICLE IX - OF THE HOLY SYNOD

SECTION 1. OF THE LEGISLATIVE JURISDICTION OF THE HOLY SYNOD. Upon the attainment and establishment of three (3) Provinces of this Church, there shall be formed a Holy Synod, which shall have the general legislative jurisdiction of this Church in all matters affecting the general interest and well-being of the whole Church. Such legislative jurisdiction shall be subject and subordinate to the Common Law of the Church and this Constitution.

The Holy Synod may enact Canons not in conflict herewith; provide for the execution of said Canons; provide for the general administration of this Church in accordance with this Constitution; receive monies from the Dioceses and other sources; and establish a treasury and expend funds therefrom as necessary.

The Holy Synod shall provide for the ecclesiastical character, constitution, integrity, and autonomy of this Church, provide for the conduct of relations of this Church with other religious bodies and with other Churches of the Anglican Communion; provide, with the consent of the Provincial Synod or Synods concerned, for the creation and constitution of new Provinces in this Church; and provide for the declaration of general principles governing discipline in the Church.

The Holy Synod shall be empowered to provide for the election and consecration of Overseas Bishops, Missionary Bishops, and Bishops to the Armed Forces and for the creation of their jurisdictions.

### SECTION 2. OF THE STRUCTURE OF THE HOLY SYNOD.

**(a) The Holy Synod to have Three Houses.** The Holy Synod shall consist of three (3) Houses:

- (1) A Council of Bishops, consisting of all the Bishops of this Church;
- (2) A Senate of the Clergy, consisting of not to exceed eleven (11) Clergymen from each Diocese, the exact number to be fixed by Canon, and chosen in accordance with Diocesan Canons; and
- (3) An Assembly of the Laity, consisting of not to exceed eleven (11) lay Delegates from each Diocese, the exact number to be fixed by Canon, and chosen in accordance with Diocesan Canons.

**(b) Provision for Representation from Jurisdictions other than Dioceses.** Delegates from other Jurisdictions may be provided for by Canon.

**(c) Composition, Officers, and Rules of Procedure.** The composition, officers, and rules of procedure of each House shall be as provided for by Canon.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> See Canons, Title VIII.

SECTION 3. OF THE ENACTMENT OF LEGISLATION. Any House may initiate legislation, and a majority vote of those present and voting in each House, there being a canonical quorum present therein, shall be sufficient for passage thereof, except for adoption and amendment of Canons, which shall require a concurring three-fourths ( $\frac{3}{4}$ ) majority of those present and voting in each House, there being a canonical quorum present therein.

Nothing is deemed an Act or Canon of the Holy Synod that does not have also the Assent of all the Metropolitans of this Church, and such Assent shall not lightly nor without the gravest cause be withheld. The reason for any withholding of Assent shall be in writing.

In case of dissent by the Primate or any other Metropolitan, the matter shall stand over to the next regular Synod, when, if the same is concurred in by not fewer than three-fourths ( $\frac{3}{4}$ ) of the total membership of each House of the Synod, it shall be deemed a valid enactment and take effect.

SECTION 4. OF THE MEETINGS OF THE HOLY SYNOD. The frequency with which the Holy Synod shall meet and the method of selection of the place and time of meeting shall be as provided for by Canon.

SECTION 5. OF THE ORIGINAL PROVINCE. Until the Holy Synod comes into being, the legislative jurisdiction assigned to it shall be exercised by the Synod of the Original Province of this Church.

## ARTICLE X - OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL COURTS

SECTION 1. OF THREE ORDERS. The Ecclesiastical Courts of this Church are of three (3) Orders:

- (a) The Diocesan Court of the Ordinary or the Consistory Court;
- (b) The Court of the Metropolitan or the Provincial Court; and
- (c) When it shall come into being, the High Court of the Holy Synod.

Each Court shall be appointed as provided for in the Canons, and shall possess and enjoy all powers for the compelling of the attendance of witnesses, the conducting and regulating of its business, and the enforcement of the judgements, decrees, decisions, or sentences made therein.

SECTION 2. OF APPEALS. Except as to findings of fact in matrimonial causes, it is hereby declared that no Bishop, or Court, or tribunal, or decision, or Diocesan, Provincial, or Holy Synod has or shall have the right to limit or restrict appeals from his or its judgements or decrees or decisions or sentences to any higher Court of this Church.

Furthermore, this Church reaffirms the ancient Christian right of every individual subject of the Church, both clerical and lay, to appeal to his Metropolitan, even in cases not elsewhere herein specified, and this right shall remain inalienable.

SECTION 3. OF FAIR AND DUE PROCESS. All Courts and tribunals of this Church shall be governed first of all by the desire for truth and justice, and to protect and guarantee the Christian rights of all parties brought before them.

SECTION 4. OF THE COURT OF THE METROPOLITAN, OR PROVINCIAL COURT. In each Province there shall be a Court of the Metropolitan or Provincial Court which shall exercise original jurisdiction over all matters and the enactments of the Provincial Synod pursuant to this Constitution not reserved to the High Court of the Holy Synod, and the trial of all Bishops of that Province.

Except as to findings of fact in matrimonial causes, said Court shall also have appellate jurisdiction over all Diocesan Courts and tribunals, and of appeals from the judgements, or decrees, or decisions, or sentences of the Ordinaries of that Province in matters of Discipline, of Offences against the Laws Ecclesiastical, of Law, of all Ecclesiastical Causes, of Doctrine, and of Worship.

SECTION 5. OF THE HIGH COURT OF THE HOLY SYNOD. Upon the attainment and establishment of three Provinces of this Church, there shall be created a final Court of Appeal of this Church which Court shall be the Supreme Court and shall be called and styled The High Court of the Holy Synod.

Said Court shall exercise original jurisdiction over all matters relating to this Constitution and the Canons enacted by the Holy Synod pursuant hereto, and shall have jurisdiction to hear and determine any appeal from the judgements, or decrees, or decisions, or sentences of any Court or tribunal of this Church or from the judgements, or decrees, or decisions, or sentences of any Bishop of this Church, except as to findings of fact in matrimonial causes.

SECTION 6. OF BISHOPS JUDGING THEIR DECISIONS. No Metropolitan or Bishop shall sit in judgement on decisions from any appeal taken from his own Diocesan or Provincial Court or from any decision of his as Ordinary or Metropolitan.

SECTION 7. OF FRIVOLOUS OR FALSE CHARGES. Those who shall bring charges held to be frivolous or false against any person in the jurisdiction of the Ecclesiastical Courts of this Church shall be held accountable for their acts by the Courts.

SECTION 8. OF DISCIPLINE OF THE FAITHFUL. All Bishops, other Clergymen, and the Laity of this Church are subject to this Constitution and to such Canons as may be enacted hereunder and are amenable to the Ecclesiastical Courts and tribunals provided for herein.

ARTICLE XI - OF THE INTERPRETATION OF  
THIS CONSTITUTION AND THE CANONS

All words and provisions of this Constitution and the Canons shall be interpreted strictly in accordance with their plain literal and grammatical meaning at the time of writing.

ARTICLE XII - OF THE REMOVAL OF THE PRIMATE  
AND METROPOLITANS

For grave cause only, the Primate of this Church or the Metropolitan of any Province of this Church may be removed from his Office as such by the affirmative vote of three-fourths ( $\frac{3}{4}$ ) of the whole number of members of each House of the Holy Synod, or of the Synod of the Province concerned, as the case may be, and with the consent of all the other Metropolitans.

ARTICLE XIII - OF THE JURISDICTION OF  
THE ARMED FORCES

The Primate, or until there be a Primate, the Metropolitan, by and with the advice and consent of the Holy or Provincial Synod, as the case may be, shall appoint an Ordinary for the Jurisdiction of The Armed Forces.

The Bishop so appointed shall be, except as he shall be limited by this Constitution or Canons enacted pursuant thereto, the Ordinary for The Armed Forces, and shall have episcopal jurisdiction over all Clergymen of this Church on active duty in the Armed Forces of the United States of America, and of such congregations, chaplaincies, and mission work, as shall now exist, or shall come to be, among the Armed Forces of the United States; provided, however, that the spiritual jurisdiction and care of such Chaplains, other Clergymen, and congregations, shall in no way infringe upon the jurisdiction of any Diocese or Missionary Diocese or District over the civilian Clergy or the civilian Laity thereof.

For the purpose of jurisdiction, the terms of the civilian Clergy and the civilian Laity shall exclude personnel of the Armed Forces on Active Duty, their spouses, and their dependants.

In the event of need, the Primate of this Church or the Metropolitan of that Province concerned, as the case may be, or as circumstances may permit or occasions may require, may appoint other Bishops with the same authority and jurisdiction aforesaid as near as possible as set forth in this Article for the Forces of other nations.

## ARTICLE XIV - OF WORSHIP

SECTION 1. OF THE *BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER*. The *Book of Common Prayer* in its 1549 English, 1928 American, 1954 South African,<sup>11</sup> and 1962 Canadian editions, and the 1963 edition of the Church of India, Pakistan, Burma, and Ceylon as well as The *Supplement To The Book of Common Prayer* (C.I.P.B.C.) of 1960 shall be the Standard of Public Worship of this Church, together with The *Anglican Missal*, The *American Missal*, The *English Missal*, and other missals and devotional manuals, based on and conforming to those editions of The *Book of Common Prayer*.

The *Book of Common Praise* of 1938 (Canada), The Hymnal, 1940, and The *English Hymnal* (New Edition, 1933) should be the primary musical standard for Public Worship.

In connection with the use of the above, the name of this Church shall be substituted in the place of other names where appropriate.

SECTION 2. OF REVISIONS OF THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER. Any revision of The *Book of Common Prayer* shall be accomplished only in the manner by which this Constitution is amended.

SECTION 3. OF THE HOLY COMMUNION. The Celebration of the Holy Communion of the Body and Blood of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, otherwise known as the Holy Eucharist, the Divine Liturgy, the Lord's Supper, or the Mass, is the chief form of worship of this Church, and thankful participation therein is the bounden duty of every member of this Church on every Sunday, unless for good cause prevented, and is the joyful privilege and royal, priestly service of the People of God<sup>12</sup> 'in the Household of Faith',<sup>13</sup> as befits His Children in their Father's Temple.

SECTION 4. OF TRANSLATIONS OF HOLY SCRIPTURE. The Authorised (King James) Version is the received Standard English translation of the Holy Scripture (Old Testament, New Testament, Apocrypha).

Except where the text of Holy Scripture is printed as part of The *Book of Common Prayer*, modern versions may be employed in services of worship only with specific approval of the College of Bishops of this Church.

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<sup>11</sup> Amended by the Xth and XIth Synods of the Original Province (Kansas City, MO, 1993 and San Mateo, CA, 1995) to add the 1954 South African edition.

<sup>12</sup> Official Footnote: I Peter 2:5, 9; Exodus 19:6; Revelation 1:6; Hebrews 3:1.

<sup>13</sup> Official Footnote: Galatians 6:10; Ephesians 2:19; Hebrews 3:6.

SECTION 5. OF SERVICES IN OTHER LANGUAGES. As the need may arise in the Church's services of worship, the College of Bishops may authorise the use of translations of Holy Scripture and The *Book of Common Prayer* in languages other than English.

## ARTICLE XV - OF ECUMENICAL RELATIONS

This Church may enter into sacramental communion (*communio in sacris*) with other branches of Christ's One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church as set forth in formal Concordats ratified by the highest Synod of this Church in the manner required for the adoption of Canons.

## ARTICLE XVI - OF THE CLERGY

SECTION 1. OF THE SEX AND AGE OF ORDINANDS. The Clergy shall be male persons who shall have attained the age of twenty-three (23) years prior to ordination as Deacon, twenty-four (24) years prior to ordination as Priest, and forty (40) years prior to ordination and consecration as Bishop.

SECTION 2. OF THE QUALIFICATIONS FOR THOSE TO BE ORDERED DEACON OR PRIEST. In order to be ordained a Priest or a Deacon in this Church, a man shall have been rightly baptised and confirmed, and if to be ordained to the Priesthood, he shall have been rightly and canonically ordained to the Diaconate.

He shall meet the Scriptural, Apostolical, and Patristic qualifications for ordination, and he shall be free of sufficient objection that he is justly liable to evil report, either for error in religion or for viciousness of life.

He shall preserve chastity, and he shall not have disavowed a valid marriage, nor shall he be married to a woman who has done so.

He shall be of sound mind and body. He shall meet such other qualifications as the Canons prescribe.

SECTION 3. OF THE DECLARATION AND OATHS REQUIRED OF ORDINANDS. Prior to being ordained or ordained and consecrated to any of the Holy Orders of the Church, all persons so to be ordained or ordained and consecrated shall make a Declaration of Conformity to the Doctrine, Discipline, and Worship of this Church and take such oaths as shall be prescribed by the Canons.

## ARTICLE XVII - OF DEACONESSES

SECTION 1. OF THE LAY OFFICE OF DEACONESS. Devout women who are rightly baptised and confirmed and who are regular communicants in good standing of this Church may be appointed and advanced by the Ordinary to the venerable Office of Deaconess, by solemn prayer and imposition of hands as prescribed by Canon.

Such imposition does not admit any such women to any Holy Order and specifically not to the Order of Deacons, nor shall Deaconesses be allowed to exercise any Sacramental or liturgical function peculiar to or reserved to any Holy Order, nor shall they be allowed to preach at the Holy Communion.

SECTION 2. OF THEIR DUTIES. The Ordinary may, within the limits of the Ancient Canons, assign them such duties as he may see fit, especially counselling, teaching, catechising and visiting of women, young people, and children.

SECTION 3. OF THE AGE AND EXAMINATION OF DEACONESSES. A woman must have attained the age of forty (40) years before she may receive the imposition of hands as a Deaconess, and then only after a searching spiritual, moral, and theological examination of her by the Ordinary.

SECTION 4. OF EMPOWERING LEGISLATION. Diocesan and Provincial Synods and the Holy Synod may enact Canons or other legislation implementing, or providing for the implementation of this Article.

## ARTICLE XVIII - OF THE CHRISTIAN FAMILY

SECTION 1. OF THE INDISSOLUBILITY OF CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE. A valid Christian Marriage creates a life-long Sacramental Bond between one man and one woman, and in obedience to our Lord's teaching, this Church dedicates itself to the faithful preservation and defence of the historic teachings of Catholic Christianity concerning Holy Matrimony, as received in the tradition of the Church, and affirms the Christian principle that, once a person has contracted a valid marriage, that person cannot enter into a valid marriage with any person other than the original spouse, during the life of the original spouse.

SECTION 2. OF THE SANCTITY OF HUMAN LIFE. Every human being, from the moment of conception, is a creature of God, made in His image and likeness, and an infinitely precious soul, and this Church reaffirms the ancient Christian principle, enunciated by the early Fathers and Councils, that the intentional taking of the life of an innocent human being at any stage is a grave sin and is condemned under the Sixth Commandment.

SECTION 3. OF CHILDREN. All children are creatures of God, and, when baptised in the Church, Children of God.



It is the obligation of the members of this Church beginning with the parents, then the Godparents, and then the Bishops, the Clergy, and the Laity, all of whom have a right and responsibility, which cannot be abdicated to or abrogated by any temporal authority, to endeavour that children be born into stable families, and that children be nurtured and protected spiritually, morally, intellectually, and physically.

SECTION 4. OF PASTORAL CARE AND COUNSELLING. The Clergy and Laity of the Church have the Christian responsibility to provide such pastoral care and counselling as may be appropriate to accomplish the purposes of the foregoing Sections.

SECTION 5. OF THE ENACTMENT OF CANONS ON FAMILY LIFE. The Holy Synod and Provincial and Diocesan Synods shall enact Canons not inconsistent with this Constitution for the implementation of these principles.

#### ARTICLE XIX - OF FOUNDATIONS AND INSTITUTIONS

The Holy Synod and Provincial Synods may enact Canons governing the reception, establishment, and suppression of Religious Communities, and of educational, charitable, and benevolent foundations and institutions.

Notwithstanding other provisions of this Constitution, no Canon suppressing any such institution previously received or established may be enacted except by a vote of three-fourths ( $\frac{3}{4}$ ) of the whole number of each of the constituent authorities of the Holy Synod or Provincial Synod concerned.

Dioceses may enact Canons for similar purposes pertaining to Diocesan institutions.

#### ARTICLE XX - OF CANONS CONFORMING TO AND IN PURSUANCE OF THIS CONSTITUTION

The Constitutional Synod at which this Constitution shall be proposed shall have authority to enact Canons in conformity herewith, and in pursuance hereof, which shall be the Canons of this Church until they are amended in accordance with this Constitution.

#### ARTICLE XXI - OF THE TEMPORAL AFFAIRS AND POSSESSIONS OF CONGREGATIONS

The right of Congregations to control of their temporalities, and to freedom from claims of any Diocesan or Provincial or Synodal Trust or implied Trust asserted by the adherence of such Congregation to the Communion of this Church, or by its adherence to the Constitution or Canons of any Diocese, Province, or Synod shall be forever recognised and protected.

No person or ecclesial body in this Church shall ever resort to any civil court for the purpose of depriving any congregation departing from this Church of any property or right pertaining to it.

## ARTICLE XXII - OF THE EFFECTIVE DATE HEREOF AND AMENDMENTS

SECTION 1. OF THE EFFECTIVE DATE OF THIS CONSTITUTION AND OF CANONS. This Constitution and all Canons adopted simultaneously herewith shall be effective from and after the ratification thereof in Diocesan Synods of a majority of the Dioceses represented at the Constitutional Synod adopting this Constitution.

SECTION 2. OF THE METHOD OF AMENDMENT. This Constitution may be amended in the following manner only:

**(a) Proposals for Amendment.** Proposals for amendment shall be made by two-thirds (2/3) vote of each House of the Provincial Synod or of the Holy Synod, as the case may be.

**(b) Ratification by Diocesan Synods.** Such proposals shall be ratified within twenty-four (24) months by a two-thirds (2/3) vote in each order by the Synods of three-fourths (3/4) of the constituent Dioceses.

**(c) Amendments to be adopted again.** Said amendments must thereafter be adopted by a three-fourths (3/4) vote of the membership of each House of the Provincial Synod or of the Holy Synod, as the case may be, and shall take effect immediately unless it is specifically provided that they shall take effect at some future designated date.

SECTION 3. OF THE IMMUTABILITY OF CATHOLIC AND APOSTOLIC FAITH AND ORDER.

**(a) Matters not subject to Amendment.** The Solemn Declaration, The Preamble to this Constitution, and this Section are not subject to amendment.

**(b) Matters beyond the power of any Synod or Episcopal Authority.** No Synod or Episcopal Authority shall have the power to alter, abolish, change, or impair any part of Catholic and Apostolic Faith and Order.

# **THE AFFIRMATION OF ST. LOUIS**

**(DONE AT ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI, SEPTEMBER 17, 1977)**

## **THE CONTINUATION OF ANGLICANISM**

WE affirm that the Church of our fathers, sustained by the most Holy Trinity, lives yet, and that we, being moved by the Holy Spirit to walk only in that way, are determined to continue in the Catholic Faith, Apostolic Order, Orthodox Worship and Evangelical Witness of the traditional Anglican Church, doing all things necessary for the continuance of the same. We are upheld and strengthened in this determination by the knowledge that many provinces and dioceses of the Anglican Communion have continued steadfast in the same Faith, Order, Worship and Witness, and that they continue to confine ordination to the priesthood and the episcopate to males. We rejoice in these facts and we affirm our solidarity with these provinces and dioceses.

## **THE DISSOLUTION OF ANGLICAN AND EPISCOPAL CHURCH STRUCTURE**

We affirm that the Anglican Church of Canada and the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America, by their unlawful attempts to alter Faith, Order and Morality (especially in their General Synod of 1975 and General Convention of 1976), have departed from Christ's One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church.

## **THE NEED TO CONTINUE ORDER IN THE CHURCH**

We affirm that all former ecclesiastical governments, being fundamentally impaired by the schismatic acts of lawless Councils, are of no effect among us, and that we must now reorder such godly discipline as will strengthen us in the continuation of our common life and witness.

## **THE INVALIDITY OF SCHISMATIC AUTHORITY**

We affirm that the claim of any such schismatic person or body to act against any Church member, clerical or lay, for his witness to the whole Faith is no with no authority of Christ's true Church, and any such inhibition, deposition or discipline is without effect and is absolutely null and void.

## **THE NEED FOR PRINCIPLES AND A CONSTITUTION**

We affirm that fundamental principals (doctrinal, moral, and constitutional) are necessary for the present, and that a Constitution (redressing the defects and abuses of our former governments) should be adopted, whereby the Church may be soundly continued.

## **THE CONTINUATION OF COMMUNION WITH CANTERBURY**

We affirm our continued relations of communion with the See of Canterbury and all faithful parts of the Anglican Communion.<sup>1</sup>

**WHEREFORE**, with a firm trust in Divine Providence, and before Almighty God and all the company of heaven, we solemnly affirm, covenant and declare that we, lawful and faithful members of the Anglican and Episcopal Churches, shall now and hereafter continue and be the unified continuing Anglican Church in North America, in true and valid succession thereto.

## **FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES**

In order to carry out these declarations, we set forth these fundamental Principles for our continued life and witness.

### **PREFACE:**

In the firm conviction that “we shall be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ,” and that “there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved”, and acknowledging our duty to proclaim Christ’s saving Truth to all peoples, nations and tongues, we declare our intention to hold fast the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Faith of God.

We acknowledge that rule of faith laid down by St. Vincent of Lerins: “Let us hold that which has been believed everywhere, always and by all, for that is truly and properly Catholic”.

## **I**

### **PRINCIPLES OF DOCTRINE**

#### **1. THE NATURE OF THE CHURCH**

We gather as people called by God to be faithful and obedient to Him. As the Royal Priestly People of God, the Church is called to be, in fact, the manifestation of Christ in and to the world. True religion is revealed to man by God. We cannot decide what is truth, but rather (in obedience) ought to receive, accept, cherish, defend and teach what God has given us. The Church is created by God, and is beyond the ultimate control of man.

The Church is the Body of Christ at work in the world. She is the society of the baptized called out from the world – in it, but not of it. As Christ’s faithful Bride, she is different from the world and must not be influenced by it.

#### **2. THE ESSENTIALS OF TRUTH AND ORDER**

We repudiate all deviation or departure from the Faith, in whole or in part, and bear witness to these essential principles of evangelical Truth and apostolic Order.

### **HOLY SCRIPTURES**

The Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the authentic record of God’s revelation of Himself, His saving activity, and moral demands – a revelation valid for all men and all time.

## **THE CREEDS**

The Nicene Creed as the authoritative summary of the chief articles of the Christian Faith, together with the Apostles' Creed, and that known as the Creed of St. Athanasius to be "thoroughly received and believed" in the sense they have had always in the Catholic Church.

## **TRADITION**

The received Tradition of the Church and its teaching as set forth by "the ancient catholic bishops and doctors", and especially as defined by the Seven Ecumenical Councils of the undivided Church, to the exclusion of all errors, ancient and modern.

## **SACRAMENTS**

The Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, the Holy Eucharist, Holy Matrimony, Holy Orders, Penance and Unction of the Sick, as objective and effective signs of the continued presence and saving activity of Christ our Lord among His people and as His covenanted means for conveying His grace. In particular, we affirm the necessity of Baptism and the Holy Eucharist (where they may be had) – Baptism as incorporating us into Christ (with its completion in Confirmation as "the seal of the Holy Spirit"), and the Eucharist as the sacrifice which unites us to the all-sufficient Sacrifice of Christ on the Cross and the Sacrament in which He feeds us with His Body and Blood.

## **HOLY ORDERS**

The Holy Orders of bishops, priests and deacons as the perpetuation of Christ's gift of apostolic ministry to His Church, asserting the necessity of a bishop of apostolic succession (or a priest ordained by such) as the celebrant of the Eucharist – these Orders consisting exclusively of men in accordance with Christ's Will and institution (as evidenced by the Scriptures), and the universal practice of the Catholic Church.

## **DEACONESSES**

The ancient office and ministry of Deaconesses as a lay vocation for women, affirming the need for proper encouragement of that office.

## **DUTY OF BISHOPS**

Bishops as Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Shepherds and Teachers, as well as their duty (together with other clergy and the laity) to guard and defend the purity and integrity of the Church's Faith and Moral Teaching.

## **THE USE OF OTHER FORMULAE**

In affirming these principles, we recognize that all Anglican statements of faith and liturgical formulae must be interpreted in accordance with them.

## **INCOMPETENCE OF CHURCH BODIES TO ALTER TRUTH**

We disclaim any right or competence to suppress, alter or amend any of the ancient Ecumenical Creeds and definitions of Faith, to set aside or depart from Holy Scripture, or to alter or deviate from the essential prerequisites of any Sacrament.

## **UNITY WITH OTHER BELIEVERS**

We declare our firm intention to seek and achieve full sacramental communion and visible unity with other Christians “who worship the Trinity in Unity, and Unity in Trinity”, and who hold the Catholic and Apostolic Faith in accordance with the foregoing principles.

## **II**

### **PRINCIPLES OF MORALITY**

The conscience, as the inherent knowledge of right and wrong, cannot stand alone as a sovereign arbiter of morals. Every Christian is obligated to form his conscience by the Divine Moral Law and the Mind of Christ as revealed in Holy Scriptures, and by the teachings and Tradition of the Church. We hold that when the Christian conscience is thus properly informed and ruled, it must affirm the following moral principles:

#### **INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY**

All people, individually and collectively, are responsible to their Creator for their acts, motives, thoughts and words, since “we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ.”

#### **SANCTITY OF HUMAN LIFE**

Every human being, from the time of his conception, is a creature and child of God, made in His image and likeness, an infinitely precious soul; and that the unjustifiable or inexcusable taking of life is always sinful.

#### **MAN’S DUTY TO GOD**

All people are bound by the dictates of the Natural Law and by the revealed will of God, in so far as they can discern them.

#### **FAMILY LIFE**

The God-given sacramental bond in marriage between one man and one woman is God’s loving provision for procreation and family life, and sexual activity is to be practiced only within the bonds of Holy matrimony.

### **MAN AS SINNER**

We recognize that man, as inheritor of original sin, is “very far gone from original righteousness”, and as a rebel against God’s authority is liable to His righteous judgment.

### **MAN AND GOD’S GRACE**

We recognize, too, that God loves His children and particularly has shown it forth in the redemptive work of our Lord Jesus Christ, and that man cannot be saved by any effort of his own, but by the Grace of God, through repentance and acceptance of God’s forgiveness.

### **CHRISTIAN’S DUTY TO BE MORAL**

We believe, therefore, it is the duty of the Church and her members to bear witness to Christian Morality, to follow it in their lives, and to reject the false standards of the world.

## **III**

### **CONSTITUTIONAL PRINCIPLES**

In the constitutional revision which must be undertaken, we recommend, for the consideration of continuing Anglicans, the following:

#### **RETAIN THE BEST OF BOTH PROVINCES**

That the traditional and tested features of the Canadian and American ecclesiastical systems be retained and used in the administration of the continuing Church.

#### **SELECTION OF BISHOPS**

That a non-political means for selection of bishops be devised, adopted and used.

#### **TRIPARTITE SYNOD**

That the Church be generally governed by a Holy Synod of three branches (episcopal, clerical and lay), under the presidency of the Primate of the Church.

#### **SCRIPTURAL STANDARDS FOR THE MINISTRY**

That the apostolic and scriptural standards for the sacred Ministry be used for all orders of Ministers.

## **CONCURRENCE OF ALL ORDERS FOR DECISIONS**

That the Constitution acknowledge the necessity of the concurrence of all branches of the Synod for decisions in all matters, and that extraordinary majorities be required for the favorable consideration of all matters of importance.

## **RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF DISCIPLINE**

That the Church re-establish an effective permanent system of ecclesiastical courts for the defense of the Faith and the maintenance of discipline over all her members.

## **CONSTITUTIONAL ASSEMBLY TO BE CALLED**

That our bishops shall call a Constitutional Assembly of lay and clerical representatives of dioceses and parishes to convene at the earliest appropriate time to draft a Constitution and Canons by which we may be unified and governed, with special reference to this Affirmation, and with due consideration to ancient Custom and the General Canon Law, and to the former law of our provinces.<sup>1</sup>

## **INTERIM ACTION**

In the meantime, trusting in the everlasting strength of God to carry us through all our trials, we commend all questions for decision to the proper authorities in each case: Episcopal, diocesan, and parochial, encouraging all the faithful to support our witness as subscribers to this Affirmation, and inviting all so doing to share our fellowship and the work of the Church.

## **IV**

### **PRINCIPLES OF WORSHIP**

#### **PRAYER BOOK THE STANDARD OF WORSHIP**

In the continuing Anglican Church, the *Book of Common Prayer* is (and remains) one work in two editions: The Canadian Book of 1962 and the American Book of 1928. Each is fully and equally authoritative. No other standard for worship exists.

#### **CERTAIN VARIANCES PERMITTED**

For liturgical use, only the *Book of Common Prayer* and service books conforming to and incorporating it shall be used.



## PRINCIPLES OF ACTION

### INTERCOMMUNION WITH OTHER APOSTOLIC CHURCHES

The continuing Anglicans remain in full communion with the See of Canterbury <sup>2</sup> and with all other faithful parts of the Anglican Communion, and should actively seek similar relations with all other Apostolic and Catholic Churches, provided that agreement in the essentials of Faith and Order first be reached.

### NON-INVOLVEMENT WITH NON-APOSTOLIC GROUPS

We recognize that the World Council of Churches, and many national and other Councils adhering to the World Council, are non-Apostolic, humanist and secular in purpose and practice, and that under such circumstances, we cannot be members of any of them. We also recognize that the Consultation of Church Union (COCU) and all other such schemes, being non-Apostolic and non-Catholic in their present concept and form, are unacceptable to us, and that we cannot be associated with any of them.

### NEED FOR SOUND THEOLOGICAL TRAINING

Re-establishment of spiritual, orthodox and scholarly theological education under episcopal supervision is imperative, and should be encouraged and promoted by all in authority; and learned and godly bishops, other clergy and lay people should undertake and carry on that work without delay.

### FINANCIAL AFFAIRS

The right of congregations to control of their temporalities should be firmly and constitutionally recognized and protected.

### ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

Administration should, we believe, be limited to the most simple and necessary acts, so that emphasis may be centered on worship, pastoral care, spiritual and moral soundness, personal good works, and missionary outreach, in response to God's love for us.

### THE CHURCH AS WITNESS TO TRUTH

We recognize also that, as keepers of God's will and truth for man, we can and ought to witness to that will and truth against all manifest evils, remembering that we are as servants in the world, but God's servants first.

## PENSIONS AND INSURANCE

We recognize our immediate responsibility to provide for the establishment of sound pension and insurance programs for the protection of the stipendiary clergy and other Church workers.

## LEGAL DEFENSE

We recognize the immediate need to coordinate legal resources, financial and professional, for the defense of congregations imperiled by their stand for the Faith, and commend this need most earnestly to the diocesan and parochial authorities.

## CONTINUATION, NOT INNOVATION

In this gathering witness of Anglicans and Episcopalians, we continue to be what we are. We do nothing new. We form no new body, but continue as Anglicans and Episcopalians.

*Now therefore*, deeply aware of our duty to all who love and believe the Faith of our Fathers, of our duty to God, who alone shall judge what we do, we make this *Affirmation*.

Before God, we claim our Anglican/Episcopal inheritance, and proclaim the same to the whole Church, through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be all honor and glory, world without end. **AMEN.**

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1. The Synod of Dallas, 1978.
  2. Because of the action of the General Synod of the Church of England, Parliament, and the Royal Assent [to the purported ordination of women], the College of Bishops of the Anglican Catholic Church is obliged no longer to count the See of Canterbury as a faithful part of the Anglican Communion.

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