

**Anglican–Roman Catholic
International Commission**

Eucharistic Doctrine Ministry and Ordination

ELUCIDATIONS

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PREFACE

The Commission has received many suggestions and criticisms concerning its three Agreed Statements. During the last two years these comments have been carefully studied and they have greatly assisted the Commission in clarifying various points for the benefit of the readers of the documents.

The Commission therefore takes the initiative of publishing the *Elucidations*, believing that it owes to its correspondents a provisional reply to criticisms of *Eucharistic Doctrine* and *Ministry and Ordination* without waiting for the final report it must present to its respective authorities. This, together with a reply to comments received on the Venice document on authority (1976), constitutes the Commission's present work and will include an attempt to treat the questions left unanswered in para. 24 of *Authority in the Church*.

These *Elucidations*, agreed at Salisbury in January 1979, express the unanimous view of the Commission on the intention and meaning of the documents. The former should therefore be taken in conjunction with the two Agreed Statements as expressing the mind of the Commission on these two fundamental questions.

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THE ELUCIDATIONS

1. When each of the Agreed Statements was published, the Commission invited and has received comment and criticism. These *Elucidations* are an attempt to expand and explain to those who have responded some points raised in connection with *Eucharistic Doctrine* (Windsor 1971) and *Ministry and Ordination* (Canterbury 1973).

I

EUCCHARISTIC DOCTRINE

SUBSTANTIAL AGREEMENT

2. The Commission was not asked to produce a comprehensive treatise on the eucharist, but only to examine differences which in the controversies of the past divided our two communions. The aim of the Commission has been to see whether we can today discover substantial agreement in faith on the eucharist. Questions have been asked about the meaning of *substantial* agreement. It means that the document represents not only the judgement of all its members—i.e. it is an agreement—but their unanimous agreement ‘on essential matters where it considers that doctrine admits no divergence’ (*Ministry and Ordination* para. 17)—i.e. it is a substantial agreement. Members of the Commission are united in their conviction ‘that if there are any remaining points of disagreement they can be resolved on the principles here established’ (*Eucharistic Doctrine* para. 12).

COMMENTS AND CRITICISMS

3. The following comments and criticisms are representative of the many received and are considered by the Commission to be of particular importance.

In spite of the firm assertion made in the Agreed Statement of the ‘once for all’ nature of Christ’s sacrifice, some have still been anxious that the term *anamnesis* may conceal the reintroduction of the theory of a repeated immolation. Others have

suspected that the word refers not only to the historical events of salvation but also to an eternal sacrifice in heaven. Others again have doubted whether *anamnesis* sufficiently implies the reality indicated by traditional sacrificial language concerning the eucharist. Moreover, the accuracy and adequacy of the Commission's exegesis of *anamnesis* have been questioned.

Some critics have been unhappy about the realistic language used in this Agreed Statement, and have questioned such words as *become* and *change*. Others have wondered whether the permanence of Christ's eucharistic presence has been sufficiently acknowledged, with a consequent request for a discussion of the reserved sacrament and devotions associated with it. Similarly there have been requests for clarification of the Commission's attitude to receptionism.

4. Behind these criticisms there lies a profound but often unarticulated anxiety that the Commission has been using new theological language which evades unresolved differences. Related to this anxiety is the further question as to the nature of the agreement claimed by the Commission. Does the language of the Commission conceal an ambiguity (either intentional or unintentional) in language which enables members of the two churches to see their own faith in the Agreed Statement without having in fact reached a genuine consensus?

ANAMNESIS AND SACRIFICE

5. The Commission has been criticized for its use of the term *anamnesis*. It chose the word used in New Testament accounts of the institution of the eucharist at the Last Supper:

'Do this as a memorial (*anamnesis*) of me' (1 Cor. 11. 24-25; Luke 22. 19: JB, NEB).

The word is also to be found in Justin Martyr in the second century. Recalling the Last Supper he writes:

'Jesus, taking bread and having given thanks, said, "Do this for my memorial (*anamnesis*): This is my body"; and likewise, taking the cup, and giving thanks, he said, "This is my blood" ' (First Apology 66; cf. Dialogue with Trypho 117).

From this time onwards the term is found at the very heart of the eucharistic prayers of both East and West, not only in the

institution narrative but also in the prayer which follows and elsewhere (cf. e.g. The Liturgy of St John Chrysostom; Eucharistic Prayer I—The Roman Missal; The Order of the Administration of the Lord's Supper or Holy Communion—The Book of Common Prayer (1662); and An Order for Holy Communion—Alternative Services Series 3).

The word is also found in patristic and later theology. The Council of Trent in explaining the relation between the sacrifice of the cross and the eucharist uses the words *commemoratio* and *memoria* (Session 22, ch. 1); and in the Book of Common Prayer (1662) the Catechism states that the sacrament of the Lord's Supper was ordained 'for the continual *remembrance* of the sacrifice of the death of Christ, and of the benefits which we receive thereby'. The frequent use of the term in contemporary theology is illustrated by *One Baptism One Eucharist and a Mutually Recognised Ministry* (Faith and Order Commission Paper No. 73), as well as by the *General Instruction on the Roman Missal* (1970).

The Commission believes that the traditional understanding of sacramental reality, in which the once-for-all event of salvation becomes effective in the present through the action of the Holy Spirit, is well expressed by the word *anamnesis*. We accept this use of the word which seems to do full justice to the semitic background. Furthermore it enables us to affirm a strong conviction of sacramental realism and to reject mere symbolism. However the selection of this word by the Commission does not mean that our common eucharistic faith may not be expressed in other terms.

In the exposition of the Christian doctrine of redemption the word *sacrifice* has been used in two intimately associated ways. In the New Testament, sacrificial language refers primarily to the historical events of Christ's saving work for us. The tradition of the Church, as evidenced for example in its liturgies, used similar language to designate in the eucharistic celebration the *anamnesis* of this historical event. Therefore it is possible to say at the same time that there is only one unrepeatable sacrifice in the historical sense, but that the eucharist is a sacrifice in the sacramental sense, provided that it

is clear that this is not a repetition of the historical sacrifice.

There is therefore one historical, unrepeatable sacrifice, offered once for all by Christ and accepted once for all by the Father. In the celebration of the memorial, Christ in the Holy Spirit unites his people with himself in a sacramental way so that the Church enters into the movement of his self-offering. In consequence, even though the Church is active in this celebration, this adds nothing to the efficacy of Christ's sacrifice upon the cross, because the action is itself the fruit of this sacrifice. The Church in celebrating the eucharist gives thanks for the gift of Christ's sacrifice and identifies itself with the will of Christ who has offered himself to the Father on behalf of all mankind.

CHRIST'S PRESENCE IN THE EUCHARIST

6. Criticism has been evoked by the statement that the bread and wine become the body and blood of Christ in the eucharist (*Eucharistic Doctrine* para. 10). The word *become* has been suspected of expressing a materialistic conception of Christ's presence, and this has seemed to some to be confirmed in the footnote on the word *transubstantiation* which also speaks of *change*. It is feared that this suggests that Christ's presence in the eucharist is confined to the elements, and that the Real Presence involves a physical change in them.

In order to respond to these comments the Commission recalls that the *Agreed Statement on Eucharistic Doctrine* affirmed that:

(a) It is the glorified Lord himself whom the community of the faithful encounters in the eucharistic celebration through the preaching of the word, in the fellowship of the Lord's supper, in the heart of the believer, and, in a sacramental way, through the gifts of his body and blood, already given on the cross for their salvation.

(b) His body and blood are given through the action of the Holy Spirit, appropriating bread and wine so that they become the food of the new creation already inaugurated by the coming of Christ (cf. paras. 7, 10, 11).

Becoming does not here imply material change. Nor does the liturgical use of the word imply that the bread and wine become Christ's body and blood in such a way that in the eucharistic celebration his presence is limited to the consecrated elements. It does not imply that Christ becomes present in the eucharist in the same manner that he was present in his earthly life. It does not imply that this *becoming* follows the physical laws of this world. What is here affirmed is a sacramental presence in which God uses realities of this world to convey the realities of the new creation: bread for this life becomes the bread of eternal life. Before the Eucharistic Prayer, to the question: 'What is that?', the believer answers: 'It is bread.' After the Eucharistic Prayer, to the same question he answers: 'It is truly the body of Christ, the Bread of Life.'

In the sacramental order the realities of faith become present in visible and tangible signs, enabling Christians to avail themselves of the fruits of the once-for-all redemption. In the eucharist the human person encounters in faith the person of Christ in his sacramental body and blood. This is the sense in which the community, the Body of Christ, by partaking of the sacramental body of the risen Lord, grows into the unity God intends for his Church. The ultimate change intended by God is the transformation of human beings into the likeness of Christ. The bread and wine *become* the sacramental body and blood of Christ in order that the Christian community may *become* more truly what it already is, the Body of Christ.

GIFT AND RECEPTION

7. This transformation into the likeness of Christ requires that the eucharistic gifts be received in faith. In the mystery of the eucharist we discern not one but two complementary movements within an indissoluble unity: Christ giving his body and blood, and the communicants feeding upon them in their hearts by faith. Some traditions have placed a special emphasis on the association of Christ's presence with the consecrated elements; others have emphasized Christ's presence in the heart of the believer through reception by faith. In the past acute difficulties have arisen when one or other of these emphases has become

almost exclusive. In the opinion of the Commission neither emphasis is incompatible with eucharistic faith, provided that the complementary movement emphasized by the other position is not denied. Eucharistic doctrine must hold together these two movements since in the eucharist, the sacrament of the New Covenant, Christ gives himself to his people so that they may receive him through faith.

RESERVATION

8. The practice of reserving the sacrament for reception after the congregation has dispersed is known to date back to the second century (cf. Justin Martyr, *First Apology*, 65 and 67). In so far as it maintains the complementary movements already referred to (as for example, when communion is taken to the sick) this practice clearly accords with the purpose of the institution of the eucharist. But later there developed a tendency to stress the veneration of Christ's presence in the consecrated elements. In some places this tendency became so pronounced that the original purpose of reservation was in danger of becoming totally obscured. If veneration is wholly dissociated from the eucharistic celebration of the community it contradicts the true doctrine of the eucharist.

Consideration of this question requires clarification of the understanding of the eucharist. Adoration in the celebration of the eucharist is first and foremost offered to the Father. It is to lead us to the Father that Christ unites us to himself through our receiving of his body and blood. The Christ whom we adore in the eucharist is Christ glorifying his Father. The movement of all our adoration is to the Father, through, with, and in Christ, in the power of the Spirit.

The whole eucharistic action is a continuous movement in which Christ offers himself in his sacramental body and blood to his people and in which they receive him in faith and thanksgiving. Consequently communion administered from the reserved sacrament to those unable to attend the eucharistic celebration is rightly understood as an extension of that celebration. Differences arise between those who would practise reservation for this reason only, and those who would

also regard it as a means of eucharistic devotion. For the latter, adoration of Christ in the reserved sacrament should be regarded as an extension of eucharistic worship, even though it does not include immediate sacramental reception, which remains the primary purpose of reservation (cf. the Instruction *Eucharisticum Mysterium* n. 49, of the Sacred Congregation of Rites (ASS 59, 1967)). Any dissociation of such devotion from this primary purpose, which is communion in Christ of all his members, is a distortion in eucharistic practice.

9. In spite of this clarification, others still find any kind of adoration of Christ in the reserved sacrament unacceptable. They believe that it is in fact impossible in such a practice truly to hold together the two movements of which we have spoken: and that this devotion can hardly fail to produce such an emphasis upon the association of Christ's sacramental presence with the consecrated bread and wine as to suggest too static and localized a presence that disrupts the movement as well as the balance of the whole eucharistic action (cf. Article 28 of the Articles of Religion).

That there can be a divergence in matters of practice and in theological judgements relating to them, without destroying a common eucharistic faith, illustrates what we mean by *substantial* agreement. Differences of theology and practice may well coexist with a real consensus on the essentials of eucharistic faith—as in fact they do within each of our communions.

OTHER ISSUES

10. Concern has been expressed that we have said nothing about intercommunion, though claiming to have attained a substantial agreement on eucharistic faith. The reason is that we are agreed that a responsible judgement on this matter cannot be made on the basis of the *Agreed Statement on Eucharistic Doctrine* alone, because intercommunion also involves issues relating to authority and to the mutual recognition of ministry. There are other important issues, such as the eschatological dimension of the eucharist and its relation to contemporary questions of human liberation and social justice, which we have either not fully developed or not explicitly

treated. These are matters which call for the common attention of our Churches, but they are not a source of division between us and are therefore outside our mandate.

II MINISTRY AND ORDINATION

COMMENTS AND CRITICISMS

11. After the publication of the Canterbury Statement on *Ministry and Ordination* the Commission received comments and criticisms, among which it judged the following to be of special concern.

It has been suggested that in the discussion of ministry insufficient attention was given to the priesthood of the whole people of God, so that the document seemed to have too clerical an emphasis. In this connection it has also been said that the distinction between this priesthood of all the faithful and the priesthood of the ordained ministry was not clearly enough explained. Questions have also been raised about the Commission's treatment of the origins and historical development of the ordained ministry and its threefold form; about its comparison of that development with the emergence of the canon of scripture; and about its views on the place of episcopacy within *episcopate* as it is outlined in the Statement (para. 9).

Some have wondered whether the Statement adequately expressed the sacramental nature of the rite of ordination, others whether this aspect has been overemphasized. The Commission has been asked to consider the implications of the Statement for the question of the ordination of women. There have also been inquiries about the bearing of the *Agreed Statement* upon the problem of recognizing the validity of Anglican Orders.

PRIESTHOOD

12. In common Christian usage the term *priesthood* is employed in three distinct ways: the priesthood of Christ, the priesthood of the people of God, the priesthood of the ordained ministry.

The priesthood of Christ is unique. He is our High Priest who has reconciled mankind with the Father. All other priesthood derives from his and is wholly dependent upon it.

The priesthood of the whole people of God (1 Peter 2.5) is the consequence of incorporation by baptism into Christ. This priesthood of all the faithful, dealt with in *Ministry and Ordination* (para. 7), is not a matter of disagreement between us. In a document primarily concerned with the ordained ministry, the Commission did not consider it necessary to develop the subject further than it has already done in the Statement. Here the ordained ministry is firmly placed in the context of the ministry of the whole Church and exists for the service of all the faithful.

The Agreed Statement (para. 13) explains that the ordained ministry is called priestly principally because it has a particular sacramental relationship with Christ as High Priest. At the eucharist Christ's people do what he commanded in memory of himself and Christ unites them sacramentally with himself in his self-offering. But in this action it is only the ordained minister who presides at the eucharist, in which, in the name of Christ and on behalf of his Church, he recites the narrative of the institution of the Last Supper, and invokes the Holy Spirit upon the gifts.

The word *priesthood* is used by way of analogy when it is applied to the people of God and to the ordained ministry. These are two distinct realities which relate, each in its own way, to the high priesthood of Christ, the unique priesthood of the new covenant, which is their source and model. These considerations should be borne in mind throughout para. 13, and in particular they indicate the significance of the statement that the ordained ministry 'is not an extension of the common Christian priesthood but belongs to another realm of the gifts of the Spirit'.

In this as in other cases the early Church found it necessary

for its understanding and exposition of the faith to employ terminology in ways in which it was not used in the New Testament. Today in seeking to give an account of our faith both our communions, in the interpretation of the Scriptures, take cognisance of the Church's growing understanding of Christian truth (cf. *Authority in the Church* paras. 2, 3, and 15).

SACRAMENTALITY OF ORDINATION

13. The phrase *in this sacramental act* in para. 15 has caused anxiety on two different counts: that this phrase seems to give the sacrament of ordination the same status as the two 'sacraments of the Gospel'; and that it does not adequately express the full sacramentality of ordination.

Both traditions agree that a sacramental rite is a visible sign through which the grace of God is given by the Holy Spirit in the Church. The rite of ordination is one of these sacramental rites. Those who are ordained by prayer and the laying on of hands receive their ministry from Christ through those designated in the Church to hand it on; together with the office they are given the grace needed for its fulfilment (cf. *Ministry and Ordination* para. 14). Since New Testament times the Church has required such recognition and authorization for those who are to exercise the principal functions of *episcopate* in the name of Christ. This is what both traditions mean by the sacramental rite of ordination.

Both traditions affirm the pre-eminence of baptism and the eucharist as sacraments 'necessary to salvation'. This does not diminish their understanding of the sacramental nature of ordination, as to which there is no significant disagreement between them.

ORIGINS AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE ORDAINED MINISTRY

14. Our treatment of the origins of the ordained ministry has been criticized. While the evidence leaves ground for differences of interpretation, it is enough for our purpose to recall that, from the beginning of the Christian Church, there existed *episcopate* in the community, however its various responsibilities were

distributed and described, and whatever the names given to those who exercised it (cf. paras. 8, 9, and especially 6). It is generally agreed that, within the first century, evidence of ordination such as we have described above is provided by the *First Epistle of Clement*, chapters 40-44, commonly dated 95 A.D. Some New Testament passages appear to imply the same conclusion, e.g. Acts 14.23. Early in the second century, the pattern of a threefold ministry centred on episcopacy was already discernible, and probably widely found (cf. the Epistles of Ignatius to the *Ephesians*, 4; *Magnesians*, 13; *Trallians*, 2; *Philadelphians*, 2; *Smyrnaeans*, 8). It was recognized that such ministry must be in continuity not only with the apostolic faith but also with the commission given to the apostles (cf. the *First Epistle of Clement*, 42).

Our intention in drawing a parallel between this emergence of the threefold ministry and the formation of the New Testament canon was to point to comparable processes of gradual development without determining whether the comparison could be carried further (cf. *Ministry and Ordination* para. 6). The threefold ministry remained universal until the divisions of western Christianity in the sixteenth century. However, both our communions have retained it.

We both maintain that *episcopate* must be exercised by ministers ordained in the apostolic succession (cf. para. 16). Both our communions have retained and remained faithful to the threefold ministry centred on episcopacy as the form in which this *episcopate* is to be exercised. Because our task was limited to examining relations between our two communions, we did not enter into the question whether there is any other form in which this *episcopate* can be realized.

ORDINATION OF WOMEN

15. Since the publication of the *Agreed Statement on Ministry and Ordination* there have been rapid developments with regard to the ordination of women. In those churches of the Anglican Communion where canonical ordinations of women have taken place, the bishops concerned believe that their action implies no departure from the traditional doctrine of the

ordained ministry (as expounded, for instance, in the Agreed Statement). While the Commission realizes that the ordination of women has created for the Roman Catholic Church a new and grave obstacle to the reconciliation of our communions (cf. Letter of Pope Paul VI to the Archbishop of Canterbury, 23 March 1976), it believes that the principles upon which its doctrinal agreement rests are not affected by such ordinations; for it was concerned with the origin and nature of the ordained ministry and not with the question who can or cannot be ordained. Objections, however substantial, to the ordination of women are of a different kind from objections raised in the past against the validity of Anglican Orders in general.

ANGLICAN ORDERS

16. In answer to the questions concerning the significance of the Agreed Statements for the mutual recognition of ministry, the Commission has affirmed that a consensus has been reached that places the questions in a new context (cf. *Ministry and Ordination* para. 17). It believes that our agreement on the essentials of eucharistic faith with regard to the sacramental presence of Christ and the sacrificial dimension of the eucharist, and on the nature and purpose of priesthood, ordination, and apostolic succession, is the new context in which the questions should now be discussed. This calls for a reappraisal of the verdict on Anglican Orders in *Apostolicae Curae* (1896).

Mutual recognition presupposes acceptance of the apostolicity of each other's ministry. The Commission believes that its Agreements have demonstrated a consensus in faith on eucharist and ministry which has brought closer the possibility of such acceptance. It hopes that its own conviction will be shared by the members of both our communions; but mutual recognition can only be achieved by the decision of our authorities. It has been our mandate to offer to them the basis upon which they may make this decision.

MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION

Anglican Delegates

The Most Revd Henry McAdoo, Archbishop of Dublin (Co-Chairman).

The Most Revd Felix Arnott, Archbishop of Brisbane (*not present at the 1977 meeting*).

The Rt Revd John Moorman formerly Bishop of Ripon (*not present at the Salisbury meeting 1979*).

The Rt Revd Edward Knapp-Fisher, Archdeacon of Westminster.

The Rt Revd Arthur Vogel, Bishop of West Missouri.

The Very Revd Henry Chadwick, Dean of Christ Church, Oxford (*not present at the Salisbury meeting 1979*).

The Revd Julian Charley, Rector, St Peter's, Everton, and Warden of Shrewsbury House.

The Revd Dr Eugene Fairweather, Keble Professor of Divinity, Trinity College, University of Toronto (*not present at the Salisbury meeting 1979*).

The Revd Canon Howard Root, Professor of Theology, University of Southampton.

CONSULTANT

The Revd Canon John Halliburton, Principal, Chichester Theological College.

SECRETARY

The Revd Christopher Hill, Assistant Chaplain, Archbishop of Canterbury's Counsellors on Foreign Relations.

Roman Catholic Delegates

The Rt Revd Alan Clark, Bishop of East Anglia (Co-Chairman).

The Rt Revd Christopher Butler, OSB, Auxiliary Bishop of Westminster.

The Revd Fr Barnabas Ahern, CP, Professor of Sacred Scripture, Rome (*not present at the Salisbury meeting 1979*).

The Revd Fr Pierre Duprey, WF, Under Secretary, Vatican Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity.

The Revd Dr Herbert Ryan, SJ, Professor of Religious Studies, Loyola University, Los Angeles.

Professor Jack Scarisbrick, Professor of History, University of Warwick.

The Revd Fr Georges Tavard, AA, Professor of Theology, Methodist Theological School, Delaware, Ohio.

The Revd Fr Jean Tillard, OP, Professor of Dogmatic Theology,
Dominican Faculty of Theology, Ottawa.
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SECRETARY

The Rt Revd Mgr William Purdy, Staff Member, Vatican Sec-
retariat for Promoting Christian Unity (*not present at the Salisbury
meeting 1979*).

World Council of Churches Observer

The Revd Dr Günther Gassmann, President, Lutherisches
Kirchenamt, Hannover.

NOTE

For English-speaking readers of these *Elucidations* non-biblical references may conveniently be found in the following: *The Three Agreed Statements* (CTS/SPCK, London 1978); *Prayers of the Eucharist: Early and Reformed*, ed. R. C. D. Jasper and G. J. Cuming (Collins, London 1975); *Alternative Services Series 3, Holy Communion* (SPCK and Presses, London 1973)—other revised Anglican liturgies may be referred to; *The Christian Faith in the Doctrinal Documents of the Catholic Church*, ed. J. Neuner, SJ and J. Dupuis, SJ (Mercier Press, Dublin and Cork 1973); *One Baptism One Eucharist and a Mutually Recognised Ministry* (WCC, Geneva 1975); *Vatican Council II—The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents*, ed. A. Flannery, OP (Costello, Dublin 1975); *Early Christian Writings*, tr. M. Staniforth (Penguin Books, London 1968); *The Ordination of Women* (CTS, London 1977); *Apostolicae Curae* (CTS, London 1974). The *Roman Missal* (1970) and the *Book of Common Prayer* (1662) are published in various editions—the Prayer Books of other Anglican Churches may be referred to instead of the latter; the *Articles of Religion* are normally appended to the *Book of Common Prayer*.