

3.

St Boniface Trust Essay Competition

Why I am an Anglican and believe I shall remain so

George Murinda

[George Murinda's essay was sent from Zimbabwe, one of the small number which were submitted from elsewhere than the United Kingdom. He has been a teacher, and is one of the few lay people who took part in the competition. He worships at St Monica's Parish Church, Seke, Chitungwiza, which is in Harare Diocese. The Judges rated his essay highly. We have introduced the footnotes for explanation, but apart from those and a few formatting modifications, little has been done by way of editing for publication. We have left his list of source References intact.]

1. Introduction: Background Information about Myself

My name is George Murinda. I am 48 years old. I am married with five children. I am a lay person within the Anglican Church. I am a member of St Monica's Parish Church in Seke, Chitungwiza, Zimbabwe. This is a parish in the Diocese of Harare within the Province of Central Africa.

I have been a member of the Anglican Communion since from 1963, the year I was born. My parents were both Anglicans and I was baptized at birth. I attended an Anglican mission secondary school (St Faith's in Rusape) and high school (St Augustine's in Penhalonga). My first employment was teaching at an Anglican high school (St David's, Bonda).

I have involved myself in the affairs of our parish for some time now. I have been a church warden, a deputy warden, an auditor and am currently the parish treasurer. I am also concerned about the challenges that we are facing, both as Anglicans in the greater Communion and as Zimbabweans in the Diocese of Harare in particular. I was therefore grateful to have this opportunity to express myself through this essay writing competition. It will be shown later in this essay that this background has a serious bearing on why I am an Anglican in the first place.

2. My Understanding of Anglicanism: How it stands out as a Distinct Witness

Being an Anglican means I am one of the 80 million or so brothers and sisters who are the family of the Anglican Communion, an international association of national and regional Anglican churches whose roots are in England. The Communion is made up of 38 provinces and each province is in turn made up of a number of dioceses. Each diocese is autonomous and is 'synodically' governed under a bishop. This is why we are often referred to as an 'Episcopal¹ church'. This autonomy of dioceses is one of the key distinctive features of Anglicanism. The administration issues are guided by a constitution referred to as 'the Acts of the Diocese'. All parishes are generally guided by the Anglican doctrine which has acted as one of the key unifying forces for such a large and diverse family of Christians. It will be shown later in this discourse that it is this understanding of Anglicanism that has influenced my relationship with the Anglican Church over the years and during trying times.

2.1 History

According to the New World Encyclopædia (2009) Anglicanism has its roots in the Roman Catholic form of faith that was brought to England by Augustine of Canterbury in the 5th and 6th centuries. From 1536 to 1539, King Henry VIII renounced Roman Papal authority and established a national church in England under the British monarch. England's breakaway from the Roman Catholic Church was motivated by dissatisfaction with 'absolute papal authority' and some elements of the Roman Catholic doctrine, and King Henry VIII's desire to divorce his wife Catherine of Aragon which was forbidden by the Roman Catholic Church (New World Encyclopædia: 2009).

2.2 Anglican Doctrine

Wikipedia, the free encyclopædia (2010) states that the Anglican doctrine emerged from the interweaving of two main strands of Christian doctrine during the English reformation in the 16th and 17th centuries; the Roman Catholic doctrine from which it retained many of its orthodox elements and the Protestant Reformed teachings, mostly Calvinism and Lutheranism. For this reason the Anglican doctrine is often said to represent or follow a middle path or 'via media' between the conservative Roman Catholic and the radical Protestant perspectives. The following interrelated and interconnected foundational elements define the Anglican doctrine:

- **The Bible or Scriptures**

This is the principal source of the Anglican doctrine. All other foundational sources derive from it. Article 6 of the 'Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion' for the Anglican Church specifically refers to the books of both the old and New Testament as necessary and sufficient for salvation.²

¹ From the Greek *ἐπίσκοπος* – *episcopos*, meaning overseer, superintendent, bishop.

² Article 6: "Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation: so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of the Faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation. In the name of the Holy Scripture we do understand those canonical Books of the Old and New Testament, of whose authority was never any doubt in the Church."

- **The Creeds**

The three creeds, namely Nicene, Athanasian and Apostles' creeds clearly spell out what Anglicans believe in. They constitute the expression of the faith of Anglicans. In all three creeds, Anglicans express their belief in the Trinity, the death and rising from death of Jesus Christ and therefore his defeat of death, the forgiveness of sin through Jesus Christ and his death, the resurrection of the dead, the true Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church and everlasting life to come. Anglicans express these beliefs from time to time during the administration of Sacraments in Church.

- **The Book of Common Prayer**

The Book of Common Prayer was first published in 1662³ and instituted by an Act of Parliament. The act was described as an *'Act for the Uniformity of Common Prayer and service in the Church and administration of the Sacraments'*.⁴ The Book of Common Prayer can be looked at as a 'Procedures Manual'. It specifically states that it is the Book of Common Prayer *'and administration of the Sacraments and other rites and ceremonies of the Church according to the use of the Church of England together with Psalms of David pointed as they are to be sung or said in churches and the form and manner of Making, Ordaining and Consecrating of Bishops, Priests and Deacons.'* The content of this book has since been adapted and modified by the various parishes across the world to suit local languages and circumstances. The diocese of Harare for example has a Shona version of the Book of Common Prayer that was approved by the 1962 synod of the Province of Central Africa. Anglicans across the Communion still look up to the prayer books for guidance on belief and practice. This principle is referred to as *'lex orandi, lex credendi'* in Latin, meaning the 'law of prayer is the law of belief'.

- **Historical Ecumenical Council Resolutions**

Wikipedia, the free Encyclopædia cites the first four ecumenical councils of Nicaea, Constantinople, Ephesus and Chalcedon as having a special place in the Anglican theology through the resolutions and creeds that arose from the meetings. Article 21 of the Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion, however, limits the authority of the councils to what is strictly scriptural to avoid errors and biases being introduced into the doctrine.⁵

- **The Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion**

The Thirty-Nine Articles of religion for the Anglican Church were the result of efforts to produce a distinctive and reformed doctrine and theology from that of the Roman Catholic Church. The work was led by bishops and theologians under the leadership of Thomas Cranmer who was then the Archbishop of Canterbury. The articles were adopted by an Act of Parliament in 1571 and were declared by the Monarch thus: *'that the Articles of the Church of England do contain the true Doctrine of the Church of England agreeable to God's word: which we do therefore ratify and confirm, requiring all our loving subjects to continue*

³ *The First Prayer-Book dates from 1549; the current Book of Common Prayer dates from 1662.*

⁴ *The text of the Act of Uniformity is printed in the Book of Common Prayer*

⁵ *Article 21: "General Councils may not be gathered together without the commandment and will of Princes. And when they be gathered together, (forasmuch as they be an assembly of men, whereof all be not governed with the Spirit and Word of God), they may err, and sometimes have erred, even in things pertaining unto God. Wherefore things ordained by them as necessary to salvation have neither strength nor authority, unless it may be declared that they be taken out of Holy Scripture."*

*in the uniform profession thereof, and prohibiting the least difference from the said Articles.*⁶ The Articles maintained some of the traditional elements of the Roman Catholic Church doctrine and incorporated some elements from the protestant teaching. Whilst the Thirty-Nine Articles are no longer a legal obligation for parishes within the Anglican Communion today⁷, they still remain an authoritative reference for the Anglican doctrine.

- **Anglican Homilies**

The homilies are sermons contained in two books that were developed by reformists like Thomas Cranmer to teach Anglicans Christian theology and practice. Homily No. 2, for example, taught against the peril of idolatry; and No.8 was on the time and place of prayer. Article 35 of the Articles of Religion specifically recognized the value and importance of these homilies and directed that they be read in churches.⁸

- **Anglican Divines**

It is generally agreed that Anglicanism has no one single founding theologian like Lutheranism or Calvinism. However there have been prominent writers, scholars and theologians who have contributed immensely in putting together inspirational works of faith, doctrine, worship and spirituality. These writers and their works have been referred to as 'divines' and their writings have been a great source of inspiration, spiritual guidance and doctrinal reference to Anglicans across the Communion. Such divines include Thomas Cranmer, Matthew Parker, Lancelot Andrewes and Richard Hooker, to mention but a few. The divines regard Scripture as interpreted through 'tradition and reason' as authoritative in matters concerning salvation.

- **The Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral**

The Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral is the term now used to describe the four points of resolutions made at the bishops' conferences of Chicago and Lambeth in the years 1886 and 1888. The objective of the conference had been to define parameters for discussion of reunion with the Roman Catholic Church. The four points of resolution however became the 'sine qua non' for essential Anglican identity. The four points are described as giving a summation of the Anglican approach to theology, worship and church structure. The four points of the Quadrilateral include: 1) that the Holy Scriptures of the Old and the New Testament 'contain all things necessary for salvation' and are the rule and ultimate standard of faith; 2) that the creeds, particularly the Apostles' and Nicene, are the sufficient statements of Christian faith; 3) that the dominical sacraments of baptism and the supper of the Lord be ministered with unflinching use of Christ's words of institution and of the elements ordained by him; 4) and the Historic Episcopate locally adapted in the methods of its administration to the varying needs of the nations and peoples called of God into the unity of his church.

⁶ *'His Majesty's Declaration' appears in the Book of Common Prayer as an introduction to the Thirty-Nine Articles. The 'Monarch' in 1571 was in fact Queen Elizabeth I; and each successive English (British) monarch re-issues the declaration.*

⁷ *..though they still have validity within the Church of England as one of its 'historic formularies'.*

⁸ *Article 35 – "The Second Book of Homilies, the several titles whereof we have joined under this Article, doth contain a godly and wholesome Doctrine, and necessary for these times, as doth the former Book of Homilies, which were set forth in the time of Edward the Sixth; and therefore we judge them to be read in Churches by the Ministers, diligently and distinctly, that they may be understood of the people." The Article then gives a list of the titles of the 21 homilies.*

2.3 Instruments of Unity or Communion

As stated above, the Anglican Church does not have an international juridical authority that oversees church activities across the Anglican Communion. The Roman Catholic Church, for example, depends on the 'magisterium' or teaching authority and Papal authority to bind the church. It has been my observation during social interactions that the most divisive topics for discussion relate to religion and politics. It is therefore amazing that such a large and diverse group of Christians has so far remained largely united without an international juridical authority. Four instruments have so far managed to maintain unity of Anglicans in the Communion.

- **The Archbishop of Canterbury**

The Archbishop of Canterbury is accepted as the 'spiritual head' of the Anglican Communion. He is recognised as 'primus inter pares' or 'first among equals', even though he does not exercise any authority over any parish outside his own province of Canterbury. As spiritual leader, he has moral authority which allows him to determine which churches join the Communion as all dioceses are expected to be in Communion with the Archbishop of Canterbury. He also invites bishops to Lambeth Conferences and chairs the conferences. He is also host and chairman of the Anglican Communion Primates' meetings and president of the secretariat of the Anglican Communion office and its deliberative body, the Anglican Consultative Council. The Archbishop of Canterbury therefore has a strictly symbolic and unifying role within the Anglican Communion. In contrast the Pope can rule by decree in the form of an 'apostolic constitution', a papal legislation that is not time limited. One of the most recent of these is the 'Anglicanorum Coetibus' that was decreed by Pope Benedict XVI in 2009 to create 'Anglican ordinariates', a development that is threatening the unity of the Anglican Communion. I will briefly revisit this and other divisive matters facing the Anglican Communion later in this essay.

- **The Lambeth Conference**

This is a meeting of all bishops within the Anglican Communion that is hosted and chaired by the Archbishop of Canterbury. At this conference bishops discuss matters of practical interest and make commitments to certain resolutions if they are made. There is however no legal means of enforcing Lambeth Conference resolutions on a diocese if it does not wish to comply. The conference is held once every ten years.

- **The Anglican Consultative Council**

This is another consultative body that is comprised of representatives of bishops, clergy and laity chosen from the 38 provinces of the Communion. It meets once every three years and has an office and secretariat, the Anglican Communion Office.

- **The Primates' meeting**

This is a recent addition to the tools for international consultation and deliberation. It is a meeting for bishops where they get a forum for 'leisurely thought, prayer and deep consultation'.

All the international bodies just mentioned help to maintain unity by providing a forum for consultation, debate, persuasion and commitment to resolutions taken by the majority.

3 How I Became an Anglican

I must confess that I am an Anglican by historical accident. Three events in history influenced my being a member of the Anglican Communion. First, the British colonised Zimbabwe from 1890 to 1980, during which time the Anglican Church was dominant in the country. My grandparents were converted to the new Christian Faith as Anglicans. Secondly, my parents were Anglican and I was therefore born in an Anglican family and baptized as such at birth. Thirdly, I married an Anglican spouse, Winnet, also with a strong Anglican background, who has strengthened my faith during times that I wavered. I have since understood my church and believe it is right for me.

4 Why I believe I will remain an Anglican

Whilst my membership of the Anglican fellowship was accidental in the first place, my continued membership to this day, and I believe into the future, is out of choice. I believe I now have a fair understanding of Anglicanism and other Christian denominations to make an informed choice. I agree with St Augustine (354-430) when he declared that '*Salus extra ecclesiam non est*', meaning 'there is no salvation outside the Church'. I sincerely believe that with hard work and God's grace, I will find salvation through the Anglican Church. I believe I will remain an Anglican for a number of reasons.

4.1 The 'pull factors'

There are some aspects about the Anglican Church that I admire and like that keep me from leaving the Communion to seek salvation elsewhere. Most of these have to do with the doctrine and practices of Anglicanism:

4.1.1 No personal veneration of individuals

I find that there is no personal veneration of individuals within Anglicanism. In other words, there is no institutionalised intermediary between the congregation and God. Whilst it is not my place to judge and criticize other Christian denominations, one cannot help but observe that some of them place a lot of emphasis and indeed veneration on the founder and leader. The founder and leader may claim special powers or gifts, usually prophetic or of healing to warrant a special place nearer to God than everyone else. I find this blasphemous and cultist. I find no evidence of this within Anglicanism. In direct contrast, the Pope is revered as 'infallible', and Papal infallibility was defined dogmatically at the first Vatican Council of 1870. It is this dogmatic assertion of Papal infallibility that enables the Pope to wield power and influence over not only Roman Catholics, but also political leaders across the globe. As an Anglican I respect my deacons, priests and bishops but not to the level of devotion to them. I have great respect for the Archbishop of Canterbury, but I do not consider him sacred. It is this absence of human intermediaries between me and God that I find deeply attractive in the Anglican Church. I find this to be a clear understanding and recognition of the Christian teaching from Jesus when he said 'I am the way, the truth and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me.'⁹ This is a unique characteristic as far as church organisations are concerned which should be cherished by all Anglicans.

⁹ John 14.6

4.1.2 No emphasis on worldly and carnal promises of the 'here and now'

One other thing that attracts me to the Anglican Church is its teaching that places less emphasis on the 'here and now'. By placing less emphasis on the immediate worldly interests of human beings, greater focus will be put on working for the eternal life that we look forward to as expressed in the Nicene Creed when we say: 'We look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come.'¹⁰ I have observed that other churches place emphasis on current personal and worldly comforts. This is through teaching the 'prosperity gospel' and advertising and performing healing 'miracles'. People are advised to give generously to the church in if they want to be blessed. The Old Testament Prophet Malachi is usually quoted. I have no problem with 'cheerfully giving' to further God's work but take great exception when it is implied that the giving will be directly related to the material return from God. This creates the false impression that salvation can be purchased like a service on the market. Advertisements are also made for people to come and witness miracle healings and indeed healing charades can be viewed on television. The 'All Experts' website quotes Andrew Foley, a religious expert, as having expressed his personal sentiments on this and related matters. In an article entitled 'Why Pentecostals are danger for Christianity', Andrew Foley commended thus: *'One could take dozens of issues in which Pentecostalism has perverted the gospel: from word-faith to the prosperity gospel, to tongues, to phony signs and wonders, to cultish behaviour, but I think the main negative characteristic that covers all the errors is the elevation of the emotions and subjective experience over the mind and over legitimate authority. Pentecostalism, with its promises of health, wealth, worldly prosperity, miracles and a direct exciting experience with God himself, appeals to something very carnal in mankind, which probably explains its incredible growth.'* I am personally concerned about advertising for people to come and witness miracle healing. This is not only contrary to what Jesus practised when he performed healing miracles on earth, but is also against medical practice ethics. I have not personally checked on the authenticity of these 'miracle healings', but some religious experts like Reverend Philip Dacre and Andrew Foley cited above claim that none of the cures have been independently medically proven. It is the absence of institutionalised appeals to worldly desires and carnal interests that attracts and keeps me an Anglican.

4.1.3 Simple and unassuming Organisational and Administration Structure

The Anglican Communion does not have a complex organisational structure. I understand all we have is a secretariat of the Anglican Communion office and an administrative Consultative Council that are accommodated within Canterbury province. To me this as a reflection of the Anglicans' understanding of their core business, which is definitely not administration and running a government, but 'living, preaching and teaching the gospel by engaging in holistic mission guided by the Holy Spirit.'¹¹ In contrast the Roman Catholic Church is ruled from the Vatican City, which is also an independent state. I believe the demands of running a state will in some way distract from matters of Christianity. Politicians the world over tend to be cunning, exploitative and selfish. It will certainly be difficult to admonish the excesses of other politicians when you are also a politician for all practical purposes.

¹⁰ From the Nicene Creed quoted in the Anglican Book of Common Prayer of the Church of the Province of Central Africa, 1962,).

¹¹ Anglican Diocese of Harare Vision Statement.

4.1.4 Trained tested and vetted priests

I have observed with appreciation and satisfaction that Anglican priests, deacons and bishops are well trained, tested and vetted before they are put to the service of ministering to God's flock. In Zimbabwe for example they undergo a three year training course at Bishop Gaul College in Harare. Before priests get posted to a parish, they are first vetted by the wardens of the parishes to which the bishop intends to post them. This practice is clearly in line with Article 23 of the Thirty-Nine Articles of religion.¹² This training, testing and vetting of priests is meant to protect parishioners against the 'false prophets' that Jesus warned us to be wary of in Mathew 7.15. Andrew Foley, the religious expert and commentator quoted above, believes some churches are being ministered to by pastors with very low educational and intellectual levels. Some even serve after acquiring diplomas from Correspondence Bible Colleges. He contends that 'this low bar allows too many charlatans, bullies, ignoramuses and heretics into influential positions of authority' within churches. I will be the first to admit that being a priest and wanting to serve in 'God's vineyard' should be a calling that should not be deterred by human obstacles like qualifications and vetting. I am however also aware that religion is now considered by some as a high stakes venture of great power/influence and wealth. To me herein lies the cause of all conflict, divisions and splits that have afflicted and continue to afflict church organisations. I will briefly comment on this issue later on in this essay. Suffice it to state at this point that as an Anglican I feel fairly safe from such religious predators.

4.1.5 Solemn and Lively Churchmanship

Churchmanship can be looked at as the manifestation of theology in the realms of liturgy and piety. Anglican Churchmanship is also unique in that it reflects the practices of both the Roman Catholic Church and the Reformed Protestant Churches. We are however different in that when it comes to the Holy Communion or Eucharist, we do not 'offer the body and blood of Jesus Christ to God for the salvation of mankind' as Roman Catholics do. On this matter we are in agreement with Martin Luther, the German reformer, when he commented thus: *'They make the sacrament which they should accept from God, namely, the body and blood of Christ, into a sacrifice and have offered it to the selfsame God.'* Article 31 of the Thirty-Nine Articles describes the practice as blasphemous and dangerously deceitful.¹³ I believe the solemnity is important as a reminder of the seriousness and importance of the liturgy, particularly the Eucharist which we believe is one the most important of the seven Sacraments that we recognise as Anglicans. Liveliness is also important to keep the liturgy captivating and interesting. I must make special mention that we do not do 'mass prayers' during our church services and we do not 'speak in tongues' during these church services. My personal sentiment is that 'mass praying' is disorderly and 'speaking in tongues' is showing off at best and 'demonic' at the worst. Our services are generally well planned, orderly and participatory. The prayer books and extracts from them generally guide what is said and done during services and at the

¹² Article 23 - *"It is not lawful for any man to take upon him the office of public preaching, or ministering the Sacraments in the Congregation, before he be lawfully called, and sent to execute the same. And those we ought to judge lawfully called and sent, which be chosen and called to this work by men who have public authority given unto them in the Congregation, to call and send Ministers into the Lord's vineyard."*

¹³ Article 31 - *"The Offering of Christ once made is that perfect redemption, propitiation, and satisfaction, for all the sins of the whole world, both original and actual; and there is none other satisfaction for sin, but that alone. Wherefore the sacrifices of Masses, in the which it was commonly said, that the Priest did offer Christ for the quick and the dead, to have remission of pain or guilt, were blasphemous fables, and dangerous deceits."*

performance of all sacraments. I understand churchmanship as practised by Anglicans is of three kinds: high church, which is traditional and very close to the practices of the Roman Catholics and favoured by Anglo-Catholics within the Anglicans; Low Church, which is more protestant and evangelical in nature; and broad church or latitudinarian, which is the middle ground between these extremes. I believe we are latitudinarian in churchmanship at our Parish.

4.1.6 Authentic claim to be a true Apostolic Catholic Church

Like the Roman Catholic Church, the Anglican Church has a genuine claim to be a true Apostolic Catholic Church. What this means is that our Anglican bishops who lead the various church dioceses across the Anglican Communion, can trace their succession back to the original twelve disciples of Jesus who were sent to spread Christianity to the world. This is called Apostolic Succession. Whilst this in itself is not guarantee to a place in Paradise, it helps to motivate me to keep to the Christianity faith. One feels closeness and a sense of belonging with the Apostles who actually worked with Jesus Christ.

4.1.7 Bernard Mizeki, the martyr

The unique story of Bernard Mizeki inspires and makes me feel good about being a Zimbabwean Anglican. Bernard Mizeki is the only Zimbabwean African martyr. He was an Anglican working as a teacher and Catechist in chief Mangwende's area near Marondera. He was murdered on Thursday 18 June, 1896. This was during the Mashona uprising against colonial rule. He was considered a 'sell-out and sorcerer' by the African traditional spiritual leadership at that time. In her biography of Bernard Mizeki, Margaret Snell clearly points out that Bernard Mizeki had been warned that he was to be killed and advised to flee the area to safety in Mutare. He refused, saying 'Mangwende's people are suffering. I cannot leave my people now in a time of such darkness. Here I must stay.'¹⁴ What is also amazing about Bernard's martyrdom is that after he was mortally wounded by stabbing, he is believed to have been bodily taken up to heaven. Two women witnesses who included his wife claim "*they were almost blinded by a great and brilliant white light. The whole of the hillside was lit up and there was a noise 'like many wings of great birds'. They saw, through their fingers, that in the centre of the light, where Bernard lay, there was a strange red glow*". After this, Bernard Mizeki was gone, never to be seen again.¹⁵ To this date, thousands of Anglicans from across the region visit Bernard Mizeki shrine just outside Marondera town annually in June in pilgrimage to the martyr.¹⁶ This inspirational story of Bernard Mizeki tells me that salvation is also for Anglicans in Zimbabwe, as long as we keep our faith in God and do his work.

4.2 Emotional Attachment to the Anglican Church

My life long relationship with the Anglican Church has made me feel emotionally attached to it. As already stated above, I was born to Anglican Church parents. I was baptised and confirmed in the Anglican Church. I attended Anglican Church schools and worked as teacher at an Anglican secondary school for several years. I married an Anglican wife and am still an Anglican. I feel like the Anglican Church nurtured me and am emotionally indebted to it.

¹⁴ 'Bernard Mizeki of Zimbabwe' – Margaret L Snell (Mambo Press, 1986) p34.

¹⁵ *Ibid*, p.38.

¹⁶ He is commemorated yearly on 18th June.

5 The Divisive Challenges Facing the Anglican Church

I want to conclude this essay by pointing out the controversial social issues that have caused dysfunctional conflict that is now threatening to split the Anglican Communion. I also want to offer possible approaches to dealing with the challenges.

5.1 Homosexuality and Females' Ordination

Five specific and outstanding events can be cited with respect to the above: 1) Jeffrey John, a celibate gay was appointed Bishop of Reading Diocese in England in May 2003. He withdrew after persuasion and appeal from the Archbishop of Canterbury; 2) the same year the Canadian diocese of New Westminster authorised a liturgy for same sex blessings; 3) in June 2003, openly gay and partnered Gene Robinson was elected Bishop of New Hampshire in the USA; 4) in September 2007 Bishop Kunonga of Zimbabwe tried to withdraw the Harare diocese from the Province of Central Africa, ostensibly over homosexuality. He failed and was subsequently excommunicated. He, however, still maintains occupancy and custody of all Anglican buildings whilst the Anglicans worship in alternative venues, including open spaces. He has a very small following. We wait to see how the courts will conclude the matter before them. 5) And in 2010, Canon Mary Glasspool, a gay female, was consecrated Bishop by the Episcopal diocese of Los Angeles in the USA. In response to the disagreements that arose, the Eames Commission was instituted by a Primates' meeting in 2003 which subsequently published the Windsor Report in October 2004 which recommended 'an Anglican Covenant' to resolve future disputes. The final draft of the Covenant was produced in December 2009 and parishes are being asked to adopt or reject it. We also wait to see how the dioceses across the Communion will respond and how those that will be in the minority after the 'vote' will react. As we speak, fierce debate and campaigning for and against the covenant goes on.

5.2 Anglican Ordinariates

In 2009, the Pope published an apostolic constitution, the *Anglicanorum Coetibus* which invited willing Anglicans across the globe to be received into full communion with the Holy See while retaining liturgical, musical, theological and other aspects of Anglican patrimony. The Anglicans would be organised into regional or national communities under the jurisdiction of a Roman Catholic Bishop, or 'Ordinary', appointed by the Pope. It is disturbing to note that one of the first people to join the ordinariates in England was John Broadhurst, a former Anglican Bishop. He was apparently lured by a fellow former Anglican, Bishop Alan Hopes now entrusted with the responsibility of overseeing the introduction of the Anglican Ordinariates.¹⁷ I view this as aggressive proselytising by the Roman Catholic Church to take advantage of the disagreements within the Anglican Communion and the presence of Anglo-Catholics within the rank and file of Anglicans. I also wonder why the Roman Catholic Church has not seen it fit to target the over four billion people in this world who are not Christians instead of targeting Anglicans who are 'at least' Christians and have therefore seen the light. I agree with John Townroe when he suggests that the strategy will be unpopular with some Roman Catholic loyalists who will view the 'preferential' treatment given to Anglican Ordinariates as favouritism. I also agree with John Townroe that a greater understanding and appreciation of Anglicanism will help in

¹⁷ This information comes from Canon John Townroe's report to the St Boniface Trust Annual Meeting 2011. http://www.stbonifacetrust.org.uk/documents/reports/J_Townroe_Report_March_2011.pdf It was this report which gave rise to the Essay Competition.

dealing with this kind of challenge in the long term.¹⁸ I want to suggest a multi-faceted approach to dealing with these divisive challenges facing our Anglican Communion.

5.3 A Multi-faceted Possible Solution

I believe a four pronged approach will go a long in addressing the divisive challenges facing the Anglican Communion and help keep it together:

- **Continued debate on controversial matters**

The debate should be open to all interested people and should be guided by the scriptures, Christian tradition and Christian reason as guided by our divines. Those who would wish to leave the Communion as individuals can leave, but the door should always be open to accept them back. Allowing open debate and disagreement is recognition of the modern thinking that certain levels of conflict are actually good for organisational development. It allows for new ideas to come to the fore and all feelings to be expressed. However, should disagreements continue to the extreme level of becoming dysfunctional as to threaten to split the communion then the next level of the strategy should be put into action.

- **Integrative Problem Solving**

We can borrow from management theory by employing the integrative problem solving strategy where the outstanding leaders in the disagreement are asked to find a solution to the problem themselves. They can do this through consensus, confrontation or pursuing a super-ordinate goal that goes beyond their personal/faction goals. In this case the unity of the church as prayed for by Jesus in John 17.21 and John 10.16 should appeal to any selfless Christian leader.

- **Teaching and Developing an Appreciation of Anglicanism**

As a medium- to long-term strategy, we as Anglicans need to be taught Anglicanism and develop an appreciation of it. This can be achieved through many ways including this kind of effort initiated by the St Boniface Trust; publishing and distributing a church magazine from the Bishop's office; sermons by priests during church services from time to time; formal lessons to Sunday school children; making it part and parcel of the agenda and activities of all guilds within the Anglican church including Mothers' Union, youths, and others; forming active Anglican Fellowships at all colleges, universities and higher educational institutions where Anglicanism is taught as part of the activities; and expanding the activities of the Theological Education in the Anglican Communion (TEAC) to make it global.

- **Appointing Mature People to Clerical Positions of Influence**

I would recommend that only elderly people be appointed to be priests and bishops in the Anglican Communion, over and above the existing requirements. It is my personal view that elderly people are more inclined to pursue God's agenda as opposed to a personal agenda by persons who are young and believe they still have time on earth. It is my belief that the pursuit of a selfish personal agenda of power, wealth and influence is the major cause of divisions that have afflicted Christian organisations in the past and continue to do so today. The younger people will be incorporated into other supportive roles and

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

functions so that they thus become prepared and mature to take up the very senior and influential positions. This is not discriminatory as everyone will eventually mature and have a chance to lead the God's flock.

6 Conclusion

I am an Anglican and am proud to be one. I believe I will remain an Anglican because I appreciate the doctrine as I have explained above. Granted, there are challenges and weaknesses within Anglicanism, but this is true of all Christian organisations. I believe it is better to spend time, effort and resources working with others to make the Anglican Church a better organisation that is guided by Christian teaching as it fulfils its mission.

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