

What is Anglo-Catholicism?

1 Introduction

What would have immediately struck someone entering a generally recognized Anglo-Catholic church just after the Second World War, say in the mid-1950s? To anyone with a very limited knowledge of the Church of England, it would have seemed just like going into a Roman Catholic church of the day. Religious pictures would be on the walls or over the altar. There would be several statues, one or two of which might have been clothed, and in front of them, a cluster of candles would perhaps be burning. A crucifix would be found above the pulpit. There might also have been one over a prayer desk, which would have acted as a confessional, if there were not an actual confessional, Roman Catholic style. There would be Stations of the Cross around the walls. And the focal point of the church would have been the high altar, decked with many candles, behind which there might have been a giant reredos with statues of saints. Around the church there would be carefully tended side-altars. A lamp might be burning in one of them; those with special knowledge would be aware that it was the place where the Blessed Sacrament was reserved. And a smell of incense may have pervaded the whole building, especially if the main Sunday service had just taken place.

At a quick glance around the church, all this and more would have immediately struck the visitor. And should he or she have been present at the most popular Sunday service, the conviction of being in a Roman Catholic church would have been even stronger as doubtless there would be three priests conducting the service, attired in richly coloured eucharistic vestments, accompanied by numerous servers. And, apart from the incense, there would much bowing and genuflecting, and perhaps the music would be plainsong. The epistle and gospel would not be read but sung accordingly. There would, however, be hymns that were

unmistakably Anglican. If the service started about 11 o'clock it might be concluded with the angelus, which consists of prayers said in honour of and to the Blessed Virgin Mary. And should the observer attend church in the evening, instead of evensong there would be the service of benediction and a public recitation of the rosary. There would be daily services, held early in the morning. On one day of the year, Corpus Christi, the Blessed Sacrament would perhaps be carried around the church, the floor strewn with flowers.

Such would have been a typical Anglo-Catholic church about thirty years ago and what the observer would have seen would have been fairly uniform amongst all Anglo-Catholic churches. Today, the position is both different and more complex. One can still find many Anglo-Catholic churches of the genre just described – churches which inside look like Roman Catholic churches of that period and where services held are also like those of the Roman Church of that period. But there are now probably more Anglo-Catholic churches which have modified their furnishings and, especially, their services to coincide once again with those of the Roman Catholic Church. The changes occurred after the Vatican Council of the 1960s and were in many cases towards simplicity of ritual and the clearing out of what was seen to be much decadent ecclesiastical furniture. Services veered towards what might simply be called a more Protestant position (see ch. 11.8). Many Anglo-Catholic clergy felt they must do likewise and this has led to much diversity of practice. Consequently today it has become far less easy to pick out Anglo-Catholic churches than once it used to be.

In terms of elaborate rituals it is often said that some Anglo-Catholic churches are more Roman than Rome – what goes on is a veritable paradise for ecclesiastical scene-shifters, Roman pattern! But, no matter the point of comparison, there would appear to be little difference between Anglo-Catholic and Roman Catholic places of worship and services, either at present or in the recent past, and this is precisely how some Anglo-Catholics want it, for it is the image they strive to create. So difficult has it been to distinguish between the churches that at various times Roman Catholic priests have had to instruct their more ignorant followers that they must not confuse the two and so find themselves worshipping in what is nothing more than an Anglican church. Some Anglo-Catholic churches have co-operated in this and placed on their notice-boards such words as 'This is not a Roman Catholic church.' Let it not be forgotten that Anglo-Catholic churches can be found up and down the English

countryside, in villages as well as in towns and cities, and, despite their internal appearance and the ritual of their services, they stand as an integral part of the parochial system of the Church of England.

2 A confusion of terms

Anglo-Catholicism has been traditionally associated with other names such as ritualism, the high church, the Oxford movement, and Tractarianism. It is necessary to see precisely what is being discussed and to differentiate the terms.

There is little difficulty in understanding what is meant by the Oxford movement. The movement is generally reckoned to have begun as a result of John Keble's famous assize sermon of 14 July 1833, in Oxford, when he called on the Established Church to assert its autonomy and to reject encroachments from the State by firmly opposing what might loosely be called Erastianism. The result was the immediate emergence of a group of academics and academically minded people, mainly based in Oxford, who set in motion an extraordinary revival in the Church of England. As it crystallized, it loudly proclaimed that the Church of England had a Catholic heritage and was therefore Catholic in essence. The revival rested on the fact that the Church of England was not just a Protestant church which had emerged at the time of the Reformation but was basically Catholic – part of the Catholic church – and had not cut itself off from its progenitor. It had reformed itself but had not radically changed its nature during those turbulent times. The early Fathers of the movement, John Keble himself (1792–1866), John Henry Newman (1801–90), and Edward Bouverie Pusey (1800–82), constituted the initial triumvirate; in the early days, there were also secondary but prominent figures such as F. W. Faber (1814–63), R. H. Froude (1803–36), Charles Marriott (1811–58), and Isaac Williams (1802–65).

The immediate task which engulfed the Oxford Fathers was nothing more than an intellectual one, that of propagating and reasserting doctrines relating to the foundation and origins of the *Ecclesia Anglicana*. Keble's sermon had been prompted by Parliament's threat to close certain Anglican bishoprics in Ireland. The battle immediately became one of ideas. It had very little to do with ritual or worship. Theology, and in particular the theology of the church, was of prime importance. Once that battle was won, practical consequences in the matter of worship would follow. Although such externalities were not the immediate concern of the Fathers, in various small ways what was said

anticipated them. The early days of the Oxford movement were like a spring of water, which may have had various sources but which eventually gave rise to a mighty river. It brought life to a church that had lost its vitality and was sterile and moribund. When the revival came, it was from a most unexpected quarter, for, unlike the Methodist and Evangelical revivals, it sprang from theological reflection. The emphasis of the Oxford Fathers on theology was apparent, not least in the publication of the *Tracts for the Times*. They began to appear in 1833 and came to an end in 1845. In all they numbered ninety. Far from being penny tracts they were weighty and scholarly essays covering such subjects as apostolic succession, fasting, the work of the clergy, and the Thirty-nine Articles. It was the logic of the final tract, written by Newman himself, which made him see that he had no alternative but to withdraw from the Church of England. *Tract XC* was condemned by the university of Oxford, which challenged it and decided against the possibility of a Catholic interpretation of the Thirty-nine Articles (Knox 1933:363). At the very outset the *Tracts* created a great deal of opposition on account of their Catholic leanings. Critics saw that their fears were justified when Newman was received into the Church of Rome. For obvious reasons the name Tractarian applied to all those who accepted the doctrines of the *Tracts*.

But, if the followers of the Oxford movement were called Tractarians on account of the *Tracts*, is it correct to refer to them as being high church? The answer is both in the affirmative and in the negative. They were generally labelled high church and often thought of themselves as such. Anyone who attempts to show historically or theologically that the Church of England has a historical lineage which connects it directly with the Catholic church (and perhaps the Roman Catholic Church) can as a rule be called high church. Also, those who support ritualistic services are said to be high or high church. The problem, however, is that the term is not applied only to the Oxford movement and all that it stood for: its context is somewhat wider. This is because it has been used to describe certain theologians such as Richard Hooker (1554–1645) and Richard Bancroft (1544–1610) of the Elizabethan period, and the Caroline divines, such as William Laud (1573–1645) and Lancelot Andrewes (1555–1626). These bishops and theologians were strongly opposed to the Puritan Reformers and their followers. They subscribed to a high doctrine of the church, seeing it as a divine institution, governed by an episcopate and being a true dispenser of those sacraments found in the early church. The Caroline divines also stressed the

Divine Right of Kings and under the reign of William III became known as 'non-jurors'. Thomas Ken (1637–1711), bishop of Bath and Wells, is often seen as a true forerunner of Anglo-Catholicism (see Kaye-Smith 1925, chapter 7, and, for a more detailed study, Legg 1914). Both the early high church Anglicans and the Tractarians were nicknamed high and dry: doctrine was what mattered above all else (see Crowther 1970:23ff.).

There can be no doubt that there is a connecting link between these old high church theologians and the Oxford Fathers, who looked upon them as being the true Anglican thinkers who stressed the Catholic nature of the Church of England. At the same time they did not support them on every issue. Compared with high-churchmen 'of the old sort', the Oxford Fathers were hesitant to accept, for example, the doctrine of the Divine Right of Kings. But, theologically, the basis of Anglican Catholicity is to be found amongst the Caroline divines, as one may see in the writings of the Oxford Fathers. In them may be seen the true heart of Anglicanism, if that is in part expressed as a form of church order in a Catholic mould.

One term associated with the Oxford movement from its early days was ritualism. It was often employed in a derogatory way. No one can deny that some early Tractarians soon became interested in ritual and hoped to introduce ceremonies and rites which up until then had been totally absent in the Church of England, or were to be found in the Prayer Book but which needed to be restored. It is not correct, however, to equate ritualism with Tractarianism, or to say that every ritualist would call himself high church, or vice versa. The position is not as simple as that. The founding Fathers were above all cautious in the matter of ritual, for fear of losing ground over secondary issues. Being rationally minded they wanted first and foremost to outline careful, well-argued, unassailable theological positions. They fully realized that with a deep concern for the sacraments, baptism, confession, and the eucharist they would have to deal with liturgical and ritual matters. But in the early days the Fathers demanded little more than that public worship should be conducted reverently and in complete compliance with the rubrics of the 1662 Prayer Book. They were careful to observe the rule of law and were opposed to anything which indicated liturgical disorder or chaos, for clearly such states were contrary to the concept of Catholicism. Being by training and background intellectuals, and having varying degrees of aesthetic sensitivity, they wished to see the establishment of the beauty of worship within Anglican churches (which some cynics might suggest is

the worship of beauty). They visualized the parish church as a holy temple, not a common-or-garden meeting-house. As a result of many decades of neglect there had to be a great deal of tidying up of church buildings and an attitude of dignity and reverence inculcated in priests and people alike. In this way congregations could be made aware that they were worshipping in the House of God, a building set apart and held to be sacred.

Many changes did in fact take place in parish churches and in college chapels. Clergy started to wear cassocks and surplices; the latter were directed in the rubrics of the Prayer Book. Indeed, what the Tractarians wanted above all else was to restore the Prayer Book and all its rubrics and instructions, which had been greatly overlooked. One example was the saying of matins and evensong daily by the clergy. Another outcome was that tidiness and cleanliness began to make their presence felt and much rubbishy furniture was thrown out. Box pews were changed for seats or lower backed pews facing the altar. Such changes were intended to allow the worshipper to see what was going on in the chancel and at the altar. The altar itself was given prominence: it was not just a domestic table which happened to be used occasionally for religious purposes. Music was introduced or improved. Hymns were sung. Gradually candles were introduced. Religious pictures were put on the walls. Even a cross was placed on the altar.

Clergy who tended to move in this direction were frequently called ritualists. Not surprisingly, amongst the population at large, and indeed amongst other clergy, it was changes in ceremonial rather than a renewal of doctrinal assertions that drew criticism and hostility, as well as enthusiasm. As the changes became rather more obvious, as ceremonial appeared to be increasing, fears arose about the Church of England being led towards the terrible Roman Catholic Church and about certain clergy being traitors within, who would deliver their church into the hands of the pope. From the 1870s up until the time of the First World War, and indeed at odd times after it, court cases emerged, some of them brought by Protestant groups within the Church of England and some by bishops, in which clergy were accused of ecclesiastical offences. The accused were castigated as ritualists and the term applied not only to those who were looked upon as being extreme but also to others who in a quiet and inoffensive way tried to make worship more reverent, more beautiful, and richer in symbolic content. There can be no doubt that such changes in worship had their origin in the Oxford movement (see pp. 25–30). As Judith Pinnington has correctly said:

‘Ritualism may not have been the logical, or even originally the consciously intended, outcome of Tractarianism, but it was both spiritually and sociologically inevitable’ (Pinnington 1983:97).

The movement towards more solemn and dignified forms of worship spread quickly. This affected the services of morning and evening prayer – the main services of the Church of England at the time – and holy communion, which was usually celebrated only a few times a year. Some clergy were keen to make changes in the services but did not necessarily accept all or many of the doctrines, such as apostolic succession, which were propagated by the Oxford Fathers. Thus, ritualism strictly referred to a wider movement than that contained within the Oxford movement and did not necessarily involve those who wanted to be identified with it. Nevertheless, the influence of the ritualistic component of the Oxford movement has been enormous in bringing about a revolutionary change in the practical conduct of worship in the Church of England (see ch. 5.3). In the end virtually every parish church in the land was influenced by ritualism. However, it must not be forgotten that the word ritualist was frequently used to describe Tractarians, and more particularly Anglo-Catholics, especially in the second half of the nineteenth century and up until the time of the First World War. Anglo-Catholics did not use the word to describe themselves: it was a term of reproach employed by others.

The term sacramentalist was also used in connection with the Oxford movement in its early days. Quite simply it meant someone who emphasized the sacraments of the church. In practice it was a synonym for Tractarian or ritualist but was not much used after the turn of the century.

Anglo-Catholics certainly, and doubtless Tractarians as well, did not like to be called ritualists because the term implied that all they were interested in was ritual itself. Most Anglo-Catholic priests felt that they were being maligned when the term was applied to them. They were not concerned with ritual for its own sake but with ritual as the action component of the Catholic faith. On the contrary, they felt that it was wishy-washy, middle-of-the-road Anglicans who introduced ceremonies and rituals just for the sake of them – to make their churches ‘pretty’, colourful, or more interesting. That was mere idolatry! Ritual is of no value and a vain thing if it is not based upon sound doctrine. What must always come first – what has always been the essence of Catholicism – is truth, truth about God, Jesus Christ, and the church. Once these intellectual propositions, enshrined in the creeds, are accepted, then Catholic rituals will have their true

place and meaning. Such a rational approach, it might be argued, was not accepted by all Anglo-Catholics and many of the laity and clergy showed themselves in fact to be more interested in expressions of ritual than in the expositions of their faith beyond simplistic statements (but see ch. 3).

Anglo-Catholic is a term usually associated with the Oxford movement. For some people the two names are interchangeable. But to make them so is inaccurate. What is implied by Anglo-Catholicism is not the same as what is meant by the Oxford movement or Tractarianism. For example, there have been and still are those who would call themselves followers of the Oxford movement but who would repudiate the suggestion that they were Anglo-Catholics. Anglo-Catholic, however, was a name which was quickly applied to the Oxford movement for a number of reasons. For one thing the Oxford Fathers began the publication the *Library of Anglo-Catholic Theology*, which appeared in 1841 as a series of theological works written by seventeenth-century Anglican divines, including those whose names were mentioned earlier. The term was also given to devotees of the Oxford movement a little earlier, in 1838. The Latin term, *Anglo-Catholicus*, is said to have been used on one or two occasions in the seventeenth century (*Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*). Certain ideas and ideals began to emerge in the Oxford movement which were scarcely perceptible when it began. Some of these were labelled extreme, in that they approximated to corresponding components of the Roman Catholic Church. Those who held such views began to be known as Anglo-Catholics. Anglo-Catholicism thus became a movement within a movement, or a more extreme wing of a movement, advocating advanced or Catholic practices and ideas which many thought were quite alien to the tradition of the Ecclesia Anglicana. It can be argued that Anglo-Catholics wanted to take the Oxford movement into fields which the Fathers were reluctant to enter, either because of a principle or because, on grounds of expediency, it was felt that the time was not ripe. Anglo-Catholics never repudiated any of the positions adopted by the Tractarians but they felt that the Fathers had not developed their initial theological advance. It is not surprising, therefore, that some have called Anglo-Catholicism 'the second stage' of the Catholic revival or the Oxford movement. If Tractarians were lambasted by Protestants for being Romanizers, then Anglo-Catholics were Romanizers *par excellence*.

E. A. Knox clearly differentiated Tractarianism from Anglo-Catholicism. As a firm upholder of the Protestant ethos of the

Church of England, he staunchly rejected ritualism and ceremonialism. He wrote: 'we acknowledge unhesitatingly that the Tractarian Revival was no mere re-awakening of ceremonialism, but entirely alien in its intention to the ceremonial development which claims parentage from it' (Knox 1933:377). The relation between the Oxford movement and Anglo-Catholicism might be seen to be that of mother and daughter. The daughter saw herself as originating from her mother yet having a distinct personality of her own. The mother realized that the daughter was in some measure an extension of herself. Because of the closeness of the bond, each was loyal to the other. The daughter fully realized and never repudiated the debt she owed to her mother: the mother was always loyal to the daughter and ready to protect her in the face of criticism and hostility. Despite disagreement between mother and daughter, external threats quickly brought about a closing of ranks.

Useful though such an analogy is, it is nevertheless not easy to differentiate Anglo-Catholicism clearly from the Oxford movement; and there are a number of reasons for this. As has just been said, neither the Oxford movement nor Anglo-Catholicism has ever been anything more than a movement within a church, and an Established Church at that. Membership of the movements has been by way of personal loyalty and identity, by self-declared allegiance. There has never been an official organization which has embraced entirely either or both movements. Membership cards are completely unknown and indeed are held to be undesirable. In this respect a contrast might be made with membership of a trade union or the Methodist Church; it is well known that the organization of the first was to a large extent based on that of the second. Generally speaking, one is a member of such groups or one is not, and, while even in these cases the boundaries may at times be fuzzy, they are relatively clear-cut compared with those which might be used to designate followers of the Oxford movement and Anglo-Catholicism.

Another problem is to differentiate Tractarians from Anglo-Catholics within the general high-church movement. The reason is quite simply that the boundaries between the two groups are extraordinarily vague. They are really best seen as resting on a continuum along which it is very difficult to draw a line, on one side of which is Tractarianism and on the other Anglo-Catholicism. To put it crudely, Anglo-Catholics are one degree further on than Tractarians. But precisely what that one degree consists of is not in itself very clear. What is meant by Anglo-Catholic has to be deduced from the general usage of the term.

Probably it is best to point to certain groups or societies which are generally known to be Anglo-Catholic, so that at least there is some point of identification. To be specific one could refer to the Guild of the Servants of the Sanctuary, the Federation of Catholic Priests, the Society of Mary, the Church Union, Ecclesia, the Catholic League, and so on. These societies, which exist today, have been created for particular ends but they are all seen to be definitely 'Catholic'. No one organization completely covers Anglo-Catholicism in its entirety but membership of these and similar groups and societies immediately identifies followers as being Anglo-Catholic. And what of those who do not belong to such associations and yet claim to be Anglo-Catholic? As we have said, only a personal response to the question will provide the answer. The notion of a movement within a movement is essentially associated with diffusion and confusion. This does not mean that one should not try to penetrate the haze and see objectively what Anglo-Catholicism is and how it is different from related movements. An answer to this problem can be found in viewing the problem from a slightly different angle.

3 The task of Anglo-Catholicism

One approach to the problem of identifying Anglo-Catholicism is to ask the question: what have Anglo-Catholics seen to be their task? The answer is simple enough: to catholicize the Church of England. One prominent priest of the 1920s, Fr Atlay, said that the work of Anglo-Catholic priests was 'to convince their people, by all their teaching and example, that Catholicism in its fullness belongs by inheritance to their own Church of England' (in ACPC 1921:190). At the 1923 Anglo-Catholic congress it was stated that the aim of the movement was 'to extend the knowledge of the Catholic faith and practice at home and abroad and by this means to bring men and women to an acknowledgement of our Lord Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour and King' (quoted in Kaye-Smith 1925:197). In one respect the work of catholicization was not necessary, since Anglo-Catholics, along with supporters of the Oxford movement, held that the Church of England was inherently Catholic. They accepted the basic premise that no one can suddenly create a 'Catholic church'. The Catholic church is one: it has a historical point of origin and a historical continuity. It cannot therefore suddenly emerge at a later point. The Church of England is not a Protestant church, such as the Church of Scotland, which is Presbyterian and which came into existence at the time of the Reformation. It is at heart

Catholic – possessing a continuity with the Catholic church, not least as it existed in the middle ages in England. Therefore, there was no question of turning a Protestant church, the Church of England in this case, into a Catholic church, for that is like squaring a circle. What was required in the English situation was to make bishops, clergy, and laity conscious of their heritage and to propagate vigorously what might be called Catholic faith and practice. It was argued that during the eighteenth century and the early part of the nineteenth century, if not before, the Church of England had theologically and liturgically forgotten its essentially Catholic nature, which is enshrined in its Prayer Books of 1549 and 1662. What was hidden and forgotten had to be publically proclaimed and made manifest for all to see. As G. W. E. Russell said at the turn of the century to a meeting of the Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament:

The work of the Oxford leaders was not to introduce the Catholic religion into a Church which was ignorant of it – not even to bring it back into a Church which had once possessed it and then lost it – but to drag it out of obscurity into the light of day, to call public attention to it, to defend it, and glorify it. The leaders fanned the embers till they burst into a flame.

(Russell 1902:330–1)

Such a statement of intent and achievement was common to Tractarians and Anglo-Catholics alike. The main point of difference between the two was the way in which and the speed at which the embellishment or catholicization should proceed. Without adding anything to the ecclesiology of the Oxford movement, Anglo-Catholics wanted to express the Catholic heritage by radically changing the ethos of parish life as it existed in the nineteenth century. Here they disagreed with their mother in so far as they aimed to bring about far-reaching changes at a much faster pace than she did.

The problem which faced all those who wished to see the Catholic tradition of the Established Church restored in a church which seemed so fundamentally Protestant was that of knowing precisely what had to be reintroduced in the matter of worship and what had to be emphasized in the matter of doctrine. It was the former which was the main concern of Anglo-Catholics. They wanted to transform the religious ethos so that it was distinctly and unmistakably Catholic. But how was that to be worked out? What norms should be applied? What ideals should be projected? Very shortly after the emergence of the Oxford movement, as theologians and clergy began to think about the application of the

principles which had been established, there appeared to be three possibilities for the restoration of a Catholic way of life:

- 1 Introduce practices used by the primitive or early church.
- 2 Restore the practice and cult, with some modification, which existed in England in the high middle ages.
- 3 Copy, with perhaps some modification, current practices in the Roman Catholic Church, especially those found in northern Europe.

The first solution was that advocated by most of the Oxford Fathers: Pusey himself held that the catholicization of the Church of England was to proceed along such lines. There were, however, a number of problems connected with the policy. Some wanted to make the norms of doctrine and liturgy those of what were called the undivided church, that is, the church until the schism of 1054, when the eastern and western churches went their separate ways. This was held to be the period of the one church (see Kaye-Smith 1925:174ff.). Such a position has direct affinities with the branch theory of the church (see ch. 6.2). If exclusive emphasis were to be placed on the early church, it would by no means be easy to determine precisely, in the mid-nineteenth century, what the liturgical practice of the church was. Very few firsthand accounts had been handed down. Scholars saw that it would take considerable time to examine the necessary early documents. Moreover, there was no guarantee that at the end of a prolonged academic venture a clear picture would emerge. Some saw the urgent need for immediate change in the Established Church. It could not be delayed by twenty or thirty years until the appearance of learned publications which, in the end, might not add up to very much. Again, a serious lapse of time might also mean the loss of the initiative which had arisen as a result of Keble's 1833 sermon. Yet another argument against this solution came from those who held that in the course of its development Catholicism had been transformed, from its early days when it was little more than a sect to the time, some thousand or more years later, when it was a universal church. The social and religious ethos had completely changed with the passing of years. Could it be said that what was the norm in the year AD 200, 500, or 1000 should be the norm in the nineteenth century?

The second possibility mentioned above would at least overcome some of the criticisms levelled against those who wished to restore the liturgies and practices of the early church. Scholars knew much more about church life in the middle ages

than they did about it in the first and second centuries. For example, there was to hand the Sarum rite which had been used by the Reformers in the compilation of the 1549 Prayer Book. This rite, used in Salisbury cathedral in the middle ages, was held to be more 'Catholic' than the 1662 Prayer Book, although it had been subject to changes and reforms. Not surprisingly, historical and liturgical research was still necessary if this solution of using patterns of worship established in England in the middle ages was to be adopted as the norm for the Church of England in the nineteenth century. Nevertheless, the Sarum rite was seen to be an excellent foundation on which to build. Through the influence of the Oxford movement and certain Catholic-minded scholars who advocated it, English cathedrals in particular, but also some parish churches, began to use ceremonial based on the Sarum rite. Its most ardent advocate, not least for parish churches, was Percy Dearmer (1867-1936), who put forward his ideas in a well-known book on the subject, *The Parson's Handbook* (1899). It went through twelve editions. Those who adopted the policy, both in cathedrals and parish churches, were said to be followers of the pure form of Gothic liturgy (see Anson 1960:306ff.). Not surprisingly the movement was closely tied in with the imitation of Gothic architecture and, in a somewhat removed way, with what is generally called the Romantic movement. Indeed, one of the criticisms levelled against those who devotedly attempted to transplant medieval services and practices to the Church of England was that they introduced an ethos which was not only Romantic but also ludicrous in nineteenth-century industrial Britain. Again, the Sarum rite was considered to be less practical than the Roman rite, although the reasons were never very clear, for the Roman rite was hardly any more suitable on rational grounds for a modern industrial society. Those who followed the Sarum usage were often castigated as being followers of the 'British Museum religion'. Indeed, the work of scholars which entailed a careful examination of what went on in the past, was often parodied as being liturgical archaeology (for further analysis of this position, see Hughes 1961, chapter 5, and Maughan 1916 and 1922:v).

The third answer seemed the most sensible. It was a quick, almost instant solution to the issue of the catholicization of the Church. Why not adopt one, with perhaps a few alterations, from a system that was seen to be working well in modern society? Why not live in the present? The Roman Catholic system was certainly Catholic and was immediately available. What could be wrong in copying it?

Convinced, therefore, that this was the obvious and most sensible solution to the catholicization of the Church of England, a number of clergy influenced by the Oxford movement went to France and Italy and brought back with them statues, pictures, vestments, confessional boxes, candlesticks, and so on. Such an activity began in the middle of the nineteenth century and continued right up until the time of the First World War and indeed beyond. These early Anglo-Catholics saw with their own eyes, though they seldom looked behind the scene, how well Roman Catholicism worked. Not only did they introduce ecclesiastical furniture and furnishings from the Continent, they also imported rituals associated with the mass, as well as extra-liturgical services such as benediction, exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, the saying of the rosary, and various litanies of the saints, especially that of the Blessed Virgin Mary. These were introduced wholesale to various parish churches, sometimes discreetly, sometimes with an arrogant openness. Clearly, the Oxford Fathers never anticipated such innovations, which took place under their very noses, and for which they might be considered in some way responsible.

All those who chose to implement the third policy, both in the past and the present, can indeed be labelled Anglo-Catholic. Their identity is beyond question and the adjective extremist was and still is justified. They have been called Romanizers and, not infrequently, Anglo-Papalists. Their form of Catholicism was sometimes called baroque or rococo. Quite simply, Anglo-Catholics were more Catholic and less Anglican than the Tractarians. Further, as they grew in numbers, such was their enthusiasm for what they saw in Catholic churches on the Continent that some became experts on the subject of liturgy and, as we have said, were dubbed, more Roman than Rome. One or two priests have been known to boast that some Roman Catholic clerics have come to see them celebrate mass in order to learn how to do it properly!

There have been some Anglo-Catholic priests who have rationalized their position by arguing that to adopt Roman practices and habits would hasten the reunification of the two churches, which has always been a fond hope of Anglo-Catholics (see ch. 7.4). Darwell Stone, perhaps the most learned of all Anglo-Catholic theologians in the 1920s and 1930s, whilst he did not accept Roman Catholic doctrine lock, stock, and barrel, advocated adopting Roman ceremonial. The English Catholic, he said, 'values more than he can easily express anything which can be rightly adopted in the Church of England, which may lessen

differences from and promote similarities to the Church of Rome' (Stone 1926, quoted in Clarke 1932:273).

One of the relatively early agencies for propagating Roman practices and ideas was the Society of Saint Peter and Saint Paul, which was founded in 1911 and which was a publishing house and shop in the West End of London. It was strongly supported by Denys Prideaux, Maurice Child, N. P. Williams, and Ronald Knox. It had little about it which was Anglican. At one time it called itself 'Catholic Publishers to the Church of England', modifying a phrase found at that time in the English Roman Catholic world. It had an imprint like the papal arms. Since it was non-profit making it was able to produce cheap literature and tracts, usually adorned with rococo patterns. Attacks were launched against the Sarum rite and Percy Dearmer. It had a sarcastic and provocative air about it which greatly irritated bishops. Although its influence began to wane after the First World War with Ronald Knox's conversion to Roman Catholicism, it was very much behind the Anglo-Catholic congresses and published the reports. (For more details on this, the most Anglo-Papalist of societies, see Kemp 1954:33ff.; Waugh 1959:114ff.; Knox:1918; Anson 1960, chapter 30 – which covers the details of the baroque church furnishings.)

St Bartholomew's, Brighton, was, from the late nineteenth century, one of the leading Anglo-Papalist churches (see ch. 4.5). Within the great building, with its rich furnishings and elaborate music, mass was sung very much in keeping with a Roman Catholic mass of the day. In 1904 an observer described the climax of the service as follows:

The voice of the celebrant was not heard from the *Sanctus* until the post-Communion Lord's Prayer. If the Prayer of Humble Access and the Prayer of Consecration were said at all, they were inaudible, and the manual acts concealed. The only evidence that the consecration had taken place was the ringing of bells, the burning incense, the elevation of the Host and chalice.

(Bowen 1904:68)

What better reason than that revealed in this account is needed for the nickname 'smells and bells' given to Anglo-Catholic practices?

A church of the same period was the completely romanized St Saviour's, Hoxton, which had as its vicar the popular and saintly Fr E. E. Kilburn. Its ethos around 1910 has been described in this way:

Perpetual Reservation on the High Altar, Benediction, the Rosary, Shrines of the Sacred Heart, of Our Lady of Victories and of St. Joseph, Corpus Christi processions through the streets, the complete disuse of the English language, the regular use of the Latin Missal, Rituale, Vesperale, Ritus Servandus, and for the people the 'Simple Prayer Book' of the Catholic Truth Society and the Westminster Hymn Book gradually became the order.

(Carpenter 1949:171; see the following pages for the way the bishop of London attempted to deal with the incumbent)

Another example of extreme Anglo-Catholicism at a slightly later date is to be found in the the Catholic League. The League was started in 1930, largely through the efforts of Fr Fynes-Clinton, who for many years was rector of the Wren church of St Magnus-the-Martyr in the city of London, and who remained there until his death in 1959. The aim of the society was to foster fellowship amongst Catholics in communion with the see of Canterbury. Its treasured hope was the reunion of the Anglican Church with the Roman Catholic Church. The League attempted to promote 'Christian living in the Church of England in strict conformity with the teaching of the Church of Rome (as promulgated at the Council of Trent)' (Lunn and Haselock 1983:6). In the matter of liturgy the Roman missal, breviary, and devotional practices were used by priest members of the society and the laity were encouraged to adopt a spirituality and discipline similar to that found on the Continent (Lunn and Haselock 1983:6). Members of this Anglo-Papalist group have played an important role in Anglo-Catholicism. The aims of the Anglo-Papalists may be seen in the following quotation: 'The true nature of the English Church could only be recognized when she was once again united with the rock from which she was hewn' (Lunn and Haselock 1983:12). They and many Anglo-Catholics wanted to declare symbolically their adulation of the Roman Church by all that they did and in the clothes they wore in and out of their churches. In recent times a subtle change has occurred, however, due to what has happened in the Roman Catholic Church over the last twenty years or so. Now, members of the League 'must be instructed and practising Catholics accepting the faith of the Church as defined by all the councils up to and including Vatican II' (*The Messenger*, January 1986, p. 13). So Anglo-Papalists have to change accordingly.

Not all Anglo-Papalists have been happy with the label, although they may accept the truth implied in it. Thus, Dom

Anselm Hughes, an Anglican Benedictine, has stated:

We are those who, as the nickname is meant to imply, believe that the natural and lawful visible head of the Catholic Church on this earth is or should be the Pope; that it is most unfortunate that we are separated from him . . . and that we most earnestly desire that this separation should come to an end.

(Hughes 1961:148)

Of course he sees that Anglo-Papalists and Roman Catholics are not the same and wishes that if a name has to be given to him and his co-religionists it should be the word 'papistical' (Hughes 1961:149). No matter what precisely is meant by it, he would settle for any word which is derived from the word pope. It is a fact that, especially today, some Anglo-Catholics, perhaps a good many, are unhappy about the term with which they are generally associated. The two words, Anglo- and Catholic, do give rise to ambiguity (see ch. 6.2). Nor does papalist or papistical command much popular following. Some now prefer 'Anglican Catholics' or 'Catholic Anglicans', depending on where they wish to place the emphasis. Once again, the names do not seem to have caught on. For our purposes Anglo-Catholic and Anglo-Papalist are the most useful terms.

4 Popular identity

The agent for any liturgical changes in a parish was, and still is, the incumbent. As the person directly responsible for the well-being of the parish, the vicar, the rector, or the priest in charge is the one who has the ultimate authority for the conduct of services. He is, therefore, in a legal sense entitled to introduce ritualistic or Anglo-Catholic practices. Whether or not such practices are legal in themselves is beside the point. Precisely through these means, individual churches have become famous for the richness of their ceremonial. By a strange combination of the policy of the patron and the appointment of a suitable priest, Anglo-Catholic churches have emerged and maintained their traditions. We might mention some of these famous churches: in London, All Saints', Margaret Street (the Anglo-Catholic equivalent of the chapel of King's College, Cambridge), St Alban's, Holborn, St Magnus-the-Martyr, in the city, and St Peter's in the docks; and outside London, St Bartholomew's, Brighton, St Mary Magdalene's, Oxford, Frome parish church, and both the shrine and the parish church of Walsingham in Norfolk. There

have been hundreds – thousands – of such churches up and down the land, some of them well known, some of them scarcely heard of beyond the parish.

Anglo-Catholic clergy and laity have to gain inside information as to where these churches are – where, as people used to say amongst themselves, ‘Catholic privileges’ are to be found, or where the priest is a ‘definite Catholic’. In times past many people obtained much of their knowledge of such churches through *Church Guides*, published by the English Church Union from about 1900 until 1931, and from notices in the *Church Times*, where the times and types of services were advertised. Today, the notices are less extensive than they used to be. If one wishes to see a flourishing Anglo-Catholic church in London which manifests much of what this book is about, no better example can be found than that of St Mary’s, Bourne Street, in the West End. This was the church where Lord Halifax was a regular worshipper (see ch. 2.1). But what in fact do Catholic privileges and the priest being a ‘definite Catholic’ mean? What tests can be applied so that ordinary people know whether a church is Catholic or not? Obviously, the first thing to observe is whether the word mass appears on the notice-board or whether confessions can be heard at specific times. These public proclamations leave no doubt that the church is Catholic! Another sure mark of identity beyond which it is hardly necessary to go is whether or not there is a service of adoration or benediction. There are other criteria relating to furnishings and services, mentioned at the beginning of the chapter. But as to the priest himself, if he wears a Latin cassock, that is, a cassock buttoned down the front, often with a cape over the shoulders, which in France is called a *soutane*, then clearly the wearer is an Anglo-Catholic priest. The Sarum type of cassock was introduced in the late nineteenth century through the influence of Tractarians and, despised by Anglo-Catholics, is often referred to as a maternity dress. A negative indicator is that no Anglo-Catholic priest would wear a moustache – only Protestant ministers are as vain as that! Other identity marks of Anglo-Catholics are mentioned further on (see ch. 2.7).

Despite what has been said already, the problem of identifying Anglo-Catholics and of defining Anglo-Catholicism is by no means easy. The reason is simply that great variation is to be found within Anglo-Catholicism itself. There are degrees of Anglo-Catholicism, varying from the moderates to the extremists. The problem, as we have already said, arises from the fact that it is a movement without a well-defined organization. We have men-

tioned some obvious externalities which are to be found in parish churches. These are manifold and therefore are open to a large number of possible combinations. Much trivial talk amongst Anglo-Catholics has centred on rivalry about ‘quantities’ of ritual which different churches have adopted. In searching for some kind of litmus test, many Anglo-Catholics in the past held that the reservation of the Blessed Sacrament was a clear mark of Anglo-Catholicism (see ch. 2.7). Today, however, many churches have reservation but have no wish at all to be identified with Anglo-Catholicism and adopt no other practices to make them so.

The problem of identity is all the more difficult because of the changes made over the past twenty years or so as a response to the changes in the Roman Catholic Church after Vatican II. The effect on Anglo-Catholics has been to create uncertainty and division between those who wanted to follow the changes demanded by the Council and those who wished to retain the old tradition (see ch. 11.9). Many Anglo-Catholic parishes have adopted some of the practices emerging from the Council but not others and so have created yet more problems in trying to define and identify Anglo-Catholicism today. There is now more infighting and a lack of cohesion compared with former times (see ch. 11). A similar splintering can be seen in the existence today of many left-wing political parties based on socialism or Marxism. The difference, however, is that the political parties have established their own separate identities and rules of membership. Such social characteristics do not apply to Anglo-Catholicism. The nearest political analogy is the Labour Party being like the Church of England and Anglo-Catholics representing the so-called hard or loony left.

To understand Anglo-Catholicism one needs to see it in all its fullness and it seems generally agreed that the movement reached its peak during the 1920s and 1930s. Certainly the series of Anglo-Catholic congresses held between the wars bears witness to it. What is also remarkable is the large number of books written by Anglo-Catholics during those decades – theological, historical, and devotional. Some were meant to contribute to the academic world: others were polemical and little more than penny tracts. But they witness to a certain vitality and to the fact that Anglo-Catholicism had some appeal among English intellectuals.

In this chapter we have tried to wrestle with problems of definition and identity and in the face of these difficulties some solution comes in an examination of the congresses, along with a few of the spate of the books that came from Anglo-Catholic and

other presses. Before these great effervescent gatherings are described, however, a word must be said about some of the problems which emerged in the Catholic revival and which have some bearing on the issues of definition and identity.

5 Tensions and dilemmas

It has been necessary to make a distinction between Tractarianism and Anglo-Catholicism. The difference has been symbolically expressed in terms of the relation of a mother to her daughter. But within great areas of agreement there also existed points of difference and even tension.

As we have already stated there was complete accord on the notion of the Catholic heritage of the Church of England and on an appeal to the creeds of the church. In more practical terms, not surprisingly, there was also an initial consensus on liturgical matters. From the early days onwards, the followers of the Oxford movement and of Anglo-Catholicism were united in a common policy of making the eucharist, the holy communion, the mass, whatever term is used, the central and most holy act of worship. The ideal to be set before the congregation was Sunday-by-Sunday attendance at such a service. There might be some disagreement, and certainly there was in the early days, about how quickly the ideal could be realized. Although more moderate churches would have matins and evensong as the main services on a Sunday, the directive of the clergy was that attendance at holy communion, perhaps once a month, was of far greater importance than participation in other acts of public worship. Tractarians were great advocates of attendance at early morning communion services (see ch. 11.5).

There was another point on which followers of the Oxford movement and Anglo-Catholics were agreed. In restoring the Catholic heritage of the Church of England the reintroduction of the religious life was necessary, that is, the fostering of vocations in men to be monks and women to be nuns. Ascetics and religious have existed in Christianity from the third century onwards. One of the great successes of the Oxford movement was the re-establishment of religious orders in the Church of England from the mid-nineteenth century onwards (see ch. 5.2). Tractarians and Anglo-Catholics were completely united in this and they became even more united in the face of considerable opposition from Protestant-minded people to such 'Romish ideas' (see Walsh 1897).

The same thing can be said about the introduction of auricular

confession. This practice goes back, some might argue, to New Testament times. Or, with stronger evidence, it can be shown to have been widely practised in the early church. On this point there was little division between Tractarians and Anglo-Catholics, although there was considerable divergence on how it should be carried out. Certainly the establishment of absolution and penance gave rise to great controversy (see ch. 3.5). It is argued that confession and absolution are legitimate practices within the Church of England since there are indications in the Prayer Book that they are sanctioned.

One issue which caused division between the Oxford Fathers and Anglo-Catholics was devotions to the saints and, above all, cultic practices centred on the Blessed Virgin Mary. Such prayers have also had a long history in the church and their extensive use in the late middle ages was one of the causes of the Reformation. The Prayer Books of the Church of England, and especially that of 1662, made it quite clear that prayers and devotions to the saints were no part of Anglican practice. Here Tractarians were cautious about prayers made directly to the saints. Not so Anglo-Catholics. And they had history on their side because if an appeal is made to the early church, say up to the fifth century, there is plenty of evidence to show that prayers made directly to the saints were not unknown and were therefore obviously sanctioned. Similarly, it can be seen that in the early church relics of the saints were highly valued and pilgrimages were undertaken. From these facts, the problems of a principle arise. If appeal is made to the beliefs and practices of the early church for their inclusion in a refurbished Anglican Church, on what grounds is one component or practice accepted and another overlooked or rejected? The Tractarians were prepared to sift and to select in a way they believed was acceptable to the Church of England. Anglo-Catholics had no such hesitation and therefore did not have to face the problem of establishing a principle of selection.

A similar point was made by Hensley Henson about the reserved Sacrament. He was a liberal churchman and was as much opposed to Tractarians as he was to Evangelicals. He held that the reserved Sacrament was clearly in existence in the primitive church. Anglo-Catholics wanted it on various grounds but in Henson's mind it was clearly illegal according to Anglican tenets and practices. To appeal to the early church in trying to establish a norm could not in itself be an adequate principle (Henson 1898:9).

A crucial issue which emerged in the early days of the Catholic revival is enshrined in the life and thought of Pusey, who became

the undisputed leader of the Oxford movement in the late 1840s after the conversion of Newman to Roman Catholicism. He held this unofficial position until his death in 1882. It is reported that he did not wear eucharistic vestments until about forty years after the 1833 assize sermon. He had a fear of Rome and stood firmly against indulgences, the doctrine of purgatory, benediction, and the cult of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Above all, he was anxious to see that the process of catholicization should proceed within the bounds of lawful ecclesiastical authority. That Anglo-Catholics refused to accept such constraints brought him sorrow as he found himself forced to oppose the growing romanizing party. Tractarians attempted to repudiate the idea that what they were doing was leading the Church of England toward Rome. They maintained they were involved in nothing more than the attempt to bring about, in the restoration of Catholic practice and doctrine, that which could be justified by the Prayer Book. Their arguments did not seem very convincing in the light of the activities of the extremists. Pusey wanted to introduce only those things which could be held to be both Catholic and Anglican. He was a firm advocate of auricular confession (see ch. 3); he practised asceticism in so severe a way as to cause many to label him a Roman Catholic; and he was instrumental in introducing the first religious orders into the Church of England (see ch. 5.5). Although Walter Walsh in his book, *The Secret History of the Oxford Movement* (1897), musters a great deal of evidence to show that Pusey was in fact a Romanizer, history shows that he never identified himself with extreme forms of Anglo-Catholicism.

The case of Pusey reflects the eternal controversy that has raged in high-church and Anglo-Catholic circles from the 1830s until the present time about the nature and authority of the Prayer Book. Since the Church of England has no constitution or confessional statement, such as the Westminster Confession, the Prayer Book has been for centuries the sole foundation of doctrine and practice in the Church of England. Whether the Church can be labelled Catholic and whether the services in the Prayer Book are Catholic in nature rests on what is to be found in that book alone. The followers of the Oxford movement were on the whole prepared to accept not only the implied doctrine of the Prayer Book but also the structure of its services. For Anglo-Catholics, especially Anglo-Papalists, the main argument against the book was that it did not contain a set of services, along with the necessary rubrics, which could really be seen to be Catholic. Hence, despite the legality of the Prayer Book, some Anglo-Catholics argued that it was necessary to introduce changes and additional

services which were Catholic in form. Some argued that the new services merely supplemented what was already in the Prayer Book and therefore their loyalty to it was not at issue. What was at stake, however, was the question whether or not the new services could be said to be within the tradition of the Established Church. Throughout the history of Anglo-Catholicism there has been a constant examination of the Prayer Book and arguments have raged as to how far it has to be taken literally or interpreted according to its alleged spirit. Anglo-Catholics on the whole were critical of certain aspects of the book. Here they were quite unlike Tractarians. Also unlike Tractarians, they often joked about the Prayer Book, but they would not joke about the Roman missal. However, when it suited them they would uphold the Prayer Book and reject any alteration to it (see ch. 2.7).

One way in which the more sensitive Anglo-Catholic clergy overcame the dilemma of wanting to use Roman Catholic forms of service which they knew would be unacceptable to their congregations was as follows. Priests said private prayers, held weekday services and performed other acts of devotion which they knew would be attended by only a few people. Here they felt free to do more or less as they wished. On Sundays at the main services they would show an outward loyalty to the Prayer Book. Some Anglo-Catholics did not, however, adopt this dual standard and were consistent in having Roman-like services on both Sundays and weekdays. In certain churches and on some occasions Latin was used. These alternative paths gave rise to the existence of two fairly well defined groups within Anglo-Catholicism, although each contained a number of variations. The extremists, including the Anglo-Papalists, had no hesitation in paying scant respect to the Prayer Book, even going so far as to reject it, whereas 'Prayer Book Catholics' were those who were rather more cautious and who attempted, at least in public, to base their services on the Prayer Book, claiming to hold to it in letter and spirit. The term Prayer Book Catholic had some validity and value until the introduction of new services in the Church of England in the 1970s, which culminated in the Alternative Service Book of 1980. (The many alternatives that then became available have made a confused situation even more confusing.)

It might be said that the more moderate Prayer Book Catholics were quite near to the Tractarians, indeed at this point the lines of demarcation may become very blurred. As we have indicated, Pusey, as a key figure in the cleavage between Tractarians and Anglo-Catholics, claimed complete loyalty to the Prayer Book.

Shortly before he died he said: 'our only safeguard under God is to keep our Prayer Book as it is' (quoted in Chadwick 1970:309). These moderates realized that their only intellectual defence against attack from the outside was to take a firm stand on the Prayer Book itself. They also saw the absurdity of the argument, so often advanced by the extremists, that, since no priest in fact ever obeyed all the rubrics of the Prayer Book, the Prayer Book could be totally disregarded or altered according to fancy. The argument, of course, opened the door to the catholicization of the Church of England along post-Tridentine lines. Appeal to the Prayer Book always divided Anglo-Catholics and weakened their corporate position. The Anglo-Papalist, Hugh Ross Williamson, wanted to say a private mass at All Saints', Margaret Street, in the 1950s, but the vicar refused his request 'because, my dear, you'll use that horrid Roman book and the rule here is music by Mozart, choreography by Fortescue [a Roman liturgiologist], décor by Comper, but libretto by Cranmer' (Williamson 1956: 157). There was amongst Anglo-Catholics, and especially Anglo-Papalists, a restless, angular spirit as they embarked on many controversies, not least over the Prayer Book: this was in marked contrast to the quiet, serene disposition which was so evident in Tractarians, epitomized in someone like Keble.

To return to an earlier point – the search for a simple, concrete mark of distinction between Tractarians and perhaps Prayer Book Catholics on the one hand and extreme Anglo-Catholics and Anglo-Papalists on the other, no better criterion can be found than in that relating to devotion to the saints, and above all to the Blessed Virgin Mary. The Prayer Book makes no reference at all to such devotions. Pusey and Gore, the latter a notable theologian and bishop of a later period who was a representative figure of Prayer Book Catholicism, both held the saints in great reverence. Both, also, were prepared to accept statues of saints in churches and to see the saints as worthy examples of Christian life and witness, to be emulated wherever possible. These ideas are evident in the *Alternative Service Book* of 1980 but the book does not go beyond them (see Keast n.d.:38ff.). For Anglo-Catholics, invocations made directly to the saints, for example, 'Mary pray for us', were to be encouraged. Without a shadow of doubt, many Anglo-Catholics and Anglo-Papalists can be identified by their Marian devotions, by their recitation of the rosary, the angelus, and the litany and vespers of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and so forth, together with visits to the shrine of our Lady of Walsingham. Indeed, the very use of the term our Lady, as distinct from the Virgin Mary or the Blessed

Virgin Mary, can identify Anglo-Papalists from the less extreme followers of the movement (but see ch. 2.7). The cult of our Lady involves several feast-days, some of which are mentioned in the Prayer Book, but there were two points of contention. Anglo-Catholics made a great deal of the feast of the Assumption (the ascension into heaven of our Lady), which is not mentioned in the Prayer Book and which most Anglicans would hold to be unscriptural. The second is the feast of the Immaculate Conception of our Lady, which in the Prayer Book is known simply as the feast of the Conception of the Virgin Mary.

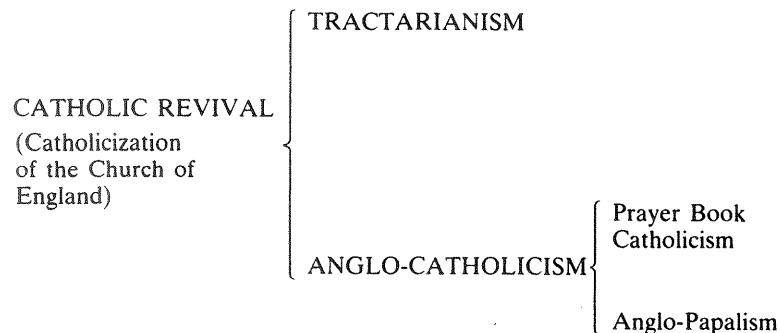
This criterion applies as much today as it did in the mid-nineteenth century. At the 1978 Catholic Renewal conference, Bishop Michael Marshall said that devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary was 'crucial in any Catholic spirituality' and the response from the floor of the assembly was a sudden burst of applause (CT, 7 April 1978; see ch. 11.2).

In 1891, *Catholic Prayers for Church of England People*, commonly known as *Catholic Prayers*, was published by W. Knott & Son, who were associated with St Alban's, Holborn. Indeed, Fr Stanton and another priest, Fr Harris, who were curates there, compiled the book. It was the first prayer book published for Anglicans in which large sections were given to Marian devotions and devotions to the saints, contained in litanies and offices. Included in its list of holy days of obligation 'on which Catholics are bound to hear Mass' is the feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary celebrated on 15 August. (It was not until 1950 that the pope declared that the Assumption was a dogma of the Roman Catholic Church.) By 1936 the book had sold over 100,000 copies and its importance in spreading Marian devotions in the Church of England cannot be overemphasized. For sixty years or more this book has been *the* devotional manual for Anglo-Catholics. In 1933 a similar book appeared, *Centenary Prayer Book*, which went through many editions, and which was very similar to *Catholic Prayers*. The foreword was by Lord Halifax. An interesting point was made in the prayer book, namely, that 1933 was the nineteenth centenary of Christ's Crucifixion and also the centenary of the Catholic revival in the Church of England. To understand the Anglo-Catholic movement one must understand these great treasures of devotion.

As we have said, as the Catholic revival proceeded mother and daughter inevitably quarrelled. Tractarians criticized Anglo-Catholics and Anglo-Papalists for their extremism, their idolization of Roman Catholicism, and their lack of loyalty to things Anglican. Their excesses in doctrine and practice prevented the

wider acceptance of the Catholic movement within the Church of England. On the other hand, convinced Anglo-Catholics accused Tractarians and those who might loosely be called high church of not teaching the full Catholic doctrine and practice. They were frightened to be committed to the true faith: they were nothing more than 'Protestants in chasubles'. Far from being consciously Catholic they merely played with ritual. At heart they were just ordinary 'C. of E.'. These tensions between those who were Anglican before all else and those who were Catholic before all else are derived from subtleties inside the movement for Catholic revival. There has been a vast amount of infighting which is virtually incomprehensible to the outsider and which has much weakened the movement.

To help summarize the problems of differentiation which have been raised in this chapter we offer the following diagram:



From strength to strength: the glorious congresses

1 The early days of Anglo-Catholicism

As we have defined it, Anglo-Catholicism began to appear very shortly after the beginning of the Oxford movement. Quite quickly a number of individuals who readily accepted the Catholic status of the Church of England went beyond the practical aims of the Oxford Fathers and openly pronounced that the process of catholicization was best achieved by borrowing heavily from the Roman Catholic Church.

In the early days there were not many such individuals but they became prominent figures because of their unflinching and outstanding position. These first overt Romanizers were based in Oxford and consisted of such people as W. G. Ward, F. Oakeley, F. W. Faber, and J. B. Dalgairns. They were prominent in matters of piety and learning and, not surprisingly, many of them quickly or later jumped the narrow divide and made their submission to Rome (see ch. 9). While it is doubtful if Newman could be called an Anglo-Catholic, it was his secession which electrified the Tractarian movement and which made the Anglo-Catholic trends within the Catholic revival more prominent. That Newman did not take the step of joining the Church of Rome suddenly and without very careful theological reflection is apparent in his movingly written *Apologia pro vita sua*, which appeared in 1864. He was not an imitator of all things Roman, yet his influence amongst his contemporaries and those whom he taught in the university was enormous. Many of those influenced by him were more extreme and less cautious than he was. They soon adopted an unashamedly Anglo-Catholic stance and were far more concerned with liturgical and ecclesiastical matters than with theological issues. Some of them had in fact become Roman Catholic before he did: others, however, only followed him once he had set the example. We mention two cases in this very brief account of the development of Anglo-Catholicism up until the time of the First World War.

Postscript¹

Some consequences of the ordination of women

The last chapter pointed to the advent of the ordination of women to the priesthood and to the possible upheaval it would very likely have on Anglo-Catholicism.

After a long tussle and much lobbying, the Church of England eventually decided in the Synod of 11 November 1992 to allow the bold step of women's ordination to be taken.² Not surprisingly, consternation among many Anglo-Catholics followed. For a short period they scarcely knew what to do. They spoke of loss and bereavement. The problem for them was not entirely new. In 1985 Synod had sanctioned the ordination of women to the diaconate, which had caused a diversity of attitude among Catholic-minded clergy and laity. However, it had far fewer repercussions than were to follow when the ordination of women to the priesthood was proclaimed.

When the measure in Synod had finally been passed and the immediate chaos subsided, Anglo-Catholic clergy and laity were faced with a number of choices. The first was to leave the Church of England, lock, stock and barrel. There were, however, two main alternatives in this response. They could join the Roman Catholic Church and a number did so. (This we call Position 1.1.) Many priests, married or not, took the step and were made welcome by the Roman hierarchy, especially if they wanted to be re-ordained and undertake pastoral work. These conversions, with re-ordination, helped to alleviate a shortage of priests in the church they joined. Further, the financial implications for the Roman Catholic Church by such moves was eased by the extraordinary generosity of the Church of England in giving, through an act of Synod, pensions to the active clergy who left their mother church on account of the ordination of women and went their several ways. The number has been estimated at 422. The relative alacrity shown by the Roman Church to allow married clergy who converted to function in parishes caused some Roman Catholic

priests, who had taken vows of celibacy, to call for Rome to withdraw the rule of celibacy and allow its priests to be married. One imagines that it must have been galling, and perhaps still is, for a Roman Catholic priest to have to sit in the congregation because he had married and face a celebrant who was a married ex-Anglican priest. It is reported that some 420 or more full-time Anglican priests, including a number of retired clergy, converted became Roman Catholics. There was a handful of others, even conservative Evangelicals, who drifted away from the Church, and there were others who joined Orthodox churches of one kind or another. Some Anglo-Catholics who went to Rome soon returned to their mother church. Since that time the wave of those leaving the Anglican Church on account of women's ordination to the priesthood has declined to a trickle. It is now claimed that over 100 married priests, who were formerly Anglican, are active in the Roman Catholic Church in England and Wales and that there are about the same number who are celibate. Among the converts were three retired bishops, including Graham Leonard, former Bishop of London. One member of the Royal Family also took the same path. Despite the defections from the Church of England, the number of those who actually left the Church was far smaller than the number who threatened to do so before the act was passed in Synod. The overall effect of the ordination of women to the priesthood on the Established Church is something that has yet to be fully explored.

The other option open to those who bade farewell to the Church of England was to join small, severed groups that were sometimes created for the purpose of incorporating dissatisfied clergy, who were firmly Anglican but who strongly opposed the ordination of women (Position 1.2). In many respects they were anti-Roman. Moreover, some wanted to adhere to the 1662 Prayer Book, in the manner of many Anglo-Catholics of the 1930s, and rejected the modern language of the revised Anglican liturgies. The Anglican Catholic Church is one such group: the Traditional Anglican Church, another. In the United States and to a lesser degree, Canada, there are several such groups. One of the problems these groups face is to find a bishop who will ordain male members to the priesthood. Usually a wandering bishop of doubtful credentials or a retired or overseas bishop can be found. The membership of these truly sectarian groups is relatively insignificant and they have been riddled with splits and acrimony.

One result of these defections has been that the Church of England has been deprived of a goodly number of clergy and laity. Their exit has added to what was already a shortage of priests and has hastened the decline of the number of active lay people in the Church. Of course the reduction

in clerical numbers has been compensated, and more than compensated for, by the ordination of women, though as so many women priests had previously been active as laity, the impact on the active laity was even greater.

The second major response of Anglo-Catholics to the ordination of women was for priests and laity to remain in the Church of England and to proceed in such ways as they thought fit. Again, several sorts of sub-responses emerged. One group adopted the policy of distancing itself, clearly and openly, from the proclamation of the Synod (Position 2.1). This group was able to achieve it by engineering a compromise that had overtones of ambiguity, typical of the Anglican Church. This compromise came with the creation of Provincial Episcopal Visitors (PEVs), or 'flying bishops', as they were nicknamed, who were given other means of propulsion than the wings of angels! Synod legislated for four bishops who would cover the whole of England and who were under the chairmanship of the Bishop of Fulham, the Rt Rev John Broadhurst, who has pastoral care over three bishops – those of Beverley, Ebbsfleet, and Richborough. Their major role is to mediate between those parishes that put themselves under their jurisdiction – parishes that declared their opposition to the ordination of women – and the diocesan bishop. 'Flying' bishops were to administer the sacrament of confirmation, would give any advice asked for by the incumbent and might help in the appointment of a new incumbent. Also they may sometimes ordain men to the diaconate or priesthood. Such parishes, one might argue, would say that they did not want to profane themselves by coming into contact with bishops who were, by the decision of Synod, bound to accept the ordination of women and some of whom welcomed the decision. Needless to say, parishes under 'flying' bishops would, as a rule, never allow women to celebrate the eucharist or be involved in the liturgy, though perhaps they might to preach. The situation over ordination in the Church of England now has many anomalies with certain diocesan bishops either not wishing to or refusing to ordain women to the priesthood (see *Church Times*, 6 July 2007).

The notion of 'parallel' bishops, never known before in the Church of England, raises theological and practical questions. For some it is an absurd and ambiguous position within the Anglican Church and is seen as a sign of the weakness of church authorities who have conceded far too much to Anglo-Catholics in order to keep them in the Church. It can be argued that this position has prevented a further weakening of the Church of England. Some would see, however, that this has been nothing more than a display of timidity on the part of Synod. Others, in a more positive way, would

hold it to be a demonstration of concern and 'love' towards those who were offended by such a modernization of the Church's priestly ministry. Further, in the matter of 'flying' bishops, there have been those who have been willing to accept the notion, since a similar practice is to be found in the Roman Catholic Church, where bishops have been consecrated to serve particular cultural or national groups, alongside diocesan bishops. In the urban area of Winnipeg, in Canada, for example, there are three Roman Catholic archbishops – one for the English-speaking, another for those whose native tongue is French, and a third for those of Ukrainian origin. Thus, the Roman Catholic hierarchy appears more pragmatic than more theologically minded Anglicans who hold to the notion, allegedly found in the early church, that one bishop is responsible for and the leader of Christians in a given geographical area. Further, there are now in the Church of England bishops who have the oversight of chaplains ministering to specific groups of people, such as members of the Armed Forces and those in prison. Admittedly, a diocesan bishop may take over such a role as well as administering his own diocese. In the Anglican Church in New Zealand separate episcopal oversight is provided for Maori and Polynesian members. The parallel is not a precise one, as 'flying' bishops have the oversight of those who hold beliefs different from those of the main church, whereas in the cases just cited the bishops administer groups that are culturally or geographically different from the majority but whose beliefs are not in question.

A second type of response among those Anglo-Catholics who wished to remain in the Church of England was to go in an opposite direction and almost put their heads in the sand. These are located among more liberal Anglo-Catholics who accept the ordination of women as an irreversible fact, and agreed to it in the first place, but with a certain amount of indifference (Position 2.2). In no way do they wish to be involved in theological arguments for the ordination of women and may hold quite simply that there exists no New Testament statement that would deny their ordination. If women priests come their way that is fine; if they do not that also is fine. Such clergy might well argue that their major interests and concerns lie elsewhere. They carry on as if nothing disturbing had happened.

The third option for those Catholic-minded clergy remaining in the Church is to take a positive stand and welcome the ordination of women (Position 2.3). They want to build a modern, open, liberal Anglo-Catholicism that is prepared to see change and accept certain modern cultural values that are now universally held, such as the equality of the

sexes and a more open sexual morality.

In considering the alternatives facing Anglo-Catholic clergy, the adoption of the first Positions (1.1 and 1.2), mentioned above, has meant the loss of clergy in the Church at a time when it could ill afford such defections. Admittedly, as has just been noted, they were compensated for by the entry of women priests, but had there been far fewer defections, the Church would have been in a stronger position in the matter of numbers of clergy. Further, divisions amongst those clergy who have remained faithful to the Church of their ordination has weakened the solidarity of the clergy, leading to a loss of respect for Anglo-Catholicism.

Anglo-Papalists rightly realised that the creation of women priests would make any hope of reunion with Rome more remote than ever before (see p.37ff.). By this one act their fond hopes were irreparably shattered.

Quite apart from any theological arguments about the ordination of women, many women ordained as priests have aspired to the accoutrements in dress, in liturgical vestments, and in performing liturgical actions at the altar such as those associated with Anglo-Catholic priests. In certain Anglican religious orders, a number of women have been ordained to the priesthood. This would indicate that some Anglo-Catholic women have for some time aspired to the priesthood. One would not find them among Anglo-Papalist groups.

Further consequences: new factions

One electrifying effect of the ordination of women on Anglo-Catholic life has been to rouse it from its slumbers, forcing its followers to take a strong stand of one kind or another. Lethargy has given place to considerable activity. Followers have had to declare their hand in the ecclesiological battle following the Church's decision on women's ordination. Anglo-Papalists have become a force to be reckoned with – a force well beyond their numbers. It should not be forgotten that the Synod vote for the ordination of women did not carry a large majority and many Anglo-Catholics, individuals and groups, were responsible for the strength of the opposition.

One result of the ordination of women to the priesthood has been the creation of two opposing organisations – two parties – within what, one might say, was the Anglo-Catholic fold. Of course, as is evident in the book, there have always been divisions in the movement between pro-English and pro-Roman factions. But with the ordination of women to

the priesthood a further division emerges. The parties stem directly from responses to the ordination of women just enumerated, to Positions 2.1 and 2.3 above. One of the points of difference between the two turns on the existence of 'flying' bishops – whether or not they are to be accepted.

Priests and parishes who ally themselves to 'flying' bishops and the ideology and practice associated with them – removal from all contact with ordained women and those bishops who ordain them – created a society, in November 1992, called Forward in Faith (FiF). It established itself as a world-wide Anglican society totally opposed to the ordination of women priests and women bishops. At the same time it repudiated any belief or action that might be an obstacle leading to a full and visible unity of the Anglican, Roman Catholic and Orthodox Churches. The Society affirms the creeds, the sacraments and the apostolic ministry of bishops, priests and deacons of what is called the 'Universal Church'. What this is is not at all clear. But it *is* clear that, while pro-Roman Catholic in outlook, the focus of FiF is with the past, that is, the early days of the church. This ideological position is much in evidence in the liturgical calendar of the society where, with the exception of people such as St Francis, St Ignatius, and St Vincent de Paul, the vast majority of the saints who are commemorated are those who lived in the first three centuries of the church. The society is obviously frightened to incorporate any modern saints for fear of giving offence to the Roman Catholic hierarchy. As with early Anglo-Papalists, so the aim of these later Anglo-Papalists is to hold to beliefs and rituals that are close to those of Rome and to hope that somehow they may become part of a Uniate church under the authority of the Roman Catholic Church.

It can well be argued that the Anglo-Papalists have now found a voice and rallying point in the organisation, Forward in Faith. Many Anglo-Papalist churches, such as St Peter's, London Docks, and St Magnus the Martyr in the city of London, have thrown in their lot with the Society, along with a relatively new church that was once owned by the Catholic Apostolic Church, Christ the King, Gordon Square. There are about 1,600 entries in the society's directory for England, Wales and Scotland, which means 1,600 parishes, some of which are very small and are grouped together under the care of one priest. It is estimated that fewer than 400 parishes out of 13,000 Church of England parishes are served by flying bishops. (The bishops of London, Chichester and Blackburn *de facto* will not ordain women to the priesthood, despite the decision of Synod.) The movement emphasizes its global membership and certain overseas parishes have also joined it, for example, those in such countries as Italy, Gozo, and Malta. To these must be added those found in the United States

and in former countries of the British Empire. The movement has various links with traditional Anglican churches that have severed their links with the Anglican Communion (see Position 1.2 above).

Forward in Faith publishes a regular bulletin, *New Directions*, and similar journals for other parts of the world. The movement is political to the extent that it attempts to achieve its goals at the highest level of ecclesiastical authority. To this end it has formed a party whose name is the Catholic Group in General Synod in order to press for the goals of FiF. The adage, 'extremes meet', is borne out by the fact that some fundamentalist Evangelicals, who are also opposed to the ordination of women and are associated with the pressure group, Reform, also support Forward in Faith when mutual interests are to its advantage, for example, by opposing measures that seem to be too liberal. All this despite the enormous theological differences between them that hardly needs to be mentioned here.

The movement that has become directly associated with FiF is an Anglo-Papalist society for priests only, the Societa Sanctae Crucis (SSC), also known as the Society of the Holy Cross (see p.71ff.). It is an old society, created in 1855, that has long striven, amongst other things, for union with Rome, by advocating Roman doctrines and rituals. With the emergence of FiF it has gained a fresh impetus.

No statistics regarding membership of FiF, other than lists of affiliated parishes, are available. It would appear that money is not in short supply. The following of the society is strongest in the dioceses of London, Oxford and Blackburn (see above).

As has just been mentioned, many FiF members would like to see their well defined group recognised by the Roman Catholic Church, and indeed eventually incorporated into it. This may be its ultimate goal. Before that day arrives, however, the society would be happy to be a third province, in the Church of England, along with Canterbury and York, and so be given a certain amount of independence. In the face of all this, some critics might be inclined to doubt FiF's loyalty to the Church of England. The long term yearning to be acknowledged and accepted by Rome, is made despite the fact that Rome, speaking infallibly, does not accept the validity of their, i.e. Anglican, orders and would never incorporate them on equal terms.

With its 'own' bishops, its deaneries, and its coherent agenda, Forward in Faith constitutes a church within a church, and to such a degree as no previous Anglo-Catholic organisation has been able to achieve. If the Church of England proceeds with the introduction of women bishops, those who subscribe to Forward in Faith will very likely encourage members

and other similar minded Anglo-Catholics to take radical measures, for example, by withdrawing from the Church of England. They might even try to create another Anglican church. In all this, Forward in Faith moves forward in a divisive way. Its clear ideological stand and the unity of its voice are in marked contrast to the characteristics of a more liberal, individualistic, Catholic-minded society to which we now turn.

Thus it is that in an almost direct opposition to Forward in Faith, another organisation has also tried to claim the allegiance of those who would call themselves Anglo-Catholic or are of a 'Catholic' background. The society has the name, Affirming Catholicism. It arose in response to FiF which was seen to be claiming the high ground in the name of Anglo-Catholics and at the same time propagating firm opposition to the ordination of women. Affirming Catholicism, unlike FiF, attempts to be firmly positive in its aims as 'a movement of inspiration and hope in the Anglican Communion'. It sets out to make the Catholic element in the Church 'a positive force for the Gospel and a model for effective mission today'. Like some of the early Anglo-Catholic societies it is committed to social and ethical issues; for example, it is opposed to the Trident programme. It looks back at the past but is also concerned with and aspires to influence the future. But prominent in its aims is an unqualified acceptance of women priests and with it, the possibility of women bishops, which it strongly advocates. In all this, it stands in stark opposition to Forward in Faith. It can claim the support of figures in authority, such as Rowan Williams, who helped to found the movement before he became Archbishop of Canterbury. He is now its patron. Another early driving force was David Hutt, former Canon of Westminster, and before that, vicar of All Saints, Margaret Street, London, a long-time bastion of Anglo-Catholicism in the West End. The present chairman of the trustees of Affirming Catholicism is a woman, Canon Nerissa Jones. Hence there is an air of 'being with it' hovering over Affirming Catholicism that is absent in Forward in Faith, basically a reactionary movement. The latter takes no notice of the fact that some of the goals of Affirming Catholicism are also held by a number of Roman Catholic clergy and laity in France and elsewhere.

Affirming Catholicism has propagated its ideas through a series of booklets, along the lines of the *Tracts of the Times* of the nineteenth century, and also like the *Signpost* series of the late 1930s. However, the booklets published by Affirming Catholicism in no way measure up to the learning exhibited in the earlier series and are of a pastoral and practical nature. The society publishes a bulletin, *Affirming Catholicism News*. However, it tends to be a somewhat amorphous group. Like Forward in Faith, it has associated

with it a society that relates solely to clergy. It bears the name Society of Catholic Priests (SCP), is firmly allied to Affirming Catholicism, not least in supporting women's ordination, and provides an important core of coherence within the movement. It claims to have just over 500 members.

The two societies that we have been describing have driven a wedge into the Anglo-Catholic movement, or at least into what remains of it (see below). Of course, it is true that the ordination of women has stirred the Catholic-minded in a way that other threats to Anglo-Catholicism, for example, the formation of the Church of South India (see p.259), have not. This current alertness has come at the expense of unity and has created a further ambiguity. It is that those who make the word Catholic their *raison d'être* – a word which, if nothing else, means universal – are divided into two opposing groups over one ecclesiological issue. The Anglo-Catholic movement in the Church of England was indeed of a sectarian nature but now, with two Catholic parties confronting one with another, the sectarian spirit is greater than ever (see ch. 7).

Sexuality

An earlier chapter pointed to a positive link between homosexuality and Catholic-oriented priests (ch. 8). Since the 1980s the English cultural scene in this matter of homosexuality has changed radically. It is now more openly spoken of in society at large and numbers of those of this orientation, having 'come out of the closet', demand their full rights as human beings. Openly declared homosexual clergy are now to be found in sectors of Anglicanism other than the Anglo-Catholic, as well as in other churches, including the Baptist Church. Another factor, however, virtually unheard of in the media when the book was written, has burst forth into the area of sexuality, aided not least by the internet. It relates to the abuse of very young, or not so young children. Such cases have been found amongst Anglican and Roman Catholic priests and probably amongst clergy of other denominations also. The clinical relation between paedophilia and homosexuals, and heterosexuals is a complex one and cannot be considered here.

Has all this in any way modified what was written in the earlier chapter? In trying to answer this question one must face the crucial problem of obtaining accurate, empirical data. No extensive studies, it is thought, have been carried out relating specifically to the homosexuality of clergy, no matter how it is defined, within the Church of England as a whole, and more specifically within its Anglo-Catholic wing. All one can do is to

enquire of those who have reliable first-hand, personal information about these issues in the Church of England, and in the Anglo-Catholic sector in particular. It would appear from such a source that the position amongst Anglo-Catholic clergy is much the same as that described in chapter 8. However, with the greater public awareness of homosexuality in society, an issue has emerged that is decisive for many in the Church. On the subject of homosexuality there exists a division of opinion about the practice of homosexuality. It is generally acceptable and positively moral for a priest to remain celibate if he is homosexual. This also is the official position of the Roman Catholic Church. What may give rise to censure and abhorrence among conservative-minded Anglicans are cases where the priest enters into an intimate partnership with another male under the roof of vicarage or clergy house. This has been known to happen, but is contrary to standards acceptable within the domains of the English hierarchy. In recent times in this country, a classical case appeared that reached the national press. It concerned the appointment of Jeffrey John. He was a highly regarded Anglo-Catholic priest, a member of Affirming Catholicism from its early days, who was nominated to be the Bishop of Reading, as a suffragan bishop of Oxford. Opposition to the appointment mounted quickly on the grounds of his declared previous relations with another man. Although he asserted that he was then celibate, the appointment was opposed by some bishops and, eventually and decisively, by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams. Having stood down, John was then appointed Dean of St Albans and was later joined in a civil union to his long-standing partner. A case that had much wider repercussions was that of an appointment in the United States in 2003, to the bishopric of New Hampshire. It concerned Gene Robinson, once a married man with a family, who at the time of his election had openly declared himself to be a homosexual and was living with another man.

There continues to be a split in Anglo-Catholic circles between those who hold rigidly to the position that it is immoral to have sexual relations of any kind outside marriage. Opposed to it are people of a more liberal and open mind, who regard loving sexual relationships as acceptable and not to be condemned as immorality. As has just been noted, it is impossible to know what proportion of Anglo-Catholic priests fall into each of these categories.

The issue over homosexuality *per se* no longer seems significant in the Anglo-Catholic world. It has spread itself along a wider shore. The case of Gene Robinson in the United States does not primarily involve Anglo-Catholicism. The foremost question is whether self-confessed homosexuals should be allowed to hold high office in the Church.

And along with it there stands the question whether same sex couples should receive a blessing in church. These have become global issues that may split the now fragile Anglican Communion right down the centre, with province opposing province. A determined and firm opposition to a liberal approach to homosexuality has come from evangelically inclined dioceses in Africa, Latin America and Australia. The Anglican Church of Canada in its synod of 2007 held that the blessing of same sex couples was not in conflict with 'core church doctrine' but did not give a clear lead as to administering such a blessing. We repeat that in all these issues Anglo-Catholicism is quite peripheral, although its priests would in all likelihood oppose the evangelical backlash against liberal positions on sexual morality.

Ambiguity over authority

It was noted in the book that Anglo-Catholics, especially Anglo-Papalists, exhibit a clear ambiguity in their attitude towards bishops (ch. 6.3). On the one hand, bishops are of the *esse* of church order – they constitute an authority and charisma that is necessary for valid ordination and are to be obeyed as fathers in God. On the other hand, when bishops have attempted to discipline Anglo-Catholics in matters of ritual, for example, their authority has been rejected and their demands refused. The result has been that priests have continued to do what they wanted to do. Anglo-Catholicism must be seen against a background of the utter failure of diocesan bishops and, since the Church of England is established, of Parliament to control the liturgical practices of such priests. Case after case has seen the clergy triumphant in continuing with their 'illegal' practices. The bishops have had no power to enforce discipline, such as withdrawing the salaries of disobedient clergy. The result is that in recent times, such practices as the perpetual reservation of the Blessed Sacrament, Benediction, Adoration, celebrating the Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary and others, no longer give rise to episcopal fury. Bishops have abandoned all hope of controlling various sorts of services that clergy hold in their churches, including those of Evangelicals. Further, they also realize that efforts to create a legitimate authority by introducing new prayer books, such as *Common Worship*, that concedes much to the Catholic-minded, have failed to achieve their goals in bringing about some kind of uniformity of worship. In brief, some Anglo-Catholics use the modern Roman rite and, Evangelicals and others, now go down other liturgical paths, unmolested by episcopal censure. The ambiguity over episcopal discipline thus remains, but it has become even more ambiguous than in former years.

Just remnants?

The last chapter described the position of Anglo-Catholicism in the mid-1980s. The movement that had emerged in the nineteenth century and which, in many respects, had reached its zenith in the 1920s and 1930s, had become seriously diminished in the sixty or so years that have followed. The high point of success contained seeds of failure. The demonstrations of its strength and vitality, in terms of the following of clergy and lay people portrayed by the great congresses, had completely collapsed by the 1980s. Efforts to revive the glories of previous decades failed lamentably. The movement that had once grown so fast became deflated. Only remnants, such as the Church Union, the centre of pilgrimage at Walsingham in Norfolk and a number of well known Anglo-Catholic parishes showed some signs of vitality. Incidentally, today, the shrine of our Lady of Walsingham attracts more and more people, drawing on those who are not necessarily Anglo-Papalist. It is also in a good financial position.³ Although its origins and ethos, stretching only as far as the 1920s, were Anglo-Papalist, and based on a Marian cult, recent Archbishops of Canterbury, including the present one, have participated in worship there. While it is looked upon as being extreme in ritual, the shrine now has a more ecumenical following.

Nevertheless, what was left of Anglo-Catholicism in the 1980s were mainly sectarian segments in a sectarian movement within the Church of England (see ch. 7). The article of 1978, written by Alan Wilkinson and already alluded to, 'Requiem for Anglican Catholicism?', succinctly sums up the position twenty or so years ago.

What, we may ask, has happened subsequently? It seems clear that there has been a continuing decline in adherence and activity in Anglo-Catholic parishes and organisations. Proof is difficult, for reliable statistics are very hard to come by. It is generally known that churches, reckoned to be Anglo-Catholic, have had to be closed through falling attendances. Other churches have been forced to amalgamate with adjacent parishes and this has sometimes meant a loss of a distinctive Anglo-Catholic ethos. One may argue that there has been a similar decline in Anglo-Catholicism in terms of active following as there has been in the Church of England as a whole over the same period. The decline of the Church has particularly affected the centre-of-the-road Anglicans – traditionalists who would in all likelihood feel at home in the forms of worship found in cathedrals where ritual extremism is absent, but where much that moderate Anglo-Catholicism stood for is present. Whereas so many centre-of-the-road parishes are declining in numbers, those of cathedrals tend to remain

stable, or are even growing (*Times* 19/12/06). A similar falling away is clearly visible in British traditional Protestant churches – in the Methodist Church and the United Reformed Church. The Roman Catholic Church in this country has also experienced a decline amongst the faithful born in England, but losses have been more than offset by the influx of immigrants from Catholic countries in Europe, particularly from Poland. Whether or not losses in membership in well-established Anglo-Catholic parishes have been as great or less, by proportion, than in the Church generally, is extremely difficult to determine. One might hazard a guess and say that the cases are parallel. The one sector in the Church of England, however, that has shown a marked growth is that associated with Evangelicals. Were it not for Evangelicals the Church of England would be in a far worse state numerically than it is at present. Evangelical clergy are known to be taking over high church or Anglo-Catholic parishes, especially country ones, because of a lack of availability of Catholic-minded clergy.

The demographic profile of the Established Church is not only one of diminution in total numbers but one where, by proportion, the elderly are growing and the young are declining. In this respect Anglo-Catholicism echoes what one sees happening in central Anglicanism. In many, but not all Anglo-Catholic parishes, it is sometimes difficult to find teenagers. It is interesting to note that girls now act as servers where once it was boys. By contrast, the evangelical wing of the Church is the only sector able to draw and keep young people – teenagers and young married couples. Judged solely on demographic projections, the future of the remnants of Anglo-Catholicism, as well as of much of the English church at large is, to say the least, one that leads to foreboding.

On a more positive note it would appear – and this is nothing more than a supposition – that the religious orders which grew rapidly with the rise of Anglo-Catholicism have apparently remained relatively more stable over the past two decades than have Anglo-Catholic parish churches taken as a whole. Of course many of the orders are more heavily laden with the elderly than was once the case. Those orders that have suffered most, as have those in the Roman Catholic Church, have been the ones specialising in teaching and nursing – the active orders. The English Franciscans – the Society of St Francis, of liberal Catholic outlook and based at Hillfield in Dorset – have failed to maintain the relatively high recruitment they enjoyed in the 1970s. Many retreat houses that have a Catholic ethos, however, appear to be holding their own. On the other hand, theological colleges of a distinctly Catholic nature have declined. The two foremost ones at the present time are St Stephen's House, Oxford, and Mirfield, near

Leeds, under the Community of the Resurrection. Both of these colleges, however, have since moved ecclesiastically so as to allow women to train for the priesthood. There is no college that might be called strictly Anglo-Papalist. By contrast, Evangelicals have more theological colleges.

From the present to the future. The final paragraph of the last chapter of the book spoke of the unpredictability of the future (p. 269). This note of caution was sounded by the author as a matter of self-protection. Despite the frequent claims that sociology is a science, it is not scientific enough to predict the future with any accuracy. Because of this, sociologists avoid any attempt at futurology. Of course many theologically minded people, lay, priestly and academic, see the church as fundamentally a divine institution, and may be hopeful about its future.

Throwing caution to the wind and chancing his arm, the author would express his pessimism about the possibility of Anglo-Catholicism ever recovering its former strength. Continued decline would appear to be the order of the day. Unlike the Roman Catholic Church, it has little hope of increasing its membership from immigrants.

A shadow looms from another direction with the possibility of a further weakening of Anglo-Catholicism. It is to be found in what some people see as the inevitability of the consecration of women as bishops. This has already taken place in the Anglican Communion in the United States, Canada, Australia (in most dioceses), New Zealand and in other countries as well. In the 1998 Lambeth Conference there were, indeed, a few women bishops, which in itself did not bring about a mass walk-out. Since 1990 about 14 Anglican provinces have opened their doors to the consecration of women to the episcopate. In Britain, however, should women be consecrated as bishops in the Established Church, there would, more than likely be another defection of clergy and laity, possibly greater than when women were allowed to be ordained as priests. Those who align themselves with the Catholic tradition expressed under the banner of Forward in Faith seem bound to act in a way that will be highly divisive. But over and against this pessimism there exists now a certain awakening.

Stung into action by the ordination of women to the priesthood a few years ago, and, now again, by the likelihood of their consecration as bishops, something akin to the vigour of the old Anglo-Catholicism has emerged. One sees in Forward in Faith a determined, well organized movement that is already making overtures to the official church with regard to provisions that will be made for them if women are consecrated bishops. Although the spirit of *semper eadem* still hangs over them, and their publications are very 'churchy' or pious, they have stirred up Anglo-

Papalists to common ideals and practices. They show relatively little interest either in social issues or in the question of homosexuality among clergy and 'gay marriages'. Such issues are causing a serious divisive concern among Anglicans of different churchmanship.

One thing certain today is that much for which Anglo-Catholicism stood in the past has been accepted and absorbed by the very Church that gave rise to the movement. One thinks, for example, of liturgical worship, of the appreciation of past traditions, of a deep sense of pastoral concern in parish work, of involvement in social welfare, of fostering personal devotion and discipline. Parish Communion, which had its roots in Anglo-Catholicism, is now widely seen as the main Sunday service in churches that would not want to be labelled Anglo-Catholic. All these and other facets of the movement have found their way into many sectors of the Ecclesia Anglicana, and can be seen among people who would in no way call themselves Anglo-Catholic. The word Catholic and many of the Catholic ideals that were once the means of identity of Anglo-Catholics are today largely accepted in much of the Church of England. In this Anglo-Catholicism has made its mother church more tolerant and indeed broadened what was often thought to be a broad church. It. As a result, some might well argue that today the word, Anglo-Catholicism, has very little relevance to church life in general. Anglo-Papalism, or some equivalent word, is assuredly a valid term of identity within Anglicanism.

Over the years the ambiguities of Anglo-Catholicism have been instrumental in making the Anglican Church worldwide aware of its Catholic roots but, as we have seen, at the same time it has been instrumental in bleeding it. This state of affairs seems likely to continue while the ambiguities remain unresolved.

Notes

1. I much appreciate the positive contributions and criticisms that have come from those who have kindly read this Postscript. Among them I wish to thank sincerely Cheryl Collins, Rhidian Jones, Alan Wilkinson, and Robert Williams. My deep gratitude is extended to the Warden of St Deiniol's Library, Hawarden, for awarding me a bursary to prepare this text in very congenial surroundings.
2. For a full account of the proceedings and what followed, see W. Oddie, 1997, *The Roman Option*, London: Harper Collins.
3. See M. Yelton, 2005 *Anglican Papalism*, Norwich: Canterbury Press, p. 143. Also, M. Yelton, 2007, *Alfred Hope Patten and the Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham*, Norwich: Canterbury Press.

Anglo-Catholicism

A Study in Religious Ambiguity

W.S.F. Pickering

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