

The Episcopal Church



remains closer to Roman Catholicism (High Church) than most Protestant churches, but in others it is difficult to distinguish between the Anglican forms in use and the uses of other Evangelical bodies (Low Church). Its constitution affirms many relatively conservative theological beliefs, its liturgical form of worship is traditional, and its organization embodies a belief in the appropriateness of the historical episcopal hierarchy of archbishops, bishops, and dioceses"

(http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Church_of_England).

By their much-vaunted "branch theory" they attempt to prove the apostolic succession of their bishops through the Catholic Church, which they prefer to call the Catholic branch.

Ever since the "Tractarian Movement," which began at Oxford in 1833 and flourished under Pusey and Newman, the High Church through the study of the Fathers has come back to many Catholic tenets and practices.

In consequence of this movement thousands returned to the Catholic Church. Many Episcopalians have copied most of the doctrines and liturgical practices of the Catholic Church without admitting the primacy of the Pope and thus without entering the Catholic Church imitate it as closely as possible. They are known as ritualists and many lean towards union with the Holy See, and it is these that furnish most of the converts to the Church.

In the name of an ideology of radical exclusivity (practices such as ordaining women and homosexuals), the Episcopal Church has moved significantly away from the apostolic and Catholic faith of Jesus Christ and as a result, many Episcopal clergy have entered the Catholic Church in recent years.

These converts have one advantage: they knew of the existence of the seven Sacraments and many practices of the Church before they enter, for their devotions are very similar to those of the Catholic Church.

Many of the clergy of the Anglican Church receive a good solid education. Many of them lead a life of voluntary celibacy. Let us hope that the better members of the Anglican establishment, who pray for the unity of the Church, may soon enter the true fold and find rest of soul. A prayer for the conversion of England is strictly in accordance with the wish of the Holy See. Many members of the Anglican Church venerate the Blessed Virgin Mary and recite the rosary daily. We have reasons to hope that the ever increasing influx into the Catholic Church from this denomination may continue.

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The history of the Episcopal Church, also called the Anglican Church, began with the complicated love story of an indecent, lustful, ruthless, and brutal king. Henry VIII of England secretly married Anne Boleyn, while Catherine, his lawful wife was still living. A few months later Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury, Henry's servile creature, pronounced the king's first marriage null and void. In the same year 1533 Pope Clement VII annulled the decision of Cranmer and threatened the king with excommunication, if he should fail within three months to restore Catherine of Aragon to her rights and dignity as queen. The king spurned the threat and three months passed. The following year, March 23, 1534, the Holy Father declared the second marriage of Henry VIII invalid. Thereupon in the spring of 1534, Henry forced the Parliament and convocation to make him the Pope and the king, the spiritual head of the Church of England. During the November session, his

will was literally executed by the following enactment: "Be it enacted by the authority of this present Parliament, that the king, our sovereign lord, his heirs and successors, kings of this realm, shall be taken, accepted and reputed the only supreme head on earth of the Church of England called Anglicana Ecclesia." A formal renunciation of fealty to the Pope followed the ensuing year. An immoral king caused the secession of England from the true church.

The Church of England, as a separate church, dates back to the year 1534. There was a chasm of over 1,500 years between the origin of the true Church and the scandalous establishment of the Episcopal Church. The Church, which Jesus founded, has existed for over 2,000 years, and the Episcopal Church is less than 500 years old. It is not the true Church, nor by any means, a branch of the same. History proves that its origin is only truly human.

In the year 1554, through the influence of Cardinal Pole, England was reunited with Rome. The whole nation with very few exceptions rejoiced. But the hope of religious peace was nipped in the bud.

In 1559, the Parliament, upon the advice of the notorious Queen Elizabeth, re-imposed the oath of supremacy to be taken to the queen in all religious matters and abolished the Sacrifice of the Mass under penalties of confiscation and death.

The bishops refused to accept such an imposition. Some 3,594 parishes were deprived of their pastors, because these pastors refused to take the oath of spiritual supremacy to the ungodly queen. (Together with almost all the Cardinals, Bishops and Priests who remained loyal to the Holy See). For this reason they were deposed and imprisoned.

Thereupon Queen Elizabeth "through the plentitude of her ecclesiastical authority" invested Matthew Parker as Archbishop of Canterbury. Parker was consecrated by the heretical ex-bishop William Barlow (d. 1568), who was probably never validly consecrated himself. Barlow was himself married well before it was lawful to do so, and fathered five daughters who married five bishops.

Barlow used the Ordinal of Cranmer, without believing in the Church, in the sacraments, or the Sacrifice of the Mass. From Parker all Anglican ordinations are derived. His ordination and that of all Anglican clergymen is therefore invalid.

Although some Episcopalians love to use the name Catholic and have many doctrines and practices in common with the Catholic Church, it is no way a legitimate branch of the same. It was a live branch as long as it adhered to the tree of life. But it separated itself entirely from the tree, from the head and body of the Catholic Church, and is now in all reality a slave of the civil power.

From 1588 until the death of Queen Elizabeth, a period of fourteen years, Catholics were cruelly persecuted, the best of them were consigned to the scaffold for no other reason than their fidelity to the Catholic Church. They were butchered and their homes and property confiscated. Priests were hunted down and when caught were tortured and put to death. During the years 1577 and 1603, "Good Queen Bess" had put to death 183 of her Catholic subjects. Of these, 123 were priests, one was a friar not yet ordained, and 59 were lay folk - three of them women. Ordinary Catholics had their possessions confiscated and lost their citizenship because they attended Mass, or professed loyalty to the Catholic Church. "Some had their ears bored with a hot iron; others were publicly whipped" (Lingard's *History of England*, Vol. 5, p. 515).

Today, "the Church of England" considers itself to stand both in a reformed tradition and in a catholic (but not Roman Catholic) church tradition *Reformed* insofar as many of the principles of the early protestants as well as the subsequent Protestant Reformation have influenced it, and insofar as it does not accept Papal authority; *catholic*, in that it views itself as the 'unbroken continuation of the early apostolic and later medieval' "universal church", rather than as a 'new formation'. In both beliefs and practices, or forms of churchmanship, the Church of England is mixed: in some of its congregations worship